The pages of this document contain excerpts from Google’s Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide as well as additional tips and best practices for improving your website’s search engine rankings.

We at Marquis are providing this information as a service to you, in an effort to help you improve your search engine rankings. We hope that you find it useful in the development of your own SEO campaign. As always, we are available for questions and can point you to an SEO expert should you require assistance with this work. Happy ranking!
Improving your search engine rankings

SEO is not a one-time investment of your time or resources. Search engine algorithms change regularly, so it is important to maintain a long-term outlook and commitment to continually improving your search engine rankings.

Many people wonder why their site isn’t on the first page of search results. Unfortunately, there is no magic bullet to getting listed on the first page of search engines, however, there are things you can do to improve your rankings over time. First, ask yourself, is my site really one of the 10 best sites in the world (or at least in my region) on this topic? Be honest. If not, you can make it better by using these strategies on the following pages.

Be patient. Results often take months to see, and this is especially true the smaller your business, and the newer you are to doing business online.

Remember, the bottom line in SEO is Content, Links, Popularity and Reputation. And, most importantly, continual maintenance and focus.

The Basics: Inbound Links

Creating high-quality links from outside websites pointing to your website (often called ‘inbound links’) is one of the top ways in which to increase traffic to your site and as a result, improve rankings in search engines. There are two main attributes of a high-quality link: the reputation of the site providing it, and the text that makes up and surrounds the link itself. One single, good, authoritative inbound link can do a lot more for you than a dozen poor quality links (which can actually hurt your reputation). Be selective when developing an inbound link campaign, but do implement this as part of your SEO strategy.

The following list contains our suggestions for the beginnings of your inbound link strategy. Many are free and some are paid listings. At a minimum, it is important to list your company on the major search engine’s local pages. Select your listings carefully based on your budget, your audience, and strategy. There are likely several directories you could list your business in based on your industry as well. Consider listing in your professional associations, affiliations, and anywhere you are members.

Submit your company information and site to the following Local Directory Pages:

Yahoo Local: http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com
Bing Listings: https://www.bingplaces.com
Local.com: https://advertise.local.com/

Submit your company information and site to the following Online Directories:

Aviva Directory: www.avivadirectory.com/
Best of the Web: http://botw.org
Consider creating a profile for your business and submit your site on the following Review Sites (if appropriate to your business):

**Yelp:** www.yelp.com  
**Citysearch:** www.citysearch.com  
**Kudzu:** www.kudzu.com  
*(for businesses geared towards the homeowner or families)*

Submit your company information and site to the following Online Phonebooks:

**Yellowpages:** www.yellowpages.com  
**Yellowbook:** www.yellowbook.com  
**Superpages:** www.superpages.com  
**White Pages:** www.whitepages.com

Consider submitting your site to the Yahoo Directory (one-time fee of $299)

[https://ecom.yahoo.com/dir/submit/intro/](https://ecom.yahoo.com/dir/submit/intro/)  
*(only if you feel your audience is searching in the Yahoo Directory)*

**Other Inbound Link Opportunities:**

- Create and update your online profiles in any membership organization or professional association you belong to *(be sure to list/link to your website on all)*
- Consider asking industry partners you work with to link to your website from their website. For example, you could be linked to from a “Partners” page or a “Resources” page or “Industry Links” page.
- Don’t forget to add links in all your traditional marketing efforts such as email marketing campaigns, direct mail, advertising, business cards and letterhead, brochures and marketing collateral.
- Make sure to include your URL in your email signature *(include the “http://”)*.
- Seek links from your Chamber of Commerce and other reputable local sites.
- Analyze the inbound links to your competitors’ sites to find links you can acquire, too.
- Cater your content to and seek links from authoritative industry sites, online trade publications and blogs.
- Post comments, articles and stories to industry blogs with links back to your website’s relevant content. But don’t comment unless you have something to add to the conversation *(that’s a form of spamming)*.
- When you have something newsworthy to report, distribute an online press release to appropriate media outlets, both online and off. Be sure to include a link to your website in the release.
- Advertise yourself as an expert in your industry. Join appropriate groups on social sites like LinkedIn and respectfully answer questions without overtly tooting your own horn.
- If you have high-quality images to share, consider joining the appropriate communities on Instagram, Flickr or other image sharing sites.
- Run a search for possible non-profit .edu sites that are looking for sponsors. .Edu domains are given nice weight by search engines. Sites with established high PageRank lend credibility to your own site.

