

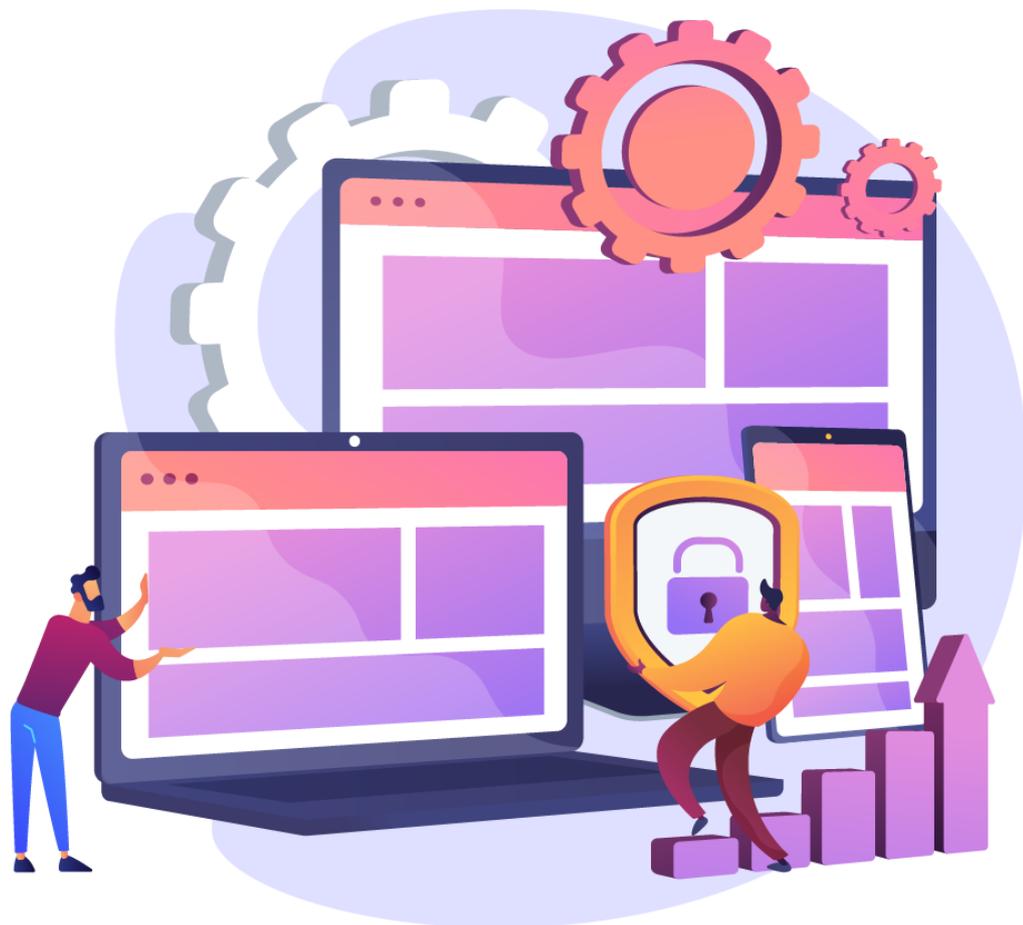


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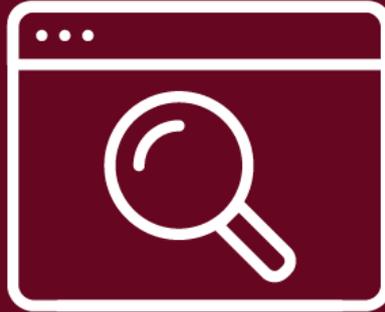
HOMESTEAD'S

Guide To

Technical SEO



What is **SEO?**



SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization

SEO is the process of improving the quality and quantity of traffic from a Search Engine, like Google or Bing, to your website (or at least a page on your website). Specifically, it's achieving this result organically. Search engines use three primary functions to get their job done:

- **Crawling:** Search Engines send out a team of robots to scour across the Internet for all kinds of content, new and updated.
- **Indexing:** The process of that content being added to Search Engines databases. Upon being filed into its index, the Search Engine will display the page under relevant searches.
- **Ranking:** Every query has an organizational list. The search engine will provide the content it believes suits the searcher's query the best. The idea is that they will order the results from the most relevant to the least.



To increase your rankings, your content needs to be deemed valuable and relevant. You must first ensure that your content is properly indexed, after which better rankings will follow.

There are many different types of SEO (some better than others), and they encompass every aspect of a website, from the design itself to anticipating how people will search for it.

