THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SEO

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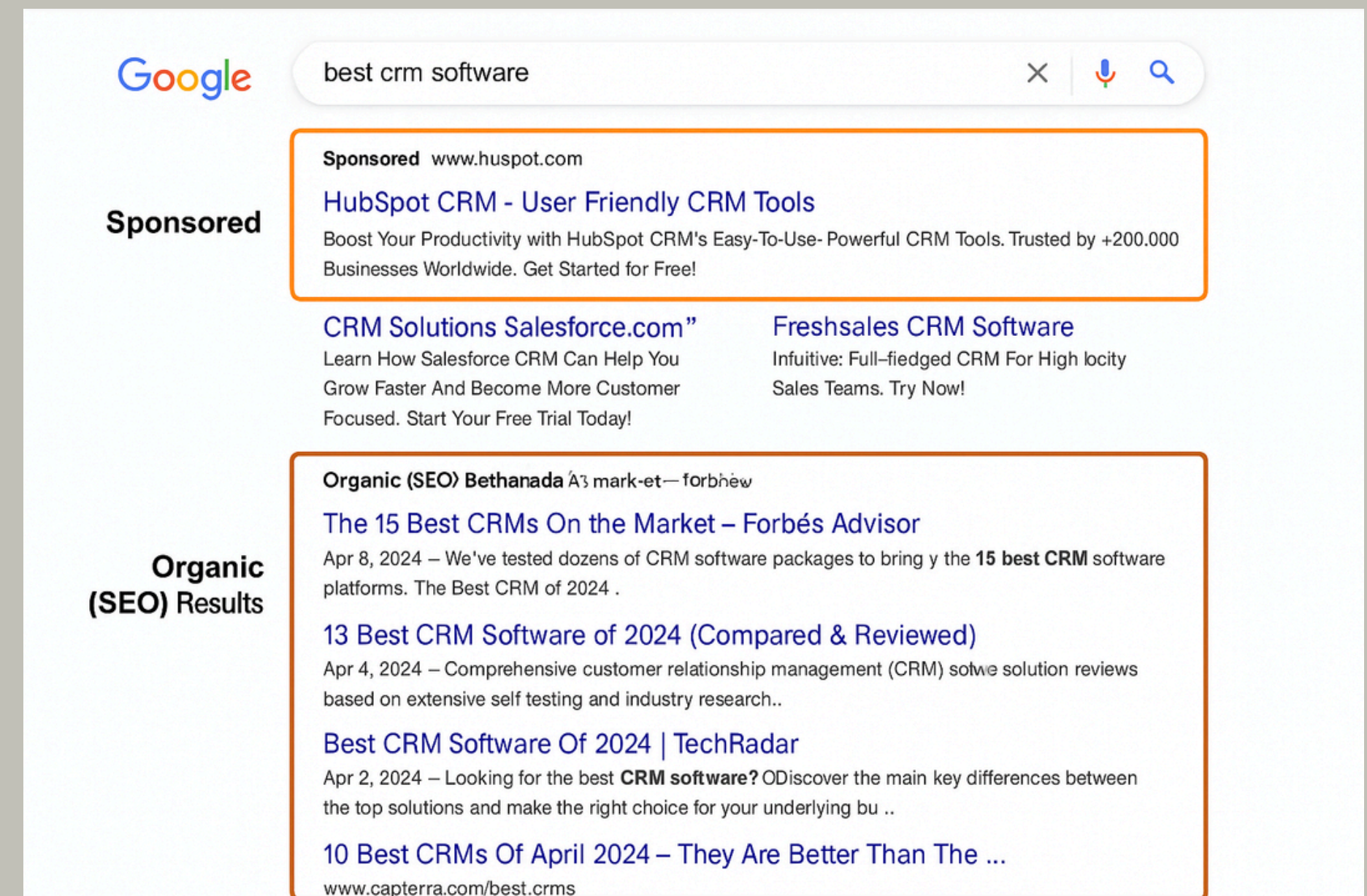
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WHAT IS SEO?