**Things to Avoid:**

- Avoid reciprocal linking for the sake of getting more links. If there is no good, logical reason for a site to link to you, you don’t want the link *(and vice versa)*.
- Don’t request the same exact anchor text on all inbound links to your site. This is an obvious sign of unnatural link building. Your link building should look natural, and varied anchor text will help.
- Avoid “spammy” sites or sites with few members or little recognition. Go for high-quality, reputable and popular sites always.
High-Quality Content

Creating and posting fresh content to your website can help improve your search engine rankings. Add new, useful content to your pages on a regular basis. Content freshness adds relevancy to your site in the eyes of the search engines, as well as to your prospective clients/customers/members. Be sure to create content that is of interest to your target audience(s) and further promotes your specialization.

The following list contains our suggestions for the beginnings of a content strategy. Select the options that best suit your organization, budget, and audience:

- Consider creating thought leadership articles or whitepapers to post on your website and link to from other websites.
- Consider creating a blog to post relevant information to regularly. The blog should be part of your site’s navigation and structure, not under a separate URL, to get the best results in rankings.
- Consider creating a “Resources” or “News” section on your site that is filled with interesting content.
- Consider adding viral components to your web site or blog such as reviews, sharing functions, ratings, visitor comments, etc.
- Broaden your range of services to include educational video or podcasts. Make sure these are high-quality, in both information and production value, and represent your business and brand well.
- Consider creating a user forum, community bulletin board or events calendar on your site.
- Surround video content on your pages with keyword rich text. The search engines look at surrounding content to define the usefulness of the video for the query.

Promoting Your Content:

Once you create this great content, and commit to adding new content on a regular basis, you must promote it’s existence for it to be successful in generating traffic to your site. Here are a few suggestions:

- Start an email newsletter. Put a link on your website or blog where members can subscribe to your newsletter. Write about your current article topics, and include links to recent content that you have written.
- Join different message boards that are related to the topics that you write about. If members have questions about any of the topics that you write, you can lead them to links to your articles.
- Promote your content in all your traditional marketing efforts such as direct mail, advertising, brochures and marketing collateral.
- Promote your fresh content in all your social media sites including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Pinterest, and Instagram.
- Promote your blog and submit your blog to several online blog directories. Join blogging communities where you can let members know about recent posts to your site or blogs. More on that on the following pages.
- Open an account at content sharing websites such as EzineArticles.com, ArticleCity, and Articlesemporium.com. You will get free exposure for all of your content by posting there.
- To get the best chance for your videos to be found by the crawlers, create a video sitemap and list it in your Google Webmaster Central account.
- Videos that show up in Google blended search results don’t just come from YouTube. Be sure to submit your videos to other quality video sites like Metacafe, AOL, MSN, Vimeo, and Yahoo, to name a few.
Social Media

Social media has become a mainstream marketing vehicle and can help create a buzz for your organization as well as improve your rankings in search engines. By linking your social media efforts to your website, through a carefully planned marketing strategy, you will increase traffic to your site and thus compete for mindshare in search engines. Your social media sites should feed your website and visa-versa to be successful.

Consider creating a profile for your business on the following Social Media Sites:

- **LinkedIn**: www.LinkedIn.com
- **Facebook**: www.facebook.com
- **Twitter**: www.twitter.com
- **YouTube**: www.youtube.com
- **Vimeo**: www.vimeo.com
- **Pinterest**: www.pinterest.com
- **Instagram**: www.instagram.com
- **Flickr**: www.flickr.com
- **MySpace**: www.myspace.com
- **Digg**: http://digg.com

*If available, use the “other” label option in these sites so you can change the link text to your company's name and insert a keyphrase (rather than getting the default “My Company”).

Blogs

Start a blog (if you haven’t already) and participate with other related blogs. Reading and commenting on other blogs can also increase your exposure and help you acquire new links. Get the owner or CEO of your organization blogging. CEO influence on a blog is incredible as this is the authoritative voice of the company. Response from the owner to reader comments will cause your credibility to skyrocket!

Your blog should be part of your website structure and under the same URL as your website to be the most effective in rankings. Remember to be keyphrase-aware in your blog post titles and content, and also with the RSS feed titles and descriptions. Promote your blog everywhere to get the best results.

