

The Good, Better, Best SEO Tips for a New Website

The Good SEO Elements

The items listed below will help prepare your site for search engines and establish the basic elements of proper SEO.

XML sitemap

- XML sitemaps provide search engines with a list of every URL attached to a domain
- Be sure the domain has a working XML sitemap that contains every unblocked URL on your domain
- Multiple free tools exist to test an XML sitemap, like xml-sitemaps.com

Robots.txt

- The Robots.txt file tells search engines which categories, pages, and parameters should not be indexed
- The XML Sitemap URL should be listed in the Robots.txt file

301 redirects

- 301 redirects are used to point one URL to another URL, usually when a page is deleted
- Redirects are highly useful for maintaining and transferring organic value and should always be part of a redesign or replatform

Status codes

- Every accessible URL (those not hidden behind a login or blocked in Robots.txt) should resolve as a 200-level status code
- Any URLs or in-text links resolving with 301, 302, or 404 status codes should be updated before launch, so they aren't indexed

The Better SEO Elements

In addition to the “Good” SEO practices, you can use these “Better” technical elements to build lasting organic value and knock competitors out of top positions.

Meta data

- Title tags and meta descriptions are extremely important for developing page value and encouraging clicks from search results
- The title tag is the first thing a search engine checks when it lands on a page, which means it must have a valuable, related keyword (or two)

Headlines

- Page headlines range from H1 tags to H2, H3, H4, and H5 tags
- Website managers can use headlines to add secondary keywords or keyword variations that support the title tag and help raise the URL's overall organic value

Internal linking

- Creating connections between related pages with internal linking is one of the best ways to transfer value from high-level pages to deeper pages
- Links should be created with valuable keywords as the anchor text, though global navigation links don't apply

The Best SEO Elements

With the “Good” and “Better” SEO practices implemented, you can move on to the “Best” elements and improve on-page content, optimize your site's speed and performance, and build your domain's presence across the internet.

High-quality page content

- On-page content is the best way to expand a page's organic value and gain rankings for secondary keywords and keyword variations
- The perfect opportunity for creating and implementing natural internal links and expanding a URL's value

Link building

- Receiving links to your website from domains in related industries
- Links can be solicited, and many marketing groups will help companies gain more backlinks for their domain

Image loading & speed

- One of the last major organic value development factors is a site's overall speed and performance
- The faster and smoother a site loads, the better. Huge image files, outdated coding and styling, and other “junk” can significantly hinder a domain's performance