

# Common SEO Mistakes

If you Want Hordes of Visitors Instead of  
Headaches, Keep Reading!



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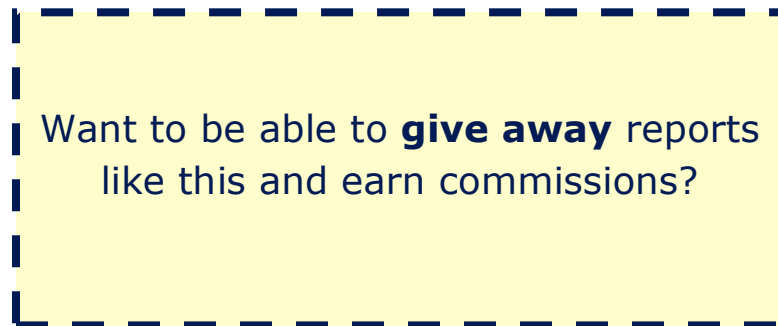
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## Table of Contents

Basics & Benefits of SEO.....	3
SEO Mistake: Hiring SEO Companies that Spam You .....	6
SEO Mistake: Waiting Too Long To Worry About SEO .....	9
SEO Mistake: Spreading Your Content Over Multiple Domains .....	10
SEO Mistake: Submitting Your Site to Search Engines .....	12
SEO Mistake: Obsessing Over Meta Tags or Your Site’s Google PageRank .....	14
SEO Mistake: Outsourcing Your SEO the Wrong Way .....	16
SEO Mistake: Which Hat Are You Going To Wear? .....	18
SEO Mistake: Forgetting Your Customers Are #1 .....	21
SEO Mistake: Forgetting It’s All About Content .....	23
SEO Mistake: Losing Sight of Your Goals as You Develop Your Battle Plan.....	25
Conclusion .....	26
Resources for SEO .....	27

## Basics and Benefits of SEO

Search Engine Optimization (or SEO) can either be made very complex and hard to understand or very easy to comprehend. We'll work on making it easy in this report.

To sum up SEO in one sentence, it simply means getting your website(s) in favor with the search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo so they can send you lots of free traffic and then keeping your website(s) there!

First, let's start with what exactly Search Engine traffic means. While this course is not intended to be a complete guide to SEO by any means, we'll quickly cover a bit of the basics to make sure that you do understand them.

Here is a screen shot from Google when I typed in “mom web hosting” on my computer.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "mom web hosting". The search bar contains the text "mom web hosting" and a "Search" button. Below the search bar, the results are displayed. The first result is a sponsored link titled "Best 10 Web Hosting Sites" from www.Top-10-Web-Hosting.com, which is highlighted in yellow and labeled "PAID Listing" with a black arrow. The second result is a natural listing titled "MomWebs Blog" from www.momwebs.com, which is labeled "NATURAL FREE Listing" with a red arrow. The third result is "WAHM Ecommerce Hosting at MerchantMoms" from merchantmoms.com. The fourth result is "Thank You Mom!! - webhosting mastertemplates.com" from webhosting.mastertemplates.com. The fifth result is "Mom's Web Hosting - Website Hosting for todays WAHM!" from momswebhosting.com. On the right side of the search results, there are several sponsored links, including "Award Winning Web Hosting" from www.1and1.com, "Affiliate Hosting Plans" from Verio.com, "Hosting Experts" from www.Rackspace.com, and "Web Hosting" from www.aplus.net. A black arrow points to the "Award Winning Web Hosting" link, and another black arrow points to the "Award Winning Web Hosting" link.

I've marked the Paid listings with black arrows, and I've marked the free “SEO” listings with a red arrow.

To get your website listed where the black arrows are, you must sign up with the Google Adwords program which is set up as a paid advertising program and that's an entirely different course. You trade cash for clicks, basically.

But, we'll be talking about the red area – which is FREE. I'll bet you can imagine that MomWebs.com, which has the first position in Google for “mom web hosting”, is working very hard to keep that spot. Free traffic is a good thing.

As I mentioned, Search Engine Optimization can be made very complex or very simple. In order to get traffic from the search engines, you'll need to focus on two things:

1. Making sure that your website is very clearly telling the Search Engines what it's about.
2. Making sure other people are talking about your website, too.

The first is called “on-site” factors and includes things like having posts that are relevant to your topic, having lots of great related content, and making sure your titles and images are named using words that will help Google to figure out what your website is about. We'll talk about that more in a bit. It obviously gets more complex than that, but look at it like a game of 20 questions. Make sure Google, Bing, and Yahoo only have to ask a few before figuring out what you're about. If they're confused at all, no dice.