To further promote your blog, consider listing your blog in the following online directories:

- **Technorati**: http://technorati.com
- **Best of the Web Blogs**: http://blogs.botw.org
- **Bloggeryes**: www.bloggeryes.com
- **Eaton Web**: http://portal.eatonweb.com
- **On Top List**: www.ontolist.com
- **Blogged**: www.blogged.com
- **Bloggeryes**: www.bloggeryes.com
- **Blog Search Engine**: www.blogsearchengine.com
- **Blog Catalog**: www.blogcatalog.com
- **Globe of Blogs**: www.globeofblogs.com
- **Blog Universe**: www.bloguniverse.com
- **Bigger Blogs**: www.biggerblogger.com
- **Bloggernity**: www.bloggernity.com
- **Bloggapedia**: www.bloggapedia.com
- **Spillbean**: www.spillbean.com
- **Blogging Fusion**: www.bloggingfusion.com
- **Blog Flux**: www.blogflux.com
- **Blog Listing**: www.bloglisting.net
- **Blogio**: www.blogio.net
- **Blog Explosion**: www.blogexplosion.com
- **Super Blog Directory**: www.superblogdirectory.com

Pay-Per-Click Advertising (PPC)

PPC results appear as sponsored/paid links alongside the natural/organic search results in search engines. The main players right now are Google’s AdWords and Yahoo’s Search Marketing. If you have the budget it might be worth the investment, particularly if you’re looking for instant visibility. Note that PPC schemes will not affect your natural search placement.
Website Monitoring and Tools

Take advantage of the tools the search engines give you. Sign up for Google’s Webmaster Central and Yahoo’s Site Explorer to learn more about how the search engines see your site, including how many inbound links they’re aware of.

Enable “Enhanced image search” in your Google Webmaster Central account. Images are a big part of the new blended search results, so allowing Google to find your photos will help your SEO efforts.

Don’t obsess over Google PageRank. It is only a small part of the ranking algorithm. A site with lower PR can actually outrank one with a higher PR. And, don’t check your rankings every day. Better to spend time improving your website rather than watching it flutter up and down the results pages.

Website Hosting and Domains

Check your website domain name. Is your address intuitive? Is it easily remembered and searchable? If it doesn’t make sense, it may be worth changing it. Also, if you are on a shared server, do a blacklist check to be sure you’re not unintentionally sharing space with a spammer or banned site. Their negative notoriety could affect your own rankings.

Be aware that by using services that block domain ownership information when you register a domain, Google might see you as a potential spammer.

SEO Companies

Should you decide you’d like to take your SEO campaign further, it may be appropriate to hire an SEO company or expert. These services can help take your SEO campaign to the next level. However, you must remain cautious as you make your choice. Ignore and delete the SEO spam you get via email. The kind of SEO company you want to hire doesn’t send out spam. Ask potential SEO companies specific questions about their tactics and if there are any risks involved. Then get online and do your own research; about the company, about the tactics they discussed, and so forth.

Remain part of the process even after hiring an SEO company. It’s your job to know and understand as much as possible about the strategies and tactics your SEO company will be using. If your SEO company uses high-risk tactics and your site gets caught, you’ll be the one paying the price.

We’d be happy to refer you to one of our partners in SEO should you decide you’d like more information.

Resources: (Marquis is not affiliated with any of the following resources)

http://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo
http://www.marketingprofs.com/topic/all/seo
http://www.searchengineline.com
http://academy.hubspot.com
Simple-to-understand URLs will convey content information easily

Creating descriptive categories and filenames for the documents on your website can not only help you keep your site better organized, but it could also lead to better crawling of your documents by search engines. Also, it can create easier, "friendlier" URLs for those that want to link to your content. Visitors may be intimidated by extremely long and cryptic URLs that contain few recognizable words.

URLs like (1) can be confusing and unfriendly. Users would have a hard time reciting the URL from memory or creating a link to it. Also, users may believe that a portion of the URL is unnecessary, especially if the URL shows many unrecognizable parameters. They might leave off a part, breaking the link.

Some users might link to your page using the URL of that page as the anchor text. If your URL contains relevant words, this provides users and search engines with more information about the page than an ID or oddly named parameter would (2).

URLs are displayed in search results

Lastly, remember that the URL to a document is displayed as part of a search result in Google, below the document’s title and snippet. Like the title and snippet, words in the URL on the search result appear in bold if they appear in the user’s query (3). To the right is another example showing a URL on our domain for a page containing an article about the rarest baseball cards. The words in the URL might appeal to a search user more than an ID number like "www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/article/102125/" would.

