



WEBSITE MAINTENANCE WITH ORGANIC SEO AND CONTENT MARKETING

Guide for interns at Company X

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Bachelor's thesis
December 2015
Degree Programme in
International Business

ABSTRACT

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The Process of Implementing Basic SEO and Writing Content
Guide for interns at Company X

Bachelor's thesis 48 pages, appendices 2 pages
December 2015

This thesis was commissioned by Company X which is a company selling lighting products online. This thesis studied the theories and current trends of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and content marketing and combined the theories with observation. The researcher's experiences at Company X and interview with the content manager formed the base for the empirical part of this research.

The aim of this study was to find out ways for more effective and informative orientation of the new employees and interns at Company X. In order to determine the best practices, terms related to SEO and search engine visibility needed to be studied and explained. Also the significance and impact of SEO and content marketing had to be clarified.

This thesis was an action research which consisted of empirical part and theories of SEO and content marketing. Also continuous observation and an interview was utilized. In the field of online marketing literature and information becomes quickly outdated and thus, the empirical part and recent literature was in a central role.

The suggestions based on this research are in the last part of this study. The recommendations provide tips for better orientation, motivating employees and developing both SEO and content marketing. The findings and information presented in this thesis can be utilized for future orientation, training and improved online marketing actions at Company X

Key words: SEO, content marketing, keywords, search engine visibility

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Background	5
1.2	Introduction to the case company, Company X.....	6
1.3	Purpose.....	7
1.4	Research question and sub questions	7
1.5	Research methods	8
1.6	Limitations and structure	9
1.7	Validity and reliability	10
2	SEO	11
2.1	Search Engine – Anatomy In a Nutshell.....	11
2.2	Constantly Changing Algorithms	12
2.3	Organic Search Ranking Factors	13
2.4	What is SEO?.....	14
2.5	The purpose and benefits of SEO	15
2.6	What needs to be done for SEO?	17
3	CONTENT MARKETING	23
3.1	What is content marketing?	23
3.2	The purpose and benefits of content marketing.....	24
3.3	How to create content and implement content marketing?.....	26
4	EMPIRICAL PART	29
3.4	Current situation	29
3.4.1	Orientation.....	29
3.4.2	SEO and Content.....	30
3.4.3	Content Marketing	34
4	RECOMMENDATIONS – CALL TO ACTION	36
4.1	Orientation	36
4.2	SEO.....	36
4.3	Content Marketing	39
4.4	Motivating Each Other.....	41
5	SUMMARY	43
6	REFERENCES	44
7	APPENDICES	46
	Appendix 1.	46
	Appendix 2.	48

GLOSSARY

SEO	Search Engine Optimization is the process of getting traffic from the “organic” or “natural” search results on search engines.
Keyword	A specific type of meta tag that appears in the HTML code of the webpage and helps tell search engines what the topic of the page is.
Keyword research/ optimization	The search for keywords related to the web site, and the analysis of which ones yield the highest return on investment
Content	Text on the website for example about the products and the company. The text must incorporate several things such as links, keywords and right kind of font.
Google Algorithms	Google’s algorithm is the program used by Google for ranking websites on its result pages among organic results. Theoretically, the first page is more relevant for the query. Google’s algorithm is virtually changing every day and is scrutinized carefully by SEO professionals.
Meta title	This is a title you give your page within the meta tags so that when a person sees a link to your page from the search engine it has a title to go with it. Keywords should be used in this title because the search engine will use the words in the title to help it index your page.
Meta description	An attribute within a meta tag that helps describe your page to search engines.
Search engine	Search engines (SEs) are programs that search documents based on keywords and give a list of results for the specific keyword. The most common search engines are Google, Bing and Yahoo!.
URL	Unified Resource Locator
HTML	Hyper Text Mark-up Language

1 INTRODUCTION

The case company is Company X, a Dutch company which sells light bulbs, fixtures and gears online. Company X has websites in different languages and on the websites the company sells its products to different countries around the world. As the company is a web shop, the quality, customer friendliness and SEO ranking of the website is important.

Company X offers a lot of internships and most of the interns have a six-month contract, which means that Company X has to be able to give profound and good orientation for the incoming staff quite frequently. The new comers are responsible for the content of the website and implementation of basic SEO. Those factors have an impact on Google ranking, success and visibility of the website. Thus the interns get a lot of responsibility and they have to be able to perform well. If the interns or employees are not able perform well, the results can be harmful for the website and company's success.

After doing an internship at Company X the researcher noticed that the current manual for SEO and writing content is not informative enough and there is a need for an updated version of that manual. (See Appendix 1. Research process) Based on the researcher's experiences during the internship and research this thesis will be a guide for the new employees and interns at Company X.

The guide aims to help the new comers learn and understand the most crucial aspects in their work and the importance of carefully implemented SEO and content. Another target of this thesis is to help Company X give even better and more efficient orientation than before. To sum up, this is a development project for the case company.

1.1 Background

The world of marketing has changed significantly during the two last decades; after the introduction of Internet and particularly after launching Google. People all over the world are not only searching for information online but also doing numerous other things, such as, buying goods and services, advertising their companies and creating networks. On top of all this, consumers are becoming more and more sophisticated

about their use of online tools, from grandmothers joining Facebook to president Obama joining Instagram. For most of the consumers one social media channel is not enough anymore and they are also transitioning from one network to the next. (Odden. 2012) Thus, companies has to be present on the relevant social media channels.

Online business may seem like a safe and sound solution for companies but actually it is one of the most competitive business fields. Due to the high competition and search algorithms online business won't benefit anyone without continuous up keeping of content, SEO and marketing. In the limitless world of Internet, the right people won't end up on your website by chance, instead easy findability requires a lot of work in terms of SEO and online marketing.

As mentioned already, Company X has to be able to give efficient training for the new employees quite frequently. After a few days orientation the newcomers start the actual work. The main task is to take care of the content - product descriptions and description about the company - on the website and assist in online marketing tasks. Hence, understanding of organic SEO and guidelines for writing content is necessary. This thesis combines the researcher's experiences and lessons learnt during the internship with literature based research.

1.2 Introduction to the case company, Company X

Company X - the commissioner of this thesis - sells light bulbs, fixtures and gears online. The office of the company, as well as the warehouse, is located in Eindhoven. The central location in The Netherlands is necessary for the company enabling the fast and efficient delivery to the closest countries and all over the world.

The customers of Company X consist of offices, factories, retail businesses, schools and homeowner associates, as well as private consumers. Customers are not limited to the European market and Company X also receives orders from across America, Africa, Oceania & Asia. Company X has different websites in different languages, such as, in Finnish, Swedish, Dutch, German, Italian and Spanish.

The company consists of around 30 employees and most of them are under 30-year-olds. Company X hires a lot of interns and offers many positions for only six months. Thus, the company has to be able to provide the needed knowledge and skills for the new employees quickly and efficiently. As the company is selling products online, the staff has to understand the basic SEO and the importance of the carefully done content of the website.

1.3 Purpose

The aim is to provide enough relevant information and guidelines for the new interns and employees for writing good content and implementing organic SEO. This thesis aims to communicate the basic knowledge and understanding needed for keyword research and optimization, using links, creating meta information and finally writing good content and blog articles on the website. In addition to this, the thesis will provide information about the effects of content and how Google Algorithms work.

Furthermore, the objective is to motivate the new employees to concentrate on their work and take good care of the website. As a result the company would save time in checking the content and correcting the mistakes and make the orientation faster. Ideally well done content will lead to better visibility and success possibilities of the website. To sum up, the aim is not only to provide important information but also to motivate employees and interns to focus on their tasks throughout their career at Company X.

1.4 Research question and sub questions

There is one main research question for this thesis but as the question is wide there are also sub-questions. The main research question is how to create good content and implement organic SEO?

The sub-questions are: How to start creating content on the website? How to do keyword research? Why are keywords important? Why is meta title and meta description important? What's good for SEO and what's not? What are Google algorithms and how

they work? What is content marketing? Why Company X should invest in content marketing?

