



WWW.

***WHAT TO KNOW***

# ABOUT SEO

*by Jeff Carrier*



Are you an owner or manager trying to figure out how to generate more leads online? This might prove more difficult than one would think if you don't know the ins and outs of digital marketing. As an owner or manager, you're dealing with new water losses, moving around technicians, managing homeowners, writing estimates, coming to an agreement with adjusters, managing your TPA programs and much more on a daily basis. You can't also be up to date on all things digital marketing!

When companies spend money on their website and online presence, it is common for companies to simply buy an all-encompassing "package" to improve their online presence without understanding what they are buying. A great example of this is search engine optimization (SEO), because organizations are simply buying the headline SEO and not asking for each individual item they are paying for when they purchase SEO.

Here is an example: Let's say you are going to an auto repair shop for a "tune-up" on your vehicle. The mechanic shop gives you a price of \$500 for your auto tune-up. Are you going to ask them, "What exactly is included in the tune-up?" Most likely you are going to ask and want a full detailed list in return for what your money is buying you. This list would include such things as:

- Test the performance of spark plugs
- Check the fuel filter to make sure it isn't clogged or dirty
- Check the engine's fuel pump for proper function
- Inspect the engine's fuel injectors to make sure dirt or other deposits are not restricting the amount of fuel that can be delivered to the engine
- Make sure fuel injector buildup isn't affecting how the spark plugs fire
- Adjust the engine timing and idle if necessary
- Check that the PCV valve isn't clogged or leaking

That makes sense, right? You get a full detailed list of what you're buying for your vehicle tune-up. The same cannot always be said when small businesses are purchasing SEO packages. Owners and managers are often purchasing SEO services by only the title and not a full breakdown of exactly which task items are included in the service. This makes the business solely reliant on the vendor providing the services for SEO. When you don't know the specific tasks you are purchasing, how can you measure the results of the vendor company?

## WHAT YOU SHOULD YOU BE LOOKING FOR IN YOUR SEO PACKAGE

A good in-depth list should include at the very least the following:

- Citation building
- Data aggregator, NAP (name, address, phone), consistency on page
- Keyword in titles, body content, image alt tag, presence of NAP behavioral signals
- Click through rate, mobile calls, etc.
- Social signals
- Google, Facebook, Twitter engagement
- Mobile friendly website
- SSL Certificate
- Reviews
- Page speed – photo optimization, server, CDN (content delivery network), Google AMP (accelerated mobile pages), minifying Javascript and CSS (style sheets)
- Link signals
- Inbound links with anchor text, domain and page authority

Each of these items deserves a proper and in-depth description, but you must ensure that all of these categories are included in your SEO packages and you have ammunition when talking to potential digital marketing agencies.

## 5 STEPS TO GET YOUR WEBSITE FOUND ON GOOGLE

### STEP 1 – KEYWORD RESEARCH

"Keywords" is a commonly used term and sometimes thrown around without much knowledge on what exactly a good keyword is and how someone came to that conclusion. In short, keyword research is a practice SEO professionals use to find and research alternative search terms that people (potential customers) enter into search engines while looking for a similar subject.

The first step is to understand how homeowners are using search engines (Google) when looking for restoration services. It's common for someone in a specific industry to think that others (e.g., homeowners) outside the industry use the same language and jargon as they do in the industry when searching online.

In this case study, we are going to talk specifically about the restoration industry. The goal is to tell Google exactly what this page is about by providing as many indicators as possible by using best SEO practices. However, we need to consider how homeowners are searching on Google.



This is where keyword research comes in. A great example of this is how homeowners search for “mold remediation.” They don’t use the word “remediation” too often; in fact, they typically use the term “mold removal.” They also use the term “black mold” often, even if the mold is technically not Stachybotrys or the color isn't black. Black mold is simply a commonly used term in households, and we (as marketers and restoration professionals) have to be aware of how people search for our services so we can optimize our web pages accordingly.

Another great example of this is restoration companies using the keyword “wind damage” on their website. Homeowners are going to most likely use “tree damage” and maybe “storm damage” when searching on search engines. Do your keyword research to find out what the best keyword term is to target for each of your web pages.

STEP 2 – WEBSITE URL LAYOUT

After you have the correct keyword terms you want to use, then it’s time to start laying out your URL structure and optimizing your web pages. Let’s start with the mold services page. The focus keyword you are going to optimize is “Mold Removal.” We will put the keyword (Mold Removal) in our URL, H1 (Header 1), page title and image alt tag along with the body content of the web page.