The second is called “Off-site” factors and is all about getting other websites to link to your website. This is the more important of the two, so focus 90% of your efforts on this. You'll want to work on anything that can get you links.

For instance -

- Article marketing
- Blog commenting
- Guest blogging
- Squidoo marketing
- Twitter & Facebook marketing
- Stumble Upon marketing
- Video marketing
- Press release marketing
- Forum marketing

Anywhere you can get links to your website from quality related websites, just do it.

Again, I could write a dissertation on getting links, but we're just covering the basics in this intro, so keep reading for how NOT to do things and we'll refer you to some resources where you can find out more info about the most efficient, effective ways to boost your Search Engine traffic, including getting links.

On that note, let's get started.

## **SEO Mistake: Hiring SEO Companies that Spam You**

Finding your way through the labyrinth of conflicting search engine optimization information can be confusing and frustrating, no matter how much experience you have. So when you suddenly receive an email in your inbox promising guaranteed results... you're tempted.

Don't give in.

First, these emails almost always offer a scam – a way of manipulating the search engine results that either doesn't work, or can get you blacklisted from the search engines even if the method does work.

Definition of Blacklisted: Denial of access. Getting your website either banned or boycotted in the search engines. Shut out.

For example, the company may promise to submit your site to 1,000 search engines or 500 directories. Sounds good, right?

### **Scam: Submitting your site to thousands of search engines**

The trouble is that there are only four true search engines in existence: Google, Yahoo, ASK and BING (formerly MSN/Live). Every other search site you use pulls their results from the four mentioned above. So, if your site appears in one of the four, it will appear in the search engine results pages, known as SERPs, on any other search engine site.

### **Scam: Submitting your site to dozens of directories**

As for the 500 directories – do your homework. The only directories that are going to do you any good are those that are related to your industry. So if you're selling handcrafted wooden toys, a wedding directory is not going to help you any. However, a directory of American made toys would be perfect. Or a directory of natural, non-toxic toys may drive actual customers to your site.

You may think that having your site listed in unrelated directories will help your site, after all, what's one more link going to hurt, right?

The trouble with that thinking is, if you have three high-quality sites linking to you and all other links are spammy, unrelated directories, those links will actually reflect poorly on your site. It's

better to focus on receiving high-quality links from sites that rank well in the search engines and have actual visitors who are interested in what you have to offer.

### **Scam: Promising the moon**

Unscrupulous SEO companies also tend to promise you #1 ranking in a particular search engine for certain keywords. The problem is that the SEO companies cannot control the results that appear in the search engines. What they do to make it appear that you're getting results is use black hat methods to artificially affect your rankings. This is temporary, at best, because the techniques they use violate search engine terms of service, putting you at risk for getting your website banned from the search engines.

Techniques that are a violation of search engine TOS include:

- Keyword stuffing
- Hidden text and links
- Doorway and cloaked pages
- Link farming
- Blog comment spam

Avoid these techniques, and any SEO scam a company sends you in a spam email and you'll have more resources to spend on techniques that actually work.

***Finally, keep this in mind:*** Emails that try to sell you something, that are sent in bulk from a company you don't have any kind of relationship with, is spam and it's against the law. The last company you want fiddling around with your online pride and joy is one that is willing to break the law to get your attention.

In spite of what the spam says, when you're optimizing your website steady and slow is the way to go. NEVER do business with a company or person who spams you.

## SEO Mistake: Waiting Too Long To Worry About SEO

Whether you're setting up a new website or revamping an existing one, you have a million things on your mind. You're thinking about things like, choosing the right logo, colors and graphics and hiring the right web designer, programmer and writer. Just to name a few.

Each of the professionals you hire will tell you the one thing that is most important for your website – from their perspective. The designer will say that the colors and graphics must be first rate. The programmer will say that the site must function properly and to do so, it must have first rate coding. And, the writer will tell you that nothing matters but what you say. After all, if no one can read your website, no one will buy.

They're all right, of course. But none of what they say will matter if no one arrives at your website. In order to drive new visitors to your site, you need search engines.

### **Customer First, SEO Second**

Unfortunately, many small business owners find themselves in a situation where they've spent thousands of dollars on a site their customers won't even be able to find. Why? Customers can't find the site because it can't be indexed by the search engines.

*What does this mean?*

Search engines use programs called robots or spiders that "crawl" the Internet. Basically, these automated programs follow links from one web page or website to another. When they find new content or a new website, they index, or save, what they find. Then, when a visitor to the search engine results page (SERP) types in a keyword, the information that is in the search engine's index, and that is most relevant to the keyword phrase, is displayed to the visitor. The visitor then clicks on the result that he thinks will best meet his needs.

