

How do I get found on Google?

Make it easy for
customers to find you
with this simple guide
to search marketing



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Why is SEO vital for businesses?

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is one of those technology buzzwords you've no doubt heard but might not fully understand.

While it may seem overly technical, its importance cannot be overstated if you want potential customers to find your business online. With so many consumers now searching for products on the internet, it's important for businesses to have an online presence.

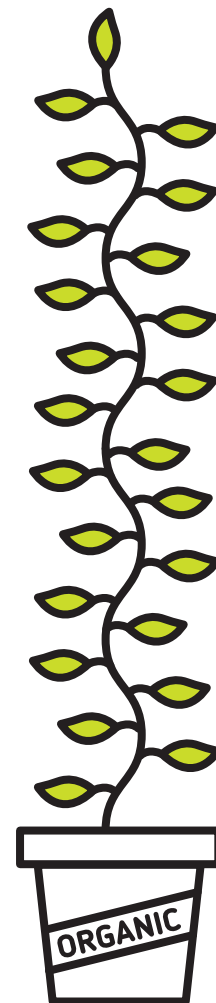
But it's not enough to simply have a website.

This is why SEO and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) are so useful for small businesses in the digital age.

SEO aims to boost your website's exposure on the web by influencing search engines like Google and Bing so they can find your website and rank it high in their results pages.

SEO is called "organic" search because appearing naturally on a results page is free. Businesses spend time and money strategising how to get higher up in search engine rankings because customers often only look at the first page of search results.

That means the more refined and sophisticated your SEO strategy, the better your website's ranking is, the more traffic you're likely to get to your site and the more conversions you make.



What is SEM?

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is essentially advertising your website on search engines like Google and Bing.

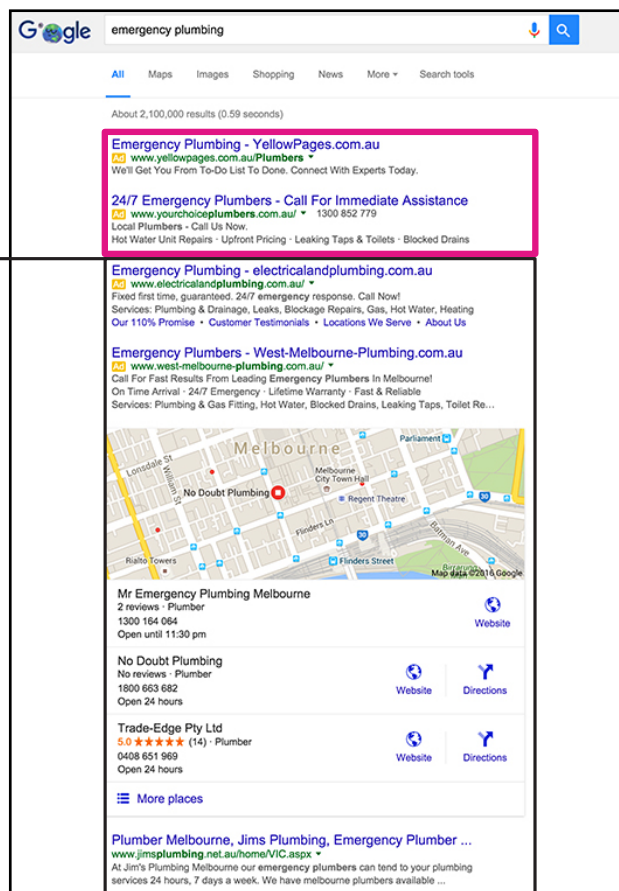
At its most basic, SEM delivers traffic to your website by buying ads on search engines. You may also hear it referred to as paid search or pay-per-click marketing.

Pay-per-click (PPC) is a common SEM format for campaigns. The limited spots are auctioned off to the highest bidder, but page relevance still counts as Google scores ad quality based on their relevance to your website.

SEM plays an important role in attracting customers to your site and, when done well, it can put your website right where customers are actively looking for what you sell.

(SEM) paid positions

(SEO) organic positions



How will SEM help my business?

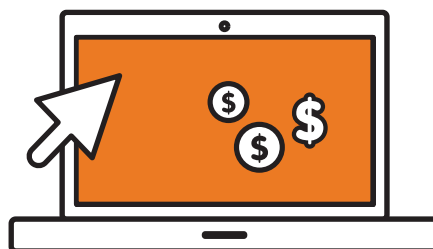
When people search the internet they type specific phrases into a search engine – like “Childcare Coburg”. These phrases are known as keywords and are at the heart of search engine marketing.

