



# Are You Making This SEO Mistake?



Seeking the elusive top spot for your prospect's search query? SEOLeverage's Gert Mellak discusses the mistake that could be blocking your way.



Gert Mellak

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 858. Today, I'm putting the question to you, are you doing SEO all wrong? And to help me with this one, I've brought along [Gert Mellak](#). Welcome, Gert.

**Gert:** Hi, James, pleasure to be here.

**James:** Back again, mate. You're a regular on this show, because you're my SEO go-to guy. Just a little bit of back drop. Gert helps us with SuperFastBusiness.com. He's plugged into my team there in [Slack](#). He's been helping us monitor our site to keep track of where we're getting progress, making suggestions for us on what phrases would be good, and giving my team some inputs and feedback on the way we've done everything, from how the site loads through to what we put on it, and how we can build links, and so forth.

## Why trust is a big issue in SEO

So Gert's our guy, he's the guy for a lot of other members in the SuperFastBusiness community. He's got an entire team behind him, many of whom used to work in my SEO business back in the day, which gives me a whole lot of confidence and trust in what they're doing there. And when it comes to SEO, I think we're going to touch on this today, trust is a huge issue.

Just like any industry, there are good and not so good practitioners. But I think SEO is slightly murky in that it's very hard to see what's going on. And unlike a lot of things, when you get it wrong, it has a massive consequence. You can literally just drop out of Google, you know, gone, and it could be hard to recover from that.

Whereas with a lot of other things, you might get a warning shot. Or you might just suffer a little bit of a lack of performance. But when it goes wrong with SEO, it can go really, really wrong. I remember this when I ran an SEO business, a lot of people push it too hard, and they think that more is better, and overcooking it is a sure way to make sure that you earn the negative results that can come your way from the big Google.

And we're still talking about Google, because it's the dominant search engine. So Gert, let's talk about what most agencies do to uncover this or to be able to recognize if we're doing SEO right or wrong. Let's talk about the typical agency practice. And then we can use this as a baseline to move this conversation along.

**Gert:** I think it's definitely a good start. Obviously, we don't want to throw all agencies into the same bucket here. But we have experienced from quite a few clients that come to us and tell us or show us what they have been doing with their other agency or what kind of reporting they got, what they actually know what their agency was doing before.

Usually, this starts with a very, very bold promise or ranking promise, approach, where there's definitely, number one, page one for all your keywords or things like those. I think whenever an agency promises something, this is probably the first warning sign, you want to make sure that you understand they can't promise anything, that not even Google really knows sometimes what's going on.

**James:** So you're talking about guarantees there?

**Gert:** Absolutely, guaranteed rankings, guaranteed page one, you get this in your inbox and this comes as spam, you might ignore it. But if you find an agency that makes promises, you might give this a shot and really look into this. But you want to stay away of agencies promising too much, because there's just so many variables out there that are out of their control, even if they try their best, there are just a lot of variables out there.

**James:** I mean, I've seen information that indicates that Google make regular updates to the algorithm. So would it be true to say that if an agency, if they somehow magically, and they can't possibly know it, but if they had the playbook for Google today, how long until that's out of date?



**Gert:** Two things here, the playbook is different for every single search query. So Google layers up different levels of their algorithm for every single search query. So there is no one playbook about how Google works. There's a playbook for every search query. And this playbook then changes every day usually. So there's really so many things moving, so many moving targets here you have to look at.

And then it really comes down to the specific situation, the specific query you want to rank on. And then also micro events also impact here. So a lot of things to look at, a lot of things to understand, and really no place to trust any guarantees you're getting.

### **Behind the scenes of the audit process**

**James:** So when it comes to how they frame up a potential prospect, what are the typical approaches? I know, when I had an SEO business, one of our best methods was to have a look at a customer's website and then for us to tell them if we thought it was something we could help them with or not. And we were very, very honest about it. because the last thing I wanted was to take on a project where they obviously had just so much damage.

It'd be like being a builder and someone asked you to renovate a termite-infested shack that's about to fall over. No matter what you do to that, it's still going to fall over. And they're going to point the finger at you. So an audit process is one way I'm familiar of, maybe you do something else. But I know for a fact that you definitely do have an audit.

