

## V-Squared Creative SEO Checklist

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### To Do List:

- Generate XML Sitemap and Add Your Site to Webmaster Tools**
- Ensure Googlebot is Crawling Your Site**
- Check the Indexing Status of Your Site**
- Run a Crawler on Your Site**
- Check Your Site for Duplicate Content**
- Ensure Your Local Business Listings Have Consistent NAP**  
(Name, Address, Phone Number)
- Ensure Your Site is Optimized for Mobile Devices**
- Check the Page Load Time of Your Site**
- Reclaim Links or Mentions to Your Site**
- Optimize Your Content by Adding Call to Action**
- Optimize Your SERP Listing**
- Ensure You are Using Relevant Keywords**
- Make Sure Your Site has Not Been Hit by Any Algorithmic Update or Penalty**

### Generate XML Sitemap and Add Your Site to Webmaster Tools

The sitemap tells search engines what pages are on your website. Create an XML sitemap for your website and submit it to the search engines to help them crawl your site better. You can use XML-Sitemaps.com to build your sitemap online. The only limitation to this tool is that a maximum of 500 pages will be indexed in sitemap for free.

After generating a sitemap, add your site to Bing Webmaster Tools and Google Webmaster Tools so the search engines can crawl your pages.

If you do not have a Google Webmaster Tools account, create a Google Account and sign up for Webmaster Tools. Add the site to Webmaster Tools, go to Optimization > Sitemaps and submit your website's sitemap.

### Ensure Googlebot is Crawling Your Site

If Googlebot cannot crawl your site properly, it will not be able to access your site's content and, as a result, your site will not rank in the search results. How you can ensure Googlebot is crawling your site: - Click the site you want Google to crawl on the

Webmaster Tools homepage - Click "Fetch as Google" in the Crawl section - Enter the path to the page in the text box - Select "Web" from the dropdown list - Click on "Fetch." Once you see the status as "successful" click on "Submit to index."

\*If you want to submit individual URL to Google's index, select the URL and click "Submit." You can submit up to 500 URLs per week.

\*If you want to submit an URL and all pages linked from it, click on "URL and all linked pages." You can submit up to 10 URLs per month this way.

You should also use Google's robots.txt Tester tool to find out whether your robots.txt file is correctly set for all the pages you want Googlebot to crawl (or not crawl).

## Check the Indexing Status of Your Site

Go to Google and type "site:yourdomain.com" (without the quote marks). The result will show you how many pages Google has in its index for your site. Whether Google is showing fewer pages than what you actually have or more than what you have in your site, both are a serious problem. While the first case tells us Google is not able to index all your pages, more indexed pages suggests duplicate content might be the problem.

## Run a Crawler on Your Site

You can use Screaming Frog to run a quick crawl test on your site. The tool gives a free trial of up to 500 URLs on the following data and more: - Missing and duplicate H1 and H2 tags - Missing and duplicate page titles and meta descriptions - Missing ALT tags in images - 404 errors - Duplicate pages

## Check Your Site for Duplicate Content

Use tools like Copyscape and Siteliner to run a quick SEO check for duplicate content, both onsite and offsite. You can also use Screaming Frog to check for the same.

## Ensure Your Local Business Listings Have Consistent NAP - (Name, Address, Phone Number)

According to HubSpot, 20 percent of Google searches are for local information. Ensure your business is present on popular local search data providers like Yelp, Foursquare, Bing and Yellow Pages. Make sure your NAP (Name, Address, Phone Number) is consistent across these data providers. Businesses can leverage local SEO by creating a separate page for each location.

Apart from this, make sure your local business is added to Google My Business. The Google My Business dashboard lets you manage all your business information right at one place.

Then, use the Moz Local tool for a quick check of the NAP of your business listing across major search engines. Just type your business name, pin code and click on the Check my Listing button.

## Ensure Your Site is Optimized for Mobile Devices

Google says, 50 percent of mobile users are most likely to visit after conducting a local search, while 34 percent of consumers on tablets or computers will go to a store. Make sure your website is optimized for mobile devices. This is becoming important as the number of mobile searches are increasing day by day.

