

# The Best Things in Life Are Free

**Leveraging the Power of Smarter Organic SEO to  
Drive More Customers to your Website at No Cost to You**



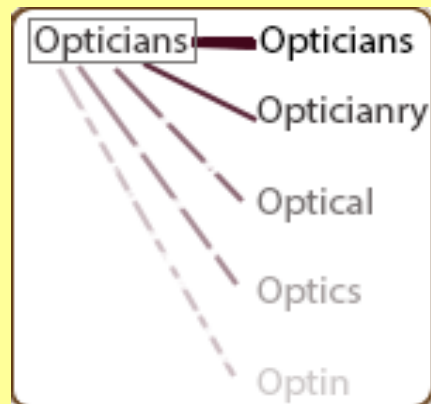
***By Jenny McDermott***

*[www.linkedin.com/in/uxdesignermn](http://www.linkedin.com/in/uxdesignermn)*

# How SEO has changed over time

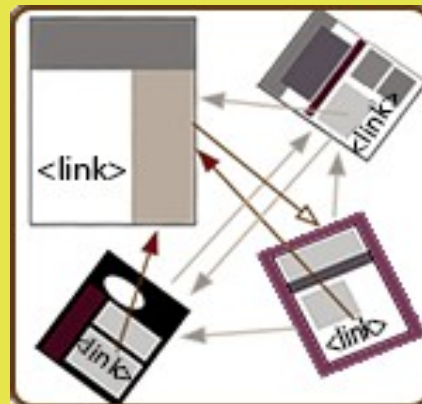
**1994 - 1999**

Phase one of SEO -  
Keyword  
Manipulation,  
Matching character  
strings



**1999 - 2006**

Phase Two:  
Backlinks:  
Links to your site  
From others is a  
“vote” for your  
Page content



**2006 - present**

Phase Three:  
Social signals:  
Likes, Retweets,  
Follows, Plus Ones



**present**

Phase Four  
And FINAL phase:  
Content is King



# On-Page Optimization (keywords)

## Panda algorithm update, February 2011



Page with thin content

Page with good content

NO keyword stuffing, *purposeful* duplicate content,  
Cloaking, sneaky redirects, or doorway pages

Request a manual review

# Making Duplicate Content Okay

## Neutralize duplicate content to avoid penalties



### Canonical urls

```
<link rel="canonical" href="http://www.mycanonicalurl.com">
```

### Url parameters

Shopping cart

Session IDs

Product or other pages that can be sorted

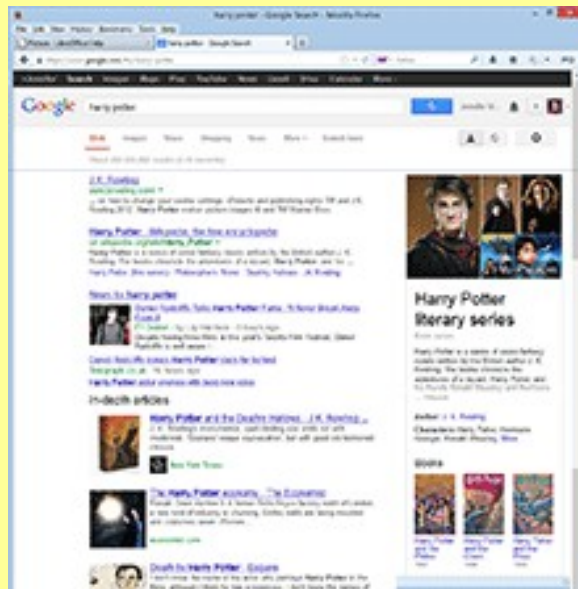
### 301 Redirects

Don't delete old pages,

Put 301 redirect tags on them

# Beyond Keyword Matching

“Things, not strings”



**Universal Search -**  
Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs)  
Videos  
Images  
right-side columns  
Links to shopping resources  
*For searches for **entities***

**Rich snippets**  
Schema.org markup enables you  
To make “rich snippets” on your pages

Open Graph video tags to get thumbnails of  
videos on your site into the SERPs

# Page Rank & Link Juice

Get links from other sites to yours...



## | *Sources of backlinks:*

- | Paid links, esp. from high PR sites
- | Paid reviews
- | Reciprocal link arrangements
- | Links to your page in an article
  - Or press release published on another site
- | Informercials with links back to your site
- | Links from your signature in
  - A forum discussion
- | Links from directories
- | Automated programs to create backlinks
- | Link farms
  
- | [Unsolicited editorial links](#)

# The Penguin Strikes

## Penguin 1.0 Algorithm update, April 2012



- | ~~Paid links, esp. from high PR sites~~
- | ~~Paid reviews~~
- | ~~Reciprocal link arrangements ?~~
- | ~~Links to your page in an article~~
  - ~~Or press release published on another site~~
- | ~~Informercials with links back to your site~~
- | ~~Links from your signature in~~
  - ~~a forum discussion~~
- | ~~Links from directories ?~~
- | ~~Automated programs to create backlinks~~
- | ~~Link farms~~
- | ~~Links from eventbrite event listings~~
- | ~~Unsolicited editorial links~~

# Defending Against Penguin

## Avoiding Penguin penalties:



1. Use the nofollow tag in links you write and other sites publish.

```
<a href="http://mysite.com" rel="nofollow">Back to my site</a>
```

2. Check and correct your backlink profile.

Find your backlinks

Have “unnatural” links removed

Manual link data analysis

Use Google disavow tool as last resort



# Directories

These are free and have “DO follow” linking:



