

· DMAasia ·

Modern SEO 101 Playbook

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**Vatsal
Asher**

DMAAsia Marketing 101 Playbooks, by Brandmasters, are designed for long-lasting success. The framework, we believe, will become the go-to resource for marketers who are looking to improve their strategies, develop new skills and optimize their performance.

Each playbook aims to offer tools and templates that will cover a specific marketing topic in-depth and are based on industry best practices – allowing your whole team to be efficient, effective and successful!

We are delighted to present to you the first of our two playbooks on Conversational Marketing & Modern SEO.



EVANGELISTS

SEO is a constant dialogue between your brand and customers - an ongoing dialogue to connect and engage with them.

The need for digitization in India has led marketers to seek further avenues of revenue generation and better Returns on Investment.

As the internet penetration percentage increases over the years, organic search will become the biggest driver of digital success for most online businesses.

With the rising cost of digital advertisements, SEO is empowering marketers with the power to deliver exponential ROI.

This playbook is our effort to outline the importance of SEO, getting your SEO efforts right and few frameworks that will make you search ready. With this book we intend to assist you in understanding and implementing effective SEO strategies and tactics.

I firmly believe collaboration creates magic. While working on this book, I had the privilege to interact with CMOs with a transformational vision in SEO and I thank them for all their support and for making this SEO Playbook come to reality; the rest is magic. Gratitude to the DMA team & Vatsal Asher for making this platform where the marketing leaders can share their learnings with the other marketers.

Enjoy the Playbook.

Kaushal Thakkar
Founder & MD



**Kaushal
Thakkar**

Infidigit



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THE ULTIMATE SEO Q&A



You may have moved from traditional advertising to digital. But are you picking up the right battle in digital? It is getting increasingly hard to sustain growth in a consumerist world. If you are not on top of the mind of your target audiences, chances are that you'll not make the cut. The key to staying ahead and relevant today is an intelligently crafted Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy.

Search rankings are one of the most important measurement metrics. Whether it's SEO or PPC (Pay Per Click), your brand placement combined with communication strategy on SERPs (Search Engine Results Page) will define the Quantity of Sessions that your website is going to get through search engines, and subsequently the traction you get on the website in terms of conversions.

Seasoned marketing leaders know that these SEO efforts are crucial. However, too often, the focus on a handful of initiatives or capabilities leads to frustration when they are unable to derive the expected value from SEO efforts.

The Ultimate SEO Q&A

DMAasia and Infidigit undertook a rigorous study to understand the SEO efforts business leaders are making. Our survey of country's leading marketers across industries focuses on strategic initiatives and draws upon the experience of marketing leaders spearheading regional, Asia Pacific and global digital marketing efforts in their organizations.

The survey provides key insights on how today's marketing leaders are actioning SEO to achieve the desired results. We can call it a practitioner's guide to getting the SEO Strategy right. Here's a snapshot for you.

Q.1 What are the goals of SEO in your organization?

The SEO goals can be distilled to these 5 points:

- i) Increasing organic traffic
- ii) Boosting presence and rankings to increase awareness and appear in search results (for both branded & non-branded terms) to earn more leads, sales, and ultimately revenue
- iii) Reducing bounce rates, dependence on paid marketing, and Cost of Customer Acquisition (CAC)
- iv) Strengthening domain authority and increasing active user time spent on-pages
- v) Improving user and search engine experience with a secondary goal of app installs.

Q.2 How do you create engaging content for SEO? What are the best practices you follow for content?

Marketers believe it's crucial to understand user intent and then assist customers with the right information, keeping the objective of the content and brand tonality in mind. Best practices for creating impactful content according to the survey include:

- i) Creating content with intent: R3MAT (Right Message, Right Audience, Right Time)
- ii) Resolving customer queries
- iii) Assessing content relevance for domain authority keeping link building in mind
- iv) Keyword research, market trend, and competitor analysis
- v) Optimization with keyword density (of 1%-2%), Meta descriptions, Alt attributes, H1 tags, & URLs.



Q.3 How frequently do you track Google's search engine updates?

We found out in our survey that leaders track the Google search engine updates on a weekly basis. They monitor SERP volatility and adhere to the latest algorithm changes to ensure their domain authority is maintained. The responses show that Google Search Central, Official Twitter account, and SEO forums are the preferred channels for tracking updates.

Q.4 What are the metrics you use to measure the success of SEO in your organization?

The metrics for measuring SEO success are many, however, as per our survey these emerged on the top:

- i) Organic traffic
- ii) Domain authority score
- iii) Website visibility on SERP
- iv) Bounce rate and average session duration
- v) Page and targeted keyword rankings
- vi) Average time spent
- vii) Number of pages indexed.

Q.5 How many people in your team are responsible for SEO and what does each person typically do?

Partnering with an SEO agency and tapping in-house experts for specific tasks like web development, copywriting, and social media is the general practice. As per the survey, the number of in-house specialists varies from 1- 6, though larger teams of up to 15 people also exist. We have found that marketing teams in global organizations also have their (central) global team handling SEO responsibilities across geographies.

Q.6 How frequently do you guest blog to boost your SEO? What are the best practices you follow in such a case?

Marketing leaders view guest blogging as an important activity to get backlinks and build trust. Their blogging frequency varies– from 3-5 days to just 1 blog per month. Marketing campaigns also play a role in determining the number of guest blogs.

Domain Authority (>45 or >60), Spam Score (<5%), Organic Traffic, Backlink Score, and Relevance are the key to deciding the guest blogging platform. Also, a guest blog with 800-1,000 words is considered optimum.

Q.7 Do you participate in link exchanges? Can this be beneficial?

This question has received mixed responses from marketing leaders. Some see benefits, while others view this as a Black Hat SEO practice. Nearly half of the leaders said they do not indulge in link exchanges as it's against Google Webmaster Guidelines and can result in penalties. However, those who agreed think it is beneficial when links come from relevant and niche sites with high domain authority and low spam score.

Q.8 From an SEO perspective, is it still relevant to write for search engines or would you take the White Hat SEO route?

White Hat SEO practices have emerged as a preferred channel for marketers. We found that marketing leaders also focus on creating a balance and zero in on the techniques based on the objective of the SEO efforts. Writing for search engines alone is a passé and content should focus on user intent, according to the survey.

Q.9 How do you strategize content for SEO? Do you review it quarterly, weekly, or monthly?

Our survey revealed that marketing leaders take a planned approach to strategizing for content. The strategy involves using scalable topics for content, revising meta tags, and updating on-page content to keep up with advances in the search engine algorithm. They carry out reviews on a monthly basis.

Q.10 SEO being a long-term investment, how much time do you invest in it?

The timeframe for SEO activities varies largely. For results to flow in, as per the marketer's survey, it takes anywhere between 3-12 months. Then the impact can be seen on SERPs (search engine results pages) in terms of organic traffic and keywords.

Q.11 What are the techniques you follow for better on-page SEO?

We found that marketers conduct on-page activities regularly. These include regular crawl of website, technical audit, SERP rank check, competitor and self-audit, defining site architecture, updating URLs, page titles, and meta descriptions; Internal and external linking; keyword tracking, checking keywords in URL, H1, H2 or H3 Tags, vetting schema markups, optimizing images, page speed and loading, publishing high-quality content, and ensuring mobile friendliness.

Q.12 How much time do you invest in off-page SEO and what are the techniques you follow for better off-page SEO?

The time spent varies from 15%-40% of the total time taken for off-page SEO. For better off-page SEO, techniques include content marketing (guest posts, authority blog posts, forum posting), brand building, public relations, influencer marketing, backlinking, press release, image and video submissions, social bookmarking, social media, and local listing.

Q.13 How do you optimize your social media pages for SEO? Do you believe it helps, or do you believe it is other social media metrics that matter?

Marketers optimize social media pages by using target keywords in hashtags and captions, social media bookmarking, providing complete and authentic information, placing anchor links in blog submissions, and backlinking press releases. Some believe that social media has an indirect impact on SEO by creating brand awareness, attracting website traffic, and increasing lifespan of content, as Google algorithms do not consider social media.

Q.14 How frequently do you audit for SEO (Technical)? What are the best practices you follow when you do an audit?

The majority of the marketers perform SEO audits on a weekly and monthly basis. And a few on a daily, quarterly, or half- yearly basis. Some best practices for technical SEO include UI/UX Audit, coverage and core web vitals error resolution, bounce rate reduction suggestions, page speed optimization, website server-related issue fix, indexing, page loading speed, pagination, canonical issue checks, broken links, crawl, JS and CSS errors, and checking SSL certificate.

Q.15 What are the best practices you follow for on-page and off-page SEO audit and frequency of audit?

An on-page and off-page SEO audit is an integral part of SEO for most of the marketers surveyed. Most perform an on-page audit on a monthly basis, while some undertake quarterly and weekly checks. The on-page audit checks include meta tags, sitemap, GA-GSC-PSI (Google Analytics, Google Search Console and Page Speed Insights) integration, Javascript crawls, H Tags, Alt Tags, URL Restructure, Website Architecture, Content Optimization, finding and deleting duplicate pages, keyword cannibalization checks, broken pages (404), reviewing structured data & rich snippets, for indexation issues, mobile friendly, site architecture, and redirect loops, among others.

Off-page audits are done at an average of 3 months. The main audit tactics include Links indexing, competitors' backlink profile checks, broken backlinks fix, anchor texts review, Inbound and outbound links and do-follow links check, referring domain and domain authority review, local citations and social signal check, disavowing spammy backlinks, online reviews. The most popular tools used for these audits cited by marketers are SEMrush, Ahrefs, ScreamingFrog, Google Search Console, Microsoft IIS, and PageSpeed Insights.

Q.16 How important is link building for you? What are the types of links you focus more on and what is the ratio?

A. For nearly all marketers, link building occupies a prime position in their SEO efforts. It comprises contextual backlinking focusing on websites that have high domain authority. The ratio of do- follow and no-follow links hovers around 70:30, and 90:10 for backlinks and crosslinks.

Q.17 How do you make backlinking more effective on your website?

A. As per our survey, the marketing leaders use multiple ways to make backlinking effective. The tactics include contextual linking from relevant websites, highlight keywords and phrases in blogs, backlinking product descriptions, press releases, quora Q&A, and infographics, using social bookmarking, competitor backlink gap analysis, and target keywords that are already in the striking distance (typically between 11 -30 positions), acquiring high authority backlinks from unique referring domains (from 30 to 80), or using third party indexing tools to send the backlinks to Google, and checking outbound links to form partnerships.

Q.18 How do you improve domain authority (DA) for your website? Are there any best practices that have helped you?

A. The majority agree on acquiring high quality backlinks from websites with high domain authority (45+) by creating good content, improving spam score, optimizing off-page, on-page, technical SEO, website structure and UX, and removing spammy links. They also check parameters such as mobile friendliness, page speed, social signal, link building, and social media plugins, among others.

Q.19 How quickly do SEO Engineers and Project Managers help in tweaking your website to enhance your overall results?

A. For most, this differs on the sprints and priority items. Some said their technical teams can incorporate changes in real-time or within a few hours. Others carry out sprints at an interval of 7-10 days or a quarter, depending on website performance. However, they agree that the time period taken to reflect the desired outcome is 3-6 months.

Q.20 Would you consider leveraging AI bots to create content?

A. The marketing leaders agree that AI-generated content has a long way to go before it can be used in organizations. They view content as creative expression, and said that AI-based content lacks pathos and is mostly one-dimensional. Some think that AI-based content creation can be useful in the discovery phase and can speed up the process by cutting down repetitive tasks, but certainly requires review by humans.

Q.21 In your opinion, how does Amazon SEO or YouTube SEO differ from website SEO?

A. The majority think that all three entities have different algorithms and hence SEO strategy would be different for each platform. Amazon is based on its own algorithm, whereas YouTube and website SEO are driven by a common Google algorithm. Amazon is sales-driven, YouTube is driven more by audience preference, and websites are usually driven by intent of the user. Google analytics offers more measurement metrics for the marketers than Amazon. The nature of content and purpose of the channel also figured as a determining factor in strategy by the marketers.

Q.22 In your opinion, what are some of the factors to consider when looking to improve your App Store Optimization (ASO) rankings?

A. As per our marketer's survey, ASO optimization is important. Frequently used strategies include optimization of app title and description, keyword metadata, app content, app deep linking and indexation, screenshots, and adding a preview video. Few carry out on-page and off-page SEO activities and use A/B testing. In addition, a handful run paid app campaigns with a cost-per-install (CPI). The majority consider methods that promote organic growth. For ASO, a handful also suggested utilizing the 100-character keywords list.

Q.23 In your opinion, what are some of the factors to consider when looking to improve Local SEO?

- A. The top 4 factors listed by marketing leaders to improve local SEO include,
- i) Optimizing Google Business Profile listing with keywords and gathering reviews based on keywords to rank better in Google maps
 - ii) Optimizing website targeting local keywords, language and visuals, NAP (Name, Address, and Phone number) citation consistency, collecting positive reviews on social media, and review forums, executing local link building, adding schema
 - iii) Google Business Profile back linking, adding URL with geolocation, backlinking with the main websites
 - iv) Voice Search Optimization (for relevant FAQs), creating content based on local news, events, and stories, mobile phone and voice search optimization, and targeting local directories for listing.

I: THE BACKGROUND



Future of Organic Search Marketing

If your website appears as the number one result of an organic search, then you are a leader in that niche. What it additionally suggests is that customers are spending adequate time on your website, and with the right amount of time, skill, and SEO expertise, you can increase your conversion rates drastically.

If anything, organic search marketing is set to become more onerous in years to come, going by the current trend. The changing Google algorithms show that success in organic search is based on uncovering deep layers of user intent.

Most senior leaders understand that SEO has to be seen as a strategic goal, but few are not sure to what degree it matters. Too often, they focus on a handful of initiatives or capabilities and then grow frustrated when the promised results don't materialize.

For this reason, it's crucial to have a clear view of what constitutes a model for SEO. While each of these components may sound familiar, we have found that the clarity of seeing them organized into a cohesive model gives leaders a better sense of how to track all the moving parts, and consider SEO as a critical part of their strategic initiatives.

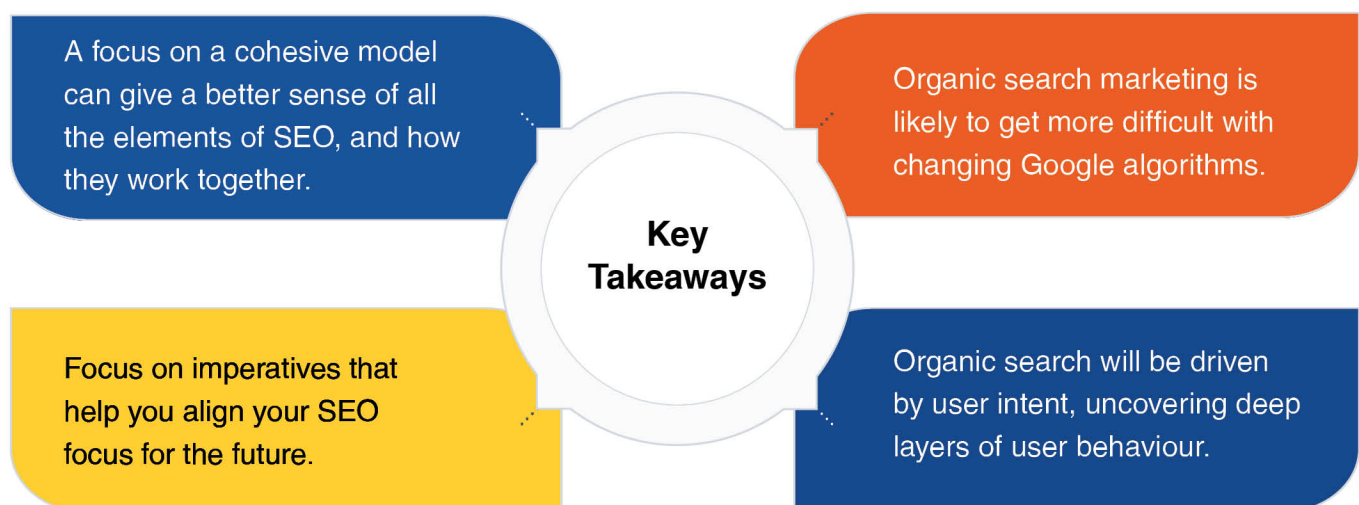
A focus on a cohesive model can give a better sense of all the elements of SEO, and how they work together.

