

SEO ESSENTIALS

- For Small Business -

(The stuff small business owners REALLY need to know!)

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Internet Business Training for Small Businesses

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SEO: An Introduction...

Hello and welcome. Thank you for taking the time to download and read this small book. **My name is Paul Barrs.** For those of you whom I haven't met yet, I won't go into a long history but sufficient to say, I've been involved in online and Internet business now since the year 2000.

Over the past 15 plus years, I've had good fortune to serve tens of thousands of customers, around the world, in over 100 countries. Both selling my own coaching and training products, as well as my digital marketing agency, my SEO training, analytics conversions, workshops, seminars, eBooks, audios and more.

It's been a wild ride, and if anything, the one thing that I have learnt over that time, it is this. *There is only one constant when it comes to the Internet.* There is only one thing that remains the same and consistent throughout time. It's not the technology, it's not the ideas, it's not the way in which we do business... it's our customers.

It's the people who purchase our products, who subscribe to our services. *It is the people.*

We all have individual needs; we all want those needs satisfied. And, for those of us, like myself, small business owners . . . We have a product, we have a service and we seek to satisfy the desires, the hopes, the needs, the wants, the whatever, of our customers.



This booklet, "**SEO Essentials for Small Business**" is a guide to helping you understand what it is that you need to know about search engine optimisation. It's by no means the be-all and end-all of SEO. There is far more than I can condense into a short booklet, making it easy to read.

There's far more about the topic even that what I know and need to know. Here's the thing. In order to make this booklet easy for you to digest, within the shortest amount of time possible, to gain the maximum benefit and best possible results, I've broken it down to 5 simple topics and we'll talk about each of them as we go.

Beginning with those absolute basics - keyword research. Understanding what it is that our customers are looking for. Looking at competitive analysis and how we group our keyword phrases into topical content. The type of content that users in the modern age are now seeking to find.

The Internet is really nothing more than an amazing library. A library of information. I'd often ask the question at one of my workshops or seminars, and I'd say, "*Raise your hand if you've ever gone to the Internet to seek the answer to a question.*" Of course, everyone's hand goes up. "*Raise your hand if, in the last week, you've searched for a product or a service online.*" And most everybody's hand goes up.

And that's where SEO, search engine results, come into play. So we'll look at the way in which people search. **We'll also look at the development of content**, the difference between static pages and blog posts; post pages and content, pages which convert, pages which draw and help build trust. **We'll touch on the technical aspects of website design and development.** We'll look a little into the Google tools that are available to us, to define our mobile sites.

We'll look at page speed, webmaster tools, the most common questions as well as the answers. There's a lot more technical than you need to know, so we'll just look at those things *that you need to understand*, and cover those basics.... the site structure, how to keep our websites error free, and for those that are truly interested, we will touch briefly some the super tech (just briefly!)

We'll also look at **the way in which you link your pages and your posts together.** From a user point of view, this is one of the most important things, understanding that whenever a new visitor comes to your website, they really should be no more than two clicks from their ultimate goal. One click is better. **One click to their goal, one more click, to yours. I'll explain that shortly.**

We'll also look at the external link process. You may have heard this before, "you need to build back links". Back links build your search engine profile. Of course, these days it's one of the most dangerous things that a business owner can engage in, that back link building process. And yet, links back to your website are still very important for the overall ranking system.

So, we'll touch onto those and look at the good, safe links that you can build, that you can build through your tribe, and that you can use to share and syndicate your content throughout the Internet.

Lastly, I'll answer the two most common questions. *How long does SEO take?* How long does it take to get results? How long should I keep working at it? And finally, *how much does it cost?* If you are to engage somebody else, how much should you pay? What's fair? What's reasonable? These are the questions I come across time and time again, and now after years, and years of specialising in this area, I want to show you . . . help you understand those basics. So that, should you decide to do it yourself, you'll know what you're in store for.

Or, should you decide to have someone do it for you, you'll know what to expect and how to keep them, I like this, honest. Yes, that is key. In my business, that is one of the most important things. I want my customers to understand that we are doing the right thing for them. Now they don't have to understand how we do it. But that, we are doing it.

And that's a part of what this booklet is for, all of my customers will have a copy of this. And you, reading it now, if you are a customer, thank you. If not, not yet, that's what I say, thank you too. I look forward to having the opportunity to serve you in the future. Enjoy, now. Take some notes. **"SEO Essentials for Small Business."**

Part One: Keyword Research...

So let's get started, **Keyword Research and Analysis**, here's the most important thing, without effective research, it is impossible to target precisely that which your customers are seeking. Google looks at it from this point of view; customers ask questions, Google delivers.

Does Google care about "our" results? Not particularly. *Google cares about its results.* Google seeks the one click experience. Their customers search; they find what they're looking for within one click, which is the ideal.

Google doesn't want their customers to click through to a website then come back, then click through to another, then come back, then click through to another and so on.

Ineffective search results mean ineffective delivery of service, from a Google point of view. So here's how we need to approach it...

When a customer clicks through to our website, we need to make sure they are getting (**EXACTLY**) what they want. Once upon a time, this was really simple...

- We did our keyword research...
- We came up with keyword phrases...
- We created content around such phrases...
- That was it –

We could target one page, one search, one result.

But not so much anymore.

Today, things are a little more complex so we need to put some thought into the process rather than just press a few buttons, and have our content or results dynamically driven by some program.

So let's walk through the Keyword Research/Analysis process:

I still find that Google's [Keyword Planner](#) within Google AdWords is the most effective for general keyword research. I have heard it said, though I've not needed to use it, that you can dig deeper into long tail keywords with [other apps and programs](#). But they are unnecessary for what I'm talking about today. You can access the Keyword Planner at no cost, though you will need to have an [AdWords account](#).

So jump into Google AdWords, have a look at the Keyword Planner and drop in at least a dozen, what I call, "**Seed Keywords**." These are keyword phrases, the things that you feel your customers would be looking for, if they were looking for you.

I strongly suggest you also have a look at your competition, look at their primary content targeting as well. Look at what keyword phrases they might also be targeting, look at their meta titles, look at their meta descriptions.

Just quickly on that, meta keywords are tagged within the coding of the page, unnecessary. Don't use them anymore, old school tech. They are now a negative ranking factor!

But you want to drop in at least a dozen seed keywords and press GO. Ideally, the Keyword Planner will return to you at least 700 to 800 different keywords. Then we are presented with two different options, we can then look at the results through the keyword display results, or we can look at the other tab called AdGroups.

THIS VIDEO SHOWS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KEYWORDS AND THE AD GROUPS

>>> <http://www.screencast.com/t/sXjquLxed> <<<

Myself, I always go to the AdGroups section and I export them all, every single one of them, into an Excel file which I can then open up on my computer, and I sort by AdGroup.

Before we move to the Analysis phase of this, we need to now refine our results...

Let's say we've got 800 or so KEYWORDS. Looking through the *AdGroups* in your Excel file, the first thing you're going to want to do is **delete those that are not you**. Here's the thing about effective keyword research, it's not about getting as many possible results as you can. It's about refining those results to have the most effective results that you can. Does that make sense?

So the first thing you'll want to do is grab yourself a cuppa, sit back, get comfortable, and then start deleting. This process can take an hour or more.

Go through the AdGroups first, delete those that are not 100% you, this is just the AdGroups, forget about the other columns at this point of time. Once you've deleted all of the AdGroups, then we look through the remaining keyword phrases.

Now there are other columns that will be exported, don't need them. All we're looking for at this point of time is three columns. *One is the AdGroup, two is the "Keyword Phrase", and three is the "Search Volume"*. You can delete "Keyword Difficulty" and "Processing", and all of those things as well, just delete those columns.

So now you should have three columns, you've already deleted those AdGroups that were unrelated to your business... now you need to go through and start looking at those keyword phrases that are left. And you need to refine further, and **delete all of those that are "not you."**

Here's how I define you or not you ... *If a customer were to click through to your website on a particular search phrase or result, they were looking for option A, Keyword Phrase A, and you didn't have that to sell, or you didn't have that as a service, or it wasn't a product that was available, that's "not you". I don't care if it's like what's something you do, it's not you.*

We're doing keyword research here and we're refining the list to a short list I hope of no more than around eventually 60, 70, possibly 80. Here's how we continue to refine the list. This could take, as I said, an hour, perhaps a little more. So you go through and you delete all of the keyword phrases that are not you, *that are not 100% you*. That should cull your list down a bit further perhaps you may only have now, 200 to 300.

Then I would like you to reorganize your search results by volume, **highest to lowest**. I want you to **delete all of the low or no search volume keywords**. No point in targeting them for these purposes. How do I define low or no? Well no traffic, that's easy, 0 or 10 or maybe 20 is certainly low. But it has to be a measured estimate based on what is high vs what is low.