Would you say your audit is different to other people's audits? Or is it similar process for all agencies?

**Gert:** I can just compare with probably 10, 20, 30 audits we have seen the clients have sent over where I said, like, Let's start with an audit. And they're like, Yeah, we just got one. And I say, Let's talk it through, let's send it over and make sure that you explain what's in the audit. And we found all kinds of things.

We found plain text files with a few notes of an SEO and charging \$1,500 \$2,000 for this. We found slideshows with no specific information, just really copied together some slides of best practices, not specific to the situation. We have reassigned any competitive research on audits we get from other agencies via clients.

So what I'm really missing in many, many audits is like a personalized approach where the agency really steps in and says, Okay, look, let's set the audit aside, what are you trying to achieve? Let's see if SEO can be a part of this. And if there is a key, I guess, then let's do an audit. An audit for us is two weeks and four people involved, including me, analyzing all kinds of things from the website, making sure everybody of these four people team understands what this person is trying to achieve, what his company is trying to achieve with their SEO, and then giving essentially four documents plus a prioritized list of action steps based on effort and impact, so they really know exactly what to do first, what to do next, what can wait, just to make sure that this really works.

**James:** Okay, I know there are tools out there people can subscribe to, like agencies can subscribe to, that are just sort of bot-generated things, scraping a few bits and pieces. We're talking about something way beyond that, of course.

**Gert:** Absolutely, because the tools don't know what you want to achieve, right? So I can get my fitness app, but it's not going to know if I have more muscle issue, or I need a cardio or whatever. It doesn't know me, it doesn't know my situation. So what you want to look for is someone who takes the time to understand what you want, what you're trying to achieve, and make sure that you understand why they're going to approach it in a certain way.

## The truth about SEO and link building

**James:** Cool. I still think there's a misconception when it comes to SEO, that SEO equals link building. Is that true or false?

**Gert:** For many clients, yes. Because, yes, it is true that they come with this perception from agencies. So we have clients where I ask, have you been doing anything in SEO? And they say, Yeah, we have been getting someone to build links for us for two years now. And I think that's really it. And it is true that in the past, links were moving the needle a lot in quite a few industries. But it still matters and I would probably roll it up the other way around.

It matters what you have on the page, how you present it, does this matter correspond to your search intent? For us, link building comes when this is the missing piece of the puzzle, then we suggest, now let's look into links. But first we try to tackle everything else.

**James:** I used to explain it like a good well-structured onsite website would be like a glider that can work with very little propulsion, you know, it's very efficient, and it can do quite well. And then link building is like putting engines on it and turning it into a real plane. It boosts what's there. But if you don't have the glider, it's very hard to fly an anvil, you know, or an aeroplane with no wings. You can put engines on it. And you might be able to jump the Grand Canyon, but it's going to end in tears on the other side of it.

### **Because it takes time to see results...**

So let's talk about SEO. I think this is one thing that makes it hard, is it can take a little while until you see results. So there is a lag time between when you commission an SEO agency, or if you want to try it yourself, that's fine, until you actually get a result.

And we're not talking like running a Facebook ad and knowing today if it works. We're not talking about a direct response mail campaign where we send out the post and we wait till next week to see if it works. We're talking in some cases, months.

**Gert:** Absolutely, absolutely. This is why you really want to make sure you know why you're getting into SEO. SEO is a strategic decision. So if you want SEO to be part of what you're doing, it shouldn't be the only thing. It should be one pillar below your marketing strategy. But if you go into SEO, you know, okay, part of what we're going to do in marketing is going to be SEO.

This means we're going to dedicate resources to it. We're going to make sure that we create content, we update this content. So even if your onsite is perfect today, you might need to go back next week when Google shifts gears and maybe tweak a few things. A long article that ranks well today might not rank well next month, and you might need a shorter version of it.



So there definitely needs to be a dynamic, it needs to be a constant decision that SEO is going to be part of what you want to do. And then this can take a few months in order to start bringing in results.

