



Importance of

# SEO



## Important SEO principles and the exact SEO plan that will take you to page one on Google search in 2020

Having an SEO plan is mission critical if you expect to generate quality inbound traffic to your website. These SEO principles are not meant to help you to “hack the algorithm” or “find loopholes”, but rather to allow you to answer questions and solve problems for those who are actively searching for answers or a solution for the problem your business solves.

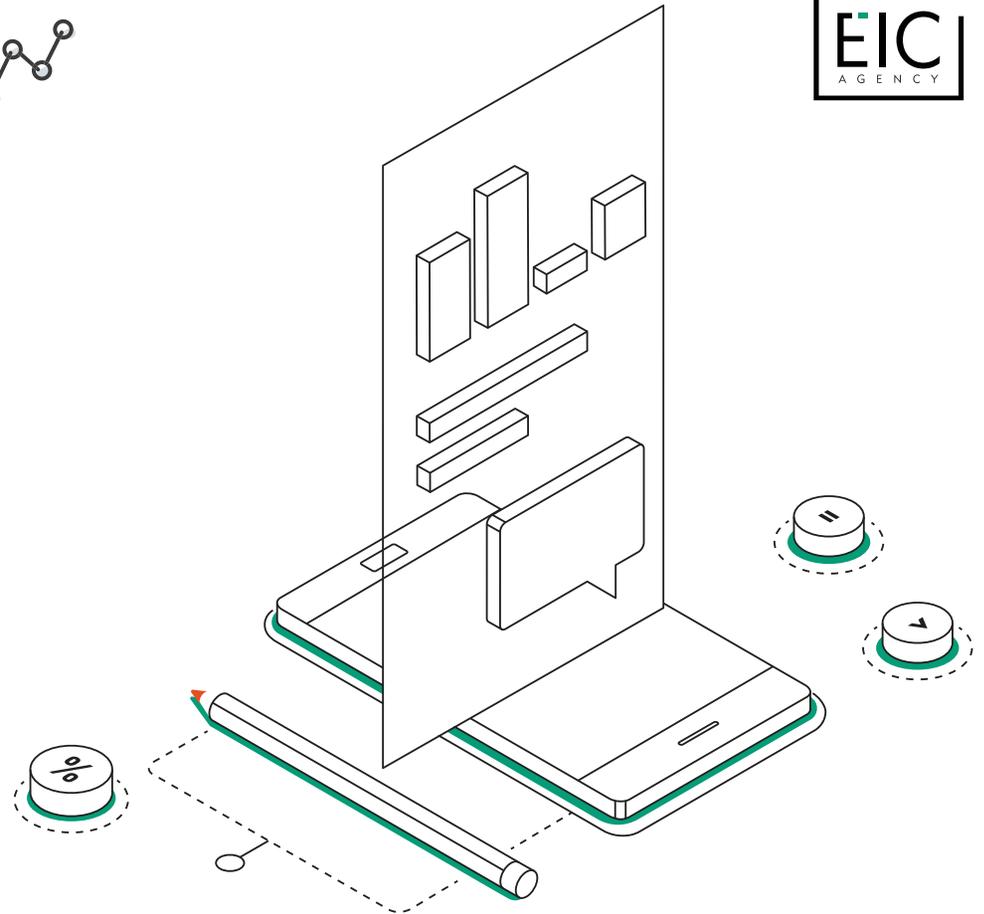
The importance of SEO is often downplayed. Although businesses want to be at the top of Google search, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to crack into page one of search rankings. Having an SEO plan will mitigate the risks of spending time crafting content that won't rank.

An effective SEO plan contains 1 part keyword research, 1 part implementation and 1 part measurement.

