THE ESSENTIALS OF MODERN ENTERPRISE SEO
Mike King, Founder and Managing Director, iPullRank

One of the Top SEOs in the Universe

An artist and a technologist, all rolled into one, Michael King recently founded boutique digital marketing agency, iPullRank. Mike consults with companies all over the world, including brands ranging from SAP, American Express, HSBC, SanDisk, General Mills, and FTD, to a laundry list of promising startups and small businesses.

Mike has held various roles as Marketing Director, Developer, and tactical SEO at multinational agencies such as Publicis Modem and Razorfish. Effortlessly leaning on his background as an independent hip-hop musician, Mike King is a dynamic speaker who is called upon to contribute to conferences and blogs all over the world.

KEY TAKEAWAY: I'VE WORKED ON A TON OF ENTERPRISE BRANDS
As of yesterday we’re 6 years old!
Who We Are

- Over $1 Billion in Incremental Revenue
- Based in NYC
- 6 Years Old
- 15 Employees
- Founded by Mike King
- Network of 100+ Content Creators
The Most Important Point from that Slide

Over $1 Billion in Incremental Revenue
Agenda

- The State of Enterprise SEO
- Key Winners in Enterprise SEO
- Common Enterprise SEO Problems & Solutions
- Our Approach to Enterprise SEO
- Enterprise SEO Strategies & Tactics Worth Considering
- A Word from Our Sponsor
- Q&A
The State of Enterprise SEO
What Makes a Company “Enterprise”?

“But because of the large digital footprint and technology scale, enterprise companies need SEO solutions that are versatile, advanced, can work over long periods of time and across various use cases.”

iPullRank, Modern Enterprise SEO Guide
What Makes it Enterprise SEO?

Business Size

Business Structure (lines of business)

Website Size

You can be a smaller company with enterprise problems with your site is big enough.
How does Enterprise SEO Differ from SMB SEO?

Navigating Organizations

Scale

It’s far less about being cutting edge. It’s far more about convincing people to do basic things.
For the Enterprise, SEO Cannot be Isolated

Digital Marketing Funnel

AWARENESS
The consumer has come into contact with your brand. 
SEO, Social Media, PPC, Display, UX, CRO, Content Strategy

RESEARCH
The consumer has identified their pain point/need and is actively searching for answers. 
SEO, CRO, Content Strategy/Marketing, PPC, Email

CONSIDERATION
They’ve done their research and are seriously qualifying the available solutions. 
SEO, CRO, Content Strategy, UX, Email

PURCHASE
The consumer is ready to buy! The process should be seamless. 
SEO, CRO, UX, Content Strategy

POST-PURCHASE
You’ve made a new customer! Convert them to a returning customer 
SEO, CRO, Email, Content Strategy, UX

Organic Search is all about giving visibility to content at different stages of the user journey.
Forecasting ROI for SEO

It is not difficult to forecast overall ROI from SEO. However it can be difficult to predict the impact of any given SEO tactic. The best way to determine the ROI from a specific tactic is through split testing. However, projections are a requirement in the enterprise environment.
The Enterprise Doesn’t Like to Wait for Compound Returns

Organic Search is a channel of content marketing. And both the ROI and cost per acquisition goes down dramatically over time whereas the cost of paid channels stays fixed or increases. Enterprises like to have this, but they don’t like to wait for it.

The long-term yield of content marketing is illustrated in the chart above, which shows the cumulative cost per lead over the 24 months, or how much has been spent divided by how many leads have been generated over time.
Navigating Algorithm Updates

No matter what size your organization is, you’re at the mercy of algorithm updates. However, for the enterprise these act as springboards to make things you already planned actually happen.
It doesn’t take Google six months to catch up to an enterprise site. **It takes an enterprise company six months to do anything.**
Maximize Your Enterprise SEO with These Tools

Using Adobe Analytics or another analytics package puts you at a disadvantage for Google’s audience data and Search Console integration.
Key Winners in Enterprise SEO

Enterprise Dominate the SERPs
Google Has a Bias Towards Brands

"Brands are the solution, not the problem. 

