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How to Optimize Your Content for Social and Search

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Website owners used to focus on every technique solely for increasing their search engine ranking. Optimization was all about cramming an ungodly amount of high dollar keywords and phrases into every inch of every web page. Today the focus has changed. Keyword stuffing is gone with the wind and a new standard of search AND social optimization is in.

If you have no social presence, you simply cannot gain rank as quickly or solidly in the SERPs as you can if you have a strong presence. So, how do you optimize for social and SEO? The first step is getting into the right mindset.

The Differences between Social and SEO

According to the [Content Marketing Institute](http://www.sitepronews.com/cgi-bin/ct.cgi?id=7674) (<http://www.sitepronews.com/cgi-bin/ct.cgi?id=7674>), there is a distinct difference between social and search engine optimization. While the goal of both is to up rankings, each is approached differently. When it comes to social, you need to think engagement and sharing. Social media marketing focuses on:

- Brand, messaging and calendar managed topics
- Short form content, such as status updates, image tiles and blog posts
- Increasing organic reach via paid options
- Real-time content opportunities via social monitoring
- Engagement – and view – based performance

When it comes to SEO, you need to think strategy and tactics. The Content Marketing Institute points out that it's the condiment, not the sandwich: "If a... content marketing program is the sandwich, then SEO is the mayonnaise. It touches... everything and enhances the... flavor of the sandwich, but on its own, it's not very appetizing." Search optimization focuses on:

- Tactics, such as more quality content generating more search presence
- Topics emanating from actual search demand
- Behind-the-scenes technical optimization, including meta details
- Content and social promotion
- Link building
- Performance that is tied to keyword-managed content and focuses on search KPIs and conversions

4 Search and Social Media Tactics

Optimization is an intimidating word. It doesn't have to be, though. Kick starting your [social SEO](http://expresswriters.com/social-media-optimizing-pictures-posts-shares/) (<http://expresswriters.com/social-media-optimizing-pictures-posts-shares/>) and search optimization doesn't have to be rocket science. In fact, I promise you don't need to be a math or science major to do it and do it well. Just apply these four simple tactics:

Tactic 1: Know Your Business Model Backwards and Forwards

Our first method comes from one of the most credible optimization sources on the net. [Search Engine Watch](http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2259693/SEO-Basics-8-Essentials-When-Optimizing-Your-Site) (<http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2259693/SEO-Basics-8-Essentials-When-Optimizing-Your-Site>). If any company knows the importance of this tactic, it's SEW. Knowing your business model sounds like a no-brainer, but too many businesses make this rookie mistake. They fail to sit down and focus on their main goals. Your goals will influence every aspect of optimization. So take a minute and answer these questions honestly:

What are your goals?

What are your assets and liabilities?

How do you define a conversion?

Are you selling impressions or the things people click on?

Tactic 2: Optimize for Search and Share

Balance is everything. Yes, it is important to optimize your web pages and media. [TopRankBlog.com](http://www.toprankblog.com/2013/05/search-social-media-tactics/) (<http://www.toprankblog.com/2013/05/search-social-media-tactics/>) says you need to optimize your topics and specific keywords based on what customers are actually searching for, but you also need to make social sharing compelling and simple. How? Let's take a look:

Master the art of crafting catchy titles, headings and subheadings

Include search phrases; for example, "8 Indispensable [keyword/phrase] Tips For [keyword/phrase]"

Your content should always include social sharing widgets so that it can be seamlessly shared with a single click

Tactic 3: Nail the Things Search Engines Want

Search engines are tasked with supplying users with the most relevant and high quality websites and content that meets their search criteria. According to Search Engine Watch, engines determine which sites meet quality and relevancy requirements by weighing four primary criteria:

Authority: **Authority is built**; you won't have it right out of the gate. You can build it through exceptional content. Your goal is to craft the kind of content others want to link to as a reference or a citation.

Content: It must be relevant to your theme, fresh and engaging. Good grammar, spelling and natural use of keywords are musts.

Performance: How fast is your site? Is it full of broken links or does it work properly?

User Experience: Is your site attractive and easy to navigate?

Tactic 4: Focus on your Meta

Your website content should have built-in **title tags** (<http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2154469/How-to-Write-Title-Tags-For-Search-Engine-Optimization>) and **Meta descriptions** (<http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2067564/How-To-Use-HTML-Meta-Tags>). Yes, we're talking about a little coding, but it's far from complex. All you need is:

Unique title tags: Think of these as 4 to 8 word ads. The goal is to pique interest and make people want to click.

Unique Meta descriptions: Avoid duplicate descriptions. They should be as unique as your titles, and they should speak to the specific page they describe.

Nowadays, social and search optimization go hand-in-hand. The key to success is balance and persistence. With just a little effort, you can achieve a lot.



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