

# Thinking about SEO?

Here's how to get the basics right



Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) simply refers to the tactics used to help you rank higher on a search engine's page (such as Google), increasing traffic to your website. These tactics can be anything from making your website more mobile-friendly, creating content your customers want, managing your appearance in Google Search results, using Google Ads, and so much more!

## About SEO:

- It's a long-term strategy
- There are some basic things you can do yourself that will make an impact
- It can help you to build a stronger brand online
- It can attract more customers to your website

knowledge in-house. An SEO specialist can audit your website to help you develop an SEO strategy to suit your business needs. They can even train you and your colleagues to give you the skills to implement the basics yourself.

If you are considering hiring an SEO professional or company, make sure you do your research first – just like any other service some companies are more reputable than others.

## Recommendations for outsourcing a SEO specialist:

SEO can be a very specialised subject, depending on how in-depth you want to go; it's common for even big companies to outsource this if they don't have the

## Important things to check:

- Research whether they are reputable on impartial platforms (everyone's website will promote them as the best), always check the rating and reviews on places like Trustpilot<sup>1</sup>.

- Be cautious of bold claims such as “we’ll get you on the first page of Google”. No one can promise you a top rank on Google without knowing your goals.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for examples of previous work and references.
- Consider a local business - that way you don’t need to worry about things like overseas payment, and time zones.
- Request a presentation or example of how they would approach SEO for your business. A good SEO professional will ask lots of questions about your business as well as pitching their ideas.
- Finally, conducting an interview is essential to make sure you are getting the right service for your business. Google provides a template for interviewing an SEO specialist<sup>2</sup>.

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true be wary. Google also provides guidelines on things to look out for when sourcing a SEO specialist<sup>3</sup>.

## Recommendations for in-house SEO – the first steps:

SEO can seem complicated, but it doesn’t have to be and it can be beneficial to learn the basics and implement some small but powerful changes.

- **Start by setting up a Google My Business** or revisiting the one you set up to make sure you have enough information to attract potential customers. Small things like ensuring you have your office address and a link to your website can help your SEO rating.
- Bing is the default for Microsoft Edge Browser so you should consider creating

- a **Bing Places profile**<sup>4</sup>. It’s free, easy to set up, and makes sure your business is listed across multiple search engines.
- **Reviews** are like gold dust, don’t be afraid to ask your customers for them! Google reviews are a good way to capture and display them.
- **Duplicate content**<sup>5</sup> – This refers to having duplicate or very similar content in different locations (including other websites), so it’s worth spending time crafting your content rather than leaving any templated responses or copying from other sources. Search engines will rarely show multiple versions of the same content, meaning the overall visibility will be compromised.
- **Know what you are trying to rank for** – Keywords are the words and phrases people type into search engines – it’s the driving force behind getting more traffic to your website. Also, consider what your customers will search, for example, instead of trying to optimise a common phrase like “mortgage adviser UK” try using local terms like “mortgage adviser Middlesbrough”.



- **New content** – If you aren't already, consider creating content like blog articles on your website and socials. Content could include industry news, product promotions, upcoming events, etc. The main questions to ask when you are creating content is who is it for, what is the main message, and what do you want people to do or take away from it?
- **Old content** – If you have old blog articles you can reuse, then revisit and update them. Things like 'how to' and 'top tips' articles always perform well online because readers have limited attention online and like easy-to-read articles. It's also content that tends to stay relevant and can be used time and time again.

With so much free information available, it's worth exploring if it is a skill someone on your team could take on, even a basic knowledge can go a long way.

## Recommendations for performing SEO in-house – digging deeper:

If you have internal resource available, it may be worth investing time into understanding what next steps you can take to improve your

SEO rating. There is so much free information on SEO, below we have linked a few useful articles:

- Google provides a beginner overview of SEO<sup>6</sup> with a series of short videos and articles to help you get started. With the learning broken up into small chunks, this is something you or a member of your business can learn slowly over time.
- There is so much free content online to help you grow your knowledge. Websites such as Yoast<sup>7</sup> and Moz<sup>8</sup> provide free SEO tools and easy-to-follow blogs. You can even download a beginner-friendly SEO strategy template from HubSpot<sup>9</sup>.

Please note that whilst we provide several sources within this article you should always perform your own research.

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- 1 <https://uk.trustpilot.com/>
- 2 <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/beginner/do-i-need-seo>
- 3 <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/beginner/do-i-need-seo#precautions>
- 4 <https://www.bingplaces.com/>
- 5 <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/advanced/guidelines/duplicate-content>
- 6 <https://developers.google.com/search>
- 7 <https://yoast.com/>
- 8 <https://moz.com/>
- 9 <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/seo-strategy>

