

A circular globe showing the Earth with a gear-like overlay in the center, symbolizing global connectivity and technology. The globe is rendered in shades of orange, yellow, and grey, with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The gear is a dark, metallic-looking structure with teeth, positioned over the Atlantic Ocean and parts of North and South America.

Freelance Campus

Supreme SEO Guide

Section 1

Site Essentials



Domain selection

It's important to select a domain that's related to what you sell.

If you sell shoes:

topshoe.com **NOT** yoghurtandjuice.co

If you do lawn mowing:

greenergrass.com **NOT** vicioushogs.co.uk

Other factors to consider:

- Shorter domain names are better for domain SEO
- Make the domain name easy to remember
- Avoid using hyphens



Metadata

When your site is made, make sure to add in the metadata. This is what search engines first look at to understand what your site does.

The Title should be your business name (Max 60 characters)

The Meta description should give more details about what you do (Max 155-160 characters)

Many website builders have a place to add this in the settings.



Title 54 / 60 (507px / 580px)

Home

This is what will appear in the first line when this post shows up in the search results.

Description 129 / 160 (804px / 920px)

This is what will appear as the description when this post shows up in the search results.

Or, you can add the metadata using code in the <head> section.

Here's an example:

```
<title>The Page Title</title>
```

```
<meta name="description" content="This is an example of a meta description. This will often show up in search results.">
```



Page URLs

Not all sites need multiple pages, sometimes a landing page or single page site is enough.

If the site does have multiple pages though, it's important to have each Page's URL to match the content and be highly searchable.

If you have an About Us page, it would make sense to make the URL short and specific. EG /about

Sometimes, you may even have level 2 pages, and have a URL that maintains the flow of the site.
EG /about/goals



Internal Links

Internal links allow the user to navigate across the site easily.

This is commonly seen in the site's menu and footer.

Sometimes, there can be links to pages in the each page's content. These are called hyperlinks and will usually be in [blue and underlined](#) to differentiate them from the rest of the content's text.

Commonly, this could be a word that links to another page on the site, or a navigation bar (eg pagination).

Log In	Owned and Managed by New Era Learning LLC
Manage Membership	Distributed by our partners:
Contact Us	EU:
Terms & Conditions	IM FOLLOWING Sp z o o
Privacy Policy	Plac Zomkaway 8/5, Warsaw, Poland 00-277
Need help? Contact support@jointherealworld.com	US:
	Thrifty Consulting LLC
	800 North State St Ste 403, Dover, DE 19901
	Legendary Courses, Inc
	221 N. Broad St. Middletown, DE 19709



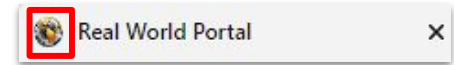
Favicon

The favicon is an image that distinguishes the site from others, when a user has multiple tabs open in their browser.

A favicon should be a small file size, 16x16 or 32x32 pixels.

Browsers will attempt to load this before the content of the site. If it's unable to find it, it will continue to look, which can reduce the load time of the site.

A slow load time not only reduces the SEO rankings, it also discourages users from staying on the site and continuing to use the site.



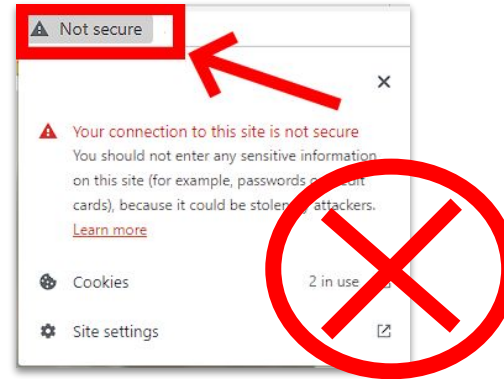
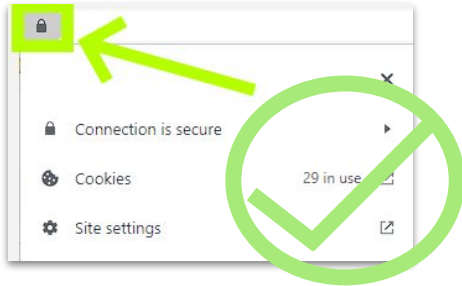
HTTPS & SSL Certificates

When the site is setup, set up SSL.