1.5 Research methods

SEO and online marketing practices undergo changes every year and hence utilizing up-to-date sources is crucial. In this research a great variety of literature and online articles about content marketing and SEO will be utilized. Literature forms the theoretical framework of this research and supports the empirical part. Researcher's experiences and observation at the case company form the empirical background. According to Alasuutari observation is a tip-off which leads to the conclusions presented as a result of the research. (Alasuutari, 2011)

In this case qualitative research and methods are more beneficial over the quantitative ones. Reason for that is the company's target to continuously create high-quality content and implement the SEO tasks carefully. Moreover, Company X is following and utilizing Google Analytics which provides numbers regarding the traffic on the website. At the moment Google Analytics provides the required numbers for SEO and online marketing practices and development.

Questionnaires were purposefully omitted as they would not benefit this research significantly. However, during the researcher's internship there were numerous discussions regarding the research topic and those discussions have been reinforcing observation and empirical part. Furthermore, an individual interview was arranged with the person managing the content team. An individual interview is an effective way to find out facts that you don't see with a bare eye, states Alasuutari. In an individual interview the interviewee feels like being in a therapy and tells about things he/she normally doesn't talk about. (Alasuutari, 2011)

This thesis is an action research since it aims to improve the case company's SEO and online marketing practices, point out central issues and provide a solution to them. The purpose of action research is to get greater clarity and understanding of how things are happening, rather than merely what is happening. In summary this research follows three fundamental steps that Stringer explained in his book: look, think and act. Mean-

ing that first the research problem needs to be defined and described – open your eyes for the problem, secondly understanding of the content is analyzed and finally comes action – formulating solutions to the problem. (Stringer & Ernest, 2007)

1.6 Limitations and structure

The topic was agreed together with the operational manager of Company X. As a result of the discussion, focusing on the guidelines for content writing and implementing the basic SEO proved to be the most relevant and useful for the company. The thesis will be a profound and clear step-by-step guide for implementing the required SEO and finally writing good content on the website. These factors are important for Google ranking and search engine visibility and thus also for reaching customers and spreading brand awareness.

Focusing mainly on Google Algorithms and Google ranking was also considered but since Google changes the important factors for the ranking quite frequently, focusing on the ranking and algorithms is not that helpful for Company X. Some basics about Google Algorithms and ranking will however be covered in this thesis. Furthermore, there are separate employees who are taking care of the SEM (Search Engine Marketing) and following the Google rankings. Those employees already have the required know-how or they get training at Company X if needed.

This thesis is divided into five parts based on different subjects. Chapter one is an introduction to the thesis; it introduces the case company, purpose and research methods of this thesis. Chapter two and three form the theoretical framework as they present the theories of SEO and Content marketing. Chapter four is the empirical part of this research and based on the researcher's experiences at the case company. Based on the theoretical framework and empirical part chapter five gives recommendations for improved future actions at the case company.

1.7 Validity and reliability

This thesis is based on both primary and secondary data. Relevant and recent literature forms the secondary data and with the empirical part the interview is the base for primary data. Important in both of the data collection methods is to ensure the validity and reliability as it is common in qualitative research.

According to Joppe reliability refers to the extent to which results are consistent and can be reproduced under a similar methodology. In this thesis reliability means that the findings and recommendations based on the research could be proofed again with a similar qualitative research. At the same the conclusions and arguments have to be clear and congruent. If arguments and conclusions are in conflict, that decreases the reliability of the research. (Joppe, 2000)

In this research the literature and other sources of information is carefully chosen, since critical selection is needed for a reliable research. The literature utilized in this thesis is written by experienced online marketing and business experts or organizations. The arguments and recommendations in this thesis are congruent and can be supported by similar researches.

Validity, on the other hand, determines how well the research measures what it is supposed to measure and how truthful the research results are. The validity of this research can be evaluated in terms of the truthfulness of the used literature and answers to the research questions. (Joppe, 2000) From the validity point of view it is important to profoundly explain how to implement organic SEO and utilize content marketing for website maintenance and better SE visibility.

The theory and findings of this research are valid since they can actually be utilized and implemented in the case company. Executing the recommendations is rational and both advantages and disadvantages are taken into consideration. Mentioning the possible risks makes the research more valid than a research which only includes advantages and possibilities. Using recent and up-to-date literature in this thesis is also important from the validity point of view.

2 SEO

Before going more in-depth to the definition and purpose of SEO, search engine, algorithms and organic search ranking factors will be defined. Is it really necessary for a content marketer to have an understanding of the above mentioned elements? Yes, it actually is; Understanding what search engines are and how they function will have you up to speed and ready to begin implementing the right SEO strategies to build the web site traffic you need.

2.1 Search Engine – Anatomy In a Nutshell

On the back end, a search engine - such as Google - is a piece of software which uses applications for gathering information about web pages. According to an experienced author of business and technology books and articles, typical information that a search engine collects includes keywords, the URL of the page, links out and into the page and phrases that are indicators for the topic of the web page. Finally all of that information is indexed and stored in a database. (Ledford, 2008: 5)

On the front end, a search engine is a software that has a user interface. Users enter a search word or phrase on the user interface when trying to find specific information. When the user clicks a search button, an algorithm checks the information stored in the back-end database and collects links to web pages which are matching the user's search word or phrase. The page the user will see after clicking the search button is called the query interface (see Figure 1 below). (Ibid) On the query interface the user sees meta title, meta description and URL of each web page. The term 'query interface' is probably unknown for most of the people even though it's the page they see every time they search something on a search engine.

The importance of search engines is not necessarily that obvious but Brin and Page summarize in a tangible way: Finding adequate information on the Internet would be impossible without search engines as they are searching the Internet, indexing their findings, and letting users search for words and phrases which are found in the database. (Brin & Page, 1998)

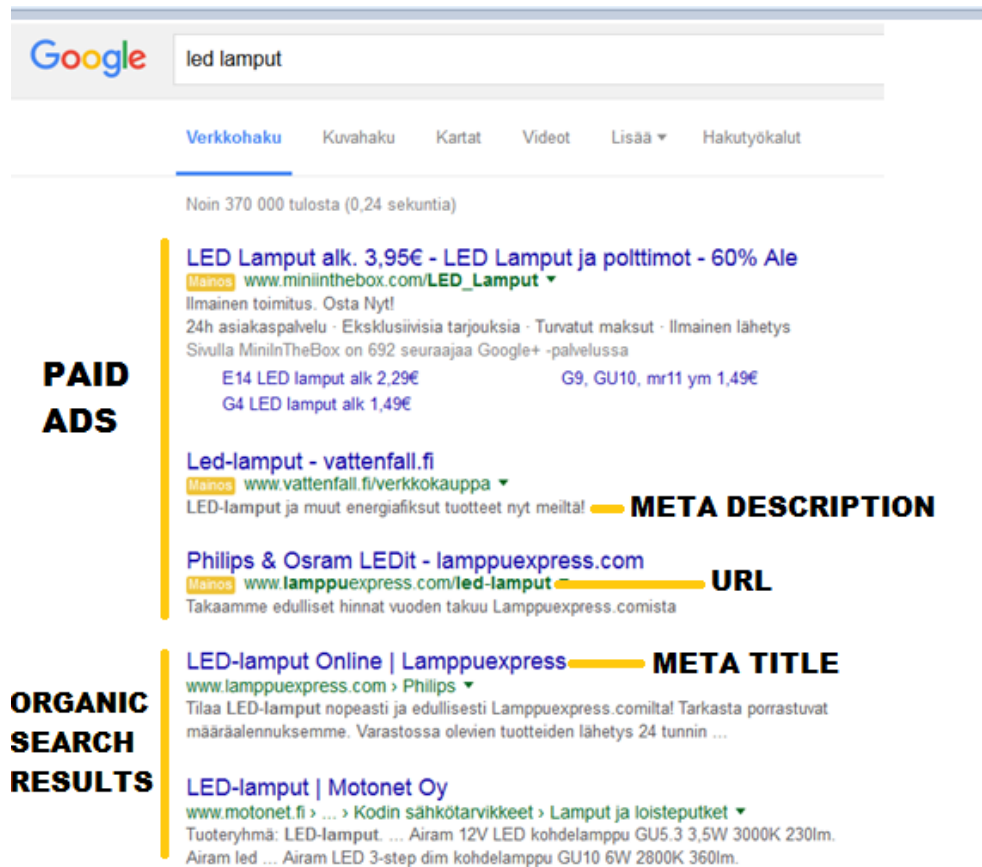


Figure 1. Query interface (Screenshot taken from Google.fi search results)