Search engines like Google match up the keywords someone is searching for with the keywords a website uses, as well as those used in search ads.

Put simply, a campaign involves bidding on keywords and phrases. These bids are referred to as your ‘maximum cost-per-click’ and are the most you’re willing to pay for someone to click on your ad.

Search engines consider a number of factors to determine who wins the auction. These include your bid, the quality of your website and how useful the information might be for a potential user.

The great thing about Sensis Search Ads is you only pay for customers who click on your ads, and our technology makes sure your campaign dollars are spent as efficiently as possible.



**16% of
Australian small
businesses
pay for SEM
services.¹**



The mysterious ways of search engines

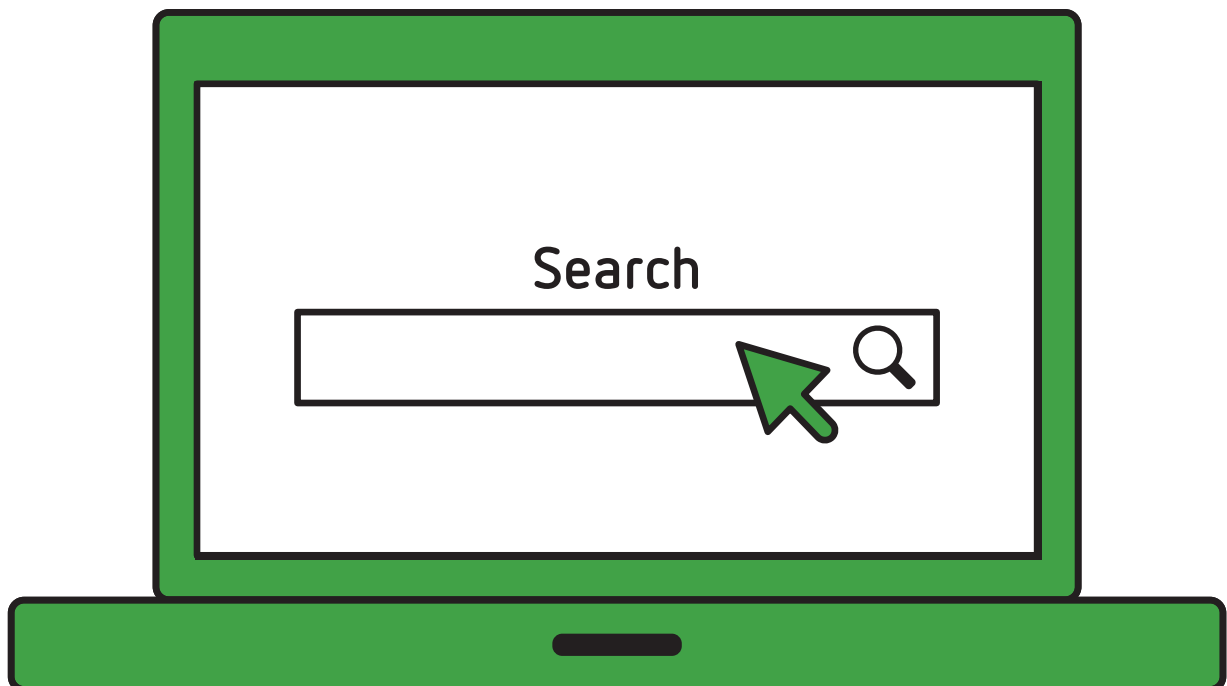
Search engines have to list hundreds of millions of web pages that are constantly being created, changed or deleted without warning.

It may sound bizarre but internet programs called "crawlers" search the web to collect data and then report this back to the search engine's list or what is also known as an index.

That index is what the search engine refers to when choosing which sites to display after a user searches for a certain word or phrase.

Naturally, search engines are keen to find web pages that best fit a searcher's needs. That's the business they're in and they want to provide a valuable service.

The search engines use complex formulas known as algorithms to bring up the most relevant results, all within a fraction of a second.



How can you boost your website rank?

Keywords

Keywords are the terms people enter to perform a search. They are also the main marker of relevance for search engines.

Much of the work performed around SEO and SEM is about making sure the keywords likely to be used by people hunting for your products appear in the right places on your website.

Here's an example. Many banks will advertise for 'mortgages' but most consumers are searching for 'home loans'. It's important to make sure you have the right keywords.

