

2018 SEO Checklist for Nonprofits



The way search engines rank your nonprofit's content changes over time, which means you need to keep on top of your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies. To help you in doing this, we suggest you work your way down the following SEO Checklist for 2018.

**as SEO practices evolve, so too will this checklist!*

TITLE TAG

This is where it all starts, folks. Making sure that you're getting your target keywords right from the get-go is imperative and should always be top of mind when you're coming up with new page and blog titles.

- ☐ Titles are unique for each page on your site
- ☐ Title length is no longer than 70 characters
- ☐ Your target keyword appears near the beginning of the title

META DESCRIPTION

When you've got a full plate, this is an easy one to forget... but it's also an easy one to check off and will make a big difference as search engines turn to it once they've identified your title tag.

- ☐ Descriptions are unique for each page
- ☐ Description length is no longer than 160 characters
- ☐ Avoid very short descriptions
- ☐ The description clearly states what visitors can expect to see on the page. *The description doesn't directly influence your site's ranking, but it can influence your click-through rate.*

URL

What's in a URL, you say? Well, turns out a decent amount of powerful SEO. Search engines take notice of what's in your URL so make sure that it correlates to both your keywords and page content, i.e., no "node83461" links, got it?!

- ☐ Create short, (human) readable URLs that include your target keywords
- ☐ Keyword close to beginning of URL
- ☐ Avoid underscore or spaces - use hyphens only to separate words

H1 and H2, H3 HEADINGS

No, this isn't just window dressing. H tags may not be on the top of the priority stack, but they still play an important role in giving search engines the right information about the content on your page.

- ☐ You have an H1 header at the top of the page (stick to one H1 tag per page)
- ☐ Your target keyword appears near the beginning of your H1 header
- ☐ Include relevant keywords in your H2, or H3 tags; however, the H1 level is the most important for SEO

IMAGE ALT TEXT

Much like meta descriptions, this can be an easy one to say, “meh, I have other things to do,” but Google places a pretty high value on alt texts to figure out what is on the image and what the text surrounding it is about.

- ☐ Describe the image and incorporate keywords where possible
- ☐ When applicable, include your brand in the alt text
- ☐ Be sure your image resolution is proportionate to your image size. Load time affects SEO!

PAGE CONTENT

Always remember that Google is most concerned about providing valuable content to its users. So don't just write words for words. Publish content that helps to answer a question, solve a problem, and/or provide unique insight.

- ☐ There is a minimum 300 - 500 words on each page
- ☐ The content is unique, and does not duplicate other content within your site, or within other sites. Each page is original, unique, valuable content
- ☐ Include your target and relevant keywords in your content

LINKS

You're probably thinking, “why would I want to connect to someone else's website? I want to keep them on mine!” And that's fair. However, connecting to external links helps search engines to create knowledge hubs that then validate the importance of a piece of content. Remember, it comes by to them wanting valuable content for users. Sharing is caring, and caring leads to higher SEO!

- ☐ Link your content to other relevant content both internally and externally
- ☐ Ensure you hyperlink descriptive text, avoiding links like, “click here” or “learn more”

If you can follow and tick off all the above each and every time you create new and updated content, then you are well on your way to having optimized content that drives users to your site.

Just don't be lazy! Stay on top of it, and follow the checklist!