

HOW TO AUDIT YOUR SEO IN 30 MINUTES (OR LESS)

In this Marketing Action Guide, you'll learn how to audit your website to make sure it's setup properly to rank high in Google when prospects search for your products or services.

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WHY YOU NEED TO AUDIT YOUR SEO

There's a big, ugly, and costly problem within the search engine optimization (SEO) industry. Chances are pretty good you've seen it firsthand and you're feeling shell-shocked from the experience.

Do you know what I'm referring to?

I won't beat around the bush. The problem with SEO is that **too many businesses have been ripped off by SEO companies.**

Of course, I blame the shoddy SEO companies. But I also strongly believe business owners need to take more responsibility when it comes to vetting, monitoring, and holding SEO service providers accountable.

SEO is not magic. It's also not "too complicated" for you to understand at a basic level. You'll see just how easy it is once you go through the 10-steps below.

If you hired an SEO company, then this is your chance to confirm they are doing a good job for you.

If you're doing SEO in-house, then use this document as a checklist to make sure you're not missing any key ingredients.

10 STEPS TO AUDIT YOUR SEO

Complete the 10 steps below to make sure your website is setup properly to rank high in Google. Even if you hired an SEO company, I strongly recommend you audit their work by going through these simple steps.

STEP 1: WEBPAGE TITLES

Every page on your website needs a webpage Title. The webpage Titles (<title> in the source code of your web pages) tell Google what your pages are about, and they are one of the biggest factors in your Google rankings.

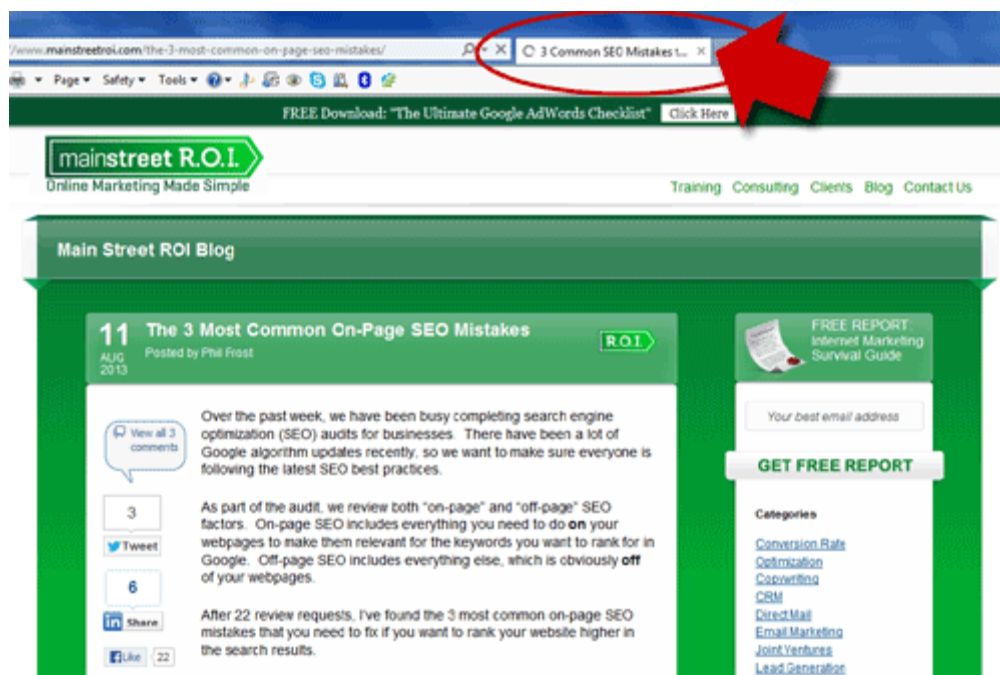
Think of your Titles as chapters of a book. What if you opened up a book and every single chapter had the same title? That would be pretty confusing right? Well, that's

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exactly how a lot of websites are set up, and you can probably see how that could be confusing for Google.

