



# Website SEO FTW!

Ben Stewart



## What we'll cover today...

- Overview of the three types of SEO
- Learn the essential technical SEO standards for your website
- Understand how SEO fits with other traffic strategies
- Discover standard SEO tools and resources
- How to audit and measure SEO performance



**THE WHO...**



**Louder Agency**

**10+ Years**

**Christian Nonprofits & Purposeful Brands**

**Served on Ministry & Church Staff**

**Lexington, KY**

**3 Kids at Home**

**We Are Peers**



Click to download slides at:  
[louderagency.com/salt](https://louderagency.com/salt)



**THE WHY...**



**There once was a man with a message...**



**You've got to give people a reason to visit  
your billboard and discover your message.**



A random stat from the internet:

**80% of church visitors check out your website  
before walking through your doors.**



**Your website is your church's new front door.  
How do your visitors find it?**



Organic search is often your **largest** traffic channel (likely 20-40%). Plus it's **free** and **high-intent** traffic.



**The goal of SEO is **not** to get the most clicks  
or game the system.**



The goal of SEO is to **reduce friction** for people who actually want to find you online — whether they know you by name or not.



**THE WHAT...**



# SEO = Search Engine Optimization

...but generally we're just talking about Google.



# Google as a matchmaker.

- User searches for something.
- Google looks at specific keywords inside their query and tries to determine their search intent.
- Google tries to match the user with results from Google's index.



Your job in SEO is to **do everything you can** to make your content is the best match for the types of keywords your target audience searches.



**... BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF YOUR VISITORS!**



Focus on **servicing your audience** well first. Then add good SEO practices like icing on your website cake.




The best way to optimize for Google is to optimize your visitors' experience with **relevant content** and **technical SEO** best practices. This will cue Google that your website is trustworthy and authoritative within your niche.



**THE HOW...**



# Three types of SEO...




**Technical SEO** focuses on optimizing the technical side of your website so that it can be easily and efficiently crawled and indexed by Google.

- HTML tags
- Site architecture
- Site speed



**On-page SEO** focuses on optimizing page content so that you can improve your rankings for those specific pages and posts.

- Keyword research
- Meta tag content
- Page content



**Off-page SEO** focuses on optimizing your backlinks so you can build authority and trust for your brand and your content (which helps your rankings).

- Link building partnerships
- Social posts (including YouTube)
- Press and media placements



**Here's where to get started...**



**1**

**Assess Your SEO Market**



**Open a private browsing window and start searching keywords your potential audience might use to find you.**

**Take notes on what the top results look like and click through to the pages.**

**BUT... don't assume that what others are doing is what's best for you.**



## Keyword Planning





Research and make a list of target keywords ranked by **volume**, **difficulty**, and **value** to you.

Consider both **brand** keywords and **category** keywords,

Consider both **target** keywords and **long-tail** keywords — long-tail are often more specific and potentially higher value and higher intent.



**Know your audiences and how they find you.**

**Consider adding more **specific** keywords into your keyword mix like denomination, neighborhoods, or specific ministries you offer.**




## **Tools:**

**Google Keyword Planner (part of Google Ads)**  
**Chrome extension “Keywords Everywhere”**



**3**

**Audit Your SEO**



**SEO Site Checkup** - See what it says your most common keywords are and check your SERP preview.

**Google Analytics** - Look at landing pages over past 12 months by organic search source. You can't see keywords, but can see the content so you can assume the intent.

**Google Search Console** - Look at Performance > Top Queries.



## **Technical SEO Best Practices**



These are **foundations** that support the other areas of your SEO.



## SERVER / WEBSITE SETUP:

Enable **robots.txt** and make sure the Google bot is allowed to crawl the right parts of your website and blocked for the wrong parts.

Enable **sitemap.xml** and submit your sitemap URL to Google Search Console.

Enable **SSL** and force your website to use it so only one version of the site exists in Google (and flatten subdomains like “www”).

Fix **console errors** on your site. Use your browser’s inspector window to see them.



# HTML TAGS:

Check **meta tags** on your main pages - title, description.

Check **heading tags** on your main pages - H1, H2, H3. How many do you have, how long are they, and what's the content of each?  
Headings are a roadmap for your page content.

Check **page URLs** (slugs) for main pages.

Check **intro paragraphs** for main pages.

Check **image alt attributes** on main pages.



## OTHER FACTORS:

Check **site navigation** & make an outline. Use simple, clear page “slugs” with appropriate keywords.

Check **site speed** - use good hosting, a CDN, clean modern code (HTML, CSS, JS), and server compression. Use Google Page Speed Insights or GT Metrix to test.

Make sure your site is **mobile-friendly** (or mobile-first).

Incorporate **structured data / microdata** on the site for things like Address, Hours of operation, Staff bios, Events, Videos (sermons), etc.



## OTHER FACTORS:

Check **site navigation** & make an outline. Use simple, clear page “slugs” with appropriate keywords.

Check **site speed** - use good hosting, a CDN, clean modern code (HTML, CSS, JS), and server compression. Use Google Page Speed Insights or GT Metrix to test.

Make sure your site is **mobile-friendly** (or mobile-first).

Incorporate **structured data / microdata** on the site for things like Address, Hours of operation, Staff bios, Events, Videos (sermons), etc.



## ON-SITE SEO TIPS:

Top 3 ranking factors for pages & posts: **Title tags, URLs, Headings.**

Write dedicated **landing pages** and **pillar posts** using target keywords.

Don't make pages **too sparse** on content.

Avoid **duplicate page content** - use canonical URL tag when you do.

Include **Q&As** where you can



## SEO KPIs:

**How much organic traffic are we getting?** Use Google Analytics and try to track your visitors' next steps like video views or downloads, too.

**How many total keyword rankings do we have?** Also track rankings for your target keywords. Use SEM Rush or AHREFS.

**What's our domain authority rating?** Number created by Moz to measure the authority of your site. Use Moz or Majestic SEO




**THE WHAT ELSE...**



**Churches are LOCAL**



**It's not SEO, but you should utilize the Local SEO box (local pack / map pack)**



**“Local Pack” - Google shows the top 3 “local intent” search results on a map on the first page of results pulled from the Google My Business directory.**

- Setup and verify Google My Business**
- Use consistent NAP (name, address, phone) online**
- Make landing pages for campuses (if relevant)**
- Add reviews and photos**



**QUESTIONS?**



Get these slides and more...

[louderagency.com/salt](https://louderagency.com/salt)