

“Google, Notice me! Notice me!”

Effective, Sustainable, and Diverse Search Engine Optimization Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) plays a key role in driving growth at successful companies. There have even been startups whose business models were grounded in effective SEO strategies. In this panel, we challenge antiquated SEO guidelines, discuss recent trends, and share learnings unique to different companies. We provide background and context for understanding the process of SEO, how it applies to applications across industries, and the different roles that contribute to an SEO team.

Tells reviewers what this submission is about

AUDIENCE

This Advanced panel is accessible to students, and industry professionals with relevant academic background in computer science, data science, and/or product growth and management, who are looking to understand basics of SEO, what SEO engineering entails in diverse companies, and key SEO strategies that have positioned companies for explosive traffic gains and user acquisition.

Tells reviewers who will benefit most from this submission

INTRODUCTION

We begin with a brief introduction of SEO and its place in relation to search engines. After establishing what is SEO, we discuss why it is important, and teach listeners how to drive actionable SEO results using both well-known and more updated industry SEO practices.

Any panel submission must have a specific core point of contention, and a clear indication of who will be taking which sides of that issue.

PLAN OF ACTION

Short “Introduce yourself” (all):

Our panelists have a diverse set of backgrounds and work in different areas of SEO including full-stack, large scale and mobile engineering to strategization and management. Their experiences span diverse companies in varying stages of growth.

Present Background - What is SEO, why is it important, what are the basics of SEO practice?

Reviewers can clearly visualize how this session will go

(moderator)

Traditionally, SEO is a methodology of strategies, techniques, and tactics used to increase traffic to websites by boosting search results page rankings. We introduce search engines and how they are the key players in SEO and briefly explain concepts of search, indexing, and crawling. We then discuss the main pillars of effective SEO: techniques, content, performance, authority, and UX.

What are some past examples of what good and bad SEO looks like? (all)

[Panelist] talks about migrating major landing pages to React framework, a major overhaul and effort that significantly improved loading time.

[Panelist] explains how to leverage href interlinking to boost site authority and shares a learning from being penalized by Google for a network of doorway pages.

[Panelist] discusses improving traffic by including popular keywords in titles.

[Panelist] shares an example of how not all title optimizations are effective or necessary.

[Panelist] explains how they built multiple pipelines to differentiate SEO traffic out of a large pool of traffic.

SEO is constantly evolving, what are new trends in SEO site owners should be aware of?

SEO is constantly shifting, and search engines are always finding new ways to serve compelling and interesting results for searches.

[Panelist] will speak to the rise of personal branding SEO, and how and why they are optimizing individual profiles for personal searches. Another significant shift is that due to the rise of mobile use, Google now has a mobile-first index.

[Panelist] can speak to how they're using Google's AMP framework (Accelerated Mobile Pages) pages to rank in the mobile news carousel.

[Panelist] will discuss the new frontier of ASO - particularly ranking in the App Store vs. Google Play and how to rank in your category.

How do we actually test and find winning SEO strategies and at scale? (Sophia - SEO experiment framework,

Experimentation is a huge part of successful SEO when testing website effectiveness. Simple user behavior A/B testing does not suffice.

[Panelist] built a SEO experiment framework that allows it to accurately measure the impact of content on the traffic. Experiments segregate the pages and compares traffic of similar pages with different content.

[Panelist] SEO's KPI metric is new volume added (NVA). Using a multi touch attribution model, Square traces customer LTV back to their original landing page, measuring quality of merchants by new volume added/dollars processed vs. only focusing on number of signups.

[Panelist] segregates its pages in structured data format and conducts experiments to evaluate richness score of each page.

[All] Google Search Console^[1] is the main tool provided to monitor SEO. All the companies represented are using Google Analytics^[2] but each has an internal dashboard to analyze user level data. For manual keyword research, smaller sites should consider using Google's Keyword Planner or SEMRush for competitor keyword research.

[All] Airbnb, eBay and Pinterest discuss using content experimentations to make data driven decisions. All four companies talk about using free sitemap resources and how batch jobs are crucial for maintaining large scale website metatags and SEO-specific components.

What are the unique challenges from different companies and what's their strategies for these challenges?

[Panelist] discusses the challenge of optimizing

SEO in a product dominated by images.

[Panelist] talks about how to do SEO for large scale systems and marketplaces.

[Panelist] shares how they find the balance between long-term and short-term SEO goals.

Organizationally, how does your company approach SEO?

[Panelist] SEO team is housed in the marketing org - this coupled with brand-first UX creates challenges for scaling SEO growth.

[Panelist] discusses how making big bets in a velocity-driven SEO team has both its benefits and costs

[Panelist] focuses on developing web-services and robust infrastructure to implement SEO techniques from the engineering standpoint and working with dedicated teams for content marketing.

OUTCOMES/CONCLUSION

Audience members will leave this session understanding what what growth teams do at scale, what the impact of growth engineering is, and the challenges those team face. Concrete take-aways include:

- Specific examples of challenging growth engineering decisions made under real world limitations.
- Tools and strategies used in SEO
- Understanding of engineering infrastructure and experimental methodology used by growth teams.
- Skills needed to be a successful growth engineer.

We ultimately hope to inspire women to consider future positions in growth.

PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

We, the five contributors to this proposal, are committed to attending the Grace Hopper 2017 conference in Orlando, Florida from October 4th to October 6th 2017 and will serve on this panel if

accepted.

Content was previously limited to 3 pages but has been expanded to 4

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "Announcing Google Search Console - The New Webmaster Tools". *Official Google Webmaster Central Blog*. N.p., 2017. Web. 7 Mar. 2017.
2. "Google Analytics." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 01 Mar. 2017. Web. 06 Mar. 2017.
3. "Search Quality Evaluator Guidelines." *General Guidelines*. Google, 19 Nov. 2015. Web. 6 Mar. 2017.

BIO

Moderator Bio

Panelist 1 Bio

Panelist 2 Bio

Panelist 3 Bio

Panelist 4 Bio

Bios should not be generic but must pertain to the session. Let us know if the moderator has had any prior experience moderating a panel.