Website SEO Optimization Checklist

Checklist - Product Design

☐ 1. [This checklist compliments Website Marketing Checklist]

☐ 2. SEO:

☐ 3. Title Tag

☐ 4. Google Preview

☐ 5. Headings

☐ 6. Alt Attribute

☐ 7. Text/HTML Ratio

☐ 8. Indexed Pages

☐ 9. In-Page Links

☐ 10. Broken Links

☐ 11. URL Rewrite

☐ 12. Underscores in the URLs

☐ 13. Blocking Factors

☐ 14. Blog

☐ 15. Competitor Websites Analysis

☐ 16. Usability:

☐ 17. Favicon

☐ 18. Custom 404 Page

☐ 19. Langauge

☐ 20. Structured Data Markup

☐ 21. Trust Indicators

☐ 22. Technologies:

☐ 23. Server Uptime

☐ 24. Technologies

☐ 25. Speed Tips

☐ 26. Analytics

☐ 27. W3C Validity

☐ 28. Doctype

☐ 29. Encoding

☐ 30. SSL Secure

☐ 31. Backlinks:

☐ 32. Backlinks Counter

☐ 33. Referring Domains

☐ 34. Backlink Quality

☐ 35. Social:

☐ 36. Social shareability

☐ 37. Facebook Page

☐ 38. Twitter Account

☐ 39. Other social presence

☐ 1. [This checklist compliments Website Marketing Checklist]

☐ 2. SEO:

☐ 3. Title Tag

Ideally, your title tag should contain between 10 and 70 characters (spaces included).

Make sure your title is explicit and contains your most important keywords.

Be sure that each page has a unique title.

15 Title Tag Optimization Guidelines For Usability And SEO

☐ 4. Google Preview

What your Title Tag and Meta Description will look like in Google™ search results.

While Title Tags & Meta Descriptions are used to build the search result listings, the search engines may create their own if they are missing, not well written, or not relevant to the content on the page.

Title Tags and Meta Descriptions are cut short if they are too long, so it's important to stay within the suggested character limits.

- **Title Tags 60 characters**

- **Meta Descriptions 120 characters**

☐ 5. Headings

Websites should use HTML headings () but beware of too many HTML headings.

Use your keywords in the headings and make sure the first level (<H1>) includes your most important keywords.

While it is important to ensure every page has an <H1> tag, never include more than one per page. Instead, use multiple <H2> - <H6> tags.

How to Use HTML Heading Tags - a Quick Guide

☐ 6. Alt Attribute

Alternative text (the alt attribute) is required for all images. Add alternative text so that search engines can better understand the content of your images.

Remember that search engine crawlers cannot actually "see" images, so the alternative text attribute allows you to assign a specific description to each image. They are also used by screen readers to help provide some context for the visually impaired.

Adding alternative text can help to reinforce how relevant a page is to its target keywords, while also making images more likely to be displayed in the Google™ Images search results.

Check the images on your website and make sure effective alternative text is specified for each image.

Restrict the number of characters in alt text to 150, including spaces, and minimize the size of images to optimize your website's page load times.

What is Alt Attribute

Image Alt Attribute– Relevant for SEO and Usability?

☐ 7. Text/HTML Ratio

This page's ratio of text to HTML code between 25 and 70 percent is ideal. When it goes beyond that, the page might run the risk of being considered as spam.

As long as the content is relevant and gives essential information, it is a plus to have more of it.

☐ 8. Indexed Pages

This is the number of pages on your website that are indexed by search engines. It's important to aim to have all of your web pages crawled and indexed by the search engines, as this gives you more opportunity for your website to be found.

A low number (relative to the total number of pages/URLs on your website) indicates that there is an issue, whether it's due to a bad internal linking structure, or you're unknowingly preventing search engines from crawling your pages.

Make sure your website's XML sitemap is present and you have submitted it to the major search engines. Building backlinks to your website's internal pages will also help bots to discover, crawl and index them, while building authority to help them rank in the search engines.

