

# Expert Advice

## SEO and Content: The Different Ways Content Is Important in SEO

SEO and content go hand in hand. But have you ever stopped, paused, refused to take the statement that content is necessary at face value, and thought about just why content is important in SEO?

This case study will offer you an explanation following with real-life data from our clients, dispersed across many industries, on just why content is important in SEO and how it makes a difference.

### On the Four Pillars of SEO

There are four main pillars in SEO, according to many SEO specialists. These are:

- **Technical SEO:** Technical SEO consists of ranking factors such as site speed, security, mobile optimization, and other technical factors that influence if and how Google can crawl and index your website. Sitemaps, site structure, and the configuration of the robots.txt file also fall under technical SEO.
- **Off-page SEO:** The majority of off-page, or off-site, SEO, consists of your website's backlink profile. Backlinks from high-quality sources provide referral traffic and indicate your website as an authority. In addition, local listing optimization and presence on social media are also considered "off-page" factors.



- **On-page SEO:** On-page SEO consists of internal links, metadata optimization (such as page titles and header tags), and alt data that appears on your actual web pages. Product page and category page content are also sometimes considered an on-page factor since, well, they appear on-page. However, this is straying into the realm of content in SEO.
- **Content and User Experience:** Content is so important in SEO that it literally has its own pillar devoted to it. Content is created pursuant to keyword research and keyword strategy and improves the keyword density of your website. As you're about to find out, content is also an attractive outlet for website users and substantially impacts the overall user experience of an eCommerce website (or any website, for that matter).

## Types of Content in SEO

Before we dive into just why content is crucial in SEO (even when, dare we say this, very few people read it), let's take a look at the different types of content that are typically used to support an SEO campaign.

Strictly speaking, any content that appears on your website can be considered SEO content if Google can access and crawl the page. However, the following types of content are typically used to support an SEO project:

- **Blog posts**
- **Product page content/product descriptions**
- **Category and collection page content**
- **Pillar/evergreen content (such as free-standing content that appears in "resources" pages or dedicated FAQ or content pages)**
- **Content intended for social channels (can also serve as an SEO ranking signal)**

- **And others, but these are some of the more important ones**

## Why Content Is Important in SEO

There are so many reasons that content is important in SEO (see below) but if we're talking textbook optimization, and just optimization, the prime value of content is that it gives an eCommerce website the ability to optimize itself for keyword density.

There are other factors that Google uses to assess the quality of content as a ranking signal, such as age, length, depth, structure, originality, and whether or not the content meets the search intent. There are also user metrics associated with content that can indicate whether or not it is especially valuable.

But to break this down to the most basic, what a piece of content must do – at a minimum – to generate ranking increases for the page on which it exists (or for a separate target page) is contain a set of chosen target keywords.

If the post – such as a piece of web copy or a blog article – contains those target keywords, as well as relevant information on a topic associated with them, Google will see that page as a relative authority on the subject matter. That's when the ranking increases begin.

Once Google "sees" that page, it will assign higher authority to it, and impressions will begin to increase for that page (and potentially for other linked internal pages) for the target keyword and possibly for other relevant keywords.

As impressions increase, some of those will result in clicks, which ultimately brings in higher organic traffic to the website in question.



It cannot be broken down into a more simplistic picture than that – although there are many, many other ways content can benefit an [eCommerce SEO](#) campaign.

## Added Benefits of Content Publication and Content Marketing

The process of generating higher organic impressions (and clicks) via the method above is the bare-bones approach. Of course, content that is just “good enough” and has keywords in it will ultimately not support a long-term SEO campaign – which is why good content is so important.

But just what are the benefits of “good” content in SEO? Well...

