



SEO

Stupidly **EASY** Optimization

A Guide To Understanding Real SEO
And How You Or Anyone Can Easily Apply It

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PREFACE

If there is any topic beaten to death online, it's SEO or Search Engine Optimization, which is overblown, overrated and misunderstood more often than not anyways. I am constantly amazed at the sheer volume of effort put into it by Internet Marketers, because the entire purpose of SEO is to generate free traffic from search engines and other web sites.

Hello! How free is it, if you're spending 50% or more of your time just doing SEO stuff (back links, article marketing, yada, yada, yada). You might just as well jump into PPC and spend the money rather than the time, if that's the case. Sheesh!

That said, I'm going to walk you through an incredibly easy strategy for deploying a brand new domain, getting it indexed and on its way to page one of SERPS in Google. Anyone can do this and the only cost of course is the cost of registering the domain and a hosting account, if you don't already have one.

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INTRODUCTION

So, you've got a new domain, you've got hosting for it and now you want to start driving traffic to it. And you probably are putting off all the work you "Think" you need to do to get that traffic, right? All those articles you've got to write, all those back links you've got to find and so on and so forth.

And that's probably the first mistake I see people making - trying to do nine million different things to drive traffic, usually losing interest quickly and just never following through with it. Instead, you probably buy the next Ebook or report that comes out promising you the moon when it comes to traffic generation.

Am I right? If so, don't feel bad... You're not alone...but you also don't need to overwhelm yourself with what amounts to a relatively simple, ongoing task as part of your overall marketing strategies. **Simple. Ongoing. Task.** Think about those three words as you're reading this guide.

The first thing I always tell my coaching candidates is that you've got to go back to the basics, develop a **workable strategy** that is **scalable to your time and resources**. This means making a plan and sticking to it. It doesn't mean going off in 20 different directions, but in one clear one that will continually build upon your previous efforts.

For me, the key is ROI in terms of time and effort. How much effort am I expending to drive the greatest amount of traffic. And where is that effort being spent - up front, in the middle or towards the end?

Let's jump right into this so you can see for yourself how easy it can be...

ORGANIC VERSUS PAID TRAFFIC

Right out of the gate, let's take a gander at the two basic types of traffic you can generate. Both work well, but both require a solid understanding of how they work, if you are going to do it effectively.

- **Organic Traffic** - As the name implies, this is the traffic coming into your site "Naturally", whereby someone finds a link to it and clicked it. This may be coming from a search engine, another website or even typed directly into the address bar by the visitor.

Organic Traffic has a long-term, residual effect and the only cost involved is usually your time and effort.

- **Paid Traffic** - This is traffic you pay for in one form or another, be it through PPC, paid advertising, etc. This type of traffic comes to your site in unnatural surges.

Paid Traffic is campaign based, which means it has no residual effect, so it's an ongoing process.

As I said, both methods work incredibly well, but to me at least, Organic Traffic is the better of the two, if you're focusing on long-term results. This is simply because [everything you do for Organic Traffic each day will continue to benefit you for years to come](#), through its residual effect.

So this guide will focus on Organic Traffic, to help you get the ball rolling.

WHAT IS SEO ANYWAYS?

At its core, Search Engine Optimization is simply all of the things you do to assist the search engines in indexing your web site and identifying relevant pages to return to someone searching through them. Search engines often provide guidelines for you to follow in this respect - it helps them and it helps you.

What SEO is not, is the process of trying to artificially skew search results in your favor. These methods are called Black Hat and in most cases, are not sustainable in the long-term. While these methods do work if you know what you're doing, to me, it's like killing the Goose that lays the golden eggs.

We can break SEO down into two components:

- **On-Page Optimization** - This encompasses all of the things you do on every web page that actually helps search engines figure out how to index them properly and where you make the best fit in search results.
- **Off-Page Optimization** - Conversely, these are the things you do external to your site, such as obtaining back links, Social Bookmarking, etc. This serves to drive traffic from specific, popular sites as well as to provide a back link to your site.

Off-Page Optimization is actually not "Natural" because you're forcing the back links, whereas normally people would link to your site if they found it interesting. This is what I term Grey Hat - it's a necessary evil, and if done properly, will provide sustainable results for you.