2.2 Constantly Changing Algorithms

The way search engine works is based on the search algorithm which determines the way data is discovered by the user. When a user searches for a word, search algorithm goes through the database and gives the best search results which contain the search word either in the body of the page or in the URL. (Ledford, 2008: 8)

In addition to the search word, search algorithm takes into account hundreds of other factors and based on those factors determines the order of the web pages on the query interface. Examples of other factors algorithm is examining are the location and density of keywords, as well as, the amount of relevant links and content. Thus, due to the algorithms it's important to pay attention to SEO, content marketing and organic search ranking factors. (Databexit, 2015)

The tricky thing with algorithm is that it's continuously changing and developing the criteria for good search engine visibility, which means that there is no simple recipe for good search engine visibility. Why on earth is search algorithm changing so often? According to Databexit website, updates for algorithm is a way to avoid manipulation of the search engine and search results. If algorithm gives better search engine visibility for web pages that have a lot of links, companies begin to add huge amounts of links even if they aren't relevant. That is manipulation and it also has a negative impact on the user experience on the web page since many links are irrelevant. (Ibid)

2.3 Organic Search Ranking Factors

Organic search refers to the natural search engine results which appear for any search. Natural search engine results are excluding paid search or sponsored search engine results. (Wedowebcontent, 2014) Organic search ranking factors are the aspects which will improve web site's search engine visibility and ranking through organic search. Organic search ranking factors have a key role in this thesis as the focus is on helping the customer company maintain its organic search ranking and search engine visibility.

Later on in this thesis numerous organic search ranking factors - such as, frequency of keywords, amount of click-throughs and relevant content - will be handled since they form the base for SEO. It's also good to keep in mind that different search engines have different kind of ranking criteria and the importance of each element will vary. In this case the focus is on the most important, most used and biggest search engine, Google. (See Figure 2 below) (Ledford, 2008: 10)

Rank	Worldwide	Market Share ▲	%Market Share
1	Google	88.52	88.52
2	Bing	4.38	4.38
3	Yahoo	3.51	3.51
4	Baidu	0.67	0.67
5	Ask Jeeves	0.63	0.63
6	Yandex	0.41	0.41
7	Yandex Ru	0.37	0.37
8	360 Search	0.26	0.26
9	Naver	0.2	0.20
10	AOL	0.19	0.19
11	Mail.ru	0.1	0.10
12	Soguo Search	0.09	0.09

Figure 2. Worldwide search engine market share. Google clearly the biggest one.
(Statsmonkey, 2014)

2.4 What is SEO?

Optimization is the act of making something as good as possible. In this context the aim is to optimize the web page for achieving better search engine visibility, more traffic on the website and high rankings while also maintaining the user friendliness of the web page. Author Ledford points out that the concept of SEO is not founded on any single element. Instead, it is based on an enormous number of elements and strategies and now it's time to start an adventure in the world of SEO. (Ledford, 2008: 14)

Best SEO practices are following Google ranking factors and aiming to build the website according to those factors. But as mentioned already, it's not as simple as it sounds due to the frequent changes in the ranking factors. (Amerland, 2011) In addition to the internal factors, also external elements of the site have an effect on the way the website is ranked in a search engine. (Ledford, 2008: 18)

Charlesworth, a senior lecturer in marketing and e-marketing at a UK university tells that the internal SE ranking factors are also known as on-site factors. SEOs are working on these factors of which the most important is website content (includes for example, videos, images, text and PDFs) in consideration of keywords used in search query. (Charlesworth, 2009: 191) What is the relation between website content and relevant

keywords all about? That will be explain in section about how to implement organic SEO.

According to Charlesworth, external SE ranking factors are also called off-site factors. These factors rely on the information from external websites linking to your website being considered as a return for any search. Off-site elements consist of two factors: website's history and links which go into your site from other sites. (Charlesworth, 2009: 191, 198) More about the ways of influencing the external factors will be discussed in the upcoming chapters.

In this thesis only the organic search engine (SE) ranking factors will be discussed as this is a guide for employees responsible for only organic SEO. However, it's good to keep in mind that organic SEO alone is not as effective as the combination of organic SEO and pay-per-click or keyword advertising program. (Ledford, 2008: 24)

2.5 The purpose and benefits of SEO

Getting better SE visibility, higher SE rankings and bringing in more traffic are the main targets of implementing SEO. Author Odden is the CEO of digital marketing agency TopRank Online Marketing and according to him ignoring SEO has actually been described as 'hiding' your content because keyword and optimization consideration is the way to get more search engine visibility for your web page. So why not make it more effective and easier for the people who are actively trying to find information about your brand online? (Odden, 2012: 57)

For an online store traffic on the website is necessary as it's the only way to get prospects and customers to make purchases. In other words, for an online store the traffic on the website a prerequisite for a successful business. Online stores don't only rely on organic SEO but they also utilize paid adds for gaining better search engine visibility and chances for making revenue. However, companies can easily waste huge amounts of money on paid adds and thus, carefully implemented organic – free of charge – SEO is extremely important for them.

Better search engine visibility and increased traffic on your website gives better opportunities for increasing your revenues. The more traffic you get without paid ads, the better from the profitability point of view. To be able to maximize the traffic organic SEO is not enough, also a high search engine ranking is needed. Ledford points out a fact which should motivate every content marketer to do their best: “The fact is, it’s the sites that fall on the first page of results that get the most traffic, and traffic is translated into revenue, which is the ultimate goal of search engine optimization.” (Ledford, 2008: 18)

SEOs spend most of their time and effort trying to affect the ranking of the website as ranking determines how often people see the website. Thus ranking affects the traffic, revenues and advertising budget the website gets. (Ledford, 2008: 9) The two figures (Figure 3 and 4) below show the importance of high rankings; Figure 3 tells that websites appearing on the first result page on Google get over 90% of the traffic meaning that they get clearly the biggest part of the traffic. Websites on the second result page get less than 5% of the traffic and websites on other result pages get barely nothing.

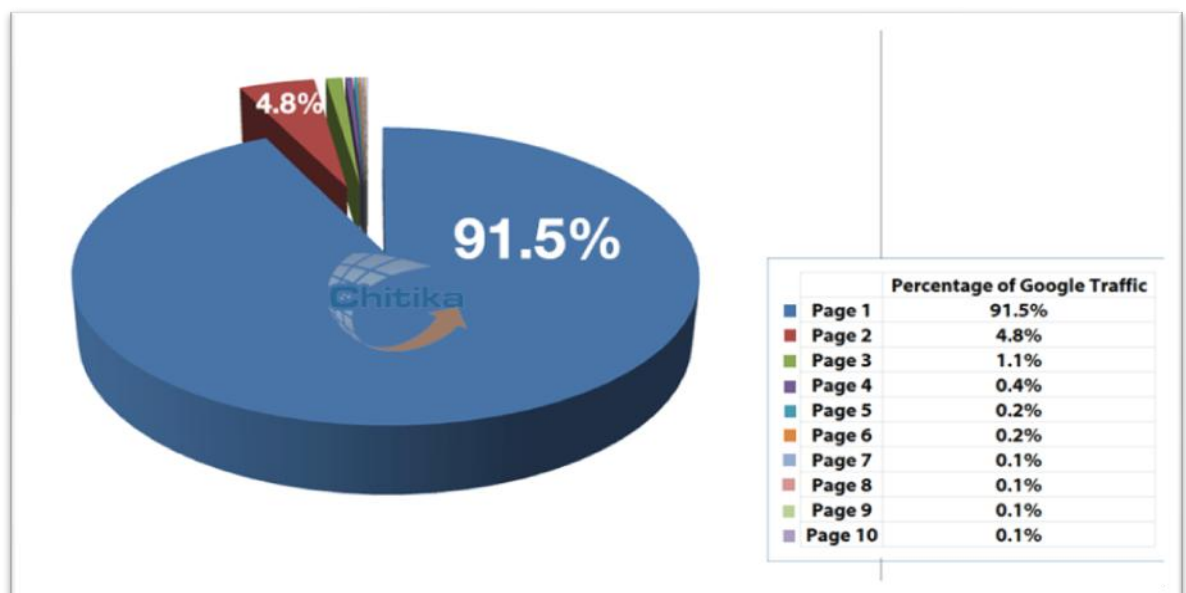


Figure 3. Percentages of Google traffic per result page. (Chitika, 2013)

Figure 4 below shows the traffic websites on the first search result page get. The website ranked first gets one third of the traffic and the second only 18%. In other words traffic on websites decreases significantly when their ranking gets lower.