Generally speaking, below are the correct keywords you want to use for your web pages if you are a restoration contractor.

WEB PAGE	KEYWORD	URL STRUCTURE
Services	Restoration Services	www.yourwebsite.com/restorationservices
Water	Water Damage Restoration	/restoration-services/water-damagerestoration
Fire	Fire Damage Restoration	/restoration-services/fire-damagerestoration
Mold	Mold Removal	/restoration-services/mold-removalremediation
Wind	Tree Damage	/restoration-services/tree-damage

The other thing you want to remember is that these are not the only web pages you want to create. You want to create a specific page for each individual type of service you have, so you can hyper-target each keyword and have relevant information on that page to answer the search query (will get into that later).

STEP 3 – BUILDING OUT THE PAGE

Now that we have the keywords we want to use, and how we want our URL structure to look, we can now start building out your web pages. Remember, for each page we



Image 1

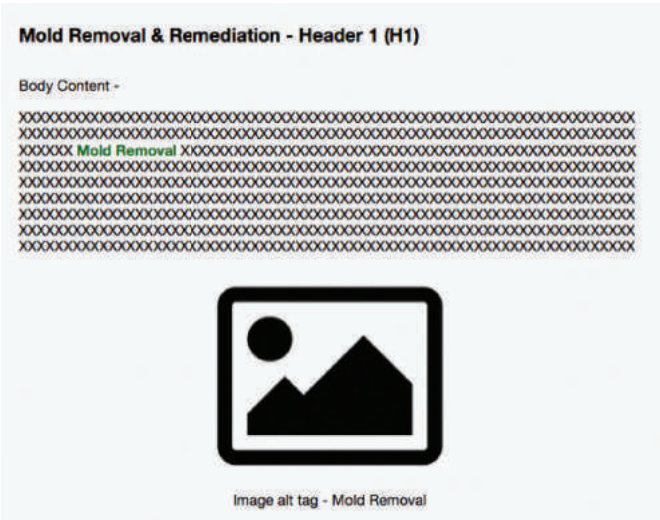


Image 2

want to use our main keyword in the URL, H1, Page Title, Image Alt Tag, and in the body content (best practices). Not all of these necessarily have a correlating effect on search rank for Google, but some have an indirect effect on search rank by affecting your click-through rate (CTR), which Google does look at as a ranking factor.

See images 1 and 2.

Increasing your CTR is very important. As a general target, here is what your web page should look like. Let’s use “Mold Removal” as our example page. In the body content you want to primarily accomplish one thing; answer the search query in an informative and organic process. What this means is that if the homeowner is searching for “mold removal” but your current mold page doesn’t have any relevant information regarding the actual mold removal process or related topics (like mold symptoms and black mold), then the homeowner may back out of your website and head to a competitor website.

This is what is called “Pogo-Sticking,” and it is negatively viewed by Google because what the user is telling Google, is that even though they landed on your page for the search term “mold removal” it didn’t answer the question they were looking for.

This will negatively impact your search rank over time. So you need to build a page that is going to be informative and answer the user’s search query.

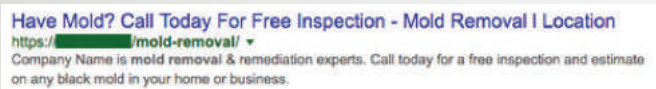


Image 3

## PAGE TITLE & META DESCRIPTION:

See image three – a screenshot of a real page title and meta description (URL, company name and location removed) in a Google search. The goal here is to capture the attention of the user and make them click through to your website. This is an area many websites don't pay enough attention to. Remember, CTR has an impact on search rankings. If you have a higher CTR than your competitors, then Google is going to assume that users are clicking on this link in the search results more often because you're answering their question in your page title & meta description.

This is a good indicator to Google that they should increase that page's rank. Here are some tips on what to include in your page title to increase traffic:

- Numbers
- Dates
- Call to action
- Questions
- Referring keywords
- Length is important

Let's look at the example above, if the search query is for "Mold Removal" how compelled are you to click on this link?

- We ask a question – "Have Mold?"
- We then follow it up with a call to action – "Call Today For Free Inspection."
- We finish it with the type of service they are looking for and a location – "Mold Removal | Location."

The meta description below the page title also does a nice job of complimenting the link and making it enticing for the user to click through. Do your links look attractive to someone searching for your services?