FOCUS ON AUTHORITY SITES

The first thing I recommend you do is to sit down and plan out the construction of an Authority Site, before you do anything else. And before you panic, I'll tell you that [these sites are nothing more than a larger site with what you might consider to be a collection of related niches.](#)

These sites have enormous advantage over smaller niche sites simply because there is more there for the search engines to work with, especially if the content is relevant to a broader topic. They will consistently rank better, appear more often in results and provide stickiness for your visitors to bookmark them.

Authority Sites are one hell of a lot easier to manage too, compared to 25 or 30 niche sites, because everything is in one place. They cost less overall (one domain, one hosting account) and your entire off page SEO efforts benefit the entire site!

It works like this - pick a niche you're interested in working in, say, weight loss. Now you could throw up a niche site with 10 pages of content, work through whatever process you follow to get it indexed and driving traffic to it, [but you're constantly re-inventing the wheel, because you're continually starting from scratch!](#)

Imagine that you've got a nice site going with a lot of info on weight loss and now want to focus on exercise. So you begin categorizing your "Niches" and adding content to each category. Like weight loss, exercise covers a lot of territory, so you can even sub-categorize it. You add in each new topic over time, logically grouping your pages together by category and inter-linking the related pages to one another.

[Authority Sites are scalable, so you can grow them as your time and resources permit.](#)

CAN YOU SAY KEYWORD RESEARCH?

OK, I know that everyone has their own theories about Keyword Research, Long Tail Keywords, etc., but the fact is, for long-term, organic traffic, you need to target broader markets than micro-niches as I just explained. To do that, you've got to look at some relatively competitive keywords.

In my case study, I planned to build an Authority Site, with the primary goal of selling a graphics software product for Windows that we developed at Incansoft. We already have a domain name that brands it (GFX-Writer.com) and it is in our [Product Catalog](#) at Incansoft, so now I want to target keywords related to graphics software.

Doing a broad search (no quotes), Google is showing me 348 million competing listings...a little too rich for my taste. Software shows over 1 billion results, so the hell with that one too! Now, I grit my teeth and start thinking about my target market, which is fundamentally people who need an easy to use graphics program, but don't like Photoshop or Gimp (free).

I start running searches on different combinations of keywords I can think of and finally run across "Header Software", which only has 30 million or so competing listings. Here's the important part - [in doing an exact search, \(using quotes\), I find that there are just over 6K competing listings.](#)

My next step is to go to the [Google External Keywords Tool](#) to start looking at the search volumes for this one and a few others. I'm looking for something competitive that I can target broadly for the overall site, but will still be drilling down into specific keywords later. [As it turns out, "Header Software" has an average monthly search volume of around 1,000 - and that's perfect for what I want to do.](#)

SIDEBAR1: DEBUNKING THE GOOGLE KEYWORD TOOL MYTH

I am so sick and tired of people making claims that Google's Keyword Tool is not accurate! Folks, Google provides this data for their Adwords customers and it's entirely accurate. Think about it - [do you really believe Google is misleading their advertisers with made up data?](#) Of course not....sheesh!

Secondly, I don't care what anyone says - [Google does not share their data with any third-party Keyword Tool providers](#), so there is simply no possible way those tools can be accurate. They base their data on other search engines that have a virtually microscopic share of the search engine market.

They may be good at estimating this data to some extent, but you've got to decide if you want to work with estimated data or the real deal! I've used Google's data for years and NEVER had them mislead me on anything I researched. On the other hand, using various keyword tools over the years, I've never been satisfied with the disparities in results they provide.

SIDEBAR2: DEBUNKING THE DOMAIN NAME WITH HYPHENS MYTH

Here's another real winner for you - the endless parroting of the idea that somehow Google penalizes domain names with hyphens or underscores in them. Newsflash people...[Google don't care one way or the other as long as the content is relevant and original.](#)

I'm about to disprove both of these myths on the following pages. And you'll see why you're shooting yourself in the foot if you believe in this kind of garbage, instead of testing it for yourself.