**You can make sure your site is easy to index by following these 5 guidelines:**

1. Make SEO your first priority. Find a reputable SEO professional who can advise you on what your website needs in order to be search engine friendly.

2. Stay involved in the website building process and make sure you know exactly what methods each professional is using in the construction of your site.
3. Avoid website that are built in Flash or Ajax or that hide your content in a graphic. Spiders can't read content that is hidden in Flash, Ajax or a graphic. Even worse, these websites can be hard for your customers to use.
4. Avoid using session IDs in addresses to your website. This is particularly important if you have a forum or shopping cart on your site. If you take a look at the address bar of your site as you navigate through it, make sure that the address is not followed by a long string of numbers. This is typically a session ID and they tend to confuse the spiders. A confused spider is not going to index your site properly.
5. Avoid frames. Not only do they hide your content from the spiders if not setup properly - they are so 1999.

### **Follow through with SEO**

The guidelines above will help you make sure that the site you setup or revamp will be built in a search engine friendly manner. This will go a long way towards making your site indexable.

But, you can't stop there.

Just like a building contractor can't stop when the foundation is complete, and a golfer can't stop his swing the moment his club hits the ball, you need to follow through on your SEO efforts.

Following through with keyword research, onsite and offsite SEO efforts will ensure that your customers can and will find their way to your website for years to come.

### **SEO Mistake: Spreading Your Content Over Multiple Domains**

Domain names are practically a dime a dozen these days. And who doesn't know someone who has at least that many in their portfolio? Purchasing a new domain is as easy as hopping out of bed at 3 a.m., doing a quick search to see if it's available and whipping out your credit card.

Setting up a new site to go along with your shiny new domain name is as easy as opening cPanel, filling out a form and clicking submit. Viola! There's a shiny new WordPress site ready to go.

It's so easy to do, and there are so many reasons that make setting up a new domain name sound good. But from an SEO perspective, is it really the smart thing to do?

### **When You Should Use a New Domain Name or Sub-Domain**

Sometimes it does make sense to use a new domain name or to setup a sub-domain. (For those who don't know, a sub-domain is a part of a larger domain, e.g. subdomain.domain.com.)

If you're selling a single product, such as an e-book, and you have an army of affiliates that will want to send their customers to a single domain and sales letter page that has nothing but the product to purchase on it, then multiple domains is a good idea.

Or, if your company provides information on multiple, unrelated topics, you may want to setup a website for each topic. For example, if you're providing information on parenting and fish keeping, those sites would benefit from separate domain names.

Using a sub-domain makes sense if you're setting up a monstrous website like About.com with multiple content categories that need to be completely separate from one another – but still under the same domain name. Sub-domains are also useful if your company offers several completely different products. For example, Google uses sub-domains in this manner: maps.google.com, news.google.com, mail.google.com.

## **When You Should NOT Use Multiple Domain Names or Sub-Domains**

That said; you need to make sure your customers or visitors can navigate your site easily and that you consider the impact of a separate domain or sub-domain on your SEO efforts before you start building.

The first question you need to ask yourself before you start building is why you need more than one domain name or sub-domain.

If your reasoning is so that you can take over the search engine results pages (SERPs) with several websites, go back to the drawing board.

This is a bad idea from an SEO standpoint because the search engines frowns upon the practice of having multiple sites with essentially the same content. Anytime you're attempting to deceive the search engines, you're walking on thin ice with your site's credibility in the eyes of the search engines.

That's just the SEO perspective. Unless you have an army of website updaters and content writers, keeping each of your sites fresh and meeting the needs of your visitors is going to be nearly impossible.

It's best to keep similar content, or content that targets the same market, on one site and in one sub-domain. Think long and hard about what impact you'll have and what your motives are before you branch out.

## **SEO Mistake: Submitting Your Site to Search Engines**

Chances are, if you've been a member of an online business or SEO related forum for long, you'll have witnessed a heated discussion about whether or not you should submit your site to the search engines. If you're really new to the Internet, you might not have a clue what this means.

Submitting your site to a search engine is a process in which you go to the search engine's website and fill out a form, telling the search engine what the address is to your website and what keywords are relevant to it.

Sounds simple, fast and harmless, right? That's exactly what proponents of submitting will tell you.

