

GREEN INDUSTRY ProsTM

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020

The Management Resource for Landscape Contractors and Equipment Dealers

HOW COULD
**ROBOTIC
MOWERS**
BENEFIT
LANDSCAPING
PROS?

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2020 THE TOP TRENDS, & CHALLENGES & INNOVATIONS



2020
CATALOG
IS HERE!



Over 9,500
Outdoor Power
Equipment Parts!

800.841.3989
rotarycorp.com



Available through servicing dealers & distributors.

HOW TO AVOID MAKING COMMON SEO MISTAKES

Keeping your website at the top of Google



PlagueDoctor / Chainrong Prasertthai / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Simply put, SEO (search engine optimization) is essential for your website to be successful. If you want customers to find you online for the services you provide, you need to appear at the top of Google's search results when someone looks for those services.

How do you get your website to the top of the search results? Search engine optimization - it's kind of in the name. SEO can be complicated and there are a lot of mistakes that can be made when doing it yourself.

From having duplicate content to not putting enough information on your Google My Business profile, issues can mount up and affect your search engine rankings drastically.

To help you avoid being penalized by Google, we have comprised a list of the most common mistakes that occur with SEO and how you can avoid them.

Duplicate Content

Duplicate content is text that has been copied from one website and posted on another. It is one of the worst things you can do for your rankings.

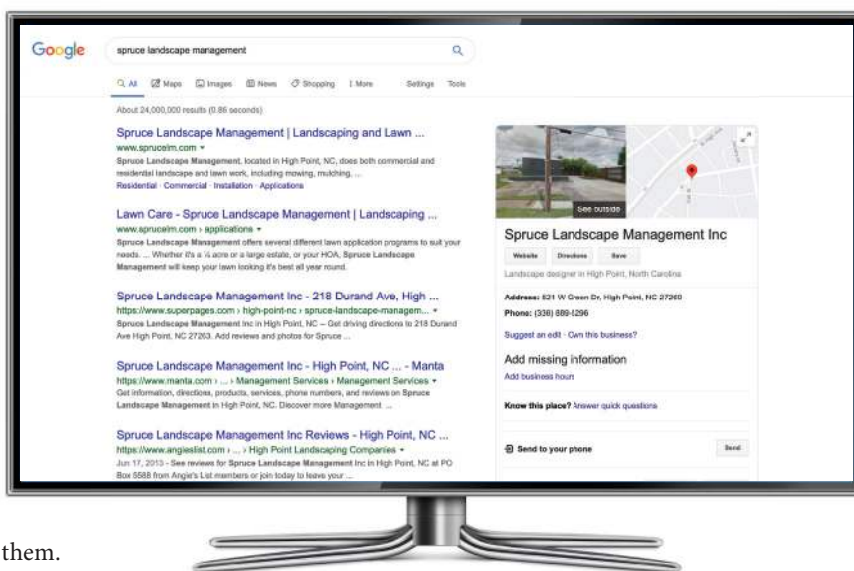
One of the most common problems when it comes to duplicate content occurs when a well-meaning staff member directly copies another website's content and pastes it onto your website. This results in two websites having identical content, which raises flags for search engines. Your site's Google rankings may then decrease significantly.

Similarly, this can also happen

when a member of your staff uses the same piece of content on multiple pages across your website - even if the content was written by someone in your own organization. Each page of your website should have unique, original content to engage your visitors and keep them reading (and eventually hiring you).

Whoever oversees your content, whether it's the designer or a team of content writers, should be made aware of duplicate content and how to avoid it. Using the same few sentences over and over will harm your website's reputation and SEO ranking.

Try to minimize your use of too-similar content across your website. If you have pages that aren't very distinguishable from one another, then you might want to ask yourself if you need separate pages at all. Consider merging similar pages into one. Google recognizes if you have duplicate



mgkaya / E+ / Getty Images Plus

pages or content repeated through your site and will penalize you for it by labeling it as “spam” or unhelpful to your site’s visitors.

I ran a comprehensive website audit recently for a professional landscaping company and discovered that their website has over 900 web pages, all indexed on Google.

They have a page for every city around them for every service they offer. Same content, different city. And now they are being penalized for it. This spam-SEO hack was used when SEO was a new concept and Google does not look kindly on it.

PRO TIP: *When it comes to creating content online, ALWAYS choose quality over quantity.*

No Content Strategy

So, you’ve hired a well-organized team of SEO experts. They’re ready to boost your search engine rankings by building links, optimizing your website for keywords and promoting it on social media, but they haven’t provided you with a content marketing strategy.

You may think your team of experts is going to get you all the traffic you deserve, but if they’re running blind without a well-planned strategy then your search engine rankings aren’t going to skyrocket anytime soon.

Content plays a massive part in determining whether your SEO campaign is successful or not. Without a content strategy in place, you won’t know what your goals are, or when you’ve reached them. It’s like throwing money into a bottomless pit.

To help increase your local SEO via blogging, try writing about local

events in the community around you, it will help you on Google, but it will also encourage people to support your business for being local. People are more likely to buy from locally owned businesses, so if you make yourself more visible, you will attract more customers in your area.



PRO TIP: *A thorough content strategy should include a multi-faceted approach to your SEO - it should include writing original and engaging content on your website, building backlinks and increasing your citations.*

Bad Structure

Just like a building, a website has a carefully crafted structure supporting it. There are many elements of this structure that add to (or detract from) its ranking on Google. If your site was built by someone unfamiliar with SEO best practices, it could be sabotaging your efforts without you realizing it.