Brands are how you sort out the cesspool."

- Eric Schmidt
Every vertical has 1-2 enterprise sites that dominate most head and mid terms in the SERPs.
Often those sites are doing things that are \textit{against SEO best practices}. 
If you’ve ever searched for anything you wanted to buy, Amazon will often rank in one of the top 3 positions with a category for the product. Because generic searches like “dirt bikes” trigger category page results, Amazon can take all their “dirt bike” products and make a category of it. After doing that about 350,000 times, Amazon can own virtually any keywords for which it has products.
Bankrate created a glossary resource that not only targets keywords related to the terms being defined but also quick answer results. The format of using the first heading to ask a question and then answering in a short paragraph is the perfect way to get picked up for quick answers and “people also ask” results. This content is followed by a longer explanation that helps target even more keywords in traditional Organic Search results.
There’s always a “best” option when you’re on a mission to save money. Nerdwallet positions their content around the intent to find the best options from credit cards, savings accounts, and even timing out a TV purchase. The “best” modifier allows NerdWallet to rank better for the more niche keywords while still targeting the broad terms.
Home Depot recognized that the home improvement shopping experience differs from ordering an item online. The local stores are critical to their business because people often come in to buy supplies and get help. Each location has a unique landing page with a crafted copy to give them the best opportunity to rank locally.
Zillow realized that when it comes to living arrangements, location is king. They have dedicated pages that are as broad as state level and as local as individual zipcodes. They can offer something to someone moving to a new state and still deciding on location or someone looking to move to be next to their favorite taco shop.
TripAdvisor leverages their users for content. Threads of user generated content often rank with contributors on the site writing in-depth responses. However, UGC isn’t the only strategy as there are designated pages for each location and sections like “attractions” and “nightlife”. Moreover, at the bottom of these pages, Q&A style content gives TripAdvisor a chance to rank for quick answer results and queries using questions (often seen in voice search).
Healthline specializes in Your Money or Your Life (YMYL) content. As such, they need to have reliable experts who write and review their medical content. Their top page on how to lose weight is a great example of this strategy paying off. Their “evidence based” badge also tells readers the article they found is scientific in nature rather than discussing a fad diet.
Indeed’s collection of career opportunities categorized in a variety of ways allows them to create dedicated pages to fields, locations, specific titles, etc. Not only do they rank for the long tail keywords like “marketing jobs NYC,” but they also outperform on generic terms like “remote jobs” simply because of a great tagging structure.
eBay leverages its authority to boost pages via internal links. With countless pages to link from, every page directs SEO value to other valuable pages on the site.
Yelp realized that the “near me” modifier was very popular in the local business and food industry. So everything location based on Yelp.com became “near me.” This works great within the app as users often want a place they can travel to (at least they used to), but it also does a great job of targeting all the “near me” terms in Organic Search.
Common Problems & Solutions

Things you must overcome to be effective
Essential Knowledge: Content Management Systems and Frankenstein CMSs

Enterprise sites have a lot more pages than a local business or even medium sized company, and because of this more robust content management systems are needed. Not only are these CMS’s able to handle more content, but also provide other services to their clients.
Another challenging aspect of Enterprise SEO campaigns is navigating through the complexities of the legal team. Every project will need to go through this team to ensure the project aligns with the company’s standards, policies, rules, regulations and overall compliance with the messaging set out by the brand.
Essential Knowledge: Navigating Multiple Departments

Enterprise companies often have a number of departments that every project must go through and get approval before a project is considered acceptable to publish.