If your site takes too much time to load on mobile, visitors will most probably click away, increasing your site's bounce rate. Matt Cutts says, "It is important to make sure your site is lean and loads fast, as that's important on mobile."

Also watch this Google Webmaster's videos to learn how to make some quick fixes in mobile site performance.

## Check the Page Load Time of Your Site

Quickly check how fast or slow your site loads, by using the PageSpeed tool on Google Developers. This will tell you what is causing your site to slow down so you can fix it immediately.

You simply have to enter the website URL and click on "Analyze." This will give you a full report of the speed of the site along with recommendations on how you can fix it. Other tools you can use for analyzing the speed of your website are Pingdom and GTmetrix

## Reclaim Links or Mentions to Your Site

Link reclamation is finding and fixing broken links on your website or other websites which point toward your site. Look for pages or websites that mention your brand name but do not link to you, find them and ask them to link back to you. Google Webmaster Tools (under the Crawl > Crawl Errors) lets you find the missing pages on your site. Click on the "Missing URLs" and "Linked from" tab to see how many backlinks are pointing to the URL. This will help you decide if these links are worth keeping. If yes, and you have another page that is up-to-date and is relevant to your 404 page, place a 301 redirect in place. After this click "Mark as fixed."

Use Google Alerts to keep a track of all the future mentions about your business or website. Whenever you see a mention, check whether or not they are linking to you. If not, send them an e-mail asking them to link back to you.

You can also use tools like Open Site Explorer, Majestic SEO and Ahrefs for this purpose. This will help you grow your domain's authority and boost your site's ranking potential. In case you have a WordPress site, use Search Engine Journal's LinkPatrol Tool to find, review and clean up outgoing links in pages.

## Optimize Your Content by Adding Call to Action

All your efforts are in vain if your visitors are not taking the action you want them to take after they land on your website. Add an effective call to action button on your pages to persuade the visitors to take the desired action. Just by making minor tweaks you can reduce your site's bounce rate and increase conversions. HubSpot recommends placing at least three CTAs on your homepage and at least one on each page of your site.

## Optimize Your SERP Listing

Even if your site is on the first page of the SERPs, what if people are not clicking on it? Make sure it stands out from the rest; only then will you get the traffic you want. Try to catch the user's attention with your SERP listing. Use SERP Simulator to see how your snippet looks, and make sure your meta titles and meta descriptions are optimized, as well.

## Ensure You are Using Relevant Keywords

Target the wrong keywords, and all your efforts are in vain. Find the right keywords that searchers are using to find you. If you are trying to rank for competitive terms, focus more on the local search area because you are more likely to rank for local search.

Make sure you use these keywords in your headers and title tags without overusing them.

Use Google AdWords Keyword Planner to find keyword ideas and how they perform, and other keyword research tools.

## Make Sure Your Site has Not Been Hit by Any Algorithmic Update or Penalty

Go to Google Analytics and see whether there has been a recent drop in your organic traffic. A fall in traffic might mean you have been hit by a Google penalty. Or you can use SEMrush to do a quick check of your website's organic traffic and keywords rankings for the last 30 days, year, two years, or all time. You can quickly see how much organic traffic your site is driving. If you find a sharp drop, it might be due to a Google update.

There are two kinds of Google penalties — manual and algorithmic. Manual penalty occurs when Google finds out your site is violating its quality guidelines and issues a warning or penalty.

Use the Google Webmaster Tools to check the site for any manual actions that Google has taken against you. Click on Search Traffic > Manual Actions. Review any manual action and try resolving it first before filling for reconsideration.

Algorithmic penalties are those that get slapped by Google when it updates its algorithm (e.g. Panda and Penguin updates). For this purpose it is recommended to stay updated on Google's algorithm changes. You can refer to Moz's algorithm change log.

While you can manage some of these on your own, you might need professional help for others. Completing all of the above will help you successfully find and fix most of the issues that can affect your website's search performance.

## Pulling it All Together

SEO isn't just SEO anymore, it's transparent authoritative communication with the outside world. These steps outlined above cover "On-Page SEO" and are good for a quick fix of common issues on your site.

For a more comprehensive list of SEO strategies that we offer or to speak with us about implementing the above steps for your business please give us a call toll-free at 855-632-6673, ext. 0.