

Five Ways To Rank In Organic SEO

SEO is dynamic, complicated and competitive. Depending on your industry, staying at the top of rankings can range from mildly challenging to completely cutthroat. In order to stay ahead of the curve, you need to be committed to following trends, being efficiently reactive, and staying willing to examine the small and big pictures thoroughly.

SEO is decipherable, and those that stay educated can absolutely succeed. If you're ready to dive in and beat your competitors at their own game, follow the five tips below and enjoy your definitive edge.

Study Your Top Competitors' On-Site SEO

In order to beat your top competition, you need to know the tactics they employ. The aspects you need to study include: 1. Title tag / meta data structure and content; 2. Keyword usage, especially in headers; and 3. Overall SEO activity – use a tool like Site Comparison for on-page analysis.

Watch closely; if one of your competitors makes major changes to their strategy, that's a key indicator. It usually means they were either dinged by a search engine and needed to change course, or discovered a new trend worth adopting. If you see their rankings improve as a result, you know what to do.

Monitor All Backlinks

It's a good idea to keep a constant log of your company's backlinks; this will help you identify any impending negative SEO attacks, and ensure all links pointing to your site are from relevant, reputable sources. On your competitor's side, watching their link strategy can unearth new link partners in your space, as well as expose tactics that are helping them stay ahead. Use a tool like Majestic SEO for assistance.

Quality & Quantity of Content

This is undoubtedly the most important. Your number one strategy in staying ahead of the curve is to have a consistent flow of epically relevant and appealing content. From blogs to white papers, videos to podcasts, slideshows to infographics, content is the best way to elevate your SEO rankings and your overall brand awareness.

Fresh content ensures the search engines are regularly taking notice. Automated indexing systems are looking for new content, and if your site becomes stagnant, that's a surefire way to give your competitors an edge. Well-crafted content is also your best bet for going viral. It only takes a couple of highly shareable releases to really start getting your company on the map. If you do nothing else to propel your organic SEO

strategy to the next level, let it revolve around consistent content creation.

Smart Keyword Selection & Execution

While it is no longer necessary to focus on things like keyword density, your keyword selection is still an integral part of a successful SEO plan.

One of the biggest mistakes companies make lies around top-ranking keywords. If you find a combo that lands you in the top spot, don't assume that's helping your brand unequivocally. Being number one for a given set of keywords should not be the goal; your bottom line is. If you've targeted keywords and have successfully landed high rankings, but you see little to no overall traffic or revenue improvements, you're simply targeting the wrong keywords.

Search queries that yield the highest traffic increases are all you should focus on. Use tools like Google Analytics to monitor different keyword combinations, and their related traffic correlations. Do the same for your competitors because that can help reveal strengths and weaknesses in your own strategy. Tools like Open Site Explorer can help you remain in-the-know.

Stay SEO Savvy

Organic SEO is an ever-changing landscape. To stay competitive, it's essential that you stay current. It's astounding how many folks are still employing tactics from five years ago, while experiencing intense frustration that their businesses are not advancing. If you're staying on the cutting edge, try new trends as they emerge. These are obviously not guaranteed to work, but if you find a magic potion before any of your competitors do, that's a genius way to leap ahead.

Stay current. Keep on point for organic SEO, video SEO, and any specific discipline that is relevant to your company or industry. Being aware of rising trends and tactics that have fallen away can be the difference between leading the pack and scrambling to stay in the fray. Creating an ironclad SEO strategy requires a consistent commitment to content, competitor research, on-site metrics, and current news. The result is a powerful combination of real-world results and future trends that can help you reach a rankings level your competitors only dream of. - Tina Courtney-Brown

