

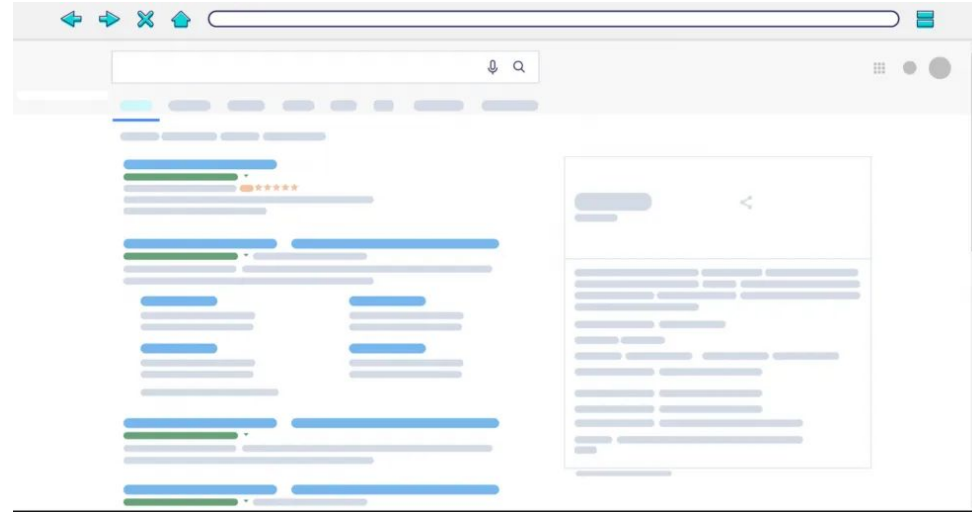
Search Engine Optimization Capabilities

Introduction to Organic Search



What Is Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

- Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is the process of taking steps to increase a site's visibility on the search engine results page (SERP) when people search for products or services related to the business.
- SEO combines technical optimizations, content optimizations, relevance and linking optimizations, and reputation management to make it as easy as possible for the search engines' algorithms to find, index, and then match a site to a user's query.



Paid Search vs. Organic Search

The screenshot shows a Google search for "iphone 13". At the top, there are navigation tabs for All, Images, News, Shopping, Videos, and More. Below the search bar, it says "About 4,000,000,000 results (0.77 seconds)".

Shopping Ads: A section titled "Ads - Shop Apple iPhone 13 Mobile Phones" contains five product cards. Each card shows an iPhone 13 in a different color (Pink, Blue, Pro Max, 256GB, and another color) with a price and carrier. For example, the first card is "Apple iPhone 13 - Pink - ..." for "US\$0.00" for 30 months on T-Mobile. The second is "Apple iPhone 13 - Blue - ..." for "US\$0.00" for 30 months on T-Mobile. The third is "Apple iPhone 13 Pro Max ..." for "US\$99.99" for 30 months on T-Mobile. The fourth is "Apple iPhone 13 - 256GB ..." for "US\$0.00" for 36 months on AT&T. The fifth is "Apple iPhone 13 - ..." for "US\$0.00" for 30 months on T-Mobile.

Search/Text Ads: Below the shopping ads, there are two text ads. The first is from AT&T: "The All New iPhone 13 For \$0 - Get Yours Today with AT&T®" with a sub-headline "For a Limited Time You Can Get the New iPhone 13 For \$0 with Eligible Trade-In at AT&T®. A New iPhone 13 with AT&T® 5G? A Perfect Fit. AT&T® Nationwide 5G. Fast. Reliable... Epic iPhone 13 Pro Max · The All New iPhone 13 Pro". The second is from Verizon: "iPhone 13 Offer At Verizon - Up To \$800 Off w/ Trade In" with a sub-headline "Up to \$800 w/select trade-in & select Unlimited. Plus up to \$500 w/port-in. Terms apply."