Google is good at crawling all types of URL structures, even if they’re quite complex, but spending the time to make your URLs as simple as possible for both users and search engines can help. Some webmasters try to achieve this by rewriting their dynamic URLs to static ones; while Google is fine with this, we’d like to note that this is an advanced procedure and if done incorrectly, could cause crawling issues with your site. To learn even more about good URL structure, we recommend this Webmaster Help Center page on creating Google-friendly URLs.

### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crawl</td>
<td>Exploration of websites by search engine software (bots) in order to index their content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 redirect</td>
<td>An HTTP status code (see page 12), Forces a site visitor to automatically jump to a specified URL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parameter</td>
<td>Data provided in the URL to specify a site's behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdomain</td>
<td>A type of domain used to identify a category that is smaller than a regular domain (see page 6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID (session ID)</td>
<td>Data provided for the identification and/or behavior management of a user who is currently accessing a system or network communications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root directory</td>
<td>Directory at the top of the tree structure of a site, it is sometimes called &quot;root&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Best Practices**

**Use words in URLs**

URLs with words that are relevant to your site’s content and structure are friendlier for visitors navigating your site. Visitors remember them better and might be more willing to link to them.

**Avoid:**
- using lengthy URLs with unnecessary parameters and session IDs
- choosing generic page names like “page1.html”
- using excessive keywords like “baseball-cards-baseball-cards-baseballcards.htm”

**Create a simple directory structure**

Use a directory structure that organizes your content well and makes it easy for visitors to know where they’re at on your site. Try using your directory structure to indicate the type of content found at that URL.

**Avoid:**
- having deep nesting of subdirectories like “.../dir1/dir2/dir3/dir4/dir5/dir6/page.html”
- using directory names that have no relation to the content in them

**Provide one version of a URL to reach a document**

To prevent users from linking to one version of a URL and others linking to a different version (this could split the reputation of that content between the URLs), focus on using and referring to one URL in the structure and internal linking of your pages. If you do find that people are accessing the same content through multiple URLs, setting up a [301 redirect](http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=93633) from non-preferred URLs to the dominant URL is a good solution for this. You may also use canonical URL or use the `rel="canonical"` link element if you cannot redirect.

**Avoid:**
- having pages from subdomains and the root directory access the same content
  - e.g. “domain.com/page.htm” and “sub.domain.com/page.htm”
- using odd capitalization of URLs
  - many users expect lower-case URLs and remember them better
Configure mobile sites so that they can be indexed accurately

It seems the world is going mobile, with many people using mobile phones on a daily basis, and a large user base searching on Google's mobile search page. However, as a webmaster, running a mobile site and tapping into the mobile search audience isn’t easy. Mobile sites not only use a different format from normal desktop sites, but the management methods and expertise required are also quite different. This results in a variety of new challenges. While many mobile sites were designed with mobile viewing in mind, they weren’t designed to be search friendly.

Here are troubleshooting tips to help ensure that your site is properly crawled and indexed:

Verify that your mobile site is indexed by Google

If your web site doesn’t show up in the results of a Google mobile search even using the site: operator, it may be that your site has one or both of the following issues:

1. Googlebot may not be able to find your site
Googlebot must crawl your site before it can be included in our search index. If you just created the site, we may not yet be aware of it. If that’s the case, create a Mobile Sitemap and submit it to Google to inform us of the site’s existence. A Mobile Sitemap can be submitted using Google Webmaster Tools, just like a standard Sitemap.

Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mobile Sitemap</th>
<th>XHTML Mobile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An XML Sitemap that contains URLs of web pages designed for mobile phones.</td>
<td>XHTML, a markup language redefined via adaptation of HTML to XML, and then expanded for use with mobile phones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting the URLs of mobile phone web content to Google notifies us of the existence of those pages and allows us to crawl them.</td>
<td>Compact HTML</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User-agent</td>
<td>Software and hardware utilized by the user when said user is accessing a website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>displayed on mobile phones and with PHS and PDA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Googlebot may not be able to access your site
Some mobile sites refuse access to anything but mobile phones, making it impossible for Googlebot to access the site, and therefore making the site unsearchable. **Our crawler for mobile sites is “Googlebot-Mobile”.** If you’d like your site crawled, please **allow any User-agent including “Googlebot-Mobile” to access your site** (2). You should also be aware that Google may change its User-agent information at any time without notice, so we don’t recommend checking whether the User-agent exactly matches “Googlebot-Mobile” (the current User-agent). Instead, check whether the User-agent header contains the string “Googlebot-Mobile”. You can also use DNS Lookups to verify Googlebot.