Strategies That Can Be Used To Action Future Ready SEO

Marketer's Imperative	How to ace it?
How to achieve desired SEO outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become enablers and align your SEO capabilities • Make SEO a part of your everyday activity and thinking
Tackling search engine changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit your SEO strategy based on search engine's best practices and master new metrics to stay agile • 20% training on SEO will make 80% impact on the role
Facing challenges in achieving the target outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefine SEO efforts with engaging content and go multi-channel to leverage different devices • View SEO team as a strategic partner • Understand which SEO goals and metrics are applicable to their role and how to execute them
Outlining content strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use customer data and understand user intent to design the right content strategy

To succeed at driving increased visibility from SEO, it's important to understand how to properly optimize your website. You need to ensure that the search engines are able to crawl your site, understand your content, index it, and show that your site is a significant authority.

Google's Algorithm considers more than 200 ranking factors. Only a smart marketer can crack the puzzle.



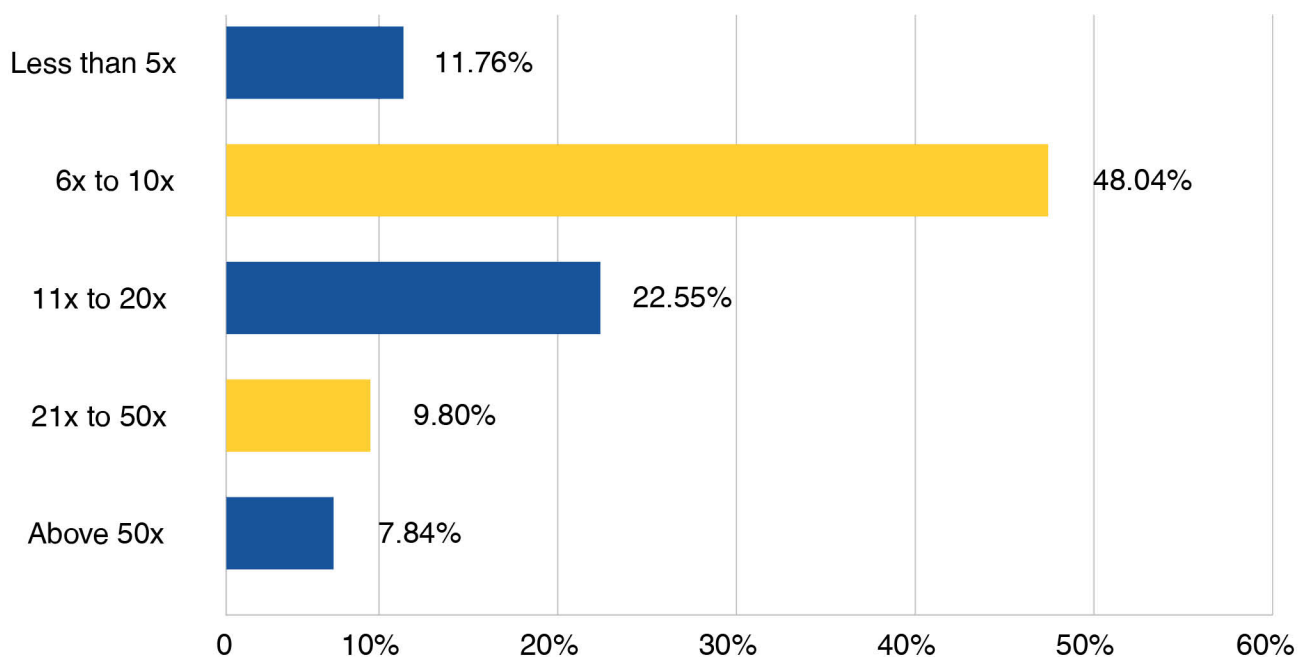
State of SEO & 2022 Trends Survey



The DMAasia and Infidigit State of SEO & 2022 Trends Survey shows that an overwhelming majority of organizations, 95%, where the polled marketing leaders come from, invest in SEO activities. We polled over 100 senior marketing leaders—CMOs, Head of Digital, and Head of SEOs, responsible for steering SEO efforts in their organization. Nearly 54% of leaders also oversee Asia and global operations. The survey was carried out across India.

cumulatively managing over USD 100 million in marketing budgets, are readying their arsenal for the future. Not surprisingly, with growing spend on digital marketing, most leaders anticipate higher ROI— to the tune of 50X— and a 10%-30% rise in their organization's spend on digital over the next 12 months.

Counting The Bucks: More Spend For Higher ROI

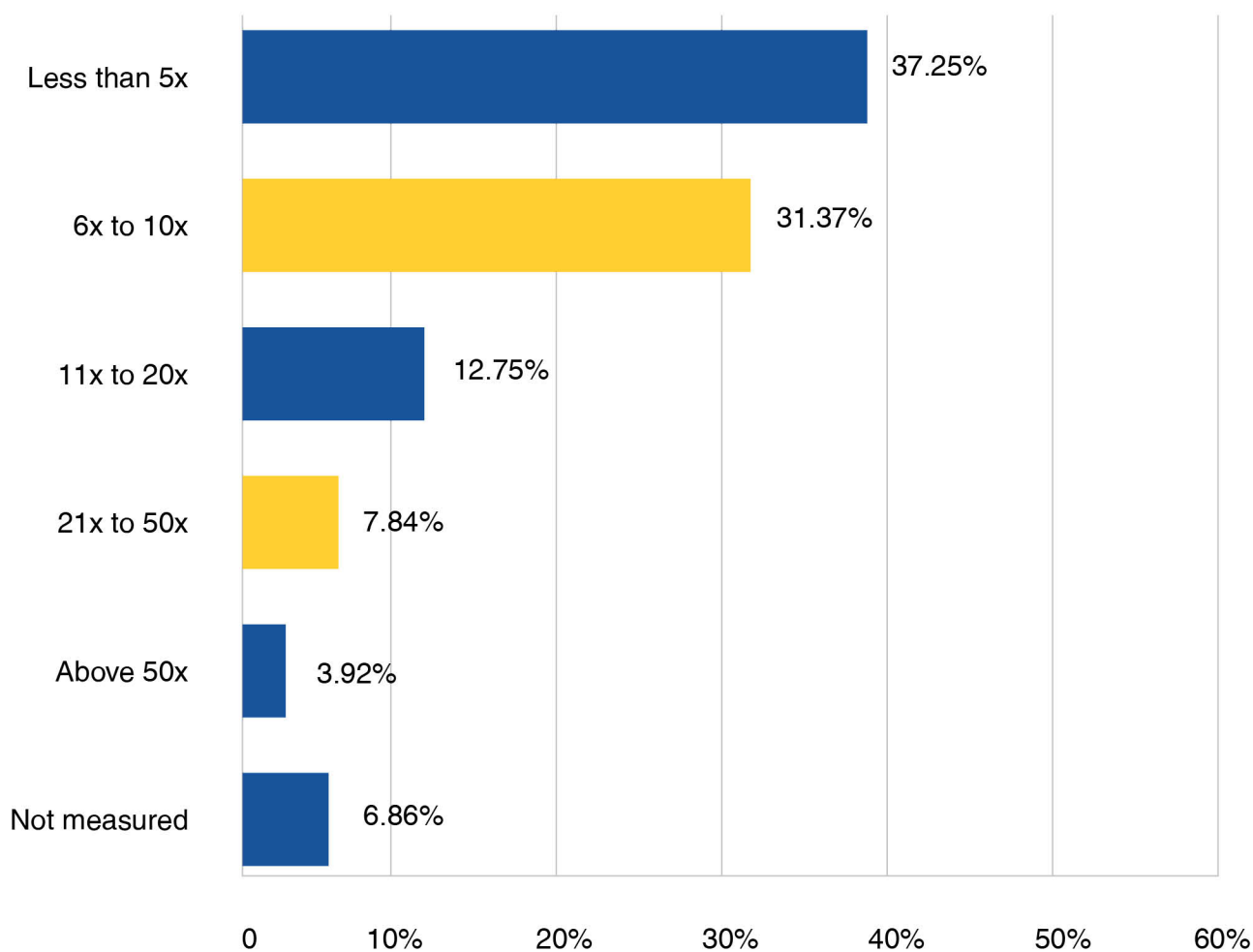


(Source: DMAasia and Infidigit State of SEO & 2022 Trends Survey)

The share of SEO in the digital wallet of marketers is also changing. With a vast majority (95.09%) of the polled leaders affirming their commitment to SEO efforts.

Owing to a hefty expenditure, the marketers expect the ROI from SEO to outweigh its spend by multiples. *And going by the outcome, it can be said that it pays to do SEO the right way. Here's a graph to show the ROI realization.*

ii) Actual ROI Realization From SEO Efforts In The Last 12 Months



(Source: DMAasia and Infidigit State of SEO & 2022 Trends Survey)

Key Takeaways

Marketers see average 10%-30% rise in their organization's spend on digital over the next 12 months.

With growing spend on digital marketing, most leaders anticipate higher ROI up to the tune of 50X.

RoI from SEO expected to outweigh the expenditure significantly.

Is SEO Aging?: A Glimpse at its Evolution and Future



SEO has transformed over the years. Today, SEO is about the effectiveness of organic content to drive relevant traffic, demand (Lead), and conversions (RoI). It has expanded to form an important component of ***inbound marketing***.

The old way of doing things, like writing long articles focused on keywords, or building a bunch of links, are no longer effective. Google's search engine has changed dramatically. Instead of typing individual keywords to find information, your potential customer might enter contextual queries, questions, or similar terms in the search bar, carry out voice search or use Google Lens. This necessitates a strong focus on user intent.

SEO has evolved as a key business performance driver. Search is now ubiquitous, increasingly vertical, and enormously topical.

#Cheat sheet to conquer new-age SEO

- Focus on making your website load quicker.
How: Optimize your website for Core Web Vitals.
- Make sure the content is easy to understand and relevant to users.
How: Create content based on Google's E-E-A-T principle to rank better.
- Pay attention to making your webpage easy to use and access.
How: Google primarily uses the mobile version of the page for indexing and ranking. Work on your UI/UX, and mobile friendliness.

Organizations invest heavily in paid search dominance to ensure that they are visible to their ideal customers in relevant search results. However, with the ever-changing landscape, this focus must also include user intent & SEO.

The Story Of Seo: Key Milestones

SEO evolution

The Google revolution and the birth of on-page and off-page Google AdWords and Google ToolBar.

2000

Schema markup was introduced to help search engines interpret the context of the query.

Google updated its algorithm to Panda.

2006

Google acquired YouTube to boost SEO for videos.

Google launched Google Analytics and Google Webmaster Tools (now known as Search Console).

XML sitemaps gained universal support from search engines.

2011

Google updated its algorithm to Penguin, which helps to clean up search results and reward high-quality sites.

Knowledge Graph was unveiled by Google, a major step forward in understanding search intent.

2012

2013

A new Google algorithm update was introduced – Hummingbird. It was designed to redefine conversational search for mobile devices.

2019

Google rolled out mobile-first indexing for all new websites.

Google rolled out its fourth spam update which was meant to filter out harmful or dubious websites.

2021

Google announced the helpful content update to reward high-quality content helpful to users

2022

Key Takeaways





The Traditional & Modern SEO

Traditional SEO:

Traditional SEO is all about improving the visibility of a website in organic or unpaid search results. The goal is to increase the quantity and quality of traffic to a site from users who are specifically searching for the type of content or products that the website offers. This can be done by making sure the site is easy for search engines to find and index, and by creating content that is relevant and engaging for users.

Modern SEO:

Modern SEO has come a long way since its early days. It's now more important than ever to make sure your website is the best it can be for both users and search engine robots. That encompasses many different aspects, from speed and structure to indexing and overall technical soundness. If your site can provide what searchers are looking for in a way that's easy for them to understand, you're on the right track.

How do they differ: Traditional Vs Modern SEO

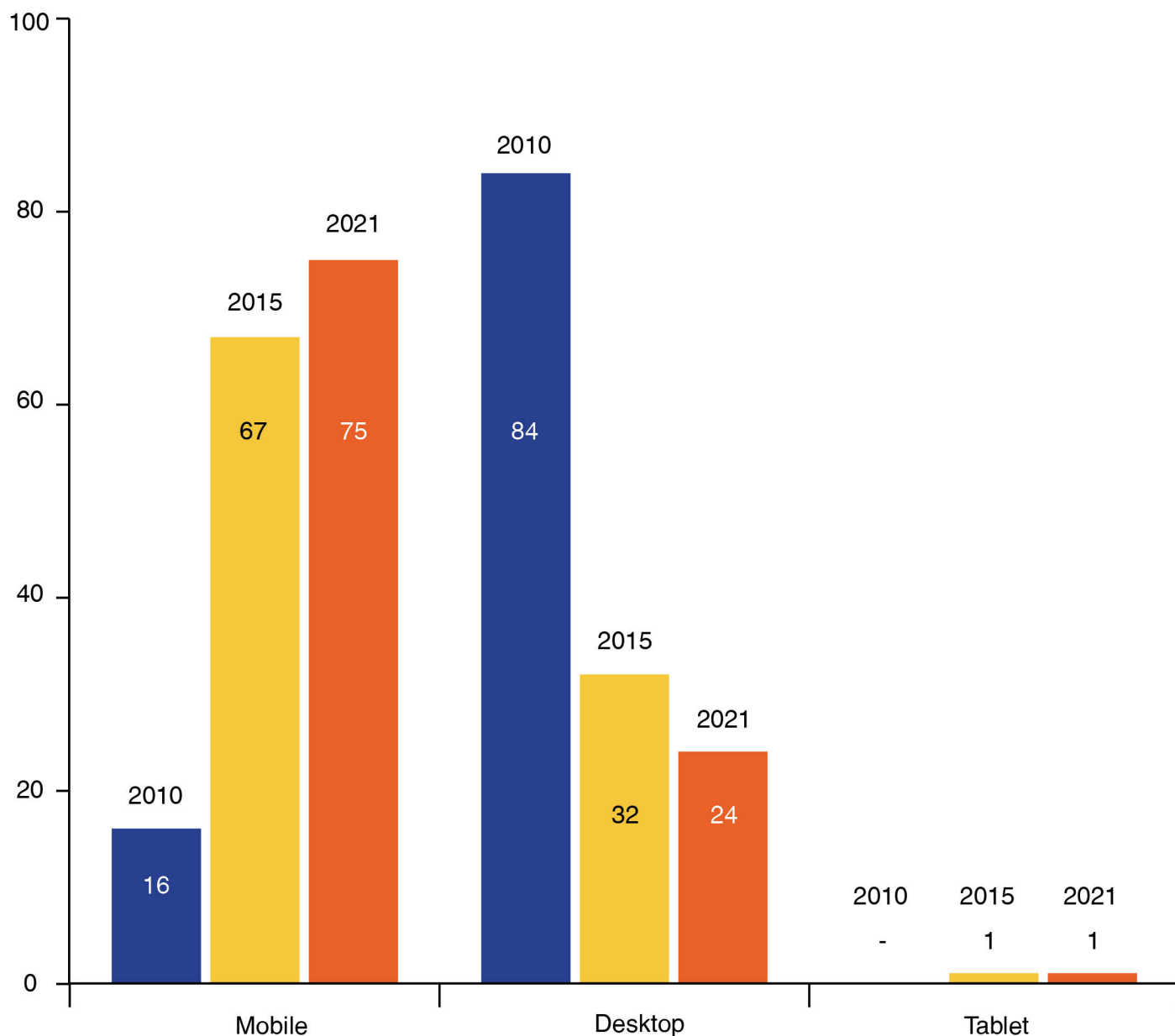
Traditional SEO	Modern SEO
It was focused on creating content with targeted keyword integration	It concentrates more on search user behavior rather than keywords and rankings
SEO in the mid-2000s consisted mainly of keyword stuffing and spammy content	Modern SEO is about creating meaningful quality content
The focus was always on link building by utilizing techniques that are now considered as Black Hat SEO	It involves link building by natural link attraction and adding guest posts to increase domain authority
Search Engine Ranking Page (SERP) organization was very basic	SERP page has various different types of listings. e.g. Featured snippets, people also ask, videos, images, etc.
The concentration on mobile-friendly and optimized results was very superficial	SERP now ranks mobile optimized websites better than normal ones
Traditionally sessions and clicks were the primary metrics	It focuses and targets on higher click-through rates and conversions
UI and UX were less imperative	UI and UX are the primary areas
It was assumed that having more links would lead to a higher ranking	Having content that is relevant and consistent is of greater importance

Strategically and operationally, Modern SEO is different than Traditional SEO. Modern SEO factors in the customer journey from the moment the customer journey triggers and goes beyond post purchase.