Without SSL, the site will be assessed as being 'unsafe' by search engines and web browsers. A warning message will appear for the user before they're able to access the site's content.

Having an SSL will prevent traffic being diverted, but it will also boost the SEO rating.

Search engines want to show high quality, safe sites to users to improve user satisfaction and trust.



Section 2

Site Design



Device Optimisation

In today's world, users will view a website from multiple types of devices (ie phone, tablet, computer) and from multiple brands (ie Apple, Android, etc)

The website's content should be optimised for many different devices.

Search engines will check for this when assessing your site's quality and giving it its SEO rating.

Currently, 60% of all website traffic comes from mobile devices. As this increases, device optimisation becomes more important.

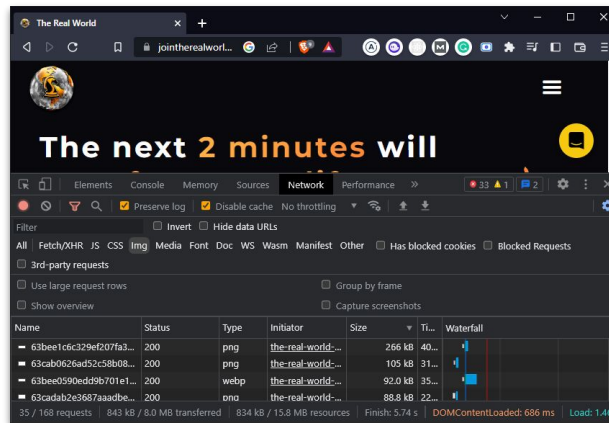


Images

Image and video optimisation are one of the best ways to improve your website's loading speed and SEO rank. Many sites have poorly optimised images.

- Make sure the image is high quality for the user.
- Check your image file sizes, they should be optimised. No images should be larger than 1-2mb (You can use <https://tinypng.com> for this)
- The image should be a proper aspect ratio (eg 16:9)
- Ensure all images have an ALT tag which contains a useful description for the image.
- Use a modern file format (ie webp and webm), but have backup formats on the site too.
- If a video, include all of the above with the thumbnail

You can check image sizes by pressing “F12” while on a website. Then navigate to the “network” tab and click “Img”



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the developer tools network tab open. The page title is "The Real World" and the URL is "jointherealworl...". The network tab is filtered to show "img" requests. The following table represents the data shown in the network tab:

Name	Status	Type	Initiator	Size	Ti...	Waterfall
63bee1c6c3296f207fa3...	200	png	the-real-world...	266 kB	40...	
63cab0026ad52c58b08...	200	png	the-real-world...	105 kB	31...	
63bee0590edd9b701e1...	200	webp	the-real-world...	92.0 kB	35...	
63cadab2e3687aaadbe...	200	png	the-real-world...	88.8 kB	22...	

At the bottom of the network tab, the following statistics are displayed: 35 / 168 requests, 843 kB / 8.0 MB transferred, 834 kB / 15.8 MB resources, Finish: 5,74 s, DOMContentLoaded: 686 ms, Load: 1,46 s.



Headings

A **heading** hierarchy must be optimised to allow search engines to understand the content on each page and how to analyse the site.

These headings range from **H1** to **H6**

The page's main title should be a **H1** heading, this can also contain some keywords you would like to rank for.

The page's subheading should be a **H2** heading.

Each of the page's sections with smaller titles should be **H3**, **H4** etc.