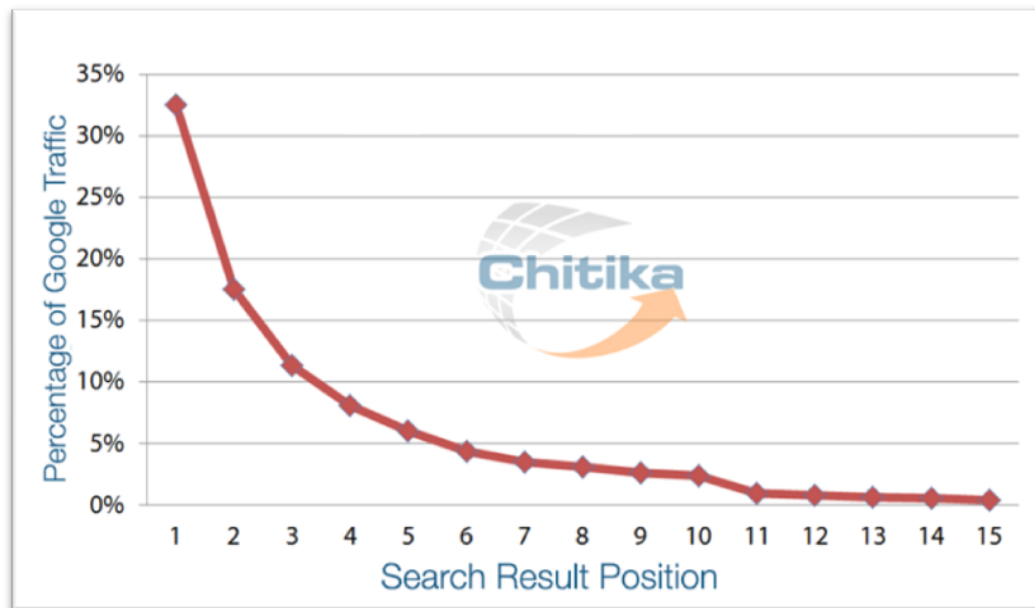


Figure 4. Percentages of traffic on Google per each position on the first search result page. (Chitika, 2013)

Making the user experience as pleasant and satisfying as possible will also improve the ranking of the page. The more people are clicking your site and the more often they come back, the higher the ranking of your site will be. Also Ledford reminds that also the time users spend on the site has an effect on the ranking. Thus, it is beneficial to maximize the usability of your site; make sure the chosen keywords, links, images and descriptions on the page are as accurate as possible and useful from the customer's point of view. In practise the whole website needs to be optimize to be able to get higher rankings, more traffic and make profit. (Ledford, 2008: 27-28)

2.6 What needs to be done for SEO?

Now it's time to discuss the elements Google places more value on SE rankings. A web page should include certain elements, such as, relevant keywords, page titles, imagines with alt tags and headings after the implementation of organic SEO. Barber, the writer of Building strong partners –blog is an experienced marketing manager and partnering practices developer. According to him the selection of the right elements alone is not enough, those elements also have to be placed in a certain way. (Buildingstrongerpartners, 2010)

The pyramid below (Figure 5.) shows the most important search engine ranking factors. The process of implementing organic SEO starts from the bottom and goes all the way to the top. In this thesis the main focus on the two lower blocks as they belong to the current responsibilities of the target audience; the interns at Company X. In this chapter the focus is on the two blocks at the bottom. Next chapter will introduce the “social” part - content marketing – which is also important for an online store.



Figure 5. What are the most significant search engine ranking factors to focus on? (SEO consulting company, Moz, 2008)

1) Keyword search and optimization

First of all, finding the most relevant and profitable keywords requires keyword research with the help of a tool, such as, Google AdWords. Many companies utilize keyword brainstorming and gather a list of the most important keywords. According to Charlesworth the purpose of keywords is to provide the searcher results which best satisfy the objective of the search. With the help of the right keywords prospects and other desired searchers find your website. (Charlesworth, 2009: 191) Keyword research has to be done before writing content and then place the keywords wisely as a part of the text.

Below (Figure 6) is an example of the way how keywords should be placed on the web page. That way is good for SEO from both the SE rankings and user's point of view. On Figure 6 Buildingstrongpartners demonstrates the ideal SEO situation: keyword is used in page title, as a part of the URL, meta description, H1 headline, file name, alt tag of the image, in internal anchor texts and in the body text. The optimal about of keywords is two times in 50 words. Sometimes the images don't appear on the web page and thus, it's important to use keyword on the alt tag of the image as it tells the user what the image is about. On the query interface keywords on the meta description, page title and URL help both user and SE to understand what the page is all about. (Buildingstrongerpartners, 2010)

2) Title Tag, Meta Title, Page Title

Meta title, also known as page is title tells the topic of a particular page for users and search engines. When your page appears on the search results, meta title appears in the first line of the result. Page titles also appear on external pages (Facebook) and on top of browsers and tabs. Google User Content –guide introduces the basics of SEO and the meaning of meta information. Page title helps the user recognize if the page is relevant to the search. Hence, it's important to create short but informative meta titles which include a keyword. Create unique meta titles for different pages and keep the titles short as Google will show only a part of too long titles. (Googleusercontent, 2010: 4-5)

3) Meta Description

Meta description gives Google and user a summary of what the web page is about. When your web page is seen on the search results, meta description appears as a snippet. Google recommends to create unique descriptions which are not only short (a few sentences) and informative but also interesting. Remember to include the name of the company and keyword on the meta description. The description should already give some value and promise the user (See Figure 6); basically a reason to click on your web site. (Ipid. 6)

4) URLs

Not only meta title and meta description, also URL should be logical and informative. URL can be seen on the search results in Google, below the meta title and description. A good URL contains words which are relevant for the content (See Figure 6) URLs

which are complicated and don't make sense are not helpful for the user and can also be considered as unreliable. (Ipid. 8)

5) Content, body text

The web page content is also known as the body text. It is the textual content of the website that visitors will read. Content should be relevant text about products, services or the company. Charlesworth highlights that even though content is important for search engine visibility, it should always be written for the users who may decide based on the content if the web page is what they are looking for. To be found on Google, content has to include keywords. It's beneficial to mention keyword at the beginning of the body text and twice in 50 words. If content is full of keywords, it is considered as keyword spamming which has a negative impact on SE rankings. (Charlesworth, 2009: 192)

Create fresh and unique content as duplicate content may lower the SE ranking of the website. Unique, valuable and up-to-date content is also important for the user who might base the purchase decision on the content. Content can also assist customer service as content may answer customer's questions and they don't have to contact customer service. (Googleusercontent, 2010: 14-16) Thus, it's good to anticipate differences in user's understanding of the topic; the user may have an extensive knowledge about the topic or is just a beginner. This way the content will attract a bigger group of prospects and customers bringing more traffic on your website.

Until now content has been described as relevant body text on a web page but also videos, images, PDFs and links are crucial organic SE ranking factors which should not be underestimated. Those elements are not appreciated only by SEs but also by users as pictures and videos often make the content more tangible and understandable. Links to other website provide more information about the topic and may help users make the purchase decision or use products and services. Google suggests to use anchor text which tells Google and user something about the page you're linking to and avoid just text "click here". Give informative names also for files and images. Sometimes image doesn't appear on the webpage and in this case an informative alt attribute tells the user what the image would be about (See Figure 6). Furthermore, relevant alt attribute helps searchers to find your page through image search. (Ipid. 14-16)

When creating content, meta titles and descriptions, it's important to make sure that the technical quality remains the same. The technical quality, HTML, has to be implemented according to the standards, which makes the website content and links easy-to-read for robots. In HTML it's possible to control things, such as, font type and size, titles and meta information. (Leino, 2012: 235)

The "Perfectly" Optimized Page

(for the example keyword phrase "chocolate donuts")

Page URL: <http://marysbakery.com/chocolate-donuts>

Page Title: Chocolate Donuts | Mary's Bakery

Meta Description: Mary's Bakery's chocolate donuts are possibly the most delicious, perfectly formed, flawlessly chocolately donuts ever made.

