

PR5 in 12 Weeks-Diary of a Beginner. Week 2

In hindsight, the best analogy I can think of, to becoming proficient in Search Engine Optimization is learning to snow-ski.

If you are young enough, fit enough and have a modicum of co-ordination, you should be able to master the slopes to a reasonable level in about 12 weeks. For most of us, of course, this process normally takes place over several years as we fit in a week here, a week-end there. What I remember most though, (and this is the bit that is relevant!), is that when you first start to ski you are crammed full of things you should be doing by your instructor. I reckon it was about fifteen different things I had to remember to do, to stop myself sliding down the mountain on my back, wondering which of the fifteen things I had forgotten, to leave me in an embarrassing heap at the foot of the slopes!

I quickly learnt that it was impossible to do everything at once and that if I concentrated on the five most important things and got them right, I would stay on my feet.

After a short period of practicing the five points, I stopped thinking about them, the reflex part of my brain kicked in and they became automatic. My thoughts consciously moved onto the next five points and so on.

The moral of this tale is that you don't need to do everything at once to master SEO. If you did, it would overtake you, leaving you spinning into a heap at the bottom of the proverbial website mountain. If you get the important things working in a semblance of order, you can add the fine tuning as you go.

In my second week, the dilemma facing me was over keywords and which ones to optimize my pages for. For this articles sake, I will concentrate on the homepage. This is the most important page, and gateway to the rest of your site.

Now, I read a lot of articles about optimization of content, Titles, keyword tag, Meta description tags, headline tags etc. etc. Some articles suggested that it was better to target more specific keywords than the larger generic, high traffic keywords, which by definition are more difficult to obtain a high ranking for.

In the end I think it comes down to the type of business you are in and the type of visitor you are trying to attract. Also take note of the competition. If the people you perceive as your direct competition are targeting certain keywords, then it is most likely those are the keywords you will need to target as well.

In my business, Spanish Property is by far the largest keyword for traffic and whilst a local realtor in Benidorm may want to target the 3-Bed Villa in Benidorm as a keyword, as an MLS provider, I needed to be amongst the big advertising sites that ultimately would be my competition.

A good place to look for keyword suggestions is;
digitalpoint.com/tools/suggestion/

You can play with different combinations of keywords and find the traffic information to best suit your site.

Once you have decided on your keywords you need to optimize your web pages for them.

I am a follower of the believers who tell you not to optimize any web page for more than 3 keywords or phrases.

The reason is simple. If you follow the Google gurus then the most important thing when looking at content is the fact that it is supposed to be for human consumption. To this end, I suggest that you write your content before you sit down to work out your keyword preferences.

Write it like you were explaining it to a friend/client/customer for the first time. Make it concise, (unlike this article!), and informative. Edit, rewrite, and pass it around your friends and family until everybody agrees what a good piece of prose you have written on the given subject.

This is now your template. With keywords in hand, and pages of 'acceptable to humans', content you have the necessary ingredients to optimize the 'on-page' aspect of your website.

I had spent a long week of typing and retyping. I felt good within myself. I felt like I had deserved a welcome break. Then my web designer asked me a question.

Have you started your back-link campaign yet?

Week 3 was going to be busier still!

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

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