

Daniel Hall Presents



Episode 128

Fast Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for Authors, Publishers & Information Marketers

with Jeremiah Smith

Welcome to today's episode of the RealFastResults.com podcast! Today's special guest is Jeremiah Smith, who is the cofounder and CEO of a digital boutique marketing agency called [Simple Tiger LLC](#). This is an agency that specializes in Search Engine Optimization (SEO), and for 11 years Jeremiah has helped companies like Segment.com, Shopify, NBC, MTV, and other big companies to get significant gains with their SEO. The company also helps small businesses do the same.

Traffic turns into money when you know what you are doing, and we all would like to have more organic traffic. It all comes down to getting more eyeballs on your books, courses, and any buy buttons you may have. Throughout the years that he was building his company, Jeremiah has seen people being unnecessarily burned by other digital marketing agencies or confused by misleading SEO strategies. Jeremiah's mission is to open up about what a lot of other SEO marketers and agencies won't share.

Why share this? Because transparency is much needed in this industry, in which sharing tends to be frowned upon. Jeremiah has some really exciting stuff to share with you right now. Please welcome Jeremiah to the show...

Promise: Demystify SEO

First of all, I'd just like to say thanks so much for having me on the show. I'm really excited to be here. In terms of that big promise, I've pretty much got two things that I'm going to

promise you today. **Number 1. I'm going to demystify SEO so that you can walk away with a really good, clean, clear, sober understanding of what SEO is, whether you've ever invested in it or have never even heard of it. You're going to understand what SEO is.**

Number 2. I'd like to show how you can do it quickly. Everyone asks me about SEO, and speed, and how long it will be before they see results. All of my clients go through the same conversation on that, but I don't talk much, publicly, about how to do SEO quickly because it is possible. A lot of you out there may be wondering, "Wait, I thought SEO was a long-term game." It definitely is, for it to age and kind of go through its vintage like wine, but at the same time, you can definitely get results from SEO very quickly. I hope to demystify that as well today.

Why You Should Be Interested in SEO

Why should you be interested in SEO? **The reason is that out of all of the online traffic generation tools, and all of the methods of bringing new visitors to your website or in your business, SEO, to this day, is still the highest-converting traffic source.** You could do Facebook referrals, you could do a cold email blast or outreach, you could make a mention on Entrepreneur.com, or you could use all kinds of different methodologies. You could even use a paid search or paid ads, but organic search is still the highest converting traffic generation methodology because people are actively searching Google for what your business does, and they are looking to buy, they are looking to transact, and they are looking to start a relationship.

Knowing that, once they perform that search and they go into Google, they trust Google's results. Google has a great name for everyone. Everyone and their mom knows how to use Google just fine. So, if you know that when you search for something, positive, trustworthy results are going to show up, then you are likely going to convert on those results. I still Google things all of the time and end up buying some of the top few results myself. I know how it works, I'm familiar with it, and I think everyone listening to this is familiar with that. Well, it's the highest-converting traffic methodology, so that's why it's relevant.

The more reputable domains, the more reputable companies, and I guess, the more well-optimized sites tend to rank better, period, end of story. Google has put such great effort into building an algorithm that delivers trustworthy results and offers a good experience to their users. **So, to a large degree, we can just, kind of, trust and lean on Google's algorithm to sort out what result is best for us to find.**

If we are very picky, then we can dig a little deeper in the results, or we can refine our search and use different keywords to hone that search in. That's even more reason to be

good at SEO. You might want nitpicky customers, and if that's the case, then you offer content that speaks directly to their needs, and your keywords are going to convert well, and your content is going to convert well.

SEO Framework

When it comes to SEO, at my company specifically, we like to lay out a framework for all of our clients. This is a boilerplate framework, and it's a comprehensive framework. Keep in mind that it doesn't always apply to every single client. Some clients come in, and they have a very specific technical need, or they have a very specific content need, and we'll address those needs. But, if I'm starting with somebody fresh, and they have never done SEO before, I'm going to tell them everything that we need to do about SEO, and here's the framework we follow.

We have three major categories of steps. The first category would be "technical," the second category is "content," the third category is "links or offsite". Now, the very first thing that we actually do before we even get into one of those buckets is keyword research because, basically, that's kind of like, "Let's develop a map to where we would like to go." So, we develop this map, first, of keywords that we know we need to rank for using a process called keyword research.

