



The Ongoing Process That Is SEO

Gert Mellak owns an SEO business, SEOLeverage.com. And one thing he can tell you about SEO is, it's not a matter of set-and-forget. What works today may be out-dated a year - or even a week - later.

Why the need for continuing SEO? A number of reasons:

Google's standards change - What once was good SEO for the search engine giant no longer passes muster, and it continues to change and update with time.

Changing user expectations - Five or six years ago, you could rank with a text-only post that had good content. Today, users look for more - attractive design, images, audio or video media - for a post to merit their attention.

Changing technology - This can partly account for number 2 in that the growing ease with which content can be published and enhanced makes users expect more of search results. People used to fast site speeds, for instance, are less tolerant of slow-loading pages. Too, the greater variety of devices means sites must adapt to a greater array of display dimensions, again catering to user expectations.

It can be mentioned that numbers 2 and 3 largely influence number one, because Google's aim has always been the happiness of the user.

Because of changing SEO trends, you may have a lot of content on your site, some of which used to do well, and Google may need your help to determine what material you'd like indexed and shown in results. What are some key factors to consider?

Is it rankable? - Ask: is the material something people will actually be searching for, that they would want to show up in search results?

Does it cater to a variety of users? - People absorb information differently. Some like to read, some to listen, some to watch videos. The more preferences you can provide for, the better.

Is it optimized? - In case where you have pieces of content that are similar, you'll naturally want the better optimized material to show up in search, thus giving you better ranking.

A Framework for ongoing SEO

Frameworks help to maintain quality and consistency. With this in mind, Gert Mellak has devised an acronym for his team's process.

ERICA stands for the steps they walk their clients through every couple of weeks in their consulting. It is broken down as follows:

E - Evolution - This is where they ensure the client knows their current SEO status, especially their conversions. Results are broken down per channel, and the progress tracked.

They observe, as well, how the site's competitors are doing. This doesn't just include



obvious competitors, but also those with different business models that show up in the top 10 Google results.

R - Research - SEO involves a lot of research. SEO Leverage's R&D department is always running at least five tests a week. They test SEO theories, ideas, info from Google and where it applies.

They redo tests over time, because findings might be different.

They research competition and user experience on the site, deciphering what action steps can be taken to improve results.

Conversions and calls to action are another topic of research, as is functionality on mobile.

I - Interlinking - Internal and external linking are still important in SEO.

Gert recommends a system of content silos or clusters, wherein a main article is internally linked to supporting articles. This is a structure Google understands and will happily send users to, where they are more likely to find what they need.

External links are proof of authority, something Google likes to see. SEO Leverage's source of high-quality, relevant links is largely a contact base of site owners that they add to with every new client.

C - Content - Content is the reason your site gets visits in the first place. These days, it includes not just the material but the accompanying design and media. In addition to having valuable material, an attractive layout and video or audio add-ons have an impact on whether users will choose to stay on your site and consume your content.

As regards the actual content, it counts not just to write what people are interested in, but what they really search for, and to write in a way that Google wants to rank. For insight on this, very often Google itself is the best tool. Search the term you'd like to write about, see what ranks, and ask: Can I produce a similar piece of content? Can I emulate the kind of links these pages get? Is this only a list of sites that have been around for 20 years?

A - Action steps - Twice a month, Gert's clients get a call, ending with a list of action steps. These are the things the team will tackle for the next 2 weeks, as well as the high-impact tasks the client can work on (high-impact meaning those that have the most relevance and potential benefit for the client's business).

SEO is an ever-changing landscape, one you cannot expect to pin down for long. However, if you can identify changes when they happen, and if you have the service of a qualified team like SEO Leverage's, you can avoid pitfalls and greatly improve your ranking.

Need help with your SEO? Get hold of Gert at SEOLeverage.com

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