*"Submitting doesn't hurt anything."*

*"It's best to make sure you're covering all your bases."*

Unfortunately, some new website owners, desperate for traffic and motivated by spammy services that promise to submit the new site to thousands of search engines, or hundreds of directories, buy into this idea and find themselves separated from hundreds of dollars with no real return on investment.

Why?

### **The Truth about Search Engines**

First, there are only four search engines. Any other site that calls itself a search engine these days simply returns results from one of the big four – Google, Yahoo, Ask and Bing.

Submitting your site to any other "search engine" is a waste of time.

Second, search engines use programs called robots or spiders to crawl the web. This means that the spiders follow links from one web page to another and from one website to another.

And when the spider encounters new content, a new page or a new site, it indexes the information. In other words, it sends the new content and its location back to the search engine.

Then, when someone searches a keyword phrase on the search engine's site or in their browser toolbar, the visitor is given a list of relevant results on the search engine results page (SERP).

Once your website is known to be trustworthy and has aged a bit, your pages will appear in the SERPs for relevant keyword phrases. This happens even if you never submit your site to a search engine. By the way, submitting will not speed up the process.

### **Impact on Your Business**

So what does this mean for you, the small business owner who just wants to earn a living?

This means:

1. Don't waste your time or money submitting your site to search engines.
2. Focus your efforts on developing quality content for your site and for other people's sites. Call it search engine food.
3. Work on developing relationships with the owners of high ranking websites in your industry or relevant industries. A website owner, who knows, likes and trusts you is more likely to link to you in the content of his website.
4. Make sure you're meeting your customers' needs first.
5. Never do anything for SEO purposes alone.

Keep these five guidelines in mind when making changes or additions to your site or building your new site. Educate yourself on each search engine's terms of services and webmaster guidelines. Oh, and don't waste your time arguing SEO.

### **SEO Mistake: Obsessing Over Meta Tags or Your Site's Google PageRank**

Meta tags are so 1995.

Even so, you'll still find a few web designers, programmers and unscrupulous SEO "professionals" who'll insist that, in order to optimize your site for the search engines, you need to fill your keyword and description meta tags with all your relevant keywords (and then some) – and keep an eye on your PageRank.

## **Stop the presses!**

If you're new to this search engine optimization business, you probably have no idea what a meta tag or PageRank is. Here are a couple of definitions, just for you:

**Meta Tag:** These are tags placed in the head of your HTML pages that give the visitor's browser, or the search engine spider, information about the page. Two mid-90s search engines, Infoseek (now defunct) and AltaVista (now owned by Yahoo!), first popularized the keywords tag, which they used to determine what each page on a website was about.

However, by 1997, search engines realized that spammers were misusing the tag to make pages rank for terms that were completely irrelevant to the page's content. Search engines completely stopped supporting keyword meta tag information by 2002.

That said; the description tag is still important. It does not affect how your page is ranked, or what keyword phrases your page will appear in the search engine results pages (SERPs) for, but it is displayed under your page's title in the SERPs.

**PageRank:** This is Google's link analysis algorithm that measures the importance, relevance and value of a web page based on the quality of the pages linking to it.

Basically, PageRank will tell you, on a scale of 0 to 10, how important your site is in the overall scheme of the Internet. It will not tell you how well your page will rank for the keyword phrases your customers are going to use to find your page.

What does this mean?

In a nutshell, this means that you're wasting your time if you spend more than two minutes on your page's meta tags or looking at your PageRank.

Meta tags are not going to ensure that your page ranks in the top 10 for your keyword phrases. And PageRank is not an accurate measure of where your page appears in the SERPs for your keyword phrases.

You're better off spending your time writing quality content, developing relationships with the owners of high ranking sites in your industry or relevant industries and making sure your site is search engine friendly.

Even better, spend time getting to know your customers or site visitors and find out what terms they use to search, what they are looking for when they arrive at your site and what they think you can do to improve their experiences while browsing your site.

This information will be more valuable to you than your PageRank and the content you put on your site in response to your customers experiences will go much further in advancing the goals of your website than a meta tag or twenty hastily tossed on your pages.

### **SEO Mistake: Outsourcing Your SEO the Wrong Way**

If you've spent any time online with successful small business owners, you'll know that you shouldn't hire the first SEO company that offers to take thousands of dollars and guarantee you a #1 Google ranking for Wonderful Wubber Widgets.

As a savvy business owner, you've taken the time to research each SEO company you've considered, including reading their reviews on industry websites and comparing notes with your colleagues. At least, that's what you should do.

Making wise SEO decisions goes beyond just finding the right company. While making the right hiring choice is crucial, your leadership and presence during the project is even more important.