We'll be reviewing the three main categories of SEO:

On-Page, Off-Page, and Technical.



By breaking it down into these three separate parts of the same goal, it will be easier to organize and implement a well-rounded organic search strategy.

In this guide, we'll be talking about
Technical SEO.

What is Technical SEO?

Technical SEO refers to improving the technical aspects of a website in order to increase the ranking of its pages in the search engines.



These aspects include making a website faster, easier to crawl, and understandable for search engines.

Your website needs to be secure, mobile-optimized, free of duplicate content, fast-loading, and many other things that go into technical optimization.

Components of Technical SEO

Site Speed



Mobile-Friendly



Security



Readability



Site Structure



Sitemap



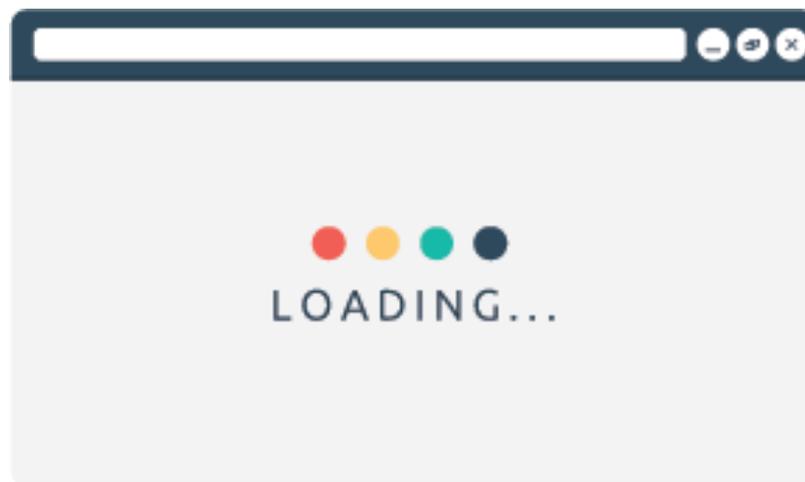
Images



Content

Site Speed

Page speed is a direct ranking factor for search engines; however, speed can also affect rankings indirectly, by increasing the bounce rate



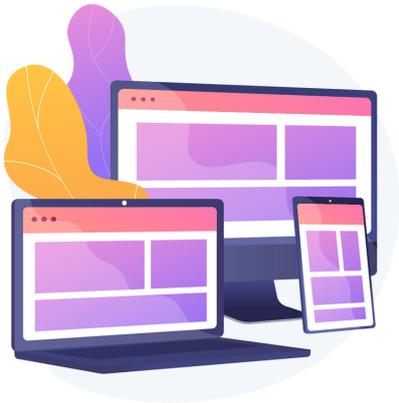
There are several things you can do to help improve your page speed:

1. Compress any files you upload to your site, including images, docs, and PDFs.
2. Optimize any images you upload by using the correct image size and image file type (PNG, JPG, GIF).
3. Minimize the 3rd party HTML you place on your site.
4. Use a CDN.
 - i. Note: WebsiteBuilder uses a CDN to store all images and files.

The Importance of Website Speed

Mobile-Friendly

A mobile-friendly site should function accurately on any mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet. The mobile-friendly aspect eliminates the hassle of zooming in and out and having to adjust the content that shows when you are using a mobile device.



Important Factors of a Mobile-Friendly Site

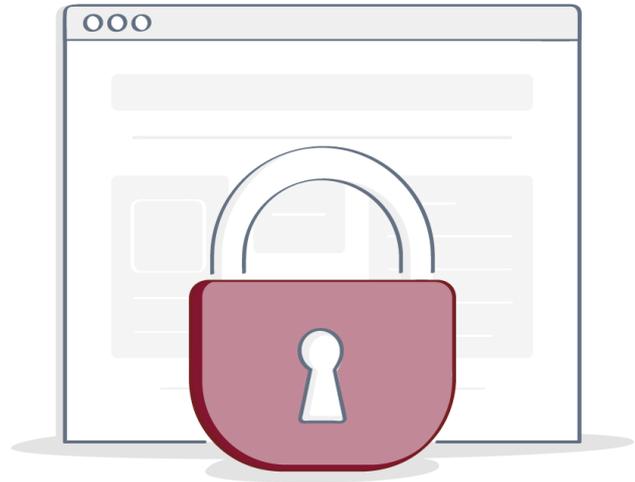
1. Responsive Page Display.
2. Readable Fonts.
3. Proper Text Formatting.
4. Optimized Media Display.
5. Mobile-Friendly Navigation.
6. Reduced Need for Data Entry.