'Keyword density' is how many times a certain word or phrase is found on your website. There are certain places where it's more important to include your keywords – the URL, the title tag, links, headings and throughout your page content. Websites are read from top to bottom so words found closer to the top result in more favourable rankings.

Link it

Another good way of increasing your popularity in the eyes of a search engine is to have plenty of links from other sites onto your site.

Search engines see these links as marks of approval or votes from other people. They assume if lots of other sites are linking to you, it's probably because your site has interesting or valuable content. You can ask other sites to link to you, or use anchor text, which is when you hyperlink a word or phrase within text to another site or to information within your own.

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Want to go higher?

Quality content

Making sure your content is of high quality is another way to make your business website more easily found by search engines. High quality means original content that will be valued by your customers.

Online directory listings

An online directory listing is another way to ensure potential customers can find your business easily. Yellow Pages' extensive online network can boost your business online by making sure it can be found however your customers are searching.

One of Google's recent updates has also focused on online directories so businesses listed in reputable directories will be ranked higher in search listings.

Speed

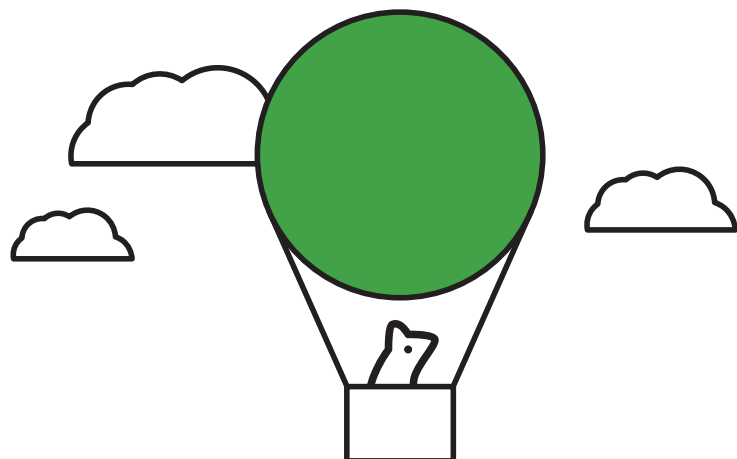
This is a new one, but something you need to keep in mind. Recently search engines have been taking a site's speed into account for rankings, especially on smartphones, as nowadays most browsing is done on handheld devices.

The faster your mobile site loads, the better off you're going to be with regard to rankings. But you should never strip away valuable features just to get a faster load time. Always balance usability with speed.

A simple URL

A great website address or URL is clear, concise, meaningful and friendly. If a URL is complicated, long and full of digits, symbols and underscores, not only will your customers not remember it, but search engines may have problems deciphering what your keywords are.

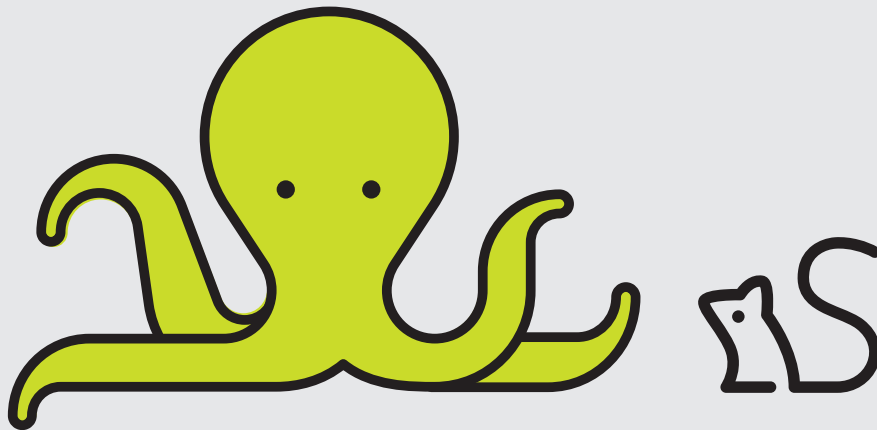
Use hyphens instead of underscores in URL names because search engines treat these phrases as one single word if connected with underscores. Taking these steps will position your website higher up in the search results.



We'll help your business:

Build a website
Get found on Google
Grow a following on Facebook
And get heaps more customers

We make it easy to promote your business.
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Mobile websites are important too

There's no denying the power of mobile. The mobile phone market is near saturation point, with more mobiles in Australia than people.