## The other parts of the mix

**James:** You said it should be part of the mix and that you need to commit resources. What sort of other things are your good SEO clients doing as part of their marketing mix? And what kind of resources are you talking about? And I don't mind if you use my business as an example. And that could be either that we're similar to other businesses, or it could be that we're an outlier to other businesses.

I don't mind either way, because everyone listening to this is at least partially aware of what we do at SuperFastBusiness here, but I'm just curious. Where does it fit in the mix? And what resources do you need to get a good result from SEO?

**Gert:** Okay, your situation is, I think, very similar to other clients we have here as well, where they would have someone who can write and optimize written content, someone who takes care of the images, someone who takes care of the website stuff, internal linking, image optimization, etc. Someone who takes care about the technical side. The website must be running, must be fast. Those are the resources.

And this can't be someone who is going to not be able to dedicate time to the website when the business is busy, because they're working on other things. I would make sure that they have maybe one day a week they can focus on SEO.

**James:** It's funny you say that, like, as a part owner in a [recruitment business](#), we often get clients asking for one person who can do all of the things you just said. They want someone who can help them build their website, send out their emails, do their SEO, get links, do their social media, their bookkeeping, and answer phone calls and set appointments. And I'm just like, Oh, my God.

So you're right, we have a few people in my business. And you do need support for the various different aspects. But in our case, we're quite responsive to your reporting. You say, Listen, we're going for this phrase. This is what's missing from the page, it should be added. Here's an old thing I found on your site that if you could renovate it and improve it, you probably can rank it. It should be a little bit shorter, or longer or more updated.



We did that recently of a many-years-old article. And we had instant wins from it. Someone looking at that level, is the kind of thing I'm looking for in a partner, because that's very far from, let's just put you on a link subscription program. And I think that's what people are selling. They're selling link subscription programs. And more links aren't necessarily going to win that battle. We need to make sure what they're linking to is good. And there is work involved.

So I guess that's sort of the thing. There will be a time lag between when you start and when you see a return on investment. But once you see the wins, that's the beauty of SEO, it's like the wind beneath your wings, to continue that metaphor. I'm still getting traffic every month, and you can verify this, Gert. We still get traffic every month, people looking for things that we have solutions for, that I don't have to run an ad for, I don't have to do a specific thing for it, just is automatically happening because we're getting rewarded for putting in the effort.

**Gert:** Absolutely. And on top of that, people doing their own research, finding their own content on Google, and they know they're not clicking on an ad. They very often are easier convertible into leads or sales than if you push too hard on with disruptive marketing, or Google ads, or whatever it is that people know, Yeah, I click on it because I like it. But they notice there's an ad. There is a subconscious process there that when I do my own research, I found this site, I made my decision that then leads very often to much higher conversion rates.

## What happens with a few small changes

**James:** One of the things we've noticed too, is when we do make changes, because our site has been pruned, and [we talked about this in a previous episode](#), you told us to turn off a lot of content, which is very counterintuitive. I'm like gosh, surely, the bigger my iceberg, the more chance I've got of getting exposure. But no.

We've made our site more effective for Google, they don't mind crawling it because it's more useful. And we're not wasting their resource. But what I have found is when we put new things on there, or make updates to old things, often the results are quite fast.



**Gert:** Absolutely, you want to make sure that whatever page you hand over to Google really makes sense for them to crawl, index and rank. And this is why in our audits, for example, we have a section that's a content audit, we crawl the entire site and ask Google about every single URL, every single page we find, and say, Look, Google tell me, how often did this page come up in search? How many people clicked on it? What's the clickthrough rate, etc?

And then we very often end up with literally hundreds of URLs. I just had the call yesterday with a new client from Germany after a site audit where I said, Look, these 200 pages on your site right now are useless for SEO. Why do we have Google crawl them, process them, I don't know how often? And then we have other URLs, we actually want them to crawl. But Google doesn't have the time to do it.

Google allocates what we call a crawl budget or a processing time to a site. And they sometimes crawl URLs we don't expect them to crawl. They don't necessarily crawl the pages you have in your navigation just because you have them in your navigation. They might crawl a PDF document you have indexable and flying around.

They might crawl this every day for whatever reason they have in their algorithms. And they sometimes then on sites, we do a log analysis where we get to server log files that note down exactly which IP was accessing which site. And this enables us to take a look at Google's eyes from Google's perspective, where does Google spend their time?