- Content educates your customers on the use of your products.
- It gives you the ability to advertise new products and services.
- Content can be used as a lead-capturing device (with forms, subscriptions, and so on and so forth).
- It gives your brand a voice and captures customer attention.
- It cultivates brand loyalty, encourages customer engagement, and stimulates interest.
- It can potentially help you direct the flow of traffic along your website (with internal links) to encourage conversions.
- It is highly scalable and an affordable long-term solution. Evergreen content will rank for years and bring in customers on a steady basis, even if some of them only come on as readers. Again, think lead-capturing.
- Authoritative content positions a website as a credible, trustworthy source.
- It spreads brand awareness, giving a website/brand greater overall visibility.
- Effective content can help diminish your reliance on paid search marketing, like [eCommerce PPC](#).
- Quality content will be read and shared, which will improve your social proof and backlink profile.
- High-quality content will generate a base of readers that will come back time and time again.
- Exceptionally optimized content will not only generate views and high-time on-page but will result in conversions. The highest of all quality content itself can serve as a sales generator. Imagine having pages on your website that do the selling for you! Content can do that.
- You only need to post high-quality content once, and it will work hard for your website for years and years to come.

So, as you can see, there are many, many benefits to drafting and posting high-quality content, beyond the basic observation that it can improve the keyword density of a website.

## How Content Supports SEO: The Data

There are a variety of ways in which we internally monitor the performance of quality content. Of course, the most important of these – for our SEO customers – is what sorts of ranking increases we generate for target keywords for our clients’ eCommerce websites.

However, there are other metrics we follow internally as well. Chiefly, these are page views, time on page, and conversions.

## Pageviews: Who's Visiting a Website

While a piece of content can still technically generate organic ranking increases even without substantial page views, the goal is to draft a post that actually gets clicks and that people read. There are a number of factors that can impact page views, including but not limited to organic rankings for the URL in question, the composition of the title, and the content on the landing page.

The data above shows some metrics for the top-performing blog pages for a past customer that operates a local automotive dealership. The two entries in red are blogs that our writers drafted for this client. These blogs are both ranking high on page one for very competitive search terms.

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
Organic Traffic	30.77% ↑ (10,074)	30.75% ↑ (9,618)
	4.54% ↑ (1,488)	4.53% ↑ (1,416)

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
Organic Traffic	7.65% ↑ (7,220)	8.06% ↑ (6,999)
	3.29% ↑ (3,105)	3.40% ↑ (2,955)

Clearly, they are going above and beyond the call of optimized content. Since their publication, they have generated over 11,000 unique organic views – averaging substantial time on page – for the client’s website. The top one stands to unseat their most successful blog yet, lagging by only a few thousand page views.

The above figure from Google Analytics shows blog traffic for a previous client that sells sporting goods – a totally different industry. They do some of their own blogging, as we counsel our customers to do, but as you can see, the highlighted entries in red are among the top-performing blogs on their website.

In fact, the single best performing piece of blog content is an article we wrote for them, which, since publication, has outperformed all of their other top pages. Our top two-performing pieces of content for them (in red) account for nearly 10,000 unique pageviews, over 10% of all traffic to their blog. Both also have nearly 6 minutes average time on page.

The results above are for one of our oldest clients who has been with us for several years now. As you can see, the majority of top-performing blogs on their website are ours (in red).

ORGANIC TRAFFIC: SIGNIFICANT PAGEVIEW INCREASE		
Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
	26.91% ↑ (19,257)	27.99% ↑ (16,188)
	9.80% ↑ (7,011)	11.14% ↑ (6,442)
	9.79% ↑ (7,005)	11.51% ↑ (6,660)
	2.53% ↑ (1,811)	3.01% ↑ (1,742)
	2.31% ↑ (1,655)	2.49% ↑ (1,443)
	1.90% ↑ (1,360)	1.88% ↑ (1,086)
	1.86% ↑ (1,329)	2.11% ↑ (1,218)
	1.29% ↑ (926)	1.15% ↑ (665)

In fact, our top seven performing blogs for the client have brought in over 35,000 unique page views since publication, averaging more than a minute each. These top seven blogs alone account for over 61% of all blog traffic to the client’s website.

## Time on Page: How Engaged Are Readers?

Sometimes, due to some factor or another, it is not reasonably realistic to generate a large number of content page views. Occasionally, the search volume just isn’t there.

In cases like these, it’s not reasonable to try to generate very high numbers of sessions. What a writer can strive for, however, is to create valuable content that keeps readers on the page for longer. Besides, higher time-on-page corresponds to interest, and the more interested users are, the more likely they will be to take additional actions before exiting.