In spite of this, mobile sites are often an afterthought for small businesses putting together a website. With 66% of Australian mobile users researching products on their phone, it's essential that your website displays perfectly in the mobile environment.²

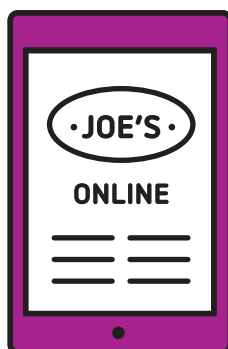
This has become even more important recently because Google has introduced a change that will reduce a website's traffic or mobile ranking if it doesn't work well on mobile or tablet screens.

Did you know that Google takes into account the speed at which your mobile landing page loads when it calculates your page ranking?

Research has shown that any delay longer than a second will cause the user to interrupt their flow of thought, creating a poor experience.

Search engines try to keep the user engaged with the page and deliver the optimal experience, regardless of device or type of network.

To see if your website is compatible and easily used with smart devices, test it with this free mobile-friendly testing tool <https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/mobile-friendly/>



Extra pointers for good SEO

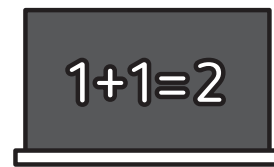
Ensure your website loads fast by avoiding over-sized images and by hosting it on a fast web server.

Create fresh, relevant content so search engines don't consider your website stale. One of the best ways to do this is with a company blog.

Engage in relevant online communities like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, forums and other blogs. By engaging in these communities and helping to educate people about your industry, you can gain additional exposure and links back to their website. This helps both traffic and search engine rankings.

Website tips for better SEO:

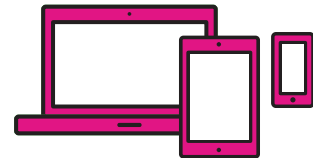
Keep your design simple.
Make sure what you're selling is crystal clear to any visitor. Don't let the design be too distracting.



Help your website build trust. Speak clearly and in an engaging way that's true to your brand.



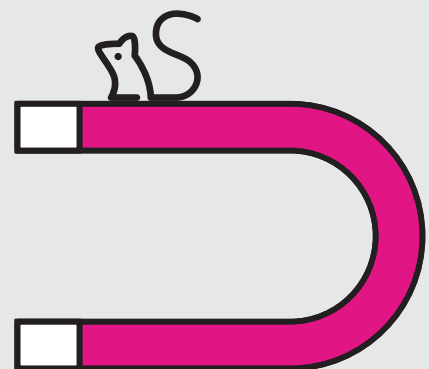
Be multi-device friendly.
Your site should work well on all screens including laptops, tablets and mobiles.



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sensis Websites



Tips on choosing an SEO and SEM partner

While basic SEO and SEM can be a DIY job, many businesses choose to hire professionals to develop a long-term strategy. Or to just save them the time and hassle of handling search marketing on their own.

When choosing an SEM or SEO supplier, make sure they're able to measure your marketing efforts and identify which strategies work for your specific industry.

They should be experts in helping you manage your website so that you appear higher in a search engine's page rank results. It's also important to track your sales leads with detailed reporting analytics.

It's also important to be careful of companies that guarantee a #1 ranking because unless you are using search ads, this is a misleading promise.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can SEO companies guarantee results for SEO?

No one can guarantee a #1 ranking on a search engine for SEO (though SEM is a different story). So beware of SEO companies that claim to guarantee rankings, allege a "special relationship" with a search engine.

My website ranks high on Bing, but not as high on Google. Why?

Each search engine uses a different algorithm; therefore, each one ranks a site differently. Any optimisation you do affects all search engines. When you're considering how to optimise your site, it's worth remembering that Google has the largest market share of all search engines.

How long will it take for a site to rank?

There is no way to accurately predict how long it will take a site to rank. A safe timeline is 6-12 months to rank on a local search term, depending on the amount of competition. Search engines may not even recognise changes to a site or links to a site for a couple of months. It's common to see no movement in rank for the first two or three months. And the more competitive a keyword is, the longer it will take to rank. This is why SEO is a long-term strategy.

There's no guaranteed placement for SEO? Why shouldn't I just do SEM?

It's true that pay-per-click (PPC) advertising can provide great results quickly with a healthy ROI. However, SEO (organic listings) are more trusted by users and receive more clicks. So even though it takes time to rank, the ROI and long term value of SEO is higher than SEM.

Want more information?



If you'd like to know more about the benefits of SEO or SEM for your business or learn about the solutions we offer, talk to one of our experts.

Just visit
[www.sensis.com.au / learn](http://www.sensis.com.au/learn)