H1 Headline:
Chocolate Donuts from Mary's Bakery

Image Filename:
chocolate-donuts.jpg

**Photo of Donuts
(with Alt Attribute):**
Chocolate Donuts

Body Text: _____

_____chocolate donuts_____

_____donuts_____

_____chocolate donuts_____

_____donuts_____

_____chocolate_____

Figure 6. How a page should be optimized? (Buildingstrongerpartners, 2010)

All of the above-mentioned factors were part of internal SEO. On the SEO pyramid (Figure 5) link-building belongs to external SEO. External SEO can actually be divided into two parts: website's history and links which go into it from other sites. According to Charlesworth the history of the website refers to the age and traffic the site has gained. For example, an older site may rank higher than a younger one if the older site has had more traffic and it has been active on social media. The more links leading to the site, the more valuable it is assumed to be, and so the higher the ranking. However, using links from sites that are not connected to the topic – or are paid for – will be penalized in rankings. (Charlesworth, 2009: 198-200) The reason for that has been link

spamming referring to the mass usage of links that are not relevant. Thus, in link-building the relevance and quality of the links matters over the quantity.

3 CONTENT MARKETING

Carefully implemented and updated SEO is necessary for a successful online store and better search engine visibility. As mentioned already, website content is a big piece of the SEO puzzle but nowadays - in addition to the website - content should be created and shared on multiple social media channels as well.

“Marketing has moved from ‘helping the seller to sell’ to ‘helping the buyer to buy.’” (Charlesworth, 2009: 15) The argument above is true when it comes to content marketing. Prospects won’t become customers if the company is just trying to push its products or services with the help of content. Instead, content has to be interesting and valuable for the user. Even though content is initially created for SEs and SE visibility, it has to be created in a way that it attracts – pulls – prospects and customers.

3.1 What is content marketing?

Odden determines content marketing as a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable and relevant content such as text, images, files, videos. When talking about content marketing, the target audience is clearly defined and understood. With the help of content marketing companies aim to attract, acquire and engage the defined target group and in the end drive profitable customer action. (Odden, 2012: 39)

According to the trend consumers are becoming more and more numb to the overabundance of traditional advertising, Odden tells. Instead of following traditional advertisements on the streets and television consumers are interested in educating themselves about the products and services on the Internet before the purchase. Today’s consumers don’t want to read “buy this” and “buy that from us because our company is the best” but they want to know more about the company, products and services. According to Odden consumers want to become wiser and get more knowledge about the products and services to be able to make logical purchase decisions and share content. (Ibid. 99)

The change in the consumer behaviour has also changed way marketers are doing their job. Nowadays marketers are trying to align their knowledge and know-how of keyword and search demand with relevant content and in this way connect buyers with products

and services more efficiently. If marketer manages to do it, it results in better customer experience and in the best case the customer also shares that experience on the social media and become loyal for the brand. Odden states that as a result of that change in the consumer behaviour content has become the key to more effective online marketing. (Ipid)

3.2 The purpose and benefits of content marketing

In most of the cases the ultimate goal of content marketing is to boost sales. Content marketing investments are usually allocated to lead nurturing and prospect education as those aspects are often beneficial for sales. Moreover, SEO focused content marketing strategy aims to increase traffic on the website, improve media presence, attract employees and improve customer service online. (Odden, 2012: 39-40) In other words, optimized content marketing can benefit companies in numerous ways.

Content has proofed to be one of the most effective SEO tactics, which makes it worth the effort. (Ipid. 108) Carefully planned and implemented content can turn out to be beneficial at each stage of the customer life cycle. Figure 7 gives examples of content types which can be utilized at different stages of customer life cycle. Thus defining the target audience, finding out their consumer habits at each stage of the customer life cycle and choosing the content types and topics based that can lead to increased sales, customer satisfaction and brand awareness.

In order to stay competitive, companies need to attract and engage new customers all the time. Content marketing in the form of viral content, advertising and social media presence can help prospects find your company, products and services through social media or search. (Ipid) If prospects find the content useful, they will most likely become customers and even share the content they have found. Thus those prospects would create Word of Mouth and promote the company. Useful and catching content could be, for example, a blog article about the advantages of LED Bulbs and the article could be shared on Facebook and Twitter.

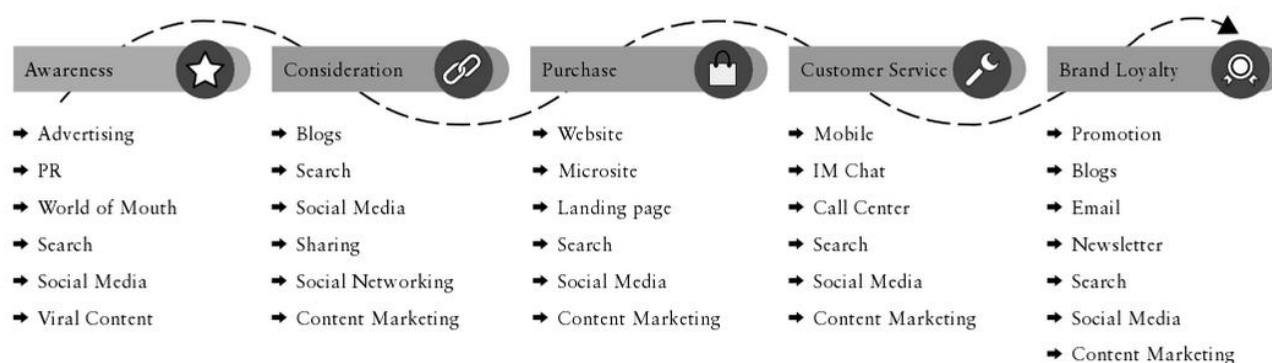


Figure 7. Customer and content life cycle. (Odden, 2012: 101)

The blog article about the advantages of LED Bulbs may make prospects consider a purchase. That article may attract people who just by chance see it on social media, as well as people who are looking for information about light bulbs, LED or online stores selling light bulbs. According to Odden, prospects consider purchase when content can educate them on a unique selling point. Hence it is important to create understandable content which tells about the benefits and advantages prospects gain if they choose your company and products. (Ipid)

If prospects find company's website, landing page and content on social media creditable, they may make a purchase online. This is an ideal situation from the company's point of view as the sales cycle is smooth and short. That saves both time and money and is usually very comfortable for the customer as well.

When content is easy to find, informative and understandable, it can replace traditional customer service (face-to-face, via phone, chat or email). Once again optimized content on the website or social media can be found through a search and save time and money in customer service. In case customers are happy with the company's products and services, they may become loyal for the company's brand. Loyal customers can be reached through social media, newsletters via email and with numerous other ways. Loyal customers may also create Word of Mouth and naturally purchase the company's products again and again.

As mentioned already, prospects and customers don't want to read and share sales talk. Instead they want to read and share helpful information and solutions to problems. They want to read and share content which makes them more intelligent. Content Marketing Institute describes that instead of traditional pitching, companies can attract prospects

and customers with the help of content marketing which is also known as the art of communicating with prospects and customers without selling. (Contentmarketinginstitute, 2015)

3.3 How to create content and implement content marketing?

Important in content marketing is not only timely and relevant content from the target audience point of view but also social media coverage and the possibility to share and follow content with multiple devices. Furthermore, in content marketing it's crucial to define the core of the product or service and tell about the brand since those may also be important for the target audience. (Rothman, 2014: 74)

In this chapter six steps for efficient content marketing strategy will be introduced: How to plan, create, optimize, promote and measure a content marketing plan that helps your brand become the most relevant choice for your target audience? How to use content marketing in spreading awareness, interest and consideration leading to a purchase?

1) Objectives

According to Odden content creation has proofed to be one of the most effective SEO tactics but at the same time also one of the biggest challenges for companies. The implementation of content marketing starts with planning and determining objectives. An essential marketing question is 'what are we trying to do?' (Odden, 2012: 41, 108) Usually companies are trying to increase leads, search traffic and get more people to buy company's products. After that comes the questions how, why and what content to optimize and socialize in a way that it is findable, readable, understandable, actionable and shareable.

