

HOW TO GET YOUR RECRUITMENT WEBSITE FOUND ON GOOGLE

Hi, I'm Rhys Jones. Welcome to my latest podcast.

Today's podcast is how to get your recruitment website visible on Google otherwise known as search engine optimization or SEO. If you've listened to any of my podcasts or read my blogs on marketing, you'll understand my view on websites is that they should be a cash generator for your business; they're not just a brochure. And how do you make them a cash generator? It's getting new clients to see them and new candidates to see them, it's as simple as that. If you think about it - if you have the most fantastic swish looking website in the world but, when you go on Google and you search for the terms relevant for your site, nobody can find it, it's like having a really good-looking brochure and keeping it in your drawer. Nobody's going to see it.

How do you get seen?

It's common sense that you get your site seen on Google. However, it's a lot easier said than done, which is why I'm doing this podcast. Getting found on Google is a whole industry in itself. SEO really is a specialism and I'll be honest with you, at the end of this podcast, hopefully I've informed you, helped you; maybe help you get some more rankings. But if nothing else, I'll be honest I'm doing it to help dismiss some of the crap that people will tell you and how to get to the top of Google. Some spread by the people that are trying to sell your services and some by a bloke down the pub. I'm here to tell you what works and the reason why I know it works is we're really good at it.

Davidson Gray itself, our website, is front of Google for an awful lot of search terms, but far more important than that is our partners, and they have an awful lot of visibility on Google. Most of them are front page for their industry term in recruitment; we've even got front page for the term 'jobs' which, if you think about it, is crazy because you're up against job sites like Indeed, Reed, CV library and so on and so forth, so for us to go against that is really difficult. I have been doing this now for 15 years, so to be fair, if I wanted to set up an SEO business rather than doing what I do, I probably could but quite frankly I love recruitment and I'll make more money in recruitment anyway.

Let's go on to my self-help if you like. Just on the whole Google thing, being on page two isn't worth a jot. If you're not on page one, then it's hardly worth having. I checked out some statistics before I did this and a company called WebFX have said that only 25 percent of people actually go on to page two of Google but another company that's an expert on this is Backlinko, and they say that only 0.78% of people that go on page two actually click on a link. So, what's the point being on page two? You've got to be on page one.

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Find the right terms

So, you've really got to decide, 'if I'm going to do this, let's do it properly'. So, one of the things I would recommend is choosing your fight before you do it because let's say for example, you're in the construction industry; you want to get on page one for construction jobs. You need to check if it is actually achievable, because you can chuck a whole load of money at this and get nowhere. There are tools out there where you can check how difficult a term is to rank. One of them being Moz; that's quite a good one. And that gives you a score as to how easy or hard it's going to be. The problem with that, if you're a layman, is if it says 70 or says 20 - doesn't mean a lot to you, does it really? But if you're looking on Moz, just as a guide, anything above 20 I would say is going to be very difficult for you. We can get you higher than that. But check out your term first; see if it's achievable because you could just be chucking money away.

The other thing is - see what the traffic is because if you think, 'I'm going to get found on this term', check if there's actually traffic for that term. So, when I say traffic, people actually search that term, because you could decide that you want to appear for example, DA Recruitment, and then you look at it and nobody searches for DA Recruitment, so what's the point? So, you've got to look at what that return on your investment is. Is it achievable and are you actually going to get traffic, otherwise there's no point doing it.

So, you've got to make a commercial decision, because if you're going to do SEO it is expensive, it's hard work but if you do achieve it, it's really worth it. And as I refer to the websites that we have for the partners we build, some of those make an awful lot of money. Some of them make six figures a year from their website. There's one business that gets 80% of their work through the website, which is phenomenal. But like I said, I've been doing it for 15 years and we chuck a load of money at it, because it's what we do. If you're a start-up, if you're a small business, you just won't have the funds to do that, and also you might not have the know-how. Not wishing to sound really negative.

Create great content

Let's jump on something a little bit easier. The real nub of getting to be found on Google is a combination of content and backlinks. Content is basically the written form that's on your website. That's the text and what Google does is it crawls that text to decide if you're the best page on your site or the best site for that particular term. So, if it's crawling your site and you're looking to be found for, let's say, construction recruitment, then it's going to look for terms that say construction recruitment. That's really dumbing it down, but then it gets a lot more complicated than that, because if you're just trying to cram loads of the same terms into a page to get found, like you used to do old-school on job

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boards, Google will see it a mile off. If anybody, like the bloke down the pub, says you just repeat the same thing over and over again that's absolute crap. Google will spot it a mile off.

Google gives you a broad statement of what they look for in content. It needs to be accurate, original, in-depth, well-cited, contain original reporting and convey a high degree of skill, which sounds really difficult, doesn't it? But what I found through the blogs that I've written on my website on Davidson Gray, if you write really good stuff, it gets found. The stuff that I write on my blogs, I deliberately write informative stuff that's going to help develop people that has things you can use. It's not sales fluff, it's not designed for SEO, and it's not designed as a sales lead; it's quality stuff. Google has seen that and that's why we rank, so if you write with genuine intention of writing an interesting, informative article, that's halfway there. You will also have to make sure you've got the keywords in there that you want to be found under, which goes back to searching on the various tools you can use, like Moz etc. to find the search term you want to be found under and then make sure that search term's in.