And if I see my kids spending too much time on the tablet or watching videos, I might grab them and we go to the park. In the same way, I grab Google and say, Look, you're spending too much time in this section. This isn't even relevant for SEO, this was just in social media posts. I'm going to noindex this, I'm going to block access to this. So you can focus your time where I want you to focus it on.

**James:** And when you do that for us, we found things like tag pages or category pages where even if someone got there, which they didn't very often, but if they did, it wasn't going to do anything, it wasn't going to convert someone, because it was just a bunch of tags or categories that didn't really mean anything, it wasn't valuable.

And there were some pages on my site that had, like, zero or one or three visits. It'd be like, if you have a YouTube channel, and some of your videos get absolutely no views, or on an Instagram page, where you go back through your feed and some images just had no reaction, nothing, you might be better to just delete and prune them and lift the quality of it. Think of it like a juice concentrate mixed with water. You know, take out some water and make the juice more tasty and stronger, and a better result.

## **Knowing what your aim really is**

So let's just talk about this idea of, what should the goal be? We've talked about some tactics, the tactics of fixing the unpaid site, the tactics of selecting a specific phrase, the tactics of building links to the site, the tactics of pruning the site, making it more readable, etc. How do we know what the goal should be?

I know what it is for me. I want to rank for phrases that result in a sale. And to do that, the phrases we rank for should be relevant. And when people get there, they should have a logical next step that can result in them opting into my email database, which I'm very keen on, or buying something, because that's what happens after someone comes on the email database if they're a good fit for me.

What I don't want is to rank for something irrelevant. I don't want to rank for fidget spinners. I remember a funny scenario, I had a guy who was half funny on my podcast many episodes back, and we named the episode a very funny name. And we were ranking for that phrase. I'm not even going to say what the phrase is because I don't want to get blacklisted by the podcasting platform. And I don't want to rank for it. So I don't want it to show up in the show notes or anything.

But it was a phrase that we didn't want to rank for, that had irrelevant traffic and could even get you blacklisted these days. So I think we may have even edited the post. But that bad traffic is just a vanity metric, right? You get all these visits and uniques and hits or whatever. That probably only works if you're selling ads based on your site, and you need to inflate the numbers to make your site look like someone should pay more to be there.

**Gert:** Yeah, this is a really good point. What I try to have my clients understand is that people coming to a page that ranks really well might click somewhere else. Google wants them to have a good experience on your website. So if there are a lot of what we call, for example, thin content pages, think of all the ecommerce sites where you have a result, like you click on the filter price, filter brain, filter whatever it is, and you have like a result where there's one product showing up. And this is everything they have.

This is a really poor search result and a poor user experience. So what we try to work with our clients on is to make sure that wherever I click on this website, I'm going to have a good experience, for a start. The second thing is that you definitely want to watch out for the quality of traffic. We do this mostly with conversions.

So we make sure that the content that ranks also gets conversions. We have clients to work a little bit with conversion optimization. We're not experts there, but we know a thing or two about it, had them get actually conversions out of their articles. And then there might be articles that never convert. And then you think about it with a client or talk about it with the client and select, is this really part of your target audience? They say, No.

And then we say, yeah, let's noindex this, let's make sure that Google doesn't even rank this. Because it brings in the wrong audience, it lowers your conversion rate, it does essentially associate you with a field you don't even want to be associated with. So I think a conscious decision of what content is for Google, what content was just for social media to be shared, what content is there because we interviewed something. Not every interview on the podcast needs to be indexable, because not every interview partner might be the perfect fit for your general audience. You happen to have an interview with someone or happened to have a discussion on your podcast with someone who might be remotely related, but might not be necessarily something you want Google to connect your brand with.

You can noindex this, not everything on your website needs to be given to Google. And this also goes back to the tag pages. A tag page or a category page very often is not a good search result. Imagine, you as a user search for something, you come to a page and you see a list of articles. And now you need to decide which one of these articles might be answering your search query.

It's not a good experience. And this is why those pages rank so badly, right? It's much better to have an article introducing a topic and then linking to individual articles, than having a category page listing 28 different articles and having declined to choose from them.