## **Getting Started On the Right Foot**

Before you ever hire an SEO company, you first need to educate yourself. Read the Google webmaster guidelines. Find out what Yahoo, Ask and Bing expect from website owners in terms of best practices.

Ultimately, the responsibility for making sure your website follows the rules lands on your shoulders. If your site gets banned from a search engine, it is you who will suffer the consequences, not the black hat SEO company that disappears into the night. Here are some tips to ensure that you choose the right company:

1. Check the search engines for reviews of the company you're considering hiring.
2. Ask the company representative for a list of happy customers that you can contact.
3. Discuss the tactics the company plans to use to promote your website. These tactics are NOT secrets; they are part of your website's marketing plan and should be discussed, much like you'd discuss construction methods and building materials if you were building a house.
4. Ask for referrals from your colleagues who have demonstrated SEO success.
5. Review the company's portfolio of sites they are managing, looking for signs of improper tactics. For example, if a site has a bunch of keywords listed at the bottom, stay away from whoever is optimizing it. Also, if a site doesn't appear on the first page of any search engines for any relevant keyword phrases, stay away from its SEO company.

## **Staying On Track**

Now that you've hired the right SEO company, does that mean you can head off to the Bahamas and kick back for a few months. No! (Not that you'd really try that...)

As with any vendor or employee, your SEO company will need your leadership. You know your business and your market the best (at least you should), so your guidance will be invaluable. Not only will you need to make sure that the company doesn't slip in any high-risk tactics, you'll need to be able to keep even the best company apprised of your business goals. Here are some tips to help you keep in touch with your SEO company:

1. Meet regularly – even once or twice a week – to discuss goals and tactics.
2. Request regular written reports from the company, explaining exactly what they have done and the impact it has had.
3. Keep track of your own statistics through Google Analytics or other stats.
4. If HTML and SEO are all Greek to you, have another expert check progress periodically, just to make sure everything is on track.
5. If you notice anything amiss, find out what is going on immediately.

Outsourcing SEO is a wonderful way for busy or technologically challenged business owners to remain competitive during tough economic times. But that doesn't mean you can sit back on your laurels while someone else handles the project. Educate yourself and stay involved.

## **SEO Mistake: Which Hat Are You Going To Wear?**

Flirting with the dark side can be fun and enticing, especially after reading those long sales letters that promise millions of dollars in just a few hours. It doesn't help that some SEO "experts" and a few unscrupulous design firms play into your need for results right now. They are convincing you that unethical or against-the-rules tactics will get you what you want.

Of course, there lies the problem.

Do you want to build a business that might make a lot of money now, but is dead this time next year? Or do you want to build a business model that continues to thrive and grow for the next five or ten years – even though it may seem like slow going in the beginning?

I hope you said that you want to build a long term business model that will be sustainable and continue growth over the long term. Otherwise, you'll have spent a lot of time working for not a lot of return.

That said how does your business model affect the type of SEO you choose?

**First, let's talk about the definition of white and black hat SEO.**

Black hat search engine optimization encompasses those techniques that attempt to acquire higher search engine rankings in an unethical manner. These techniques can be categorized as:

- Breaking rules and regulations defined by the search engines
- Create a negative user experience as a result of the tactics themselves
- Unethical presents one set of content to the search engines and another to the user

White hat SEO includes techniques that are sanctioned by the search engines, create positive user experiences on the website (or at least don't negatively impact users) and present the same content to users as it does to the search engines.

**Examples of black hat SEO include:**

**Keyword stuffing** – This is where keywords are “stuffed” into your meta tags, image tags and the content of your pages. Even just a paragraph of text on your site with a list

of keywords (like the lists of states or cities at the bottom of some websites) is considered keyword stuffing.

**Doorway pages** – These pages are optimized to specific keyword phrases and programmed so they are only seen by certain search engines. The trick is that the search engine will see the doorway page, ranking it highly for a specific keyword phrase. Then, when the visitor clicks the link to the page on the search engine results page (SERP), he is immediately redirected to the real website. This site may have nothing to do with the search term the visitor entered.

**Invisible text** – This is similar to keyword stuffing, only the paragraphs of useless keywords are “hidden” in white text on a white background. Or black text on a black background. You get the picture. Again, this is another attempt to fool the search engines into ranking a page highly for search terms it does not merit.

If these techniques are so bad, you may wonder, why do you see them all over the place? Why are they such a problem? Black hat SEO is so tempting and so prevalent because it does work – at least in the short term.