If you're targeting specifically local search results, 50 a month, maybe 70, or 120... that can be high. That can be the top of the barrel. In which case 10s and 20s, that's about as low as you would go and want to delete those.

But if you're targeting nationally something and the top end of the barrel (the search result's volume) is 5,000, 10,000, or 20,000 + then low search results would be 100 or 200, maybe even 5,00. However, 500 can be nice for just the right keyword phrase, so perhaps but maybe 500 or less. Usually, I find as a general rule, 300 to 400 or less is the low search volume. But it's entirely up to you to have a look at what your results present based on your target market selection.

Here's how I'd like you to use your judgment. If you were to target a keyword phrase, a topical thing, and it was only returning 10, maybe 20 search results a month, and you were to get 10%, 20%, 30% of those clicking through, so 2 or 3 people. *Is that enough to sustain your business?*

Probably not, but if that's all there is for local search of course it's a different thing, because there are others too, understand? But you need to delete your low or no search volume. That's the third part of the keyword refinement process.

Lastly, step four... and this is a difficult one;
I'd like you to go through and delete
all of your single keyword search results.
Yes, **delete them**, get rid of the singles!

We're looking for keyword phrases, two, three, or four keywords together – a phrase, not a singular result. Too often, singular results are too difficult.

So in your Excel file you should be starting to develop a “short list”, perhaps 50, 60, 70, or maybe even 80. This is ideal, we've taken 800 and culled 90% of potential, irrelevant, or low search volume data. And you'll be left with three columns; you're AdGroups, your Keyword Phrases, and your Search Volume in this final list.

Here's what I'd like you to consider and also keep this in mind as you're refining by search volume. Those AdGroups are topical results. It's a number of different keyword phrases related within a singular topic. So you can also look at it this way, as you're looking at volume, “If we add up number 1, 2, 3, and 4, those 20s, those 30s, those 70s, they may add up to 100, 150, 300 or so each”. That's okay. That's just part of the refinement process.

But now we then have this final list 50, 60, maybe 70, and it's time to do some competitive analysis, that's the next step.

Competitive analysis means not looking at what keyword phrases your competition are using, *we're talking about competitive search results VOLUME analysis*; how many different websites are targeting these keyword phrases?

Now... you *can* do this manually, it is a long and arduous process, but you can use something called [Google Operators](#) and just doing a simple, exact, match search, you'd want to do a search for each of these different keyword phrases in your final list, add a new column in, Exact Match Search Results Volume.

THIS VIDEO SHOWS A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT GOOGLE OPERATORS

>>> <http://www.screencast.com/t/Iu2XhxOjjFsB> <<<

So if we have "sheepskin undergarments" exact match search and it shows up in Google on your desktop, a result of 340 results in this search, that's the number you carry over to the 4TH column... 340. If you were to do a normal search without and the exact match, that could be 250,000 - but we're looking for exact match only. *Go through and do that for all of them.*

I also think it's a good idea an **All-in-Title** Search. Again, have a look at Google Operators to find out how to do this, and perhaps an **All-in-URL** search and add a column in for each of these too.

you can see this process *could take another hour or three* depending on how many you need to do, but you're going to end up with the topic in one column, the keyword phrase in another, the search volume in another, then the exact match competition results in another, for example, exact match in title for another, and in URL for another, that's the manual way to do it.

Then it's a matter of measured judgment to look at these results and go, well, that one there, "sheepskin undergarments" is getting around 50 searches a month but it has only 300 or so competitors (and I'm just using simple numbers for the moment for demonstration purposes).

Whereas sheepskin socks, I don't even know if they make them, say "woolen socks" has 10,000 searches per month, and has 350,000 competitors, I'd be going for "sheepskin undergarments" if I was making them by hand and then selling and targeting them.

It's a very general guideline. The video above explains things further (the manual way to do it). *There's also the automatic way, much easier.* I use the tools at [Moz.com](#) and one of those is keyword analysis, and I get to pop in my keywords and it does the maths for me and returns a percentage symbol, a percentage number of ranking difficulty... *telling me how difficult it may be to rank under these terms.* However, with pricing starting at \$100 / month; you need to decide which is better for you.

So...

Now we have our topical groups. These are important because when we move to content we're working on [topical groups](#). We have our *keyword phrases* within those topical groups, we have our *search volume* and we have our *ranking difficulty*.

What you need to do now, the final step of this process is to decide which keyword phrases represent the best opportunities... Usually the higher the search volume, the lower the ranking difficulty, the better the opportunity.

And often you'll find and, say, with the Moz tools, *if it's in that sort of 20%-29% range, that's a great opportunity* if it has reasonable search volume, 30%-34% little bit more difficult, 35%-40% certainly getting tough, 40% or more, **you don't want to target those if you're a brand new website**, 45% or 50% plus, stay away from them, unless you are well established and getting current ranking already, they're much more difficult.

I've seen some keyword phrases ranking as difficult as 70% even 80%... yep, no chance! Stay well away ☺

Look for the golden opportunities in that 20% percentile range, if you have something that comes up under which will from time to time, double check that you spelled everything correctly. **You may find a golden egg**, but it's rare.

This is the process of keyword research, something which I do every week for clients. When done correctly, it can take an entire day to get all of these numbers correct. It can take an entire day to produce the results which then lead us to the next stage, which is development of content.

But the foundation, the **keyword research and analysis**, that is everything. Without that, nothing else should go ahead.

Let's get ready to move on.

Part Two: Content ...

Once the key words and topics have been created and everything is in your files; and you've got your best opportunities, the next step is to **start developing your content**.

*However, before we begin... understand this:
content serves a number of different purposes.*

Primarily, of course, it is to convert the customer from the inquiring lead. It also serves the purpose of SEO – Google - getting people to the site. Then thirdly, attracting traffic through social media. **This is done with different types of content for different types of people.**

Understand this: Within the buying cycle *there are two different types* of people looking to purchase your product. There are those who know what they want... they go searching for exactly what they want. They look at it. They compare maybe options or prices and then they purchase. They are the 20%. They are those who know what they need.

Then there's the other 80%, the greater majority, which most marketers miss out on, are those who are still in the investigation space. They have an idea of what they want. They know what they would like it to do, *but they have not yet decided exactly on the specifics*.

- They're looking for research.
- They're looking for answers.
- They are looking to understand more about the purchase they should soon make.
- **These are the 80%, the greater majority.**

These are the topical content researchers looking to learn. So the purpose of your content is to serve both of these people, whilst at the same time, *converting the researcher to the buyer*. The idea, in a nutshell, is to attract the person who is looking to understand more to your website and then shift them from research to purchase.

To move them from discovery to decision!

With that in mind, you need to write two different types of content, for two very different types of people.

In this chapter, we're looking at both posts and pages. As a general rule, those pages across your website are the content which tends not to change. It doesn't time date or it serves the purpose of informing and conversion. That's its job. **These are the primary pages.** Not just those on the menu, but also those subpages which share greater information about a specific product or service. These are your primary pages.

As you create your own internal site map, it's a good idea to always begin with the end in mind. Where would you like the customer to finish up? Is it a purchase of a product, online? The thank you page after payment is made. Maybe it's a contact form or a submission of some sort saying "Please, get back in touch."

Once you have those set up, then you take a step back to the conversion pages. Of course, if you have just one product or service, or maybe only a few, this is quite easy. Two or three pages could inform and convert for you well enough.

Typically, these pages are not often found in search. They are specifics created for a purpose. I like to use the phrase "a **Content Conversion Page**," others refer to them as "**Cornerstone Content Pages**;" **they have substantial content but they have the intention to convert.**

THIS VIDEO SHOWS MORE ABOUT CONERSTONE CONTENT / CONVERSION PAGES

>>> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNeDOmY9-8w> <<<

These pages both inform and also have a call to action, a "CTA". If you are running a shopping cart, then of course you have multiple conversion pages through your products, but it is extremely worthwhile looking at the overall categories which your products are based, and also present to your customers some **solid content pages** about these categories, about the values, about the benefits, about the product type.

Don't just expect people to buy just because you have a shopping cart and you have a product and a purchase button. That serves the 20% only. It does not serve those researchers who are still looking to be informed and learn more.

So there are two different types of pages. There are those which say 'Buy now.'

And there are those which also say "Here's why you should." Good to understand both.

These form the primary structure of your website.

Then we have posts. Blog posts, for example. Blogging is an invaluable part of the website success formula. It serves multiple purposes. Number one is to provide ongoing, fresh, updated content to the site. This content, of course, is great for SEO. This content is also terrific for social media. And again, can be used through newsletters, published PDF documents, and so on.