Importance of a Mobile-Friendly Website

What Makes a Good Mobile Site?

Security

Secure Sockets Layer – SSL – is standard technology for keeping an internet connection secure and safeguarding any personal data being sent between servers. You can spot a site using SSL fairly easily: the website URL starts with 'https://' rather than 'http://.'



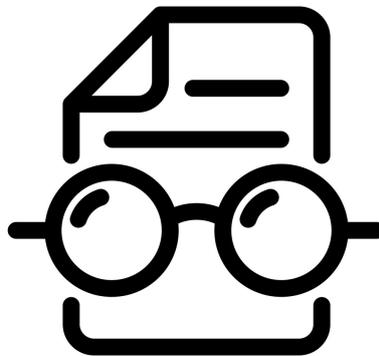
These days, it is mandatory to have HTTPS for all sites for security purposes. Your ranking will suffer if your site is not secure.

Previously, an SSL was only necessary for websites that asked for personal information like card details or social security numbers. These days, it is recommended that any website has one, to keep your site visitors information safe and to give them peace of mind.

The Importance of Securing Your Website

Readability

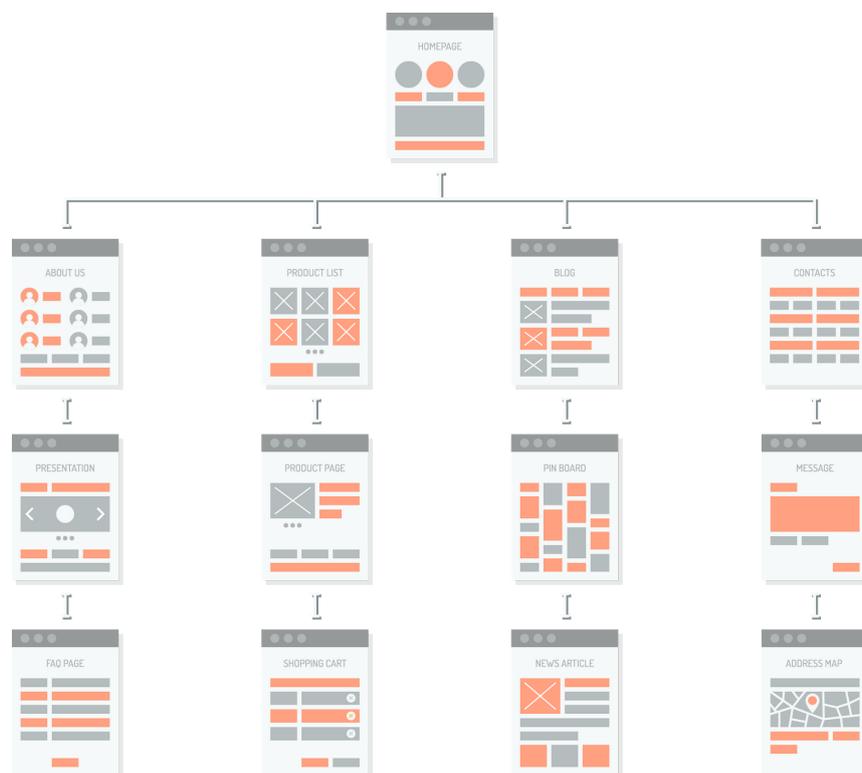
Readability refers to how easy the content on your website is to digest. The clearer and easier to understand, the better. By producing content that's easy to read and understand, your site visitor is immediately engaged and will be encouraged to spend more time on your site.



- Less is more. Try to keep your content concise and interesting.
- Focus on formatting. Break up text with paragraphs and don't be too text-heavy.
- Use headings and Sub-Headings. Categorizing your content lets the reader choose the specific content they want to read, improving the experience.
- Font size and style are both important. If your font is small and complex, it can make your content difficult to read.
- Use bullet points or ordered lists. It helps to shorten your sentences, direct the focus of your message and offer quick clarity to the reader by highlighting key points.
- Images break the monotony of text. Relevant and quality images can keep your readers engaged.

Site Structure

Site structure refers to how you organize your website's content, dealing with how different information on your website is grouped. It is a vital aspect of your SEO strategy. The structure of your website shows Google which pages of your site are most important.