## STEP 4 – ADDITIONAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Now, this is a great start to having your web pages found on the Internet in an organic search, but it's not everything. Here are some other ranking factors that you need to consider when trying to optimize your website to be found on Google.

- Mobile Friendly – Google prefers mobile-friendly websites, especially to users searching on their mobile devices.



Image 4

Keyword	Location	Monthly Volume	Rank	URL	Optimize
restoration services water damage	National	0-10	#1	[redacted]	Optimize
restoration services water damage	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#1	[redacted]	Optimize
restoration services water damage	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#1	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#2	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#2	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#2	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#3	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#3	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#4	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#5	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#5	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#6	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#6	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#7	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#8	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#9	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#11	[redacted]	Optimize
water damage restoration	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#12	[redacted]	Optimize

Image 5

- HTTPS – Having a secure website is important and one of the many ranking factors. Like a mobile-friendly website, both of these are easy to accomplish. If you don't have an SSL Certificate yet, we suggest you buy one.
- Back Links – Increasing your domain and page authority is huge for SEO. Make sure all your local organizations, industry associations, vendor/partner sites, directory sites and others have an inbound link to your website.

## STEP 5 – TOOLS & OPTIMIZATION

The final step in optimizing and measuring your website presence is tools. There are far too many tools to list them





Image 6



Image 8

- CallRail – not a free tool but an easy to implement tool to track all your phone calls on or offline by source
- Moz Tool Bar for Chrome – free tool from Moz, install this to show each page's headers, page title, meta descriptions, page speed, link metrics and more
- Check out all the 2017 ranking factors for organic search here – <http://bit.ly/2017-ranking-factors>

## RESULTS & REPORTING

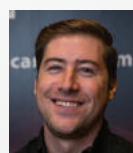
So what kind of results could you expect by implementing these best practices or by hiring a digital marketing agency? And which results should you care about?

The two main key performance indicators (KPI) you should care about as a restoration contractor should be tracked keywords/search visibility and phone calls. Thanks to great tools (as mentioned above) it is relatively easy to track both of these important metrics.

As an example, here is a day zero report (before the first day of optimization) and after 30 days of optimization utilizing one of the tools listed above to track keywords and search visibility of our work.

In images 4, 5, 6 and 7 you can see a significant increase in keyword rank in multiple local areas. One of the great reasons to use one of these tracking tools is so you can measure and track keywords at the local level. This increase was done by utilizing many of the suggested best practices we have listed above.

Image 8 shows you the incoming tracked phone calls only related to online sources. More and more people are relying only on online resources and reviews before making purchases. If you don't have a strong web presence now you are missing a big piece of the pie when it comes to restoration dollars in your service area. Diversify your revenue by committing your marketing dollars smartly and into digital marketing. **RIA**



*Jeff Carrier is a digital marketing expert and certified Google AdWords Search specialists that works only with the cleaning and restoration industry. Restoration Digital Marketing (RDM) is not only a digital marketing agency, but is also run and managed by a market leading restoration contractor. RDM applies proven real-world tactics and strategies to business that it currently uses in its own business to generate online leads.*

Tracked Keywords Overview

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Export CSV

Keyword	Location	Monthly Volume	Rank	URL	Optimize
fire water restoration	National	11-30	#1		
restoration services warner robins ga	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#3		
restoration services warner robins ga	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#4		
warner robins water fire damage	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#5		
warner robins water fire damage	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#5		
restoration services warner robins ga	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#5		
warner robins water damage	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#7		
water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#7		
restoration services	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#8		
warner robins water damage	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#9		
fire water damage restoration	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#11		
water fire damage	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#16		
warner robins fire damage	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#24		
warner robins fire damage	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#25		
mold removal macon ga	Macon, Georgia, United States	no data	#27		
mold removal macon ga	Warner Robins, Georgia, United States	no data	#31		

Image 7

all but here is a number of tools you can check out to assist you in your web presence.

- Google Keyword Planner – free tool from Google for all your keyword research
- Website Speed Tool – measures website speed and recommended actions to take
- Google Page Speed Insights
- GT Metrix
- Mobile Friendly Test – free tool from Google to make sure your website is mobile friendly
- Keyword Tracking and Optimization – tools to assist you in tracking keywords, inbound links, page optimization score, keyword opportunities and much more.
- Moz Pro
- SEMrush
- Ahrefs