

# Website University

Anchor Wave Internet Solutions  
[www.anchorwave.com](http://www.anchorwave.com)

# Website University

In response to many of our client's requests for on going strategies, we have developed Website University, a guide for internet marketing. Our goal is to answer questions like "Our site has launched. What do we do now?" and "Is there anything I should be doing with my website?"

## Table Of Contents

- [Website University](#)
  - [The Website University](#)
  - [Website University is not...](#)
  - [Strategies we will dive into...](#)
  - [Future Plans](#)
- [Search Engine Optimization](#)
  - [Keyword Research](#)
  - [On-site Optimization](#)
    - [Page Optimization](#)
    - [Blogging](#)
    - [Create New Pages](#)
    - [Crawl Error Resolution](#)
    - [Sitemap Submission](#)
  - [Off-Site Optimization](#)
    - [Forum/Community Participation](#)
    - [Blog Comment Participation](#)
    - [Directory Submissions](#)
    - [Social Bookmarking](#)
    - [Permanent Link Buying](#)

## The Website University

This guide has been designed for website owners that plan to manage internet marketing efforts through an outside partner, or wish to educate themselves in order to learn and implement internet marketing strategies on their own. Many of our clients are interested in learning some of the key processes involved in a successful internet marketing campaign. It is our goal to make the Website University guide into a reference manual for all the available strategies and what they entail without all the technical jargon.

## Website University is not...

This guide is not designed to be a replacement for the many books and instructional websites that can teach you every detail of the topics covered. Instead, it is structured to give you an

introduction into internet marketing techniques and help you decide if you should learn and implement the techniques on your own, or hire an expert to help.

The guide is structured as follows

- Introduction to overall strategy (ie. Search Engine Optimization)
- Description of specific ways to implement the internet marketing strategy
- An assessment of difficulty on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being hardest)
- Hire an expert? - Honest advice about doing it yourself vs. hiring an expert
- Additional tips and notes to guide you

## Strategies we will dive into...

Internet marketing includes a ton of different ways to drive traffic to your site, and the most aggressive businesses will leverage all of these. However, we want to lay them all on the table because even employing one tactic on a regular basis can create big results. Here's a preview of The Website University's topics (beta version) -

- **Search Engine Optimization** -The foundation for ranking organically in search engines
- Planning and Research - Competitive Analysis, Keyword Research, Webmaster Tools, Sitemaps, Analytic Tracking, and more
- **On-Site Optimization** - Page Titles, Meta Descriptions, URLs, Content Guidelines, Header Hierarchies, and more
- **Off-Site Optimization** (Link Building) - Forum/Community Participation, Blog Comment Participation, Local SEO, Directory Submissions, Social Bookmarking, Permanent Link Buying, Link Renting, and more

## Future Plans

This guide is a living document and is being built to include all the techniques that a website owner might employ to build their business online. As such, we will be releasing updates to the manual that include additional training and tips on the following topics.

- Social Media
  - Content Distribution via Social Networks
  - YouTube/Video Distribution
  - Photo Distribution - Flickr
- Email Marketing
- Email Signature & Voicemail Marketing
- Search Engine Advertising
  - Pay Per Click - PPC
  - Google/Bing Maps
  - Google Tags
- Site Advertising
  - Facebook Advertising
  - Targeted Site Advertising

# Search Engine Optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of making adjustments to your website in order to help search engines like Google and Bing! understand what your site is all about in order to give them the confidence to list your site in the search results. The end goal of SEO is to rank and raise the the ranking for your website for very specific keywords.

SEO breaks down into two primary areas:

On-Site Optimization - these are all the changes you can make on your website to help search engines better classify your website. This is all about the actual text, photos, links, headings, pages and code of your website.

Off-Site Optimization - these are all the factors that exist outside of your website that influence a search engine's ability to understand what your website is all about. This is primarily "link popularity" - the number of other websites that have a link pointing from their website to yours. Building more links is off-site optimization.

### **Difficulty: 4/5**

Initially SEO can be a difficult prospect for a novice user to engage in. SEO breaks down into many processes that is described below. Some are easier than others, and there are areas where you can help, get involved and save money by doing it yourself.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

At first, yes. If you know nothing about SEO, hire an expert to get you started. After reading the following sections, you may identify areas that you can do on your own.

## **Keyword Research**

Keyword research informs everything we do with respect to off-site and on-site optimization. Simply put, we want to aim to rank for keywords that will:

1. Have enough volume of searches so that if we do rank for it, there will be enough traffic that can make its way to our website.
2. There is not SO much competition that is will be very difficult to rank for that work. Going after easier words will give us some early success so we don't give up and provide us with more credibility in the eyes of the search engines so we can have a chance at ranking for more competitive terms.
3. The keywords we choose have a good chance of driving visitors that will take the action we want them to. (Call, email, buy, signup, etc...)

The end result of Keyword Research is to have a small list of "valuable" keywords. In general, we want to pick between 2 and 10 to start with depending on the business and size of the site. Over time we'll build out list to include more words.

Note: Just because you target a keyword like Tucson Veterinarian does not exclude you from

ranking for words like East Tucson Veterinarian or Veterinarian Tucson. Its best to keep your keyword short and focused at first.

### **Difficulty 4/5**

Keyword research is mostly a mechanical process - and that's the easy part. The hard part is interpreting the data that is collected to identify which keywords to target.

### **Should I hire and expert?**

We don't usually recommend doing this yourself, or skipping this step. You can learn how to do this, and the mechanical process of data collection uses mostly freely available tools. The value that comes from professional keyword research is the identification of keywords that may drive significant traffic and be easier to rank for. Skipping keyword research might mean that you're focusing all your energy on a keyword that is very hard to rank for or does not have ample search volume.

### **Frequency: Quarterly to Yearly**

Search volume changes from month to month. What was popular once might not be as popular today. Same goes for competition. What was once not competitive could become more competitive in the future. These changes don't always mean that you should be changing your strategy, but keeping an eye on these things could explain why your lead volume might be higher or lower at any given time.

## **On-site Optimization**

Once you have your list of keywords and phrases you want to target, it's time to tackle all of the on-site optimization tactics. The following sections describe the common and best practices for on-site optimization.

On-site Optimization is all of the factors that you can adjust on your website to help improve rankings. Remember: search engines want to know that your site is relevant to the searches you want to be listed for. If they feel that another website is more relevant to a particular search than your website, you won't rank as high. The following tasks will help you communicate what your website is about to search engines.

### **Page Optimization**

A website typically consists of many different pages. An optimized website means that you've applied the following techniques to some or all of your web pages. Optimization will rely heavily on your keyword research.

**Title Tag Optimization** - A title tag is the words that appear at the top of your browser window and as a link in the search engine for your page. Novices ignore this area and you'll typically see "Home" or "Company Name" at the top. You'll want to describe the page and embed keywords that are relevant to that page. Instead try "Tucson Veterinarian, Emergency Vet Clinic

| Company Name”

**Meta Description Optimization** - A meta description is a short description (160 characters) that appears underneath the title tag in a search engine. This description should be grammatically correct and relevant to the content on the page.

**Heading Optimization** - Headings are the large text you usually see at the top of a web page or at the head of a paragraph. How many times have you seen “Welcome to our Website.” at the top of a home page? Search engines would be better able to evaluate your website if it said, “Welcome to our Tucson Vet Clinic.” Keep in mind that the hierarchy of your headers is important, denote your primary header as an H1, secondary as H2, and so on.

**Text/Content Optimization** - Similar to headings, how can you work in your keywords into the paragraphs of text that exist on your website?

**Linking and Internal Linking Optimization** - Identify text on your website where you can link to other pages of your website. If you have a page describing your vet clinic’s services and a paragraph of text on the home page that mentions [Tucson vet clinic services](#), then link them together. This makes it easy for human and search engine visitors to associate that content together. It’s even better if the link has a keyword that you’re trying to target on the page you’re linking to.

**Meta Tag Optimization** - Meta tags are codes embedded in each page of your website that tell the search engines what your site is all about. Google says they don’t really look at them for ranking purposes, but we still don’t suggest you ignore them. The text included in your Meta-Keyword tag is also displayed along side of your listing in Google’s search results.

**Tip:** The common theme with Page Optimization is remembering to include the words that you want to rank for in strategic places but still sounds like it’s written for a human visitor to read and understand. Don’t overload your site with keywords.

### **Difficulty - 2/5**

The hard part of this is having knowing what keywords to use. Some of this will require some skills with HTML. If you have a content management system that allows you to make changes to your own website. You can make many of these changes yourself.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

You can do this yourself if you are comfortable making changes to your own website. Hire an expert if you’d prefer not to make changes to your own website. A professional can also help you identify ways to include content. Once you’ve done this a few times, you’ll start to learn how to include your keywords naturally.

### **Frequency: On-going**

Do this every time you add a new page. It’s okay if you don’t optimize every single page of your site right away. Choose the most important or top level pages first and do a few at a time until you’ve hit them all. It doesn’t hurt to revisit pages you’ve already optimized to make sure they

are still in line with the keywords you want to target.

## **Blogging**

Blogging is an easy way for you to continually add keyword rich content to your website. Remember: search engines will feel more confident about ranking your site if you continually give them blogs to evaluate your website.

What is a blog?

A blog is just a fancy word for the process of putting news, announcements, articles, etc on your website. Blogs are typically a set of pages on your website that lists articles or posts in a chronological order on your site. They will usually let you categorize your articles into groupings you define so your visitors can browse articles that exist in a certain category.

What am I supposed to write about?

The topics you will write about will vary. Most sites try to focus on client education and promotion. Write tips (ie. Top 10 ways to...., how to....), announcements, etc. The key is to choose topics that can tie to the keywords you are targeting. Blogs are also a great place to experiment with new keywords that you are not focusing on.

### **Difficulty: 3/5**

Setting up a blog on your site is the most difficult part technically speaking. The only other obstacle that you need to overcome is setting aside the time to write! We've setup many blogs for clients, but it is rare that they are updated regularly.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

Hire an expert to setup the blog for you and get you trained. If you can't find the time to write the blog yourself, hire us to help you write the blogs with your input. A professional can also help you brainstorm a list of topics for your blog that you can draw on for inspiration.

Tip: Avoid hosted blogs like Blogger.com. They are very easy to setup, but exist outside of your website/domain name. For maximum effect, the blog and content should exist on your website.

Tip: Brainstorm a list of 50 titles you could write. Use this list as inspiration when you want to write.

### **Frequency: 2x Monthly+**

Most websites should consider blogging at least twice monthly - the more the better, really. What is key is to do it consistently. Over time you will build a relationship with the visitors to your blog. Keep them coming back by giving them new content to read.

## **Create New Pages**

Content is king. Adding new pages to your website to expand upon the content that is already there will help you with several things.

- It gives search engines more content and they become more confident ranking you for the keywords you are targeting.
- Human visitors will stay longer on your site, become more educated about your products and services and be more likely to convert.

When creating the pages, use the keywords you identified with keyword research but also identify gaps in your website's content where you could get more detailed.

If you have one page that lists all of your services, why not create a new page for each service where you can get more detailed about what you do?

### **Difficulty: 2/5**

As long as you have a way to update your website without knowing HTML, you can do this on your own. There isn't really a "wrong" way to do this as long as you are writing content that human visitors will get value from. Avoid overusing keywords in your content just for the sake of including targeted keywords.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

If you don't have a way to update your own site, hire an expert to help you with this. A professional can help you write content or identify places of your site that could be expanded.

### **Frequency: 1-4x Month**

Adding new pages is a good thing to fit into your routine. You really can't overdo this as long as what you are adding is relevant to your website.

## **Crawl Error Resolution**

Search engines have a lot of websites to visit every day. If they have difficulty evaluating your website because of technical problems, they won't stick around long and their confidence in your site will drop which can have an impact on your search rankings.

There are a few common errors to check for. Google provides access to a tool called Google Webmaster Tools that provides some basic information to help you identify areas.

"Not Found" Pages - Pages that are non-existent on your website but are still being linked on your website should be resolved.

Duplicate Content - Having the same exact content on multiple pages of your website can confuse search engines, or cause them to think you are trying to trick them. Sometimes technical errors can cause duplicate content without you knowing it.

Title and meta tag problems - Missing or duplicate title and meta tags also look suspicious to search engines. Having complete and unique tags for each page is important and should be addressed during page optimization.

### **Difficulty - 3/5**

Signing up for Google Webmaster Tools is easy but resolving the errors will require some expertise.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

You don't need an expert to monitor your site errors. This is something you can do on your own for free. If you don't have time for this, it may be worth making sure a professional is keeping an eye on this. If you spot errors, most should be easy for a professional to fix. If you have access to content management tools, some errors can be fixed without technical knowledge.

### **Frequency - Monthly**

Once you've resolved all of the errors reported by webmaster tools, you won't have to keep a very close eye on this. If you are making lots of changes to your website or the search engines have not indexed/evaluated all of your pages, you'll want to watch this page until you have everything resolved.

## **Sitemap Submission**

A sitemap is an index of all your website's web pages that you can give to Google. This sitemap can be updated each time you add or modify a web page. This helps Google ensure that they know about all of the pages that exist on your site. Google does a good job of finding the pages on your website just by crawling your web pages, but this is a little bit of added insurance. It also helps them determine how frequently your pages are updated so they can schedule the frequency of their visits to your website.

### **Difficulty - 2/5**

Setting up this sitemap is easy. Google provides instruction on how to do this. It will require some basic knowledge of coding and uploading files.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

Even though this is easy to setup, it is not a very time-intensive process to get setup. You might save yourself some frustration by having a professional get this done quickly for you. The other benefit of hiring a pro is that they can usually set it up so that sitemap changes are automatically updated when you make changes to your site's page structure or add content like a blog.

### **Frequency - Once**

Once this is setup, you can forget about it as long as it is setup to automatically update based

on your website's structure. You can check the status of your submission in Google Webmaster Tools and if there are any problems with it you'll see it there.

## Off-Site Optimization

Off-Site Optimization is the process of making adjustments to things outside of your website in order to give the search engines more confidence that you should rank for particular keywords. Optimizing off-site is all about influencing link popularity. The search engines use link popularity to help them the relative importance of a particular site. Link popularity simply is the type and number of in-bound links from other sites that point to yours.

Search engines have a bird's eye view of the web. They can not only see what is on each website but the relationships (links) that exist from one website to the next.



New websites that are in a competitive keyword space can have a more difficult time ranking for their keywords if they don't have a strong link popularity.

The following sections describe how to create opportunities for other websites to link to you.

Note: Link popularity is all out links pointing from other websites to your site. Placing a link on your website to another website does not help your link popularity, it helps the site you are linking to.

Note: Link exchanging is the process of "trading" links between two websites. Sites that link to each-other does not hurt your ability to rank but may not help it.

## Forum/Community Participation

There are countless websites, community forums, chat rooms and blogs on every subject imaginable. The value in participating on websites like these with respect to link building and off-site optimization is that responses and posts you make on these sites can have links that point back to your website. This strategy will also drive referral traffic to your site from human visitors that frequent these community and forum websites.

In addition to helping the community members of this forum by answering questions and starting new conversations, you'll be able to create new inbound links to your site.

How do I find community forms?

Doing a search for "<business type> form" or "<business type> community" will usually reveal a few good options. We have identified a few forms or blogs and post/comment in regularly. Here are a few examples of sites we use.

- Intuit Small Business community forum
- American Express Open Business Forum

On these forums and blogs, we aim to respond back to the other people who are discussing things. This positions us as credible experts and will forever exist in cyberspace with a link back to our website. When someone finds this discussion ten years from now, they can look us up. Search engines like to see this too as it helps them better classify your website.

In addition to responding and talking with other members of the community, we create new topics of discussion. In many cases, we create topics that relate exactly to the blog post we just made. Take a look at this example:

1. On our blog we posted an article called, [Do you know about the red envelope?](#)
2. On AMEX Open Forum we created a [discussion talking about the blog post's topic.](#)

Doing this again and again will build relationships, drive traffic and some of that will turn into leads and some of that will turn into business. This type of link building is ideal for people who love talking or writing about what they do.

How do I get started?

1. Do a search to locate forums that you can participate in. The forums don't have to match your business exactly. It can be a general forum that caters to many different things.
2. Evaluate the forum to determine if it is an active forum or a virtual "ghost town." It doesn't have to be a thriving forum to provide valuable links, but if it is not active you might not be making regular trips back to engage in on-going conversations.
3. Check out posts to make sure that the signatures from other forum posts are actually valuable links. Not all links contribute to link popularity.
4. Create an account and customize your signature to include a link to your website using the keywords you are trying to target. This link is the primary way that your links will be

included along with your forum posts.

5. Identify posts where you can contribute something meaningful and reply back. Your post will now have placed a link back to your site. Sometimes it is appropriate to mention or link your company or web page in the body of your response, so do that only if it makes sense. If your response does not require you to “advertise/promote” your site, don’t do it. It looks fake.
6. Where appropriate and relevant create a new discussion that tells people about a recent blog post you made on your website. Tell them what it is about (not verbatim) and link back to your website.
7. Make trips back to your posts to continue the conversation, interact and provide value to the community.

### **Difficulty 1/5**

Posting on forums is very easy. The difficult part can be locating a forum that’s links provide link popularity to your website.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

This one is easy to do on your own. An expert can provide value to help you identify forums that will allow you to place links that help with link popularity. This is also a time-intensive process, experts can post and participate on your behalf but it may not be as genuine as if you did it yourself. It’s okay to hire a professional to help here but it’s great if you can participate yourself.

### **Frequency - Weekly**

If you engage in community participation you need to make a trip back to continue the conversation and engage with other community members. It is more genuine if you do it frequently, but you will not be under penalty if you don’t make frequent trips back to participate.

## **Blog Comment Participation**

Many blogs across the internet invite readers to participate by leaving a response to the posted blog article. These comments are a way for you to engage with the author and other readers of the blog to share insight. These blog comments also make a great opportunities to place in-bound links from a website into your website.

How do I get started?

1. Do a search to locate blogs or article topics that you can participate in. The articles don’t have to match your business exactly, as long as you can respond in some meaningful and non-spam way.
2. Check out existing comments to make sure that the responses are actually valuable links. Not all links contribute to link popularity.
3. Identify articles where you can contribute something meaningful and reply back. Your post will now have placed a link back to your site. Sometimes it is appropriate to mention or link your company or web page in the body of your response, so do that only

if it makes sense. If your response does not require you to “advertise/promote” your site, don’t do it. It looks fake.

4. Make trips back to your posts to continue the conversation, interact and provide value to the community.

### **Difficulty 1/5**

Posting on blogs is very easy. The difficult part can be locating a blog that’s links provide link popularity to your website.

### **Should I hire an expert?**

This one is easy to do on your own. An expert can provide value to help you identify blogs that will allow you to place links that help with link popularity. This is also a time-intensive process, experts can post and participate on your behalf but it may not be as genuine as if you did it yourself. It’s okay to hire a professional to help here but it’s great if you can participate your self.

### **Frequency - Weekly-Monthly**

If you engage in blog participation you need to make a trip back to continue the conversation and engage with other community members. It is more genuine if you do it frequently, but you will not be under penalty if you don’t make frequent trips back to participate.

## **Directory Submissions**

Web directories are websites that exist to catalog links to other websites. Some directories catalog all different types of sites while others are specific to a region, industry or other niche. Search engines rely on directories to help them identify the type of website that is listed.