In addition to having that search term in, what Google also does is it associates words with that search term. So, let's say, for example, you want to get found for 'wedding', you wouldn't put wedding wedding wedding into your content, because that wouldn't work. But if you put wedding and cake and ring and celebration and groom, all these words refer to wedding and Google will see that, and it then reinforces the term wedding which is why it goes back to having genuine content that will have those sorts of words in because you're talking about it. So, it might sound difficult writing good content but it's not quite as difficult as it sounds but also the content does have to be fairly long. Google tends to like, for content creation purposes, 1500 words in a piece of content.

Create a high domain authority

But all that is great, but your website must have something called a high domain authority. A domain authority - it's a point of contention at the moment within the SEO industry because they say it's not necessarily a great guide. Well, the way I look at it, it's like if you stand on a set of scales and it isn't set properly and it tells you you're 12 stone but you're only eight stone. But then you stand on it again and then you're 14 stone. But you're really ten stone - you still know you put on weight. So, the point is with the domain authority - it may not be 100% accurate but the point is, if your site hasn't got high domain authority you're going to struggle. How do you get a high domain authority? Well, the domain authority is based on Google seeing your site as being relevant. It likes your site, and it rates your site. So how does it do that? It's the content but it also brings me on to the next thing.

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Backlinks are key

The second most important thing for your website is backlinks. If you don't know what backlinks are, basically these are the links from other websites that are pointing towards your website. In doing so, Google goes 'oh there's lots of other websites pointing to this site, it must be a really good site, so it rates you for that. Now with the backlinks, it's not all about quantity, it's about quality and relevance. Just again to explain that without trying to make it too over-complicated, with your backlinks; if you've got other websites with high domain authorities for the relevant sites pointing at your site, Google likes that. But they've also got to be relevant, so let's say you've got a recruitment company and you've got a lipstick manufacturer pointing at your site. Google will say that's not relevant so it's not necessarily going to score it very highly. So, you've got to try and get a combination between the two. So that's one part of the backlinks.

The other part of the backlinks that makes it difficult is the sites with high domain authorities, the really relevant sites, everybody wants to get links from those sites. So, unless you've got a close relationship with them, you're probably going to struggle. So, it's actually quite difficult to get links from sites with high domain authorities. So that's a job in itself. The lower down domains, you might have a chance, but this is where SEO is actually quite difficult. Google deliberately makes it difficult for the reason that they want the terms that appear on page one on their site to be the most relevant and the best results possible so the consumer who's using Google is getting the best value for money; they're finding the right sites. So that's why they do. So, if it was dead easy to do everybody would do it, so they keep changing what's called the algorithms, which is basically the rules. There's a new algorithm coming out in about a month's time which apparently is going to put a lot of weighting on page download speed, which is how quick your page loads, and also how quickly it takes for the consumer to get from the home page to wherever it wants to be and also the stability of your site. It all sounds really complicated. Even more so if you speak to SEO people. Some say it's not going to make a lot of difference at all, some say it's going to be a game changer. So, SEO is a constantly moving target which is why I did caveat this podcast by saying at the start that, at the end of this, you're not necessarily going to be able to get on page one because it's hard. Maybe you're currently listening to this because you've got nothing better to do or you're a bit of geek. I'm a geek, and I like to know about stuff that I'm not necessarily going to be able to do but I still want to know. But if you're still listening, I'll carry on.

Use internal links

What you need to do is you need to plan the term that you're looking to be found under and also sometimes the term that you think somebody would look for, they don't. It could be a different word or a different term or a different string, so that's why you check that. But also, what adds value to your site is something called internal links, so if you've seen that if you're going to a website and say you're

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reading something. They'll have a link that takes you to another page on the site or obviously you've got your tabs at the top that give you links to other parts of the site. Well Google will look at your home page because that has the highest authority because it is your landing page and then what it'll do is it'll go from there to other pages. If you don't have those links, it's a lot harder for Google to crawl the site and find the other pages so you help Google by having these links that are taking Google's algorithm robots or whatever they want to call them to other parts of the site to crawl that content so they can understand it. So that's why internal links work.

There's also other stuff which you can do on your websites. Think about metadata and alt tags and stuff like that, but I'll be honest with you that's where it gets really technical. Because the real key thing with your website is always going to be content and it's probably always going to be backlinks. The content is something that you can control because you can write good content. Backlinks - that is a lot more difficult but what I would say is it is achievable because we can do it, we have done, it but it does mean you've got to spend a lot of time on it. And you do have to commit to it, and it is a slow burn, it takes time. That's the other thing with websites is the longevity of the website also accounts for it. So, if you've got a brand-new site, it's going to be very difficult to SEO it in the first 6 months, 12 months. The older the site, the more Google likes it so with all this added together you can see that how to get your website found on Google is actually quite difficult.

Conclusion

If you do manage it, it is a pot of gold, so hopefully you've found this informative. I don't know if it's made it more confusing of how to get found on Google, it probably has, but hopefully it's saved some of you spending money on the made-up stuff or the old stuff or the myths that some SEO people will say or blokes in the pub say. But if you want to learn more about the marketing, I've got plenty of other blogs and podcasts on other parts of marketing where you can make money for your business. Because if you've listened or read any of my other material, it's marketing to me that is hugely beneficial to your recruitment company because it makes your recruitment company an easier place to make money. And that's the whole point of the business, is to make it an easy environment to make money because that's a true business. If it's just a bunch of recruiters that are all billing individually that can walk out the door, then it's not really a valuable business. So, it's about creating value and that's where marketing comes in. So, before you go out and spend 10 grand on a new website that looks absolutely fantastic when you look at it you think, 'wow, people are going to definitely buy from me', just bear in mind if people aren't going to find it, it isn't worth anything.

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