If you're not yet blogging, this is something you absolutely must consider. So let's pause a moment and look at the options. Over the years I have found, through discussion, that **the main reason people why don't blog is because of the time factor.** Yes, it takes time. It takes commitment. It takes effort. But the results are so worthwhile.

I often tell my customers that they really need to focus at least 30 minutes at the beginning of each work day towards creating some kind of content. As I write this, right now, it's 8:04 a.m., I've just started my workday and this will be the first 30 minutes. Will I get this finished today? No. But I'm getting it started. You need to do the same.

Here's the thing, if you cannot afford to take 30 minutes out of your workday, you're doing something wrong, seriously wrong. One of the greatest mistakes for all small business owners is this – and it's a simple fact... **you need to stop working "in" your business**

and start working "on" it. I know you've heard that before.

When it comes to creating content, the same principles apply.

Here's the thing.... **you don't necessarily have to write all of your content yourself**, but you certainly should be involved with at least producing the outline. There is a number of what are called [blog-topic generators or blog-heading generators](#) across the net. Google them. At this point of time as I write I know Hub Spot has a really good one. Follow [this link](#) to find some. Once there, you are able to put in your categories, your topics.

We're not looking at specific key words, *we're looking at topics*. And it will generate for you a random number of suggested headings, which guide you then towards the rest of your content. Stop by the [blog at PaulBarrs.com](#). Have a look at my topic headings. You'll notice how they've changed over time. And yes, that is the way it is. We must follow current trends. So the purpose of blogging is this, **to product new and fresh content on a regular ongoing basis.**

I suggest you invest 30 minutes at the beginning of every work day, if not to write, then to at least create the foundations. Create the steps. Give your writer access to "I want five points on . . ." and you give them the five points. They go and fill them out. Does that make sense?

For myself, I find it quite easy to speak in front of a camera. You might think I'm typing this right now, but I'm not. I'm actually recording this, and then once the transcript comes back to me, then I'll edit. Why? Because that's faster. And it's more time efficient for me. *I can speak faster than I can type.*

I also do a lot of work in video. I'll create a video. It will go up on [YouTube](#). I'll take a transcript.. The video and the transcript together make up a blog post, which of course gets shared to social media! *Isn't that an easier way to do it?*

Here's my golden rule. Never create content for only one purpose.

It takes too long, and that's why *most people don't do it*. But I'm here to tell you today, unequivocally, absolutely, 100%, **you must be blogging in your business**. It is a vital, integral, important, essential part of the overall SEO success formula. So I suggest you set aside the time and start today!

So what do we actually blog about? That's the next question. Well, go back to your original key word research! You've already got your primary product pages, whether they're shopping cart pages or whether they're information pages leading to a purchase or a contact form. They're already in place.

They should be on the topics that you're researching for your key words, so no need to even think about those. *Those pages are written specifically for customers*. Do not give any thought to SEO when writing those pages. They are written for conversion! Write them for the people. This is so important.

Your blog posts, however, are all written for SEO -

I want you to look at your topics. Remember the topics that we did with the keyword research? The AdGroup areas? And within your blog, and say for example, you're using something like a Word Press based system, you have a number of categories.

Let me just throw in quickly, **focus on your categories**, not so much the tags. Tags are more from a customer point of view, just so they can click and read more (which they usually don't... not so much anymore). They used to, it was novel once; not so much anymore. So stop using the tags and just use categories. About how many? **"About" half-a-dozen**. If you cannot come up with about half-a-dozen, well, you need to break it down so you can.

If you find that you've got much, much more, then you need to cull that list so you can. **About half-a- dozen**... that could be four, five, or six. *"About"* half-a-dozen. Six, seven or eight? That's 'about' half-a-dozen. Twenty categories? No... too many.

So... I want you to look at your products or your services and break them down into AdGroups through the keyword research. This should already be in the Excel file that you've refined. Then you go to your topic generator, your heading title generator, and you look at your ad groups, and in my business for example, "Website Design", that's one. "SEO", that's another. "Google Analytics", or "Analytics and Conversions", that's another. That's three different AdGroups, from three different topics.

For example: If I put into my blog-heading generator "Google Analytics", it may come up with something like a heading such as *"Five things about Google Analytics you need to know to increase your sales."* There we go. Just off the top of my head, that's a heading. And as a blog post, its category is Google Analytics, which my research would have shown up as one of my AdGroups.

Now here's the thing, within that AdGroup in my keyword research there's going to be 'probably' **about half-a-dozen** different key word search phrases. *So I look at them and just have them in mind*. I don't need to write them word for word, repeated verbatim in my blog post. **I don't need to, because I'm talking about the topic**. Google is clever. It knows what we're talking about. But I will have them *in mind* and if they do fit into the words, fantastic. But if they don't, well I'm still talking about the topic and that's okay.

So I'll come up with *"What are the five things about Google Analytics that you might need to know in order to increase conversions."* And I'd go and bullet point, one, two, three, four and five. **Then** I would write about them.

So now, as you write, simply fill in the blanks. Like I said, don't focus too much on the key words anymore. Here's the thing, Google has changed so much over the years. Google is now looking to provide information to its customers on...

Read this carefully, this is the key...

... not just what they *want to know now*, but what they might also like to know *later*.

Remember the two different types of customers, the 80 and the 20? Twenty percent... they know what they want, they're just looking for someone to buy it from. **The 80% are still discovering, learning more, seeking to understand**. These blog posts are designed for the 80%! They are interest generators. They are draw cards through social media. They are there to prove your value and your worth and build trust in the eyes of the customer. So you don't need to think *"I must make this keyword fit in this place."* No! You need to write

for the customer and make it interesting!

Someone recently asked me, "But Paul, how many times do I need to make that keyword appear in my article?" Here's my best answer. "You don't. At all. Ever."

Why?

That's old school. That's 2013. That's the way it *used to be.*" Here's the way it is now –

Talk about what you're talking about. Look at your key word research, have those things in mind. Answer, for example, the five points about Google Analytics or whatever.

If you're not answering that question, then none of your keywords and nothing related will appear in the article! In which case I ask, "Why are you writing it?"

But if you DO answer the question, if you DO fill in the blanks, your keywords will, as Google themselves in their training have said, "***appear natural and relevant in your text***". And that's what you want to happen; to have your keywords appear natural and relevant within your text.

And there you have it: a blog post that fits into a category that goes up on the web. The category of course is not just about the 'blog post', it's one of your AdGroups and other posts in that category cover a range of items on that overall topic.

Do you do just the one? No. Over the space of a year, you'll do 52 of them. Well you should. That's the ideal. **How often should we blog?** My best answer, "***As often as possible. As often as you can.***" Once a week? I try once a week, sometimes I can't, sometimes I can. But I try.

For a brand new website, this is a good question... How often should we blog?

You should aim to publish one new *highly relevant, content-based topical blog post* every single day, five days a week for the first 90 days for a brand new website.

This is to give your website a kick of steroids when it comes to powerful content. There is nothing worse when a customer comes to a website and goes "Okay, I'm looking for . . . Oh dear, and it's not there." Hmm." That's not such a good thing ;)

Quality blog posts build value. They build *trust* in the eyes of the consumer and of course we also share them to social media.

And one more thing; *how lucky it is for you if you are in a position to create **evergreen content**.* Do you know what that is? *It's content that never goes out of date.* What I'm sharing with you, right now, works right now. But it's subject to change in six months or twelve months or two years. In which case I will re-record and rewrite this product. This content is **subject to change**. Evergreen content is not.

Evergreen content is the best content in the world!

So here's my goal for you then, look at your content over the space of a year, 12 months' time from now, let's think about it that way. Your website will have **about half-a-dozen** solid content based pages that lead to a conversion (very, very important!).

You will have *at least 50 or more blog posts* on your website on **about half-a-dozen** different categories. These categories are based on your AdGroups research.

One last thing before we move on and we'll talk about internal linking later, but just think about what I said. About half-a-dozen different pages on your different AdGroup categories, good solid content pages that lead to a conversion and then at least 50 or so different blog posts in about half-a-dozen different categories....

Hmm. **Where do you think those blog posts should link to?** That's right! They should link to the primary category pages. But we'll talk about that later in internal linking – very, very important.

For now, I want you to look at your schedule. **I want you to plan.** I want you to implement. I want you to do and take action. If you've never done this before, start right now, before you move on, I want you to create for me three blog post headings, just three. Now!

Why now? Because it's easy to do! Just THREE blog post headings (you can use one of the bog post topics generators if you wish, or just use your imagination for the moment).

However, I also understand it can be easy not to do, so you're going to have to extend yourself if you haven't done this before.