### SEO Principles

In this piece we will discuss the 5 SEO principles that should be a part of your SEO plan. They are as follows:

- 1.- Build domain authority
- 2.-Utilize SEO tools
- 3.-Topic clusters
- 4.-Media rich content
- 5.-Measure and validate

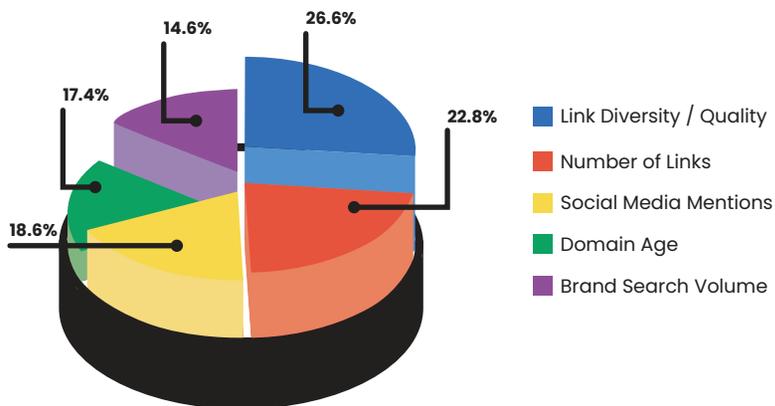


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## Build Domain Authority

Crafting an appropriate SEO plan for your business will vary based on your current domain authority. The importance of utilizing proper SEO principles based on your current brand position is not something that should be downplayed.



Checking your current domain authority using tools like Moz will help you to have an accurate understanding of where your business is currently at as it relates to an SEO plan. The following SEO principles will affect your overall domain authority.

- **Link Diversity/Quality:** Diversity of link sources and quality of linked publications based on relevancy to your content.
- **Number of Links:** Total links internal to your website & external links to other websites. Consider linking your own relevant content to itself.
- **Social media mentions:** Refers to the number of places on social media that your content appears. The more places the link is shown & referenced on social the higher your post will go in Google's search algorithm.
- **Domain age:** Quality content and number of links over time. A one month old site will not get to page one. Much like fine wine, your site must mature and age in order to perform to its highest potential.
- **Brand Search Volume:** As your website visits grow, so will your rank.





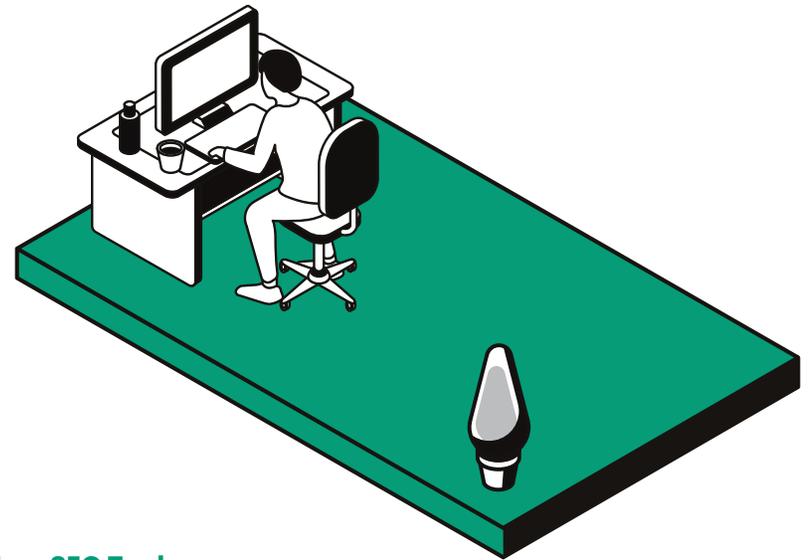
### Utilize SEO tools

Once you have a realistic view of how your site is currently indexing, it is time to devise and SEO plan that focuses on prioritizing content production through blogs, podcasts, videos and website pages. This is where the importance of SEO strategy starts to come into the fold. This content schedule must correlate with the overarching themes YOUR CUSTOMERS are interested in BASED ON SEARCH VOLUME DATA.

Generally the process starts by uncovering the search terms that your customers are actively searching for. The key is to start broadly by focusing on overarching themes that are relevant to your business before getting more granular. The following tools are extremely helpful to uncover search volume and reveal relevant longer tail keywords that surround the overarching 30,000 foot view.



In order to execute your SEO plan it takes strategy and intent around **which keywords are most accessible and relevant to your business.**



### Free SEO Tools

**Google Keyword Planner:** Helps users to identify relevant and suggested keywords based on google's very own data.

**Uber Suggest:** Monitor competition around keywords and use data to guide your content planning strategy and benchmark your current efforts.