Check Google™ Search Console under 'Google Index' and 'Crawl' to keep track of the status of your site's indexed/crawled pages.

☐ 9. In-Page Links

While there's no exact limit to the number of links you should include on a page, best practice is to avoid exceeding 200 links.

Links pass value from one page to another, but the amount of value that can be passed is split between all of the links on a page. This means that adding unnecessary links will dilute the potential value attributed to your other links.
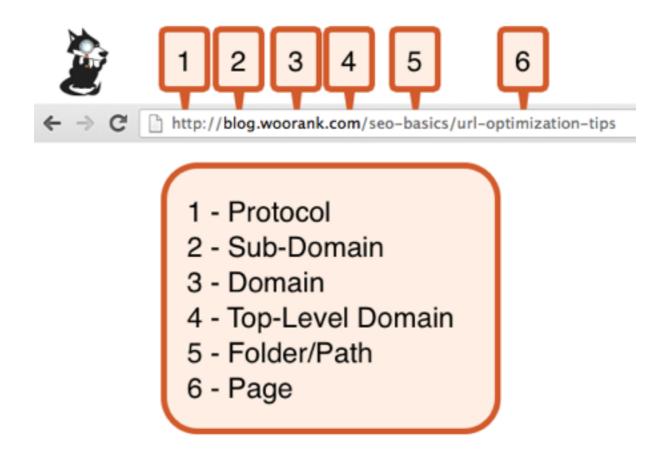
Using the Nofollow attribute prevents value from being passed to the linking page, but it's worth noting that these links are still taken into account when calculating the value that is passed through each link, so Nofollow links can also dilute pagerank.

☐ 10. Broken Links

Broken links send users to non-existing web pages. They are bad for your site's usability, reputation and SEO. If you find broken links in the future, take the time to replace or remove each one.

☐ 11. URL Rewrite

URL Optimization: 5 Best Practices for SEO

□ 12. Underscores in the URLs

We have detected underscores (these_are_underscores) in this URL and/or in your in-page URLs. You should instead use hyphens (these-are-hyphens) to optimize your SEO.

While Google™ treats hyphens as word separators, it does not for underscores.

□ 13. Blocking Factors

Flash should only be used for specific enhancements. Although Flash content often looks nicer, it cannot be properly indexed by search engines. Avoid full Flash websites to maximize SEO. This advice also applies to AJAX.

Frames can cause problems on your web page because search engines will not crawl or index the content within them. Avoid frames whenever possible and use a NoFrames tag if you must use them.

☐ 14. Blog

Starting a blog is a great way to engage with your audience and increase your online visibility by attracting qualified traffic from new sources.

Please check our Advanced Content Promotion Checklist for more tips

☐ 15. Competitor Websites Analysis

Use tools like Similar Web to learn more about your competitors' web marketing strategies.

☐ 16. Usability:

Favicons improve a brand's visibility. As a favicon is especially important for users bookmarking your website, make sure it is consistent with your brand.

☐ 17. Favicon

☐ 18. Custom 404 Page

Take advantage of the opportunity to provide a beautiful 404 Error Page for your visitors.

** 40 Great 404 Error Pages**

☐ 19. Langauge

Use the META Language Attribute to declare the intended language of your website.

Tips for multilingual websites:

- Define the language of the content in each page's HTML code.
- Specify the language code in the URL as well (e.g., "mywebsite.com/fr/mycontent.html").

☐ 20. Structured Data Markup

Structured Data Markup is used to generate Rich Snippets in search engine results. It is a way for website owners to send structured data to search engine robots; helping them to understand your content and create well-presented search results.

Google™ supports a number of rich snippets for content types,
including: Reviews, People, Products, Businesses and Organizations, Recipes, Events , Videos, and Music. If your website covers one of these topics, then we suggest that you annotate it with Schema.orgusing microdata.

☐ 21. Trust Indicators

- "About us" page

- "Privacy Policy" page

- "Disclaimer" page

- "Cookies policy" alert

☐ 22. Technologies:

☐ 23. Server Uptime

☐ 24. Technologies

Get to know the technologies used for your website. Some codes might slow down your website. Ask your webmaster to take a look at this.