Organic Search: Below the text ads, there are organic search results. The first is from apple.com: "iPhone 13 and iPhone 13 mini - Apple (CA)" with a sub-headline "When measured as a standard rectangular shape, the screen is 5.42 inches (iPhone 13 mini), 6.06 inches (iPhone 13, iPhone 13 Pro) or 6.68 inches (iPhone 13 Pro ...". The second is from apple.com: "iPhone 13 Pro" with a sub-headline "iPhone 13 Pro was made for low light. The Wide camera adds a ...". The third is from apple.com: "New Buy iPhone 13" with a sub-headline "A closer look at iPhone 13. ... Our most advanced dual-camera ...".

Shopping Ads

Search/Text Ads

Organic Search

Shopping ads often appear above both text and organic listings, showing products relevant to a user's search. These are ads as well, and are priced and charged on a CPC basis.

Search or Text ads appear above the Organic results and are noted with an "Ad" icon.

Organic Search listings are based on SEO, or Search Engine Optimization, rankings. These positions are not paid for, but are ranked and positioned based on page relevance, site speed, and other criteria.



Search Engine Optimization Terms

Index

- Verb: When the search engines fetch and crawl a page, then add it to their index.
- Noun: the index entry for each page describes what the page is about and records the location (URL) of each page.

Crawl

- The process of looking for new and updated web pages. The search engines discover new or updated URLs mostly by following links from other pages and checking the sitemap for changes.

Crawler

- Automated software that crawls (fetches) pages from the web and indexes them.

Googlebot/Bingbot

- The generic name of Google/Bing's crawler.



Search Engine Optimization Terms

Backlinks

- Inbound links from an external site back to the owned site, usually to a piece of content.

Authority

- The external guidance on how authoritative or reputable a page or domain is, based on factors including keyword relevance, backlinks, reputation, and technical efficiency.

On-Page/Off-Page

- On-Page: Ranking factors dealing with content and layout of a site.
- Off-Page: Ranking factors outside the direct sphere of influence of the site, including backlinks, reviews, social shares, and user-specific factors (browser, geolocation, etc).


Technical SEO

- Technical and infrastructure efficiency of a site, including security, HTML, site speed, sitemaps, robots.txt, and structured data markup.



Organic Search Listing Structure

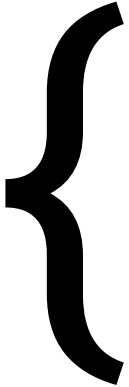
URL →
Title →
Snippet →

 LaGuardia Airport
<https://www.laguardiaairport.com> ⋮

LaGuardia Airport: LGA

The new **LaGuardia Airport**. From curb to gate, enjoy a world-class 21st century travel experience. Terminal B named World's Best New Airport Terminal by ...

Sitelinks



- Flight Tracker - LGA**
Track flights and get status information by Flight Number on ...
 - Airport Maps**
Airport Maps. Click here for an interactive airport map. Airport ...
 - Shops, Restaurants and services**
All shops, restaurants and services available at LaGuardia Airport.
 - Public Transportation**
From the Jackson Heights-Roosevelt Avenue subway ...
- [More results from laguardiaairport.com »](#)



Organic Search Listing Terms

Title

- The main link in organic search results.
- Populated by the title tag assigned to the page.
- Maximum length is 70 characters.

URL

- The page on your site that the title links to.
- Keyword-rich and descriptive URLs are informative and let the search engines and the user know what the page is about.

Snippet

- The description of the page, and is usually pulled from the meta description.
- Rich snippets are structured and provide additional information, like ratings or reviews.

Sitelinks

- Additional sub-listings that direct users to other relevant pages on the site.
- Generally limited to six, sitelinks are generated automatically based on how well-structured the site is.