**Moz:** All in one suite of Free and premium SEO tools to help benchmark and improve rank. Moz has local business and a pro version that contains site tracking with Campaigns, link building, and keyword performance tracking.

**Quora:** Database that assists in discovering the questions that are being asked most frequently online in order to create content that has an impact.

**Tube Buddy:** See what descriptions and tags working for other creators on youtube, and uncover the patterns that lead to more viewership and higher rankings. Tube buddy has a premium offering that contains an entire suite of helpful SEO tools for Youtube specifically.

## Paid SEO Tools

**Spyfu:** Keyword and PPC research solution to help you outrank competitors, track your rankings, and increase web traffic. Pricing starts at \$39/month.

**Buzz Sumo:** Assists in finding influencers and reviewing the content they share. Also helps identify the names of publishers and writers whose content is the most socially engaging. BuzzSumo analyzes billions of pieces of content and provides robust data analytics. Pricing starts at \$99/month.

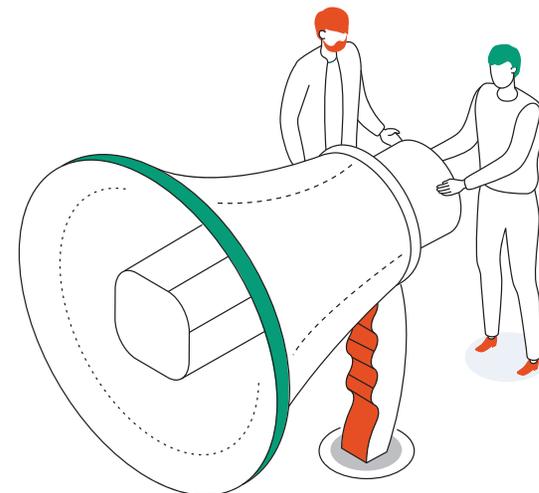
**SEM Rush:** SEMrush gives you an opportunity to look at your competitors' marketing strategies and tactics from website traffic, to PR and content marketing efforts, social media presence, and PPC creatives. Pricing starts at \$99/month.

**Ahrefs:** Ahrefs is known as the ultimate toolset for SEO. Ahrefs crawls the web, stores tons of data. The data can be used to aid keyword research, link building, content marketing and SEO strategies. Pricing starts at \$99/month.

Despite the accessibility of amazing SEO tools, it takes more than just having a tool to succeed. In order to execute your SEO plan it takes strategy and intent around which keywords are most accessible and relevant to your business.

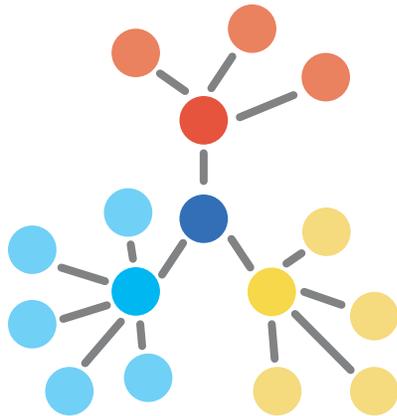
A good rule of thumb if just getting started on your SEO plan is to identify keywords that have between 200-500 searches per month with <\$5.00 average CPC (cost per click) on Google ads or a KD score of <65 (this data is calculated by most of the aforementioned tools). These style keywords often provide the best opportunity to crack into the first page of Google and start to build domain authority to climb the ladder of more difficult keywords.

Armed with the SEO principle of quality tools, you can shift your focus to topic clusters as a mechanism of organization for your SEO plan.



