Seven basic tips for blog SEO

By now the advantages of blogging are undoubtedly well-established. Statistics show that:

- Businesses that blog get 67 % more leads than businesses that do not
- Marketers that prioritize blogging are 13x more likely to get a positive ROI compared to marketers that don’t
- Companies that blog get 97 % more links compared to companies that do not blog
- Websites with a blog are likely to have 434 % more indexed pages.

However, if you don’t have an SEO strategy for your blog, you are most certainly missing out. Research shows that SEO leads have a 14.6% close rate, compared to a 1.7% close rate through outbound means.

In other words, it is not enough to blog. You need to make sure your blog ranks in the search engines. The following basic tips will help you optimize your blog for search engines:

1. Employ the use of breadcrumbs

Take a look at the screenshot below – from an article on the Writers in Charge website:

You’ll notice the section underlined in red? That’s breadcrumbs.

You can also see this implemented on all Search Engine Watch articles, including this one you are reading.

Using breadcrumbs has two main advantages:

- **It helps Google and other search engines understand the structure of your blog**. Using clickable paths, it makes it easy for search engines to see how your blog is structured. It also helps your blog’s internal linking – making it almost impossible for content on your blog to be undiscoverable by search engines.
- **It improves the user experience of your blog**. It makes

it easy to navigate sections of your blog without necessarily having to go back or close the browser tab. This increases time spent on site and reduces bounce rate, and good user experience will help your SEO.

2. Write longer and topically relevant content

Any article discussing basic blog SEO tips that doesn't talk about content is incomplete. While Google has maintained a level of secrecy about factors it uses to rank websites, it has never shied away from emphasizing the importance of content. In fact, according to Google Search Quality Senior Strategist Andrey Lipattsev, content, links, and rankbrain are the three most important search ranking factors.

The main question, however, is this: what gives a blog post an advantage over others in the search engines. While Google has been very vague, SEO experts have some data based on analysis:

- Longer, in-depth content rank better. Studies have shown that content in the 1800 – 2,000+ words range tend to rank better than shorter content.
- Topically-relevant content has been found to rank better. Making a blog post focus on one topic and discussing it in-depth will yield better results than having it discuss two or more unrelated topics.

3. Make your blog posts visually appealing

Taking the extra time required to add relevant, properly-tagged images to your blog post can seem frustrating, but it will be well worth it. It's one of the easiest, most basic

things you can do to help your content rank better.

According to Backlinko's analysis of over one million articles, blog posts that contain at least one image significantly outperformed content without any images. That said, it doesn't seem to matter much whether a piece of content has one or ten images: at the very least, make sure to include an image in all of your blog posts.

4. Internal linking

Links are undoubtedly one of the most important search engine ranking factors. In fact, the impact links play on search engine rankings is so significant that Backlinko's research found that links influence the rankings of any content piece more than anything else.

However, a lot of attention is often paid to external links to the detriment of internal links. In a case study, Ninja Outreach explained that they were able to boost their search traffic by 40% simply by working on their internal linking.

Here are some tips:

- Use descriptive anchor texts when linking internally
- Moderate the number of links on your page – while internal linking is good, there's no point having too much on one page.
- Occasionally review old content pieces to ensure they link to other content pieces.

5. Improve your blog's permalink structure

Depending on the CMS you are using for your blog, you're likely to be stuck with an SEO-unfriendly permalink structure. Permalinks are the web address used to link to your content.

For example, if you own the blog: howtoteachadog.com and publish an article titled “How To Teach a Dog to Catch,” the resulting URL structure could be this:

howtoteachadog.com/?p=100

Or this:

howtoteachadog.com/how-to-teach-a-dog-to-catch

In most cases many blogs are stuck with the first version – which gives no indication of what the article is about. The second structure, on the other hand, is more *descriptive* and will be more effective from an SEO perspective.

If you use WordPress, this article will show you how to change your blog permalink structure. If you use other CMSs, they most likely have an official tutorial on how to do this.

6. Install basic SEO plugins

Plugins can give you a kind of superpower when it comes to your blog SEO. While you want to be careful with what plugins you install (in order to avoid clunking your site and making to slower), installing and using the following basic SEO plugins will give you an edge:

- **All in One SEO/Yoast SEO plugin**: this allows you to review each of your posts based on a number of factors until it is “perfect” from an SEO perspective.
- **The WP Smush.it plugin**: site speed is one of the ranking factors Google and other search engines use, and images are often a major culprit when it comes to site loading times. This plugin will compress your images and as a result boost your site speed and helping your SEO.

7. Get quality external links

This is as basic as it gets. Google admits that links are one of the top three ranking factors it uses when ranking websites. Effective blog SEO is not possible without external links.

Here are some ideas to help you get backlinks to your blog:

- **Identify relevant and authoritative publications and become guest authors for them**. These publications will let you have a bio link and sometimes an in-content link to your blog posts. If relevant, these links can positively impact your blog SEO.
- **Get relevant industry blogs and publications to feature you** – it could be in the form of an interview, a quote, or as part of an expert roundup.
- **Develop an outreach strategy aimed at getting relevant blogs to link to content on your blog**.

https://searchenginewatch.com/2018/06/28/seven-basic-tips-for-blog-seo/