### Examples of Directories

- Dmoz.org
- <http://dir.yahoo.com/>
- <http://www.business.com/>
- <http://www.botw.org/>

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but will help you find some common directories. You can do a search for something like, “<business industry> directory” or “top web directories” to find more. Keep in mind that while many directories are free of charge, many charge annual fees to be included.

### How to get listed in a directory

1. Locate a directory
2. Browse the directory to locate the section where you would want your website listed.
3. Follow the instructions for submitting your website. Each site will have a unique way of

accepting entries and may require different information that will be collected along with your website's address. (ie. Company name, description, classification, etc..) Use your primary keywords in descriptions if possible.

4. Schedule a trip back to the directory to make sure you get listed. If you don't see your website added to the directory, follow the instructions provided by the directory to inquire or resubmit your link.

### **Difficulty 1/5**

Adding your website to directories is a very administrative process. Most common web users will not have difficulty in submitting your website to directories.

### **Should I hire a professional?**

Only hire a professional if this is one of many other link building services they are providing. Hiring an expert will allow you to delegate this time intensive process. As an alternative you can delegate this to a staff member on your team. Leverage the help of a professional to help you identify directories or train your staff on how to execute this task.

### **Frequency - Monthly**

Add a few new directory submissions every month. If you have a list you are working from you can easily make many submissions in a short period of time.

## **Social Bookmarking**

Social Bookmarking is websites that exist for people to share and distribute links to content around the web. The name combines the concept of bookmarking, which is saving a link for future reference with Social, the concept of sharing. So, social bookmarking is simply: sharing your favorite links with a community of other people who share and visit links.

There are thousands of Social Bookmarking sites, but about 20 that we would suggest that you focus on. For a list of some of the top social bookmarking sites, visit <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-bookmarking-websites>

What links should I be sharing exactly?

The value that people see in Social Bookmarking services is that search engines and human visitors are exposed to web content that is relevant, interesting or some how meaningful to the person who visits the link. If you're sharing a link to your home page, then your home page needs to be the most interesting page on that subject. But, it's more than likely that your home page is boring, like most home pages.

Social bookmarking is ideal for blog content. If your blog shares the most relevant, interesting or meaningful content on your subject it is much more likely to be picked up and shared by the members of these communities.

How do I submit my links to social bookmarking sites?

1. Identify content that you want to share.
2. Visit the social bookmarking websites and create an account if necessary. Follow instructions for making a submission.

### **Difficulty 1/5**

#### **Should I hire an expert?**

Only hire an expert to perform this type of link building if it is included with other types of link building or social media promotion. Hiring an expert will allow you to delegate this time intensive process. As an alternative you can delegate this to a staff member on your team. Leverage the help of a professional to help you identify directories or train your staff on how to execute this task.

#### **Frequency - Monthly**

## **Permanent Link Buying**

As discussed in off-site optimization, inbound linking to your website can help greatly with Search Engine Optimization Efforts. Buying or renting links can be an effective way of creating inbound links from websites that have a higher authority. Links with higher authority will have a greater influence on rankings and can be particularly useful for more competitive search keywords or phrases.

How to buy or rent links:

The easiest way to purchase or rent links is to work through a link broker. They do the hard work of finding and negotiating pricing with website owners and will typically guarantee placement within a certain time period and length of time. You can contact and negotiate with website owners on your own, but this will be a time consuming process.

Rent vs. Buy

When you buy a link, it is typically in place forever. Few will guarantee that the link will exist for more than thirty days, but more often than not, the link will exist for years to come. Rented links are typically more valuable links from higher authority websites. You typically pay monthly for these links - when you stop paying, the link goes away.

Should I hire an expert?

Yes. Link buying and renting is an advanced technique. It requires knowledge of link value, pricing and negotiating. You can work through a link broker directly and they will usually be able to provide you with some basic guidance on what kinds of links to buy and how many, but this is best left to the professionals.

Difficulty: 5/5