The snapshot above captures blog traffic to another client that has been with us for more than two years. This client is in the tobacco industry and so is PPC-restricted. Blog traffic is modest, which is in part due to competition, and also in part due to relatively low search volume.

What’s telling, though, is the average time on page. Even among the top two blogs with several thousand unique views each, the average time on page is above 3 minutes. It is just 2 seconds shy of an average of 2 minutes (or higher) for all other blogs. In fact, the average time on page for all blogs is above 2 minutes.

The benchmark will vary on the source, but several blogs and pollsters have released figures suggesting that the average time on page for blogs – in the business of delivering content – should be anywhere between 2 to 5 minutes, depending on length and depth. Considering the fact that this client (like all of our clients) is an eCommerce business, the 2 minutes of average time on page is even more impressive. They’re not expressly in the business of selling content, but we do that for them anyway.

This data is from another client that has been with us for several years. They sell specialty cycling equipment and odd bikes. We wrote nine of their top ten blogs – with the one that isn’t highlighted in red being their “blog” page itself.

ORGANIC TRAFFIC: DOUBLED PAGE VALUE INCREASE	
Page ?	Avg. Time On Page ?
	00:03:00
	00:04:51
	00:02:46
	00:04:53
	00:05:03
	00:04:34
	00:04:13
	00:03:00
	00:01:58

ORGANIC TRAFFIC: DOUBLED PAGE VALUE INCREASE	
Page ?	Avg. Time On Page ?
	00:05:02
	00:03:44
	00:02:27
	00:04:32
	00:02:51
	00:03:25
	00:01:33
	00:03:20
	00:03:45

The average time on page is impressive for all of these top blogs. First, it is over 2 minutes for all blog pages. The low performers are substantially buoyed up by the high performers, several of which have an average time on page in excess of 4 minutes. The top blog, which has brought in over 3,500 unique visitors, has more than 5 minutes average time on page. Users are reading what we write and they are interested.

ORGANIC TRAFFIC: INCREASED TIME ON PAGE	
Page ?	Avg. Time On Page ?
	00:05:11
	00:03:13
	00:05:47
	00:03:47




The client above is another that has been with us for several years. They sell golfing equipment and are regular contributors to their own blog, which is beneficial both to their SEO campaign and to their readers. Still, our writers delivered several top-performing blogs for them. In the past two years, we wrote 4 of their top 10 blogs, which together have generated over 39,000 unique page views. That is nearly 20% of all their blog traffic.

But time on page is most impressive here. Two of these top 4 blogs have over 5 minutes of time on page – average – which is an impressive metric when distributed across nearly 10,000 views each. Again, users are interested, and they are reading.

## Conversions: The Gold Star of Content Excellence

While [content marketing](#) strategies can lean on content streams to generate interest and foster conversions and sales, it’s not reasonable to rely on long-form content – like blogs – solely for the purpose of generating revenue. Blogs and other long-form content, like page copy, can serve many other purposes without being directly responsible for sales. Other forms of copy, like ad copy and email marketing copy, are expressly responsible for driving conversions.

But it is still the case that sometimes blogs are such home runs that they actually succeed at convincing users to buy directly through them. There are some clients for whom we’ve created blogs that actually result in sales. These blogs, the purpose of which is to provide optimized content, go above and beyond the call of duty, and capture sales.

ORGANIC TRAFFIC: DOUBLED PAGE VALUE INCREASE			
Page ?	Bounce Rate ?	% Exit ?	Page Value ?
	55.79%  Avg for View: 42.08% (32.57%)	18.08%  Avg for View: 19.10% (-5.32%)	\$1.65  & of Total: 21.15% (\$7.78)
	51.34%	30.76%	124.10% (\$2.04)
	41.80%	13.16%	76.45% (\$1.26)
	44.84%	29.58%	43.79% (\$0.72)
	35.16%	14.93%	82.00% (\$1.35)
	55.06%	34.57%	151.39% (\$2.49)
	54.50%	33.65%	12.86% (\$0.21)
	68.06%	16.72%	193.49% (\$3.18)
	49.38%	18.37%	326.81% (\$5.38)
	48.28%	27.53%	156.74% (\$2.58)
	89.19%	19.14%	13.77% (\$0.11)

The above image is worth poring closely over. It features blog statistics for a client that has been with us for over two years. This client sells sporting goods and is in a PPC-restricted industry. We wrote all of their top blogs; the only entries not highlighted here are pillar blog pages; that is, the first, second, third, and fourth pages of the blog, and so on.