GRABBING THAT PERFECT DOMAIN NAME

The absolutely most vital starting point is to ensure that your primary keywords are in your domain name. And of course, you're thinking, "Easy to say, but geez...harder to do these days," am I right?

All the best domain names are hard to find anymore, especially if you believe in the myth that Google penalizes domain names with hyphens and/or underscores. I don't believe in it and the proof, as they say, is in the pudding.

I registered Header-Software.com on December 16th of 2008 and guess what? For my primary keyword phrase, header software, it has moved up to position #2 for broad searches (no quotes) and exact matches (with quotes). That's out of over 30 million competing listings!

Oh, wait a minute...I used a hyphen in the domain name didn't I? Go figure, LOL.

I also noticed that I'm in position #4 at MSN for this keyword and indexed in Yahoo, but nowhere to be found. That's not a problem as I've not put any special effort yet into either of those search engines - I'm focusing on Google because of their market share at this point.

Let me add in a couple of points as well - the site was listed in Google that same day (shortly after I put it on my server) and then it went through the normal "Google Shuffle" as they display it on page one, move out and bring it back.

The salient point here is after a month of shaking out - I'm at the top of page 1 ☺

WHAT EXACTLY DID I DO?

After pointing the DNS at my server (I put it on a shared IP Address), the first thing I did was to install a copy of [EZ Content Manager](#). I did this because of its blog-like functionality when it comes to SEO and its ease of use. Google and, so far, MSN, have fallen in love with the pages it produces, so I've been using it on a lot of sites.

Next, I added some initial content..7 or 8 pages if I recall. I made sure that the title of each page contained relevant keywords to the site and I also provide Meta Keywords and Descriptions.

Contrary to popular belief, [Google will use the Meta Description in the results list, so there's an opportunity to provide a short, compelling description to get searchers to click your link instead of the one above or below it.](#)

I made sure that the Title of each article (on the page, not the titlebar), was wrapped in `<h1></h1>` tags and contained a Keyword I'm targeting. Additionally, I made each keyword within the article body bold with `` tags.

I also took advantage of "Alt" and "Title" attributes in links and images to work in keywords without "Stuffing" the page full of them.

Incidentally, the approach I use is to optimize for LSI or Latent Semantic Indexing. I try to keep a very low keyword density on the primary keywords, but use a lot of secondary, semantically related words and phrases to give more context to each page.

Here's the important thing - I generated an RSS Feed and then auto-submitted that to a bunch of online RSS Feed Aggregators using [RSSBot](#). Boom...instant, one-way back links without me needing to do any extra work. I also submitted it to a variety of online directories and Social Bookmarking sites using [DirectoryBot](#) and [SocialBot](#) respectively too.

I did make up a Link List style sitemap and submitted these to Google, Yahoo and MSN. This is needed for later, when I start to trickle in content. I want to automatically ping the big three to let them know about it.

The last things I did that day (the 16th of December) was to "Digg" the index page and add a Digg icon to all the pages and using a FireFox add on, sent it to StumbleUpon. Because I had some other stuff in the works for this site, I just let it sit for a couple of weeks. I'll explain that one in a moment...

Before I forget, I did install Google Analytics when I added the content - I needed to track things from day one for this report, as well as for knowing what was or wasn't working.

Currently, the Bounce Rate is 18%, the Average Time on Site is 3:10 and it averages 169.29 visits per day. So far, 36% of that traffic comes from Google and the remaining 64% is coming from Referring Sites, primarily from my submissions using [DirectoryBot](#), [RSSBot](#) and [SocialBot](#).

Here's the rub - I've made no effort since then to do any off-page SEO! Everything that's happened to date is the result of about 3 hours worth of work on a snowy afternoon while my kids were taking a nap.

A WORKABLE STRATEGY

My plan is a simple one, which is to continue to add a page or three of content on a daily basis. [Original content mashed up with some related feeds](#). While I know I'll miss the occasional day here and there, it only takes me a few minutes a day to do it, so I can pretty much stick to it religiously.