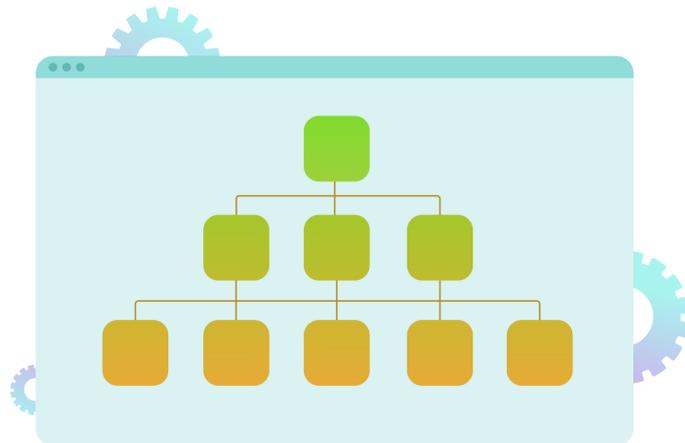


Good site structure allows users to find their way more easily and lets Google index your URLs better.

According to best practices, users should be able to reach any page on your website in 4 clicks or less.

Sitemap

A sitemap is a blueprint of your website to tell search engines what content is available and how to reach it. Sitemaps also tell search engines which pages on your site are most important.



XML sitemaps help search engines like Google crawl your pages more intelligently. They tell crawlers where your important pages are located and even provide information such as when your pages were last updated.

TIP

Your sitemap is usually found at site.com/sitemap.xml

Images

Image optimization is important for customer experience, page speed, and search engine ranking.

Image Optimization Tips

1. **Choose the Right Format-** PNG, JPG, and GIF all have the proper time and place to be used.
2. **Compress Your Images-** the more your image is compressed, the faster it will load.
3. **Create Unique Images-** Duplicate content can be detrimental to SEO. Having unique images can put you ahead of the competition.
4. **Beware of Copyright-** Make sure to check for this before you use an image you found through a Google Search.
5. **Customize Image File Names-** Image file names alert search engine crawlers as to the subject matter of the image.
6. **Write SEO-Friendly Alt Text-** Alt tags are a text alternative to images when a browser can't properly display them.

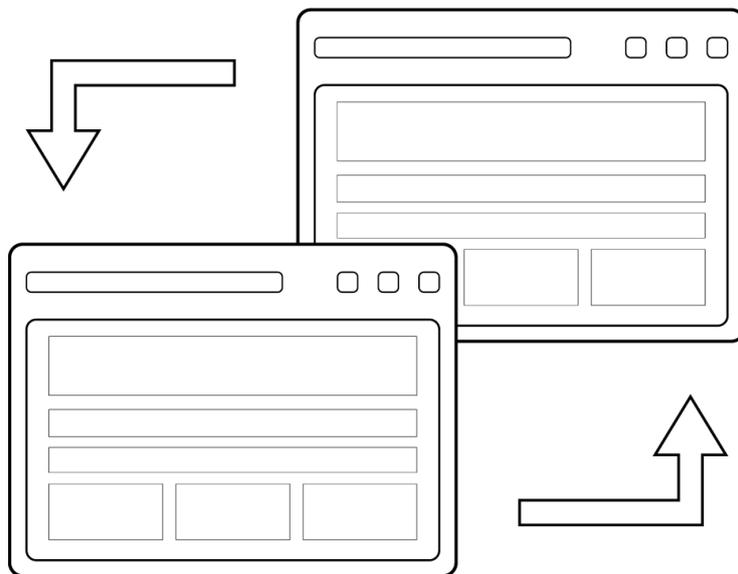


Optimizing Images

Duplicate Content

It is important to make sure that your site doesn't include duplicate content.

Duplicate content is content that's identical or almost identical to content on other websites or on different pages on the same website.



Duplicate content is bad for several reasons:

1. It provides no added value for site visitors, meaning it provides a bad customer experience.
2. For duplicate content on the same website, it can confuse search engines on which page to index.
3. For duplicate content on another website means you'll be competing with which site will be indexed.

Glossary

Bounce Rate: The percentage of visitors to a particular website who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page.

CDN: A content delivery network, is a geographically distributed group of servers that work together to provide fast delivery of Internet content.

Crawling: The process in which search engines discover your web pages.

Indexing: The process of adding content found during crawling.

Mobile-Friendly: The website looks and functions accurately on any mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet.

Optimize: To rearrange or rewrite (data, software, etc.) to improve the efficiency of retrieval or processing.

Ranking: Cataloging search results by relevance to the query.

Search Engine: A software system that searches for information in a database that matches the user's query.

SEO: Search Engine Optimization.

SERP: Search Engine Results Page— the page you see after searching.

SSL: Secure Sockets Layer encrypts the data that goes from a user's computer to the target website and back, protecting potentially personal data.



Need further help with SEO?

Our team of experts is ready and able to help make sure you're found on search engines like Google and to save you time.

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