In his book Rothman adds that determining the target audience and directing them to a wanted result also has a central role when setting objectives. Think about possible problems the target audience may have and how your company could solve those problems. Communicate a solution to the problem and benefits of the solution clearly in the content. The content should always be created and optimized for the audience and not only for SEs. (Rothman, 2014: 77)

2) Audience

Just like Rothman in his book, also Odden highlights the importance of customer-oriented content marketing. To be able to create relevant content and spread it through the right social media channels, the target audience has to be segmented. Based on the customer segment the needs and wants of the target audience, as well as, their consumer behaviour needs to be defined. After doing research about customer segment a recommended practise is to develop profiles which represent typical characteristics of the customer segments. What kind of characteristics would be relevant? For example, motivators to purchase, pain points and social engagement. (Odden, 2012: 55)

3) Content Plan

Understanding of both business goals and customer needs will be translated into a content plan. Content plan consists of relevant mix of various content types, topics and outcomes as they apply across customer buying cycle. (Googleusercontent, 2010) What kind of information and content types are useful and value-adding for the audience? Maybe a blog article about tips for choosing the right kind of a light bulb or a newsletter introducing the benefits of LED bulbs. The above mentioned examples can be helpful in different stages of customer life cycle: awareness, consideration, purchase, customer service and brand loyalty (Figure 7).

The mix of content types and topics should come out as valuable content which is findable, readable, understandable, actionable and shareable for the target audience. (Odden, 2012: 58) Whether the content is a blog article or a video, it has to be findable and actionable. It has to be shared on social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) which is used by the audience. If the audience finds the content useful and understandable, they will most likely share it or make a purchase. Hence, it's important to create content which is understandable for the prospects also.

4) Promotion

The content created requires promotion to both end users and influencers. Promotion makes finding relevant content easier for users and may even make the user experience better. Furthermore, promotion encourages users and influencers to share and recommend your content, products and services. (Odden, 2012: 58) For example link-building is a type of promotion and as learnt already, link-building is actually a crucial part of SEO.

5) Engagement

Growing your network and increasing engagement is one of the most significant aspects of content marketing. Extensive networks help companies find new opportunities, sponsors, business and collaboration partners. In the best case companies can achieve long-term engagements with networks. Engagement with prospects and customers often leads to sales, customer satisfaction and good reputation. (Ipid) For example, listening, participation and content sharing provides ideas for new content, enables advocacy and reinforces sharing. All the above-mentioned factors help reinforce engagement.

6) Measurement

After implementing the content marketing strategy it's useful to evaluate the strategy and results. Those results will guide in refining future content marketing efforts. According to Odden it's recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, for example, with customer service and HR people who may have noticed some changes as well. It may be useful to evaluate at least the following aspects: Is your content marketing useful for customers? Are interactions leading to intended behaviours such as inquiries, sharing, and sales? How have content marketing efforts affected the main business goals? (Ipid)

To sum up the required steps for creating and implementing content marketing, the content has to be well-planned, relevant and finally evaluated. To begin with, the objectives have to be defined. Objectives may vary between different target audiences, for example, in different social media or at different stages of customer life cycle. Based on the objectives and target audience, a content plan can be designed, content created and promoted. Finally, it is always wise to measure and analyze the outcomes of content marketing and make possible developments based on the results.

4 EMPIRICAL PART

In other words observation which refers to what goes on in the real world. Content might be good or even great already but it isn't shared that much. It could and should be shared more actively to increase brand awareness and the amount of prospects and finally/hopefully also the amount of loyal customers.

3.4 Current situation

3.4.1 Orientation

At the beginning of the year 2015 the researcher started to work for Company X. At the same time also a few other new comers joined the Company X team meaning that quite a few interns/employees needed orientation for SEO and writing content. The orientation process started with the introduction to the company, its products and services. Furthermore, quick lessons regarding Magento – the program used for doing changes on the websites – and the current SEO guidelines were given. Everyone also got a manual for writing content and implementing organic SEO. After a few days of orientation the new comers started practicing with writing real content according to the SEO guidelines and content manual.

In practice in January the staff was busy with orientating and assisting the new comers. Some of the new interns/employees learnt the required SEO practices and routines very quickly. However, the researcher for example, experienced the orientation too short and theoretical, which slowed down the learning process. As a result the researcher's way of working was ineffective and the quality of content was far from excellent. Poor quality of the content and mistakes added the workload of the staff as the researcher needed additional guidance. This again was harmful for other's effectiveness at work since they did not really have time for providing additional guidance but they just had to take that time.

This was pretty much what was going on in January: Some of the new comers learnt the required practices for implementing SEO and creating content very quickly and some were truly struggling with those. The targets set for the content team were mainly too

high at that point since only a few new comers were able to achieve them. Different kind of working methods were tested, such as having daily targets and meetings and having weekly meetings and goals. In the end the weekly meetings and targets turned out to be the most effective and motivating solution and in February the entire content team was working quite well.

Why was the beginning so hard? Why others learnt the required practices faster than others? People have different ways of studying and learning; some learn things very quickly and hearing things once is enough while others need to repeat the things a few times before learning and remembering them. Moreover, some people learn well just by listening and others, on the other hand, by doing. The orientation at Company X was excellent for those who have the ability to learn quickly and by listening. In contrast, if the person assimilates new information by doing and repeating it, the person is struggling with the orientation and learning process. The researcher belongs to the latter group. Chapter 5, which is about recommendations, gives improvement ideas for the orientation practices.

3.4.2 SEO and Content

Strengths Time content on the website, blog articles about relevant topics, well organized text, well implemented SEO, control over the quality of content.	Weaknesses Orientation for people who learn by doing and repeating, communicating changes in the guidelines, sharing content, social media presence.
Opportunities Better orientation, more effective communication, motivating content team, up-to-date SEO and content on the website, sharing content/content marketing.	Threats Increasing competition, changes in Google algorithms, poor quality of content and SEO, lower SE rankings, losing SE visibility.

Figure 8. SWOT about the current SEO and content on the website

Strengths

The products Company X is selling are technical and some of them also quite complex. Good examples of the complexity of the products are different kind of sockets of the light bulbs: in the picture two different sockets of gas discharge lamps may look exactly the same even though they were different due to the difference in the power (W) of the lamp. If the customer doesn't know enough about gas discharge lamps, he/she will most probably buy a wrong kind of a lamp which doesn't fit in the current fixture. When the customer gets the ordered lamp and realizes it is not what he/she needs, he/she will most probably return it, which is a costly and time-consuming process for Company X.

Also Jamie, the manager of content team at Company X highlights the importance of content for both Google and customers. (See Appendix 1.) She explains that it is not only important to give precise product information but also to tell about the terms and conditions. Providing clear and reliable information about the payment and delivery terms is clearly one strength on Company X. Moreover, Jamie points out the importance of content for convincing the customer and helping him/her to make a purchase before leaving the website.

The example above proves that timely, informative and understandable content on the website is extremely important for Company X. During the researcher's internship at the company, the quality of content improved significantly; More pictures of different kind of sockets, videos about installation and characteristics of the products were added. Moreover, simple steps for choosing the right kind of a light bulb were explained. The added videos and images are not beneficial from the customer's point of view but also from the SEO perspective. Currently the usage of images, videos, relevant blog articles and quality of content is very good.

While the researcher was working for Company X, also control over the created content and implemented SEO improved. Every time content was written on the website, someone was checking out the quality of the text and SEO. Based on the checkout, the person who created the content got feedback and did corrections accordingly. After that the content was checked again and either accepted or improved until it's perfect. Control over the content ensures that SEO is implemented according to the current guidelines and the quality of content is good.

Weaknesses

As mentioned already, based on the researcher's experience and observation the orientation is not as efficient as it could be. Thus, there is the chance that the new employees won't learn all of the practicalities and guidelines immediately and they end up making mistakes and creating poor-quality content. Mistakes lead to additional control, correcting and checking the implemented improvements, which is a time-consuming process and it could be avoided with the help of better orientation and communicating the guidelines.

Other weakness currently is the internal communication when some changes regarding SEO or content guidelines occur. Most often those changes has to be done due to the changes in Google algorithms and some content writers hear about those changes but the others don't. Thus, it is recommendable to have a meeting or send an email every time some changes should be implemented.

The third weakness is the social media presence which could be more active. At the moment Company X and its other websites have accounts on some social media channels but active posting and content marketing not active. While the competition between online stores and search engine visibility is increasing, the activity on multiple social media channels could be beneficial.

Opportunities

The opportunities of content and SEO are mainly opposites of the above-mentioned weaknesses. Firstly, the orientation process could be improved in a way that it takes into account differences in learning styles the new comers may have. Improved orientation is an opportunity as it would maximize the effectiveness of orientation and new interns would be able to work efficiently after the orientation.

