

# The Once-A-Week SEO Checklist

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**A new year always brings about new possibilities, which are often predicated on the many resolutions we all make to improve our lives and work during the course of the year.**

It's possible that many of the hardworking webmasters and website owners have resolved to improve or amp up their search engine optimization (SEO) efforts this year to help them find more relevant consumers and increase conversions. However, many of these same Web workers will quickly find themselves faced with the same problems that plagued them in the years passed, most notably a lack of time in an already busy schedule.

No need to worry, though, because here's some good news for you: It's possible to maintain a healthy SEO campaign by (mostly) conducting a check up once a week that examines the most important elements of your website for moving up the search engine rankings, allowing you to identify and correct any issues you may be having. And the best part is, once these larger problems are corrected, it will help improve many other aspects of your overall SEO performance.

Just make sure that you regularly follow a version of this SEO checklist once a week, and get ready to watch the inevitable upward progress of your search marketing efforts.

## **- Use Google Webmaster Tools to check sitemaps**

To start, simply sign into your [Google Webmaster Tools](#) account (actually, if you don't have one, the first step is to register one), which can help you quickly identify any issues with your domain. Primarily, you should use this service to make sure your sitemaps don't have any errors and to review how many of your pages have been indexed. If you find that you have some missing pages, that's a pretty good indicator that you need to submit a brand new sitemap.xml to the search engines.

## **- Don't forget to look for crawl errors, too**

Google Webmaster Tools can also help you spot any crawl errors (pages "not found" or broken links) on your site; if these issues are uncovered, they should be considered top priority fixes. In addition, this tool can help you check up on your site speed, HTML problems, such as short or duplicate metadata, and links to your site.

## **- Look for (and fix) broken links**

Having a bunch of dead links on your website is going to hurt your standing with the search engines, so you should make it a point to regularly look for them by using a tools to crawl your website and point out any hazardous hyperlinks that you are unaware of. And once you know which links are bad, you can easily fix or get rid of them.

## **- Tune up title tags**

If you've put any effort into your SEO until now, every page on your site should have its own unique, descriptive title (as indicated in the HTML <title> tags), but as we all know, the more pages one adds to his or her site, the harder it is to constantly ensure that every page is given an appropriately SEO-friendly title. If you have a somewhat small site, you should be able to check all of your pages manually pretty easily, but for larger sites, Google Webmaster Tools will gather and present this information to you in a new "Content Analysis" section that can be found under the "Diagnostics" tab.

## **- Revise meta descriptions (as needed)**

Although meta page descriptions don't have a huge impact on search rankings, they can play a major role in convincing users to click-through to your site, so its worth giving them a once over on a regular basis, especially if you add a lot of new pages from week-to-week. In particular, you should look to make sure you don't have any duplicate descriptions on your site. Good descriptions should be between 150 and 160 characters and made up of compelling copy that smartly uses crucial keywords, without using quotation marks or other non-alphabet characters.

## **- Follow the trends**

Using an analytics platform like Google Analytics, check the daily, weekly and long-term search traffic trends to see what users are responding to and what isn't working. Find out which of your pages have increased search engine traffic and which ones have had the opposite effect, and then figure out the reasons for why this is the case. Ultimately, you should have a solid idea/starting point to look at the problems on your site that need to be addressed, as well as the opportunities you have to increase search traffic based on user data.

## **- Add internal links when possible**

Search engines use internal links to determine which pages the website owners think are the most important on the site, so to help your rankings and show off your best stuff, look around your site for ways to include links to these power pages. This is especially easy (and important) if you are consistently adding new content.

## **- Seek out your best search phrases and use them a lot**

Thanks to – you guessed it – Google Webmaster Tools, webmasters can now find out what search phrases are leading users to their virtual door. By going to the "Statistics" tab and look at

“search queries,” you’ll see the top 20 search queries that your site is appearing in, which can help you assess the performance of your current keyword campaigns and maybe even discover a few new ones hadn’t even thought of. With this information in tow, you can use [TrafficZap’s keyword density tool](#) to receive a report about the words and phrases that appear most densely on the page of the URL that you enter; this will help you figure out just how well you’re using your keywords and phrases on your site, and make adjustments accordingly.