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4th Edition

Search Engine Optimization

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Books
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Bruce Clay

Kristopher B. Jones

Founder, LSEO.com



Search Engine Optimization

ALL-IN-ONE

4th Edition

by Bruce Clay and Kristopher B. Jones

for
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Introduction

Internet marketing is a dynamic marketing channel because of its accuracy and ease in tracking traffic. It also generates new opportunities for communication and marketing at breakneck speeds.

In the early days of the Internet, search engines evolved to bring the web to users who were looking for sites, products, and like-minded users. These days, savvy marketers know that showing up on search engine results pages is a fruitful way to reach potential new customers. But landing your business's website in that precious spot high on the results pages is far from guaranteed. Search engine optimization (SEO) grew out of the need to persuade search engines that your site offers the best content for a particular topic.

Search engine optimization isn't a difficult discipline, but it is complex because of its many different parts that you need to tweak and adjust so that they work in harmony. And as far as marketing disciplines go, SEO is a wildly moving target. This latter quality makes a book on search engine optimization a challenging undertaking, often requiring a focus on broad concepts rather than specifics. Many of those specifics change or even fade away so often that they can need to be replaced or updated a hundred times just while this book is being updated for the newest edition.

To keep pace with the unavoidably fluctuating nature of SEO recommendations and search engine guidelines, your business needs to avoid chasing search engine algorithms. Instead, your goal should be simply to present your pages as the most relevant for a given search query. Resist the urge to assume that one aspect

of search engine optimization is more important than another. Keep in mind that to succeed, all the various aspects of your SEO endeavors need to work together.

About This Book

Throughout this book, we reference tools as well as experts (ourselves and others) in the field. Search marketing, as an industry, is very active and excels at knowledge sharing. Although we cover the basics here, we strongly urge you to take advantage of the community that has developed since search engine optimization began. Truly, without the search marketing community, we couldn't have written this book.

We hope that you keep this book near at hand, picking it up when you need to check for answers. For that reason, we attempt to make each minibook stand on its own. If something falls outside the scope of a particular minibook, or requires a mention in one but more detail in another, we refer you to the correct chapter or minibook for more information.

Search engine optimization has grown and changed over the years, along with the search engines themselves, and it continues to change at such a fast pace that sometimes the tools and features of the search engines become outdated even soon after this book's publication. For example, over the course of writing this book, Google changed the name of its webmaster tools platform from Google Webmaster Tools to Google Search Console and modified the layout of local search results pages multiple times. This changeability means that you may have to research the most current tools and features available to you at any given moment.

This book uses the following conventions:

- » Text appears in brackets when it represents a search query that an Internet user might type into a search engine's search box, like this: [when is Mother's Day].
- » Web addresses and programming code appear in monofont. If you're reading a digital version of this book on a device connected to the Internet, you can click or tap the web address to visit that website, like this:
www.dummies.com.

Foolish Assumptions

We wrote this book for a particular sort of person. We assume that you, the one holding this book, are a small-business owner who's pretty new to Internet marketing. You might have a website, or maybe you're thinking about finally diving into this online thing; either way, we presume that you have already figured out how to connect to the Internet and use a search engine.

We also assume that you're either somewhat familiar with the technologies that power websites or that you have access to someone who is. HTML, JavaScript, and other technologies are broad topics on their own. We don't expect you to know everything there is to know about JavaScript programming or HTML, but we also don't spend time explaining them to you. If you don't know how to program in these technologies, find a capable programmer to help you in your journey of developing your business's online presence. For a primer, you may want to seek out the *For Dummies* titles devoted to these topics.

Icons Used in This Book



TIP

This icon calls out suggestions that help you work more effectively and save time.



REMEMBER

Try to keep items marked with this icon in mind while you optimize your website. Sometimes we offer a random tidbit of information, but more often than not, we talk about something that you'll run into repeatedly, so you should remember it.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

SEO can get pretty technical pretty fast. If you're not familiar with the terminology, it can start to sound like gibberish. We marked the sections where we get extra-nerdy with this icon so that you can be prepared. If these sections go over your head, don't worry: You can move on without understanding every nuance.



WARNING

If you see a Warning, take extra care. This icon denotes the times when getting something wrong can nuke your site, tank your rankings, and just generally devastate your online marketing campaign.

Beyond the Book

You can find a little more helpful related information at <https://www.dummies.com/>, where you can peruse this book's Cheat Sheet. To get this handy resource, go to the