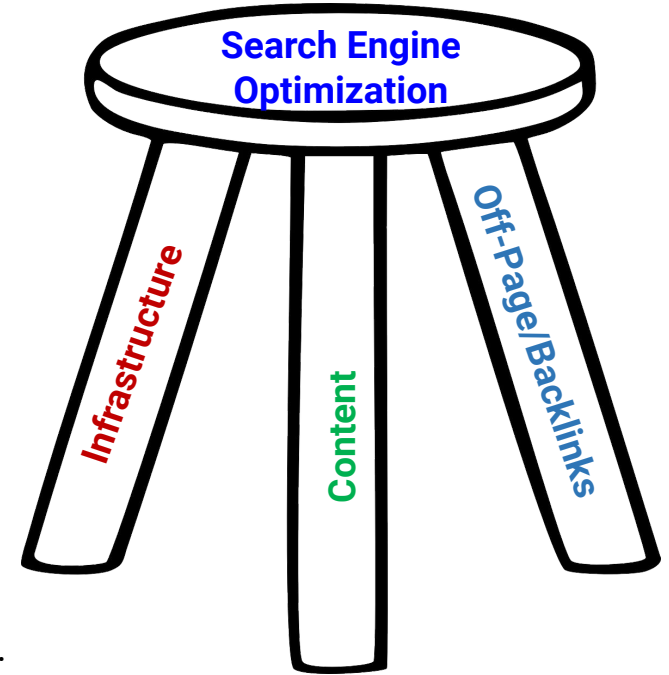


Organic Search Ranking Factors



SEO Elements

- Think of SEO as a stool with three legs. Each leg supports a different way the website relates to the search engines (infrastructure), users (content), and other websites (off-page).
- Optimizing the **infrastructure** of the website sends a signal to the search engines that the website is well-maintained, well-organized, and well-ordered, making it easy for the search engines to efficiently crawl the site's content.
- Optimizing **content** makes it easy for users to get to what they're searching for, and allows the search engines to "understand" what the site's pages are about.
- Optimizing **off-page** elements, such as backlinks, sends a signal about how relevant the site is in the greater "community". This is a vote of confidence for the "authority" of the site.



On-Page SEO Factors: Infrastructure

- HTML titles remain the most important HTML signal that search engines use to understand what a page is about. Unique and descriptive titles, in concert with keywords in the URL, tell the search engines what the page is about.
- Header tags, bold, italics, and underline tags also tell the search engines which keywords are “important”.
- Internal and external links should be hyperlinked with a keyword relevant to the page being linked.
- To assist with visual elements, ALT-tags are important. Search engines can’t tell visually what’s contained in an image. ALT-tags “tell” the search engines descriptively what is contained in the image.
- Relatedly, SRT files contain a video’s subtitles, and are valuable in helping the search engines to index and understand video content.



On-Page SEO Factors: Infrastructure

- Technical aspects of how the site is built, and how easily the crawlers can reach and index the site, is another major factor.
- Even with excellent content, if the site isn't crawlable, the search engines can't index the site, and the site won't show up in the results.
- A site's mobile version is an increasingly important factor. The mobile version should be fast, adapted to mobile's smaller screen size and reduced functionality, and should mirror what users see on the desktop version.
- Speed and security also factor heavily. A site should be fast-loading and absolutely secure from malware and hackers. Implementing HTTPS and having an SSL certificate is the standard protocol.
- A site's URL structure is also important. Including relevant keywords in the URL itself is an easy way to convey what's housed on the page to both the user and the bots crawling the site.



On-Page SEO Factors: Content

- Authentic, valuable content is the single most important factor for search engine visibility. This is what draws users to a site, and is the major source of keywords matched by the search engines.
- Content is considered valuable if it's keyword-rich, relevant, original and non-duplicated, and timely.
 - News-related content should be cited, accurate, and in-depth.
 - Artistic content should be original and skillfully executed.
 - Informational content should be accurate and comprehensive.
- Site content can be housed across the site, or within a blog or other content repository - as long as the search engine's bots can access the content.
- The crawlers scan site content to learn what each page, and by extension, the site as a whole, is about.