The solution is simple. Use unique, descriptive Titles for each webpage and include your target keyword phrase early in the Title. For example, if you want your webpage to rank #1 for the search phrase “baby food cookbook,” then the Title of that page should include that exact phrase. Using your keyword in your Title tells Google your page is **relevant** for that keyword.

Here’s how to locate your webpage Titles to confirm they are set up properly. If you use Internet Explorer 10 as your web browsers, then the webpage Title is displayed as the name of the tab. See image below.



This can be confusing because the webpage Title is not displayed on the actual webpage. It’s displayed as part of the browser. If you use Firefox, then the Title is in the upper left corner of the browser, as well as the name of the tab. See image below.

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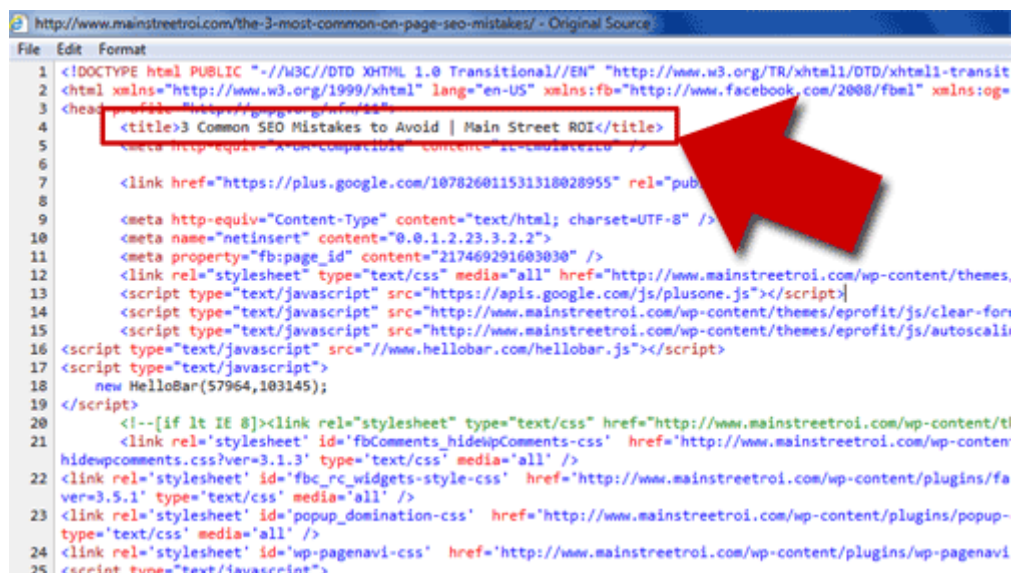


As you can see in the examples above, the Title can get cut off so the best way to get the exact Title is to view the HTML code. Don't get freaked out. I promise this is super easy to do and this skill is critical for analyzing your on-page SEO.

Here's how to find the Title in the sea of HTML code on your webpage.

First, go to the page in your browser. On a Windows computer, you'll right click your mouse and select "View Source" or "View Page Source." Source code is just a fancy way to say you want to view the raw HTML code (and any other code that's on your page).

Once the browser loads the source code, then you'll see something like the image below. The webpage Title is everything between <title> and </title>. In my example the Title is "3 Common SEO Mistakes to Avoid | Main Street ROI."



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If you have trouble finding the “<title>” in the sea of HTML, then use the Find function. Again, on Windows you can select Ctrl + F and then type “<title>” to quickly find the Title. That’s all there is to it. Now you can easily find the webpage Title for any page on your website to confirm they are unique, descriptive, and include your target keyword.

Also, if you want to rank high in the local SEO results, then I recommend you include your city and/or state in your webpage Title. For example, “Car Mechanic in New York, NY” would be a good Title for a NYC car mechanic.

STEP 2: WEBPAGE DESCRIPTIONS

The webpage Meta Description is what Google will display in the search results below your Title. This is a critical element because your prospects will use your description to determine whether or not to click on your listing. A compelling description will earn you more clicks, which in turn, will help improve your rankings even further.

