ORGANIC SEARCH

The Past, The Present, The Future
Getting good visibility online is getting harder:

- There is so much competition
- Google is changing

But... the future is still bright.
Figure out how to make Google put you on the first page (at the top please...
As more and more websites were created - the first search engines were designed to help with structure and accessibility.

Excite (1993) was the first and shortly after major competitors like Yahoo (1994) & Google (1997) joined the party.

High rankings were achieved by keyword stuffing, excessive tagging, and (often spammy) backlinks.


- Begun penalising bad linking practices & keyword stuffing to improve indexing
- Google’s first tests of personalised search and local SEO.
- This era focused heavily on generating inbound links to increase exposure.
The User First Era (2006 – 2009)

• User focused approach to SEO – meant a more reactive and varied search experience

• News, images, video all became part of SERPs

• In 2008 Google suggest launched along with keyword research and insight tools

• Particular emphasis on optimising alternative content medias for search to increase exposure.
The Network Era (2010 – 2012)

- A big change in SEO, forced brands to earn rankings through quality, user-focused content or face penalties
- Major updates enforced stricter regulations on keywords, content quality & over-optimisation
- Technical foundations of websites still important
- Additional data panel features trialled in SERPs
The Modern Era (2013 – Present)

- Digital environment optimised around user intent
- Data used to develop individual digital presence by personalising results based on history, location, and device
- Quality content continues to be of utmost importance
- Segmented content, optimised for device and user.
Algorithms (some of them...)
THE TODAY

Put the audience first, it is no longer all about our good old mate Google.
• Less emphasis on keywords – (although these are still important)... but more emphasis on the audience.

• Persona building to know what messages to deliver, how & where

• Where do they hang out online? Target to get your brand coverage in these places

• Your website's important but if your audience is elsewhere then focus efforts here as well.
Link Building Earning

- Link building is still a hugely important ranking signal but it has evolved
- Build networks, brand recognition content, social signals, and content research
- Get buy in from network at point of concept
- Domain Authority can be used to evaluate the value of a backlink from any particular site
Content

- Two types of content - onsite & offsite
- Onsite - relevant & well written to engage users & drive shares
- Offsite - put the audience at the heart - target those sites where your audience operates

Follow three simple questions
- What’s the hook? (for audience, for partners)
- What are you offering?
- Has it got longevity?
The Billion Euro Game

• An interactive guide telling the story of the game of football in financial numbers.
• Prize money, attendance, sponsorship, commercial partnerships
• Worked out that the CL was worth billion euros so tracked back to apportion the revenue into many sectors.

Target audience of first time buyers... the Netflix generation

Season 5 of Game of Thrones was about to start...

Align property value with location and aligned to the properties in the series.

Seven point property infographic

https://www.landc.co.uk/insight/2015/11/7-epic-game-of-thrones-castles-mortgages/
Local Search

- Focus on citations
- Target sites that dominate local search
- Register with Google Business and add complete business information
- Address must match exactly as Google Business
e-Commerce

• One of the most competitive markets

• Big brands dominate the organic search results making it more difficult to rank

• Use big brands such as Amazon to help build authority and gain visibility and potential traffic.
Many people think our main competition is Bing or Yahoo. But, really our biggest search competitor is Amazon.

Eric Schmidt, CEO Google
Mobile Search

- Pressure now on sites to be mobile friendly
- Test your site to ensure it meets mobile quality guidelines – Google PageSpeed Insights
- Opportunity for apps to take up SERP real estate
Behaviour on social platforms is changing

Social platforms want to keep viewers on their sites and in their apps

Facebook instant articles an example of this

Did you know Facebook can now search for content as easily as people?
Personalisation

• Part of search results for years

• Search results will change dependent on geography and search history and even social connections

• Engaging users and create campaigns that help them remember your brand will increase your rank even within personalised results
The Influence of Ranking Factors in Google’s Algorithm

Search Engine Ranking Factors Expert Survey

Moz asked over 150 experts to rate the influence exerted by broad areas of ranking factors on Google’s core search algorithm. Each area was rated on a scale of 1 (not influential) to 10 (highly influential).