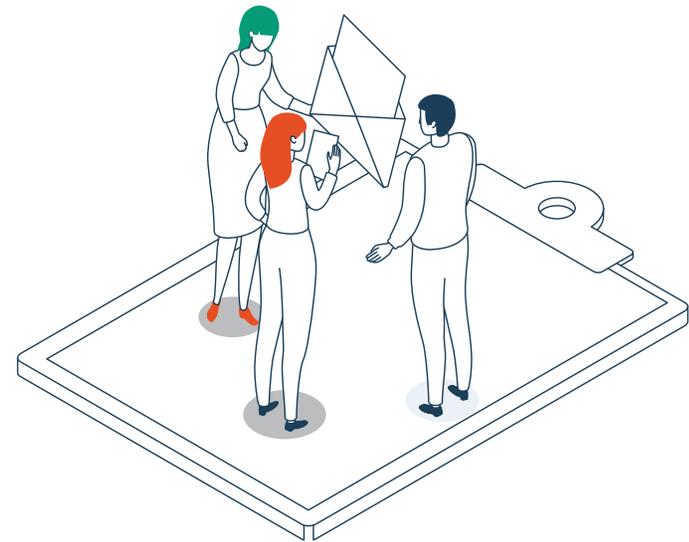
## Topic Clusters

When organizing your SEO content plan start broad and then focus. This means first defining broad opportunity zones of search that you want your brand to appear under. These topics generally produce a very high volume of search traffic and are extremely competitive for PPC advertising as well as organic search. This broad keyword is what we consider to be the nucleus of a 'topic cluster.'



Cluster Diagram

If you are a small business it will be helpful to niche down on your broad keyword. For example, if you are a local realtor your broad topic cluster keyword might be "Scottsdale Real Estate" instead of "Real Estate."



Avoid simultaneously attacking more than 1-3 topic clusters at a time as each cluster should include 10-15 pieces of separate content that surround the cluster. Looking back to the realtor example, a piece surrounding the "Scottsdale Real Estate" cluster might be "How do real estate taxes work in Scottsdale?"

The 10-15 pieces of content surrounding each cluster should focus on specific long tail keywords or questions being asked online that compliment the overarching 'topic cluster.' By creating these pieces of content, publishers can interweave their content through internal links to catalyze greater search results.

Depending on how much bandwidth your team has, we often recommend focusing on one cluster per month or even per quarter in order to be thorough and set your organization up for a quality SEO plan long term.

### Importance of media rich content for SEO

Media rich content is what can take your SEO from good to great. Media rich content refers to the following elements included in your content:

- Videos
- Photos
- Social media posts
- Podcasts

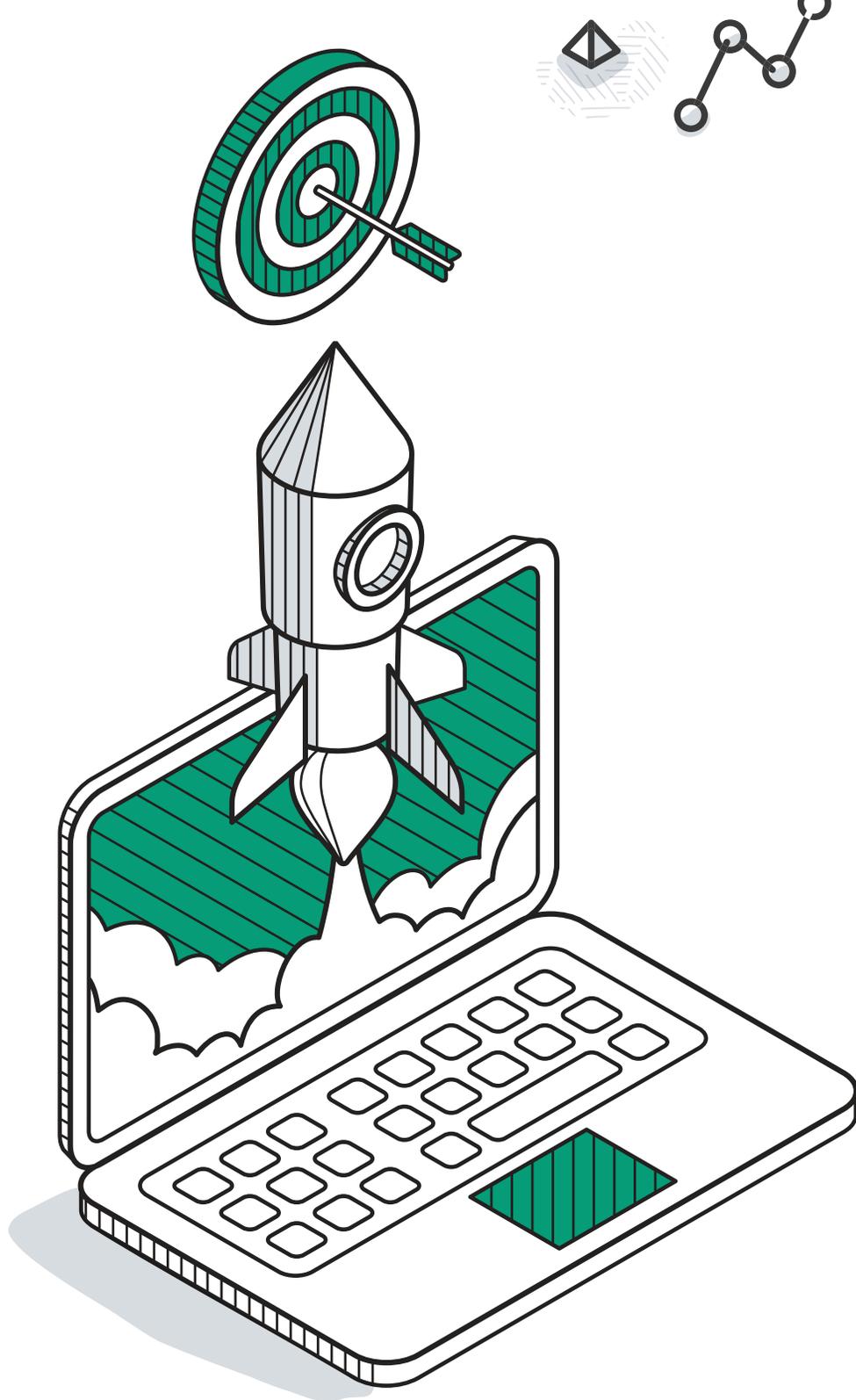
Because Google owns Youtube (the second largest search engine), Google has the ability to auto-transcribe Youtube videos instantly. By loading the transcript of your video with proper keywords and embedding your Youtube video into your blog, publishers can benefit from additional SEO power. Using tools like Tube buddy can be helpful in properly naming, describing and tagging videos to ensure the best possible results.