Search Engine Optimization, or "SEO" is the process of making your website easier for humans, search engines, & AI systems to understand. That means building a strong technical foundation + creating content that answers the questions that your audience is searching.

When done right, SEO drives higher click-through rates, increased conversions, and sustained search revenue.

HOW SEARCH ENGINES WORK

Search engines use a series of processes to identify, organize, and rank content across the web. These 3 steps ensure users are presented with the most relevant and valuable information in response to their searches:

1

CRAWLING

Crawling is the process by which search engines discover new or updated content on the web. Automated bots, known as crawlers or spiders, scan websites by following links and analyzing pages to gather information.

2

INDEXING

Indexing is the process where search engines organize and store the information gathered during crawling. Once a page is indexed, it becomes eligible to appear in search results.

3

RANKING

The ranking process determines the order in which search engine results are displayed. Search engines evaluate numerous factors, such as relevance, content quality, and user experience signals, to prioritize pages that best match a user's search intent.

HIGHER SEARCH ENGINE RANKINGS

As technical SEO improves, content becomes more targeted, and backlinks are acquired, clients will see their pages rank higher for important search queries.

IMPROVED USER ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE

Technical optimizations, content relevance, and faster page speeds will result in lower bounce rates, longer user sessions, and higher engagement rates.

HOW WILL SEO HELP MY BUSINESS?

INCREASED TARGETED ORGANIC TRAFFIC

Higher rankings lead to more clicks and visitors from search engines, contributing to business growth.

COST EFFECTIVE, LONG-TERM ROI

Unlike paid ads, SEO provides sustainable results over time, reducing the need for continuous investment in advertising to maintain traffic.

CORE SEO PERFORMANCE METRICS

KPI	WHAT IT SHOWS	WHY IT'S IMPORTANT	EXPECTED BENCHMARKS
ORGANIC TRAFFIC	Growth in the number of visitors coming to the website from search engines.	Increased organic traffic is a direct result of improved search rankings and visibility. It's a clear indication that SEO efforts are driving more people to the site.	*Aim for a 10-20% month-over-month increase after optimizations, depending on the industry and seasonality.*
KEYWORD RANKINGS	Improvement in the rankings for targeted keywords	Higher rankings lead to more visibility and clicks. Regularly showing clients how their keywords are moving up in the SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages) proves that optimizations are working.	*Look for at least 5-10% of targeted keywords moving up in the rankings each month, especially for competitive keywords.*
CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR)	The percentage of people who click on your website's link after seeing it in search results.	A rising CTR indicates that your meta titles and descriptions are engaging and relevant to search queries, leading to more visitors	*A 1-3% increase in CTR is a reasonable target. For high-performing pages, aim for a CTR of 3-5% or higher.*
BOUNCE RATE	The percentage of visitors who leave the site after viewing only one page.	A lower bounce rate suggests that visitors find the content useful and are engaging with multiple pages, which is a sign of effective content optimization.	*Aim for a bounce rate of 40-60% for most sites; improvements of 1-3% monthly are a positive sign.*
CONVERSION RATE	The percentage of visitors who complete a desired action, such as filling out a form, making a purchase, or contacting the business.	This ties SEO efforts directly to business outcomes. Improved conversion rates show that SEO is not only driving traffic but also attracting qualified leads that convert into customers.	*A 1-5% increase in conversion rates monthly is a solid goal, with higher rates being better depending on the type of conversions.*

CORE SEO PERFORMANCE METRICS (CONT.)