Go and look up some blog topic generators. If you go to <http://www.PaulBarrs.com/blog>, you'll see that my very first post is a sticky post. It stays up the top all the time. [Links, Tools and Resource's](#). And in that, you'll see I have "Content Management" and I have a link to I think five or six different blog topic generators. Go and have a look at them.

Come up with at least three, and if you cannot yet write the entire thing, then come up with the headline and then the five, six or eight bullet points that will make up the content. Maybe then you can outsource it, **but you must be in charge of the content direction.** That is the most important thing.

Part Three: Technical Stuff...

So let's talk technical, and I'm really going to try and not get "technical" with you but there are certain things you need to understand. For example, **imagine if Google has a problem with your website**, how good would it be to have them send you an e-mail and say, "Hey, we've got a problem with your website. This is the problem. Could you go and fix it, please." Did you know that's actually possible? It's done through the Google Search Console.

[Google's Search Console](#) was once called 'Webmaster Tools'; you may be more familiar with that name. **It's vitally important that you make sure your website is registered and verified with Webmaster Tools**, plus set up correctly, in order to receive such notifications. Amongst other things within Webmaster Tools you can look at the various technical elements, reports, and so on.

Here's the thing... *you don't need to understand what each of them are but you do need to make sure that, when problems arise somebody addresses them.* Amongst other things it's also very important that you create for your website what is called an "**XML Sitemap**" and then submit that XML Sitemap to Google Search Console. This allows Google to more accurately index and view your site from a technical perspective.

If you're using a CMS, something like WordPress then it can also be set up that every time you update your site, the XML Sitemap updates at the same time, notifying Google, and yes the same does apply to Bing and Yahoo. Therefore, new pages are indexed more quickly and thus more likely, assuming all other elements are correct, to be found in search.

But wouldn't it also be good to know that (if you have, say 300 pages across your website), and you've been working on it for a few years, and then something goes wrong in the indexing of your site you now only have 5 pages (indexed with Google). Hmm. Don't think it's possible? *I had someone **just last week** contact me saying, "Paul, I need your help. End of last year we engaged someone to do some upgrades on our website and we've gone from over 5,000 visitors a month to about 120!*

Ouch! That's got to hurt, and their sales have dropped 90% in just four months. What went wrong? **The very first THING I did was said**, "Please add me to your Google Search Console so I can have a look at the numbers." Looking at their XML Sitemaps stats, I could see that the new Webmaster - oh how cruel and foolish and stupid - hadn't deleted the old Sitemap!

Therefore, Google was trying to re-index pages that no longer existed and this was an e-Commerce Shopping Cart Site with over 1,500 products of a 1,500 pages all gone from the Google Index. They only had 6 pages showing up. Not going to bring them much traffic.

Therefore, Google was trying to re-index pages that no longer existed!

So I deleted the old one, built for them a new XML Sitemap and submitted it to Google's Search Console. Google re-indexed the site, and then within three days they had over 1,000 pages, products *re-indexed back in to Google*. Of course now we have a lot more work to do we have to update all of the [meta data](#), look at the product pages, look at the page URLs and the site structure - also very important from an SEO point of view.

Here's the point, this customer didn't know. *You now do.* And that is the purpose of this booklet, "SEO Essentials" – *That you should know what you need to know.*

A question though.... *Do you have to understand enough to be able to do these things yourself? No. Not really; but you do have to understand enough to make sure that somebody else is doing it properly.*

What about mobile? How does your website appear on mobile on different devices? Now this is in today's day and age, one of those things that many will check. Well, it's also good to see what Google thinks of your website from a mobile point of view.

You need to do a Google Search for the [Google Mobile-Friendly Test](#), and then actually 'do' the tests... and don't just pop in the home page, run tests on the home page and then some *other primary pages*. And if you have shopping cart pages, pop in a couple of those as well, and **get a look, get an overview, of how Google sees your pages technically**. Same as your [site speed](#), your page loading time. Keep in mind though, site speed is an interesting thing, it is a major ranking factor but we are often confused by site speed, meaning, *"Well it came up on my mobile phone and I'm with XYZ carrier and that's why it took a long time."*

Google is not interested in how long it takes to load on your mobile phone when you're out in the back of Burke and waiting to see what happened. **Google wants to know how long does it take to load off the server.** How long it takes to load on your device is secondary.

We understand that internet connectivity can determine the load time on a consumer's device, and yes, of course, faster is better. But if you Google [page speed test](#) then you will find and again you should pop in, not just the home page, but a couple of major pages, perhaps some product pages, to look at your page loading speed.

I often find this interesting... I find that we do this with a client's website when we build a new one (on our backend servers) and we might get a result and say, "65" or "68" out of a 100. Different result from mobile versus desktop. But I'll then instruct my tech guy, *"Can you go and improve on them, make that better, optimize the images, minify the JavaScript, do these things."* And we can improve that to 70, 80 even 90 out of a 100 in some cases.

There are many factors. But for you, **you don't have to know how to do these things but you do need to make sure it gets done**, and make sure you check because, if your page load speed goes down after a site upgrade for example, that's going to be a huge negative for you. You're got to ask, what is it that is causing the problem? Was it the images that are loading? Maybe you have a new theme design for your CMS. Whatever it is you need to address it, as best as possible.

Remember though, it will never be possible. Myself, I'm happy with 70 to 80 out of a 100. It's about as good as it going to get, for example, using a WordPress website. There are too many elements that need to load sometimes. So it's good to keep them simple. These things are good for you to understand and then check.

Then if you go back into your [Webmaster Tools](#) you need to look at various error reports. Look at things like your [301 redirects](#), look at the [crawl stats](#), look at the [404 errors](#), "the page is no longer there" which need a 301 redirect. **This is the technical stuff which if I'm losing you a little here that's okay, you don't need to understand it, but you do need to look at it.** And if you're showing up in your reports, you need to say to your Webmaster guy or girl, *"Hi, can you fix this for me, please?"*

More importantly, from a user / consumer, point of view, you don't want them clicking on a page that doesn't exist.

Just quickly if you do have (and we all have some) 404 error reports - pages that don't exist - **you should create a custom 404 error page**. That is the page that doesn't just go, "Hmmm, this is an error." It is the page that says, *"Thanks for visiting. We've made some changes to our site recently and this page no longer exists. Please click here to search or to visit our categories, or go to our homepage or . . . something!"* That's important as well.

You should also look at the redirects that you have in place, make sure they are leading to new pages. Look at – and this is important - pages that do redirect, to where they are going. If a missing page redirects to a new one you don't want to then redirect to another one, redirect to another, redirect to another one etc etc. You need to make sure it's a clean redirect from one place to the destination as best as possible. That's all part of the technical.

There are other elements which can cause problems, too much use of *JavaScript*, pages loading through or being served in JavaScript. Use of *iFrames*, content being pulled from other places into your site through iFrame. Use of *Flash* or Flash Technology does that hinder the crawling process? Perhaps. Does it slow things down? Is it available on an android device (such as a flash video)? As I record this, "not at this point of time", is the answer.

Look for errors, look at those sitemaps, look at your [canonical URLs](#). "Sorry? What, Paul?" yes, "canonical". **Canonical URLs are those which are the original**. Have a look and see if you're if you're using them (using the correct tag to identify your original content pages / posts as the canonical URL).

If you write content for your website, it's brand new, that becomes the canonical URL whether you or maybe someone else creates that or copies that content again elsewhere you need to, there needs to be a tag saying "the canonical URL is . . ." pointing back to the original, is just a technical thing within the curd. This is important to help prevent duplicate content problems.

Of course when it comes to duplicate content that's just another thing, yet again!

These are some of the elements when it comes to the technical side that you need to, at least, be aware of.

It's good idea also to have a [search spider crawl](#) through your own site. I just use the [Crawl](#) within Google Search Console but there are others out there as well, you can just simply Google them and they can pull up errors for you.

*Leaving things with this... If you have technical problems with your website and you don't know about it, guess what, it's not your Webmaster's fault. **It's yours**.* We can build a perfectly functioning website, but you've got to understand that it's the Internet. **Stuff breaks!** Stuff stops working for no apparent reason. It's a computer. That's all a web server is, it's a computer. If it had a corrupted file on your computer gone to open something, wouldn't work, computer freezes up, it's just a computer, it's a hard drive with a different operating system, that's what a web server is.

So, sometimes yeah, stuff breaks. *Worst yet if you are using a CMS of some sort, and I use WordPress on my own websites and there's an upgrade, a plugin perhaps, or a core upgrade,*

or a theme upgrade **it can break everything**. Which is why it's incredibly important, just as a side note, that you backup regularly.