Off-Page SEO Factors: Off-Page (Reputation)

- Trust in a website and its perceived authority represent how reputable the site is.
- Domain and Page Authority represent how much the site is recognized as a “leader” in the space the site operates in. Some of this authority is assessed by automatic signals (the site content, the longevity of the site, security, etc.) and some of this authority is assessed by human raters.
- How engaged with the site users tend to be is another factor around reputation. Bounce rate, time on site, pages per session affect the site’s reputation.
- The actual reputation algorithm the search engines use are a black box, but sites you would consider reputable are likely the same sites Google and Bing do as well.



Off-Page SEO Factors: Off-Page (Backlinks)

- Backlinks are inbound links on external sites that link back to the site. Backlinks are vital to how search engines find new pages to index.
- Backlinks can be thought of as “votes for relevance”. Defined as inbound links from external sites, the more backlinks a site has, especially from higher ranking, reputable websites the more the search engines will hold the site in esteem.
- When a higher ranking site links back, that site’s domain and page authority passes through to the site being linked back to. This is commonly referred to as “link juice”.
- Not all TLDs (top level domains) are created equal. Generally, backlinks from .gov, .edu, and .org domains tend to carry more weight than links from .net and .com domains.



Off-Page SEO Factors: The User

- User-related factors are mostly outside the site's direct control.
- Geography, language and culture all factor into deciding if a site's content "speaks" to users in the areas being served. User location is also a factor. "Near me" searches will produce far different results in one locality vs another.
- A user's recent search history also affects rankings. A prior query can be used to contextualize the results for the user's next search.
- User experience is also important. The search engines want the user to be shown relevant results, as well as have a positive user experience on the site. On-page factors such as content and architecture play a role here, as technical hierarchy, a lack of pop-ups, and clear navigation tend to deliver a better user experience.
- User intent signals also affect rankings, as the search engines can guess as to the intent of the user's search.



Negative SEO Factors: Deliberately Misleading

Cloaking

- A deliberate attempt to trick the engines by showing the search engines something different than what you present to users.

Keyword Stuffing

- Excessively repeating keywords across a page or the site. Keyword density is not as important as it once was, and now the search engines value reading user intent and providing quality content.

Hiding

- Similar to keyword stuffing, but the site tries to hide the stuffed keywords by matching the font color to the background, or placing the keywords offscreen.

Piracy

- Hosting plagiarized or illegal content.

Schemes

- Such as paying for backlinks. Backlinks that are paid for can be placed, but won't pass link equity. To avoid being penalized, adding a "nofollow" or "sponsored" attribute should be included.



Negative SEO Factors: Poor Technical Aspects

- Other factors that are less deliberate also negatively influence rankings.
- Slow site speed, especially on mobile.
- Poor site security and not having an SSL certificate.
- Broken links and images.
- Duplicate content
- Poorly structured meta content
- Having an out of date or poorly structured sitemap
- Having a poorly configured robots.txt file



Up and Coming SEO Factors

- Searches made with digital voice assistants like Alexa and Siri tend to be more contextual and conversational in nature, further amplifying user intent as a major ranking factor.
- Google Image Search is the world's second largest search engine. Users searching for images that are hosted on a site will necessarily bring traffic in. Having descriptive ALT-tags and good “neighboring” text around images provides additional context to the search.
- YouTube is the world's third largest search engine. Title and description tags, as well as SRT (SubRip Subtitle) files, are critical to successful ranking of video on both YouTube and Google. Similar to ALT-tags, SRTs give the search engines something to index against.
- Local search for the service industry and brick and mortar stores is increasingly important. Ranking highly within directories (Yelp, TripAdvisor, etc.) is important as a site's listing *within the directories* will generally rank higher organically than the site's own ranking.