**Verify that Google can recognize your mobile URLs**

Once Googlebot-Mobile crawls your URLs, we then check for whether each URL is viewable on a mobile phone. **Pages we determine aren’t viewable on a mobile phone won’t be included in our mobile site index** (although they may be included in the regular web index). This determination is based on a variety of factors, one of which is the “DTD (Doc Type Definition)” declaration. Check that your mobile-friendly URLs’ DTD declaration is in an appropriate mobile format such as **XHTML Mobile** or **Compact HTML** (3). If it’s in a compatible format, the page is eligible for the mobile search index. For more information, see the **Mobile Webmaster Guidelines**.

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**Links**

- Google's mobile search page: [http://www.google.com/m/](http://www.google.com/m/)
Guide mobile users accurately

Running desktop and mobile versions of your site

One of the most common problems for webmasters who run both mobile and desktop versions of a site is that the mobile version of the site appears for users on a desktop computer, or that the desktop version of the site appears when someone accesses it on a mobile device. In dealing with this scenario, here are two viable options:

Redirect mobile users to the correct version

When a mobile user or crawler (like Googlebot-Mobile) accesses the desktop version of a URL, you can redirect them to the corresponding mobile version of the same page. Google notices the relationship between the two versions of the URL and displays the standard version for searches from desktops and the mobile version for mobile searches.

If you redirect users, please make sure that the content on the corresponding mobile/desktop URL matches as closely as possible (1). For example, if you run a shopping site and there’s an access from a mobile phone to a desktop-version URL, make sure that the user is redirected to the mobile version of the page for the same product, and not to the homepage of the mobile version of the site. We occasionally find sites using this kind of redirect in an attempt to boost their search rankings, but this practice only results in a negative user experience, and so should be avoided at all costs.

On the other hand, when there’s an access to a mobile-version URL from a desktop browser or by our web crawler, Googlebot, it’s not necessary to redirect them to the desktop-version. For instance, Google doesn’t automatically redirect desktop users from their mobile site to their desktop site; instead they include a link on the mobile-version page to the desktop version. These links are especially helpful when a mobile site doesn’t provide the full functionality of the desktop version—users can easily navigate to the desktop-version if they prefer.

Redirect
Being automatically transported from one specified web page to another specified web page when browsing a website.
Switch content based on User-agent

Some sites have the same URL for both desktop and mobile content, but change their format according to User-agent. In other words, both mobile users and desktop users access the same URL (i.e. no redirects), but the content/format changes slightly according to the User-agent. In this case, the same URL will appear for both mobile search and desktop search, and desktop users can see a desktop version of the content while mobile users can see a mobile version of the content (2).

However, note that if you fail to configure your site correctly, your site could be considered to be cloaking, which can lead to your site disappearing from our search results. Cloaking refers to an attempt to boost search result rankings by serving different content to Googlebot than to regular users. This causes problems such as less relevant results (pages appear in search results even though their content is actually unrelated to what users see/want), so we take cloaking very seriously.

So what does "the page that the user sees" mean if you provide both versions with a URL? As I mentioned in the previous post, Google uses "Googlebot" for web search and "Googlebot-Mobile" for mobile search. To remain within our guidelines, you should serve the same content to Googlebot as a typical desktop user would see, and the same content to Googlebot-Mobile as you would to the browser on a typical mobile device. It’s fine if the contents for Googlebot are different from those for Googlebot-Mobile.

One example of how you could be unintentionally detected as cloaking is if your site returns a message like "Please access from mobile phones" to desktop browsers, but then returns a full mobile version to both crawlers (so Googlebot receives the mobile version). In this case, the page which web search users see (e.g. "Please access from mobile phones") is different from the page which Googlebot crawls (e.g. "Welcome to my site"). Again, we detect cloaking because we want to serve users the same relevant content that Googlebot or Googlebot-Mobile crawled.

Be sure to guide the user to the right site for their device!

Links

- Google mobile
  http://www.google.com/m/
- Cloaking
  http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=66355

(2) Example of changing the format of a page based on the User-agent. In this case, the desktop user is supposed to see what Googlebot sees and the mobile user is supposed to see what Googlebot-mobile sees.
Promote your website in the right ways

About increasing backlinks with an intention to increase the value of the site

While most of the links to your site will be gained gradually, as people discover your content through search or other ways and link to it, Google understands that you’d like to let others know about the hard work you’ve put into your content. Effectively promoting your new content will lead to faster discovery by those who are interested in the same subject (1). As with most points covered in this document, taking these recommendations to an extreme could actually harm the reputation of your site.