<code><h1></code>	Most important
<code><h2></code>	Second Most Important
<code><h3></code>	Third Most Important
<code><h4></code>	Fourth Most Important
<code><h5></code>	Fifth Most Important
<code><h6></code>	Sixth Most Important



Content Length

The number of words on each page should be substantial enough to help search engines realise what your site's about.

It's recommended that each page on a site should have a minimum of 600 words - although some pages may not reach this (eg Contact page).

It's ideal to have around 1,500 words on each page. Make sure you focus on content quality. You will want to come across like an authoritative figure.

More isn't better though. It's best to stay below 3,000 words.



Tags

Keywords that are important on a page should be strong or bold.

This shouldn't be overused.

Instead, it should be carefully used to point the search engine and user to keywords that have been used in the page's content.

To put this into code, you must use:

```
<strong> Strong Text </strong>
```

```
<b> Bold Text </b>
```



Page Speed Score

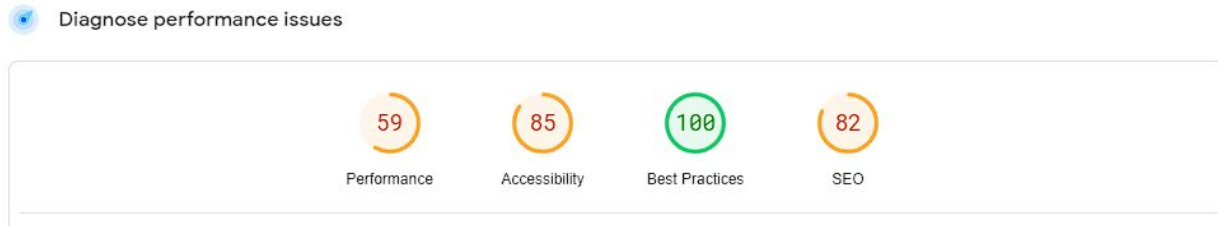
After your website has been developed you should run it through Google's PageSpeed tool:

<https://pagespeed.web.dev/>

The tool will scan your website as both a mobile and desktop device and suggest many ways to improve the usability and performance.

Ideally, you want to achieve the highest scores possible in all four categories ("Performance", "Accessibility", "Best Practises" & "SEO") for both mobile and desktop.

Search engines will prioritise your loading speed score in your SEO rankings with



Using a CDN

Based on your page loading speed you should consider using a CDN.

A Content Delivery Network (CDN) is a way of loading your CSS, Image and Javascript assets from a third party's website.

This can help the users load speed as the CDN will serve assets from the visitors country instead of a statically hosted server.

For a WordPress site you can use JetPack

For static sites you could use either <https://www.keycdn.com/> or <https://www.cloudflare.com/cdn/>

WebFlow sites already use a CDN.



Section 3

Search Engines



Crawling

For search engines to give you the best results possible they need to keep a record of all websites and the content on websites via a method called **crawling**.

Crawling is a discovery process where robots are sent out to find and look for updates to existing websites and to find any new websites missing from their indexes.

Ensuring your website is crawlable and therefore findable is an important step to your site being found.



Robots.txt

A robots.txt file tells a search engine or crawlers which pages to crawl (searching).

If you want the entire website to be crawlable, then add a robots.txt file to the root folder of the site with the following content:

User-agent: *

Allow: /



Adding a sitemap

To further assist search engines and crawlers, you should create a sitemap. A sitemap is a file which describes the page structure of your website, it also includes a priority rank to understand which pages matter most.

Creating a sitemap can be done in a few ways:

WordPress - Use the Yoast SEO plugin, go to settings > site features > scroll to API's > enable XML Sitemaps: <https://yoast.com/wordpress/plugins/seo/>

WebFlow - Visit Site settings > SEO tab > Sitemap section. Toggle Auto-generate sitemap to "YES" to enable the auto-generated sitemap.

For a static site use <https://www.xml-sitemaps.com>

Once you have your sitemap file you can add this line to the robots.txt file.

```
Sitemap: https://www.coopcode.co.uk/sitemap.xml
```



Google's Webmaster Tools

When your website has gone live you need to set up Google's webmaster tools.