I offer clients a service where we don't just review these technical things and manage them, but we also do updates, we do site maintenance, and we do backups on a regular basis as well as **upgrade the security**; the security of the databases, the usernames, the logins, the pages, etc. If you're using a CMS like Wordpress, you need to upgrade the security to help prevent malicious hacks. And these things happen. I get over a hundred hack attempts a month on my website.

I had a customer just yesterday e-mail me going, "Paul, what is this it's a notification of someone's being trying to break-in to my site." I said, "Yes, we did your security upgrade last month and that's the first person whose tried to get through. Here's the good news. They didn't." If you are using something like WordPress or Joomla or any of the others that are out there, expect people to try and hack your website. It's just what some people do. Online vandalism, that's what I call it and it can be prevented - YOU can prevent it.

Here's the thing... If you are not able to do that yourself from a technical standpoint, [perhaps you should give us a call](#) and we can do it for you. We set it up for a year, and we have a simple guarantee. Should something go wrong, should someone then hack your website after we've done your security upgrade, **we fix it for free** because it's our problem.

Security updates and backups for a WordPress website... yep, that's something technical that you MUST also be aware of. You need to be backup regularly, and be aware of your website's technical vulnerabilities and problems.

Part Four: Internal Links...

Internal linking is a very important part of the overall sales process. It has minor benefit for SEO, but a *major benefit for the consumer*. They need to be able to find what they're looking for fast. Here's my philosophy. No matter where a customer arrives onto your website, no matter what page or what post, **they should be no more than one click away from what they are looking for.**

This ONE CLICK PHILOSOPHY is crucial to your site's success!

For your customer, they need to be no more than one more click away from what they are looking for; and from there, no more than one click away from what YOU are looking for... which is the conversion, the sale or the contact.

So I would like you to look at your website and give considered thought to this, there are really only three different types of pages.

1. There are those **pages which are designed to draw and attract customers** to your website. Most often, these are part of the blog but they can also be pages as well. These are the ones that get shared to social media. That you talk about through your newsletter, that other customers are likely to share amongst their tribe also.
2. Then there are your **cornerstone content pages**. These are the ones which showcase your products, your services, your value, your authority, your mastery. These are the ones that say *"Hey, we know what we're talking about, and yes, we are the people to buy from."*

These are the ones that the 80% of customers out there, who don't yet know what they want to buy, want to read. *These are the ones that inform*. These are the ones that discuss, these are the ones that answer questions.

Remember earlier? **Two types of customers.**

- Those who know what they want...
- ...and those who're still yet trying to decide.

It is the 80% of those who want to decide, who need and who feed, off these cornerstone content pages.

3. Then there are the buy now pages; like product pages and a shopping cart. These conversion pages are for those who already know what they want; *these are the pages they look at if they're just trying to decide who to 'buy' from*. So these need to be more just a simple form, but not providing too much additional information. They still have to build authority.

Keep in mind, the two different types of customers... Those who know what they want and are yet to decide who to buy it from, they are the **conversion pages**. Those who have an idea, but aren't yet sure, still trying to decide what they want to buy. They are the **cornerstone content pages**.

How do those people find your content pages? They find them in those **attraction pages**, the blog posts, the ones being shared on social media, all of these different types of things.

With that in mind, now you should be able to start creating, in your mind, in your own mind, an internal site structure. Let's just make it really simple, break it down those couple of steps –

Blog posts are excellent for showcasing authority, excellent for attracting inquiry. They get shared through social media, through newsletters, through various channels. They bring people to your website.

But if you have a service... (ABC, that is the service), and you write a blog post about "A", "*Six ways that A can help you do better in your hobby.*" If the service is ABC and the blog post is only talking about A, does it not make sense then, *to link from that blog post to a cornerstone content page about ABC?* Of course it does!

Here's what you need to understand. Once upon time Google search, Google, said, "*What do people want to know?*" Well, **here is the new paradigm**... Google now asks the question, "*What is it that people want to know?*" Then says, "*What do they really mean by that?*" And then asks, "***What else might they like to know?***" Search has evolved. The way in which consumers search has also evolved and Google has answered the call. So must you.

**Google is no longer primarily interested in just 'the thing'.
Google also wants to know about 'other things' RELATED
to "the thing!"**

So if blog post about A, links to a cornerstone content page about A, B and C (*what else the customer might like to know*), where do you think that content page should link to..? The conversion point! It could be the product to buy, or the contact form, or the helpdesk... or some point of actual consumer contact.

For example –

- The customer arrives on the attraction page (such as a blog post).
- That links to a deeper cornerstone content page with more information.
- Which link to the 'buy now' / 'contact us' etc.

Note: Your blog posts / attraction pages can (and should) also link to the 'buy now' pages as well; giving the choice.

Think about the actions that you want... What is the action that you want the customer to take? *Maybe it is just to subscribe, to download a report like this.* That is an action. **What is the action you want them to take?** Your internal links need to help people find their way through the sales process to taking that final action because, until you ask them to take it, and they say either yes or no... you'll never know whether you've got a customer or not.

Here's the biggest problem that I see with content on pages, and internal linking.... People just link randomly, they link only with keywords. And there is nothing wrong with doing that but it's a smaller part of the strategy (just the SEO). They don't link from a *sales funnel* point of view, which we'll discuss it in a moment.

They don't ask people to travel through *from post, to page, to conversion*. Does that make

sense, *from post to page to product*? Does that make sense? **That is the most important internal linking structure ever.**

Then yes, there is the keyword thing... the keyword phrase. Here's how I look at it. If post A is about whatever the topic of A is, maybe, airplane model kits... if it's about airplane model kits, do you think you'd be talking about "airplane model kits"? Yes! I think you would be, which is why those keywords would appear *naturally and relevant in the text*.

So that's portion A of ABC. So this cornerstone content page could be not just about airplane model kits, it could also be about display kits. It could also be about help groups. It could also be about hobby groups, A, B and C. *It's what else they might like to know.*

And here's the thing... do you think it would be a god idea to link from a blog post about airplane model kits to a page about more.. not just model kits but display kits, about techniques, about ideas, *about creativity*. All on that topic, a good solid topic page. Would you be talking about those keywords anyway? **Yes. Of course you would.**

Does it add some value to hyperlink the actual clickable link, "airplane model kits", to that page? Yes, it does. Nothing wrong with doing that, as long as it doesn't make you look silly. I was talking about this in a conference once and someone said, "Well, what does it mean, 'to look silly'?" I said, "Imagine this, take your blog post or take your page and replace all of those hyperlinked keyword phrases, with just in capital letters, bold type, KEYWORD PHRASE and if it says, 'and what you need to do is KEYWORD PHRASE. Click here blah, blah. Click here KEYWORD PHRASE, KEYWORD PHRASE, KEYWORD PHRASE, and so on and you realize all of a sudden that there's just too many KEYWORD PHRASES, that's starting to look silly."

Google understands when people are doing this and trying to 'game the search results'. Google no longer appreciates people gaming the search by having too many keyword phrases built into a page, especially when they're hyperlinked and so on. It's a dead giveaway that you're "trying" to DO 'SEO'. Don't!

Here is an example of using the keyword phrase naturally and relevant in the text....

Imagine you have a blog post about airplane modeling kits; you could hyperlink once to your content page about using that exact search phrase "airplane modeling kits", and then maybe once again using another related search phrase (talking about another aspect of airplane modeling), but not the exact same words, to link there again, top and bottom, or in the middle. It doesn't really matter, honestly, it does not matter. Just don't throw them all over the place because you read it somewhere – you probably read it from something written YEARS ago!

Will it still make sense to the customer? Will it help them follow through the sales funnel? Does it lead them through to that final product purchase or conversion point? **If it does, then it's a good internal link.**

Here's the thing... final thought - there is a school of study which says, "If I have a good cornerstone content page the more links going to that page, the better that page may perform in Google." Here's the thing. That's very likely true. It's difficult to confirm but I believe such to be very likely true and one of the many ranking factors that can affect a page.

But you wouldn't link to that page from every single blog post using the keyword phrase anchor text 'airplane model kits' because, I'm sure that if I was to do some keyword research and come up with 50, 60, or 70 different keyword phrases, and *search them out optimally* by search volume and ranking difficulty, as we did in part one, with the various ad groups, the topic groups... I'm sure that the topic group of ABC airplane modeling kits, display kits, techniques, strategies, etc., etc. **we'd have more than just one keyword phrase we could use to link to our content page from.**

- We'd have more than just one keyword phrase we could use to write our blog posts.
- We'd have more than just one single keyword phrase being repeated over and over again. *Would you agree with me on that?*

So here's what you need to do. Go back to your website (and I hope you're running a blog), but if not, well good news for you, you can get started and do it correctly. If you are, then you need to go back over them. **You need to have a look where they are linking to.** However - *before you even do that you need to make sure you've got two, three, perhaps half-a-dozen or so different cornerstone content pages.*

So write them, make sure that they are leading people to the final product purchase, or the contact form or wherever, *whatever your goal is.* **Then you go back to your blog posts** and make sure that they are linking to those cornerstone content pages using a range of different 'anchor text' keyword phrases

The anchor text being the actual words that you use to create the hyperlink -

Some of you might say, "Well, I've got a blog post here, that doesn't really need to link to any of them." I say to you, "*What the hell is it doing on your website?*" Is it really related? Seriously?" Because if it is, then you should be able to link to one of your content pages.

