

Digital marketing's SEO: What is it and how does it impact businesses of all sizes?

 By [Stephen Sandmann](#)

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SEO or Search Engine Optimisation is all about making the most of the global phenomenon, which is the Google search engine* and its potential to improve your business's performance, whether your business is a leading blue chip company or an SME.

What is organic search?

SEO involves improving the visibility of your business's website on the main, central section of a Google Search Result Page (SERP), for any relevant Google search queries. Let me elaborate...



(Image courtesy of cyberwalk.com)

On any given SERP, there are usually AdWords listings or ads at the very top of the page, in a column on the right of the page and at the very bottom of the page. These ads are demarcated by a small, yellow, rectangular 'ad' graphic. The central body of website listing is referred to as 'organic search listings', as these website listings appear (as well as their order/ranking) via organic means and are not associated with direct payments to assure their place on a SERP. The general perception that these listings are purely merit-based gives organic search listings the advantage over AdWords ads.

Understanding what SEO is all about

An easy way to understand what SEO is about is to observe it on a micro level, as in its effect on an SME. For example, a particular hair salon, based in a shopping mall, has never advertised in a newspaper nor handed out any pamphlets, because the owner considers these advertising media to be ineffective. However, the hair salon does have a website that ranks especially well for relevant, hair salon-related keywords. The result is that this hair salon receives more clients from organic Google search (via its website) than via 'walk-ins' (people walking by the salon who subsequently make use of the salon's services).

The power of SEO

I have noticed a major impact that digital marketing has on the total number of leads that large and small businesses acquire overall, with SEO playing a major role in this. Organic search, in most cases, provides any given website with the largest portion of visits, along with the most receptive and engaged website visitors. In other words, these visitors are most likely to contact your company for business, whether it be filling in a contact form or booking a vehicle test drive via the website.

Why should companies bother with SEO?

SEO is necessary because the majority of people who perform Google searches only click on the top 4 organic search result listings within SERPS. A recent eye-tracking study by Mediative revealed the following regarding people who perform Google searches: 32% of people click on the first organic search result listing within a SERP, while 64% of all clicks occur within the top 4 search result listings. This reminds me of a funny (SEO-funny) joke I read on LinkedIn a while ago: "Where is the best place to hide a body? On the second page of Google."

Google cannot be ignored

Google's massive influence on our lives can't be ignored by marketers, so if your company, be it big or small, is yet to embrace and harness organic search, now is the right time.

**This is excluding Google's AdWords search advertising.*

ABOUT STEPHEN SANDMANN

Stephen Sandmann is a Senior Digital Strategist at Quirk. He has a keen interest in everything digital.

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