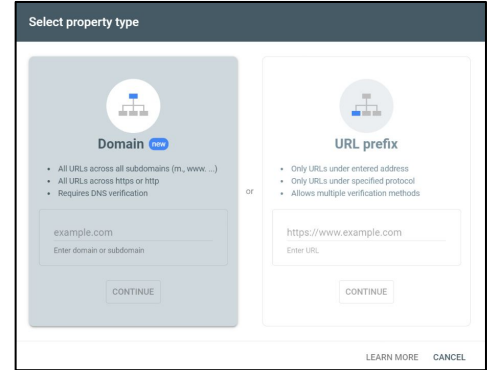
Visit <https://search.google.com/search-console/about> - You will need a google account

Once you have signed in or registered click on the “Add a new site property” button

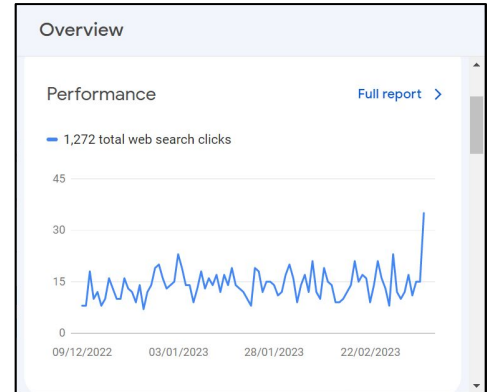
Enter the domain and then you will need to add a tag within the websites source code, within the <head> tag.

Within the tools you can:

- Submit url for indexing
- Check for mobile usability
- Check page experience
- Check for any redirect/404 issues
- Understand what keywords your website shows up for and what keywords you are getting clicks for
- Understand what countries your users visit from
- Check what pages have been indexed
- Add your sitemap



The screenshot shows the 'Select property type' dialog in Google Search Console. It offers two options: 'Domain' and 'URL prefix'. The 'Domain' option is highlighted and includes a 'new' badge. It lists requirements: 'All URLs across all subdomains (m, www ...)', 'All URLs across https or http', and 'Requires DNS verification'. A text input field contains 'example.com' with the label 'Enter domain or subdomain' and a 'CONTINUE' button below it. The 'URL prefix' option lists requirements: 'Only URLs under entered address', 'Only URLs under specified protocol', and 'Allows multiple verification methods'. A text input field contains 'https://www.example.com' with the label 'Enter URL' and a 'CONTINUE' button below it. At the bottom right, there are 'LEARN MORE' and 'CANCEL' links.



Bing Webmaster Tools

You should also add your site to Bing's webmaster tools and ensure you have submitted a sitemap.

<https://www.bing.com/webmasters/about>

Bing's version is very similar to google's as you can see:

- Submit url for indexing
- Check for mobile usability
- Check for any redirect/404 issues
- Understand what keywords your website shows up for and what keywords you are getting clicks for
- Check what pages have been indexed
- Add your sitemap



Section 4

Keyword Planning



What's a Keyword

Keywords are what search engines use to better understand the content of your website.

They are also a word or group of words that a user may type into a search engine when looking for your website.

The search engine simply connects the users' search terms with the sites' keywords.

By better understanding keywords, sites are able to perform better on search engines. This is called 'ranking'.

When putting content on the site, it's important to know what you'd like the user to search for and then include that on the site.

For example:

If your site is about selling real estate for expats in Moldova. Having the terms "Real Estate", "Expats" and "Moldova" regularly on your site will drastically increase the chances of a user finding you.



Keyword specificity

Keywords should be specific to your business and the site's purpose. When considering keywords, it's important to start at your business, then expand to the industry and region of operation.

This is why it's best to have a range of keywords.

For example:

If your site has "Cars" as a primary keyword, search engines have to be able to figure out if this is related to vehicles, Disney movies, or something else.



