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The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

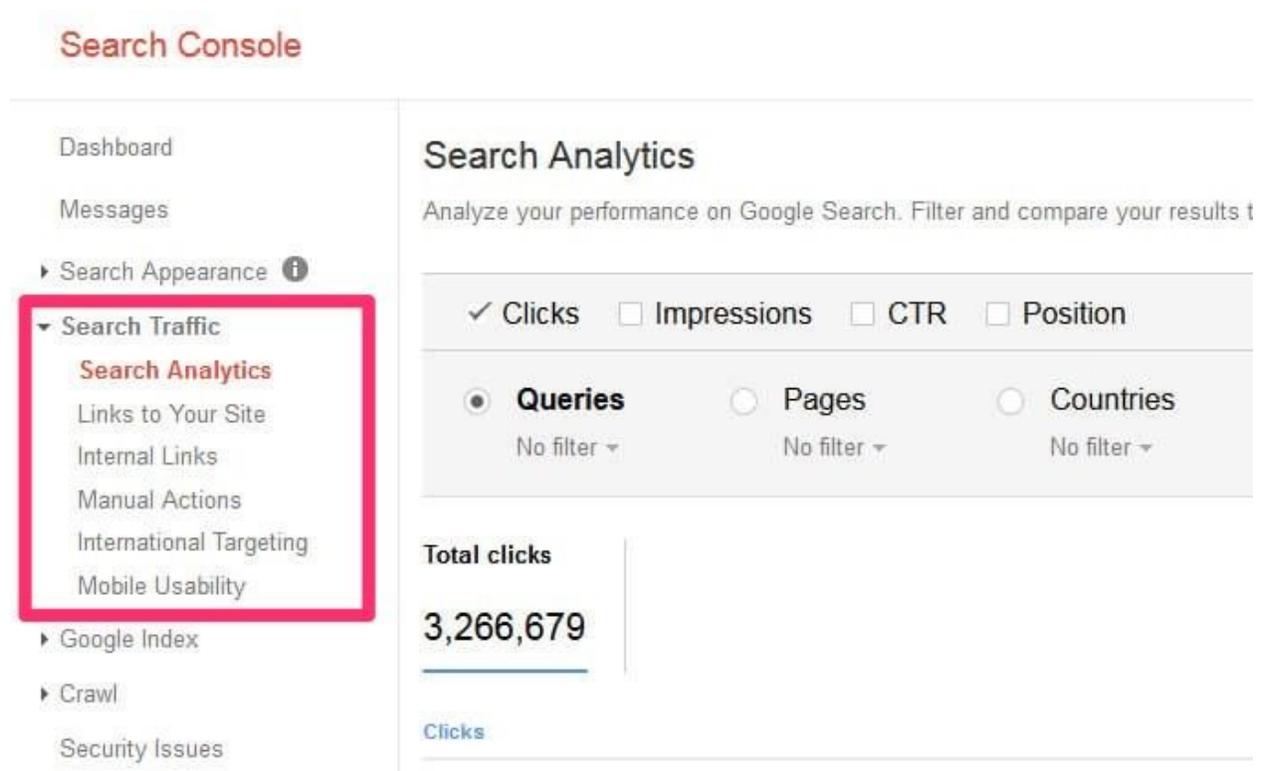
*This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:
[Membership Site SEO 102: A Guide for WordPress Optimization](#)*

The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

Optimizing your blog posts for SEO is similar to optimizing your landing pages, but there's a bit more to writing content that Google loves, so we'll be covering those tips here instead. Happy optimizing!

Step 1: Find Your Top Blog Keywords

Unless you're writing your very first blog post, you probably have some keyword data that can be leveraged for future blog posts. Google's (free) [Search Console](#) contains a section called the [Search Analytics Report](#), which helps you analyze clicks from Google Search.



The screenshot shows the Google Search Console interface. On the left, the 'Search Traffic' menu is expanded, and 'Search Analytics' is highlighted with a red border. The main content area is titled 'Search Analytics' and includes a sub-header 'Analyze your performance on Google Search. Filter and compare your results'. Below this, there are filter options: 'Clicks' (checked), 'Impressions', 'CTR', and 'Position'. Underneath, there are three radio button filters: 'Queries' (selected), 'Pages', and 'Countries', each with a 'No filter' dropdown. At the bottom, the 'Total clicks' are displayed as 3,266,679, with a 'Clicks' link below it.

This can be useful in determining which keywords searchers are already using to find your site, as well as keywords that have worked for previous blogs and internal/external links that impact SEO. Before you optimize your blogs, pull and review a Search Analytics Report.