But there’s one little catch. **It’s impossible to see your Meta Description by simply visiting your webpage.** Browsers do NOT display the Meta Description. Only search engines read and use this information.

So again we need to view the source code (aka HTML code) just like we did to find the Title. But instead of searching for <title>, we’re going to search for “<meta name=’description’” See image below for an example.



```
27 </script><script type='text/javascript' src='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/wp-includes/js/jquery/jquery.js?ver=1.8.3'></s<br>28 <script type='text/javascript' src='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/wp-content/plugins/popup-domination/lightbox.js?ver=1.0<br>29 <script type='text/javascript' src='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/wp-content/plugins/google-analytics/external-trackin<br>30 <link rel='EditURI' type='application/rsd+xml' title='RSD' href='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/xmlrpc.php?rsd' /><br>31 <link rel='wlmmanifest' type='application/wlmmanifest+xml' href='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/wp-includes/wlmmanifest.xml<br>32 <link rel='prev' title='YouTube Video Ads Are a Huge Opportunity For SMBs' href='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/youtube-vi<br>33 <link rel='next' title='Mobile Is So Hot Right Now (what To Do About It)' href='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/mobile-is-s<br>34 <link rel='shortlink' href='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/?p=14931' /><br>35 <script type='text/javascript'><br>36 window.__gcf = {lang: 'en'};<br>37 (function()<br>38 {var po = document.createElement('script');<br>39 po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';<br>40 var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0];<br>41 s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);<br>42 })();</script><br>43 <br>44 <meta name='description' content='Here are the top 3 on-page search engine optimization mistakes to avoid.' /><br>45 <meta name='keywords' content='on-page seo,search engine optimization,seo' /><br>46 <br>47 <link rel='canonical' href='http://www.mainstreetroi.com/the-3-most-common-on-page-seo-mistakes.<br>48 <br>49 <style type='text/css'><br>50 span.oe_textdirection { unicode-bidi:bidi-override; direction: rtl; }<br>51 span.oe_displaynone { display:none; }<br>52 </style><br>53 <br>54 <!-- Google Analytics Tracking by Google Analyticor 6.2: http://ronaldheft.com/code/analyticator/ --><br>55 <script type='text/javascript'><br>56 var analyticsFileTypes = [''];<br>57 var analyticsEventTracking = 'enabled';<br>58 </script>
```

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In the example above, the word “description” is highlighted because I used the Find function to quickly search for the Meta Description. That’s how I recommend you find the description in your source code. The actual Meta Description for this page is “Here are the top 3 on-page search engine optimization mistakes to avoid.”

So as you check your webpage Titles, also confirm each Meta Description is unique, descriptive, and compelling so your prospects are more likely to click on YOUR website in Google.

STEP 3: WEBPAGE COPY

The first thing you’ll want to check is to make sure you have sufficient text on your webpages. If your webpages are full of Flash and images without enough text, then it’s going to be hard for Google to “read” your website and understand what your pages are about. Make it easier on Google and include at least 200 words of copy on each webpage.

Next, check to see if every page on your website has UNIQUE content. If Google thinks two or more pages are essentially the same, then only one will have a chance of showing up in the search results. Think about it from Google’s perspective. Why would Google want to show duplicate pages? That doesn’t help their users find the information they want.

So, make sure you have unique webpage copy, along with your unique Titles and Descriptions for each page (see steps #1 and #2 above).

STEP 4: WEBSITE STRUCTURE

A lot of website owners shoot themselves in the foot with their website structure. Take a look at your website and go to your product or services page(s). Do you have individual pages for each product or service? Or (more likely) are all of your products or services listed on just one page?

Putting all of your products/services on a single page is a big mistake, when it comes to SEO. Google wants to show the most relevant web page for any given keyword. So if you have a focused web page for each of your target keywords, you’ll have an easier time ranking in Google.