Types of Keywords

Each of these keywords should be included in a well-developed SEO strategy. Ideally, each type should have ~15 keywords.

Meta Keywords

These are your metadata

Informational

This is information a user may need (eg blog)

Navigational

Specific keywords to navigate and rank different pages (eg About vs Contact)

Transactional

Terms to promote purchasing on the site (eg “Add to Cart”)

Phrase

Finding the exact terms users type into a search engine and including it on the site

Long-Tail

A combination of words that's more precise (eg “Make dog food at home”, instead of “Dog food”)

Negative

These are words to *EXCLUDE* from your strategy



Selecting Keywords

When selecting keywords, it's essential to keep a holistic approach with all types of keywords across the site.

It's also important to select words and phrases that relate to each other to maximise traffic to specific areas of the site and the homepage.

Example:

You're writing a blog on your site to target the keyword "freelancing". To maximise traffic to the site from related search terms, it would be good to have other keywords, such as "How to start freelancing" and "Find your first client as a freelancer". These could be H2/H3 headings and strong/bold text to increase the usefulness of them.



What to Consider

Lastly, an often overlooked aspect of keywords is the competitiveness and effectiveness of them.

Some words are highly competitive, and so increasing the site's rankings for these terms is extremely difficult.

Example: "Active wear" and you have to compete with Nike

Other keywords are highly effective, and will increase the site's rankings quickly. These may not be searched often though.

Example: "Shoe store in Dubai"

These make a 2x2 type of matrix and should also be considered when making a comprehensive SEO strategy.

	Competitive	Non-Competitive
Effective	Green	Yellow
Ineffective	Yellow	Red



Google Trends

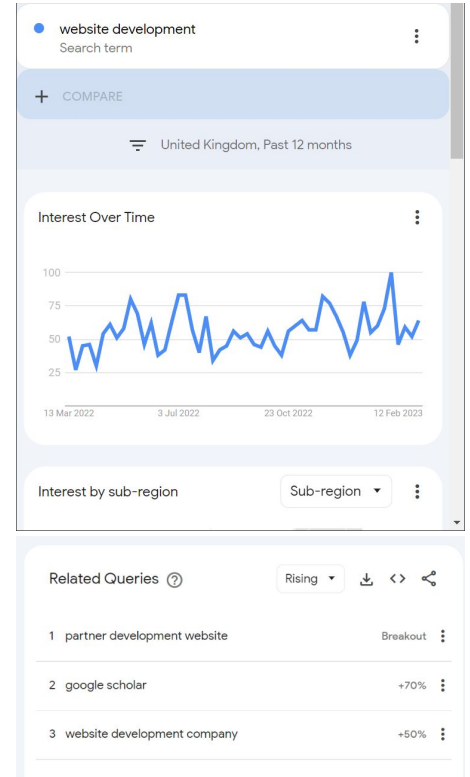
A tool called Google Trends is a great way to figure out what keywords or topics are popular at the moment.

You can use this for free here: <https://trends.google.com/trends>

A trend is broken down by sub regions within a country and Google will even show other related or breakout queries which you could target with your content.

You can also filter trends by a specific country to work at which topics are trending within that area.

Google Trends is a fantastic way to be introduced to the ways that search terms relate to each other.



Section 5

Backlinks



What is a backlink?

Backlinks (AKA: inbound links) are links from an external website that connect to your website.

These act like “Followers” on social media, and tell search engines that the site is trustworthy.

The more links, the more trustworthy the site is seen to be.

They are one of the most important factors in SEO.



Good backlinks

There are good and bad backlinks, and having lots of good links is important.
The following make good backlinks:

Comes from a reputable site

Universities, government agencies, multinational corporations

Similar theme

Electronics wholesaler links to a computer ecom site

Similar country

German site links to a Belgium site

Anchor text

“Click here for weight loss tips” links to a fitness page

Recency

Link posted a week earlier

Frequency

More links posted each week directed to your site

Volume

Total number of inbound links found across the entire internet



Good tactics

You need to understand how to implement good quality links.