Master making announcements via blogs and being recognized online

A blog post on your own site letting your visitor base know that you added something new is a great way to get the word out about new content or services. Other webmasters who follow your site or RSS feed could pick the story up as well.

Putting effort into the offline promotion of your company or site can also be rewarding. For example, if you have a business site, make sure its URL is listed on your business cards, letterhead, posters, etc. You could also send out recurring newsletters to clients through the mail letting them know about new content on the company’s website.

If you run a local business, adding its information to Google Places will help you reach customers on Google Maps and web search. The Webmaster Help Center has more tips on promoting your local business.

(1) Promoting your site and having quality links could lead to increasing your site’s reputation.

Glossary

RSS feed
Data including full or summarized text describing an update to a site/blog. RSS is an abbreviation for RDF Site Summary; a service using a similar data format is Atom.
Know about social media sites
Sites built around user interaction and sharing have made it easier to match interested groups of people up with relevant content.

Avoid:
- attempting to promote each new, small piece of content you create; go for big, interesting items
- involving your site in schemes where your content is artificially promoted to the top of these services

Reach out to those in your site's related community
Chances are, there are a number of sites that cover topic areas similar to yours. Opening up communication with these sites is usually beneficial. Hot topics in your niche or community could spark additional ideas for content or building a good community resource.

Avoid:
- spamming link requests out to all sites related to your topic area
- purchasing links from another site with the aim of getting PageRank instead of traffic

Is your site doing OK?

Links
- Google Places
  http://www.google.com/local/add/
- Promoting your local business
  http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=92319
Make use of free webmaster tools

Make Googlebot crawling smoother by using Webmaster Tools

Major search engines, including Google, provide free tools for webmasters. Google's Webmaster Tools help webmasters better control how Google interacts with their websites and get useful information from Google about their site. Using Webmaster Tools won't help your site get preferential treatment; however, it can help you identify issues that, if addressed, can help your site perform better in search results. With the service, webmasters can:

- see which parts of a site Googlebot had problems crawling
- notify us of an XML Sitemap file
- analyze and generate robots.txt files
- remove URLs already crawled by Googlebot
- specify your preferred domain
- identify issues with title and description meta tags
- understand the top searches used to reach a site
- get a glimpse at how Googlebot sees pages
- remove unwanted sitelinks that Google may use in results
- receive notification of quality guideline violations and request a site reconsideration

Yahoo! (Yahoo! Site Explorer) and Microsoft (Bing Webmaster Tools) also offer free tools for webmasters.

High-level analysis is possible via Google Analytics and Website Optimizer

If you've improved the crawling and indexing of your site using Google Webmasters Tools or other services, you're probably curious about the traffic coming to your site. Web analytics programs like Google Analytics are a valuable source of insight for this. You can use these to:

- get insight into how users reach and behave on your site
- discover the most popular content on your site
- measure the impact of optimizations you make to your site
  - e.g. did changing those title and description meta tags improve traffic from search engines?

For advanced users, the information an analytics package provides, combined with data from your server log files, can provide even more comprehensive information about how visitors are interacting with your documents (such as additional keywords that searchers might use to find your site).

Lastly, Google offers another tool called Google Website Optimizer that allows you to run experiments to find what on-page changes will produce the best conversion rates with visitors. This, in combination with Google Analytics and Google Webmaster Tools (see our video on using the "Google Trifecta"), is a powerful way to begin improving your site.
Google Webmaster Help Forum
http://www.google.com/support/forum/p/webmasters/
Have questions or feedback on our guide? Let us know.

Google Webmaster Central Blog
http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/
Frequent posts by Googlers on how to improve your website.

Google Webmaster Help Center
http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/
Filled with in-depth documentation on webmaster-related issues.

Google Webmaster Tools
https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/
Optimize how Google interacts with your website.

Google Webmaster Guidelines
http://www.google.com/webmasters/guidelines.html
Design, content, technical, and quality guidelines from Google.

Google Analytics
http://www.google.com/analytics/
Find the source of your visitors, what they're viewing, and benchmark changes.

Google Website Optimizer
http://www.google.com/websiteoptimizer/
Run experiments on your pages to see what will work and what won't.

Tips on Hiring an SEO
http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=35291
If you don't want to go at it alone, these tips should help you choose an SEO company.

Make the most of useful tools and information!
Check out Google's SEO resources and tools.

http://www.google.com/webmasters/