That means if you provide multiple products or services, then each one should have **its own webpage**. Again, think about this from Google’s perspective. Does it make more

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sense for Google to display a webpage about every product or service you provide, OR a webpage that perfectly matches the keyword typed into Google.com? For example, if someone searches for a “BMW car mechanic” then which page is more likely to rank higher:

1. Webpage specifically about car mechanic services for BMWs
2. Webpage about car mechanic services for all car manufacturers

Clearly, #1 makes more sense because it’s more likely to satisfy the searcher (aka Google’s end user).

If you currently list all of your products or services on a single page, then create new webpages specifically for each product or service.

STEP 5: TECHNICAL SEO

Unfortunately, there’s no way around the fact that some things with SEO are going to get a little technical. But recognizing the technical issues is really not difficult. I’ll show you how to do it in just a moment. And then, if you discover a problem, it’s up to your webmaster or server admin to roll up his or her sleeves and fix it.

There are 3 common technical SEO issues you need to check:

1. Canonicalization
2. Duplicate websites
3. Sitemap.xml

CANONICALIZATION

Canonicalization is a fancy word that is essentially the process of telling Google which URL structure to use in the search results. For example, by default most websites can be accessed by going to www.domain.com, as well as domain.com. The difference is that one includes the “www” and the other does not.

So what’s the big deal?

Well, technically if you let people and search engines access your website from both URLs, then it’s as if you have TWO identical websites. So if you’re trying to rank your service page at www.yourdomain.com/service and Google also finds the same page at yourdomain.com/service, then that’s a confusing situation. Which one should Google show in the search results?

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The solution is simple. I recommend you choose the URL structure with the www. Once you know which one you want, then ask your webmaster to 301 Redirect the other version so everyone automatically is redirected to the URL with the www.

DUPLICATE WEBSITES

As I said earlier, Google does not like to see duplicate websites. That's one of the reasons fixing canonicalization is so important.

So if you have several websites and they are very similar, then again, I recommend you pick just ONE of the websites and focus on building up the authority and reputation of that one website. Ask your webmaster to 301 Redirect the other duplicate websites to the website you want to focus on. This will centralize all of your SEO efforts.

SITMAP.XML

The last technical issue to check is your sitemap.xml file. Simply go to yourdomain.com/sitemap.xml to see if you have one already installed on your website. If you do, then you're all set!

If you do not, then I recommend you ask your webmaster to generate a sitemap.xml file, install it on your website, and then add it to your Google Webmaster Tools profile. This will make it easier and faster for Google to find all of your pages so they have a shot at ranking in the search results.

STEP 6: WEBSITE BLOG

I'm sure you've heard that blogging is a great tactic for SEO. Or you've heard that "Google loves blogs." But do you know why?

Search engines like Google love blogs because they provide fresh, informative webpages for their users (for free!). Google would be worthless if it didn't have enough relevant and high quality webpages to show for every keyword searched each day.

OK, but how does blogging improve your SEO?

There are two main reasons:

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1. First, consistent blogging signals to Google that your website is “alive” and actively contributing information to the web. Google doesn’t want to show outdated webpages on websites that no one uses anymore. Think of publishing articles as a way of telling Google you’re still in business and you are worth listening to.
2. Second, each blogging article gives you another opportunity to rank. Most business websites only have a handful of webpages. That means you have a limited number of chances to show up in the search results because a single page is relevant for only a few keyword phrases. But if you’re blogging each week, then after a year you have 52 more pages that Google may rank on the first page of Google. Think of blogging as if you’re spinning a web and as your web grows you’ll be able to catch more and more prospects who are searching in Google.

STEP 7: GOOGLE ANALYTICS

You can’t improve what you can’t measure. That’s why it’s critical to have an analytics program to track website visitor behavior on your website.