Here's another important element of this - split those 500 word plus articles into 2 or 3 pages of content. Link them together (Part 1, Part 2, Part 3, etc.) at the bottom and keep the pages to 2 or 3 paragraphs. [Using this approach with 10 articles, you end up with between 20 and 30 content pages rather than just 10.](#)

Using [EZ Content Manager](#), every time I add new content, I publish a new sitemap and automatically ping Google, MSN and Yahoo to let them know. I have submitted a plain text, "Link List" style of sitemap to all three, so they are quick to come and grab the newest one.

I also work through the routine of using [RSSBot](#) and [SocialBot](#) to ping the RSS Feed Aggregators and bookmark new pages respectively. [All told, I spend around 15 minutes a day on this](#). When I checked earlier today, I saw that I've got 66 pages of content online.

At this point, the site is growing slowly and naturally and the inbound traffic is commensurate with the effort I've put into it. And I know from experience that the daily traffic will continue to grow over time.

I'm not greedy or in a real hurry - so I'm not killing myself trying to drive a ridiculous amount of traffic to it. [I'd rather focus on quality, organic traffic for now at least.](#)

LET'S DO SOME LIST BUILDING

Part of my plan for this particular site is to build a list of people interested in graphics, software, etc. - primarily Internet Marketers. The plan is simple enough - we call it [Free Graphics Daily](#). Every day, subscribers receive a zip file via email that contain a themed Header, Footer and Background graphic they can use on their own web pages.

In the 15 days since we deployed this program, [we've averaged 51 signups per day with a 2% unsubscribe rate](#). That list, like the site itself, is growing slowly and naturally - and it really does laser target the market segment I'm after. I've gotten some good feedback and will be tweaking the program eventually, but it's a winner in my book.

A couple of things to add to this - [on the back-end, I've got an offer to grab our graphics software at a big discount](#)...the offer is on the Signup Confirmation Page and also in the Welcome email. Other than that, I've not slammed the list with any other offers. Eventually, I will make some offers related to the subscription, but am not going to abuse it.

DON'T FORGET TO MONETIZE THE SITE

At the moment, I've added in AdSense to most of the content pages as I've not researched other, related products yet. [AdSense is doing OK...\\$147 in 15 days with highs of \\$9 and lows of 36 cents](#). It seems to be all over the place earnings wise, but the CTR is great.

The ballpark \$10 per day is more than enough for the effort made. For now, as I let the site age, I'm happy with its performance overall as a new site.

WHY STOP THERE?

It's true that there are literally thousands of different methods or techniques you can use to drive more traffic, but [most of them do not drive quality traffic](#). That's to say that if the traffic isn't converting, why keep beating it to death?

This is something you've got to test for yourself - I've done so and know that my particular methodology works well overall, driving traffic that buys. For example, the [Free Graphics Daily Program is converting at 10%](#) - and it would be higher, except that many of the subscribers I recognize as already owning the software, LOL.

That's not to say that I never use other methods...I do - [but I only use them when my time and workload permits me spending the odd hour or two doing it](#). For example, I will tweet about it on [Twitter](#) once in a while (although I don't post that much on Twitter right now).

I may do a little forum marketing, email other lists, etc., and follow up on other interesting opportunities to drive quality traffic, but here's the point:

I Am NOT In A Hurry! The Site Will Grow As It Ages...

...And Its Pulling In Some Revenue on Auto Pilot 😊

I'm not thinking about today though...I'm thinking about five years from now!

Sure, I could spend hours every day building back links, article marketing and trying other methods, but what's the point? I want the site to age gracefully, gain its position naturally and let it funnel that organic traffic into our main site at Incansoft.

But This Method Is Scalable...You Can Do More Or Less Depending Upon Your Time, Resources And Needs

You can ramp your efforts up and down as you have the time or money to outsource. If you're new to this, then you've probably got more time than money, so use it effectively and make everything you do count!

Now let me leave you with one final tip, which will save you the need of buying up all those reports and ebooks on traffic generation:

Organic traffic boils down to one thing - getting your links out there on the Internet. Whether you're posting in forums, commenting on blogs, doing reviews at Amazon, answer questions at Yahoo Answers, etc., [what you're really doing is simply getting your link out in front of people's eyes.](#)