KPI	WHAT IT SHOWS	WHY IT'S IMPORTANT	EXPECTED BENCHMARKS
BACKLINK GROWTH	The number and quality of new backlinks pointing to the site.	High-quality backlinks improve domain authority and help drive rankings. Demonstrating an increase in quality backlinks proves your link-building strategy is working.	*Aim for a 10-20% increase in total backlinks month-over-month, focusing on acquiring high-quality links.*
DOMAIN AUTHORITY	The strength of a website's backlink profile.	As DA increases, it becomes easier to rank for competitive keywords, especially in the long term. This is a good indicator of the site's growing authority.	*An increase of 1-3 points per month is a reasonable target, depending on the current authority and efforts.*
PAGES INDEXED	The number of website pages indexed by search engines.	If key pages aren't being indexed, they can't rank. An increase in indexed pages demonstrates that the site structure and technical SEO optimizations are helping more pages appear in search results.	*Aim for an increase in indexed pages, ideally 5-10% more over the reporting period.*
CORE WEB VITALS	Performance metrics related to user experience, including page load time, interactivity, and visual stability.	Improvements in Core Web Vitals signal to Google that your site is user-friendly, which positively affects rankings.	*Strive for all Core Web Vitals to meet Google's thresholds (LCP < 2.5 seconds, FID < 100 ms, CLS < 0.1).*
CRAWL ERRORS & SITE HEALTH	The number of issues (e.g., 404 errors, 500 errors, redirect chains) that prevent search engines from properly crawling and indexing the site.	Fewer crawl errors mean a healthier site, leading to better search visibility. Reporting on the resolution of these errors shows technical SEO progress.	*Aim to reduce crawl errors by at least 50% month-over-month and maintain low numbers of 404 errors.*

KEY COMPONENTS OF AN SEO STRATEGY

TECHNICAL SEO

These optimizations focus on improving the structure and backend of a website to ensure search engines can efficiently crawl and index it.

CONTENT STRATEGY

These optimizations focus on creating and optimizing website content to target relevant keywords and provide value to users.

BACKLINK BUILDING

Backlink optimizations focus on acquiring high-quality links from external sites to improve domain authority and search engine rankings.

LOCAL SEO

Local SEO focuses on increasing a business's visibility in location-based searches, helping it connect with nearby customers.

TECHNICAL SEO

GOAL & EXPECTED RESULTS

GOAL: A well-optimized technical structure means search engines can easily crawl and index your website, improving rankings and visibility, specifically for high-priority pages.

EXPECTED RESULTS

IMPROVED INDEXING
Search engines can efficiently crawl and index your site, leading to better visibility for your pages.

FASTER LOAD TIMES
As page load speeds improve, users spend more time on the site, and bounce rates decrease—both of which can improve rankings.

ENHANCED MOBILE RANKINGS
A mobile-friendly and fast website results in higher rankings, especially for mobile searches.

ERROR REDUCTION
Fewer 404/500 errors and proper 301 redirects improve user experience, retain link equity, and ensure smooth navigation, contributing to better rankings.

Higher Core Web Vitals Scores
Meeting Core Web Vitals thresholds (LCP, FID, CLS) positively impacts rankings as Google increasingly emphasizes user experience.

TECHNICAL SEO

KEY OPTIMIZATIONS

These optimizations are designed to enhance site performance, improve crawlability, and resolve technical issues that may impact search rankings. Addressing these areas builds a strong foundation for search engines to index and rank the website effectively, ultimately boosting visibility and improving user experience.

CORE WEB VITALS	MOBILE OPTIMIZATION	XML SITEMAP CREATION & SUBMISSION
ROBOTS.TXT OPTIMIZATION	URL STRUCTURE	SSL/HTTPS IMPLEMENTATION
404 ERROR FIXES	301 REDIRECTS	500 ERROR FIXES
STRUCTURED DATA & SCEHMA MARKUP	CANONICAL TAGS	INTERNAL LINKING
SITE SPEED OPTIMIZATION	INDEXING MANAGEMENT	BREADCRUMB NAVIGATION

TECHNICAL SEO

CRAWL ERRORS & SITE HEALTH:

Reporting focuses on reductions in issues like 404 errors and other technical problems that can affect site crawling. A healthier site contributes to improved indexation and search visibility.