Fact #101: From the mid-2010s- today

Google demoted websites which are not mobile friendly, YouTube became the second largest search engine, and voice searches became more prominent.

Desktop Vs Mobile Searches Over the Decade (%)





(Source: Global Statcounter)

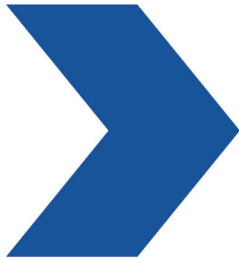
SEO plays an important part in paid and organic strategy for marketers. Our survey shows that leaders aim at—creating a strong brand presence as well as targeted online search results. This helps in ranking higher on SERP based on what a user is searching for.

With both offline and online SEO optimization efforts, they want to enhance and improve organic traffic and time on the website, improve page speed, and create a user-friendly UI/UX for landing pages. But most importantly, **drive organic lead generation and sales through SEO efforts.**

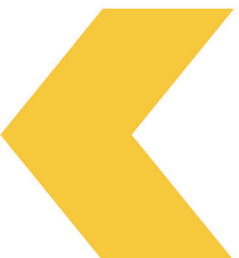
Key Takeaways:




Strategically and Operationally,
Modern SEO is different than
Traditional



Modern SEO techniques factor in the
customer journey from the moment the
customer journey triggers and go beyond
purchase.



Being aligned with key growth metrics in
modern SEO pushes you a step closer to
achieving your SEO goals.



Content as Catalyst: Its Role Today



Content is no longer a piece of data needed for search engines to index your website. Content needs to be relevant, educational, and search engine worthy. Originality and uniqueness of content for ranking higher for searches is a recipe for success, along with relevant keywords.

#Cheat sheet: These tactics will help to get your content noticed

- Focus on long-tail keywords and structure content for better readability.
- Focus on analyzing user interactions and adding relevant content based on that inference with rich media.
- Make link building efforts to acquire links from websites with high domain authority.
- Optimize your title descriptions and URLs, internal links, backlinks.
- Define the brand's tonality and voice and create content with intent i.e., the right message to the right audience at the right time.
- Leverage online tools to get indicative information on headline strength, quality of grammar, length of an article, etc.
- Keep the language to be simple, and to the point, packed with actionable insights.
- Make sure that your experience, expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness (E-E-A-T) score is high
- Make sure that the content is helpful to users

From a marketers' notebook: Content Strategies for SEO Success

Relevance And Uniqueness:

The ultimate goal is satisfying the user experience. Content Relevance is an important ranking factor and an inherent component of On-Page Optimization. Original and relevant content pieces with short paragraphs get precedence over lengthy, irrelevant, and copied ones.

Readability & Tone Of Voice:

Create content that is easy to read and understand with a consistent tone of voice helps readers understand the perspective. Set up a tone of voice to create a brand persona.

Keywords:

Keywords are an integral part of content and also assist a customer in decision making. For example, a high volume of the topic keywords cluster can help to understand the traffic impact a topic can have. Instead of adding too many keywords, focus on 3-4 primary search terms that are relevant to users. Specific search terms along with long tail keywords of high volume and low competition can help to maintain reasonable keyword density on their pages.

Topic Cluster:

Topic clusters are an SEO strategy aimed at optimizing a website's overall content structure and internal linking efforts. Topics clusters help you in rearranging the architecture of your content where clusters of content that cover a topic area link to a central pillar page that broadly outlines the topic.

Link Building:

Google says that internal linking to other pages on your website and quality (organic) backlinks from high-quality pages can improve SEO and help you rank higher in Search Engines. Links that you get from other websites should be related to your niche. Link earning in SEO takes a lot of effort but is highly rewarding, if done correctly and consistently.

User Experience:

Your ultimate goal is conversions and repeat visits. Ensure there are no broken links with error codes, enable a good sitemap, and optimize robots.txt to crawl the site. Right tags, and indexing helps the search engine and eventually the user. Most importantly, include title tag, meta description, and URL.

Key Takeaways:

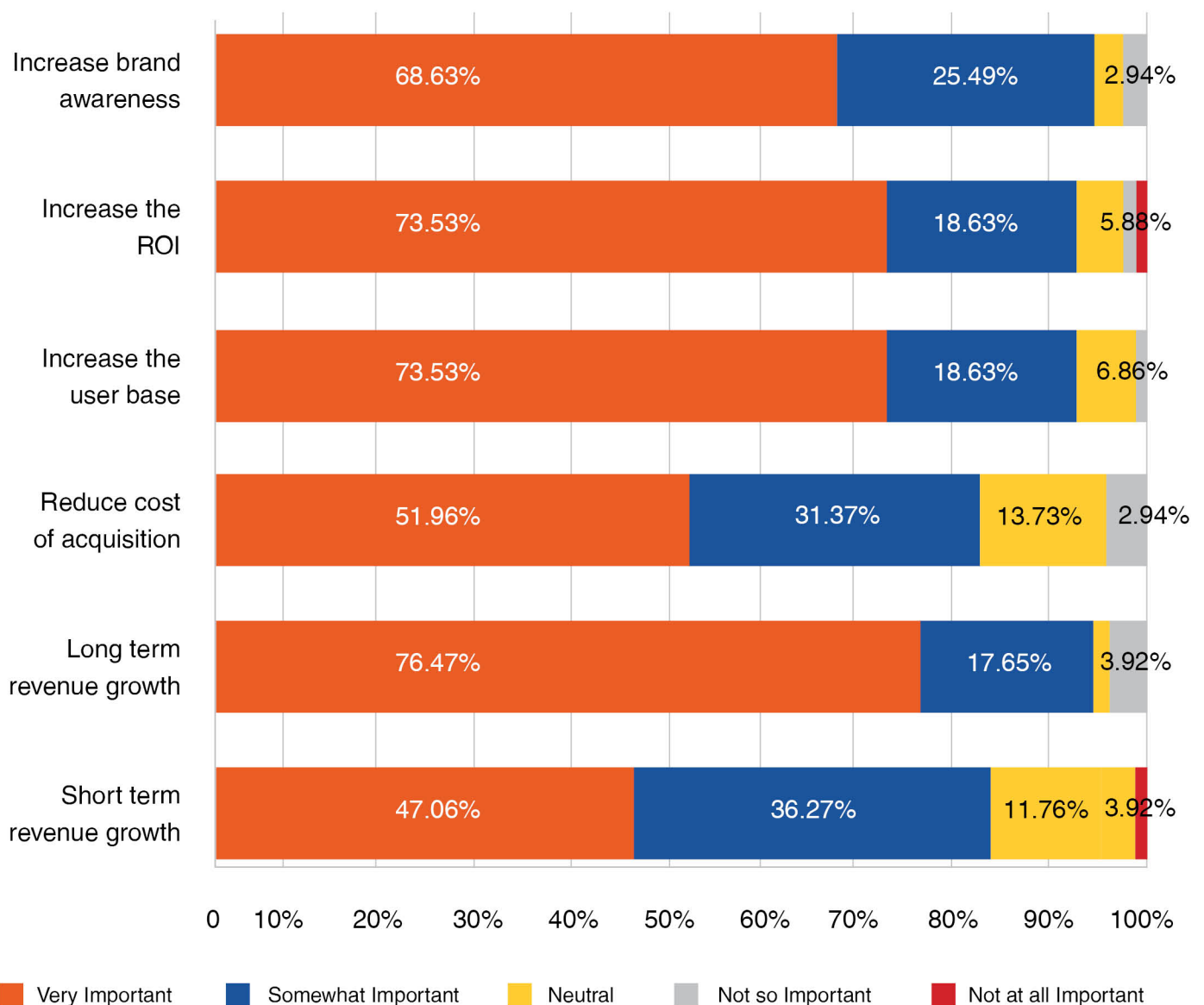
II: THE PURPOSE

Why ‘Search’ can be a great Marketing Strategy?

Marketing is a major driver for any company’s growth. From being the bastion for brand and advertising, it’s now among the frontrunners shaping the organization’s fortunes.

Our survey also backs this change with an overwhelming majority focusing on growth drivers– increase in ROI, user base, and long-term growth.

View From The Top: Most Important Outcomes Of Marketing Strategy



(Source: DMA State of SEO & SEO Trends Survey 2022)

The customer’s interaction with brands and products has now become a multi-channel journey. In this, ‘search’ occupies the prime position and acts as a decision tool influencing the buyer journey significantly.

Seo Matters: Numbers Speak

- 105k searches are performed on Google every second
- 39% of all global ecommerce traffic comes from search
- 93% of all online experiences begin with a search engine
- Nearly 80% of users ignore paid ads in search results
- 50% of all searches will be voice searches by 2022
- 58% of searches come from mobile
- 97% of page-one results have at least one image on the page
- 46% of all Google searches are local

If you're looking to create long-term brand awareness, expand your target audience and earn more revenue, then SEO should be at the center of your marketing strategy.

From Marketer's Notebook: How Seo Fits Snugly In Marketing Strategy

- **Boosts Credibility**
Tip: A higher SERP ranking demonstrates your credibility, try to get a higher score.
- **Cost-Effective**
Tip: You reach out to target users who are already searching for relevant products and services.
- **Offers A Competitive Advantage**
Tip: Recognition of your brand at the customer level can make the competition lopsided.
- **Enhanced User Experience**
Tip: Help your users identify and relate to your brand with relevant content.



- **Better Conversion On Leads**

Tip: Use SEO effectively to make the site accessible to search engines and high ranking pages.

- **Improves Local SEO:**

When you optimize your content for location-specific search, it can greatly help grow your brand in those specific areas.

Tip: Add location-based optimizations, citations, and backlinks to target neighborhoods, cities, or regions based on their local habits.

- **It's Measurable:**

SEO is measurable and quantifiable. What this means is that you get valuable data and insights into your customer's buying patterns.

Tip: Make strategic changes to your campaigns to improve your leads or drive more traffic to your website on the go.

- **Provides Better Understanding Of Your Audience:**

SEO helps you understand your audience better because of the right keywords.

Tip: Analyze market trends, and alter your search to suit customer preferences.

- **An Effective Long-Term Strategy:**

It takes time for results to show when it comes to SEO, but it also allows your brand to grow with your customers.

Tip: You can improve your keywords to attract new visitors and build effective marketing strategies.



The Seo Route Marketing Leaders Take

- Define SEO goals
- Put the team in place (mix of content and tech minds or external agency)
- Set SEO metrics tracking frequency
- Monitor SEO results
- Refine and readjust SEO gears, if needed

TOOLS

Google Search Console
Screaming Frog
Google Analytics
SEMRush
SEO Sitecheckup
Ahrefs

III: THE HOW-TO-GUIDE ON SEO

Behind the scenes: How to put the SEO to work



Every organization has defined goals before they start their SEO campaigns, like improving organic traffic, strengthening domain authority, increasing active users, decreasing the bounce rate, etc. Be it any goal, the end result is expected to be the delivery of quality content and an increase in the number of users organically.

Every SEO type comes with unique functionalities and, if executed properly, will yield results in the long-term. Here's what you can do to make SEO work for you.

On-Page SEO: On-Page SEO is all about creating content that's both relevant to your website and engaging for your readers. This means that your headlines, tags, and images should all be optimized to ensure that they are helping you rank higher in search engines. Additionally, On-Page SEO includes making sure that your website is seen as an authority on the subject. This can be done by ensuring that your content is high-quality and that you are regularly publishing new and fresh content.

How to improve your On-Page SEO?

SEO being a long-term investment, how much time do you invest in it and what are the techniques you follow for better on-page SEO matters. On an average, you need at least 3-6 months to see the effectiveness of SEO. There are various on-page techniques including:

- **Optimize Page Titles:** Make sure each page on your website has a unique descriptive title to attract more visitors. Keep the title length between 50-60 characters max.
- **Use Headings:** Make sure to add heading tags to your page. Keep the tags to be informative and avoid using single-word tags. Add keywords and related phrases in the sub-headings to enhance your site's ranking.
- **Optimize Meta Descriptions:** Create relevant meta descriptions that summarize your content. The ideal character length should be 150-200.
- **Check Content Format:** Readability is the main essence for the content on your site. Try to stick to Google's recommendation of a 16-pixel font size and the text color that relates to your background color. Use bullet points as much as possible as it allows users to quickly skim through. When using paragraphs, try to break them into shorter forms for easy readability.
- **Image Optimization:** Always use compressed images so that the site loads faster and add alternative text descriptions to help search engine bots understand your images better.