Secondly, the internal communication regarding content team can be improved. On Monday mornings the content team always has a meeting with the supervisors and all the changes regarding SEO or content could be discussed there. If some changes come up in the middle of the week, additional meeting could be arranged and on informative email sent for the whole team. Improved internal communication also helps to keep the SEO and content up-to-date.

According to Jamie, one major opportunity for Company X is filling the gaps between different pages, products and categories. With gaps Jamie refers to differences in product information and the quality of content on different pages and categories. Adding images and product features are good ways to complement product information. Content, on the other hand, can be improved with more relevant, specialized and unique text and demonstrations.

And last but not least, also more active content marketing is an opportunity for Company X. With the help of content marketing Company X could spread brand awareness in different countries, attract customers and make them aware of possible discounts and trends. It is good to keep in mind that content marketing has its pros and cons and thus it will be handled profoundly in the chapter 4.5.

Threats

Both Internet and business is full of threats. The most significant threats for Company X include increasing competition, changes in Google algorithms, losing the high quality of content and SEO, lower SE rankings and losing SE visibility. To be able to keep up the high rankings and SE visibility, Company X has to do continues research and development regarding traffic, content and SEO on the website.

Jamie mentions the aim at Company X is to write content which is value-adding for customers and prospects. That is not as an easy task as it sounds and thus, one threat is slowly losing the relevance from the customer's point of view. Changes in trends and consumer behavior can also decrease the effectiveness of the current content.

3.4.3 Content Marketing

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Account and posts are free of charge, good way to attract private customers and companies, spreading brand awareness and knowledge, reminding customers about your brand, attracting employees, positive feedback is public, increasing networks.</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Negative comments are public, content is not noticed, may require a lot of time and effort</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Wider brand awareness and knowledge, getting more customers and sales, decreasing the need for customer service, quick reaction to negative comments, creating positive Word Of Mouth.</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Is not worth the effort, negative effect for the brand image, takes too much time.</p>

Figure 9. SWOT about content marketing.

Content on the website is necessary for an online store but in addition to that content can be utilized in the form of content marketing as well. Timely, relevant and catching content marketing can be beneficial for the company in numerous ways: it can spread brand awareness and knowledge, remind customers about your brand, create positive Word Of Mouth, assist in customer service and improve SE visibility, just to mention a few examples. Furthermore, content marketing is a good way to reach both private people and companies.

Just like all marketing actions, also content marketing has its risks. Content marketing can be waste of time and resources if it isn't implemented carefully and the target audience doesn't find the shared content useful. Thus, it would not be worth the effort. But if the right people are taking care of content marketing and creating content for customers, it will most probably be a good investment. In addition to wasting resources, content marketing can be risk for the company's brand image. If quality of the content is poor and the company doesn't react to negative comments wisely, content marketing

can ruin the company's brand image. However, if the company responds to negative comments in appropriately, the results can be extremely good; the reaction shows that the company cares about customers and understands that not all the feedback is positive.

At the moment Company X doesn't do much of content marketing even though it already has accounts on several social media channels. Based on the research well-implemented content marketing could be beneficial for Company X and hence the company could start testing it at least on some social media channels. Chapter gives some recommendations how Company X could start doing content but before that a quick look at the recommended social medias is needed.

Facebook is a good channel for reaching private people and online stores in all the languages already have an account. Facebook accounts also have up-to-date information about the websites but only a few posts and likes. Thus more active posting on Facebook and getting more likes could easily bring new customers for Company X and other websites. Additionally, Facebook can be utilized in spreading job advertisements and finding the most suitable talents to Company X team.

LinkedIn is extremely good for building networks, recruitment, attracting business people and getting new company customers. At the moment only Company X has a LinkedIn profile with only a few followers and connections. In addition to Facebook and LinkedIn, content marketing also on Twitter could be considered. All the websites already have a Twitter account and definitely more followers are needed. Twitter is a good way to reach both private people and companies and create new networks just for business purposes.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS – CALL TO ACTION

This chapter is about the researcher's recommendations for the case company. Recommendations consist of improvement ideas both in individual and company level. These ideas are based on the researcher's experiences at the case company and literature based research. Recommendations will also summarize answer to the main research question and sub-questions.

4.1 Orientation

As mentioned already in the empirical part, the current orientation process at Company X is excellent for people who learn quickly by listening. In contrast people who learn by doing and repeating may be struggling with the learning process. Thus, I suggest the company to develop the orientation process in a way that it is beneficial for people with different kind of learning styles.

Just like in the current orientation it is good to start with background information about the products and programs - Magento and keyword planner Google Adwords for example – at Company X. After reading through the content manual and getting some background information about the products the new comers start doing exercises in Magento and Google Adwords. Exercises can be as simple as doing keyword research for a certain category, then writing meta information in Magento and finally writing content for that category according to the current SEO guidelines. While doing those exercises there is person assisting the new comers and making sure they learn to do things in a right way. As a result of the exercises the new comers are able to do similar tasks independently and correctly.

4.2 SEO

The whole SEO and content writing process always starts with keyword research on Google Adwords. Why is keyword research so important? The chosen keywords are part of the webpage's metadata which helps search engines match the page with an appropriate search query. Hence, the chosen keywords may determine whether potential customers find our website when searching for (on Google), for example, "LED lamps" or "T8 tubes". The purpose of keyword research is to find out the keywords that poten-

tial customers use for searching our products, help them end up on our website and find what they are searching for.

How to do keyword research and which ones to choose? Keyword research is always done with the help of Google Adwords and common sense. Google Adwords tells how popular each keyword is; what is the average monthly research and how high is competition for each word. On Google Adwords you can list similar words and find out how popular each word is. Google Adwords also gives you new ideas by listing similar keywords. Choose keywords which have high monthly researchers, add those words on metadata and use in content. Content manual of Company X gives step-by-step advice how to use Google Adwords.

After keyword research is time for filling in the meta information: keywords, meta title and description. As mentioned already in chapter 3, meta information is important from both the search engine's and customer's point of view. In other words, based on the meta title and description customers decide if the website is what they are looking for. Meta information tells also the search engines what the webpage is about, what are the keywords and length of the meta data.

When writing meta titles, it is good to keep in mind that you never add the name of the website on it always appears automatically at the of the meta title. What is advised to include in the meta title is the name of the category or products and a short sales talk. Meta title has to give a short, unique description what the page is all about. Meta title is a very short one and with the name of the website it can include maximum of 55 characters. Depending on the current SEO guidelines, meta title (as well as meta description) can also be measured in pixels.

Just like meta title, also meta description should give a short introduction to the webpage. Ideally meta description includes the name of the online store, some sales talk (such as, promoting the quality of the products, friendly customer service or well-known brands) and introduction to the webpage. It is recommendable to add a "call to action", like "order now" and keep the description short enough, maximum of 156 characters.

The first step of creating content is keyword research. Without the right keywords the chance that customers and prospects actually find the website and what they are searching for is minimal. In addition to the keyword research, the keywords have to be optimized. Optimizing means that you don't repeat keywords too many times as it's bad for SEO.

Keyword density	Number of words	X times the keyword
2-3%	200	4-6
	250	5-7
	300	6-8
	350	7-9
	400	8-10

Figure 10. Ideal keyword density. (Content manual of Company X)

After keyword research the writer has to decide what kind of technical information, company introduction and tips to include in the content. Based on the researcher's experience and literature research content has to be written for the customer. Even though content is an extremely important part of SEO, customer needs and wants go beyond it. Usually customers need help with a very basic thing; finding the right light bulb. Thus, on the category pages it is important to briefly tell about the typical features of products category. Furthermore, it is wise to give step-by-step advice, how to choose the right kind of a light bulb. Add a short call to action to the beginning, image, useful links and video if possible.

In addition to the actual text, it's advantageous to utilize various headings. Headings help both the reader and SEO. Meta title, also known as page title, is always Heading 1. Never use Heading 1 in the category text. Instead it is recommendable to use Heading 2, 3 and 4. It is possible to use keywords in headings, but never add links in the headings.