A lot of these department heads will have little understanding or working knowledge of SEO. In order to get recommendations implemented, and content published, you need business cases, and case studies to get buy in for a lot of these projects.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** Some organizations end up with the wrong tools because some SEO tool providers have very strong sales teams.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Identify core features of a different tool and tie it to needs throughout the organization. Tell the vendor you need to beat an existing vendor’s price to switch.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** You cannot build links due to legal compliance issues. Outreach cannot be done and there are limitations to the deployment of content.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Buy websites and surgically redirect them from specific page to specific page.
Case Study: Domain Acquisition

Modern Enterprise SEO

HOW WE HELPED A CUSTOM GREETING CARD MARKETPLACE RANK FOR CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

THE RESULTS

KEYWORD RANKINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyword</th>
<th>Initial Rank</th>
<th>Peak Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Card</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Cards</td>
<td>100+</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Card</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Cards</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedding Invitations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUR TASK
Our task was significant with a fast-approaching deadline. Going into the holiday season, a popular online marketplace for customized greeting cards was experiencing issues ranking for primary keywords around holiday cards and wedding invitations. Some of their spam-driven tactics of chrismas past were causing their ranking of the keyword “christmas cards” to fluctuate between 24 to not even in the top 100. We needed to get them to top of the SERP before competitors stole all the christmas cheer - their customers.

OUR GOALS
- Stop Keyword “Christmas Cards” from Fluctuating
- Improve Organic Visibility for Specific Keywords

OUR METHOD
Taking a multi-faceted approach, the iPullRank team reviewed all their existing links to determine which sites were contributing to decreases in visibility, and then performed a disavow. Also, we performed audits to vet domains prior for acquisition with significant link equity and ensured that redirecting them to the client’s site would not lead to further losses in visibility. Finally, we reviewed 903 sites, sent 356 emails and built 44 links using a combination of white hat outreach-driven tactics. Christmas miracle, perhaps? We call it spirited SEO.

OUR SERVICES
- Backlink Audit
- Domain Vetting
- Link Building Strategy
- Strategic Link Building
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** The organization does not care about SEO.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Education, business cases and case studies. Use algorithm updates against other people’s the KPIs and use them for buy-in. Don’t be ashamed to use vanity metrics to your advantage.
Be prudent with your words and data points. Executives tend to be very busy and prefer you to get to the bottom line as clearly and succinctly as possible.

Shantel Branch
Senior Account Manager
@iPullRank
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

Problem: Content deployment takes too long. You can’t capitalize on news and trends.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Content Strategy. Be more predictive and build out clear governance models and workflows through content strategy.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** Obsolete technology and frankenstein content management systems. Keep you from being able to launch things.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Reverse proxy to enterprise WordPress.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** Brands have microsites for a variety of initiatives and link equity is split.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Consolidate all microsites into the core domain.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** Line of Business thinking for sites on one domain.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

Solution: Lunch and learn sessions with representatives from each line of business you need to educate them that it is all one site.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** They don’t want to make “SEO content,” because that is not what their audience wants.
You just had to kind of help educate them that you’re not just writing for a print product anymore. You’re writing for a larger world thing and then bring that all together.

Christopher Hart,
Director of Revenue
@iPullRank
You also need to have working knowledge of content strategy and planning. Content and SEO go hand in hand, but you need a clear roadmap and content plan before diving in and creating that content. What is each piece of content’s purpose? Who is your audience? Where is each user at in the buyer journey? These are just some of the questions your content roadmap should answer.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** The organization is siloed. Different groups are not communicating and that causes difficulty for the SEO program.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Reach out to people throughout the organization and network. The more people you engage with the more you’ll be aware of what’s going on. You can’t expect everyone to always bring things to you.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** Getting buy-in from the development team to implement changes.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Learn to speak the product management language. Create user stories with very specific instructions for implementation.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Problem:** Because Enterprise brands are typically huge siloed companies they don't really want to try anything new because they're already doing great.
Common SEO Enterprise Challenges

**Solution:** Show the value of being innovative through case studies and business cases. Show what competitors are doing. Explain why new techniques might be more beneficial than what is already out there and how we can get where we need to be.
Our Approach to Enterprise SEO

How iPullRank makes the magic happen
We approach SEO as a holistic effort that needs to fit into rather than disrupts the marketing mix. It’s an effort that sits across your company and an SEOs coordinate with the right people to make it happen.
How That Translates to Deliverables and their Dependencies

