ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 5 - number 174 Wednesday 29 september 2021

SEO tips for selling online courses

Did you know that SEO is a great tool for attracting visitors to your site and increasing online course sales? Let's find out how.

If you're in the **online training** business, you'll know that instructional design requires time, resources, and expertise, and that once the course is published, an equally complex job begins: that of promotion and sales.

On the other hand, working to create a complete and effective eLearning course is of little use if you can't sell it. But what can you do to bring more visitors to your site and make your training offer known without paying for ads and campaigns?

The answer lies in SEO, which is **search engine optimization**.

In this article we will see:

- What SEO is and how it works
- The benefits offered by SEO
- How to use SEO to sell courses online

What is SEO and how does it work?

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is the set of strategies aimed at increasing the visibility of a website by improving its positioning in the **organic results (not sponsored)** search engines (such as Google).

If done well, SEO allows you to **bring free and quality traffic to a website** by intercepting the needs of users who search online and directing them directly to the most relevant pages of the site. For example, if you market an online course to learn English, SEO will help you to be increasingly visible on search engines when users search for "online English course".

The benefits of SEO

Relevant traffic

SEO is the only strategy that allows you to **bring free and relevant traffic** to your site. This is because if you rank high in the search results, most users will come to your site spontaneously at the exact moment they search for what you offer.

Long-term strategy

Unlike paid ads (with which you only get traffic when you spend money), SEO is a great long-term strategy. Working on optimizing your site will allow you to create relevant content that will drive traffic to your site not only when you publish your pages, but also afterwards. Indeed, over time it is very likely that your site (if optimized) will gain authority in the eyes of search engines by further improving its **ranking**.

Trust

Publishing quality content on your site will allow you to **provide value to your audience** and this will also positively affect the trust that users will have in you.

How to use SEO to sell online courses

Identify keywords

First, you'll need to take care of searching for the right keywords - terms related to your course topic that your audience is searching for on the web. How to do that?

Search engines are a free and easily accessible mine of ideas for finding out what users are searching for online. How do you use them for SEO? Access any search engine (e.g., Google), type in your keywords, and wait for auto-completion to suggest the phrases most searched for by users. Use both the list of the most frequent searches and the list of so-called "related searches", which will allow you to further expand your list of keywords.

Another free tool for analyzing user queries is **Google Trends**, with which you can identify the most searched terms on the web over a certain period of time or in a specific geographic area and compare two or more search terms to see which is the most popular.

Our advice, however, is not to focus only on the **queries with the most traffic**. The terms with the highest volumes, in fact, have higher competition and, since Google favors the most established sites (which have more content, links and authority), you would risk not getting results. So also focus on **lower volume**, more specific keywords, the so-called "long-tail keywords." For example, going back to the English course example, the query "advanced English course" will certainly have less traffic than a more generic "English course", but it responds to a more targeted search intent and will allow you to convert more easily.

Use keywords in your content

Once you've identified keywords, you can incorporate them into your content. Be warned, however: although keywords are crucial to a site's SEO, you should use them as naturally as possible. Among the factors that are analyzed by search engines to evaluate web content is **keyword density**, which is the number of times a keyword appears in the text of a page. This means that if they find an excessive use of keywords, they will consider it an attempt to trick the system and penalize your site.

Write quality content

Once you've identified your keywords and analyzed user searches, it's time to write. With this in mind, it will be important to focus not only on the presentation and sales page of the course, but on any other content that can offer value to your audience (for example, a blog where you can collect in-depth articles on topics similar to those covered in your courses).

Remember that, in SEO, quality always wins over quantity. Here are some tips for structuring your content effectively:

1. Choose a **catchy and relevant title**. This is in fact one of the crucial elements of the page as it will determine whether a potential customer will click on your site or not. A good page title must be able to grab the user's attention and, at the same time, work well in terms of SEO.
2. Write a **short introduction** in which you anticipate what they will find within the page.
3. Break the text down into **short, simple sentences** and divide it into paragraphs that provide a pleasant reading experience. The reason is that web readers are easily distracted. If the text is not easy to read, they will close the page and look elsewhere.

Optimize images

Visual content is an increasingly important element on the web because it has the ability to grab the user's attention and make a page's content more appealing (e.g., through photos and infographics) or effective (e.g., through charts or graphs).

But that's not all. Images are also very important from an SEO perspective, as long as they are "optimized". What does that mean?

Weight and size

First, remember that heavy images take longer to load, compromising the **user experience** on your site. So make sure your images have a size that is relevant to what their use will be and that the weight is not excessive.

Image name

Make the file name relevant to both its content and the keywords you want to push. Uploading an image with the name 237623.png is not going to be very useful in terms of SEO. So, take your time in choosing the file name, make it **descriptive** and, if it consists of several words, make sure that each word is separated from the other by a hyphen.

ALT tags

Search engines are not able to look at images and fully understand what is inside. With this in mind, a very important element for SEO optimization of images is the ALT tag (or alternative text), which is the textual content (invisible to page visitors) with which to describe the image and allow search engines to correctly identify and categorize it.

This text is also very important in terms of **accessibility**, because it will be read aloud by screen readers allowing those who cannot see the image to understand its meaning.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator