

TECHNICAL SEO FOCAL POINTS

Google has made it clear publicly that their primary ranking signals are content and links. However, experienced search engine optimization specialists know that user behavior signals are what ultimately gets and keeps that top position in Google. Below are a few technical tasks that may benefit users and search engines alike.

Website Level	Speed & Performance	Security	Duplicate Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ robots.txt does not block important scripts & content ✓ robots.txt declares XML path ✓ HTML sitemap exists ✓ Intuitive website taxonomy used ✓ Privacy Policy in global footer ✓ Refund Policy in global footer ✓ Site can be used with JavaScript and CSS turned off ✓ Nav not hidden by AJAX or Flash ✓ Social network links in global footer ✓ Includes all applicable schema.org ✓ Void of excessive internal links ✓ Confirmation pages are non-indexable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ High webpagetest.org score ✓ High tools.pingdom.com score ✓ High Google PageSpeed score ✓ High Core Web Vitals score ✓ High GTMextrix score ✓ Passes Google mobile-friendly ✓ Uses a content delivery network ✓ Site is caching content efficiently ✓ Images are optimized for fast loading ✓ Files are gzipped for fast delivery ✓ JavaScripts are combined & minified ✓ Style sheets are combined & minified ✓ Bounce rates improve monthly ✓ Conversion rates improve monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Serves HTTPS by default ✓ All internal links use HTTPS ✓ All canonical tags use HTTPS ✓ All URLs in XML Sitemap use HTTPS ✓ All outbound links use HTTPS ✓ Passes SECURI test ✓ Passes Norton test ✓ Passes McAfee test ✓ Passes Google safe test ✓ CMS version is up to date ✓ Plugins/add-ons are up to date ✓ WordPress vulnerabilities addressed ✓ Database vulnerabilities addressed ✓ User management reviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pagination is managed efficiently ✓ Multi-language content managed efficiently (HREFLANG tags used) ✓ Duplicate subdomains are non-indexable ✓ Staging servers are non-indexable ✓ Tags, author and date archives are non-indexable ✓ URL parameters managed in Google Search Console ✓ H1 is different from HTML title ✓ Only one H1 tag per page ✓ Index pages 301 to root paths ✓ Trailing slashes are consistent

CONTENT SEO FOCAL POINTS

The goal of an SEO-driven content strategy is to get your key customer-driving content to rank well in search results. But to do this, search engines must see your brand (entity) as being authoritative *off the website* when mentioned as a resource or reference on high-traffic web pages that mention and (hopefully) link to your website. The entire Buyer's Journey is therefore more important than the customer-attracting pages alone.

Customer-Attracting Content	Consideration Phase Content	Awareness Phase Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Researched competitor keywords <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed historical data (PPC+SEO) <input type="checkbox"/> Addressed every user search goal <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmed that our page is best <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ requester.mturk.com <input type="checkbox"/> Selling principles utilized <input type="checkbox"/> Title optimized for phase (buy, order, etc) <input type="checkbox"/> Meta description uses all available space <input type="checkbox"/> Unique imagery added to pages <input type="checkbox"/> Unique video added to pages <input type="checkbox"/> Strong call-to-action easy to see <input type="checkbox"/> Use of lists not just paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasized phrases in subheadings <input type="checkbox"/> Page loads in under 2 seconds <input type="checkbox"/> Page earns A's on webpagetest.org <input type="checkbox"/> Images are well optimized <input type="checkbox"/> File name / page name is well optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Internal links to page are optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Added to HTML & XML sitemaps <input type="checkbox"/> Structured markup used wherever possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Researched competitor keywords <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed historical data (PPC+SEO) <input type="checkbox"/> Addressed every user search goal <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmed that our page is best <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ requester.mturk.com <input type="checkbox"/> Ecommerce categories well optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Comparison tables used (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Page shows more value & options than others <input type="checkbox"/> Testimonials / reviews standout to viewers <input type="checkbox"/> Video included to assist with decision-making <input type="checkbox"/> Title optimized for phase (shop, explore, etc) <input type="checkbox"/> Meta description uses all available space <input type="checkbox"/> Structured markup used wherever possible <input type="checkbox"/> Links to product detail pages (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Links to supportive content (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Above the fold is business, not blog or article <input type="checkbox"/> Below the products is supportive content <input type="checkbox"/> File name / page name is well optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Internal links to page are optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Added to HTML & XML sitemaps <input type="checkbox"/> Page loads in under 2 seconds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explored product/service questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ answerthepublic.com storybase.com <input type="checkbox"/> Clustered keywords by similar user intent <input type="checkbox"/> Decided on syndication / sharing touchpoints <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed top-linked pages of competitors <input type="checkbox"/> Built content marketing calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmed that our page is best <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ requester.mturk.com <input type="checkbox"/> Avoided selling of any kind on the page <input type="checkbox"/> Custom navigation focused on non-selling <input type="checkbox"/> Call-to-action opt-in, not purchase/lead intake <input type="checkbox"/> Social sharing easy to find <input type="checkbox"/> Custom illustration available and Pin-able <input type="checkbox"/> Custom video available and shareable <input type="checkbox"/> Title offers compelling headline <input type="checkbox"/> Meta uses all available space and is helpful <input type="checkbox"/> File name / page name is well optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Internal links to page are optimized <input type="checkbox"/> Added to HTML & XML sitemaps <input type="checkbox"/> Page loads in under 2 seconds <input type="checkbox"/> Structured markup used wherever possible

LINK EARNING FOCAL POINTS

Earning links through relationships and content marketing is the "White Hat" method of showing search engines that we are relevant and authoritative and not manipulative or trying to game search engine results pages.

Internal Links	Suspicious Links	Link-Earning Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Highest ratio of links point to important pages <input type="checkbox"/> No ambiguity in anchor text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't link to 2 pages with the same text <input type="checkbox"/> Varied anchor text used for each page <input type="checkbox"/> JumpTo links used when appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Homepage links to most important pages <input type="checkbox"/> Remove/reduce links rarely clicked on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Project created to remove suspicious links <input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 rounds of outreach completed per link <input type="checkbox"/> Disavow list submitted to Google monthly <input type="checkbox"/> New links monitored monthly (AHREFS.com) <input type="checkbox"/> New links added to project (Buzzstream?) <input type="checkbox"/> Link removal request sequences scheduled <input type="checkbox"/> Trend and pulse reviewed monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Unlinked mentions become linked mentions <input type="checkbox"/> Broken links to site and to competitors <input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary data shared in evergreen content <input type="checkbox"/> Industry study completed / evergreen content <input type="checkbox"/> Free tools or service launched and shared <input type="checkbox"/> Influencer marketing initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Content syndication performance monitored