CORE WEB VITALS:

Tracking improvements in page load time, interactivity, and visual stability demonstrates how user experience optimizations can positively impact rankings.

PAGES INDEXED

Reporting includes reductions in issues such as 404 errors and other technical problems that can impact site crawling. Improved site health supports better indexation and enhanced search visibility.

HOW IS IT REPORTED?

Monthly reports will show reductions in crawl errors, better core web vitals performance, and an increase in indexed pages, proving that technical issues are being addressed and site performance is improving.

TECHNICAL SEO

CONTENT STRATEGY

GOAL & EXPECTED RESULTS

GOAL: Optimized content boosts your site's relevance for search queries, helps target more keywords, and improves user engagement, which leads to higher rankings and more organic traffic.

EXPECTED RESULTS

IMPROVED KEYWORD RANKINGS

With optimized content, expect to see gradual improvements in rankings for targeted keywords.

INCREASED ORGANIC TRAFFIC

As content ranks higher and targets more keywords, organic traffic to your site will grow.

HIGHER CTR

Well-optimized meta tags result in more clicks from search results, driving more traffic to the site.

LOWER BOUNCE RATE & LONGER SESSIONS

By providing valuable, well-structured content, users will engage more with the site, reducing bounce rates and increasing time on page.

TOPICAL AUTHORITY

Consistently publishing high-quality, relevant content builds authority on specific topics, improving overall site visibility.

CONTENT STRATEGY

KEY OPTIMIZATIONS

Optimizing on-page elements such as headers, meta descriptions, and keyword placement, combined with creating engaging and valuable content, can significantly improve a site's visibility, user engagement, and search engine rankings. These strategies help content resonate with both users and search engines, supporting sustained growth in organic traffic and conversions.

KEYWORD RESEARCH	ON-PAGE OPTIMIZATION	CONTENT LENGTH & DEPTH
UPDATING & REFRESHING CONTENT	META TITLE & DESCRIPTION OPTIMIZATION	HEADING TAG OPTIMIZATION
IMAGE OPTIMIZATION	CONTENT STRUCTURE	INTERNAL LINKING
CONTENT GAP ANALYSIS	LOCAL SEO CONTENT	BLOG OPTIMIZATION & STRATEGY

CONTENT STRATEGY

HOW IS IT REPORTED?

Reports will include metrics such as **increased organic traffic**, **improved keyword rankings**, higher click-through rates (CTR), lower bounce rates, and **stronger conversion rates**. These metrics connect SEO efforts to measurable business outcomes.

ORGANIC TRAFFIC
Growth in organic search traffic, which reflects improved rankings and visibility for the optimized content.

BOUNCE RATE
Reporting will include changes in bounce rate, which indicates whether visitors find the content engaging and navigate through the site effectively.

KEYWORD RANKINGS
Tracking the rise of targeted keywords, showing clients which key phrases are driving traffic and proving that content optimization efforts are succeeding.

CONVERSION RATE
Monthly tracking of how well optimized content is converting visitors into leads or customers.

CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR)
Monitoring the CTR for high-priority pages, showing how well meta titles and descriptions are engaging users.

BACKLINK BUILDING

GOAL & EXPECTED RESULTS

GOAL: Backlink building increases your domain authority and trustworthiness in the eyes of search engines, leading to higher rankings for competitive keywords and improved overall search visibility.

EXPECTED RESULTS

HIGHER DOMAIN AUTHRORITY

A stronger backlink profile leads to a higher domain authority, which improves your chances of ranking for competitive keywords.

BETTER RANKINGS FOR COMPETITIVE KEYWORDS

High-quality backlinks signal to Google that your site is authoritative, resulting in higher rankings, particularly for difficult-to-rank terms.

INCREASED ORGANIC TRAFFIC

As your rankings improve, more visitors will land on your site through organic search.

COMPETITIVE EDGE

By building better-quality backlinks than your competitors, you gain a significant edge in search rankings.

LONG-TERM SEO GAINS

Backlinks are a long-term investment. A strong backlink profile results in sustained improvements in search visibility over time.

