



Introduction

Alloyfish SEO Research and Strategic Analysis is the first step towards an effective solution for Search Engine Optimisation. A strategy which is based on research, specific to your website, gives you the best chance of achieving your ambitions for improved Search Engine stature.

To ensure that later investment is used effectively we comprehensively analyse key factors on your website, related to your website and those affecting your competitors, so that we can determine the most effective strategy for your business.

Throughout this process we document our analysis to provide a highly informative report to you, as a company, that will enable you to gain a real understanding of your options and your competition.

The report includes details of our proposed strategy alongside itemised costing associated with each part.

Incoming Link Analysis

We search your server logs and the reports obtainable from major search engines to produce as complete a list of incoming links as we can. This list is then analysed and categorised.

The incoming links to your website help us to determine the starting point upon which we will be building and understand how your site has been received so far.

We also need to check your incoming links for unsavoury websites which may link to you for malicious reasons.

The final benefit of evaluating your incoming links is to ensure that your theme is not being poisoned by them, for example, strong links from another country or sites which are unrelated topics that share the same keywords.

Competitive Incoming Links

Having found your competitors, both naturally in the marketplace and those who are ranking well for your target key terms, we analyse the links which go to these websites.

The quality and distribution of incoming links to your competitors indicates how competitive the marketplace is and how much your competitors rely upon links alone.

Many of your competitors will have good incoming links to their websites, and these sources are evaluated as they are likely sources for good links to your website as well.

SPAM found within search engines due to artificially obtained links, networks and doorway pages can be recognised during a competitive link analysis. Where such a site is your competitor, we will consider suggesting reporting these techniques to leading search engines to remove this unfair competition.

Target Customer Profiling

We combine background research into your sector, discussion with you, and review of any information you may have about past customers such as website logs to get a clear idea about the customers you are targeting.

This allows us to clearly establish who you want to visit your website in order to focus not upon getting you visitors but upon getting you potential customers.

Geographic and linguistic differences between key markets may arise at this point, and inform intelligent SEO work to target these specifically.

The more targeted the visitors to your website are, the higher the proportion of them which become customers so it makes good business sense to focus your efforts on your target markets.

Competitive Segmentation

Your competitors work against you in many ways. Some will be truly competing for the same customers, some will be middlemen seeking to sell customers on, and others will just happen to compete for the same keywords but not seek your customer profile. Acknowledging this, we segment your competitors list to determine an appropriate approach for each type.

Direct competitors who are targeting the same products or services in the same geographic area are primary threats and we need to spend time carefully looking for weaknesses in their SEO strategy.

Middlemen, agents and affiliates with existing good rankings will be identified to you to enable you to investigate whether they are willing to promote your services in place of their existing affiliation.

Websites which do not compete with your business directly, such as those targeting other countries or customer levels, will be considered for collaboration. When your target customers visit these sites, they are of no value to the owner and likewise when their target customers reach your website.

Competitor Identification

We will find your competitors, both at your current level and larger competitors through reviewing websites which rank well for appropriate key words in major search engines for your geographic target market.

SEO is like an auction, if there are no competitors it is easier to win, and the more competitors you have the harder it will be to gain rankings.

A listing of your competitors gives us a clear idea of what we are working against and can formulate an appropriate strategy.

The list of competitors allows us to undertake segmentation of your competitors as well as learn from their current strategies.

Competitive Strategy Analysis

We will review the websites of your competitors, particularly those which are ranking well and try to ascertain the methods they are using to gain those rankings. In addition, we characterise the hosting and nameserver setup for your competitors to detect those which are linked.

Every market segment is different and so one of the best places to learn about what works well for your website is to look at what is working well for your competitors and try to improve upon those techniques, if appropriate.

Frequently, competitors leak valuable information through poor data control. This can extend to web-statistics, search term logs, target keyword lists and more. Where we can locate this data we will do so and learn from it.

Websites which are using disreputable techniques which are frowned upon will be noticed at this point so that their high risk strategies can be made unworkable and you can compete on a level playing field.

Competitive Keyword Analysis

By reviewing the keywords which feature within the title, header and other key parts of the pages of your competitors we will assemble an analysis of the terms which they are trying to target.

Being aware of a larger number of key terms is important as it helps us inform and expand our own key term targeting.

By comparing the key terms which we have obtained through research to those your competitors are using, we may be able to identify niches in which there is much lower competition but still useful traffic.

Keywords which are used by your competitors frequently indicate keywords which perform well for them in terms of acquiring new customers, these can and should be considered carefully.

Keyword and Key Term Strategy

By combining data obtained from several sources, including major search engines and specialist competitive analysis companies we will formulate a keyword and key term strategy. This includes analysis of common typographic errors where possible.