Website owners see the results they receive and naturally, they want more. So what faster way to get what you want, right? Of course, that works until the site is banned from the search engines. Many career black hat specialists will even setup hundreds of sites, fully expecting that they will all get banned soon. Then he or she simply sets up hundreds more when that happens.

Now, if you're trying to build a legitimate business that relies on positive customer experiences, repeat business, brand-building and long-term viability - black hat SEO should be avoided at all costs.

Black hat SEO “experts” view your site’s rankings as a game. For a business owner supporting a family, attracting real customers and earning a real income, SEO is not a game. It’s a vitally important tool to growing a business and connecting with potential customers.

## **SEO Mistake: Forgetting Your Customers Are #1**

With all the talk of search engine optimization, techniques for increasing your business income and better ways to outsource, it’s easy to forget what’s most important: Your customers. If you choose to forget about your customers, about their experience on your site, and no amount of SEO will help your business.

So, how do you know if you’ve forgotten about your customers? Consider these symptoms:

1. You have lots of traffic, but no sales. Your stats show people searching your keyword phrases and arriving at your site, but visitors rarely click past the home page and sales are weak at best.
2. Customers arrive at your site from the search engines, click around and then leave. When you talk to people about your site, they express confusion about how it’s setup. Hey, you may even be confused about where to find products or information on your site!
3. When you talk to customers about your site, they are often frustrated with your website. Some may not be able to find the site. Others can’t find what they’re looking for on the site. They express dissatisfaction with the navigation, content, checkout process, etc.

If your website suffers from even one of these problems, it’s time to put down the SEO tools and look at the usability of your website.

You've often heard people say, "If you build it, they will come." Now, often, this isn't true, because there is a lot more to building a business than setting up shop on a street corner, or on a website.

That said, you have to actually build it before you start promoting it. Once you've built it, then you can work towards getting your customers to come to it. Some of the things your customers will need in order for your SEO efforts to be successful include:

- Proper site structure
- Logical navigation
- Descriptive link text

Proper site structure means that you've built your site in a way that your customers and the search engines can effectively navigate through it. A properly built site can be read by customers as well as the search engines. Things to avoid include building the site in Flash, creating pages as one big graphic and hiding your content in frames or iframes.

Logical navigation includes structuring your site in a way that makes sense to someone who is trying to find information or products. This includes putting a static main navigation area on each page. If you have a large site, you may even want to put relevant sub-navigation in each section of your site. Make your site easy for customers to navigate and the search engines will follow right along.

Description text links are those that use keyword phrases relevant to the link they are pointing to. Don't just link to a site by saying "click here" with those words being the links. Use a phrase that actually describes what the visitor will find when he clicks.

In general, when you are building your site, keep your customers number one. The search engines will follow.

## **SEO Mistake: Forgetting It's All About Content**

Follow only your SEO expert's advice, and you'll spend all your time researching keyword phrases and looking for possible backlinks. Follow your web designer and you'll be immersed in building the right image for your site. Ignore everyone but your programmer and your site's code will be a thing of beauty. But no one will ever see it.

While each of these experts have a point -- after all, your site must be optimized for search engines, have a professional image and be coded properly -- they're all missing one key element in the equation: Content.

### **Why is content so important?**

To answer that question, you'll need a little perspective.

The Internet started in the late 1950s by the U.S. government as a small network to decentralize information, thereby protecting the information and communications during a possible nuclear attack.

As the Internet grew, it became a way for scientists to share information .

What do these two groups have in common? Information!

Information, of course, is content. Without anything to send from one computer to another, there would have been no reason to start the Internet. And today, the main reason people get online is to find or exchange information, otherwise known as content. Think about it. The three main reasons people get online are:

1. To find information
2. To find a product or service
3. To find other people with similar interests

What this means for you is this: *If you want people to find your website, you need to be providing them with content that falls into one or more of the above categories.*

For example, if you're building an informational website for people interested in tropical fish, you'll need to include lots of information on how to setup aquariums, how to maintain proper water conditions, how to feed fish, etc.

Or, if you're building an ecommerce site for the same people, you'll need to include at least one product and lots of information about it – how to use the product, answers to questions about the product, customer feedback on the product, etc.

In addition, if you want to build a community website for people interested in tropical fish, you'll need to set up a way for site visitors to exchange content that includes general information, product reviews, stories, etc.

What does all this mean for the busy website owner?

It explains why some of the ugliest sites on the Internet have tons of traffic. It explains why some websites that cannot be found on a search engine have tons of traffic and it explains why some sites that don't always work properly have lots of fans.

It's all about content. You can be the most comprehensive source of information in your niche. Or you can have the most products, or the best product. Or you can provide the largest active community in your industry.