**James:** This is a case where cannibalizing yourself can happen, where you have too many things that are very similar, which definitely happens on my own site. So when we do the podcast preparation these days, we actually list the intentional key phrase that we're looking for. And we compare it to what we already have, and try not to cross over too much.

And you pull us up when we do it. If it's too close, you say, Hey, I think this page and that page are very similar. So you want to pick which one you want Google to index.

### **This SEO tactic is a mouthful**

You talked about doing some cannocal, cannocali - this will definitely end up in the preview of the episode, canonicalization. Did I get it?

**Gert:** Right.

**James:** What does that mean?

**Gert:** This means that you tell Google which URL you actually want to rank. Google collects signals about all URLs, okay? And Google sometimes makes on their end the decision of which URL is going to be a one. So if you think about it from Google's perspective, if you have 20 articles about SEO on a website, how would you rank a certain article for a search phrase? Google needs to pick one based on however they make up their mind.

And we have tactics to help them make up their mind in a way we want. One of them is canonicalization. So if I have, like, a masterpiece on SEO, and then I have another article where I invite James Schramko to my podcast, [SEOLeverage](#), by the way, and we talk about the future of SEO, for example, I want Google to know that this is not the one I want to rank.

I'm going to put in a canonical and reference the actual URL that's the masterpiece about SEO on my website. So we can make sure that Google gets an additional hint that canonicalization is not an obligation for Google to follow. But it's like a guideline. And Google usually tends to listen to those things.

## The timeline to expect when you work with Gert

**James:** Nice. Okay, so let's say we've got a few goals set, we know what we're trying to do, we're getting some help with it. Even listening to this episode, I'm thinking, oh, gosh, we should go through our site and see what's relevant and tidy it up a bit. And then I thought, Oh, Gert will tell us to do that, and my team will do it. So I'm very lucky about that.

So there's a difference between trying to do it yourself, or getting help. And I know you're going to tailor a plan with someone if they want to do it. You mentioned [SEOLeverage.com](#). And that's great. What does it look like once you get started? Just give us a little sort of timeline of expectations.

**Gert:** Okay, first of all, usually, we start with an audit because we know that our audit, I would say 99 percent of the time, goes in much more depth than any audit clients bring us, but we're happy to take a look and see if there are matches, if we can do only part of our audit or whatever, if this is really taken care of recently. But usually a product starts with an audit.

An audit takes a couple of weeks, roughly 10 days usually, until this is done, where we do keyword research, competitive research, analyze the website, analyze the backlinks, get an idea what is happening, what is working, what is not working, how competitors get the traffic, all these kinds of things.



We have the audit, we come up with a list of action steps. The action steps, I remember in the past, we used to do only priorities, but then we split this up based on impact and effort. Because once you know that something has high impact, low effort, it's a low-hanging fruit, and you want to do this first.

So we have really refined our methodology there as well and come up with an action plan, not just the list, but really priorities where I say, This is where you should start, this is what you should do next, this is what you should do next. This involves, like, a complete theme change. Let's put this at the back of the list because this involves some heavy lifting, but we have to audit them.



Some clients then take this audit, have their own team, their own SEO maybe on the team, and work on those things. Many clients want some ongoing guidance with this. And this is where then our framework comes in.

**James:** Yeah, you've mentioned this on a few other episodes, [the ERICA framework](#), and you've got a [book](#) by the same name. So we won't go too deep on that. But just rest assured, Gert's got the framework. We can link to that episode as well from the show notes of this episode. This episode is 858 on SuperFastBusiness.com. I'm talking with [Gert Mellak](#) from [SEOLeverage.com](#). And we will link to all the resources mentioned, and we will fully transcribe this episode, which you can get from the website as a download.

## What's changed SEO-wise on SFB

And interestingly, and it's quite relevant here, if you go to the page on SuperFastBusiness.com for Episode 858, what you'll find these days is different than what you'd have found a few years ago. We used to publish the entire transcript. But Gert said, don't do that. You might be putting far too many words. It may be watering down and diluting the relevance of it.