Traffic and competition data for keyword and terms in your sector are valuable for identifying both niches and major business terms.

In formulating our strategy we will be able to inform the types of information, services and tools which should feature prominently on your website.

These keyword and key term lists can be used as part of a future or supplementary paid marketing campaign, giving you a head start should you wish to go down that route.

Competitive Performance

There are many ways in which we can obtain data about your competitor's web presence. We employ these to provide you with a reference data set including traffic, keyword and demographic information.

Traffic information will help with understanding the potential market size as your SEO performance will always be limited by the number of potential customers who are searching online.

Demographic data helps us inform the tone and targeting for your SEO. Where we see distinct groups, it can suggest that distinct targeting might provide better performance than a one-size-fits-all optimisation.

As a business owner, you can never have too much information about your competitors and this reference can help inform all parts of your business.

Server Headers and Robots Exclusion

We will work through your website checking that appropriate headers are returned, particularly for CGI and invalid page requests. In addition we will ensure that robots are blocked from places you don't want them and allowed in places you do.

Fixing invalid or incorrect server headers can ensure that all your content is indexed by search engines. Not issuing proper error headers for pages which aren't found may lead to these pages being indexed and damage your overall site presence.

Our analysis of your robots.txt file and suggestion of modifications will help you to keep robots out of places where they shouldn't be, such as contact forms and third-party advertisements

Search engine crawlers are more fussy than most browsers, particularly the case for Microsoft's 'msnbot' and so responses need to be checked for compliance with standards not just functionality.

Code: Text Ratio and Speed Testing

By reviewing your current pages and comparing them to those of your competitors we will inform you both whether your pages are bloated with mark-up and how you compare in terms of loading speed.

Pages which are bloated with unnecessary mark-up run the risk of being incorrectly parsed by search engines and are a hallmark of a poorly constructed website.

Long pages and slow servers both contribute to your visitor conversion, and have been cited in recent patents by Google as factors which may be used in ranking.

We can recommend changes to your HTML code, your scripting or database and to your server architecture to help you improve these factors should that be required.

Search Engine Ranking Analysis

If your current website has pages already indexed, we will analyse how they perform at the moment.

Where you are already doing well, we will need to be careful not to lose your existing rankings by re-optimising too heavily.

Knowing where you rank now also helps identify terms which we can bring up the rankings more easily as having reasonable rankings for a term is a head-start on having none at all.

Finally, knowing where you ranked at the start of the project will help us to monitor the progress of the SEO strategy by having a baseline against which we can measure.

Spider Eye View

We will prepare illustrative versions of your website in a way similar to the way a search-engine spider understands them. These are a graphic expression of the essence of on-site SEO.

By looking at a spider-eye view of your web pages it is easy to spot undesirable elements and find things which are inaccessible or lose functionality.

When looking at a browser's rendering of a website the focus tends to be more on the aesthetics of the website, making it important to strip these away to ensure the site beneath it remains effective.

Duplicate Content Checks

Through the use of major search engines we will see out other websites using the same text as yours. These may be doing so in a licensed way but very often they are stealing your unique content.

Search engines deliberately discount duplicate content as it does not add value to a searcher to see the same information twice. Where content is legitimately duplicated we will advise on rewriting your content to make it unique.

Sometimes, other websites will scrape or copy parts of your text. These can be copyright infringements and there may be ways to get the content removed rapidly. Whilst there may be the possibility of compensation in some cases, we do not deal with these legal issues.

At times, it is possible to gain links and attributions for content which other websites are using without appropriate permission. This can be more effective than having the content removed and we will advise if this is the case.

Internal Linking Map

By 'spidering' your website ourselves we will be able to draw a diagram of your internal linking structure.

By viewing your structure graphically you can see if some parts of your website are unnecessarily isolated, or if related sections could be better interlinked.

Theme is passed through your internal linking, and so we will be able to check that themes are built up in a logical way; for example, that variations of one item are linked from a page which covers the item in general.

Orphaned pages and those inaccessible without javascript can be located at this point because they won't show up on the internal linking map at all. These pages are wasted as far as search engines are concerned and we will advise upon linking those pages into logical parts of the website.

SEO Implementation Proposal

Combining all of the data obtained throughout the background data and analysis stages we will propose a plan of action designed to give you the best SEO service we are able.

Our proposal will be priced and itemised and we will be able to discuss scaling it to your particular budget if you find it unsuitable.

Whether you engage us to complete your SEO work or not, the data and report will provide you with a solid foundation upon which you can build your website in an informed manner.

We will advise upon how appropriate non-SEO strategies such as Pay Per Click and graphical advertising units might be for your website, if you are not already working on these. We are able to develop strategies and build campaigns around all of these should you wish to pursue them as additional options.