Open Directory

Google Places for Business

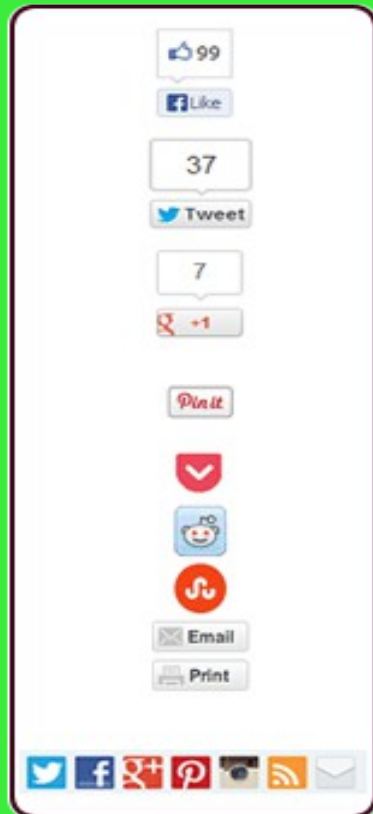
Bing Places for Business

Yahoo Basic Listing

Nofollow links but lots of stuff for free:

# Social Media Signals

Social media can help you rank in SERPs



Share on bookmark sites  
AddThis buttons

Follow Us links to your  
Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn,  
Pinterest, Google+ accounts

# Making the Most of Facebook

## There's more to signals than just “Likes”



Facebook social plugins provide a dozen  
Types of button or box to connect  
Your site to a visitor's Facebook account

Most don't require you to know how to code  
Some require rudimentary knowledge of  
Javascript or php



Open Graph video tags will help you to get thumbnails of  
your videos in the listing of your page In SERPs

# Making the Most of YouTube

## Make “How-to” videos for YouTube



You can demo an actual task,  
Or simply explain how something works

You can link to your site, your social media pages,  
blogs, or apps from your video, and also put in an  
Email link so people can mail the video to others

# Making the Most of LinkedIn

## LinkedIn Company pages can help improve search ranking



Put keywords in the link to “Other” websites in your contact information

Create targeted variations of your Products and Services page

Encourage employees to join LinkedIn and participate in discussion groups

### How to tell if it's a good group:

- Recent posts

- High numbers of posters

- High percentage of replies to posts

# Making the Most of Twitter

## Two ways of maximizing the potential of Twitter



### In your own Twitter account:

Hashtags: put hashtags (#) in your tweets on Keywords for your business or industry.

And Twitter cards

### On your Website:

Use the embedded timeline widget

# Making the Most of Google+

**Does having a Google+ business page give your site  
A boost in SERPs ranking?**



Google says no; professional SEOs say yes

Authorship allows you to put content  
From your site, blog, articles,  
on your Google+ pages

Google hangouts on air

Google is the 800-pound gorilla of the Internet.  
Google Plus is its baby. Consider the implications  
and act accordingly.

# Content is King!

**Actually, it always has been.**



The best possible SEO strategy is  
Publishing quality content.

Web presence is intended  
To attract and retain customers.

Panda and Penguin are ongoing updates.  
They enforce the “content is king” rule.

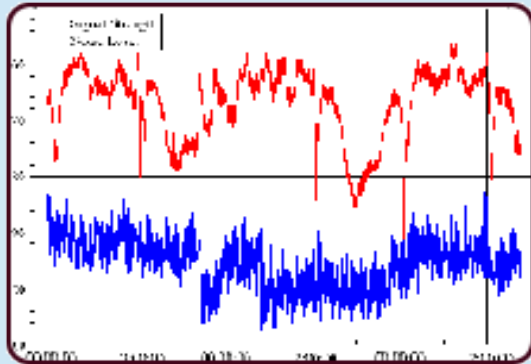
Hummingbird enables conversational search.





# Improve the Signal-to-Noise Ratio

**Create content that speaks to your target audience's wants and needs.**



Who is your target audience?

Who buys from you now?

What are their characteristics?

How do they use your product or services?

# Amplify the Signal

**Find the people who are like your customers...**



- Trade publications
- Professional association sites
- Blogs
- Forums
- LinkedIn groups
- Google+ circles
- Twitter feeds
- YouTube channels

# Amplify the Signal

...and talk about their needs, wishes, fears, interests, hopes



Suggestions, advice, stories, referrals

Your name, company name, brand names, links to site and social media pages in forum and blog comments

How-to videos and/or pages  
Webinars

Articles in trade journals  
Guest blogs  
Online tools

# Getting Conversions & Supporting Customers

**Give qualified prospects a reason to come back**



## **Prospects' buying process**

B2B buyers may need to get approval from somebody else

Make it easy for people to buy

Prospects may be doing comparison shopping

## **Site design must meet minimal standards**

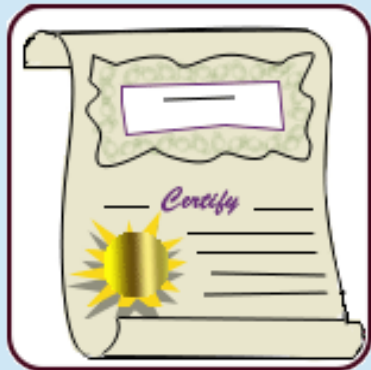
Clean and simple

Clear, consistent navigation

Have someone who doesn't know you test and critique it

# Prove It!

## How to “Prove It!”



Publish **research** about your product or service, your product or service's **impact** on end users, **trends** in your industry

Use **testimonials** from satisfied customers, Certifications, seals of approval, awards, etc.

**Reviews** – Google gives points for good reviews

, ,

### **Credibility and Trust**

**Mentions** in authoritative sources in any medium

Photos of the building and/or employees

Bios of owners and principals

Company history

Adequate contact information