Discovery
- Customer Segmentation
  - Keyword Portfolio
  - SEO Site Audit
  - Competitive Analysis

Planning
- Content Audit
  - Measurement Plan
  - SEO Copy Brief
  - Backlink Audit
- Content Plan
- Content Recommendations
  - Production Calendar

Execution
- Implementation Audit
- Reporting
- Content Development
  - Quarterly Business Reviews
Enterprise SEO Strategies and Tactics Worth Consideration
Enterprise SEO Strategies
SEO Business Cases

Business cases mean different things to different people. I find highlighting opportunity cost to be a poignant strategy.
Find your Internal Champion
Competitive Intelligence

The single best way to get people bought into doing something in an enterprise environment is to show that the primary competitor is doing it and it's working.
Workflows and Governance Models

You cannot do effect content-driven SEO in an enterprise environment without doing Content Strategy. You need to map the process and the key stakeholders so you know how to effectively move content from ideation to creation, optimization and publish.
Content Strategy
There is no such thing as “SEO content.” There is only content that serves both the user and the brand that is optimized with search engine expectations in mind.
SEO needs to be baked into your content operations through people, process and technology rather than having it be a “button” that is “pushed” once the content is complete.
Lunch and Learns

SEO is not a button that is pushed. It requires a variety of stakeholders to be aware of what needs to be done so they can flag opportunities to bring SEO in.

This can only be done through education. Bring people to the table with free food.
Cross-channel Alignment

Although interactions will naturally be different across different channels, it is important that basic strategies and messages are aligned. The key to delivering a positive experience is consistency that should mean outcomes are extremely, regardless of the channel that is being used.
A key area to test and learn for SEO is in Paid Search. There is almost always an opportunity for Paid and Organic to work together to save time, money and prioritize opportunities for improved performance.
Think Like a Product Manager

Product Managers are great at translating requirements into things that engineers can understand. Embrace agile methodologies, learn to write user stories and get comfortable with development vocabulary so you can join meetings and help push your SEO recommendations along.
Enterprise SEO Tactics
Natural Language Generation

We live in the future now with advanced natural language generation capable of creating text for all the areas of websites that people should not need to spend their time.

Check out our post on this: https://bit.ly/Natural_Language_Generation
Automated 301 Redirection of Broken Link Targets

If you redirect old URLs to new one (in example: A to C and B to C) all 301’s should be removed from index and SEO will be redirected to the new page/url. Remember that 100% SEO will never be transferred to the new URL.

The Foolproof Guide to Redirects

Automated Testing

Automated testing is a way to put some safeguards in place so that if anything new in your code is rolled out, it doesn’t break something that previously existed in the code, like some previous functionality or something to that effect.

Log File Analysis
Crawl Speed & Site Speed

For large websites, load times are definitely impacting Google’s crawl

As your site gets bigger, the speed of the pages impacts how often Google crawls them. The more Google crawls, the more opportunities you’ll have to rank.
Internal Link Building

Internal links also connect your content and give Google an idea of the structure of your website. They can establish a hierarchy on your site, allowing you to give the most important pages more link value than other less valuable pages.
Reverse Proxies

In computer networks, a reverse proxy is a type of proxy server that retrieves resources on behalf of a client from one or more servers. These resources are then returned to the client, appearing as if they originated from the proxy server itself.
Domain Acquisition

If you already have an established brand name, getting a domain for that brand name is a practical must; not only will it help you rank higher and be more memorable, it will also stop potential competitors or poachers for using your branded domain for other purposes.
A Word from Our Sponsor
Watch our film
Runtime: The 3 Ring Circus of Technical SEO

https://ipullrank.com/runtime
Download our Ultimate Guide to Modern Enterprise SEO

Q&A
Thank You!

Mike King
Founder and Managing Director

Twitter:  @iPullRank
Email:    mike@ipullrank.com
Website:  https://ipullrank.com

Get in touch if you need some help!