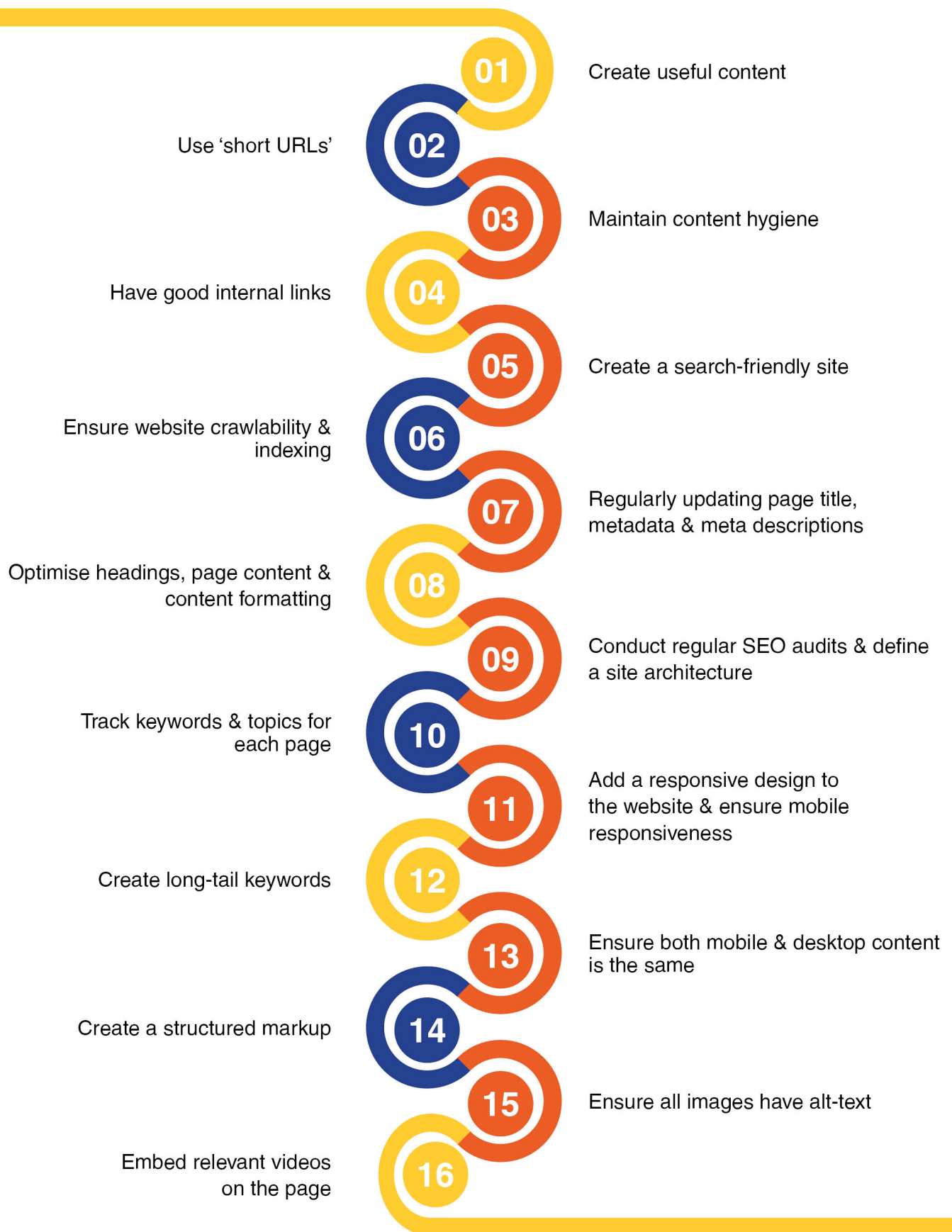
Take a look below for on-page SEO hacks from our marketer's survey.

On-Page Seo: What Makes The Cut In Marketer's List In 2022

Meta, Heading, Content, Schema Optimization to improve website presence on SERP and more...



Top Tips To improve On-Page SEO



Off-Page Seo

Marketers today spend anywhere between **15%- 40%** of the total time on off-page SEO. Off-page SEO is all about making sure your site can be found easily. It's the things you do outside of your website to make it more visible. One of the most important aspects of off-page SEO are backlinks. This happens when a website with a good page ranking links to another site. This helps increase the visibility of the second site in search engines.

Off-Page Seo: What Makes The Cut In Marketer's List In 2022

Creating backlinks is at the core of off-page SEO. Social media, guest content, forum posting, local listings...and more.



Guest Content



Social Media



Local Listings



Infographics



Quora activity



Google Business Profile optimization



Press Release/ Video submission

How to improve your off-page SEO?

- **Understand Link Building And Its Importance:**

It should be about delivering quality at all times. Always prefer to go for high-quality links. Make sure to remove or replace broken links.

- **Content Marketing:**

Create quality content in the form of blog posts, infographics, surveys, case studies, ebooks etc. and promote it on relevant media outlets.

- **Social Media Marketing:**

Leverage social networks to engage with your audience. Make sure to have real engagements and shares on social media to gain more attention.

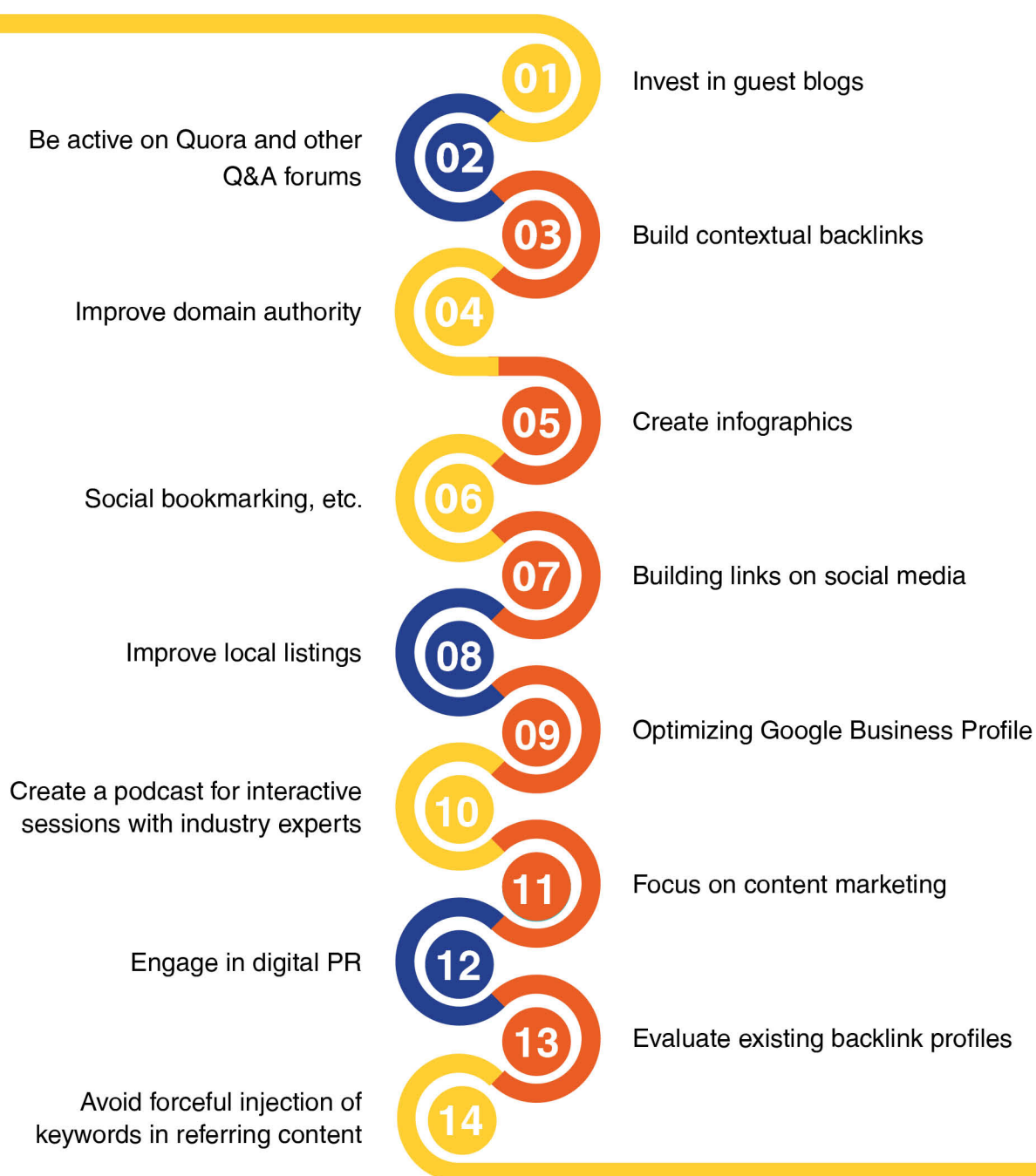
- **Guest Posting:**

It's one of the commonly used and effective link building strategies. Get experts to create content for you, and post it on relevant websites to increase traffic.

Improving off-page SEO performance will directly correlate with your Domain Authority score (DA).

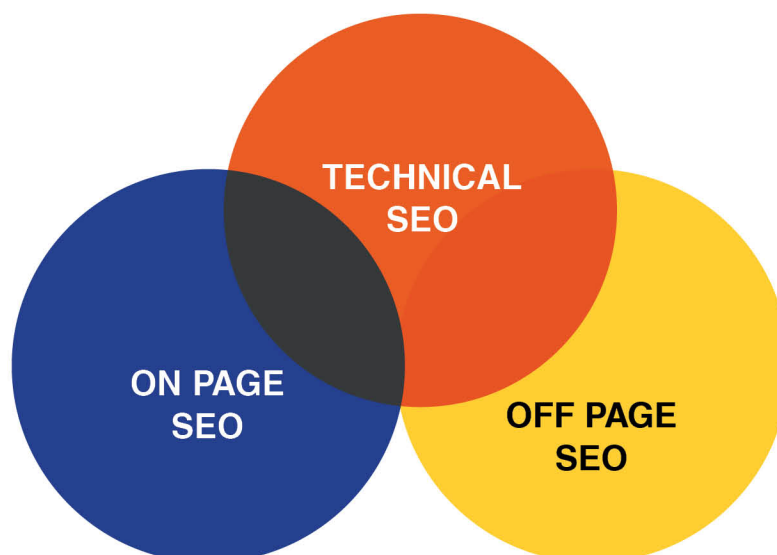
Marketing leaders have a few best practices that they follow to ensure long-term success with their off-page SEO activities. Here are a few top tips from our survey.

Top Tips To improve Off-Page SEO



Technical SEO

Technical SEO is a bit like spring cleaning for your website. You want to make sure everything is in perfect working order so that visitors have the best experience. Optimizing your website for speed and making it easy for search engines to crawl are two important aspects of technical SEO.



How to improve your Technical SEO?

- **Optimize Your XML Sitemap:**

Generate an XML sitemap using free WordPress plugins. After creation, submit it to Google Search Console. Make sure to include high-quality pages in your sitemap, and blocked pages can be omitted completely.

- **Increase Your Website Loading Speed:**

You can do this by using compressed images, enabling browser caching, enabling compression and reducing server response time to under 200ms.

- **Perform Weekly Technical SEO Audits:**

Leverage the SEO tools to perform an SEO audit. Once done, implement the recommendations, eliminate the error warnings etc., to improve the overall technical health of your website.

- **Optimize Internal Links:**

Every internal link points to another page on the website. Optimize each link by using descriptive keywords in anchor texts.

- **Fix Crawl Errors:**

Check for crawl errors on Google Search Console at least once a week, and fix them as soon as possible.

As per our survey, marketers conduct data-oriented audits mostly on a monthly basis.

Top 10 In Marketer's Seo Audit Checklist

1. Are there any Indexing and Crawl issues?
2. Are the right backlinks in place?
3. How is the page speed?
4. Are there any broken links?
5. Does it need any redirections?
6. Do duplicate titles/descriptions exist?
7. Are there any security issues in the search console?
8. Are there any manual actions required in the search console?

Key Takeaways:

Regular technical SEO audits and addressing the identified issues is essential for a successful SEO

OnPage SEO is not restricted to textual content, focusing on images and videos is also paramount

Which SEO KPIs should you focus on?



Goals and KPIs are among the most crucial parts of your SEO strategy. While there are several other integral components, you may find it difficult to determine if your efforts are paying off, or are on track, until you have taken some time to envision the kind of impact you would like to see on your business.

There's no quick and easy fix for SEO. But setting up KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), helps in gradual improvement to achieve your objectives.

Top KPIs For SEO And How They Link To Business Objectives

- **ROI:** The goal of any SEO campaign is to drive return on investment (ROI). ROI for SEO is calculated by dividing *(sales from SEO – cost of SEO)/cost of SEO*. A high ROI means your SEO efforts are well optimized and heading in the right direction. However, ROI is a long-term goal, and it can easily take 6 to 12 months for fruition.
- **Organic Visibility:** Organic visibility allows you to keep track of your growth even if it isn't manifested through increased sales. The number of times a website is visited is a good measure of organic traffic, and this type of measurement can be leveraged to improve one's online presence.
- **Conversions:** Tracking organic conversions like sales, leads, etc. are some of the important KPIs to track business growth. However, it's tricky to use a benchmark for accurate results as traffic sources differ. Make sure to analyze Google Analytics data closely to get an accurate picture of organic conversion rates over time, across different traffic sources, so that you can determine the best conversion benchmarks for your site.
- **Keyword Ranking:** Keyword ranking offers important insights into your SERP performance. When you track keywords, you get to know about various opportunities to optimize them and make them perform better to improve overall site traffic.

Certain words are closely associated with your brand, product, or service. When these are searched online, they should feature in the results. The best way to measure them would be to take stock of the keywords' ranking on a monthly basis and see how their ratings have moved up or down. When you see a progression in your keyword rankings, you know your site is doing well.
- **Backlinks:** Backlinks are an important aspect of Google's ranking factors. They not only reveal insight into one's link profile but also provide a great KPI to make your backlink strategy more future-proof. However, keep in mind that regardless of the technique used, it should be kept up-to-date and well-maintained just like any other part of one's SEO marketing strategy.

- **Organic CTR:** The organic click-through rate (CTR) is a metric that lets you know the number of people clicking on your listing on the SERPs. Simply put, the higher your organic CTR, the better chance your website has of getting more traffic from search engines. This happens when users see your title tags and meta descriptions and decide to click, bringing them to your site. An organic click-through rate shows how effective these elements are in attracting people to your site.
- **Bounce Rate:** Bounce rates are a great way to see how relevant your content is in terms of the user experience and search queries it is ranking for. The higher the bounce rate, the more important it is to minimize any issues that might be causing people to feel uncomfortable or annoyed when they land on your page. An easy way to improve your site's flow and reduce bounces is by ensuring the images are appropriate, and pop-up ads don't coerce visitors for conversion.
- **Share Of Voice:** Tracking share of voice will help you figure how you fare against the competition in the SERPs. The share of voice metric considers both paid and organic marketing efforts. You can gauge how you fare among your competitors, make business strategies, and assess the effectiveness of the plans.
- **Reduction In Performance Marketing Spend:** Over a period of time, SEO should facilitate the lowering of spends on Performance Marketing. The numbers of inorganic visits and other activities should be able to create enough search volume and higher rankings, wherein it reduces dependency on Performance Marketing.

Web Vitals

Web Vitals are metrics that are important for ensuring good user experiences.

- Largest Contentful Paint (LCP): indicates the website's loading performance.
- First Input Delay (FID): shows interactivity.
- Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS): measures stability.
- Page Links: Reduce 404 Error pages.
- Crawl errors for Google bots.

Branded Traffic

Branded traffic is the traffic that comes from users who searched for terms that contain your company name. If brand awareness is important for you (and it should be), branded traffic should be your primary KPI. As searchers already know what they want when searching for branded keywords, this traffic results in the highest conversion rates.

