Overview

Today we’ll discuss the following:

● **Why SEO is important**
● Current search engine algorithm **trends**
● **Best practices** to increase your website's search visibility
Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's unpaid results—often referred to as "natural," "organic," or "earned" results.

- Wikipedia
What are Search Engines?

- Search engines are very large, complex information cataloging systems.
- Users type in keyword or phrases to find relevant web content.
- Common search engines include, Google, Bing, Yahoo!, Ask, and AOL.
# Search Engine Market Share

## comScore Explicit Core Search Share Report (Desktop Only)

October 2015 vs. September 2015

Total U.S. – Desktop Home & Work Locations

Source: comScore qSearch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Search Entity</th>
<th>Explicit Core Search Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sep-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Explicit Core Search</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Sites</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Sites</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahoo Sites</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask Network</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOL, Inc.</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why is SEO Important?

- Connects new users to your website organically.
- On average, there are 10 search results on a page. The top three receive the most organic traffic.
- If you’re not at or near the top, most likely new users will click on other organizations’ websites.
Google Search Results
Keyword Search Term: Washington State University

Paid
Washington University - WGU.edu

Organic
Washington State University

Paid
Online MBA Degree - Top 25 Ranking from US News

Washington State University
With its main campus in Pullman and urban campuses in Spokane, the Tri-Cities and Vancouver, WSU enrolls 21,000 undergraduates and graduate students.

Admission
Admissions - Admitted - Apply Now...

Academics
Academics & Majors - Apply to WSU - Freshman - Contact - Info

Graduate School
Learn about the graduate programs offered in the...
Keyword phrase: growing gala apples in washington

Google Search Results

Same website, different pages:
- **Apple Varieties** - Washington Apple Commission
  - [bestapples.com/varieties-information/varieties/](http://bestapples.com/varieties-information/varieties/)
  - You'll go gaga for Gala! This crisp, aromatically-sweet apple features pink-orange stripes atop a pretty yellow background. Delicious in salads, pies, and sauces, ...

- **Crop Facts** - Washington Apple Commission
  - Washington grows more apples than any other U.S. state. With its nutrient-rich soil, arid climate, plentiful water and advanced growing practices, Washington's ...

- **Organics** - Washington Apple Commission
  - [bestapples.com/washington-orchards/organics/](http://bestapples.com/washington-orchards/organics/)
  - Washington State is known as one of the premier apple-growing areas in the ... of the Washington organic acreage planted is in Gala and Fuji apple varieties ...

WSU Website:
- **Apples in Washington State** - WSU Extension Counties
  - [county.wsu.edu › ... › Tree Fruit › Washington State University ›](http://county.wsu.edu › ... › Tree Fruit › Washington State University ›)
  - Washington produces about 58% of the apples grown in the United States, and ... it has receded to 30% of production, followed by Gala (now being converted to ...
Google’s Algorithm

- Google adjusts its algorithm 450-500 times a year
- Uses 200+ parameters
- Exact algorithm is not available to the public
Algorithm Parameters

Common parameters include:

- Content
- Titles and headings
- Keywords
- Links (internal and external)
- Accessibility
As a WSU unit, you already have a head start with SEO. Here’s why:

- `.edu` URL
- Optimized for mobile
- Website/Organization large size
Quality Content is the #1 parameter

- Focused, high-quality content
- Easy to read and understand
- Use common terminology
- Create content for your users
- Updated frequently
Unique and accurate page titles

- Choose a title that accurately describes the page’s content
- Use brief, but descriptive titles
- Think about terms your users would use when looking for this page
Page title (H1)

Main Content (H2)

Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting, remaining essentially unchanged.

Sub-section 1 (H3)

Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book.

Sub-section 2 (H3)

Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book.
● Max. 2-3 keyword phrases per page
● The main keyword phrase should appear within first 150 words on the page
● Repeat the keyword phrase(s) a couple times on the page.
Links

- Internal (journeys connecting like pages together)
- External (outgoing links to other websites)
- Link farms
- Always link with a purpose (consider reputation)
- Avoid linking to add links for SEO returns
Ways to track success:
● Check search engine ranking changes by searching for keywords
● Watch your page’s Google Analytics
● Increase in ‘conversion’ or actions (e.g. requests for information, phone calls, event registrations)

Be patient, it will take 60 days (or more) to see changes in your performance.
Search engine crawlers need to be able to read everything on the page.

- Adding descriptive ‘Alternative Text’ to images, graphics, and documents
SEO No-Nos

- Cloaking
- Duplicating content on multiple pages
- Adding irrelevant keywords
- Linking to link farms or linking to link
Steps you can take now

- Review your pages for the proper heading hierarchy (H1, H2, H3, etc.)
- Identify keywords for top programs, search for those on Google and Bing.
- Scan pages for keywords, add if needed
- Add descriptions in the ‘Alt Text’ on all displayed images
Final Thoughts

- This is just scratching the surface
- If nothing else, focus on:
  - Creating high quality content
  - Good organizational structure
  - And, update your content often!
References

- **Google Search Engine** Optimization Starter Guide *(PDF)*
- On-Page SEO: Anatomy of a Perfectly Optimized Page *(InfoGraphic)* backlinko.com
Questions?