

Webinar

Nine SEO Tips You Can Use Today

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Search engine optimization, or SEO, is key to maximizing the visibility of a website or a webpage, as well as being a key driver of search engines' unpaid results, often referred to as natural, organic, or earned search results. Unlike paid results, such as those found with the help of web ads, organic search results stem from choices that financial institutions (FIs) make related to their web content and its execution.

Context

According to Q2's Will Rodgers, there are nine important steps that FIs can take to increase their organic search results. Among them: creating effective, dynamic web page content, employing well placed internal and external links, consolidating similar content, evaluating key word use, and using meta descriptions. Additionally, there are important ways to identify reputable third-party vendors, as well as an array of effective tools FIs can use to assess their SEO effectiveness.

Key Takeaways

FIs looking to maximize their organic search results should consider nine helpful tips. The tips discussed are tailored to Google, considered the industry standard for SEO.

1. Make frequent content changes.

Because Google “bots” are constantly crawling the internet for new content, frequent updates can benefit rankings. Because most FIs don’t have the staffing resources or the need to update their website pages frequently, they can use other opportunities such as community calendars, blogs, and other pages that share more timely content.

2. Build linkable content.

Links from other sites are also valuable for positive rankings. In the case of FIs, opportunities such as loan calculators or valuable tools or information from other sites could be linked to as a resource.

3. Practice link reclamation.

A web search may identify other web sites that mention an FI without linking to them. In cases like this, practicing link reclamation can positively affect rankings. Essentially, the FI would reach out to the company or entity responsible for the web content and ask if they would be willing to link back to the FI’s web page.

4. Link to key internal pages.

Google takes special note of hyperlinks, assuming by default that they are of particular value in respect to content. This is also true of links within an FI’s website. The text used within the link is also important. For example, an FI that mentions great auto loan rates and links to its auto loan page would likely have better success improving their organic search ratings by using keywords within the links. In this case, “Find out about our great auto loan rates” would be a better choice than “click here for great auto loan rates.”

“If you have a website that hasn’t been modified in two years, how valuable are the search results that might be coming to that website? For that reason, (Google) likes content that changes. So, it’s a good idea to try to update your content, add pages, just try to make, as frequently as you can, changes to your website.”

— Will Rodgers, Q2 Director of Web Services

5. Consolidate similar content.

As a website grows, it’s not uncommon for pages to begin sharing and duplicating content across the site. Consolidating similar content into fewer pages can benefit rankings for several reasons, including not dividing rankings or getting “dinged” for having lots of similar content on multiple pages.

6. Place keywords in critical locations.

To help maximize rankings, keywords should appear in a number of locations, including the page URL, the page title, the most prominent headlines on the page, and within the page content.

7. Use meta descriptions.

While they don't appear on the site itself, meta descriptions are an important way for FIs to uniquely describe every page on a website. For example, a page about auto loans might have a meta description with important keywords, the name of the FI, and the phrase "Check out our great auto loan rates." It's important to meta descriptions relatively short, unique, and to avoid stuffing them with keywords, which can have a negative effect on rankings.

8. Use "near first page" keywords.

By using SEO tools, such as Google Search Console, an FI can identify their most popular keywords. By using the most popular keywords (or "near first page" keywords), an FI can rework their web page content and capitalize on the proven effectiveness of them.

9. Consider geography.

As an example, FIs with websites that don't mention the county where they are located or the neighboring towns or cities they serve may be missing out on organic search opportunities to improve their presence in the rural, adjacent, or unincorporated areas near them.



“Your best bet is just to maintain a good website and try to refresh the content as frequently as you can. Either adding new pages or edit existing pages because the more you do that, the more frequently Google's going to look at your site, which will decrease the time that any changes or new pages will show up in the index.”

— Will Rodgers, Q2 Director of Web Services

Biography



Will Rodgers
Director of Web Services, Q2

Will Rodgers is Q2's Director of Web Services and brings more than 18 years of experience in web design and development within the financial services space to Q2's customers. He has also served in web design and development roles at Q UP and CBANC. Will joined Q2 in 2005 to direct the Creative Services team.

For more information on Q2, go to Q2eBanking.com or call (512) 275-0072 ext. 2.