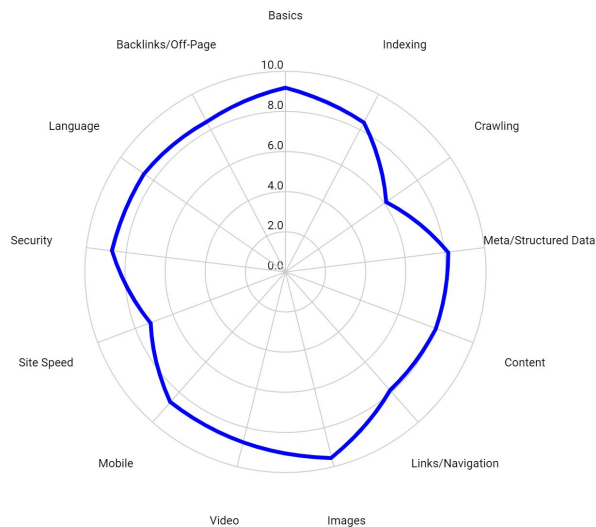
How Hallon Havre Marketing Manages SEO



Full Technical Organic Search Audit



Generic Company



- We begin by performing a technical SEO audit of the site across 13 major areas, analyzing more than 75 individual criteria related to SEO.
- A scorecard is produced to grade SEO-readiness, and to identify immediate optimization opportunities.
- A spiderweb chart shows areas of strength and areas of opportunity for an easy visualization of the account's health.
- A detailed account of findings and recommendations is also provided to act as a roadmap for account success.

Full Organic Search Competitive Analysis



- Once the technical aspects of the site have been audited and scored, and recommendations have been prioritized, a comprehensive competitive audit is conducted.
- This audit is designed to track organic search performance against the other sites that compete for space on the SERP, as well as the site's strategic competitors.
- A detailed comparison, including comparative impression share, a sample of top ranking keywords, and a roadmap to follow to better align organic performance with strategic is provided.

Strategy and Planning



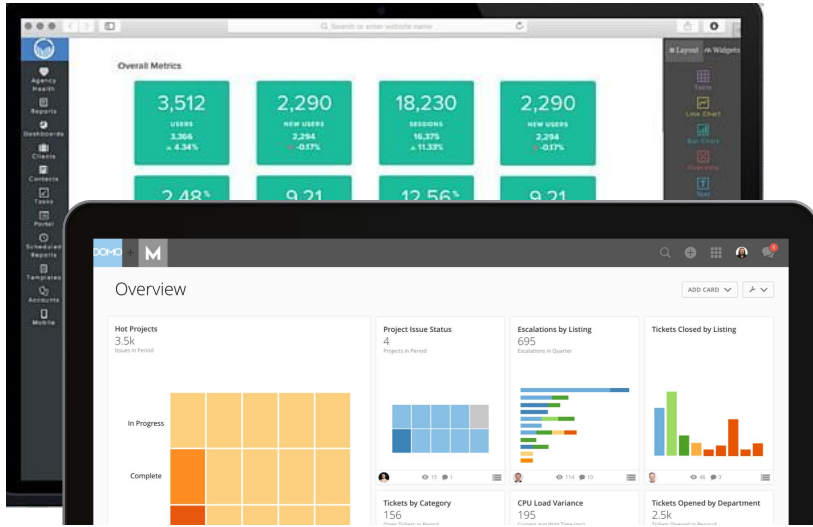
- The results of both the technical audit and the competitive audit are presented, and recommendations are made.
- This acts as a roadmap to lay out the tactics that will be used to sustainably and predictably achieve technical competence, as well as improve competitive standing.
- We work with the client on a content strategy and editorial calendar to regularly refresh content, as well as lay the groundwork to improve ranking for key keyword themes.
- Prioritization of all recommendations is presented to manage expectations and strengthen the partnership.

Audit Optimizations Implementation



- We work with the site's development team on technical implementation of all agreed upon and recommended adjustments and corrections based on the results of the account audit and client conversations.
- We also work with the site's content and editorial team on a framework for improving and promoting content.
- We work with the client to provide a timeline and project plan for implementation of all optimizations.

Reporting



- Hallon Havre takes a collaborative approach to reporting. Our analytics team has an array of reporting options, ranging from a simple Excel report, Google Looker Studio reports, to multichannel DOMO dashboards.
- In addition to reporting on results, weekly optimizations, recommendations, and next steps are presented.
- The client's specific needs dictate the cadence.