Here are common suggestions:

Produce high quality content

Content people want to view, share or engage with

Link baiting

Having images on the site that other sites can use and link to

Ask for links

Ask a supplier to link to your website on theirs

Social Media

Have numerous social media pages with your website on them

Directories

Put your business on directories and include your website

Paid content

Get blog sites to include links to your site and blogs about your site



Bad backlinks

Understanding what makes a bad backlink is also important.

The following make bad backlinks:

Spam pages

ie links only on spam pages

Perfect anchor text

Too many perfect links can be seen as spam

Old links

If links are only old, it's seen as an old site

Unnatural

A wellness site that links to your computer ecom site

“No Follow” links

rel="nofollow" code in the link, which tells search engines to not follow the link



Bad tactics

To prevent your site from having poor quality backlinks, we need to understand how bad links are usually used.

Here are common suggestions:

Spamming your site

Pasting your site's link in blog comment sections

Too many directories

Having them on every possible directory, and only on directories

Link exchange

When two sites make links to each other, on (roughly) the same day

Links from unrelated sites

Bad backlinks can be from sites not relevant or related to your business



Authority vs Credibility

Search engines measure both, but it's unclear which is more important. It's also not clear if search engines change the relative importance of each.

For this reason, it's recommended to aim for both relatively evenly.

Authority is built by lots of high quality links that direct users to your homepage. This shows that your site is trusted enough that others will point users in your direction.

Credibility is built with lots of high quality links to specific pages that relate to the theme of your website (eg recipes on a cookie cooking site). This shows you are knowledgeable on the theme of your site enough for others to refer to it.



Checking your backlinks

There are a few ways to check backlinks that point to your site:

<https://ahrefs.com/> - Considered the best tool to check and track your backlinks (Has some free information but generally costs money each month)

<https://www.semrush.com/analytics/backlinks/> - Free up to 10 requests a day (Must register)



Section 6

Social Media



Why social media?

The power for social media to gain attention is well-known.

The power for social media to increase site traffic is less known. The goal should be to move your followers to your website.

Site traffic is where the majority of sales, bookings, etc still occur on the internet. It's also the best place to give details about your business and products.

Most importantly, it's very difficult for the Matrix to attack your site.



How to advertise your site

There are a number of popular and useful ways to promote your site on social media.

Always keep in mind that if you OVER share your site, it can be detrimental. Search engines may view this as spam, if it's not being shared naturally.

- Link in bio
- Link in thread
- Link in comments
- Link in post
- Link in DMs



SEO Goldmines

There are a handful of sites that can be harnessed to “spam” your site’s links and keywords, without having a negative effect on your SEO rankings.

These are the SEO Goldmines of the internet.

There are a number of reasons for this, but it’s mainly to do with the size of the site, the functionalities of the site, and the natural ability to make numerous posts per day.

3 sites that are currently Goldmines:

- Youtube
- Pinterest
- Reddit

This is not an extensive list. In fact, there are hundreds of SEO Goldmine sites, but we’ve chosen these examples, because:

- Users generate the content and publish it instantly (*unlike Wikipedia*)
- They are under-utilised (*Reddit grew by 30% in 2022, and is still growing*)
- They are trusted by Google (*Unlike alternatives, such as Truth Social*)
- They are free and easy to use (*unlike Shopify*)



Why Youtube?

Youtube has a number of factors that makes it a SEO Goldmine.