Google Analytics is free, easy to install, and fairly easy to use if you know what to look for. If you’re not sure whether or not Google Analytics is installed on a particular webpage, then view the source code (see steps above) and search for “analytics.” You should see code like this on EVERY webpage:

```
<script type="text/javascript">
  var _gaq = _gaq || [];
  _gaq.push(['_setAccount', 'UA-XXXXX-Y']);
  _gaq.push(['_trackPageview']);
  (function() {
    var ga = document.createElement('script'); ga.type = 'text/javascript';
    ga.async = true;
    ga.src = ('https:' == document.location.protocol ? 'https://ssl' :
'http://www') + '.google-analytics.com/ga.js';
    var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0];
    s.parentNode.insertBefore(ga, s);
  })();
</script>
```

If you do not see that code, then you’ll need to go create an account at <http://www.google.com/analytics/> and then follow the directions to generate your

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unique tracking code. Once you have your code, then I recommend you ask your webmaster to add it to every single page on your website.

STEP 8: EXTERNAL HYPERLINKS

Up to this point, we've been focused on all of the so-called "on-page" SEO factors. On-page SEO includes everything you need to do ON your website in order to make it relevant for the keywords you want to rank for. Once you've confirmed your webpages are relevant, then it's time to switch gears and check your "off-page" SEO factors.

By far the biggest off-page SEO factor is the quantity and quality of hyperlinks (aka links) from other reputable websites. Each link is like a vote in your favor to rank your webpage higher in the search results. The more links you have from relevant, high-quality websites, the better.

So to review your off-page SEO, I recommend you run a link report on your website. One of the best, free tools available is <http://www.OpenSiteExplorer.org>. Go to that webpage, type in your domain name, and then click the Search button.

OpenSiteExplorer will then show you all of your links from other websites. At this point, you'll fall into one of the following buckets:

1. You may have NO links. If this is the case, then you have no votes in your favor and you're less likely to rank high in Google ☹️
2. You may have very few links (i.e. less than 20).
3. You may have a lot of links, but they are from LOW quality websites. You'll need to click on the website to see whether or not it's a legitimate website. If your links are from random comments, spammy looking blogs, and irrelevant articles, then this is a red flag for Google. The recent Penguin update targeted websites who had links like this.
4. You may have a lot of links from HIGH quality websites. Pat yourself on the back or give your SEO company a nice big high-five 😊

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STEP 9: MOBILE WEBSITE

If you've been following me for a while, then you know my predictions surrounding mobile devices. It's all based on the fact that mobile internet traffic is expected to surpass desktop computer traffic by 2015. At that point, more people will be "Google'ing" from their cell phone than from one of those outdated, clunky desktops. I can already hear my daughter say, "You used to use a DESKTOP computer!?! You're OLD!" ☺

The reason this is so important for SEO is because 70% of businesses do not have mobile friendly websites. If you ever try to use a website that's not mobile friendly on your mobile phone, then you know it's extremely frustrating. Google doesn't like to frustrate their users and that means businesses with mobile friendly websites will have a competitive advantage in the search results.

To check whether or not your website is mobile friendly, simply go to your domain using your smartphone (or your kid's phone if you're behind the times). If your website looks like a miniature version with links that are nearly impossible to click, then you do not have a mobile friendly website. If your website looks more like a mobile app with big buttons and large font, then you're all set!

STEP 10: GOOGLE+ LOCAL

The final step in our SEO audit is for businesses who want to use local SEO to target nearby prospects. Here's a quick background about local SEO, so you can see if this is relevant to your business.