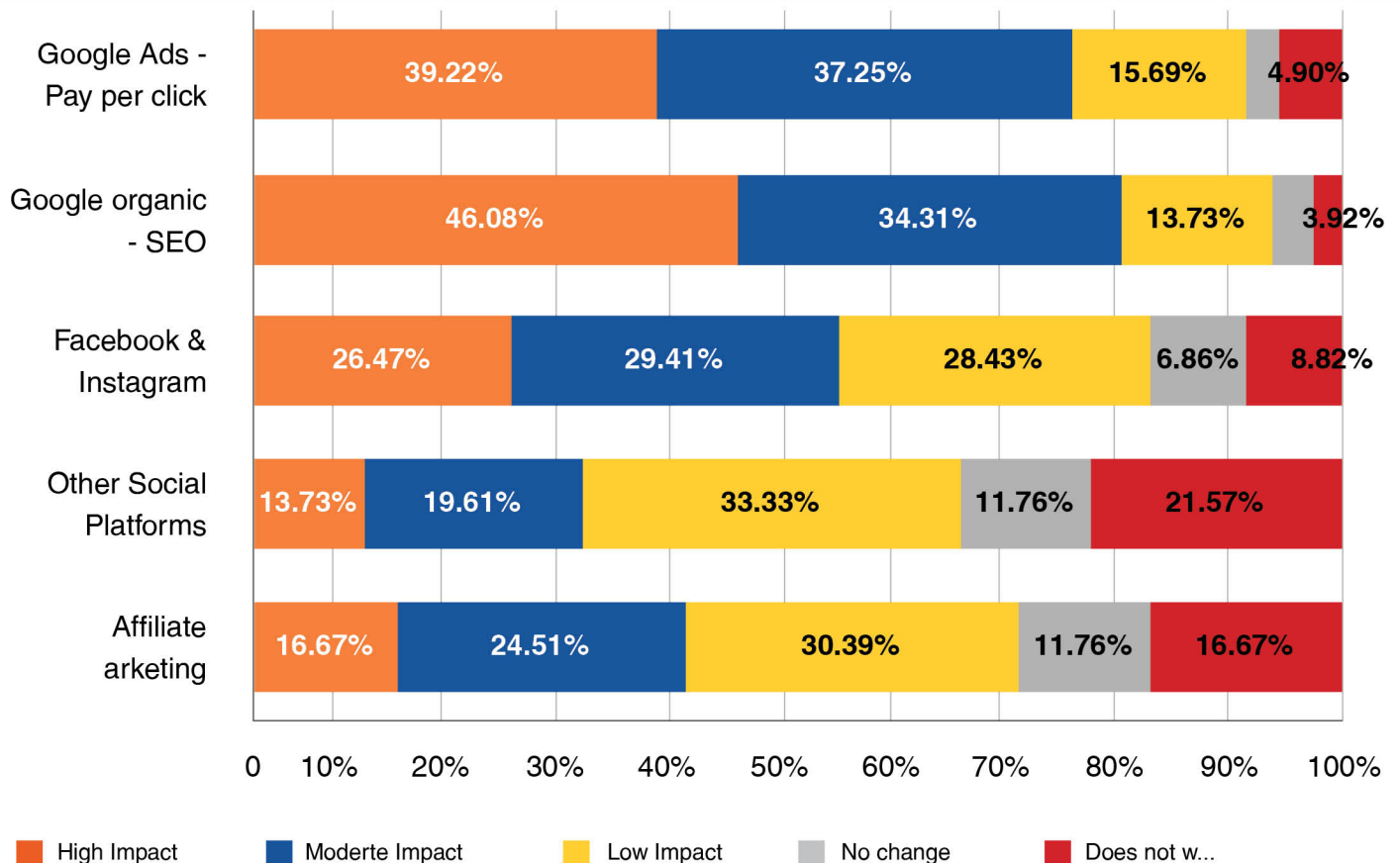
Average Session Duration

For customers, it's imperative to know how long consumers are spending on your website. The standard should be about 2-3 minutes per visit. If someone stays on your site for longer than that, you can assume that they've either found what they're looking for or are interested in taking the next step. You can keep improving on it so that users stay longer.

Other Kpis You Should Consider

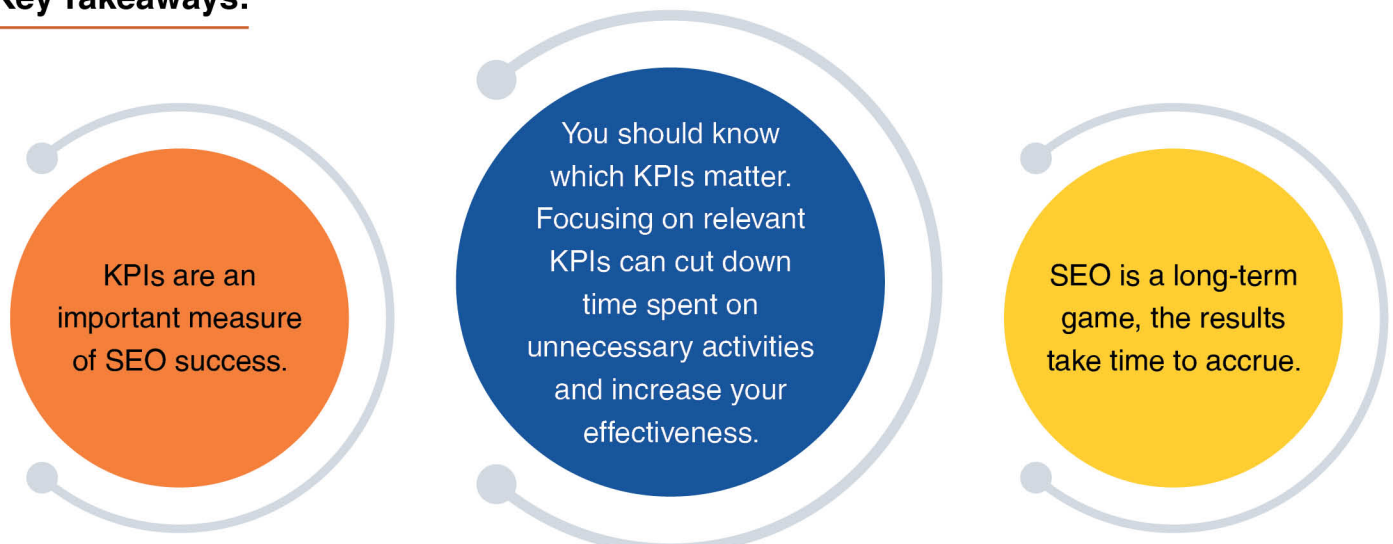
- Page Speed Insights
- Chrome UX Report
- Search Console
- Local Visibility
- Location
- Web Vitals Extension from Chrome
- Lighthouse
- Web Vitals

Channels Marketers Use In 2022: ROAS Over Last 24 Months



(Source: DMAAsia and Infidigit State of SEO & 2022 SEO Trends)

Key Takeaways:





Beginner SEO

To put it simply, if you have only started doing SEO and have recently been making changes to the way users access your online presence, we applaud your efforts because it's the key to improving the overall ranking of your project. As a beginner at SEO, you can quickly change the indexing of your website by implementing strategies that will point more traffic and user attention to what you're offering.

How can you move along the curve: Beginner to Intermediate

- **Use Long-Tail Keywords:**
Long-tail keywords are more specific than the usual target keywords and can prove to be very powerful as they account for higher search volume compared to shorter keywords.
- **Use Keywords In Alt Text For Images:**
Alt text or alternative text is a short description of an image. It is an important factor as it offers context to users when an image is unable to load. Search engine crawlers use alt text all the time as it helps them in indexing an image properly.
- **Improve Your Ux (User Experience):**
Many factors are considered by Google when ranking your website and one of them is the time spent by users. Longer loading times have a huge impact on your website's overall ranking, so make sure that the UX offers a great experience like relevant information, reduced image sizes for faster loading, easy navigation, clear headlines, shorter paragraphs, etc. so that users stay on your website longer.
- **Offer Multiple Media Types:**
One easy and effective way to improve your SERP rankings is to include multiple media types like audio files, videos, ebooks, GIFs, etc. which helps in creating engagement with the users, thus increasing the time spent on your website as well as the user experience.

Intermediate SEO

Now that you've become familiar with basic trends and strategies associated with SEO, it's time to delve deeper into this subject. Hopefully, you have already implemented some of the beneficial techniques discussed earlier in this guide. But if not, now is the time to start incorporating some of these methods into your website to take your SEO to the next level.

- **Build Quality Backlinks:**

Backlinks were a very important part of SEO, but Google rolled out an algorithm which stopped counting a lot of backlinks which affected rankings. Try to earn high quality backlinks from websites with high domain authority. The targeted websites should be a trusted resource and relevant for your business.

- **Offer Strategic Content:**

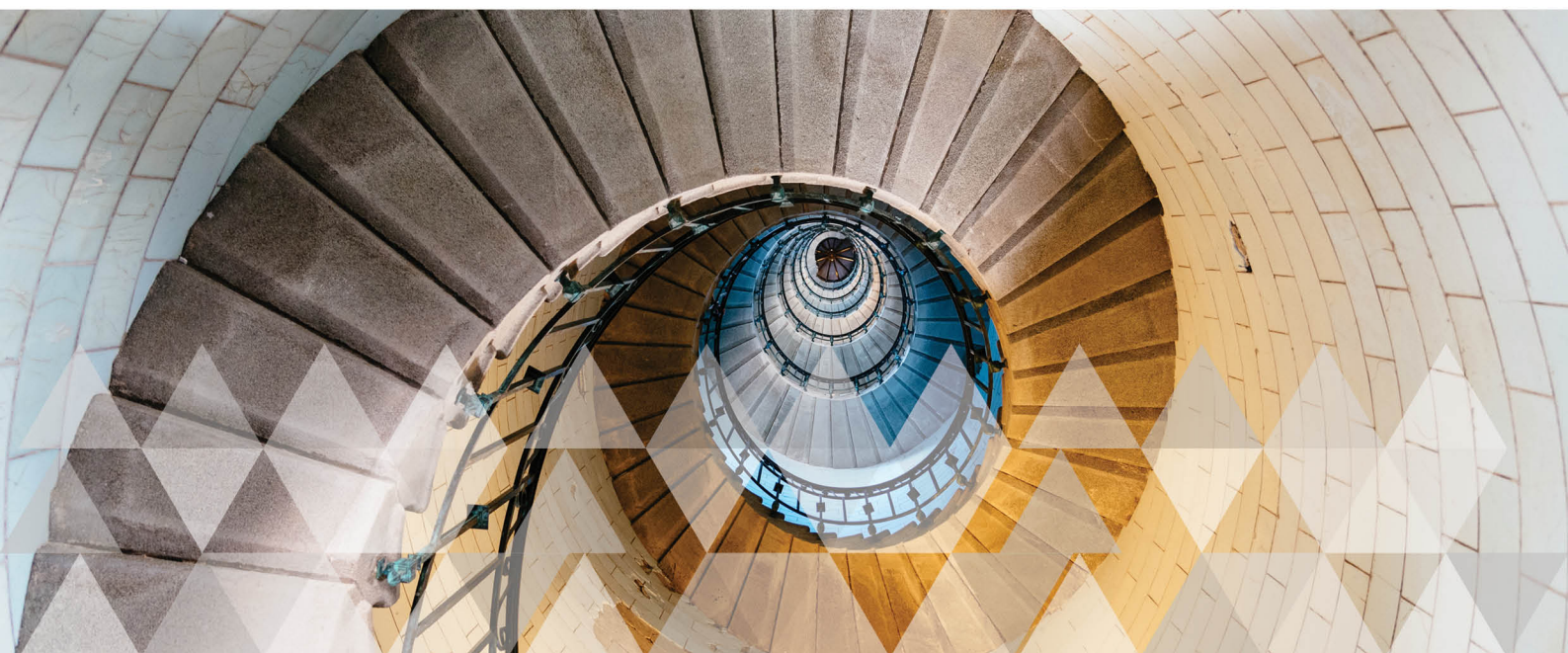
It makes sense to offer more than information on your website, and offer thought-leadership content. This will ensure that more people spend longer hours reading your content, which in turn will improve your rankings organically.

- **Leverage Subject Matter Experts:**

While you don't need to be an expert on the topic that you offer, you can always conduct interviews with subject matter experts and use their expertise to increase your rankings. Make sure to find the experts, who are the right fit for your brand and add links to their interviews, podcasts, infographics, etc. to get your point across.

Advanced SEO

While the basic principles of SEO are relatively simple to grasp, reaching the advanced level requires unique problem-solving skills and a certain amount of trial and error. However, if successful, the payoff can be huge: once you master SEO, your website will stand out among your competitors and rank high on search engines like Google. The benefits of reaching that advanced level are both short and long-term. On one hand, you'll immediately see a rise in traffic to your site; but in order to truly succeed over the longer run, all tactics must be planned out strategically, with clear objectives in mind such as a targeted message, budget limitations, and audience size.



- **Conduct Thorough Site Audits For Indexation And Crawlability Issues:**

Google Search Console is an essential tool that can be leveraged to measure one's site traffic and performance. Analyze the performance report to understand impressions, clicks, etc. Check the indexing of your pages and change it to also focus on search engines other than Google.

- **Create Seo-Optimized Landing Pages:**

Create specific landing pages to target keywords matching the intent of your visitors. This will help increase your SERP score by bringing more visitors to your site.

- **Keep Your Site Aligned To Core Web Vitals:**

Core Web Vitals are experience metrics like loading speed, interactivity, and visual stability. These three metrics have a big impact on user experience and the technical performance of your site. Make sure to keep your site aligned to these metrics for improved results.

- **Optimize For Mobile Page Speed:**

Most people access your site on their mobile devices, and optimizing it makes perfect SEO sense. Run the Google mobile-friendly test on your site for page audits. Fix the issues spotted, and keep conducting regular technical audits which give real-world measurements, field data, etc. to enhance your rankings.

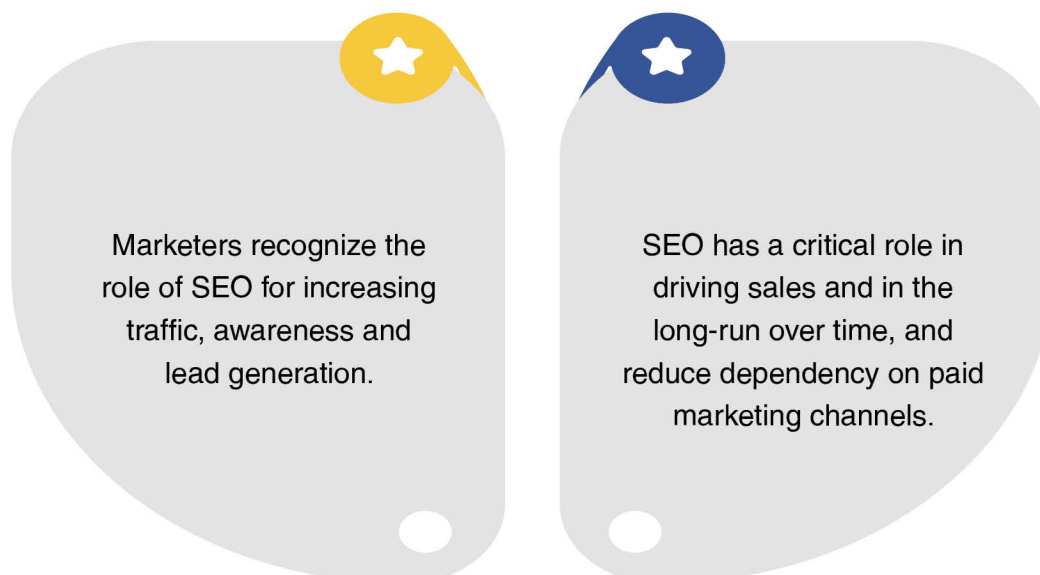
- **Add Videos To Your Site:**

While content is the strongest part of any site, one must never underestimate the power of a video. YouTube is the 2nd largest search engine in the world and videos greatly boost the dwell time on your site. Start with making simple and short brand videos, product demos, educational videos, etc. with relevant metadata and exact keyword matching.

- **Be There On Amazon:**

This is applicable only for e-commerce players. When your customers have special purchase intents, they veer off the Google path and head straight to Amazon. So it makes sense to reach out to those users. If you need to improve your sales velocity on Amazon, then you need to launch paid ads for users to find you. Invest in creating content that is creative with the right combination of images, unique descriptions, reviews, etc.

