Proposal

Improving SEO Results for <Company name>

**For attention of:** <Contact Name>, <Role>

**Author**: <Consultant name>

**Date**: <Date>

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# About this template

## Who is this template for?

The main purpose of this template is to help agencies and consultants preparing SEO proposals.

We think that client-side businesses may also find the template useful when reviewing proposals received from different agencies as part of SEO agency selection.

We have developed it in response to requests for an SEO proposal template by consultants and agencies whose main focus isn’t search marketing, instead they are looking to offer SEO services perhaps through recruiting or re-training existing staff. Of course, we know that specialist search marketing agencies will have already developed their approach to proposals for pitching, although they may be interested to compare their approach to ours.

The first part of the proposal, which summarises current goals, processes and results from SEO can also be used for taking or giving a brief to the agency in advance of submitting the proposal.

## What is the scope of the proposal?

Traditionally, SEO proposals have focused on five core areas:

* 1. Keyword research to understand customer intent for content related to market and to scope the size of the SEO opportunity
* 2. Technical SEO to ensure search engine robots can crawl the site successfully and index unique content. This also includes information architecture, taxonomy and the internal linking structures.
* 3. On-page optimization to improve relevance of pages for searchers and so attract more visits.
* 4. Link-building to gain quality links from quality sites.
* 5. Brand reputation protection including managing negative SEO.

These areas are all covered in the template structure, but the proposal is broadened to include recommendations on content marketing and social media marketing. Modern SEO requires a solid content marketing strategy and implementation to be effective unless the scope is deliberately limited to one of the four techniques above. For larger brands it should also cover Brand reputation, so considering negative SEO.

## How is it structured?

The template is provided as an unbranded Word document so that it can easily be modified for proposals. It is structured in a conventional format for an agency proposal:

* Understanding client business challenges and goals from investment in SEO
* A summary of the agency solution going into detail on different activities forming the approach to SEO
* Structure of SEO programme

## How to use this template?

This template has clear headings and <prompts of what to cover in the section in angle-brackets – you can delete these>.

As you complete the proposal, or as clients review it, it’s important to keep in mind how the approach is differentiated from those for other agencies. Here are 10 key differentiators between agencies.

**10 Key differentiators between agencies:**

Which factors should clients consider when reviewing proposals:

1. **Proof of delivering results from SEO**, ideally in a similar business sector.
2. **Methods for reviewing market potential based on consumer search intent** – keyphrase analysis and target setting.
3. **Process and techniques for identifying possible penalties** and **techniques for recovering from them “link detoxification**”.
4. **Specific techniques for link-building**, still the most important ranking factor and vital for success in competitive markets. Look for a structured, repeatable, scalable process, with sufficient creativity to encourage sharing.
5. **Specific techniques for identifying technical SEO challenges** such as duplicate content, redirects, content errors
6. **Integration with content marketing and social media marketing processes** / division between agency and client tasks
7. **Specialist SEO techniques relevant to the type of business**, e.g. local SEO, international SEO or factors related to the vertical market
8. **Approach to understanding and reporting on SEO effectiveness**. Defining commercial results and the quality of links built.
9. **Process for reporting, review and improvement** discussed agency and client using relevant KPIs, dashboards and reports.
10. Finally, **cost** in relation to activities delivered.

We consider that on-page optimization i.e. copy markup isn’t a significant SEO differentiator, although the process for managing improvements to on-page markup and copy quality at scale for large sites can still give significant boosts in traffic.

# 1 Introduction

Thank you for inviting us to propose how we can assist <company name> in improving your Search Engine Optimization (SEO). We see a good opportunity for SEO to contribute more to <company name> based on our review of your current effectiveness outlined in this proposal. The SEO techniques we recommend are based an established process focusing on <describe key differentiators>. We will tailor our approach for <company name> to get the best level of collaboration between <company name> and <agency name> to drive results. SEO can be developed as a major source of traffic, leads and sales with focus on the right SEO activities based on high quality content marketing and we look forward to working with you to achieve that.

