

Why On-Page SEO Matters

by Taymour | August 17, 2021

Both on-page and off-page SEO are essential for search engine optimization. On-page SEO is concerned with the website elements that influence search engine results page (SERP) rankings, whereas off-page SEO, as you may have assumed, focuses on online factors that are not on your website. In reality, both SEO types play a crucial role and are intimately linked. This blog emphasizes frequently-neglected on-page SEO.

At a recent forum of SEO professionals, experts noted that on-page SEO is so critical that a page can stand on its own and be ranked on Google without any backlinking (off-page SEO) whatsoever. Before we get too far into the weeds, however (and we will), let's figure out why on-page SEO is so important.

Google indexes billions of pages so that people who search for a keyword or phrase can find relevant information about it. Even though this is a daunting task, Google continually repeats this process in an ever-growing online community. Protocols exist to ensure that search engines like Google can easily and efficiently crawl through websites to find what they're looking for. This feature is important because it helps them determine whether your website is relevant to a user's search query. If it's not, then your website won't rank high in SERPs.

On-page SEO covers a broad range of activities, from written content meant for human consumption to technical SEO, which focuses on a website's technical aspects such as structure, code, and performance. Besides the noted search engine efficiency gains, on-page is also meant to improve a visitor's experience. Google's recent algorithmic updates have emphasized such experiential factors.

Relevance is a key factor in both search engine optimization and the user experience. Search engines want to provide the best results for a user's query, part of which is returning results that are relevant to the original keywords. Similarly, users expect to see results that are relevant to their query.

Relevance is also important in the connection between off-page and on-page SEO. Backlinks, which

are an important part of off-page SEO, must have content relevant to the final page to which they connect. The [anchor text](#) used in the link can also add an extra layer of relevance. Taking all these factors into account, it becomes clear that relevance is essential for a good user experience and successful search engine optimization.

Tips for Optimizing On-Page SEO

Title:

The webpage title is one of the most important on-page SEO factors. It's the first thing search engines see when they crawl your site, so it's important to optimize it correctly. Make sure your title is unique, catchy, and relevant to your page topic, and include your target keywords as close to the beginning of the title as possible. Also, always include each title in the HTML code's <head> section.

Meta Description:

The meta description (the snippet of text that appears below your title in SERPs) is also important for on-page SEO, and it's a great opportunity to introduce potential visitors to your page and persuade them to click through. Make sure your meta description is well written and includes your target keywords, and keep it under 160 characters, so it doesn't get cut off in the SERPs. As with headings, each title should be included in the HTML code's <head> section.

Headings:

One way to improve your on-page SEO is by using heading tags correctly. Header tags (h1, h2, etc.) help break up your content and make it easier for search engines to understand. Each page should only have one h1 tag, and you should use other header tags (h2, h3, etc.) sparingly, to highlight your content's important points or sections.

Keywords:

Keywords are another important factor for on-page SEO. When your content targets specific keywords, it improves your site's chances of achieving high SERP rankings for those terms. Be sure to research which keywords are relevant to your topic, and use them throughout your content (including in the title, meta description, and body text). However, don't overuse keywords, as Google sometimes penalizes this practice.

Images:

Images are also important for on-page SEO. When you include images on your page, always optimize them with relevant keywords and captions. You can also use Alt Text to provide additional information about the image for search engines.

Content Length:

Another key consideration for on-page SEO is content length. SEO experts generally recommend you aim for at least 1,500 words per page if you want to rank high in SERPs. However, don't focus only on word count—make sure the content is high quality and provides value to users.

Technical SEO:

As the name implies, technical SEO refers to optimizing a website for search engine indexing and ranking. This SEO subset focuses on a website's technical aspects such as structure, code, and performance. Web developers and engineers usually perform technical SEO rather than marketing or SEO professionals. However, technical SEO knowledge is becoming more important for all digital marketers, as it can have a significant impact on a website's visibility and traffic.

Technical SEO's main goal is to improve how search engines crawl through and index a website, which can ultimately lead to higher rankings and more traffic. To that end, technical SEO experts (developers versus marketers) need to ensure that a website is well-structured, uses clean code, and loads quickly. Additionally, they may need to troubleshoot issues that prevent search engines from properly indexing a website. While technical SEO can be complex, I can't overstate its importance. For any website that wants top rankings in search results, technical SEO must be a priority.

Website Performance:

Finally, it's important to optimize website performance. Search engines take into account how quickly a page loads when they rank it. If your website is slow, you're likely to rank lower than websites that load more quickly.

Website performance also affects user experience. Ensure that your HTML is properly formatted, with correct syntax and no errors. Poorly-formatted HTML can negatively affect your website's SEO performance. In addition, check for broken links and repair or remove them as necessary. If your website is slow to load or has errors on the page, visitors are likely to leave (or "bounce," in SEO jargon) before they even give your content a chance.

Tools and Resources to Help You with On-Page SEO

Several free and paid tools and resources are available to help you with on-page SEO. Some of the most popular ones include:

GTMetrix:

This tool loads your pages in a real browser with an unthrottled connection on the GTMetrix servers, which allows you to change certain options (location, connection speed, screen resolution, etc.) to better fit your needs.

Google PageSpeed Insights:

This tool uses headless/emulated browsers and network throttling to simulate your page load under different network conditions (i.e., desktop and mobile). Note that you can't change the test options like location, connection speed, screen resolution, etc.

GTMetrix and Google PageSpeed Insights:

newData recommends that businesses test their website speed using both methods. For your convenience, you can [test your website with both solutions at the same time](#).

Consider Hiring an SEO Expert

SEO can be a complex and time-consuming process, and it's often difficult for business owners to DIY their way to good results. Hiring an SEO expert can help you improve your website's content as well as its technical aspects. An SEO expert can also help you stay up-to-date with the latest trends and best practices, which is essential for achieving good results with SEO in general.