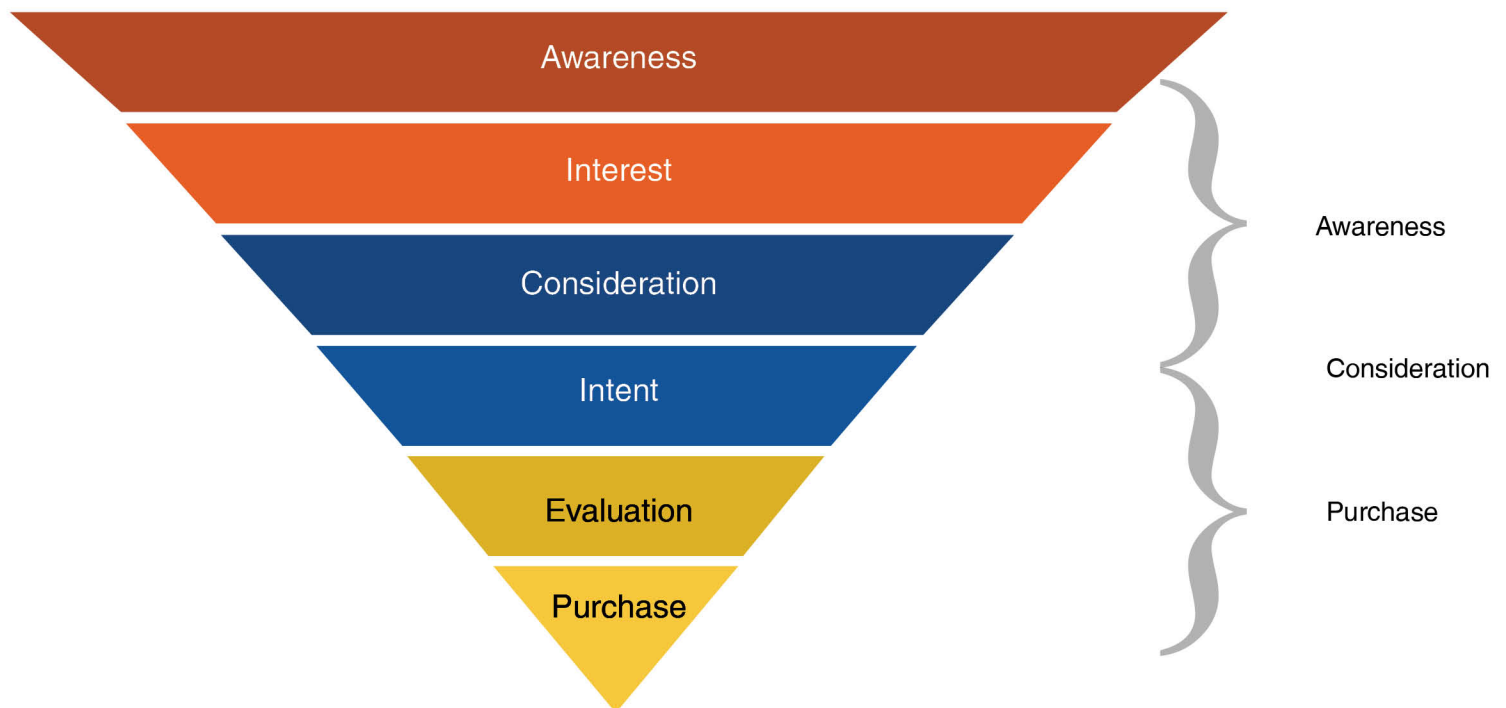
Key Takeaways:



How can partnering make SEO work

Search engines are everywhere – people perform searches on Google, Bing, Facebook, Amazon, etc. all the time. These resources are so ingrained in web browsing behavior that they easily represent the largest marketing channel in the world, as well as, the one with the highest ROI.

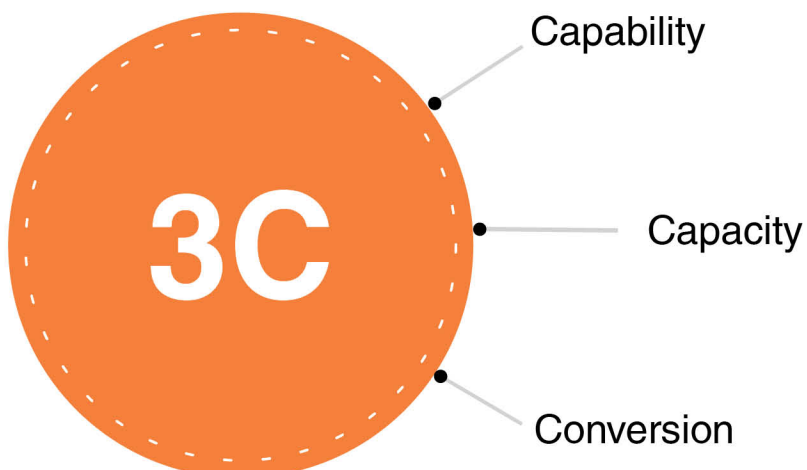
The Marketing Funnel



Key Parameters For Selecting An SEO Partner

Most individuals, small businesses, and major companies will be glad to know that Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is something that can be hired as a service. However, choosing the right partner or agency is often harder than doing it yourself because there are many manufacturers providing this kind of technology and they all don't have the same level of expertise.

The Three Components To Select the Right SEO Partner



Capability

- Number of years in the SEO industry
- Understanding of the holy grail of SEO
(every agency says we have cracked it; how can you conclude that the agency understands SEO well)
- Organic visits (check whether the websites managed by the agency have witnessed an increase or decrease in organic visits)
- SEO Focus (understand how large the SEO team is)
- Growth Hacking mindset
- Clients/Projects handled in the past
- Rankings of the clients handled
- Case studies from the agency
- SEO strategies and Frameworks created
- Awards won
- Client testimonials
- References – Speak with the agency's customers and past employers
- Content skills
- Data Analysis skills (what evidence the agency has for data analysis?)
- Technical SEO, and UI/UX experience
- Development/ Engineering (how is this important? What development would an SEO agency do?)

Capacity

- Experience in industry verticals as per size
- Team size (as clients, you can demand a dedicated SEO manager)
- Modern SEO tools used
- Geographical presence, both domestic and international

Conversion

- How does the agency rank in SERP organically (both clients and itself)
- Projected revenue and user growth for the project
- Statistics on existing projects on projected targets

Key Takeaways:



Tools to sharpen your SEO process

SEO tools give you invaluable insights into how your site is performing, as well as, what your competitors are doing on their SEO efforts. Having access to accurate, reliable, easy-to-use SEO tools will make your SEO strategy stronger. There are many SEO tools available, here are a few which you might consider for your SEO plans.

1. Keywords Research

a. Google Keyword Planner

What can you use it for?

- Discovering new search keywords
- Seeing average monthly search numbers for keywords
- Helping to determine costs
- Creating new search ad campaigns

b. Google Trends

Google Trends is a powerful analytical tool used by many businesses, marketers, researchers, and others to discover the ins and outs of trends on search and for comparing trends.

What can you use it for?

- Market and product research
- Keyword research for SEO
- Trend variations by location
- Discover seasonality
- Determine stableness of a search term
- Improve marketing and online advertising
- Find niches for products
- Get ideas for content marketing and social media marketing
- Understand brand competition comparison and brand interests
- Discover local differences in search patterns

c. Keyword Surfer

Keyword Surfer is a free and the fastest way to reveal search data, run keyword research, and get content guidelines directly in Google Search.

What can you use it for?

- Performing SERP Analysis
- Content Editing
- Backlinks & Visibility
- Keyword Research

d. Keyword.io

This tool helps with a comprehensive list of relevant keyword suggestions to create and improve your message, and connect better with your audience. The tool helps in finding the actual phrases that people use to find information, products, and services.

What can you use it for?

- For highly relevant keyword suggestions
- To improve your message and connect better with the audience.
- To find actual phrases people use.

f. Answer The Public

It collates, tracks and alerts you to the important questions being asked on Google.

What can you use it for?

- Find the topics people are interested in.
- Make your content calendar with highly relevant content ideas.
- Discover new niches and unexplored angles to boost your organic search.
- Grow your traffic with tailored on-page optimization.

2. Analytics Tools

SEO analytics provide a way for businesses to become more aware of different elements influencing their website and to know if they have had a positive or negative impact on traffic, ranking, conversions, or even the time spent on site. Analytics tools help in building a successful SEO campaign and track the performance of your initiatives. You can also measure the traffic against specific keywords, and thus get an opportunity to build your marketing plan around the most beneficial keywords.

a. Google Analytics

It's the most cost-effective analytics tool (free!) for businesses of all sizes. Getting started with it is fairly simple, and generally, you can begin to track key metrics of your site right away. Google Analytics comes in a variety of complexity levels; the more you want out of it and the more time you put into it, the more useful it will be to you.

What can you use it for:

- Improving the Bounce Rate of your website.
- Optimizing your website ranking.
- Learning more about your prospective clients.
- Segmenting your visitors effectively.
- Setting and monitoring goals.
- Providing data visualization.
- Discovering the right platforms for marketing.

b. Keyword Hero

Keyword Hero lets SEO agencies and marketers replace keywords which are not there in the Google Analytics suite. The keywords are replaced with actual keywords. Moreover, the detailed performance report can be accessed for each keyword and metrics like conversions, bounce rate, CVR, revenue, average session duration etc.

What can you use it for:

- Keyword and traffic analysis
- Optimization of site structure and content
- Boosting organic ROI
- Driving traffic, conversion and revenue from the organic channel

c. Google Data Studio

Data Studio is a free tool that makes your vital data accessible and useful, so your team can find and share answers to your most important questions. Data Studio handles data authentication, access rights, and structure for use in calculations, transformations, and data visualizations.

What can you use it for:

- Access unlimited widget options
- Pull data from multiple sources
- Share data studio easily
- Modern and interactive data visualization
- Create easy to refer and read data for everyone
- For dynamic reporting
- Build interactive experiences
- Embed data studio reports on social media

d. Bing Webmaster Tool

A unique Bing search tool lets you explore your site, analyze backlinks, manage keywords, and more, to help your website reach your targeted website fast and first.

What can you use it for:

- Monitor your site's performance and see what keywords you rank for.
- See how Bing crawls and indexes your site.
- Submit your website/new pages to be crawled.
- Remove any content you don't want to be indexed.
- Disavow links.
- Monitor and resolve potential malware or spam issues.

3.

Local SEO Tools

a. Google Business Profile

Google Business Profile (formerly Google My Business) provides you with the ability to list your business location on Google Maps and local search results. You can display important information about your business, including the opening/closing times, contact details or a link to your website. More recently, Google has also released a new feature that allows you to post a link to articles, or for upcoming events.

What can you use it for:

- Local Pack Tracking
- Auditing Citations
- Auditing Local SEO
- Reporting on Multiple Locations
- Monitoring and Grow Reviews
- Integrating GMB Insights
- Connecting GA
- Capturing Leads And Enquiries (Forms, Calls, Messages)
- Helping Users Find Your Location On Maps

b. Whitespark's Google Review Link Generator

It's a useful and free tool to find your business easily, get customer feedback & online reviews.

Technical Tools

Technical SEO is a subcategory of SEO that involves optimizing the infrastructure of your website, so it can be easily crawled and indexed by search engines. It deals with the technical components of your website — such as, the sitemaps, page speed, URL structure, schema, site navigation, and more. Here are some of the useful technical tools to generate organic traffic from search engines.

a. Google Search Console

It allows you to measure your site's search traffic, find out which keywords your site ranks for, and identify technical errors. GSC reports common errors, including Index Coverage, Core Web Vitals reports, and Mobile Usability.

What can you use it for:

- Help Google to find and crawl your site.
- Fix indexing problems and request re-indexing of new or updated content.
- View Google Search traffic data for your site; how often your site appears in Google Search, which search queries show your site, how often searchers click through those queries, and more.
- Receive alerts when Google encounters indexing, spam, or other issues on your site.
- Show which sites link to your website.
- Troubleshoot issues for AMP, mobile usability, and other search features

b. Semrush

Semrush is an all-in-one tool suite for improving online visibility and discovering marketing insights.

What can you use it for:

- Keyword Research
- Competitive Research
- PR, Content Marketing
- Marketing Insights
- Campaign Management

c. Ahrefs

Ahrefs is an SEO software suite that contains tools for link building, keyword research, competitor analysis, rank tracking, and site audits. Most of the features inside of Ahrefs are designed for marketing professionals.

What can you use it for:

- Find content that's performing well
- Find backlinks of competitors
- Identify broken links
- Keyword clicks

d. Screaming Frog

The Screaming Frog SEO Spider is a website crawler that helps you improve onsite SEO, by extracting data and auditing for common SEO issues.


e. Ubersuggest

Ubersuggest allows you to get insights into the strategies that are working for others in your market so you can adopt them, improve them, and gain an edge.

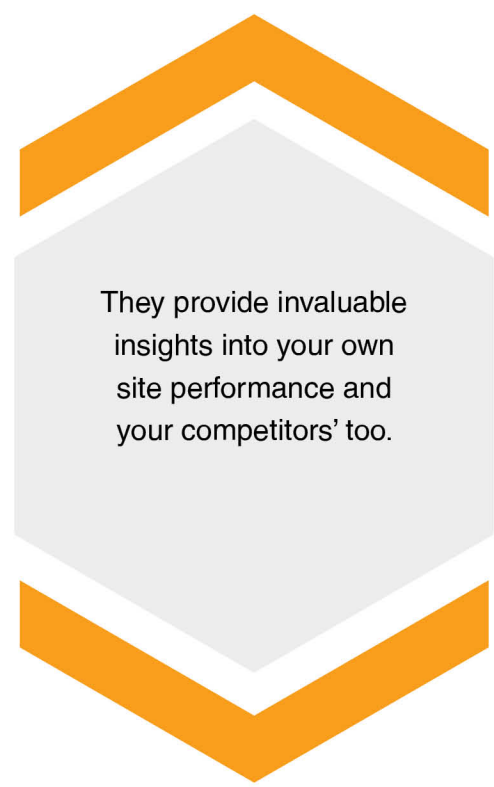
f. Google PageSpeed Insights

Google PageSpeed Insights is a free tool to help you find and fix issues, slowing down your web application. An open-source tool called Lighthouse collects and analyzes lab data that's combined with real-world data from the Chrome User Experience Report dataset.

Key Takeaways:



SEO tools helps
to make your SEO
strategy stronger



They provide invaluable
insights into your own
site performance and
your competitors' too.



Broadly speaking, SEO has two major elements-- On-page activities at a site level and second, what happens outside that increases visibility and domain credibility. There are always different ways to tackle each one. In our approach, we understand the change and shift in the way a user looks for queries online.

Post pandemic, it has become ever so critical for businesses to be present and visible across digital channels. Marketers want to ensure that on-page tech is structured for quick implementations and off-page visibility is great, accompanied by relevant content.

1. Google Algorithm Changes

There's no single answer to Google's Algorithm update. And there's no other way to handle it other than being proactive about it. This is how the domain of search optimization operates. For instance, the CoreWeb Vitals of June of 2021 and others, signaled what organizations should stay prepared for.

The only way to handle this change is to be agile with the tech level implementations that may be needed when the change occurs, keep your eyes and ears open for updates and act swiftly.

Tip: Adopt an agile approach for technical implementations

2. Evangelizing Seo Internally

SEO as a function, its nuances and the impact that it creates is something that all stakeholders need to be aware of. Because of the complexity it carries, it's sometimes confusing to understand the big picture. For example, every area, be it content, tech implementations, or user experience, are inter related, and a strong communication strategy needs to be defined to ensure that each team understands the priority of the function. Arranging internal workshops and adopting a more learning based approach is what is required.