What you find now is a summary of this episode. You'll see some concise notes, which a fantastic member of my team collates and puts together and makes it a quick digest of what's in the podcast, including a little timeline as well. So you get the timeline, which we've always done. Now you get a little digest. And that digest is keyword-driven. And it's conversion-driven.

It's supposed to entice you to listen to the podcast so you can get the most value from it. And there are prompts to download the transcript or any kind of extra guide, or cheat sheet or extra resource that we often do on an episode to collect an email address so that we can stay in touch and send out future podcast episodes.

Most of the podcasts on this show have a call to action. So what I'm doing is using the podcast content as a way to build the relationship and the connection with my audience. But we can then turn that into a really nice little SEO piece. So twice a week, we're adding SEO content to our website. That's our content generation methodology. And Gert keeps an eye on us and makes sure that it's working well.

But what I have had, and this is really important, Gert, I've had a lot of people get in touch with me saying, I really love the new style of the post, the digest. I've had many people comment. So I suspect it's good for customers. And often that can also be good for Google. Is that a fair sort of comparison?

**Gert:** Absolutely, because I think what we need to understand is that podcast episodes themselves, they have their platforms. And this is where the audio is really the important part of it. You obviously have your keywords and your descriptions there as well. But it's really all about the audio. But when you want to rank your podcast in search, you need to think about how many out of 10 people performing a search on Google, how many are going to be in the moment, in the place, prepared and even happy to find a 40-minute podcast episode solving their problem?

Most of us are looking for a specific answer. Most of us want to skim an article, find our answer, find our reference, find our recommendation, find out what James Schramko talked about, subject lines and email marketing. And then I'm happy. I don't want to have to listen to an entire episode. I don't want to have to read through a transcription, which is helpful, sometimes, I read transcriptions at times, but it should be my choice if I want to read the full transcription or if I just want to really consume, like, the gist of this episode in a written form.

**James:** Yeah, and of course, we're linking between the episodes where you've been on. We've actually got a [series](#), and you suggested that. Put together a cluster of relevant posts from the same expert. Because of the way that I do this podcast, I have often, probably 60 or 70 percent of the time, I'm just guessing, have the same people back.

So I've got my rotation of [Gert](#), [Charley](#), [John](#), [Will](#), and [Ilana](#), and so forth, and they keep coming back. And we go deeper and deeper and deeper, and we end up with a little miniseries. So it's like I've got several podcasts in one. They're all covering an online business theme, and then they go into little silos of each different topic. And we interlink them when we mention it, with the anchors, and so forth. And over time, we're building up this sort of strong armory of what Google wants to see, to have evidence that there's some authoritative content here.

## Helping things along with an app

So I know you use an app that we can access, and we can track our performance according to the goals set. So there's quite a lot of transparency there. And I know, because I know you and we talked behind the scenes, how much went into developing that app, how much R&D you've done, and the iterations and so forth. So well done on that, by the way.

And now you can track the KPIs. But I'm at the stage now where we get really encouraged by the results. We do things, we get results. That's good. Would you say the app has helped that process?

**Gert:** I think the app was helpful. Definitely for you, for other clients, just to know why things do matter, right? So I think our ERICA framework started our approach with the application or methodology, which is quite different from what SEO agencies do that minimize content, minimize touchpoints with clients, where we go in a very opposite direction.

I think the whole point was really to make clients understand why things are important. I don't need anybody to know the details about SEO. I'm geeky enough to figure those out. But I know I need every client to understand why things are important. And our focus is really long-term. I think my average client has been with me for four or five years. Whereas most SEO agencies are probably happy to keep someone around for six months before they leave and find out they're not getting results and they don't know why.

## Working with a long-term focus

So our focus is really long-term. My longest client has been with me for 16 years, which obviously brings our average up. But definitely, they're only with me because they know what I'm doing makes sense in their context. And what my team is working on makes sense for their goals. So when the client comes in, we spend quite some time with them, figuring out, what is their goal, and how can SEO achieve this goal? And what's the overall strategy that's going to bring them closer to this goal?