Everything should link and draw the customer in. That is the point, and then from an SEO point of view, Google will follow those links and go, "Ah, this must be an important page. Look at all the links that are going to it."

And that's how it works. Quick, simple and easy. This is one of those things that is good for you to understand. **Do you have to do these things yourself? No, but you do need to understand that they're being done for you, if somebody else is doing the work.** That's important.

Part Five: External Links...

There are only five different areas to the overall SEO puzzle, good for you. **Only five. Five is easy.** I could give you 50, 50 I think is too many. Let's just focus on the five. The fifth of these and final, is the External Link process.

External Links - being different to Internal Links - are those that come from other websites back to you, and often referred to as [Backlinks](#).

Let me dispel one of the myths which still surrounds the Internet today right up front... back-linking as a process, as a "thing" which is often outsourced, overseas, through the cheapest possible provider, is an extremely dangerous thing.

However, with that in mind, back-linking, getting links back to your website is an extremely important thing! But Google made it clear a few years ago, in 2013, that it's too easy to game the system, it's too easy to create *automated* backlinks. This would be BAD for you. You don't want this to happen. And if you do it or if it's being done for you, you need to go back and remove or at least review such links, lest you fear the wrath of Google.

You can find what sites are currently linking back to you, through the Google search console.

So then... if these external links are so important part of the SEO process, yet also so dangerous, what should you do?

First things first...

Sidebar: this next thing is the best thing to do though it is often the one that takes the longest to get results with, and takes the most amount of time. However, this is the best..

You need to create and publish ongoing and regular, awesome content to your website!

Why? Because if you make your content, your blog posts, **that damn good**, people will start talking about them – AND – start linking to them. However, this takes (often, particularly for a new or an unknown business) an extraordinary amount of time. So does that mean you should put it off? Hell no. You should start today.

But what else can you do?

One of the things about external links is the way in which you do them can not only benefit your website but also other Google properties, such as Google's **local search**. Do you have a local search profile within Google? It's a topic for another day, but I hope you do. You simply go to <http://www.google.com/business> and you'll be redirected for your area to create your local page.

It's something which you can do for free. You simply fill in the blanks; it's kinda like "paint by numbers and follow the bouncing ball". What you want to do is PIMP YOUR PROFILE. It's

just another online profile, like your Facebook business page or your LinkedIn page or similar, it's considered within those social media circles, though not that social. But you need your business page set up in Google, for local search.

One of the most important things that you can do to improve your local search listing in Google, those that often appear above the generic search results, is to build up your citations list. [Citations](#) are the way in which your business name and business details appear on business directories.

Here's the key. The way in which you present yourself in your Google business page, same as you would under the contact page of your website need to be identical. So if your business, your company is called XYZ Propriety Limited but is written as PTY / LTD then you would repeat those exact phrases elsewhere. If your phone number is 07 555 961 and you type it in with brackets around the (07) then you must use brackets around the (07) on your contact page, on your Google business page, on your other social media pages, and on your local business listing pages, for citations. They must be exact, NOT just 07 without the brackets.

Here's how you build your citations and how they improve both your local search results and organic search results. If you go to paulbarrs.com and then visit my site map, you will see under "featured pages" that I have the [top 30 Australian business directories](#). Just go there and click on each one, one at a time and find out if you're listed.

If you're not, find out if you could be. i.e., do they have a category which is suitable for your business? *If they do, claim that spot, pimp that profile, put your details on it and fill out as much data as you can.*

These citations, as they are called, don't always have a place for an actual hyperlink back to your website. But if they do, good, grab it. If they don't, no matter, Google is clever. Google knows that because your citation is identical to your local business profile with Google, which has a website link, they know where your website is, and it builds your relevance and your authority.

If you can get 20, 25, maybe even 30 of these other business directories linking back to your websites, not only do you get the citation link, but they're great external links: good, quality, relevant, external links, and that's the key. *They need to be good*, they need to be quality, and they need – they MUST be, relevant. That was the problem that most people who got spanked by the Penguin update had; **their back links were not relevant**, they sure as heck weren't good and they were lousy quality. This is the key. That's probably the easiest thing that you can do.

Then I want you to start building a tribe. You're going to want to ask yourself the question amongst your customers, do they have social media profiles? Do they love you? Would they talk about you, link to you? It would be good if they could, wouldn't it? Are they businesses, do they have a website? Do they love you, like you, could they link to you?

Build A Tribe!

How do you build more quality external links back to your website? How do you get them to link back to you? You ask! Well maybe you can be a bit more strategic, if you're serving business to business, go looking for the right type of strategic partner, but have a look, find out, and ask.

You need to build a tribe. Remember, I'm assuming here that you're publishing ongoing, regular, quality content, which is what...? **It's awesome quality content!!** And they'd love to link to that. If you're going to work a little bit more strategically, you can look for joint venture partners, such as I have magazines that I write for. And there's an idea... magazines in the real world, there's no actual hyperlink there, nor SEO benefit whatsoever, but it's still building my tribe.

And guess what? In today's modern age, almost all magazines published online as well. **There's your backlink!** High quality, authoritative links - this is what you want.

And then there's a thing which was spoken about a lot in recent years, some claim it to be dead, called [Guest Blogging](#). Look folks, guest blogging isn't dead. Shitty, crappy, useless articles written purely for SEO are. Please understand the difference.

Guest blogging isn't dead. Shitty, crappy, useless articles written purely for SEO are!

So if you can build for yourself and find a potential joint venture partners where, maybe once a month, once every six or eight weeks, you provide them with some content; they're going to link back to you - sending you quality link juice, and as well as more importantly, QUALITY CUSTOMERS!

Question: How do you decide if someone is a good partner for content (*and I'm talking content that gets published on their website... and you offer for them to publish first, before you do on your website, if at all*)? Do they have customers? Obviously you're non-competitive. But do they have customers that *if they were* to click on that link through to you they'd be pleasantly surprised?

They'd go "Wow, I'm so glad I found this website. I'm so glad I've come across this service. Good to be here. This is good for me", will they say that? **Because if they will then that is a good joint venture partner.**

Obviously, it's ideal that these people be more successful than you (the ones linking back to you), but sometimes we look for those across the board as well, not just above.

Joint venture partners, through quality content are one of the best possible ways, not only to bring you new traffic and actual customers, but to get solid external links for Google as well.

Another unique idea is products and services that you might be using. Have a look and see if they publish testimonials on their websites. If they do, and they might link back to you, there's a good opportunity for business to business customers.

Look, here's how it goes, I said up front this chapter, **content is the best possible way to generate ongoing links**. But it sucks because it takes often so long to create that content. Remember this from earlier? **Never create content for just one purpose, because it takes too long.**

So what then should we say to these things? What we should say is this, "Make your content work for you!" Do some research into what's called "syndicated content." Don't just

write something for one person over there; write it and put it in a place where it can be syndicated everywhere.

I've been doing online audio for years, and I have many audios now syndicated all over the Internet on other people's websites and often them linking back to me. This is what you need to look for, it's the next step. But it is the last thing, you need to do everything else in this booklet first - that's important.

And here's what I want you to understand... let's wrap things up... the final mindset. What we've looked at so far, the Keyword Research Analysis and so on. The development of content, the technical aspects, the internal linking, those first four of the five things, they're all *on-page* elements.

What we're talking about now, **External Links, are off page elements**. And when you combine two and five together, the quality content with the external links; that is all you'll need to do from now on.

Number 1, number 3, number 4, they're a one-time thing. On-page - do them, monitor them from time to time to make sure everything is still okay. But creating content on an ongoing, regular basis and then building those external links... *that's what you do for now on*.

Once the on page is done, you only focus on the off page. This is very, very important. And of course, amongst everything, yes, you need to be tracking your results. You need to be measuring your successes. So you'll need to have a good [SEO Keyword Reporting System](#).

I think I mentioned this earlier, but we offer such a service. Not just to clients but also to others. Keyword Reporting, a whole bunch of different keywords being tracked across three different search engines including both local and national search.

It's very affordable, and you need to have access to those reports every month in your mailbox, to let you know if you're on track. Of course if you're not on track, you can [get in touch with us](#) and I'd be more than happy to not just help, but in the interim, maybe give you some ideas. I'll have a look at your website, talk to you over the phone, or sit down for a coffee.