Tip: Collaborative, agile, and responsive teams make evangelizing SEO successful.

3. Finding The Right Talent

The industry is flooded with many small and large sized agencies that boast of the best SEO expertise. It's important to work with a partner who understands your business, its objectives and limitations, and creates a plan with the required milestones to achieve the target. The same applies or hiring talent for an organization. The digital space, especially SEO, is a constantly changing environment.

Tip: Find people and partners who are strong in fundamentals, have proven themselves, and are open to learning and improvisations.

4. Ux-First Led Website Design

Google has been focusing on making user experiences better. Any search should not only lead a user to the best options available in location snippets, FAQs, etc., but also go a step further and ensure the website is designed to easily handle the queries that lead users to it.

The focus is on making relevant content more quickly accessible, reducing page load time, and ensuring a delightful customer experience through design.

Tip: Focus on a user experience-first approach.

5. Creating Quality Content On A Sustained Basis

Being in sync with the latest trends, data analytics, and keeping a close watch on your business landscape, will determine a strong content strategy. Content needs to be fresh, relevant and consistently produced. Merely dumping volumes without any strategic approach will never ensure sustained growth.

Tip: Create content that generates user interest and solves a query rather than keywords or volumes focused.

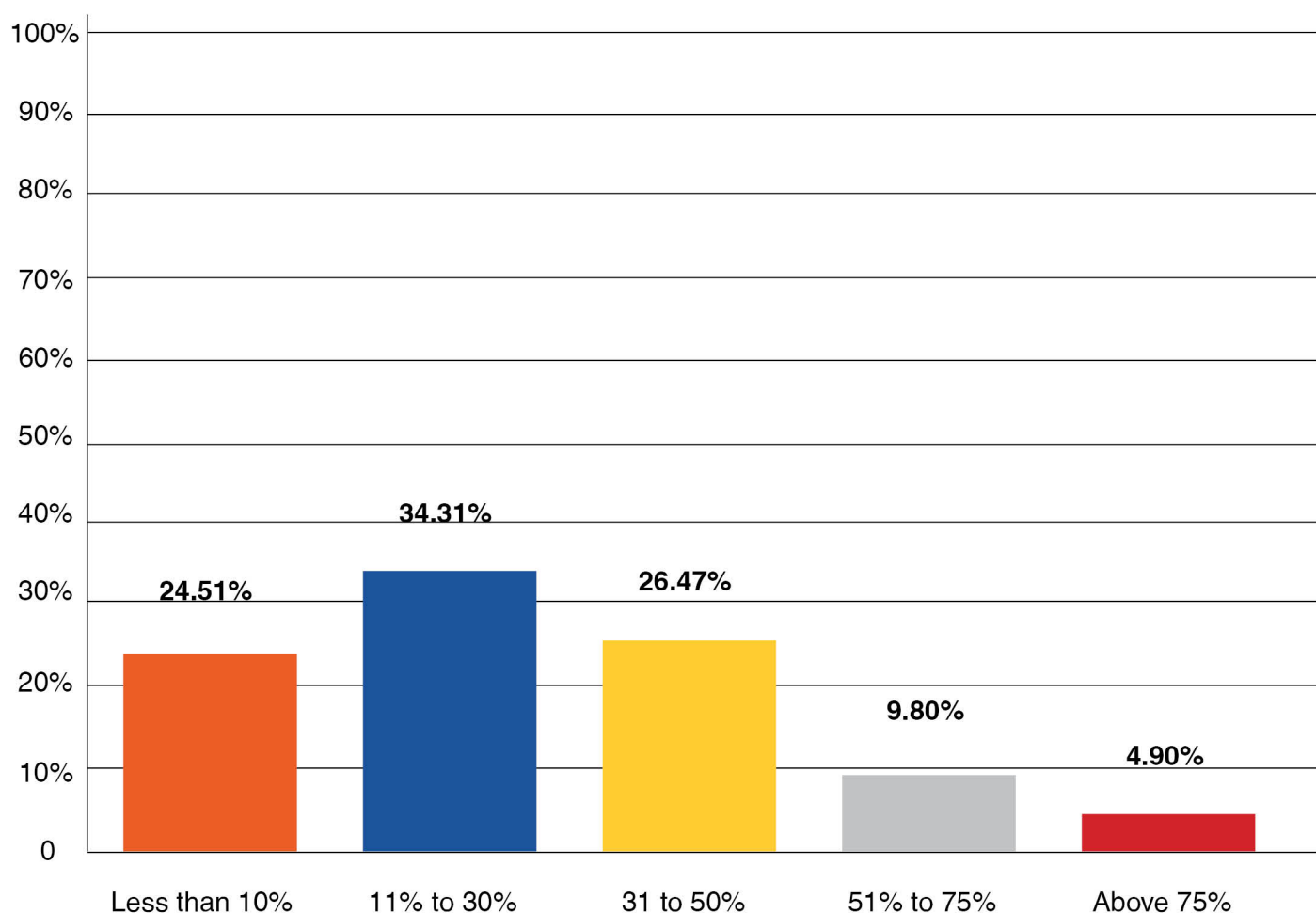
Key Takeaways:

SEO best practices are always evolving, you need to be agile and find ways that work for you to tackle challenges effectively.

SEO efforts: How today's marketers tie it all together

SEO has come a long way, and so have marketers. Most marketers are armed with the knowledge of Google algorithms and use SEO effectively to attract customers. Our survey underlines that marketers are leveraging SEO to unlock its value, with a few (4.90%) driving nearly 75% online traffic using SEO, with tactical and planned efforts.

Unlocking SEO value: How Much Are The Marketers Getting Online Visits



(Source: DMAasia and Infidigit State of SEO & SEO Trends Survey 2022)

Going multichannel, and using local SEO are a few approaches that marketing leaders are adopting. Let's look at them in detail:

Using a multichannel approach for SEO

An omnichannel is an integrated approach to provide seamless customer experiences, both online and offline. Search is not only useful for brand discovery, but also forms a large part of the customer journey.

A powerful local SEO strategy with omnichannel fused into it can make a big difference in how physical retail outlets connect and interact with their online counterparts. Here are some ways of achieving it using modern SEO techniques.

Website Searches

Keeping your SEO strategy in-line with Google Updates can help drive organic traffic and also appear in featured snippets of Google search results.

How:

- *Focus on core web vitals: Page Speed, Load Time, etc., mobile friendliness, no pop-ups, HTTPS certificate.*
- *Focus on topics instead of keywords: know your audience, create content clusters*
- *Create voice search friendly content: long tail keywords, structured data.*
- *Refresh your old content regularly: rewrite intro, delete irrelevant information, replace old images.*
- *Work on organic link building: With quality content that can help earn links from websites with high domain authority.*
- *Make your content visually appealing: With UI/UX, image breaks, and infographics.*

Marketplace Searches

- *Focus on popular and long tail keywords (product reviews, competitor listing, top sellers)*

How:

- *Understand factors affecting ranking and product performance on the marketplace*
- *Stay one step ahead in technology (Website speed, mobile responsiveness, UI/UX experience)*

Voice Searches

- *Assistant searches have become more fluent, conversational, and complex for Google.*
- *Users have greater expectations from Voice Searches (Direct answers, local results, more natural and conversational experience)*

How:

- *Focus on long tail keywords (Higher chances of featuring in snippet that drive 40% of voice search results)*
- *Focus on mobile friendliness*
- *Use structured data (Schema Markups)*

Video Searches

- *Videos are an ideal means to improve the dwell time of your consumers while engaging with your brand.*
- *Video Searches are bringing a paradigm shift in user engagement*

How:

- *You can optimize videos for YouTube for SERP ranking & audience engagement (Optimized video descriptions, well searched target keywords, promote other relevant videos/content, etc.)*
- *Leverage Google Trends (Find out what people are searching, demographics, time spent on video, etc.)*

ASO (App Store Optimization)

- ASO helps in maximizing the visibility of applications on app stores

How:

- You can improve ASO by optimization of App title, description, visual assets of app, localization of listing, etc.
- Performance parameters can be measured through downloads, ranking on app store, user ratings, conversion rate, etc.

SEO is no longer restricted to Web Pages. It covers many channels that help bring the audience to your brand. You need a cohesive approach to work on all channels for sustainable growth in the long run.

Key Takeaways:



Going local: the Vernacular SEO

A rapid rise in India's new internet users brings with it distinct and varied requirements, particularly when it comes to using their preferred language. With 90% of these new internet users preferring to consume content in their mother tongue, marketers need to turn their focus on the vernacular.

In the past year, users in India have translated websites into Indic languages using Google Translate over 17 billion times.

Why Does Your Business Need Vernacular SEO?

- Vernacular content has wider reach.
- It's easier to rank on Google in vernacular searches as they have lower competition.
- Vernacular brings more traffic to your website.
- Vernacular SEO is the best way to target your audience.
- Vernacular SEO can help you rank higher in search engine results pages (SERPs).

How to Set Up Your Vernacular Content SEO Strategy

- Understand the demographics of your customer
- Figure out the local languages that you need to include
- Choose the right domain structure for vernacular content
- Use human translation instead of translation tools to convert content in local languages
- Create sitemap for vernacular URLs
- Use the local language in the meta description for Google to read your pages



IV: RESOURCES

Case Studies

1. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance

Organic Search with a ROI Mindset

About ICICI Prulife

ICICI Prudential Life began its operations in 2001 and it has consistently been amongst the top companies in the Indian life insurance sector.

Campaign Objective

Improve organic visibility and reduce cost per lead.

Challenges

The Retirement and Annuity Plans demand was picking up and ICICI Prudential life insurance wanted to tap as many customers and get them onboarded for their products. They noticed that the vast majority of people seeking services such as insurance do research online before deciding who to contact. They envisaged that if a potential client starts online, and your website and web content rank well for search terms for all products including Retirement and Annuity plans that meet the criteria of their search query, they will be among the first insurance companies they will likely click on. The road map was clear but they were looking for a cost effective strategy

Solution

The period of the case study was April 2020 – November 2021. The target markets were Metro, Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities and audience comprised of both men and women. ICICI Prudential life insurance partnered with Infidigit to reduce the cost per lead and increase the organic visibility for Retirement and Annuity Plans. The SEO expert team at Infidigit conducted a comprehensive audit of the current online behavior of the customers visiting the website and suggested their recommendation on the way forward to achieve the noticeable numbers. The Infidigit Team collaborated with ICICI Prudential life insurance's marketing team and revisited the content strategy and came up with a plan that helped them reduce the cost per lead using organic marketing and create search query related relevant content.

Infidigit's Efforts

Content Gap Analysis

Content Gap Analysis was performed across along with competitor gap analysis for the Retirement & Annuity Category to identify missing content pieces in terms of the type of content, pages, content structure, and layout.

Landing Page Creation

On the basis of the learnings on the missing pages, Infidigit team created new pages with relevant content keeping customer satisfaction in mind.

Optimizing Existing Content

For better organic visibility and ranking, infidelity optimized the existing content as per user expectation. FAQs, one of the most important pieces of content influencing buying decisions of any products/ service was reviewed by the Infidigit SEO team, and they further optimized which helped the user to find right solutions to their queries.

Infidigit also conducted a UI/UX audit and made necessary content layout for better user experience.

Contextual Links

To improve crawl rates, the Infidigit team added contextual footers. This activity made it easier for bots to crawl. Furthermore, they reached out to the various pages, thereby helping us in passing page authority and improving the page ranking.

Structured Data Markup

As an ongoing process of helping search engines understand how to interpret and display content, the team made use of various structured data such as FAQ Schema, Breadcrumb Schema, Video Object Schema. This helped ICICI Prudential life insurance in improving the CTRs.

Influencer Marketing

Infidigit partnered with several influencers to promote ICICI Prudential life insurance to raise product awareness and gain popularity in the same niche/industry. With this approach, we took into consideration some top metrics such as the website DA, traffic, and spam score, that helped us to improve ranking for commercial keywords.

Optimize The Ctas

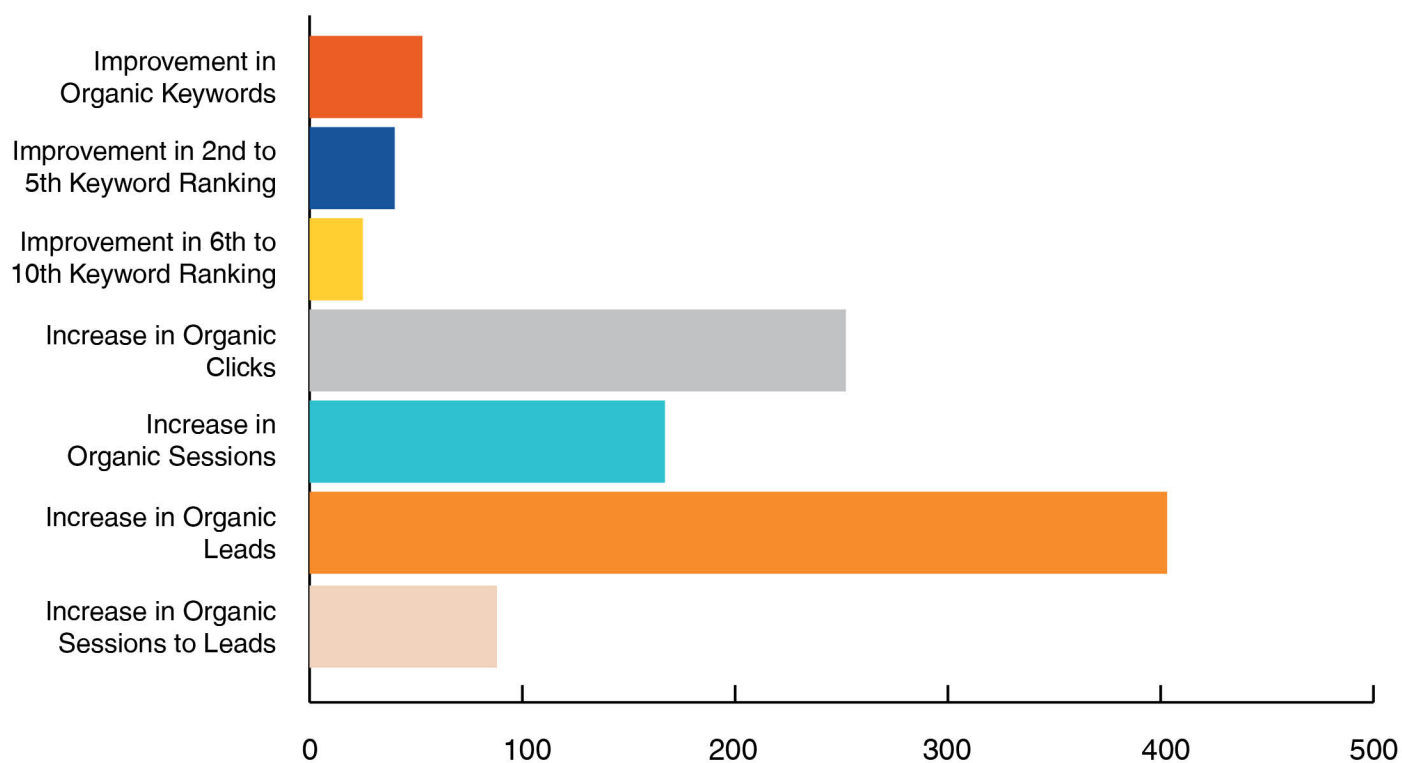
Made use of heatmaps to understand the user behavior on the page. On the basis of that information, the Infidigit team implemented different types of CTAs like Banner and Featured Box Widgets, mapping the user journey to improve the conversion rate.

