

## 6 Things CEOs Need to Know About SEO

As business is so heavily impacted by technology, CEOs need to be informed about current strategies. A Q4/2009 study by Conductor, a New-York based SEO services/technology firm, showed that 53% of Fortune 500 companies have “no natural search visibility for their most advertised keywords” – meaning they don’t show up in the Top 100 results. Implementing and analyzing a Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy will allow Marketing and IT teams to leverage website traffic and impact revenue.

Here are 6 things CEOs should know about SEO:

### 1. SEO is a marketing opportunity

As the study mentioned above relays, more than half of Fortune 500 companies do not have a search engine presence. This opens up a large opportunity to capitalize on that market share. If SEO does not account for a portion of your marketing budget, you are missing out on a powerful opportunity to reach your target audience.

### 2. You can’t set it and forget it.

While there are many web design, development and hosting firms that create beautiful websites, aesthetics do not result in search engine visibility. SEO is a marathon, not a sprint: it is a long-term strategy that includes much preparation, and replenishment. SEO is ever-changing and must be a continual process and strategy.

### 3. You must have unique content.

It is important for your website to be focused on content themes relevant to your industry and your most important keywords. Duplicate or irrelevant content will hinder your search engine presence. If you sell insurance, utilize terms that refer to the theme of selling insurance. The worst possible outcome is for a user who needs insurance to land on a page within your site that says nothing about the topic. User-experience has a lot to do with providing information relevant to both search engines and users.

### 4. Relevant title tags and descriptions are important.

Place the keywords chosen for optimizing into your website’s title tag, the verbiage at the very top of web browsers. The website description and the first few sentences on your home page are indexed by search engines; therefore, they will provide a clear and concise explanation of your company and what it does. Your site needs to be clear, concise and descriptive.

### 5. Establishing 301 redirects and creative 404 error pages can make or break your website.

When moving content on your website, make sure you 301 redirect your old URL to your new one. Also create a unique 404 error page that notifies the user of the non-existent page. While in many cases a 404 error page means that the URL or page is broken, it acts as the final attempt to capture users’ attention and keep them on your site. Additionally, include a link on the 404 page that points back to the previous page.

### 6. Website modifications should be based on data.

Utilize web analytics in order to track your web performance data. If you don’t currently use analytics tools, such as Google Analytics, you don’t have your hands on the controls. Keyword research also helps define the true intent of what people are looking for and can give you ideas on how to establish content themes for new sections of your website. At Marcel Media, we like to say, “an ounce of data is worth a pound of opinion!”