Youtube is HUGE

- Due to its size, search engines must crawl Youtube more frequently than other sites

Youtube encourages more posts

- More posts means more views, and more links in each video's description
- This is especially important with the rise of Youtube Shorts

Google owns Youtube

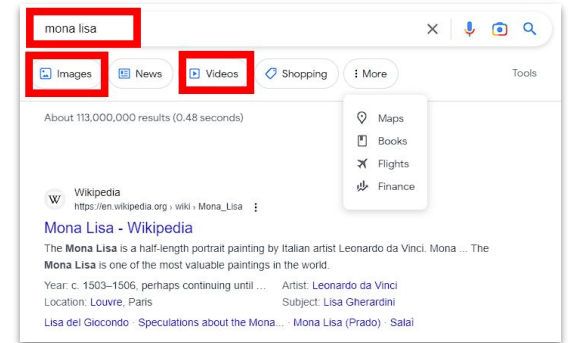
- Youtube is the second largest search engine in the world, and is owned by the first

Content on Youtube is always searchable on Google

- Social media platforms allow you to hide your content from search engines, but Youtube does the exact opposite and promotes it MORE

Google ranks the content 3 separate times!

- Youtube is ranked in the search, images, and videos
- This is why Youtube videos can be a first page result on all 3 classifications



Why Pinterest?

Here's why Pinterest is an untapped SEO Goldmine

Pinterest has traffic

- There are around 500 million monthly active users (MAUs)

Pinterest is SEO focused

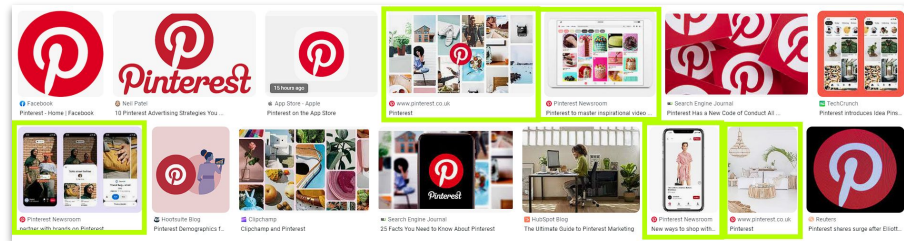
- The site has been designed so good descriptions etc increase traffic to the images and products

Pinterest allows search engine crawling

- Images and products can easily be found on search engines this way
- Each image and product can have a link to your site, with keywords in the description

Pinterest - Google relationship

- Due to the number of images, Pinterest is often ranked higher than other images in Google Images



Why Reddit?

Here's why Reddit is a standout SEO Goldmine

Reddit has loyal users

- Reddit has more users than Pinterest and Twitter, and they have a much higher lifetime

Reddit is an internet powerhouse

- Users can share text, images, videos, gifs, etc. Each are crawled, ranked and shared by search engines

Reddit allows search engines to crawl

- All content is crawled by engines multiple times daily
- As Reddit continues to grow, the site will be crawled even more frequently

Unnatural posts

- Due to the nature of Reddit, it's extremely difficult to have posts ranked as 'unnatural' or 'spam' by search engines. They allow Reddit to police itself and downvote / delete the spam and unnatural content



Section 7

Helpful Resources



Resources

Seobility - Check SEO

<https://www.seobility.net/en/seocheck/>

GTMetrix - Check SEO

<https://gtmetrix.com/>

Google SEO Checker

<https://pagespeed.web.dev/>

Google Console - Connect site to Google

<https://search.google.com/search-console/about>

Bing Webmaster Tools - Connect site to Bing

<https://www.bing.com/webmasters/about>

Static Sitemap Builder - Build sitemap

<https://www.xml-sitemaps.com/>

Ahrefs - Check Backlinks

<https://ahrefs.com/>

SemRush - Check Backlinks

<https://www.semrush.com/analytics/backlinks/>

Yoast - SEO for WordPress

<https://yoast.com/wordpress/plugins/seo/>

Google Trends - Check Google search trends

<https://trends.google.com/home>

Tiny PNG - Optimise image file

<https://tinypng.com>

Key CDN - Recommended CDN

<https://www.keycdn.com/>

WebFlow - Website builder

<https://webflow.com/>

WordPress - Website builder

<https://wordpress.com/>

