

SEO Is a Journey, Not a Destination

Over the years, I've worked with many clients of all sizes and shapes. Many have been businesses that need help with their internet presence and ongoing internet strategy.

When the discussion turns to SEO, one of the most common misperceptions many clients have is that SEO is a destination; that you can do a few things and you'll reach the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.



This is embodied in questions that might be familiar to you:

"How long will it take to optimize my site?"

"How much would you charge to get me a top 10 ranking on Google?"

"Can you help me revise my copy with keywords for SEO?"

Inevitably, I have to break the bad news to the client: SEO isn't that simple.

Sure there are SEO-related tasks that, for smaller clients, are usually one-off projects, from creating a good information architecture to developing optimal link structures to making sure that page markup is search engine friendly. But this is the easy stuff and it's just the beginning.

Unfortunately, I've come face to face the reality that there are a lot of people out there who don't know this. And frankly, that's often because the people they hire to help them with SEO aren't telling them.



I've worked on a number of consulting projects so far this year in which the client has retained the services of an 'SEO person'. Even though I don't provide SEO services to clients these days, I like talking SEO because I have been doing it for years with my own websites.

Here are just a few of the things that some of my recent clients have been led to believe:

"Copy should be written specifically for SEO."

"Including a list of keywords in page footer text is very important."

"Building a network of sites that all link to each other can help boost your SERPs."

"Adding a blog to your site will boost your ranking."

"Splogging is a great way to create up lots of pages for Google to index."

Most of this is hogwash. Copy should be written for humans. Adding a list of keywords in the footer of each page is not going to work SEO wonders. Setting up a network of sites solely for SEO purposes is a waste of time and money. While Google loves blogs, it's about the content, not the mere presence of a blog. And splogging is far more likely to get you removed from Google's index than it is to get you worthwhile SERPs.



Invariably, few of the clients I've dealt with lately who have retained the services of SEO consultants had been told that SEO was an ongoing process and that, outside of the structural components of SEO a good content management system and webmaster can easily take care of, there really is no 'destination'.

Instead, it's the journey – producing valuable, authoritative information and getting other sites with authority to link to it – that makes all the difference when it comes to SEO. Unfortunately, if what I've seen lately is any indication, there are still a lot of hit-and-run, self-proclaimed SEO consultants out there selling a one-way trip to a place called SEO disappointment.

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