Naming and tagging photos included in your blogs will also give your content a boost. This process should be a part of the SOP (standard operating procedure) for getting a blog properly optimized and posted.

Social media shares and traction of content is a key metric that plays into the search algorithm. Whenever possible share your content on social media and embed the posts back into the blog. This will further prove to Google your SEO legitimacy.



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The key is to start broadly by **focusing on overarching themes that are relevant to your business** before getting more granular.

Don't forget about podcasts! Because Google can crawl through descriptions and podcast pages, if you have a video made for a concept relevant to a topic cluster use the audio to create a podcast and link that in your blog post as well. Anchor is a great tool to make posting podcasts easy.

While these processes may seem like a lot of work, once you have created consistency in posting it becomes easier to find consistency and personnel to execute on these details so that you can focus on the data and make more informed decisions to tighten the screws on your SEO plan.

## Measurement and Validation of your SEO Principles

Although there are amazing tools to help guide you on your SEO plan, there is no magic formula to get to page one. Depending on competitors, keywords selected, your current domain authority and a variety of other variables your results will assuredly vary depending on where you focus your efforts.

Measurement of your efforts will allow you to steer the metaphorical SEO ship towards more quality inbound search traffic month over month.

Many of the aforementioned free and paid tools will index your current search ranks respective to the keywords you are focusing on. Generally it takes 3-6 months of focused content output to begin to see real results. Here are some good and bad metrics as it relates to measuring the success of your SEO plan:

Quality Data	Misleading Data
Dwell Time	Average session duration
Month over Month traffic	Total website traffic
Page rank by keyword	Average page rank

If your organization spends time prioritizing the topic clusters based on keyword research and focuses on and creating processes to keep the content output specific and intentional, then the results over time will speak for themselves. Oftentimes, organizations believe that once the blog or content is posted, that it is time to move on to the next piece. Be sure to always optimize your content. Adding new links, changing headings and embedding media rich content will only help enhance your overarching SEO plan.

Measuring and validating the effectiveness of the content rank increases month over month will keep your team making informed decisions that lead to more organic traffic.



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