And then every couple of weeks, with the application behind it, with the framework guiding what we actually do, the methodology, what we actually apply here, we know this is going to bring us one step closer to this goal. The goal is a moving target as it is with Google. But we're getting closer, we're getting short-term results, we're getting to see that Google ranks us for more keywords, ranks a keyword that used to rank on page eight, now on page two. So there are all those things moving. Even if the ultimate goal is a long-term goal, there are things moving, and the application keeps track of this.

There is a KPI, it's called KPI overview, you click there, you see, what is the traffic, what are the conversions, which articles bring in the extra conversions, where can we focus on those, which articles don't drive conversion, so we need to focus on them. So essentially, we build this in a way that it gives transparency about what's happening.

So we can then tell the client, Look, this is what's happening. This is why it's important that you now focus on this article, because it doesn't drive conversions, or this is an article that drives a lot of conversions. This is simple, this is why it's important that you create 10 more articles around the same topic from different angles to cover more ground.

So we try to do some hand-holding here and make sure that with the application, we have the transparency, we have everything in one place, we don't have any different versions of spreadsheets lying around or whatever. The clients log in, their team logs in, they can assign different things that need to be assigned to the team member where we might know who the tech person is.

So we give them the tech things directly. And they just click on action items and see what's being done, what's in progress, can ask questions, etc. So this is definitely a very, very big part of our entire methodology. Both our clients, their teams, but also our team are in there every single day and make sure that SEO moves forward.

## **A common SEO mistake and what to do about it**

**James:** Awesome. So in summary, for this episode 858, you told me that people are making an SEO mistake. Do you want to tell us, what is that mistake? And what have we covered here that would be your action steps?



**Gert:** The mistake in my point of view is not seeing, like, an overall purpose of SEO in the strategy, but only making sure that you tick the boxes of your SEO plugin or that you push content out every single week and think this is enough for SEO. SEO is very complex, SEO needs resources. SEO needs to be done with an overall strategy in mind. It's not something you set and forget. And it needs to be part of what you do in the long run.

**James:** So what are we going to do now, in terms of your action plan? What do you suggest?

**Gert:** If someone listens to this episode, I would think about what role SEO has in your business. Does it have dedicated resources where you know that SEO is being worked on? First of all, obviously, define if SEO should be part of the plan. If it should, it needs resources. Otherwise, it's not going to happen.

And then those resources need guidance, need a strategic approach. And this is where we very often help clients and their teams to make sure that the strategic approach happens, and that they focus on the right things. There's a lot that could be good for SEO, but only probably two or three things this week that are actually going to move the needle for you.

**James:** Perfect. All right. Well, I think that's a wrap, Gert. You're always generous with your time. So in this episode, we've really talked about the difference between ticking off little tactical things. SEO is not link building. SEO isn't falling for the bait of an instant, guaranteed quick win. You do need resource, you do need a long-term approach.

You do need a partner who you can trust. Ideally, they have a methodology or framework they're working on, or with. They have a team. They've been around for a while. They've got an app or some easy interface. Sounds a lot like you, Gert. [SEOLeverage.com](https://SEOLeverage.com). If you liked this episode, or you want to follow up with Gert, go for it. That's why I'm bringing this out as a podcast.

I feel SEO is a strong piece of my puzzle when it comes to driving traffic. I'm borrowing one of [Ilana's](#) phrases there, she's got the [traffic puzzle](#). SEO has been there for the whole time with me. And again, thanks to your help, Gert, we're continuing to generate great traffic. It's just fantastic to have that. Aside from doing what we do with the podcast or with our books and paid stuff, this organic stuff has been the bread and butter of our business.

Still, I think probably a third of our traffic or somewhere around that is still, or more, could be coming from the search results. And when you add that to other things like social media videos, you add that to some Facebook campaigns, or YouTube campaigns, or Google campaigns, or Amazon campaigns, or you have a book out there, or referral partners, or you speak from stage, or do guesting, all the other traffic things, add the SEO in the mix there.

Be consistent with it. Do it for the long haul. Go with a trusted partner. I think you'll get a return on investment. In one year from now, you could have a really good boost to it. If you already run ads or you already rank for things, then it's just going to happen faster, and you'll have more clear data to work with. So thank you so much, Gert.

**Gert:** Thank you very much for inviting me. Always a pleasure.



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