Keywords

What that really involves is figuring out some keywords that are related to my product, or business offering, or service that customers are actively searching for on Google right now. An easy way to figure that out is to go ahead and search for those keywords and see if any competitors that you know of come up, or any sites come up that are offering what you're offering. And, if they are offering it, consider them competitors, even if you've never heard of them before, because, at least in regards to SEO, they are competitors for you. They are dominating a space that you want to be in.

Technical Optimization

So, technical optimization is... If you talk to 10, 15, 20 SEO people, they are all going to say pretty much the same thing, which is that you have to do good technical SEO in order to rank well.

That's true, but a lot of SEO professionals tend to, kind of, stop right there. They, kind of, finish up at technical because that's all they really understand. It gets much deeper than that, but the whole idea behind "technical" is that the code and the structure of your website, the server configurations for the server that your website is about, all of that actually matters. How fast your site loads, how easy it is to access individual pages on the

site... The reason is that when Google goes out and crawls the Web, they send little robots out that are little pieces of code, which follow certain directives. They follow certain rules on how they are going to index the Web.

Your site has to work in a way where those directives, and those robots, can easily crawl your website and access everything. So, think of it like a library with The Dewey Decimal System being perfectly implemented. If that's the case, you could walk into a library of 10 million books, and you could go find the exact, single one book that you wanted to find in that whole library. And, as a matter of fact, if you used the table of contents in the book, you could find the single page, or even the single word, that you wanted. That's how organized the information is.

Think about that in regards to “technical” and your website. We want to structure things well. So, that's “technical”.

Content

The next piece is content. **“Content” is the text, images, video, and audio that users are looking for when they are searching on Google.** You may be thinking to yourself, “Well, I have an eCommerce business, so my business isn't all about people looking for photos or images.” Well, not necessarily. Some of the content that actually convinces users to convert on commerce are good quality photos. So, you do need good photos on your site, and you need good text to describe the product. Maybe if you have a product review video on your site, that might help too.

All of that content really helps users to convert, and Google knows that. Google knows that content helps users to convert and that content has value to it and that people are going to search for that content. So, you've got to have good content on your site. This can be anything from pages on your site, to blog articles, to a resource section, or a knowledge base, if you are trying to teach on a pretty intense subject. That could be really useful. Things like that. So, we have to have “technical” checked and “content” checked.

Links and Off-Site

The final piece is something that I loosely categorize as “off-site”. Most of the time I'm talking about links, but I loosely use the term “off-site” because links aren't the only factor that interact with your rankings from outside your website. **There are a lot of other factors as well, so I created this category called “off-site”.** Well, we'll just stick to links for a moment. **We want to build links back to our pieces of content from other sites around the Web.**

Now, this can happen naturally, and you can just sit back and let it happen as people discover your content. That's the slowest, most painful, most difficult way to do SEO. **However, if you really want to do it well, I would recommend producing pieces of**

content and trying to get other sites to link to your pieces of content. By doing that, what happens is everything that is on your website so far, the “technical” and “content” that we’ve already discussed, that’s stuff that you can easily manipulate, and Google knows it. But, stuff that’s off of your website is much harder for you to manipulate because that means that you have to, somehow, influence other sites to do things for you.

That’s really hard to manipulate, so Google, kind of, offsets their trust for you with some factors off of your website that actually balances out how much they can really trust you. If they see that your site is very well-optimized and you’ve got good links pouring into it, then they actually trust your site a lot of what you say it’s about, and that helps you rank, ultimately. That’s pretty much the 10,000-foot overview of SEO, kind of demystifying it a little bit. There are so many more details I could dive into, but I think that’s a good overview of SEO.

Keyword Research

Starting off with keyword research, I’m just going to give you a few key pieces of information that you could run with today, and you can start working on an SEO campaign, yourself, right away. **The first thing that I would do, if I were starting an SEO campaign for my own business, would be to analyze some keywords that were relevant to my business offering.** What is it that I sell? Maybe I sell some type of invoicing software for SaaS companies. So, let’s say that I’m a competitor to Stripe, and we’ll call the company Squiggles. So, that’s going to be the name of my company, Squiggles, and my competitor is Stripe, and I want to rank for, maybe, “SaaS invoicing software”.

I’m going to do a couple of searches on Google and see who is coming up in the results. I see that Stripe comes up and a couple of other competitors come up. I look at their sites and I figure out what kind of keywords they are using on their site. I figure that out simply by reading the text on the sites and seeing what’s in their headline and seeing what some of the first few things they are talking about are. What do they say that describes exactly what they are? And, take note of all that.