Broad search ranking factors from most influential to least:

1. Domain-Level Link Features: 8.22 / 10
   - Based on link/citation metrics such as quantity of links, trust, domain-level PageRank, etc.

2. Page-Level Link Features: 8.19 / 10
   - PageRank, trust metrics, quantity of linking root domains, links, anchor text distribution, quality/spamminess of linking sources, etc.

3. Page-Level Keyword & Content-Based Features: 7.87 / 10
   - Content relevance scoring, on-page optimization of keyword usage, topic-modeling algorithm scores on content, content quantity/quality/relevance, etc.

   - Content length, readability, Open Graph markup, uniqueness, load speed, structured data markup, HTTPS, etc.

5. Engagement & Traffic/Query Data: 6.55 / 10
   - Data SERP engagement metrics, clickstream data, visitor traffic/usage signals, quantity/diversity/CTR of queries, both on the domain and page level

6. Domain-Level Brand Metrics: 5.88 / 10
   - Offline usage of brand/domain name, mentions of brand/domain in news/media/press, toolbar/browser data of site usage, entity association, etc.

7. Domain-Level Keyword Usage: 4.97 / 10
   - Exact-match keyword domains, partial-keyword matches, etc.

8. Domain-Level Keyword-Agnostic Features: 4.09 / 10
   - Domain name length, TLD extension, SSL certificate, etc.

9. Page-Level Social Metrics: 3.98 / 10
   - Quantity/quality of tweeted links, Facebook shares, Google +1s, etc. to the page

Source: https://moz.com/search-ranking-factors
Technical

• Often neglected but very important part of SEO strategy

• Technical audit to form a part of pre and post site launch

• Crucial to understanding what problems exist and what work needs to be done

• Proved to improve organic performance
THE FUTURE

The future of Search Engine Optimisation is Not Search Engine Optimisation
Semantic search seeks to improve search accuracy by understanding searcher intent and the contextual meaning of terms as they appear in the searchable dataspace, whether on the Web or within a closed system, to generate more relevant results.

“London tube stations” - explicit aspect of query

iPhone user, on street in London - implicit aspect of query
Implicit Signals

- Search History
- Location
- Browser
- Device
- Language
- Social Connections
- Time of Day
Wearable Technology

• Wearable are starting to have an effect on all aspects of marketing

• Less listings - less visibility

• Wearable technology can be used to collect data about the user to deliver more personalised messages via digital channels.
“My vision when we started Google 15 years ago was that eventually you wouldn’t have to search at all.”

Sergey Brin, Google
Compound queries

Previous model:

Query -> Google Magic -> Response

Revised Query -> Google Magic -> Response

New model:

Query -> Google Magic -> Response

Revised Response -> Google Magic -> Additional input
Voice Search & Personal Assistants

• Personal assistants are smart enough to associate natural language with a request.

• PA search terms pull even more heavily on history and context.

• Whole new type of long-tail keyword queries will emerge.

• Personal Assistants couldn’t care less about websites. They’re all about data.
The future?

ANTICIPATE.ANSWER.CONVERSE.
The Sprint Philosophy

1. What the user intends
2. What your content is about
3. Relating concepts to one another

Keyword themes:

1. What the user intends
2. What your content is about
3. Relating concepts to one another
The Sprint Philosophy

ON-PAGE
Optimisation of on-page elements: titles & headlines, body content, image alt tags (for image search!)
Gap Analysis

OPPORTUNITIES
Building up external content seeding opportunities

ANALYSIS
Reframing content ideas based on search data
Relabelling blog titles based on interest in phrases

PROMOTION
Managing the content promotion of blogs, core pages, native advertising, social advertising.

IDEAS
Curating or creating customer centric content assets
Thanks!

ANY QUESTIONS?

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