

De-mystifying SEO

SEO is a buzzword that is often bandied about. Not everyone is tech savvy, so this article seeks to demystify SEO by taking you through some helpful basics.

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation. A Search Engine is what you use when you search the internet for information. The majority of website traffic is driven by the search engines Google, Bing and Yahoo! These engines trawl through the vast array of information available on the web and endeavor to present the most relevant, targeted information on any given topic search undertaken by the user.

SEO is a marketing tool that is used to grow organic (or non-paid) search engine results. Adwords, on the other hand are paid sponsored results and they appear at the top and right hand side of the results page when you undertake a search.

SEO (unpaid) search results are driven by a fairly complex Algorithm. Making relevant content available to these search engines is a vital part of boosting your website ranking – ie putting it higher up the search results so that people will find it easily.

There are some components which we know the current algorithm is factoring in to these the results. Below are some simple tips on how to help your organic SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) results and thus boost your website ranking.

Search engines are driven by the phrases we put into the search box on the search engine we use.

The aim is to work out what your relevant phrases are, and then to load them into key areas on the website.

A great resource in working out the phrases that are applicable to your business is the Google Adwords tool. You need to have a Google account and be logged in to use the tool. N.B. You do not need to have paid Google Adwords to use this tool.

These SEO phrases that you select need to go into 3 places.

- SEO Title
- Paragraph 1
- Meta Description

Ideally the phrases or at least variations of the phrase need to be also found in the:

- H1
- Fully content body

Length

There are restrictions on the length of 2 of these fields and longer than this will lead it to be automatically shortened – so it's important to get it right!

- Page Title – 55 characters
- Meta Description – 160 characters

SEO Title

This sits under the Page Heading in the CMS.

This should include the key word(s) relating to this specific page that people are likely to search for i.e. "Wedding Photographer". N.B. make sure these key word(s) are terms that your clients would use, not necessarily what you in the industry call things.

Start with your preferred search phrase, which is limited to a total of 70 characters minus "YourSiteName".

A good search phrase example is a photographer with the SEO title starts with "Wedding Photographer Auckland



A bad example is a photographer with the SEO title starts with "Wedding Photography with Attitude, Style & Fun". People will not be searching this specific phrase.

It makes a great Page Heading, but a bad SEO Title.



Paragraph 1

In the opening paragraph you should include the phrases you have used in your SEO Title. These need to be in natural language. Search Engines are evaluating how natural content is in their Algorithm.

Meta Description

The Meta Description is another component which is referenced by the Algorithm. This is also really important for conversion when you appear in the results.

Good Meta Descriptions are a Call to Action of the page. Try to keep this within 160 characters, as anything larger will be automatically culled.

The Meta Description should also include the phrases you have used in your SEO Title. These also need to be in natural language and in a Call to Action format.

This sits at the bottom of the CMS.

A **good example** is a photographer with the Meta Description with “Looking for a great team of professional wedding photographers? We’re available anywhere in New Zealand. Book today: 0800 746 121.”. This is a great Meta Description. This will make you click on the link.

[Wedding Photographer - Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Tauranga](#) 
Looking for a great team of professional **wedding** photographers? We're available anywhere in New Zealand. Book today: 0800 746 121.
www.one2onephotography.co.nz/wedding-photographers/ - Cached

A **bad example** is a photographer with Meta Description that has not been set

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[Stephen Roke Photography Ltd.](#) 
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Using SEO is a valuable marketing tool – driving targeted traffic to your site, offering publicity, promotion, and in turn driving revenue. SEO is complex, but even limited knowledge is useful for making a big difference to boosting your website traffic. However, for a more technical approach it's best to consult a Digital Specialist.

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