At the end, you want to start with at least 5-10 keywords, minimum. So, if you can get to that, then we’re good. We’ve got a good list, and I would call that a “seed” list of keywords. Then, I would go over to a tool, like, [Ahrefs.com](https://ahrefs.com). And, I’m not an affiliate of theirs; I don’t make money if you guys go in there. It’s a really good tool that we actually use in our agency to do keyword research. You can plug those keywords in under a free plan, and the tool will give you some keyword data back, such as the search volume for those keywords.

What that means is, how many people per month are searching for those keywords. We want to find keywords with higher search volumes and lower amounts of competition. That’s the sweet spot, and it’s hard to find because a lot of people are doing what I’m doing. A lot of people are researching this stuff, and a lot of people know that if

there's a high search volume/low competition keyword, it's a good keyword. So, what happens? Competition increases. So, just because it's a competitive keyword doesn't mean that you can't compete for it, especially if the keyword describes specifically what your business does. Throw your hat in the ring for that, and jump in, and do that, alright?

The same tool that I have already recommended, [Ahrefs.com](https://ahrefs.com), has a site auditor, or site crawler tool, but there's another one out there that's free, if you have 500 URLs on your site or smaller. That tool is called [ScreamingFrog](https://www.screamingfrog.co.uk). Again, I'm not an affiliate. I should probably find out if these guys have affiliate accounts; it might help us, but... It's an incredible, free tool. **So, download Screaming Frog. It will let you crawl your site, and it will show you all of the intricacies of your site.** If you read a little bit about the technical optimization of SEO, either through [Moz.com](https://moz.com), or some other online provider, you can find out a lot about what's wrong with your site in that free Screaming Frog crawl, and you can go back to your developer and have them optimize the site for you.

Turn Keywords into Content

Once you are done with that, now let's really get into the long stretch of SEO. This is where you need to be patient with yourself and take your time because it's going to take a lot of work, but it will work. **We need to take our keywords and convert them into content.** We need to find a way to write about your keywords. You need to write content that adds value, that educates people, that offers a promise in the title and then delivers on that promise right away. Then, you'd need to dive deeper into that promise in your article, so that it pushes people to read the whole thing, and then ultimately, this all drives to a call to action.

Now that we know our keywords, and we know what our search volume and our competition is like for those keywords, I think we'd have some expectations. We'd have some idea of how hard it's going to be to perform for some of those keywords because of the competition as well as how much we have to gain from those keywords because of the search volume. Once we are done with that, then I think it would be time for us to look at the technical structure of our site.

So, at the end of the piece of content, ultimately you want people to do something. What do you want them to do? Do you want them to study your product or service a little bit more? Do you want them to make a purchase? Do you want them to sign up for an email list? Do you want them to get in touch with you? There are several different ways that you could go about making a call to action, but in that content, you need to do something along those lines.

Once you are done with that, and the content is there, you need to create relationships with people around the Web. **I recommend using tools like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and connect with people within any of those spheres that are in your**

neighborhood of influence, and maybe, are related to you in a sideways fashion. Maybe they aren't a direct competitor or something.

So, for example, let's say that I'm developing my software company, called Squiggles, and I'm a competitor to Stripe. I'm probably not going to reach out to Stripe, but I'm probably going to reach out to other companies that provide services to software companies, though, just like me. I'd reach out and say something like, "Hey, let's team up and promote each other's content, and let's do a guest posting on each other's sites, and let's share content, and let's mention each other on our social networks, and things like that." This adds you to a web, that Google can already see, of people that are relevant to a whole section of the World Wide Web. Once Google sees that, you'll start to stand out in that area as being influential for your target keywords.

Your goal now is to build links, get some social buzz, and create some activity around your content. Ultimately, that will help you. So, that would be the process that I would follow from A-Z. I know that I shortcut it a little, but I hope that gives you an idea of how we typically operate.

Google's Website Tool

When you are doing the whole technical optimization side of things, one of the first things that I highly recommend you check out is [Google PageSpeed Insights](#). If you just Google that really quick, it will be the first product to come up, and you can jump in there. For free, you can paste in your website URL and run a test. It's actually going to run two tests simultaneously. One is for desktop, and the other is for mobile.

Mobile is becoming more and more important over time. So, it started off kind of like a background noise thing that we should consider at some point, and the desktop was more important. But now, most searchers are mobile, and that's crazy to think about, but most people are not going to look at your website on a desktop computer, depending on the industry you are in and what you're targeting, of course.