☐ 25. Speed Tips

Website speed has a huge impact on performance, affecting user experience, conversion rates and even rankings. By reducing page load-times, users are less likely to get distracted and the search engines are more likely to reward you by ranking your pages higher in the SERPs.

Conversion rates are far higher for websites that load faster than their slower competitors.

See Google's PageSpeed Insights Rules for more information on how to improve each of the elements in this section.

An example:

 Perfect, your server is using a caching method to speed up page display.

 Perfect, your website doesn't use nested tables.

 Too bad, your website is using inline styles.

 Perfect, your website has few CSS files.

 Perfect, your website has few JavaScript files.

 Too bad, your website does not take advantage of gzip.

☐ 26. Analytics

Web analytics let you measure visitor activity on your website. You should have at least one analytics tool installed, but It can also be good to install a second in order to cross-check the data.

Popular Analytics Tools Include: Google™ Analytics, Quantcast™, AdobeAnalytics™, Piwik™, chartbeat™, Clicky™, ClickTale™, etc.

☐ 27. W3C Validity

W3C is a consortium that sets web standards.

Using valid markup that contains no errors is important because syntax errors can make your page difficult for search engines to index. Run the W3C validation service whenever changes are made to your website's code.

☐ 28. Doctype

The Doctype is used to instruct web browsers about the document type being used. For example, what version of HTML the page is written in.

Declaring a doctype helps web browsers to render content correctly.

☐ 29. Encoding

Specifying language/character encoding can prevent problems with the rendering of special characters.

☐ 30. SSL Secure

Modern websites tend to be SSL secured (HTTPS) as it provides an extra security layer while logging in to your Web Service. In 2014, Google™ announced that an HTTPS (vs HTTP) website would receive an extra boost in their ranking.

While switching to HTTPS, make sure your site remains optimized and see to it that your website will still run quickly. Follow these best practices for a smooth transition:

- Use a serious issuer to purchase your SSL certificate

- Redirect all of your HTTP pages to the HTTPS version of your website

- Use a Security Token Service (STS) in your headers

- Renew your SSL certificate every year, before it expires

- Make sure that all of your content (CSS, etc.) is linked to HTTPS

- Update your XML sitemap to ensure the URLs include HTTPS and update the robots.txt file to reference this version

- Register the HTTPS website in Google & Bing Search Console/Webmaster Tools

☐ 31. Backlinks:

☐ 32. Backlinks Counter

Backlinks are links that point to your website from other websites. They are like letters of recommendation for your site.

Since this factor is crucial to SEO, you should have a strategy to improve the quantity and quality of backlinks.

Backlinking Factors to Improve Site SEO

□ 33. Referring Domains

The number of domains your backlinks are coming from.

□ 34. Backlink Quality

You can better understand which web pages link to you using the following data:

- Anchor Text - this is the clickable text that is used to link to a web page.

- Source URL - this is the URL of the linking page.

- Target URL - this is the URL of the linked page.

- Backlink Quality Score - this is a score that rates the quality of your backlinks by analysing data from the Majestic backlinks tool, based on a number of factors, including the number of links/referring domains pointing to the linking domain and the quality of those links based on their backlink profiles.

It's important to understand how to identify low quality links and how to build new future-proof links in order to build a diverse link profile that conforms to Google's Webmaster Guidelines.

□ 35. Social:

□ 36. Social shareability

The impact of social media is huge for certain industries, take advantage of this digital version of word-of-mouth marketing.

Make sure you have opened social media profiles on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ and other sites that are of interest to your customers.

Learn how to engage your social media audiences and create a consistent fan base. You can also use your website to increase your popularity on social platforms.

Check these helpful tools for managing your social media campaign.

Note: This data represents social media influences from your website's URL, it does not represent data from specific brand pages.

☐ 37. Facebook Page

☐ 38. Twitter Account

☐ 39. Other social presence