

SEO & SEM Best Practices

How to get customers to go to your site, call your phone, and buy your products

What is SEO? What is SEM?

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization. It helps increase your website's visibility to search engines to improve your ranking in organic (non-paid) search engine results.

SEM stands for Search Engine Marketing. It means paying search engines to show your ads when potential customers search for words you select.

1st

91.5% of Google traffic comes from the first results page.

<http://bit.ly/1e0n8S>

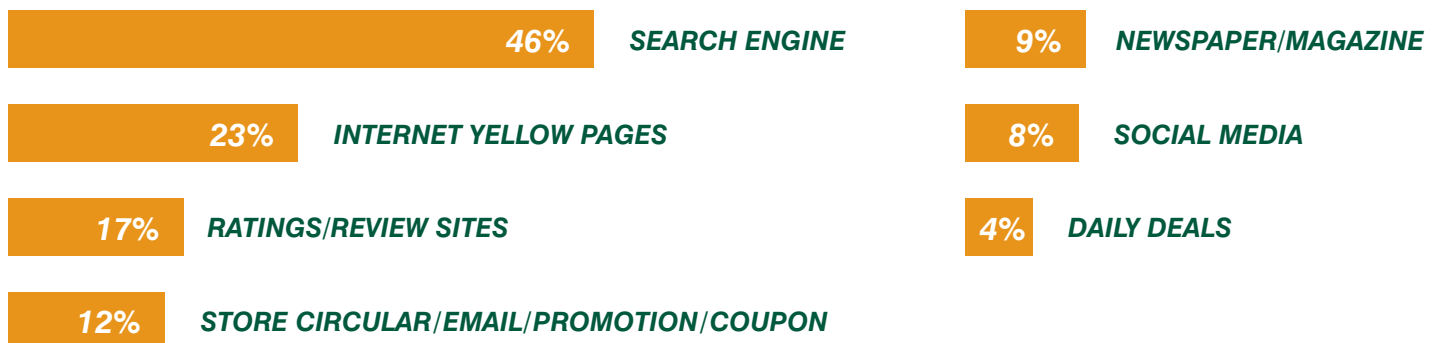
50%

50% of all mobile searches are conducted in hopes of finding local results, and 61% of those searches result in a purchase.

<http://bit.ly/1X9fVw1>

Why are SEO and SEM important?

When people are looking for your business, you want them to find you. These are hot leads—SEO leads have a 14.6% close rate, while outbound leads (such as direct mail or print advertising) have a 1.7% close rate. (<http://bit.ly/1e0wJp>) And while you'll still get some calls from the Yellow Pages, more people use search engines when looking for an HVAC repair source.



Sources used to search for local Air Conditioner Repair (multiple sources common) (<http://bit.ly/1TdlkMS>)

SEO 101

A few simple changes to your website can make a big difference in your search result rankings. We've included a few basics here.

- **Create a free XML sitemap and upload it to your site**
 - Helps Search Engines find and prioritize all the pages on your site
 - Learn more at www.xml-sitemaps.com

SEO 101 (Continued)

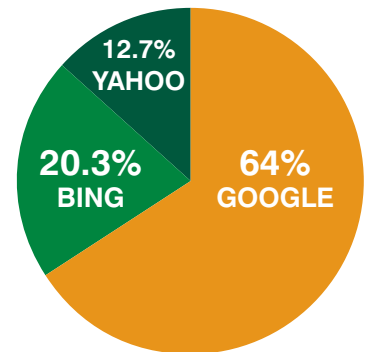
- **Check your site for 404 errors**
 - Defines broken links and improves overall health of the site
 - Learn more at www.brokenlinkcheck.com
- **Create Google Webmaster Tools and Google Analytics accounts**
 - Learn how your site is performing, information about your site visitors, and ways you can improve
 - www.google.com/webmasters or www.google.com/analytics
- **Make the most of your local listing**
 - Get your business on Google for free: www.google.com/business
 - Choose 3–5 local directory sites to focus your efforts
 - Yelp • Foursquare • Yellow Pages • Yahoo • Bing
 - Encourage your customers to submit positive reviews by asking them in-person and by including your directory profiles on marketing materials

Try to estimate how much a click is worth to you. One click is a person that searches for one of your keywords, sees your ad, chooses to click on it, and lands on your website. How much is this potential new customer worth?

SEM 101

Start with one search engine. Once you get the hang of it, you can take on more. We would recommend starting with Google Adwords because it captures most of the potential audience.

1. **Target A Geographic Region** – You can display ads in your city, state, or even nationwide.
2. **Set Your Daily Budget** – Great benefit of SEM—you control how much you spend.
3. **Set Your Per-Click Spend** – Most SEM ads are pay per click (PPC).
4. **Create Ads** – Format varies by search engine, but will include a headline, two lines of text, and a clickable link.
5. **Choose Keywords** – These are the words or phrases for which your ad will appear when a user searches for them. They'll determine the audience that will see your ads, but you can add or change them as you go.
6. **Test & Learn** – SEM ad platforms include tools to optimize and improve your campaigns. Use them to your benefit.
6. **Don't Buy Your Own Name** – SEO should bring customers who search for your name to your site.



Search Engine Market Share as of July 2015

Additional Resources

- Google SEO Starter Guide – <http://static.googleusercontent.com/media/www.google.com/en//webmasters/docs/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf>
- Google Adwords Starter Guide – <http://www.google.com/ads/new/step-by-step-adwords.html>
- Moz Beginner's Guide to SEO – <https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>
- Get started with Bing Ads – <http://help.bingads.microsoft.com/apex/index/3/en-us/51093/>