

# SEO for Profit

*A Wordtracker Masterclass in search engine optimization*

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Part One

# Search engines and SEO



# Introduction

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the practice of maximizing visits and response from search engines.

Part One of this book introduces you to search engines and SEO – what they are, how they work and why you should start your SEO now.

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Search engines are at the heart of sales and marketing for most consumer industries.

Chapter 1 (**Search engines**) looks at the scale and influence of search engines, including that a staggering 89% of consumers research online (mostly with search engines) for offline purchases.

You'll also learn how search engines work which is the first step to understanding how to get the most from them.

Chapter 2 (**What is SEO?**) introduces and defines search engine optimization (SEO) as the practice of maximizing visits and response from search engines. You'll discover the five core steps to SEO:

- 1) Keyword research.
- 2) Planning site structure.
- 3) Creating quality content.
- 4) Building quality links.
- 5) Monitoring results.

Chapter 3 (**Why SEO now?**) explains how success brings more success in SEO. Every day, strong sites get stronger while the weak have to work harder.

Every delay in starting SEO makes success more difficult and more expensive. So start optimizing now.

Chapter 4 (**Integrated SEO**) starts with the premise that SEO does not work in isolation. SEO works best when integrated with your other marketing activities.

To achieve its potential, your SEO needs to work closely with editorial, design, branding, offline marketing, pay per click (PPC) advertising, and public relations.

## Wordtracker Tools

[Keywords Tool](#): Do you know why some websites get plenty of traffic, while others get very little? Find the best keywords for your business. [Take a risk-free 7 day trial of Wordtracker's Keywords tool](#)

[Strategizer](#): Find your most profitable target keywords. Plan your search marketing actions. Report and monitor your site's results. Get maximum profits from your SEO and PPC campaigns. [Take a risk-free 7 day trial of Wordtracker Strategizer](#)

[Link Builder](#) is a powerful tool designed to help you define your best link prospects - and craft a linking campaign that quickly and dramatically grows your online presence. [Take a risk-free 7 day trial](#) of Wordtracker's Link Builder tool.

# Chapter 1

## Search engines

A significant % of consumer purchases are now made online and almost all are researched online.

Search engines follow links to find and index billions of pages.

To have a chance of being found with a search, your site must at least include the search phrase (aka keyword).

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People use search engines to help them find things.

I might be hungry and want some donuts delivered to my office so I search with *donuts delivery*.



donuts delivery

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

Search engines are used to find almost anything including: friends, pictures, maps, news and things people want to buy.

Search engines are so popular that approximately 17 billion searches are made a month in the USA (July 2011, source: Comscore).

Worldwide, 131 billion searches were made a month back in December 2009 (source: Comscore). That was a 46% increase on the same month in 2008. We can be confident that considerably more searches are now made.

## Search engines and business

Search engines have become a crucial part of business and communication.

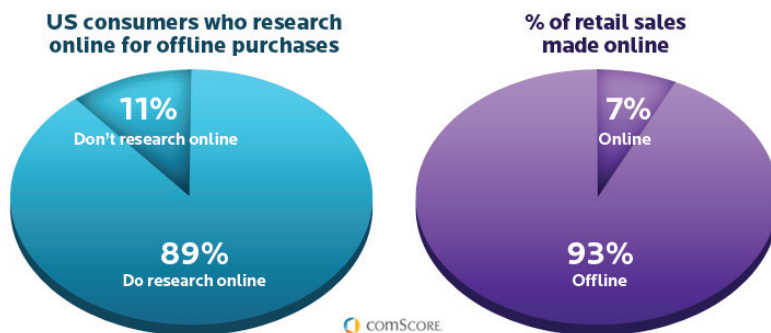
Significant sales in most companies' markets are either made online (and mostly via search engines) or influenced by research online.

Approximately \$160 billion was spent online in 2009 (source: eMarketer).

7% of all consumer spending is made online (source: Comscore).

Most of these sales come via a search.

Plus, an amazing 89% of offline consumer purchases are first researched online (source: Comscore).



Having your website found by those making relevant searches is starting to look essential to business success.

Before we have a first look at how that's done, let's find out how search engines work.

## An introduction to how search engines work

Here we will give you Google's own summary of how they work (with some significant comments from me in bold italics) ...

### Crawling

Google crawls the world wide web with software programs called spiders.

Spiders crawl by following links on documents and pages (I'll just say pages). Like the links you would yourself use on a web page.

#### ***Google finds pages via links on other pages.***

Google crawls billions of pages.

Google stores the information it finds in its index.

Google's index is like a huge filing system for all the pages it finds.

### Matching

When you search for eg, *donuts delivery*, Google searches its index for all the pages containing *donuts delivery*.

Typically, Google will find thousands, even millions, of matches for a search.

The image below shows there were 6,620,000 matches for my *donuts delivery* search.



This means that 6,620,000 pages are competing to be shown on the first results page for that search and have a chance of being visited.

#### ***If your site does not at least contain the words in a search then it is not even in the race to be found for that search.***

Google must then decide what order to display its results in.

## Ranking

Google uses over 200 factors to decide what order to display the matching pages. These include (for each page):

- How often the keyword's words eg, *donuts delivery*, are used on the page?
- Do the keywords appear in the page title and the URL?
- Does the page include synonyms for those keywords?
- Is the page from a high quality website, or is it low quality or spam?
- How many links from other pages and sites point to the page (and how important are those links)?

Each matching page is scored for each of the 200-plus factors and the scores totalled. This whole process is the algorithm.

The total score is then used to rank the matching pages and decide the order the results are presented on the search results page (highest at the top).

## A more advanced look at how search engines work

That was a simplified introduction to how Google works, according to Google in its own [video here](#).

Google doesn't like to say much more than that but Bing does.

Bing have recently revealed what we might call some of the advanced parts of its ranking algorithm.

The insights are relevant to all search engines as they all face the same problems and have largely the same resources available to solve them.

Bing said the three most important aspects of ranking (in this order) are:

- Content quality as measured by user behavior.
- Social references to a page.
- Links to a page.

We'll be looking at all these in more detail but I'll give a little more information here ...

### **Content quality as measured by user behavior**

Bing monitors how users react to the pages listed in its search results. Specifically, it measures:

- What % of searchers click through to each listed page.
- If searchers come straight back to the search results once they have clicked through to a page (a sign they didn't like what they found)?

Pages with bad results get moved down the rankings.

### **Social references to a page**

Bing monitors how much - and by whom - a page is referenced on social sites like Facebook and Twitter.

### **Links to a page**

As mentioned in the introduction to Google's ranking above, Bing considers the links to a page.

In particular, search engines are interested in the use of keywords in the anchor text of links.

Anchor text is the actual words you click when following a link. Like [these words](#) which link to the Wordtracker Academy.

## Next

Next we'll look at search engine optimization (SEO) - the craft of maximizing your results from search engines and the subject of this book, of course.