Step 2: Choose Topics That Answer Searcher Queries

As we discussed in our [SEO 101 post](#), Google's algorithm is optimized for searcher intent. This means that your blog posts should answer fundamental questions your audience has.

To create a content topic plan the traditional way, you can use both keyword research and customer questions to inform your topic choices. For example, if you're a fitness membership business, you want to create blog topics around fitness-based questions.

The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

Consult your sales team or look at customer surveys to get an idea of what topics to write about. If you're struggling to come up with topics, you can use a tool like HubSpot's free [Topic Generator](#).



Of course, this means relying on a single blog post to rank. Alternative, you can harness the power of multiple blog posts using topic clusters to boost your SEO. For example, a fitness blog could write a blog about Gym Best Practices, followed by a series of blogs on using machines, gym etiquette, hiring a trainer, etc.

Which leads to the next step...

Step 3: Use Topic Clusters

A topic cluster is multiple pieces of content that are grouped by a shared topic and related subtopics. Think of Wikipedia – they cluster all their pages by topic and then interlink them. That's topic clustering.

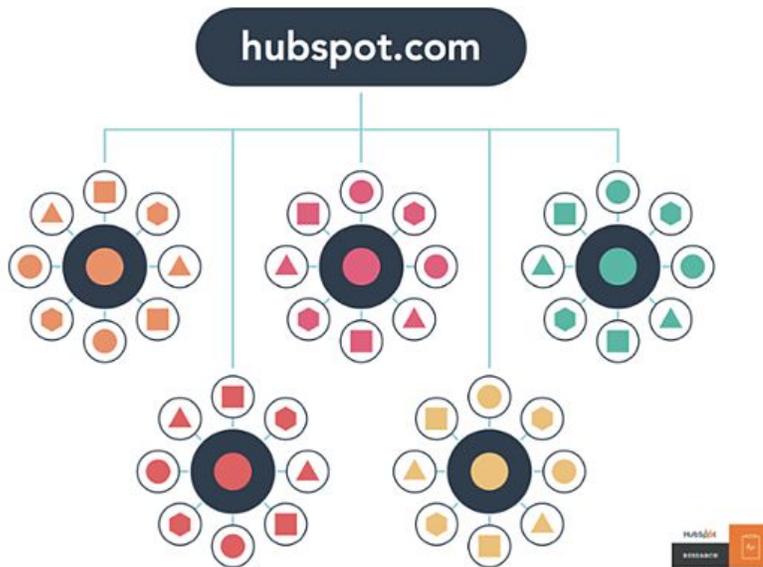
In a post from [HubSpot](#), they discuss their use of topic clusters for maximizing SEO. Here's what they said:

The way most blogs are currently structured (including our own blogs, until very recently), bloggers and SEOs have worked to create individual blog posts that rank for specific keywords. The result is disorganized, and hard for the user to find the exact information he or she needs. It also results in your own URLs competing against one another in search engine rankings when you produce multiple blog posts about similar topics.

Here's what our blog architecture used to look like using this old playbook:



[Using the topic clusters] model, this is what our blog infrastructure looks like now – with specific topics surrounded by blog posts related to the topic, connected to other URLs in the cluster via hyperlinks:



The way they approach the creation of blogs has shifted in such a way as to prioritize human interaction and human search queries rather than Google’s crawlers.

As we pointed out in SEO 102, the order of your Hx tags, meta descriptions, etc. and even keyword placement don’t matter as much as they used to. As Google updates their algorithm for searcher intent, so must we.

The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

This means:

- Writing about topics in succession (e.g. SEO 101, SEO 102, etc.)
- Cluster topics by using similar (NOT duplicate) URLs, titles, and keywords
- Use internal links to connect your topics to other blog posts
- Use internal links to connect to other related SEO landing pages

Step 4: Optimize for Crawlers

While Google's algorithm updates (and the general improvements to AI and machine learning) have resulted in more sophisticated crawlers, SEO best practices still apply to some extent.

Here are some important guidelines to consider when creating your blog posts:

- Use only one URL for each blog post (don't create a separate blog page or a redirect with the same content but a different title – yes, people do that).
- Follow [best practices](#) around URL length and inclusion in your XML Sitemaps files.
- Focus on 1-2 high-value keywords and 1-2 semantic keywords.
- Place high-value keywords in your URL, your title and your H1 tag.
- Place high-value and semantic keywords in the first 100-150 words of your post.
- DO NOT KEYWORD STUFF. [Keyword stuffing is bad.](#)

Step 5: Add Value With Strategic Keywords

In addition to optimizing for crawlers, you need to optimize for your human readers. According to [Moz](#), an optimized page doesn't just provide unique content, but **unique value**.

Unique content means that keywords are optimized for crawlers, but otherwise placed anywhere on the page without much consideration.

Unique value uses keywords strategically to provide insights that can only be discovered once you read the content.

'Value' will impact the way you perform keyword research as well as the way you structure your blog posts:

- Look for specific, long-tail keywords (e.g. "small business local SEO" versus "SEO")
- Use semantic keywords throughout your blog copy (e.g. "How do you optimize WordPress for SEO?")
- Use semantic keywords in your metadata

The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

- Think about [voice search](#) – as more people use Siri, Alexa, etc., optimizing for voice search will be important.
- Ensure your blog posts answers semantic keyword questions (a.k.a. Hire a good writer)
- Avoid clickbait titles and blog post structures (e.g. list posts with no real value)
- Consider shareability – Posts should be optimized for social sharing, including easy access to share buttons and URLs that are [Open Graph-friendly](#).

Step 5: Optimize Your Tags, URLs and Metadata

We covered this in the main post, but to reiterate the steps you should follow these best practices:

- Include keywords in your blog title
- Your blog title should be short (7-10 words), catchy and keyword optimized (Check out CoSchedule's [SEO-friendly blog title formulas](#))
- Your high-value keywords and semantic should be in the first 100-150 words of your post.
- Your Hx headings should follow hierarchy (H1, then H2, H3, etc.) – **Note:** your H1 heading doesn't have to be at the top of the page.
- Keywords should be used throughout the normal cadence of your body copy.
- Your meta description should include important semantic and high-value keywords.
- Your meta description for social (Open Graph) should be different than your Google-focused meta description.
- Optimize (compress) your images using a tool like [TinyPNG](#).
- Include alt text descriptions with relevant keywords in your images.
- Don't overuse topic tags – Topic tags can help organize your blog content, but if you have too many similar tags, you may get penalized by [search engines for having duplicate content](#).

Step 6: Create an Internal Linking Strategy.

External links do matter for SEO, but they matter a lot less than they used to. Internal links, on the other hand, are becoming a big ranking factor for Google.

Internal links connect your content in a relevant way and gives Google an idea of the structure of your website. Internal links can also establish a hierarchy on your site, allowing you to give the most important pages more value than others.

The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

For every blog post, you should consider:

- The relevance of the blog post (is this topic integral to your business?)
- The relationship between other similar blog posts (does this relate to anything else you've written? A blog post, SEO page, etc.)
- The value of the page for readers (is this important to them?)

Once you understand how this blog post fits into the scheme of things, you can start placing links organically throughout the blog post. For example, if you're writing about SEO for WordPress and you've already written a blog about optimizing WordPress, [include a link, like so.](#)

While there's no rule for how many internal links to include, you should aim for at least three relevant links to other blog posts or SEO pages in every blog.

Think about link placement the same way you think about keywords: they should be a natural part of the writing process and fit in naturally with the content. Don't link stuff.

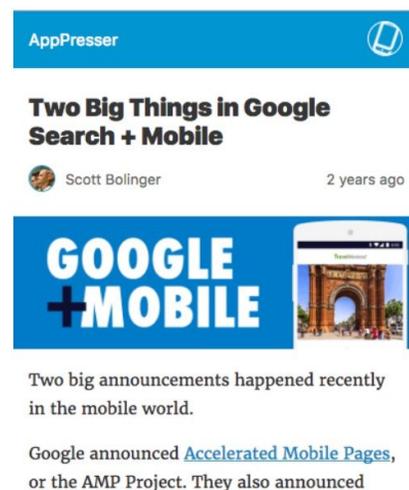
Step 7: Set up Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP)

Finally, once your posts are written, you want to ensure your blog pages are optimized for mobile. To do this, you can use [Accelerated Mobile Pages \(AMP\)](#).

Here's an example:



Normal Post



AMP Version

The SEO Guide for WordPress Blog Posts

When Google loads pages on mobile devices, it uses AMP to improve loading speeds. AMPs strips unnecessary code and images (etc.) from your pages so they're more readable.

AMP does require some setup, and only works for your WordPress posts, not pages. Here's a [complete guide for setting up AMP with your WordPress blog](#).



Need Help Building an SEO-Driven Membership Site?

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