This proposal is based on your brief discussed between <name, company name> and <consultant name, agency> on <date>.

It outlines the analysis and recommendations needed to improve SEO and content marketing effectiveness for <company names>.

# 2 Understanding your needs

## Market

<Company background – range of products or services highlighting those which are a priority for improving SEO>

<Core audiences summarised through personas>

## Background to SEO activity

### Business goals

Your SEO activity has these goals on which we will focus:

* < Typically this will be increasing ranking to specified product categories and so visits to increase leads or sales
* <Broader goals may include brand reputation, thought-leadership or brand protection too>

SEO is currently delivering this value to the business <Important to go beyond rankings and volume to commercial results – use the Smart Insights VQVC mnemonic to check this>.

* *Volume* (organic visits, volume and percentage of all traffic and AdWords if relevant, coverage and rankings for main target keywords)
* Quality (bounce rates, conversion to lead and profile quality of leads generated, site engagement)
* *Value* (Percentage and amount of new and existing customer revenue generated from SEO, or for a non-Ecommerce site, leads and goal value per visit in Google Analytics)
* *Cost* (Reference current cost and express as Cost-per-click or Cost-per-Acquisiton, CPA)

### Existing resource and process

<Current management and process of different areas of SEO and how they relate to content marketing and social media marketing>

**SEO History and SEO activity**

<Summarise the long-term trends in SEO rankings and contribution, particularly any problems, such as a fall in rankings, penalties and recoveries. Aim to summarise current priorities>.

<SEO assets – number of pages and current marketing activity across range of domains owned by the company or partner domains that can be used for relevant links. Cross-linking between sub-domains and domains is often a good opportunity, particularly in larger businesses>

<Existing approaches summarising around the main areas of SEO, for example>:

1. On-page SEO.

2. Technical SEO.

3. Development of quality content assets.

4. Influencer outreach and link-building.

5. Brand reputation management.

6. Measurement and improvement.

## 

## Business proposition and brand engagement using content

<SEO should support the unique features of the company and brand(s) and how it is positioned in market. This relates closely to the types of content used to engage audience>

## Your requirements

You would like us to review the effectiveness of your SEO strategy and execution and make recommendations for:

<List relevant sites and microsites>

# 3 The <agency> solution

Our approach to reviewing and improving your results from SEO will involve these steps which are part of our standard audit and recommendations process, tailored to your market:

1. **Understand business goals and challenges against performance delivered**.

* Review commercial drivers for SEO investment and define KPIs with you for managing future performance and agency activity.
* Review current and potential future business contribution of SEO (compared to AdWords paid search if used) based on the review of Google Analytics and creating a conversion-based budget model
* Review and make recommendations on target keyphrases and summarise customer search intent/behaviour.
* What is SEO delivering now in terms of visitors and marketing outcomes?

2. **Understand marketplace effectiveness**.

* Review ranking performance against different competitor types for target keyphrases using an independent rank checker <name>. Make recommendations on how to out-perform each competitor type.
* Complete an Excel-based gap analysis of visits and engagement against search demand from customers. We recommend this spreadsheet is used for managing future performance.

1. **Brand reputation management**.

* Review position against competing sites for pure brand and ‘navigational’ searches.
* Review of effectiveness of brand messaging compared to natural and paid search competitors
* Review of quality of site, content and backlinks for Google Webspam filters including Google Panda and Penguin to identify any link detoxification needed
* Review social media mentions and recommend how to manage

4. **Review external backlink profile analysis**

* Overview of site authority and backlink profile using 2 independent tools <name>.
* Review of competitive referring domain backlink history through backlink analysis services
* Detailed recommendations on techniques to improve backlinks to your site including publishing a list of publishing / partner options and link-building methods for linking. Based on more detailed analysis of link profile for competitors.