Most people are going to view your website on a mobile device, in most industries. **So, you need to make sure that you look at that mobile section of PageSpeed Insights.** It's going to tell you how fast your site loaded, and it's going to give you a score, out of 100. Nobody gets a 100, so don't kick yourself if you get a score of, like, 85. That's honestly a great score in a lot of industries, but it will give you a little list of the types of things that they recommend that you optimize to speed up your site's load time. I would take that list, study it really well, and if you have a developer or someone who helps you to build your website, then I would contact them and say, "Hey, can you help me with this hit list of things that are going to help to speed up my site."

If you are on something like WordPress, it could come down to making sure that you are using the right plug-ins and the right hosting environment, like WP Engine or something

like that. Something that's built for using WordPress will often speed it up. Things like that really help a lot. There's another tool called Cloudflare that will speed up your site as well, if you are on WordPress or other sites. That's a great place to begin because PaidSpeed is such a critical technical item.

How Often Do I Have to Use a Particular Keyword in My Content?

Good question. A while back, many years ago, I probably would have given you a number or a percentage. Now I'm not going to do that at all, and it's because, over time, Google's algorithm has gotten so intelligent that it doesn't necessarily need a certain "keyword density," which is what you are really referring to. It doesn't really need that as much as it used to in order to deduce what it is that you're searching for. For example, if you were to open a new tab and search for "video game from the 80's with plumbers," you probably would know what I'm talking about. Well, so does Google. Google will show you the Wikipedia article for Mario Brothers.

It's pretty incredible that they can do that because you didn't use keywords that are directly relevant to what is in the description for that video game, but somehow Google figured out what you meant. So, there is this incredibly powerful algorithmic deduction of what users' intentions are when they are searching, and Google is making a lot of assumptions in that, but through artificial intelligence they are able to determine... When we click on that Wikipedia article, and we actually read it, are we engaged with that content, and was that what we were looking for, or we bounce away because that was not what we were trying to search for?

Google uses that little AB test right there to determine if that's a relevant result, and if it is, the given content will show up more for that keyword, and if not, it will show up less for that keyword. So, really, all you have to do is take your keyword subject... For instance, if I'm writing about the Squiggles software... It's an invoicing software for SaaS companies, so I'm probably going to talk about payment systems and challenges that SaaS companies have with processing credit cards. And, to a degree, Google is going to be able to deduce that we are an invoicing software company.

Now, at some point, it would not be a bad idea for me to just outright say, "This is a really good invoicing software for SaaS companies." It's not a bad idea for you to just straight out say it. You don't have to avoid the topic, but you also don't need to focus too heavily on using the keyword. So, I would say to just speak naturally as much as possible.

Final Tips

When it comes to publishing, we work with a ton of publishers, and we do a lot of PR. That's kind of our methodology for link building. We see the value in trustworthy, quality journalism. In this day and age, you very well know, I'm sure, that trustworthy, quality journalism is under constant threat. It's a difficult time to be in journalism and in PR, in general. But at the same time, it's an opportune time to be in that because it means that you can still be a voice of reason, and you can disrupt things by being authentic, which I think is so cool. I love it when the good guys have a chance like that.

So, I highly suggest that if you are in publishing, or if you are in some type of media, look for authentic data, and look for exclusive data. Then, find a way to connect that authentic data to an audience that is really looking for it. Let's say that you are just a contributor at a publication, for example, and you are all about producing content for this publication. You don't own your own brand, or your own website, or anything like that, but you want to do a good job of contributing. You could take the very first tip that I recommended, and just use that.

Just go do some keyword research before you start writing a piece to see how people are searching for what you are about to write about. That will help you to craft your message, not just so that you are able to say what you need to say, but also so that you are able to connect what you need to say to the people who are interested in actually hearing it. A lot of great stuff... And, this is something that we see all the time in dealing with publications...

A lot of great stuff gets published that no one ever finds because it wasn't well-optimized, and it really hurts us when we see that. Me, personally, I don't like it when I see that because there's great content out there that's hidden under poor optimization. We want to help people get through that.

Connecting with Jeremiah

A great way to connect with us, if you are interested in learning more about SEO, if you want more than just a brief overview, or if you have some difficult questions, or something like that, go to SimpleTiger.com, and just give us a shout. I've got a little chat box there. My face is going to pop up, and you can ask me questions directly. I do respond to those on my phone. You could also just shoot me an email at Jeremiah@SimpleTiger.com. I'd be more than happy to help you out with any challenges you're struggling with.

Resources

[Ahrefs.com](https://ahrefs.com)

[ScreamingFrog](https://screamingfrog.com)

[Moz.com](https://moz.com)

[Google PageSpeed Insights](https://pagespeedinsights.google.com)

Real Fast Results Community

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As always, go make results happen!