



IN WEB

with
Nicky Jurd



GET LISTED ON GOOGLE

Sitting near the top of the page on a Google search is a nice place to be for a business, but how do you get there?

TODAY'S consumers research, debate and ultimately purchase much of their products and services online. Having a website easily found on Google is an important piece of the marketing puzzle.

Google uses automated processes to rank websites based on an algorithm. This month I will discuss elements that have the most impact on your search engine rankings.

Research Keywords

When it comes to researching keywords, there are a wide number of resources to tap into online. Undoubtedly, the best place to start is by talking to your customers.

Because potential customers online may have never heard of your business name, they generally look for generic industry and location terms. This means if you call yourself a retreat and your customers are looking for a bed and breakfast, you will not be found.

First, consider your location. Customers looking for products or services are most likely to include a location when searching. Despite us commonly referring to the region as North Queensland or Far North Queensland, these are not frequently used when searching.

Next, determine your industry specialisation. Ask yourself how a customer would describe your business or what it does. More often than not, these descriptions exactly match the words and phrases used by potential customers when searching for products and services online.

When you combine your location and industry terms, you have a phrase that should precisely describe what you do and where you do it: cairns hotel, palm cove car hire, atherton solicitor.

The next step is to broaden and tighten your scope, depending on what sort of market you wish to reach. If your marketing strategy is to reach new customers outside your location, then you might broaden your location, or remove it completely: tropical fruit wine, Australian gifts. To compete in a less competitive market, or to streamline your product or service range, you might tighten your industry: self-contained apartments, corporate gift hampers, hospitality employment agency.

While rankings for broader keywords produce greater visibility, they will result in less qualified visitors and leads.

Write Keywords into Text

Once you know which keywords you want to rank for, the only way Google can share in this knowledge is if you include these keywords in the text on your website.

Google's algorithm for determining relevance among millions of web pages is more complex than the number of times you have included a keyword on your page. However, the premise is there - including your primary keywords more frequently than other words will demonstrate the subject of the page.

Let's take this text:

George Hudson is a local who has been fixing cars since he was a teenager and his workshop is one of the most popular in the area. You must make a booking.

Here's an example of text optimised for search engine rankings:

George Hudson is an experienced Cairns mechanic, having dedicated his life to automotive efficiency. His mechanical workshop is one of the most popular in the North Queensland, and bookings are essential.

Win the popularity contest

How high you are ranked is partly determined by your popularity, as judged by the quality and number of websites that link to you.

When another website links to yours, it is seen by Google as an endorsement of the relevance of your website.

Incoming links are other websites linking to yours, and these are the ones that help your search engine ranking. Websites you link to are called outgoing links. Outgoing links increase the ranking of the websites you link to.

Domain Name

The words that make up your domain name will contribute to search engine rankings when a visitor searches for those exact words. So, a domain name such as realestate.com.au will have a natural advantage in search engine rankings for the phrase real estate.

How Long Does it Take?

The time it takes Google to recognise changes you make to your website and update your rankings depends on lots of factors.

For changes made to your text, Google will generally pick them up in under a week. New links you acquire take much longer and usually get picked up within a couple of months.

A new website will take considerable time before being listed in Google for competitive terms, usually between eight to 12 months. However, you will only be taken seriously when your website has a number of links from other websites.

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AT WORK



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