Provide the content your customers or site visitors are looking for and search engine optimization will be the easy part. It will almost take care of itself.

## **SEO Mistake: Losing Sight of Your Goals as You Develop Your Battle Plan**

As you consider your SEO options, you may wonder which techniques are the best to use for your website. Is it better to focus your efforts on optimizing your website itself or on getting back links from other sites? Is it better to focus on keyword density or customer needs?

None of this matters if you don't know what your goals are. You know the old adage: You aren't going to be able to get where you're going if you don't know where you're going. You wouldn't start out on a road trip, without knowing where you're going. (Well, some college students might, but we're assuming you're trying to run a business, not escape from exams.)

So, the first thing you need to do is determine exactly what your goal is:

- Is your goal to get as many visitors to your site as possible, even if they don't stick around?
- Is your goal to attract visitors who want the information, product or service you provide?

Not knowing the answer to that question can lead you down many dead ends. Choosing the wrong answer can lead you to lots of work with relatively little return. Once you know the right answer for a long-term, sustainable business, you can then start creating your battle plan. Like a military commander doesn't wake up one morning and decide to go into battle, you'll need to put on the brakes and evaluate the situation.

A military commander will determine what his goals are, will evaluate his resources, research the enemy, observe the lay of the land and select a target. Only after he has completed all the necessary research and planning will he go into battle. The military commander will send his troops in to capture a hill, rescue a hostage or force an enemy to retreat, but only after careful planning.

As a website owner, you determine what your business goals are, evaluate your resources, research your market and competition, observe the lay of the search engine land and select your keyword phrases. As you implement your SEO strategy, you'll know immediately if a specific technique fits into your plan.

For example, you'll know that your customers don't want to arrive at a page that is full of hidden keyword phrases. You'll know that your site visitor wants to find specific information on a certain topic, specific group of products or services, or maybe other people with his interests.

Knowing your goals and the best ways to achieve them will help you avoid the minefields of black hat SEO, unethical "experts," and uninformed but well-meaning friends.

Know where you're going and how you're going to get there, of course, is only half the battle. The other half is putting your plans into action and adjusting those plans as you go. After all, your market changes, the search engines change and the Internet itself is in a constant state of flux.

Like a military commander constantly receives and evaluates information, you will need to stay on top of day-to-day changes and progress in your SEO campaign. Not knowing where you're going or how you're going to get there at any given time is one of the most costly SEO mistakes.

## **Conclusion**

As you've learned, there are a lot of mistakes that you can make, but the #1 mistake is in getting overwhelmed and doing nothing.

## Resources for SEO

**[SEO Revenge](#)**. Discover A Step-by-step, Instructional To Turn Your Business Into A Cash Cow With Totally Free Traffic And Start Making Huge Profits!

**[50 SEO Secrets For Mom Entrepreneurs Ebook](#)**. Gives Website Owners 50 Actionable Tips For Driving Visitors To Their Sites, For A Fraction Of The Cost Of Hiring A Professional. Feedback Has Been 100% + With No Returns Since Launch In Mar 09.

**[On Demand Search Engine Marketing Training Courses](#)**. Empower Your Business With The Knowledge Of How To Drive Massive Amounts Of Targeted Traffic To Your Websites With Cutting Edge And Simple To Implement Online Marketing Techniques. We Offer A Full Range Of Search Engine Marketing Training Courses.

**[Do it Yourself – SEO & PPC Manual](#)**. SEO & PPC Manual Was Created By Internet Consulting Firm (<http://www.reciprocalconsulting.com>), Experts In Online Marketing. We Created This Resource Based On Hundreds Of Questions & Issues That We Encounter Over The Years.

**[SEO Unmasked – the Ultimate SEO Guide](#)**. - Generate Extreme Traffic By Turning Your Websites Into Search Engine Machines.

**[Boost Search Engine Rankings – Fresh Website Content 24/7](#)**.

Discover An Amazing Technology That Will Give You An Unfair Advantage Over All Your Competitors And Increase Your Rankings Rapidly... Guaranteed!

**[Brand New Video Series – Hot SEO Niche!](#)** Everything You Need To Know About Search Engine Optimization Finally Revealed!

**[Pro SEO Blueprint](#)**. Search Engine Optimization Tutorial Provides Information Which Helps You To Dominate Google First Spot. All The Information Is New And Isn't Available Online.

**[Unique SEO Software Solution – SEOspiderspy.com](#)**. Allows Your Customers To Quickly 'spy' On Their Competitors To Uncover Their Prized Pages And Rankings!

