



## SEO for Higher Ed

SEO is important, but often misunderstood, aspect of marketing. To that end, we've created the [ultimate guide to SEO for higher education](#). For convenience, we've created a summary of the ultimate guide listed below.

### What Is SEO and How Does It Work?

Search Engine Optimization (SEO for short) is the strategy and efforts you take to try and improve your website's placement in the search results of search engines such as Google and Bing. There's no guarantee of ever being able to rank highly for every search term, but if you follow the guidelines below, you'll be well on your way to improving your position in search results.

## **Why Is SEO Important?**

A webpage ranking highly in SERPs increases the number of people who see the site's content in search results. Being seen more frequently increases the odds of getting a larger number of users to click from search results to your website.

## **What Are the Core Components of SEO?**

On-page SEO refers to the actual content on your website. Technical SEO encompasses issues that relate to your website's infrastructure. These factors directly affect search engines' ability to crawl your site and properly index pages.

Off-page SEO is everything that happens away from your website. It's about a search engine's perception of your website's authority. The goal is to get linked to from a wide variety of unique, respected websites.

## **How Can I Improve My Site's SEO?**

The first thing to do to improve your website's SEO is to fix any technical SEO issues. Some of the most common technical SEO problems include:

### **Slow Page-Load Speed / Poor Mobile Experience**

Use Lighthouse PageSpeed Insights to identify the current load speed of your website. Then follow Lighthouse's recommendations for what changes you should make to get the site to a better page.

## **No HTTPS Security**

To convert your site to HTTPS, you need an SSL certificate from a Certificate Authority. Once you purchase and install your certificate, your site will then show as HTTPS to users, and Google.

## **The Site Isn't Indexed Correctly**

Add your site to Google Search Console to see if there are errors. Send Google a list of your most important URLs to let them know they should crawl and potentially index them.

## **No XML Sitemap**

If your website doesn't have a sitemap, you'll need to create one. If you have a WordPress site, the Yoast SEO plugin can automatically generate an XML sitemap for you.

## **Messy URLs**

Messy URLs can hurt your trust and credibility with search engines. Clean up those messy URLs to make sure they're not too short or too long. Between 50-60 characters are ideal.

## **Missing Alt Tags On Images**

Alt tags describe the content of images and are incredibly important for visitors who have difficulty with their sight. They're also useful for other users because if an image fails to render properly, the alt tag for the image will usually be displayed. Alt tags also reinforce the.

## **Focus Keyphrase**

The most basic way to tell people that your website's content answers a user's question is in the language you use. Each page of your website should have a unique focus keyphrase. But make sure that you don't do keyword stuffing.

### **Title Tags & Meta Descriptions**

The title tag and meta description appear within the search engine result next to the URL. A widely-accepted rule is for the title tag to have fewer than 60 characters.

### **Visual Assets**

Using images, infographics, and videos gives you opportunities to improve your SEO. Google is also starting to push visual search heavily through its Google Lens feature. Create regularly occurring new content from your existing offline materials.

### **How Does Social Media Content Affect SEO?**

The majority of the elements that relate to your website's SEO potential occur on your website itself. That being said, it's still important to regularly post to social media platforms, such as YouTube.

### **What to Check Before A New Website Launches**

If you're in the process of reimagining your website, that is the best time to begin your SEO efforts. Map out a unique focus keyphrase for every page of your website. Use a site like Yoast to find out exactly how many times your focus key phrase should appear on each particular page.

### **How to Track Your SEO Efforts**

When tracking your SEO-improvement efforts, there are multiple metrics you'll want to monitor. Some of the tools that you can use to track those metrics include Google Search Console, Yoast, SEM Rush, and Moz.com.

### **The Future of SEO**

More people are using voice assistants like Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant to perform searches. If voice-search assistants aren't able to understand your website then you'll miss out on getting in front of the people using those devices.

### **Stay Focused on the Basics**

Search algorithms want to surface the most relevant and useful results for users. They look to determine the expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness of your site. If you stay focused on creating content that follows those guidelines, you'll make steady progress.

Sincerely,  
Ian Evenstar