Quote From Manish Dubey, CMO

“SEO is one of the channels I prefer for customer acquisition. With years of trust between us, we entrusted Infidigit with the responsibility of reducing our organic cost per lead for Retirement and Annuity plans. Thanks to Infidigit, our team generated a multifold increase in organic leads & sessions in one year.”



The Results



Source- Infidigit Analytics and Reporting

Here is What ICICI Prulife had to say about the results.



2. Adani

SEO for “One Nation Billion Celebrations” Campaign

Describe Your Marketing Challenge Or Opportunity

When Adani was handed the charge for 7 different airports across India, a difficult challenge was set before us. These airports were handled by different organizations and we had to bring them all under the Adani umbrella. Our priority was to shift from the subdomain to a single platform as we had seven different micro websites for the airport business.

Detail The Campaign Objectives

We set about this task with a single focus to enhance organic traffic on our website while retaining the current traffic from the other domains from an SEO point of view. We implemented several strategies to address this problem. We started with the migration of airport websites from sub-domains to adani.com to ensure scalable website structure and SEO traffic growth. We ensured that we had defined a strong site structure that gave us better crawling. The better website structure in turn helped us index more pages and content in the search engine.

Explain Your Strategy

In the next phase, we prioritized search engine-centric navigation & contextual internal linking. As internal links are useful for establishing the site architecture and spreading link equity. We define our main link navigation and web linking so that crawlers find all of the web pages available on the website. The next step was the meticulous implementation of content strategies for airports to increase rankings. For this, we optimized previously written content as per new guidelines. We then conducted URL redirection, as redirecting URLs is one of the most important things to do to make a site migration go smoothly. While placing 301 redirections, we kept in mind not to lose our SEO rankings. We continuously monitored and checked our redirections to make sure that they are properly functional (post going live). This led to an improvement in ranking for some sets of keywords after redirection.

Details Of The Data

Finally, all Adani airports' GMB accounts were migrated to a single account. The GMB listing enabled us to feature in searches and Google maps. We edited the Google my business profiles to reflect the ownership changes to the Adani airport business. It was earlier managed by the Airport Authority of India. We made changes in website links, office directions, and photos, monitored Google reviews and replied to comments wherever required, and ensured monthly tracking of GMBs insights by airports.

Illustrate Your Creative Solution

We edited the Google my business profiles to reflect the ownership changes to the Adani airport business. It was earlier managed by the Airport Authority of India. We made changes in website links, office directions, and photos, monitored Google reviews and replied to comments wherever required, and ensured monthly tracking of GMBs insights by airports.

Results And Sources

With a successful migration of various sub-domains of different airports across India, to a single domain on adain.com, we were able to create a seamless transition process of information and

customers while improving our keyword crawling from 735 to 2684 (above Top 10) and 226 to 609 (Top 10) from Jul 2021 to Nov 2021. There was also an increase in organic web traffic growth from 22974 to 127961 from Jul 2021 to Nov 2021. With our steadfast efforts and continuous monitoring across various domains, we witnessed an increase in business visibility across search engines. There was a good growth in keywords (improvement in the search engine). Increase in customer acquisition and month-over-month growth in organic web traffic.

Data Sources

Brief Summary Statement Or Expression

With our steadfast efforts and continuous monitoring across various domains, we witnessed an increase in business visibility across search engines. There was a good growth in keywords (improvement in the search engine). Increase in customer acquisition and month-over-month growth in organic web traffic.

Hero Image :



Why do several SEO efforts struggle and fail?

Google algorithm is a work-in-progress. With changing SEO parameters and rules, the best practices may seem inadequate to help you stay on top of the SEO game.

In that case, it's time to step back and revisit your strategies.

How to evaluate whether your SEO tactics need a facelift?

- Your website is a critical channel for lead capturing but is not performing
- Your content assets are designed as lead magnets though they are not giving any results
- Your website traffic is declining and the bounce rate is hitting the high note
- Your competition has a robust SEO strategy and you are still fixing your page speed
- Your Google Analytics data goes red

If you are encountering any of these issues, it's time to look inwards. There are certain practices that are counterproductive for SEO. Let's look at the most common culprits.

- **Black Hat SEO**

Black Hat SEO techniques may get your site ranked among the top search results, but there are high chances of your site being removed or knocked down to the bottom too. For example, Black Hat tactics make your copy stuffed with keywords to rank higher, show one piece of content to searchers and a completely different one to the search engine, or use link farms.

How to overcome this:

Use White Hat content strategies that Google rewards.

- **Spammy Traffic**

If you find spam traffic referrals in your Google Analytics reports, chances are, you are the recipient of spammy traffic.

How to overcome this:

Do an SEO audit to check the backlinks. Try to remove the spammy backlinks.

- **Dull Content**

Churning out large quantities of low-quality content does more harm than low volume of quality content. Google has updated its search algorithm to counter keyword heavy, low in quality content, in order to make the search contextual and user intent focused.

How to overcome this:

Publish high quality credible content pieces that serve user needs and answers search queries.

- **Duplicate Content**

Google can easily spot duplicate content on your website. It can penalise your website with poor rankings for such duplicate content.

How to overcome this:

There are many tools to detect duplicate content. Additionally, you can adopt content hygiene practices to self-audit for duplicity.

- **Link Building**

Link building is both an art and science. You need to maintain a fine balance to get high quality links from authoritative sources.

How to overcome this: Avoid link directories and spammy links. A higher ranking on SERP can be partially attributed to links from high domain authority websites. Hence try to earn more of such links.

- **Schema Markups**

If you find Google not reciprocating your schema markup efforts in snippets that appear in organic search results then you are probably being penalized.

How to overcome this:

Do your on-page SEO properly by adhering to Google Structured Data Implementation Guideline.

Key Takeaways:



There are ways to tackle poor performance in SEO, but it's better to avoid the pitfalls beforehand.

Being aware of Google's algorithm changes and avoiding old SEO practices that may have worked once can go a long way.

Conclusion

SEO is like a maze. Once you are on the right path, there's no looking back. But if you get caught in the maze, then working your way out may feel exhausting. The changes in Google's Algorithm and tech landscape certainly keeps you on your toes. Not to mention the battery of competitors.

We have tried to simplify some key aspects to ace the SEO game. With insight and wisdom from leading marketers, we hope the SEO playbook has imparted some invaluable knowledge that you need as a practitioner. We'd be happy to hear back from you, be it reviews, comments, or just messages. Because we place a high premium on your inputs

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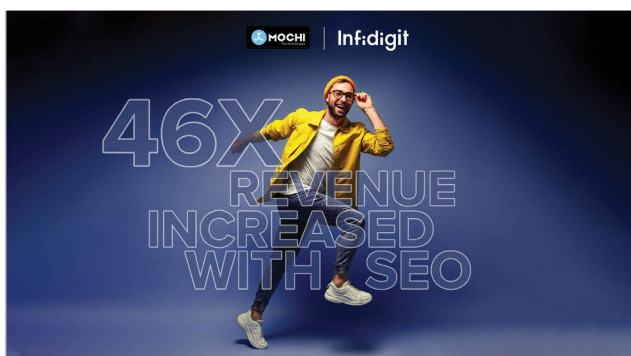
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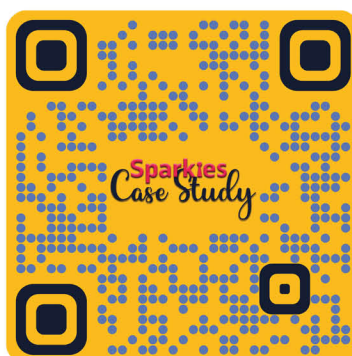
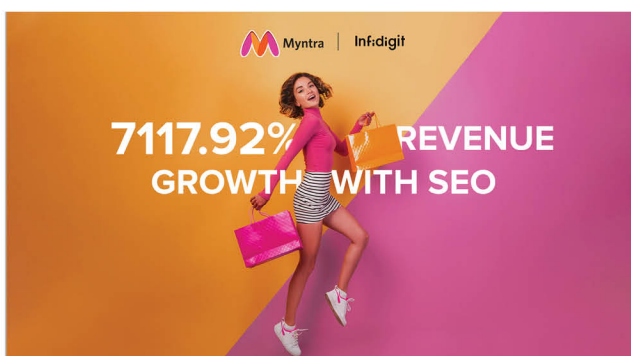
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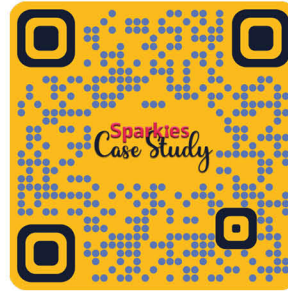
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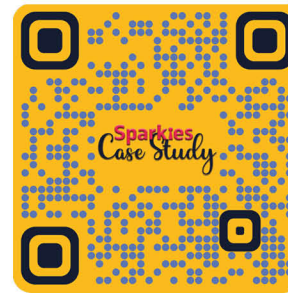
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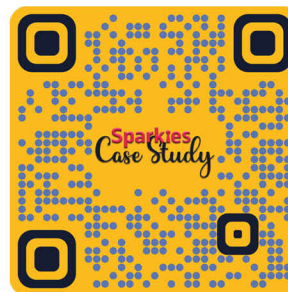
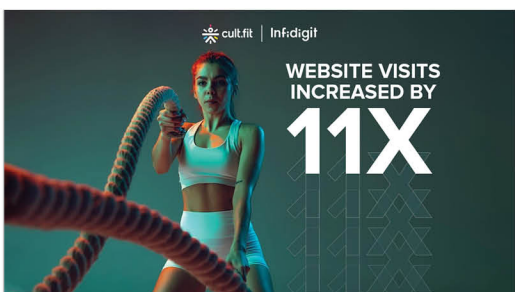
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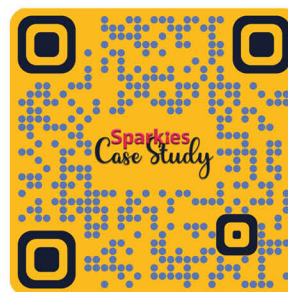
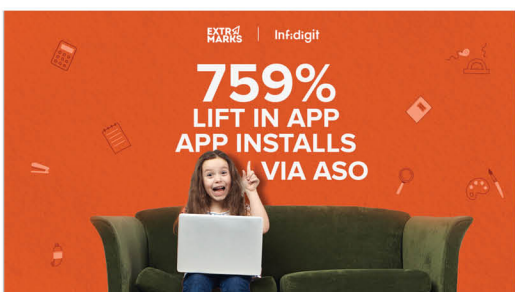
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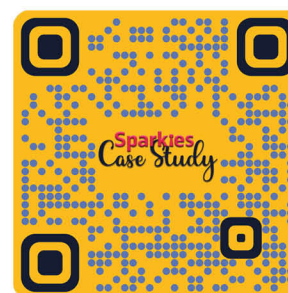
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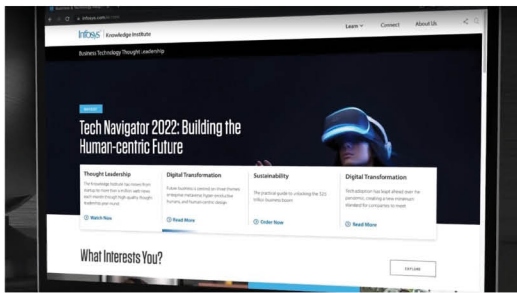
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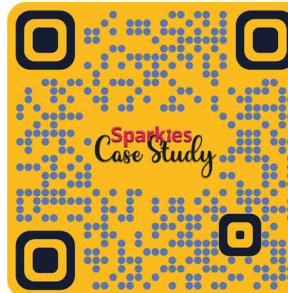
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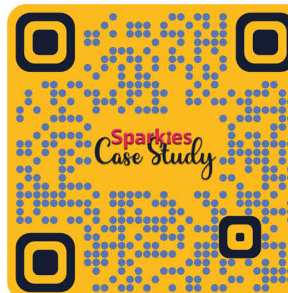
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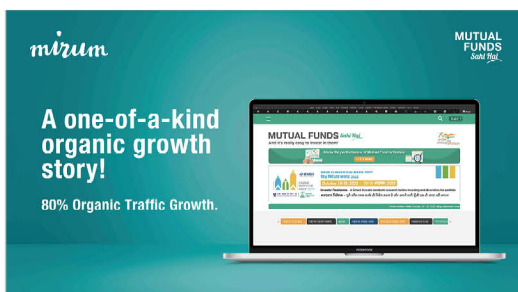
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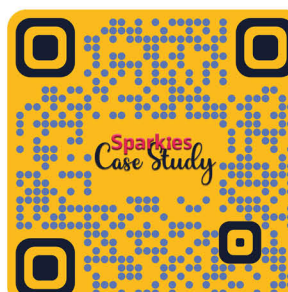
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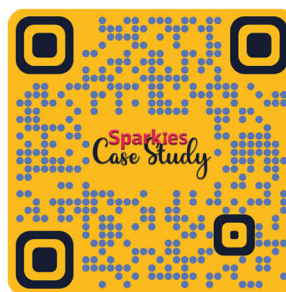
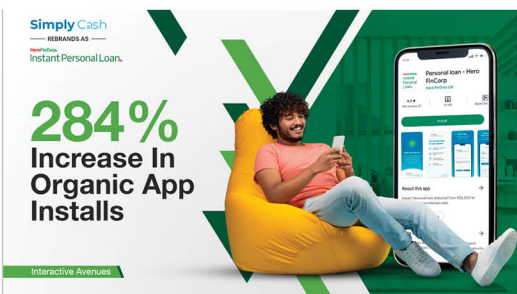
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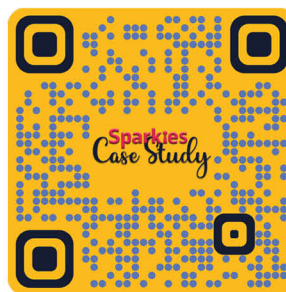
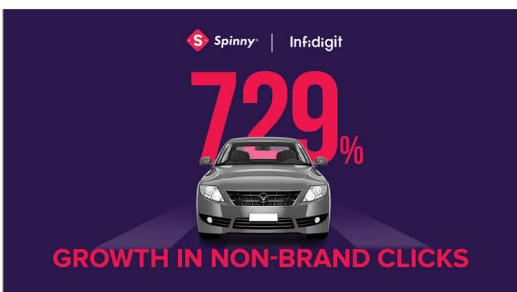
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Suri



Rajesh
Kumar



Sumeet
Singh



Praveen
Rao



Anita
Nayyar



Sai
Narayan

& TORCHBEARERS



Karan
Kumar



Abraham
Alapatt



Kaushik
Chakraborty



Kanchan
Achpal



Deepak
Gulati



Shalini
Rao



Shirish
Agrawal



Kiran
Veigas



Kantil
Majumdar



Saurabh
Bajaj



Ankit
Porwal



Vipul
Oberoi

Modern SEO 10 Commandments

DEFINE

Clear goals of what SEO should deliver.

ONBOARD

Right partners & team

DEPLOY

Omnichannel and multi-lingual SEO

ALIGN

Your Content with Search Intent.

OPTIMIZE

Images, UX and Backlinks

METRICS

Define the focus metrics

REVIEW

on-page and off-page and technical SEO

ADOPT

SEO audits periodically

TRACK

Your results

STAY AGILE

with current best practices.
(and attend DMA Brandmasters forums.)



Scan the QR code and get five actionable insights to level up your SEO game. The Infidigit team will take a deep dive into your website's performance and identify the five most important areas for organic growth.

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