4.3 Content Marketing

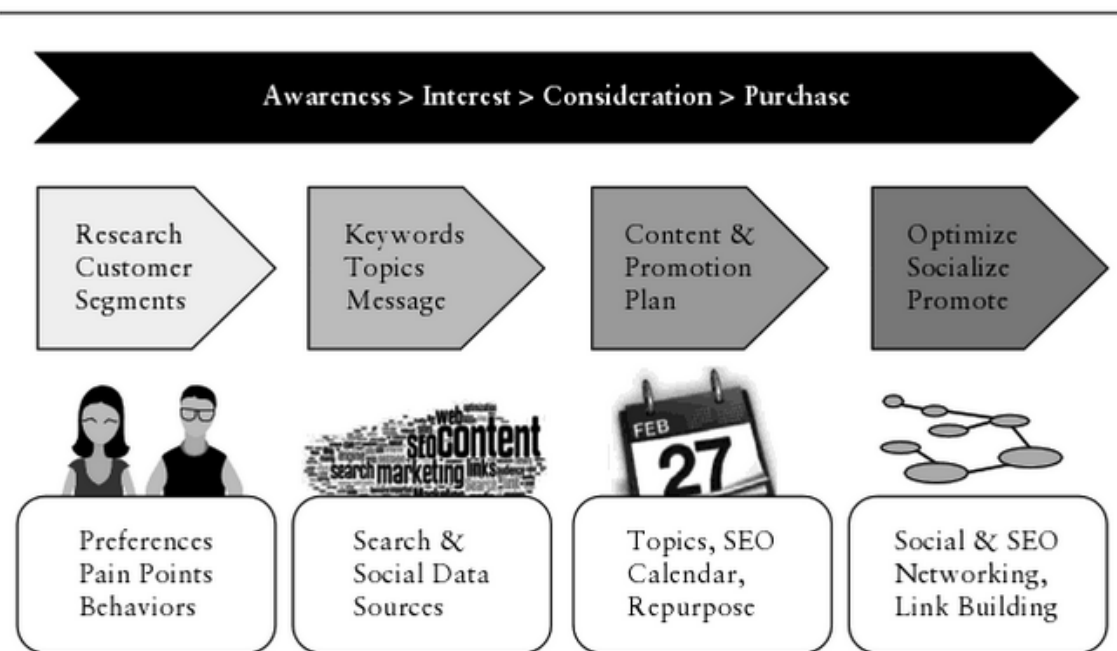


Figure 11. Optimize for customers. (Odden, 2012: 10)

Company X already has great blog articles and content on the website. The content is written and optimized for customers and updated regularly. Figure 11 demonstrates how to optimize for customers. If the content on the website or on social media is optimized for customers, in the best case it attract new customers and immediately lead to a purchase.

How is the content on the website of Company X optimized for customers? Current customers and prospects include both companies private people, men and women, young, middle-aged and older people, which means that the customer group consist of different segments. When planning and creating content, it is important think about different segments and what kind of information they need; what are their pain points. Furthermore, it is beneficial to think about their consumer behavior and how to reach them. Maybe some social media channel should be utilized.

At the moment, the content at least on the main categories provides answers and solutions to the most common problems people have when purchasing light bulbs or fixtures. For example, tips for choosing the right kind of a gas discharge lamp or how to switch from halogen to LED. Thus, the topics and messages included in the content are

always chosen carefully. In addition to the message, the content is optimized according to the current SEO guidelines. Referring to keyword research, keyword optimization, using images and videos.

As discussed in a few previous paragraphs, the quality of SEO and content on Company X website is good at the moment and updated when needed. However, a good website and well-functioning online store is not everything if prospects don't find it or know about your company. It is also possible that happy customers forget your company if the company is not active on social media or email marketing for example. Based on figure 11 Company X and its other websites are optimized but could be better socialized. Next the opportunities of potential social medias for socializing will be discussed.

Blog posts, possible discounts and recently published content on the website could be shared on Facebook. Posting that kind of content does not take too much time and is most probably helpful and interesting from the customers' point of view. Moreover, Facebook is a good channel to attract new customers and spread brand awareness of private consumers. For example in Finland, the Finnish website is not well-known at all and Facebook is one potential channel for spreading brand awareness and knowledge.

LinkedIn is extremely good for attracting the best talents to join Company X team, building networks and spreading companies' brand awareness. Company X is hiring new interns quite frequently and thus, activity on LinkedIn is a smart move. Discounts for companies, blog posts and the latest news of Company X could be shared on LinkedIn. Just like on all the social media, also on LinkedIn a quick (once a day) and smart reaction to both positive and negative comments is possible.

Twitter is a good channel to reach both private people and companies. Furthermore, Twitter can be utilized for building networks and creating new connections. Posts doesn't have to be as formal on Twitter as they are on LinkedIn. Again blog posts and the latest news are excellent ways to remind about your brand and reach prospects.

4.4 Motivating Each Other

Last but definitely not least, it is important to motivate each other. Nowadays employee motivation and atmosphere at work has a key role in employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction again may have a significant effect in effectiveness at work. In practice, it is good that the supervisor or employer tells the content team when something has been done very well. The good news can be shared in a meeting or in the form of an email.



Figure 12. Motivating each other. (Yourwebchick, 2015)

Motivating each other is not only supervisor's or employer's responsibility but also the employee's and intern's responsibility. Employees and interns should give positive feedback for the employer or supervisor when they have done something well, such as done some changes in the weekly schedules of the content team or given some new tasks/challenges for the content team. In addition to that, within the content team employees and interns should tell each how nice it is to work within that team, how well someone has performed or be grateful when someone has helped you. Keeping up the good vibes and building strong team spirit can have a significant effect on effectiveness at work and motivation. Within the content team also bringing some candies or healthy

snacks to work after a tough week can motivate people to focus on their work and maintain team spirit.

5 SUMMARY

The topic and need for this research came up during the researcher's internship at the case company, Company X. Company X has websites in several languages and via websites the company sells light bulbs and fixtures. Company X recruits interns quite frequently meaning that orientation process is often needed. During the internship the researcher noticed that the orientation could be more practical and highlight some key points regarding SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and website content. Furthermore, Company X could start utilizing content marketing. As a result of these remarks, the topic for this guide for formed: Website maintenance with organic SEO and content marketing.

The theories of organic SEO and content marketing formed the theoretical background of this thesis. Since SEO and online marketing practices undergo changes very often, it has been crucial to use recent and up-to-date literature and publications. The aim of the above-mentioned theories was to clarify the nature and importance of organic SEO, search engines and content marketing.

In addition to the literature based theoretical framework, this research includes an empirical part. The empirical part is based on the experiences and remarks the researcher did during her internship. The empirical part covers the current orientation, SEO, content marketing and employee motivation situation and points out strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of those points.

In the end this study presents recommendations for Company X. Those recommendations are only directional and they have to be discussed within the Company X team before implementing them in practice on all the websites. However, based on this research Company X can start testing more active content marketing, up-dated orientation and give this thesis for new interns as a part of orientation.

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview Company X content manager Schouren, J. 2015. Interviewer Koivisto, K.

1. What is content for?

Content is to help our customers to find and buy the right product. With the content we explain the product, show images, videos etc which will help the customer to find the right product. On other pages, we use the content to inform customer. About for example shipping costs or opening times. We also have special theme pages about for example “how to save up to 95% on your energy bill” with the content on those pages we give some extra information to our customer.

Next to this, the content is also important for Google. With the right content on the page, Google will show us when someone is looking for it in their search engine. For example: a customer types in Google: “how to change from Halogen to LED” and we have a page answering this question. With the right content, Google will put our website on top.

2. Why is content important for Company X?

To help our customers, to show we are the “expert” in lighting and to have high Google rankings. However, only a high Google ranking will not make us successful. If the customer doesn’t find what he or she is looking for, the customer will leave without buying.

3. a) What are the targets for content and SEO in the near future?

We are at the moment filling all the “gaps” which means every page, product and category has content. We are also adding images, different from the supplier images. Images with for example a measurement inside, so customers can really see how “big” the product is. Our goals for SEO is to attract more traffic to our website and increase the conversion ratio. More relevant, specialised, detailed and unique content will generate a higher Google ranking and more sales.

b) How will those targets be achieved?

By working hard in efficient and productive teams

4. What is particularly challenging for content writers? Where they make mistakes?

The challenge is to really write something which is of added value to the customer. All the information which can be found on the first 10 pages of Google, is something we rather not write about. We want to show we are the experts in lighting.

Appendix 2. Research process.