Google recently introduced "local" business listings to Google.com's search results. For example, when I search for "car mechanic" in Google, then I see a page like the one shown below because I'm searching in New York City:

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The screenshot shows a Google search for "car mechanic" with approximately 29,300,000 results. The results are categorized into "Ads related to car mechanic" and "Local Car Mechanic" listings. The "Local Car Mechanic" listings include:

- Local Car Mechanic - Complete Auto Care & Repairs** (www.acdelco.com/New_York) - Offers services like Air Conditioning, Batteries, Alternators and Starters, and Brakes.
- Local Car Mechanic - Find a Dealer for Auto Repair Here** (www.mycertifiedservice.com) - Highly Trained Expert Technicians. Brake Offers/Service Info - Everyday Values & Rebates - Locate A Dealer. 1039 Northern Blvd, Roslyn, NY - (516) 209-2446.
- UTI Auto Mechanic School - UTI.edu** (www.uti.edu) - Jumpstart Your Auto Tech Career at UTI - Charlotte. Visit & Enroll Now.
- Auto mechanic - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia** (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auto_mechanic) - An auto mechanic (or car mechanic in British English and motor mechanic in Australian English) is a mechanic with a variety of automobile makes or either in a ... Education - Related careers - References - External links.

The "Local Car Mechanic" listings are displayed in a grid format. To the right of the listings is a map of New York City with several red pins labeled A, B, C, and D, indicating the locations of the listed businesses. Below the map is a "Map for car mechanic" link.

Below the map, there are several "Ads" for car mechanics:

- Car Mechanic** (www.meinekeads.com/Coupons) - Free Maintenance Check & Up To \$50 Off Any Auto Repair Service -Call! 1613 JF Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City (855) 847-6186.
- Marty's Auto Repair NYC** (www.nyc Autobody.net) - 24hr. Towing Service Manhattan. Call For Free Estimate.
- Firestone Monthly Offer** (www.firestonecompleteautocare.com) - For Select Services only, Buy 1 get 1 50% Off at Firestone, ends 9/30. 1767 Forest Ave, Staten Island, NY (718) 569-5206.
- Salerno Auto Repair 1959** (www.salernoservicestation.com) - 1 (718) 384 4880. Brooklyn HONEST Family ran Mechanic -DROP Your Car off 24-7 for Repairs. 451 Lorimer Street, Brooklyn, NY (718) 384-4880 - ★★★★★ 22 reviews.
- Joman Auto Service** (plus.google.com/AutoRepairShop) - 40+ Years Auto & Truck Experience. Diagnosis Maintenance Repair.
- Auto Repair** (www.fast-enterprise.com) - We Specialize in Perfection When It Comes To Your Car!
- Rubix Auto** (plus.google.com/AutoRepairShop) - Lube and Auto Repair. VAG & European Car Specialists.

Local Business Listings (Google+ Local)

See how Google automatically lists local car mechanics in New York City? Those are Google+ Local listings and the process of getting in those results is called "local SEO."

If you're not looking to attract local customers (e.g. if you're an e-commerce business), then you can skip this step.

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But if you're a business targeting local customers and Google is showing Google+ Local businesses for the keywords you want to rank for, then you'll definitely want to complete this step.

When it comes to local SEO, Google is ranking your Google+ Local business listing instead of your website. However, there are still some things you need to do on your website to optimize your Google+ Local listing.

Here's what we're going to check:

- **Consistent contact information.** Google needs confidence that your name, address, and phone number are accurate or else they risk frustrating their users. So it's critical to use consistent contact information on your Google+ Local listing and on your website Contact page.
- **Keyword optimization.** Google uses the information on your Google+ Local listing (i.e. categories and description text) to match your business to relevant search phrases. Make sure you include your target keywords in your categories and business description.
- **Reviews.** Online reviews on Google+ Local are great signals that tell Google you're a popular business providing excellent service. If you do not have any reviews, then Google will not have much confidence ranking you higher than competitors who do have reviews.

TAKE ACTION CHECKLIST

Go through the list below and complete your SEO Audit. When you're done reviewing the list, then assign each incomplete task to a team member and set a deadline.

- Webpage Titles
- Webpage Descriptions
- Webpage Copy
- Website Structure
- Technical SEO
- Website Blog
- Google Analytics
- External Hyperlinks
- Mobile Website
- Google+ Local

WANT MY HELP?

If you'd like help with your SEO, send an email to privateclient@mainstreetroi.com (and be sure to include your website URL).