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Your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) service should, at all times, be ethical. Consequently,it would only be prudent for you to monitor your competitors' web sites. Unethical SEO practice of any of your competitors can have a strong impact on your website's search engine results. If your competition uses SEO techniques that are unethical, you are well within your rights to report them to all of the major search engines.

Almost every company in business today has at least a handful of other companies that it considers to be its primary competitors. They are the ones that sell the same products and services and are similar in market placement. Competitors are of similar size to you in terms of size and area of operation, product and service segment, number of employees, etc. You will also be competing with a large number of online competitors.

Your competition criteria should include all primary or online competitor companies that offer products or services similar to yours. You should focus on monitoring those competitors that outrank you in major search engines on any of your targeted key phrases or keywords.

Competition monitoring should be done on a regular basis for one's own benefit. You will be checking to see if your competitors' SEO techniques are ethical or not. You will be able to learn about the competition's sales and marketing tactics by evaluating the targeted keywords and phrases they are using. You will also be able to ensure that they are practicing ethical SEO practices in their advertising campaigns.

If you are lucky enough to have competition that does not utilize an SEO service and does not practice SEO services in-house, you should rejoice but continue to monitor the competition so that you know when they do start practicing SEO. Never let your competitor catch you on the wrong foot.

Your SEO service will regularly analyze the competition that outranks your company in the search engine positions for any of your targeted key phrases or keywords. By using an ethical SEO service and monitoring your competitors, you will often be able to identify forward looking competitors that you may not have been aware of. You will be able to plan ahead for those companies that will be your competition in the future. If you are a few steps ahead of your competition at all times, you will keep the sales volumes up and your cash register ringing.

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