So wrapping up... thank you very much for taking the time to read through this report. I hope you've learnt some things you can take home. However, you must remember, these things have no value whatsoever if you don't apply them. You need to actually do them. You need to sit down and run through the checklists yourself.

Look for gaps, look for holes, look for things that you can work on, or things you can get somebody else to work on. **Remember: If somebody else is doing the job, you need to make sure they're doing it right.** Such is the purpose with this book.

I hope to hear from you with your feedback. Thank you very, very much. Drop me a line and let me know how you're going. Let me know if I can help too. Thank you.

Paul Barrs
<http://www.paulbarrs.com>

How Long Does SEO Take?

The following is a reprint from my blog post <http://www.paulbarrs.com/how-long-for-seo>

You can watch the video at the above link –

Today we're talking **search engine optimisation**. *How long should it take to get results from the work that's being done for you?* This is a question that I get asked a lot, and there's a lot that I need people to understand is involved with SEO before I can really explain and answer that question for them.

How long does it take when you write something, you get it on to your blog, and it's indexed into Google? Look, if it's set up properly, it's a process that takes a couple of minutes. You write it, it's indexed, Google comes and it's in the index. But does that mean it's found where you want it to be? Maybe not.

So let's look quickly at the different elements of SEO and what needs to take place for a solid SEO strategy, and then we'll answer the question: How long does it take to see results?

First things first. I'm assuming that everything you do is based on **good, solid keyword research**. You've done your homework. You know what people are looking for. You know the broad variety of keyword phrases within an individual topic, and that's what you're targeting on your website. I have to assume you've done that correctly.

I also have to assume that you've done the **other on-page SEO factors**. You've gone through and you've optimised all of your meta data. You've gone through and you've optimised your internal link structure. You've gone through and you've looked at the different crucial elements from a technical aspect, responsiveness and others, and you've fixed those errors up. You've gone through Google Webmaster Tools, and you've looked at the different reports, and you've looked at the problems that you have and you've fixed them up.

I'm also going to assume that you've looked at the first element of **off-page search engine optimisation** and you've looked at your current backlink profile and you've fixed it up. You've gone and removed all of the completely **irrelevant, unnecessary links** that are currently coming back to your site *from places where they shouldn't be*. This is one of those things, it just happens over time that people link and the Internet marketers in the world out there use tools to scrape content and create automatic rubbish, which sometimes, if you're lucky, will have a link back to you. Well, not so much if you're lucky anymore, because that can be a bad thing for you.

So I'm going to assume that you've done all of those different things and then you're beginning, as we spoke about last week, with some ongoing content management and regular updates from a SEO strategy point of view.

So how long will it take to see results in search? Well, it all depends how competitive the things are that you are searching for. There are also other factors that can be involved, the age of your domain name. How long have you been around? Do you have any authority yet?

Other things, the quality of the content. Of course, I'm assuming it's good quality content. *I know if I'm doing it for you, it's going to be blinking awesome content*. You need to make sure whoever is doing that for you does it well. I'm also going to say and I'm assuming, I'm making a lot of assumptions here, aren't I? And I'm assuming that you're doing and producing new content on a regular basis. Assuming you're doing all of those things, and these are things that I do for clients when I'm doing their SEO, which is why I have to make those assumptions.

If you have all of those things in place and you produce some new content and you link it correctly and it improves the overall quality of your website, **you can start to see ranking within a day or three**. Of course, the Google dance, we'll call it that, is sometimes pages will come up quickly and then go down. But if you haven't done and aren't doing any of those things, you're starting brand spanking new, couple of months perhaps you might see a rush to the top and then start to balance in, but that will come up as you continue to work on your content strategy.

I like to say to people that it's at least a minimum three to six months. If I'm doing some work with someone, I want six months. I want six months to start, because it's going to take me a month or two just to fix up all the on-page crap and look at it and fix up the backlink profile as it stands.

So I like to ask people for at least six months, and that's for the moderate to more easy keyword phrases to be targeting. If you're going to get into the more difficult things, those things which a lot more people are not just searching for but also competing for, **12 months**.

You see, organic search engine optimisation and strategy through your content management is not a quick fix process. If you want a quick fix, you need to optimise your content for conversions and then go to AdWords or Facebook advertising or Twitter advertising or some other form of bang, pay, get the lead, get the link and convert. That's the only way to get it done quickly.

But I have seen for the more difficult keywords it can take 12-24 months. I'm not going to go into the details of it now, but when I looked at rebranding my business five or six years ago, to work more specifically in this small local business sector, I looked at different opportunities, and rightly so I went for the lower hanging fruit. That's what you do. **You go for the easy ones first**.

But I noticed three years later, the most difficult keyword phrase that I really wanted to be found under in my business, but just no point in even going for it right up front, it took three years and now I'm page one. But that was because all of those assumptions that I make for your business, I do them in mine.

It's why now I don't need to advertise. I don't. I have no need to advertise at all to bring in new business, because I get what I want from SEO, and then I have processes in place to bring back referral business, to bring back repeat business and other things.

How long does it take to get results from SEO? Look, if you don't have a six month strategy in your mind, maybe you should just look at pay-per-click advertising, because search engine optimisation isn't getting found for one thing.

Here's how people search. We'll finish with this. Someone goes to Google. I need to learn about X. So bang and they might click through to your website. But chances are they are going to want to know other things about X, and if those things are not on your website, what are they going to do? They are going to go back to Google. Well, tell me about this part of Y, and then they'll find someone else and go through to that website and so on and so on and so on.

Here's what you need to do. Your topical content within your website needs to answer not just that user query, but what is **the intent behind the search**, what **else might they like to know**. When you do that, not just through primary pages, but also through supporting blog post pages, also getting it out to the Web in many other different places, here's the magic and how it works.

I'm looking for X. Hmm, okay, click through. Maybe just a post. The conversions weren't right. They didn't read more. They go back. I'm also looking for Y. *Oh look, the same search engine results, your website, are coming up for X, for Y, for Z, and for other different things within that topic.* **That's when the magic starts to happen.**

How long does it take for that to happen? Six to twelve months, absolutely at a minimum. And for me, when I talk SEO, I'm not talking one page, your business name, bang you're there. What a waste of time. I'm talking about you getting found for X. I'm talking about you getting found for Y. I'm talking about you getting found for Z. And not just that, on search for Google, but when they're on social media and they're talking about and they're looking for things, you're also coming up because you're related to their mind, and **you're popping up in the right places**. Maybe you're using retargeting, and you're also coming up in the advertising streams.

The point is this. When someone starts thinking about wanting to be found for what you do, you need to start thinking to be everywhere. Not just that one thing. Does that make sense? *How long does that take?* **Six to twelve months.**

So you need to have a serious commitment for your SEO. Otherwise you're just sort of putting your toes in the water. But if you want real results, it **must be an ongoing process**. That's what I need you to understand.

How Much Does SEO Cost?

The following is a reprint of my Blog post <http://www.paulbarrs.com/how-much-seo-cost>

You can watch the video at the above link –

How much should SEO cost? It's a big question, isn't it? I've seen prices ranging from \$300 a month up to \$1,500, even \$2,000 a month for those top premier products.

The question for you though as a business owner is: How much should you be paying? What's right? What's wrong? ***What are you getting in return for that money?*** If you'd like to know those answers, stick around for a few minutes, and I'll share them with you.

Now here's the thing. I'm going to assume, at this point, that all of the on-page SEO for your site has been done. I mean there are two different elements of search engine optimisation. There's the things you do **on your pages**, and then there's the things that you do **off your pages**.

Very quickly, everything begins with good, solid keyword research, then the on-page work. That is the content. That is the structure of the site. That is the technical. That is the elements of responsive design. That is the menus. That is the internal linking. That is all of those things, which can probably take a month or two sometimes just to get done properly. But once they're done, they're generally done. You don't need to keep doing them. Just monitor and make sure that everything is working fine.

Then we move to the second part, which is what's called the **off-page**, everything that is done off your page. Well, in order to understand the question, "How much does SEO cost," you have to first understand how modern SEO is different from the older style SEO as we've done it in past years.

Very simply, this was the strategy in past years. We would do the on-page stuff, the keywords, the meta title, the descriptions, the pages. Then we'd move to the off page, and we would outsource backlinking.

Now backlinking is a process where you get links from other places back to yours. It is an important ranking factor. No doubt. But once upon a time, all we did was we'd outsource this to an agency or to somebody overseas who could *very easily do this at low cost*, and they'd just get links from all different places. They might be doing some kind of blog commenting, or 2.0, you've heard that phrase, the social network bookmarking and all of these different things to get these links back.