## 5. On-page optimisation analysis (for country sites and partner sites)

* Review of HTML semantic markup and schema options.
* Recommendations on which meta data are important, unimportant and which need to be improved.
* On-page semantic markup
* Duplicate content recommendations
* International SEO recommendations (where relevant)

6. **Content, link and viral attractiveness audit**

* Effectiveness of different types of content in attracting links
* Effectiveness of social media marketing in generating links
* Recommendations on content marketing strategy to improve
* Use of Google authorship to improve visibility in Google+

## 7. Future SEO resourcing and process analysis

## Review and recommendations on:

* Current effectiveness of agency work
* Responsibilities for SEO
* Activities for ongoing management of SEO
* Use of agencies including social media, design agencies.

# 4 Fees and timing

## Fees

The fees to complete the analysis and recommendations described in the previous section is **£X+VAT**

## Exclusions

<Can be useful for scoping in or out different aspects of content and social media marketing that may be shared with the client>

# 5 Managing the project

## SEO activities, deliverables and review process

<Define recommended deliverables and preliminary timings to be agreed on contract completion. This table of activities. At a top-level as below, these can be generic, so define individual tasks in more detail to help prove value.>

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Purpose** | **Deliverable** | **Target delivery (to be agreed)** |
| 1. Keyphrase analysis and opportunity estimate | Identify priorities for targeting keyphrases and define potential business benefits | Grouped Target Keyphrase spreadsheet | Week 2 |
| 2. Technical site audit | Identify problems and opportunities and define quick-win and longer-term recommendations | Site SEO audit and recommendations | Week 3 |
| 3. Content marketing strategy | Define best themes, formats and schedule for content | Content marketing strategy | Week 3 |
| 4. Backlink audit and link—building strategy | Identify and remove harmful links, reconfigure existing links and identify opportunities for new links. | Backlink analysis and recommendations | Week 4 |

## Deliverables

Our reports will help you prioritise by giving three levels of recommendations within the deliverables including:

Priority 1. **Quick Wins** to gain immediate improvements – give examples of categories, e.g. home page, product and navigation improvements for internal linking. Link detoxification and recinclusion requests.  
Priority 2. **Medium terms investmen**t in content marketing and link-building, for example developing a blog and new content assets.  
Priority 3. **Longer-term factors**. Summary Powerpoint presentation of main findings recommendations to discussed in 1/2 day meeting at the end of the project

## Team members

<Define the key team members depending on the scale of the project>

* Account or project manager
* Different SEO roles as appropriate: SEO Strategist, Technical SEO, Copywriting, Online PR and content management

## Confidentiality

An NDA will be signed for the project. All data and recommendations will be treated as strictly commercial-in-confidence.

## Our requirements from you

* Provision of login access to Google Analytics and Webmaster Tools.
* Prompt review and response to questions and draft recommendations

# 6 About company name

<Company case studies and credentials giving examples of improvements in business results>

## Contact details and next steps

This report was prepared by <consultant names>. Please contact us with any questions on <X>.

## Further examples of SEO proposals

This book by Danny Dover covers the consulting process and creating a proposal.

<http://www.amazon.com/Search-Engine-Optimization-SEO-Secrets/dp/0470554185/ref=la_B002IR161U_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1403071885&sr=1-1>

# Appendix - A glossary of SEO terms for business.

<SEO is perhaps THE most confusing part of digital marketing for clients, so it is best to minimise jargon. However, to describe your specific approach and credibility you need to go beyond generalisations. A selective glossary of SEO terms can be helpful here since you wont want to explain terms in your main proposal. Example terms covered in our 7 Steps to SEO guide include:>

* Backlink
* Duplicate content
* Geotargeting
* Google Webmaster Tools
* SERPS
* Internal links
* Link Detoxification
* Negative SEO
* Panda
* Penguin
* Reinclusion request
* Webspam