

Top 10 Reasons Content Marketing and SEO Fails

Before you begin to flesh out your SEO and content marketing plan and then implement it, please review this important list of key things to avoid. These are the most common reasons why SEO and content marketing programs fail, and we want to see you succeed.

Check each one just so you know if you are truly avoiding them all.

- 1. Tech issues:** These are just some of the technical reasons that your terrific blog content might go to waste: slow page load, not having a secure site even if you don't do ecommerce (SSL), broken links, pages that result in a 404 error, lack of 301 redirects from old URLs, improper use of redirects, and poor site folder architecture. SEO is not dead, and it's essential to get tech nerds to help you fix these issues before you blindly plod along with a content strategy.
- 2. Bad links:** If you have bad sites linking to you that an SEO firm got (thinking they would help you), get them removed or use the disavow tool. Google Search Console is where you upload your list of admittedly bad links to the disavow program.
- 3. Lack of links:** Google still admits that content, links, and RankBrain (basically artificial intelligence) are the three big ranking topics you need to address. If you just have average content, you won't get links. If you don't promote your content, you likely won't get links.
- 4. Doing regular content but not properly using keywords:** The average writer says they "know SEO" but do they really know how to craft a careful keyword strategy? If not, you fail. You also need to understand how to add related keywords (LSI) that give more depth to your content and help make it more relevant to users' intent.
- 5. Focusing only on keywords and not also on topics:** Do you know what topic clusters are? You need to because they are crushing it in terms of making content rank highly. If you want to rank for "birth injury lawyer," for example, either on your practices area page or on a resource page/post, write some long page content — like 1,600 to 2,000 words or more. Make it all about the topic and have a short paragraph on the 12 or so most important aspects of birth injury lawsuits. Then link from each general paragraph about each topic to another shorter post of say 750 or 1,000 words that dives deep into that aspect of the content. Link back and forth from the cluster subpages to the pillar mother ship pages and voilà, your pages will kick ass (in terms of search engine results) over one page about the topic — even if it that one page has lots of keywords in it.

- 6. Reducing high bounce rate:** Go into Google Analytics to discover how often people bounce off your site if they land on one of your pages and never go to another. If potential customers hate your site, why should Google love it? Add better headlines, better images, more information for the customer, a video, and/or links to supplemental information. When people stay longer and visit more pages on your site, Google will factor that in when deciding if your site deserves to rank in the top 10 search results.
- 7. Having a poor click-through rate:** Make sure when people see your listing in the search results that it entices them to click to your site. When possible, don't just add keywords to title tags, but add a value proposition or some emotional hot button.
- 8. Getting ranked anywhere below the top 10:** The top five results get 67% of the traffic, while 6 to 10 only get another 3%. So if you do SEO half-heartedly, do not expect to get leads. Go onto SEMrush and check what terms you rank for on pages 2 and 3 of search results. Then make even better the pages that cause those ranks. Add more content on those topics to take advantage of being within striking distance of having your SEO actually matter.
- 9. Doing the tactics but not being a true thought leader:** Google will sniff out if you are respected on LinkedIn and if your content is shared, liked, and loved. Think you can game the system? Go to Google headquarters and smell the fresh black ink on the hundreds of whiteboards burning with the math of algorithms designed to stop "black hats" and spammers.
- 10. Not having strong brand signals:** Do people search thousands of times a month for a firm you compete with but only hundreds of times for you? Try adding your brand name as a search in SEMrush to see what the monthly search volume is on your brand. We will get deeper into the various brand signals elsewhere in this guide, but know that you need to be respected in order to be ranked. This is not just checking a bunch of SEO items off your list.

Don't make these mistakes, or you will fail to get real leads from your new SEO strategy.