6 SEO Guidelines for Analyzing your Competitors by Audreyabbey

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In order to survive and thrive in todayâ€™s fiercely competitive world of online SEO and SEM, you must know how to monitor your competitors' success and failure.

Here are some tips on how to analyze SEO competitors:

1. Determine who Your SEO Competitors are

To be able to analyze your competitors, you must first find out who they are. To identify your competitors, you could look at the sites in your niche, sites that rank well for your major keywords, or direct competitors for your long tail keywords, etc. Or if you are familiar with your local competitors for your offline business (if you have), then just check and evaluate their sites. If your list is long and obviously you canâ€™t keep an eye on all of them, you can trim your list down.

Just do a search with Google about your target keywords and make a list of the sites/companies that are listed high in the search results. The ones you have listed can now be considered as your main competitors.

2. Visit and Analyze Your Competitorâ€™s Sites

Once you have made a list of your competitors or at least the major ones, your next step would be visiting their sites and evaluating their sites. Your analysis should be based on the siteâ€™s design (designed professionally or not), quantity of content (have much content), quality of content, URL Structure (whether they use static or dynamic URLs), etc.

In doing this, you can determine how professional your competition's web presence is and how likely or unlikely it is that search engines will rank them.

3. Analyze your Competitorâ€™s Keywords

Identify the top keywords your competitor is using and ranking highly. Check the keywords they use on their title tags, meta tags, headings, body content, anchor text, URLs, etc for you to get some good ideas why they are ranking well in search engines.

4. Check the Backlinks of your Competitors

Analyze anchor text usage, number and origin of backlinks and others. Check also the mix of branded links versus keyword-rich links. Check domain and page authority, and the number of unique linking domains (the number of different websites linking to the competitorâ€™s site). Analyze also the diversity of the links. Determine if links are coming from local directories, press releases, article syndication, social bookmarking, relevant guest blog posts, forums, or others. You can use OpenSiteExplorer and Backlinkwatch.

5. Check Other SEO Factors

Check also your competitors' Page Ranks in Google and their siteâ€™s performance in Yahoo and Bing. Determine also the number of indexed pages the sites of your competitors have with these search engines.

6. Assess Social Media Presence

See also how they are developing community for their social content. Determine if your competitors are engaged with Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube and other social media sites. See how many Facebook Page likes, homepage likes, Facebook comments, Twitter followers and tweets, and videos/views are showing for your competitors. This will give you a sense of how engaged your competitors are in social and whether they seem to be using these synergistically with their SEO Campaigns.

SEO competitive analysis has become a more essential Search Engine Optimisation technique in order to help you be more efficient in your own SEO efforts. Make sure to always do regular monitoring of your competition as the world of online business is becoming more complex.

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