BACKLINK BUILDING

KEY OPTIMIZATIONS

By acquiring high-quality, relevant backlinks from trusted sites, we strengthen your site's credibility in the eyes of search engines. These efforts enhance domain authority, improve keyword rankings, and drive referral traffic.

LINK PROFILE AUDIT	GUEST POSTING	BROKEN LINK BUILDING
COMPETITOR BACKLINK ANALYSIS	RESOURCE PAGE LINK BUILDING	OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS
SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION	CONTENT-BASED LINK BUILDING	HARO (HELP A REPORTER OUT)
LOCAL CITATION BUILDING	PRESS RELEASES & PR	SKYSCRAPER TECHNIQUE

BACKLINK BUILDING

HOW IS IT REPORTED?

Monthly reports will outline how many new backlinks were acquired, the quality of these links, and any improvements in DA/DR. This shows the success of link-building efforts and the website's growing authority.

BACKLINK GROWTH

Reports will show the increase in both the quantity and quality of backlinks, which strengthens domain authority and boosts rankings.

DOMAIN AUTHORITY (DA)

Monitoring the rise in domain authority, demonstrating the long-term impact of link-building efforts.

LOCAL SEO

GOAL & EXPECTED RESULTS

GOAL: The primary goal of local SEO is to improve visibility in local search results, connecting businesses with nearby customers who are actively searching for their services. By optimizing for location-specific searches, local SEO drives more qualified, high-intent traffic from the local community.

EXPECTED RESULTS

INCREASED LOCAL VISIBILITY

Appearing in the Local Pack, Maps, and organic results connects the business with customers searching within the area, increasing its presence in the local market.

HIGHER LOCAL KEYWORD RANKINGS

Boosts rankings for region-specific keywords, making the business more discoverable by nearby users looking for relevant services.

MORE WEBSITE TRAFFIC & CALLS FROM LOCAL CUSTOMERS

Drives higher-quality traffic from local customers who are more likely to convert, leading to increased calls and inquiries.

ENHANCED FOOT TRAFFIC AND IN-STORE VISITS

Attracts nearby customers to visit the store, especially those on mobile who are actively looking for nearby services.

IMPROVED BRAND RECOGNITION IN THE COMMUNITY

Regular local search visibility builds familiarity and trust, solidifying the business's reputation within the community.

LOCAL SEO

KEY OPTIMIZATIONS

By optimizing for location-specific searches, we enhance your business's local presence and connect with nearby customers. These tactics improve visibility in local search results, drive foot traffic, and build credibility within your community.

GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE OPTIMIZATION	LOCAL KEYWORD TARGETING	NAP CONSISTENCY
LOCAL CITATIONS AND DIRECTORY LISTINGS	LOCALIZED CONTENT CREATION	REVIEWS AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT
OPTIMIZED LOCATION AND SERVICE AREA PAGES	MOBILE-FRIENDLINESS	SCHEMA MARKUP FOR LOCAL SEO
LOCAL BACKLINK BUILDING	ENGAGE WITH LOCAL SOCIAL MEDIA	GEOTAGGED IMAGES

LOCAL SEO

IN SUMMARY

SEO UNLOCKS VISIBILITY & GROWTH

Effective SEO strategies focus on positioning businesses at the top of relevant search results, capturing audience attention at the moment of intent.

THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

TECHNICAL SEO

Optimizing website structure and performance improves search engine visibility and accessibility.

CONTENT STRATEGY

Data-driven content aligns with audience needs, building trust and engagement.

BACKLINK BUILDING

Quality links from reputable sites expand a website's reach and authority within its industry.

LOCAL SEO

Targeted local optimizations connect businesses with nearby customers, increasing visibility and community trust.

TRACKING & REPORTING ON KEY KPIS

Monthly reporting on metrics like organic traffic, rankings, conversions, and engagement offers valuable insights into how SEO efforts contribute to business goals.

THE END