Having a good website structure allows your users to have a better experience when on your site, which in turn will help improve your SEO.

The 3-click rule is still popular and

for good reason – a visitor should be able to find what they’re looking for on your website within three clicks.

You need to make sure that everything on your website is easy to read and understand and that everything is uniquely labelled to attract as much attention as possible to your site. Your titles and descriptions all matter when

it comes to making your user feel comfortable when using your site. Usability and ease of navigation ensure visitors don’t click away.

An appealing site isn’t just for attracting customers, it is also used to attract the attention of search engines.

Google considers the information it gathers from users to rank your site. If your website has bad CTR (Click Through Rate) and users spend a short amount of time on your site, it won’t perform well in the search engine rankings.

PRO TIP: *Google measures how long each visitor spends on your site and what they spend the longest looking at. If your site is full of original, engaging, interesting and helpful content that people love to read, you’ll do well on the search engines.*

“The longer you keep your visitors on your page, the better your SEO ranking will be.”

- Pam Haskell, Chili Pepper Design

Relying on Words Only

Your website might have wonderfully crafted words, but if it's all piled into one block of text most visitors to your site won't even glance at it.

You need to break up your content with relevant pictures to capture the eyes of your users, as well as interesting videos to hold their attention on your page for longer. The longer you keep your visitors on your page the better your SEO ranking will be.

Other forms of media you can include on your site are:

- Quizzes
- Podcasts
- Graphs
- Gif Animations

PRO TIP: *You should also try to break up your site's content into short paragraphs separated by headers and white space. This makes it easier for your users to scan, read and understand your content.*

Great Local SEO

The biggest mistake people make when it comes to Google My Business is simply not claiming their listings. Google My Business is an incredibly useful tool and can increase your local

SEO significantly, if used correctly.

It's easy to claim a business as your own. You can

simply search for your business on Google, click on it and click claim.

They will ask you for some details but after that it's all yours and you can upload pictures, edit opening times and much more.

It's often the case that business owners will set up their Google My Business, upload a few photos with some information and then forget about it.

This is a huge mistake.

Your business is always changing and whether that's your opening times, your product info or even what your offices look like, it is highly important to keep all your information up

Are You Ready To Begin or Enhance Your Business?

The average annual gross revenue produced by our franchise owners is

\$1,880,398*

We're Looking For You.



Safer Lawn Care Since 1987
Plus Mosquito & Tick Control Opportunities

1st Year Revenue Potential: up to \$150,000
Serving 100,000+ Customers • 6 Year Avg. Customer Life
\$74M+ in Gross Revenues • Serving 24 States + D.C.

Key Markets Available in Your Area!
(800) 989-5444 | NaturLawnFranchise.com

*Based on 36 owners and the 2019 gross revenue report. ©2020. NaturLawn of America, Inc. A division of NATURLAWN® Services and Products. All rights reserved. Each office independently owned and operated.

COPPERHEAD®
Professional Grade for
POWERFUL PERFORMANCE!

Vortex, diamond, quad tex
& premium quad trimmer line

rotary®

1.800.841.3989
for more info!
Servicing dealers and
distributors only.
rotarycorp.com

porcorev / Stock / Getty Images Plus



This article was written by Pam Haskell, owner of the website design & development company Chili Pepper Design (cpdesignco.com). She helps businesses in the landscaping and outdoor living space create and maintain a modern web presence along with online marketing and reputation management services.

to date on your Google My Business so your customers can stay informed.

Incorrect or missing information can make a bad first impression when it comes to customer experience. Issues such as inaccurate business hours or locations can result in visitors not returning.

Ignoring Online Reviews

What people say about your business matters, and that's especially true about

what customers are saying online. If a customer leaves a review, whether it's good or bad, it's important to reply to them and address their concerns in a helpful and professional manner.

Offering customers value and attentive assistance will make your company seem a lot more trustworthy.

Replying to reviews can also increase your local customer base, and happy customers can spread positive word of mouth to your local community.

If you've invested in your website, it might pop up as the number one result on Google. If you've claimed and optimized your Google My Business listing, it might be the highlighted option on the right of the search results.

What happens if Google and social media are riddled with one-star reviews of your company?

While online reviews may seem like a small piece of the bigger picture that makes up your online presence, people are relying on reviews more and more when deciding what companies to hire.

If you found our list of the common mistakes that are made when it comes to search engine optimization helpful and want to learn more, get in touch. If you're worried that your website isn't performing to the best of its abilities, then try our free SEO audit. ➤

ADVERTISERS INDEX

American Honda Motor Co. - Engines	14-15
Bobcat	52
Briggs & Stratton	27
Cub Cadet	22-23
Exmark Mfg. Co. Inc.	11
The Grasshopper Company	2, 25
JRCO	43
Kawasaki Precision Machinery (U.S.A.), Inc.	9
Kubota Tractor	5
Kuriyama of America, Inc.	43
Lastec	19

Mean Green Products, LLC	39
Naturalawn	49
Nokian Tyres	41
Progressive Insurance	13
Rotary Corp.	29, 42, 49, 51
SiBore Drill	42
Stihl Inc.	6-7
Takeuchi Manufacturing Co.	36-37
The Toro Company	30-31
Z Turf Equipment	35