Page views and time on page are modest, most likely to do relatively low search volume for the targeted terms. However, these blogs are extremely conversion-rate optimized and are intended to serve as sales funnels. As you can see, among the top 11 blogs we wrote for the client, every single one of them has page value. That means that users read these blogs, then navigated through them and conducted purchases on the client’s website. Exit rate and bounce rate are also amazingly low, at just 18% and 55% overall, respectively. Considering the fact that most blogs have high bounce rates – around 80% – this is even more impressive.

We don’t have room to show it here – but among the top 25 blogs on this client’s website (all of which we wrote) – every single one has conversion value.

The metrics above show blog traffic to another long-term client in a PPC-restricted industry. This client sells airsoft guns and accessories.

Again, blog traffic is modest (although time on page is respectable, as are bounce and exit rates). The proof of success here is in the fact that, of the top 10 blogs on the client’s website, we wrote 7, and over half have conversion value. That is, real-time users read our content and then decided to buy something from the client’s website.

ORGANIC TRAFFIC	
Page ?	Page Value ?
	48.19% (\$0.27)
	33.75% (\$0.19)
	50.40% (\$0.28)
	0.00% (\$0.00)
	317.51% (\$1.76)
	0.00% (\$0.00)
	0.00% (\$0.00)

ORGANIC TRAFFIC	
Page ?	Page Value ?
	13.77% (\$0.11)
	102.98% (\$0.86)
	197.63% (\$1.65)
	579.77% (\$4.84)

Finally one more client in a PPC-restricted industry. This client sells outdoor sporting goods as well but has not been with us for as long as the previous two. Consequently, our content has had less time to generate substantial rankings for them. Still, 4 of their top 10 blogs are ours, and every single one has respectable conversion value. So people are reading and buying. The blogs are doing their work to generate higher organic impressions and they’re capturing some sales as well.



## The Takeaway: Why Content Is Important in SEO

Taking all of this into consideration, it's clear that optimized content can do much more than generate ranking increases in the organic search results for target keywords as a part of the client's eCommerce SEO campaign.

High-quality content can also:

- **Bring in readers**
- **Increase time on page**
- And, in select instances, result in sales, directly through the content pages themselves.

Though it's not possible to guarantee them, these are the things we strive to deliver to our clients with our SEO content creation strategies.

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## Get Creative About Attracting Long-Term Organic Traffic and Engaging Customers with Content and SEO

Our aim is to create content that ranks, captivates attention, engages readers, and sells. It's integral to our SEO process. If you're looking for a provider that takes creativity and interest seriously, we're here for you.

Get in touch with us at 888-982-8269 for more information. We'd be happy to field any of your questions and get you started with a custom-made, purpose-driven SEO campaign that puts a strong emphasis on the most important pillar of SEO – content.

## Considering Our SEO Services?

SEO for eCommerce is a hard-fought battle. Everybody in your industry is competing for just 10 spots on Google's first page. In order to be one of those people, you need to be smarter, quicker, and work harder than everybody else. 1Digital is the marketing partner that can help you get there. We employ intelligent SEO strategies that grow organic ranking, traffic and conversion. We have highly skilled eCommerce SEO experts that focus on eCommerce merchants and we're widely recognized as one of the best eCommerce SEO companies online.

**SEO Experts.** 1Digital employs a talented team of eCommerce experts that focus on e-Commerce only. We've been working on eCommerce SEO since our inception and we've slowly grown into one of the top eCommerce digital agencies in the country. Our eCommerce search engine optimization skills have propelled us to the top of the talent pool and we've been helping our clients win more business with more sales and leads since early 2012. Our founder and CEO, Dan Kogan has been involved with eCommerce SEO since the late 1990s and he's carved out our path to being the best in the eCommerce space ever since. If you've been looking for a top company that handles eCommerce SEO, you've found it.



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