That evolved. In a little bit of time people said, "*Oh, we need to start sending content with that link.*" So they would do articles and article spinning and maybe a top 5, top 10 lists, things like that. Then we do blog commenting, and we'd get it out there and we'd have articles, guest blogging and all sorts of different things to get these links back to us. And in principle, it's the right strategy. But the delivery in today's modern SEO world is completely different.

People have evolved. We have as consumers begun to realise that, guess what? Crap content is what? Crap content. It's never going to improve. So the strategy from a good SEO agency point of view in today's modern SEO world isn't just to go and make the quickest possible thing happen to get you a link back to your website. And remember, keep in mind what I said earlier. **On-page SEO**, generally a **one-time thing**. Then we have to be producing content to go out and bring people back. I'm sure you've heard that before. This can't possibly be the first time you've come across that strategy.

Here's the way I like to think about it, and here's the way I like to say it. Every link back to your website must be accompanied by a link. Not just the link. The link must be accompanied by content. That's what you need to remember. **The link is accompanied by content.**

So here's **the reason why** and **the difference** between the \$300 a month SEO, pure, old-school strategy and the \$1,000 a month SEO, the \$1,500 a month SEO, depending on how much, what, content is being created and then delivered to bring those links back to you. And that's what it comes down to in today's modern SEO.

So I want you to understand this. For \$300 a month, *how many quality articles do you think maybe I could write for \$300 a month?* Two? One, two, certainly. I mean, okay, I have a degree in writing. It's a little bit different. I can write and would apply myself to that. But a good article, you know, we're talking 30 to 45 minutes for a really good article. Or are we? But you can shrink that down to maybe 15 to 20 minutes if you want to. Let's say 20 minutes. How many good articles could you get for \$300 a month, 20 minutes each? Let's see that's three for an hour. Let's work on maybe \$100 an hour for someone with some reasonable quality. There's six articles.

Oh, hang on. We've got to also be able to get them out there through our social media. We've also got to be able to get them onto our blog. We've got to be able to look for other opportunities where people may publish and republish your content. So let's scrap that down back to two. So we spend less than an hour. We produce some content. We've then only got two hours, four a month, to go out and get those links back. Not much time and really it doesn't give you much opportunity. **This is what I want you to understand.**

Whereas a package which is \$750, \$1,000 a month, that might include doing some videos like this one here, and then taking those videos, using the transcripts to produce the foundation of those articles, to produce the blog posts which get shared to your social media, to also then engage them over a period of time so that they're repurposed in that content, to create perhaps thumbnail and placeholder images, which are relevant to yours, and they could be used for SlideShare images, and they could be used to create content again and again and again.

Here's the thing. **You can outsource your content creation.** You can and you **probably should**. I believe you should at least have the foundation for it. But the higher the skill of the person writing the content or speaking, recording the content in this case, the more that's going to cost.

Now what I want you to understand in these last few moments is this. SEO, how much should it cost? Really you've just got to look at the **time value**. How much time? I believe if they're not giving you, whoever's doing your SEO, at least 8 to 10 hours a month, and that's not much. **Eight to ten hours a month, that's a day and a bit.** If they're not giving you at least that much time, that much effort, what's the point? But for \$30 bucks an

hour you're not going to get somebody really highly skilled. You're certainly not going to get a technical agency being able to do all of this for you.

So here's the formula. Come up with some **foundation content**. Use it to produce some videos for YouTube. Use it to become the foundation for your blog posts. Use it to repurpose and share them out to social media. Use the same thing to repurpose and share out to your [newsletter](#). Make it evergreen content so you can repurpose and share it again in the future. And every time it gets shared out as well as you're looking for opportunities for other links back to you through other non-competitive but complementary websites. Remember the link must be accompanied by content.

Now you're beginning to understand why modern SEO costs a lot more than it used to, because modern SEO is **about managing and creating content**. It's about managing and creating content for your blog and even putting it there. It's about using that same content and managing your social media content. So it's not just the link. It's not just the link. That's what I need you to understand.

Modern SEO is about the creation of the content. It's about the distribution of the content. It's about the management of that content in your social media. It's about the management of your blog with that content, and it's also about looking for other link building opportunities, links accompanied by content out there on the Web. **You can't do that for \$300 a month. You just can't.** It's absolutely impossible. It costs at least 8 to, what, 10 hours a month minimum. Really you're looking at 10 to 15 hours a month to get that done properly.

So how much does SEO cost? How much should it cost? You really need to be serious and working around \$750 to \$1,500 a month, absolutely, and have that working for at least six months. We might talk more about that in the next video. *How long does it take to get results from SEO?*

But I hope I've answered that first question: How much should it cost? Understand the difference between just link building and complete content creation, management, and distribution. That's modern SEO.

How to **Improve** Your SEO in Just 24 Hours!

The following is a reprint of my Blog post <http://www.paulbarrs.com/improve-seo-24-hours>

You can watch the video at the above link –

I've got a list of 4 different things that I need you to write down and then go and do and yes if you do this and do them well, they will make a difference to your SEO assuming of course, they haven't already been done. You ready? Grab your pen, grab your paper, let's start with....

Number 1: Update your Meta titles and descriptions.

Meta titles and Meta descriptions are those things that appear in Google search or of course in the other search engines, usually the blue line and the 2 lines underneath it. When it comes to creating a compelling and powerful Meta title and Meta description, this is the number 1 reason - that if you are getting results - people are going to have a reason to click through to your website. But more importantly than that yes, yet again from an SEO point of view, these are incredibly important.

Now I could just give you a whole tutorial on how to write a good meta title and description but I've already done that. If you go to this website, metalength.com.au, you'll find there **some tools and a training video** I've put together to help you get better results from good titles, good descriptions.

Number 2: I want you to **identify your main information or conversion pages** and look at reviewing and updating that content.

Then I want you to **link to them from other pages and other posts on your website**. Here's the concept and this is all you need to take home. Imagine you got in a one page here and another page there; these 2 pages are enough to talk about your products, to talk about your service.

You talk about what you do, who you do it for and where, and these pages talk about the 2 different areas of your business, maybe 2 target markets, 2 different types of a product, service something like that. You can have more than 2, am just using 2 for this example.

I want you to go and update the content and have a look at it and make sure it really does cover the most frequently asked questions that your customers are likely to have. Then I'd like you to look at all the different other pages and maybe blog posts and other things within your website that link or could link to those 2 pages.

So from all of these, I want you to start linking to those primary pages. And of course, your homepage over here, well it links to it of course. Obviously, we want people to read it. Don't we? Well if you want to make a difference in your SEO then you need to update the content on these pages to **make it highly relevant** to whatever it is your user, your consumer is looking for and needs. I've always used the summary guideline of what is it that people

want to know about what you do and then what else are they likely to know. Look at the content on your pages and review by that structure.

Number 3: Review your homepage and make sure that it isn't too general.

Link from the content within that homepages I mentioned earlier to those main pages. So here's the thing, look at the content on your home page and make sure it's not too general but it is about what you do, who you do it for and if necessary where. 1, 2, 3 things.

Seriously when people come to your business, to your website they're wanting to find out 1 or 2 different things. Number one, if they're in that part of the buying cycle that says "*I still don't know exactly what it is that I want*", they need to be able to find product or service information quickly. Yes, absolutely. But if they're already in that process of "*I know what I want but who should I buy it from*", then they need to be able to find that information quickly, obviously again. So, what you do, who you do it for and where that should be the summary on the main page linking to your main pages.

Finally, **number 4** makes a huge difference. After you've updated all of those on-page elements, I want you to **verify your site with Google Search Console**. I want you to submit an XML [sitemap](#). I want you to get Google to then crawl your website, do a fetch and look for errors, to then fix.

Now, maybe your webmaster did this for you, somebody else built your site but you should have access to this information as well. I mean if nothing else, imagine this... imagine that Google has a problem with your website. Maybe you can't see it, can't access if something's gone wrong. Wouldn't you like them to send you an e-mail to tell you, "*Hi, we've got a problem with your website, here please go and fix it*". Wouldn't that be cool? Guess what? **They do** and they'll do it **through Google's Search Console**, webmaster tools is what we used to call it.

So this is something you absolutely must do, submit your XML sitemap, get them to crawl the website, do a fetch, look for errors and fix them. Look for *page errors*, look for *reading errors*, look for *mobile errors*, all of these different things and **fix them**.

And yes, this can be done within a 24 hour period. Well, assuming that you don't have a 600 website like I do but even then most of those are blog posts. The average website, you don't have to optimize every single page, just your primary pages, just your home page and all of the content pages that link to those conversion pages. So that's my goal for you, a little bit of hard work, go and get those things done before next week.



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