**[Traffic Generation Script : webtrafficscorpion.com](#)**. Allows Your Customers To Quickly Generate SEO Optimized Web Pages For Unlimited Traffic!

**[Learn SEO Secrets](#)**. Learn About The Truth And Secrets Behind SEO 'Internet Marketing' So That All Of The Hard Work You Do - Over And Over Again. Does Not Go To Waste And Finally See The Results Of True SEO Industry Secrets And Knowledge!

**[1<sup>st</sup> Page Ranking SEO Formula](#)**. The SEO Secrets That The Search Engine Optimization Experts Wish They Had! Finally A Formula To Ensure That All Of Your Webpages Get Onto The Front Page Of Yahoo, Google & MSN. No Matter What You Are Selling, You Have To Be Found!

**[The Webmasters book of Secrets](#)**. Leading Webmaster Reveals Proven Methods For Achieving #1 Google Rankings In Only 48 Hours.

**[SEO Quick Fix System](#)**. Quickly And Easily Boost Any Site To The Top Of Google With Minimal SEO Changes In Days.

**[SEO Power Team – Power up your Search Engine Rankings!](#)** Step-by-step Guides Teach The Secrets Professional SEOs Use To Rank Sites In The Google 10 Pack, Optimize For Google 1st Page Ranking, And Get Hundreds Of Google Approved Inbound Links!

**[Sean Supplee's Take Action SEO – Insane Conversions](#)**. Ranking Newbies And Pros Alike To Get Their Sites Ranked Higher And Faster On Popular Search Engines Like Google, Yahoo, Msn And Other Niche Search Engines.

**[The Ultimate SEO Tool](#)**. Offers A Complete SEO Solution For Beginners And Experts. Building Up Your Knowledge Of The Web And Attracting New Visitors To Your Website. We Provide You With The Tools You Need To Make Your Website Gain The Place On The Web It Deserves.

**[3 Steps to Search Engine Success book – Search Engine Optimization SEO](#)**.

Learn How To Get A Top Search Engine Ranking In 3 Easy Steps. Increase Your Website Traffic With This Straightforward Guide.

**[E-Business Niche Marketing – SEM and SEO](#)**. Find Out How To Get On Top Google with Proper Search Engine Optimization.

**[Niche Demon](#)**. Set The Search Engines On Fire And Completely Dominate Your Niche!

**[SEO Mindset by Brad Callen – Get Top, Long-lasting Google Rankings](#)**. New Search Engine Optimization Course Created By The Makers Of SEO Elite. Learn How To Get Top Google, Yahoo And Msn Rankings... And Best Of All, Learn How To Keep Those Rankings From Dropping Over Time.

**[New\\* SEO Videos for Top Rankings](#)**. Brand New Online Videos For Search Engine Optimization

## **[SEO Made Easy: What you Need to Know About Search Engine](#)**

**[Optimization](#)**. Now You Can Get Your Site Listed On The First Page Of Google For All Your Top Key Words. It Is Not That Difficult. You Just Need To Know Exactly What To Do. And I Will Show You!

**[OFFline SEO Profits](#)**. Finally, Tap Into The Offline Goldmine By Performing Simple, Yet Profitable Services For Offline Businesses That Are Begging You To Do Them!

**[Traffic Market Videos- SEO Solution](#)**. Finally, Real No-Bull Facts On Search Engine Marketing In A Video Course System That Is So Simple, Straight Forward & Quick - But It Works For Newbies. Do It Right And Start Driving Traffic From The Search Engines!

## **[SEO | Insider Search Engine Optimization Secrets that Work.](#)**

When You Get Your Hands On This Search Engine Optimization Guide And Put The Seo Methods Into Action You Will Start To See Higher Search Engine Rankings For Just About Any Keyword You Choose.

**[The SEO booklets – complete SEO course](#)**. A Complete Guide To Get As Many As 20 Keywords Ranked Between Number 1 And Number 3 In Google... Or Your Money Back...

**[SiloMatic SEO software – Google based Site Builder](#)**. It Is A Fact... If You Build Your Sites For Search Engines The Right Way You Are Guaranteed To Bring In The Big Bucks Consistently Month After Month! Now You Can Build Exactly The Type Of Site Google And Other Top Search Engines Require For High Rankings!

**[SEO Guide for Ismart Create](#)**. Search Engine Optimization Guide For ISmart Create (Content Management System). Learn How To Optimize Your Site For Search Engines With ISmart Create. Make The Most Of Search Engines And Build A Strong, Durable Online Presence!