How to educate clients about SEO and earn their trust

I’ve found that most of my clients know a little something about SEO, but they’re not exactly sure how to make it work for them as well as it should. Teaching SEO to clients should be part of the client management services that you provide during SEO sales presentations.

SEO is a broad topic that covers a lot of ground. The challenge lies in how to explain SEO is communicating all the ways that you can enhance SEO in terms that clients can understand so that it doesn’t seem so much like a foreign language.

I’ve found that my clients have a better understanding of the value of SEO when I can help them understand its significance in today’s digital marketing plans and speak to them about it without being too technical with the terms.

I’ve found some effective ways on how to pitch SEO services and with their help, I develop a custom SEO plan that’s designed for success. The points shared below will help you convey a lot of crucial information to your clients.

Whitepaper

Why SEO is necessary for your business

When teaching new clients about SEO and demonstrating how to show SEO value, I keep three things in mind:

1. Explain SEO using a language they're familiar with
2. Demonstrate that SEO is still relevant today
3. Explain the value of SEO in the simplest way possible

In getting acquainted with my clients, I like to start by explaining that SEO is a vital tool for success as a jumping-off point to a more pointed conversation about how to show SEO value.

Clients who don't hurry to embrace SEO unless they fully understand one simple thing – online is the new offline. Virtually every business is now present online and people are used to doing everything online, too.

Why do SEO? Customers should focus on SEO because people go to Google to explore almost everything, from medical symptoms to new restaurants. This re-emphasizes that online is the new offline. Organic search is the primary source of the traffic to most websites, and your online visibility depends heavily on how high you rank on Google. If you decide that you want to go out for dinner to a nice Italian restaurant this evening, you'll browse online and find restaurants in your area in Google Maps, take a look at the pictures, the menu, and read the reviews.

Important points to refer when explaining why SEO is important

1. Organic search is the primary source of web traffic
2. SEO builds trust in your products and company
3. SEO improves the buying cycle because it puts your

business where the audience is

While most clients know what SEO means, they're not usually as familiar with related terms. I try to gauge their knowledge base of SEO as quickly as I can, so I can help fill in their gaps in knowledge.

Why educate clients about SEO?

Providing SEO services isn't just about getting results, although, that's a big part of it. Our society is more tech-savvy than they used to be. It's important to give our clients credit for what they know and educate them on the "behind the scenes" factors that are at work with SEO.

SEO is a valuable tool and when we can help our clients better understand how it works, they can more easily see its value. Our credibility, and livelihoods as SEO professionals, depend on our ability to explain and demonstrate value.

I also recently had a conversation with Eugene Levin, CSO of SEMrush, who believes that it's important to educate the leadership in companies.

Here's what he said

> *"We do our best to educate both our employees and our clients. Each of our employees should understand SEO and know how to use SEMrush and all its tools. While with the clients we often meet in person to find some tailored tactics that would help them increase online visibility and drive sales. We meet with companies' SEO teams and figure out even more efficient ways to boost online rankings."*

Giving client education a deeper

thought

SEO skills are important but don’t overlook the importance of assuring your clients that you have worth as a specialist who can help them take their business from good to great. Your clients aren’t going to be satisfied with you sending them links on marketing blogs, videos, or informational emails alone. It requires time, work, and energy to educate clients, but your client management skills will eventually pay off.

As you spend more time with your clients, they will learn a little more from you each time about SEO which will bolster their trust in you as their SEO advisor and create a stronger mutual trust between you. While you are the SEO expert, don’t forget that they are the expert on their business. Their input during collaborations is a vital component of their ultimate success in SEO campaigns.

1. Clarify goals and expectations

I make sure the goals and workflow are clear, so the report ties in with monthly deliverables. These are the details that prove how hard you are working behind the scenes for your clients.

2. Share reports

During the course of planning for improving SEO results, clients will learn that much more time goes into it than they probably thought. To help them realize this, I always share reports as the ones mentioned below:

- Reporting in calls
- Emails
- Reports with custom KPIs

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3. Make SEO easy to understand for your clients

While I educate my clients as well as I can when I meet up with them, I supplement my teachings with blogs on my website that correlate to different aspects of SEO as resources if they're interested in understanding more about a particular aspect of SEO. Over time, they will come to rely on my site for the latest information in SEO, which is a great way to reuse your content. They will probably even share it with others, which will help to expand your business.

Every client is in a different place in understanding their digital marketing needs, so I try to cater my teaching to their level of understanding.

My process of educating clients involves one or more of the following steps:

- Learning how much the client knows about SEO and the internet
- Determining their learning style
- Breaking down the meaning of SEO and what it does
- Choosing an analogy that has meaning for them

4. Gauge your client's understanding levels

When having discussions with clients, I make eye-contact with them. If I start getting puzzled looks when I mention things like search engines and backlinks, it helps me pick signals whether I need to explain some of the technical terms or

whether I can offer a simple definition and move on.

5. Understand and choose an ideal learning style for your client

I know that there are three main learning styles – verbal, visual, and physical. Using one or more of these styles helps drive home certain points.

I know that some of my clients do well when we have discussions in person or on the phone. Other clients need the help of a chart, diagram, or a simple drawing. Physical learners need me to demonstrate the concept. The best way to do this is by giving them an analogy or showing them an example on the computer.

Clients that are new to technology may need to understand what SEO is, so I like to start by explaining that the acronym, search engine optimization is. I also explain what optimization means and how it helps to rank websites higher on a page and how authority gives the search engine a way to rank its importance.

6. Use analogies to make SEO relatable

Finally, an analogy is always a great teaching tool because it gives my clients a way to compare a challenging concept. In the course of the discussion, I usually grab onto a comment they made. If they mentioned they were late because they had to meet with their insurance agent – I present an example using the same context in which I can show how an insurance agent can use SEO to rank high on a web page.

His insurance agent has a website. Most likely the agent has a blog and some testimonials. The more content the agent has, the higher the site ranks. Ranking higher will mean that the agent's site takes advantage of titles, product descriptions, and summaries. It will have photos and videos and it will link

to other pages. Because the agent is looking for local business, he or she will target customers within a certain radius of the office. The agent may also have a target audience of married people who are homeowners, so it’s important for them to advertise in places that will attract that market rather than online locations that attract millennials.

Extra tip

I often spend some time on my clients’ websites before a scheduled appointment. That gives me additional opportunities to apply some of the concepts we’re discussing to the work that we can begin doing together.

Closing note

I never anticipated that teaching would be part of my job as a digital marketer. What I enjoy so much about the client management aspect of my job is that I’m continually finding out new information about SEO and it makes me eager to share it with my clients. It’s rewarding for both of us to share details that will help them to become a success.

Which of these tips would you practice to help educate clients about SEO? Feel free to share your thoughts, experiences, and tips in the comments section.

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