



## You've Got SEO? – Is it Contagious?

By [Cynthia Saarie](#) | Published March 6, 2018 Christian Marketing Company E-Zine

Silly, it's not a disease. SEO is Search Engine Optimization. SEO is the abbreviation used by millions to [optimize their websites for better traffic](#) and search engines to find their website. Using Keywords and code, meta tags, and HTML to bring the searching public to them.

Millions of times a day people will go to Google or Bing to search for something. Worldwide there is so much data, and yet, these search engines have whittled down an algorithm to find data. That data is stored in different locations around the world and retrieved in a microsecond. So how do companies get their businesses to show up on these search engines?

The average top position given to any field on a Google, Bing or other popular search engines, are calculated by an algorithm. An [algorithm](#) is "a process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer." There are several factors that go into ranking high in the search results, such as how often you write on your pages, and how often you share those pages with sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.

If you want your website to be looked at by others, you must produce content, and often. The content must be dense with interesting and important information, not a lot of fluff. [Google has strong policies](#) regarding using high-quality content and may penalize your website if you don't.

As time has evolved and different practices have come and gone, the thing that really works is using engaging content as a way to draw people to your business. It's less of a pitch and more about being helpful and educating people. We're educating people enough to do business with us.

— Brian Clark, founder of Copy-blogger

Here's an example. You wrote a terrific sermon. You delivered that sermon last Sunday, and it went over big time with your congregation. That's great! Now blog that Sermon! Blogging is writing about

what you are doing. It covers all activities, interests, dreams, desires, and gets people interested in what you are doing, what you are going to do, and how they can do it too! Share that blog on Facebook and other social media. Include your church's website and the URL. Adding fresh content to your website will help your [website to rank higher in the search results](#) and drive traffic to your website.

One sure way to keep your audience's attention is by providing a video, or a slideshow video presentation on your website. HubSpot reported Video Marketing would play a key role in the optimal placement of pages. By the year 2020, 80% of all business websites will have some sort of video on their front page. That is an important part of today's advertising dollars well spent. Videos increase click-through sales rates by up to 300%, and most marketers use video content strategy to increase those sales dollars. Marketers that currently use videos plan to increase their video budgets by 65%. That's a lot of viewers and a lot of expected revenue coming back into that business. Your church is a business.

Another point of interest, pictures. People are visual creatures; God designed eyes to look at interesting things. Add interest to your pages, including videos, and a lot of pictures. Change those pictures often or add new ones. Search engines look at this as keeping content fresh and the website alive. It's also important to [alt tag your images](#). For any image on your site, the alt tag should describe what's on it. Screen readers for the blind and visually impaired will read out this text and thus make your image accessible.

Your website's home page is where you make your first impression. If you don't have a great page, some may not stick around long enough to read about your church. God is Great, and I know He is... but if you have a so-so, lukewarm first page, many will just move on. It's important to build out pages that offer different information. Putting all of your information on just your homepage will confuse search engines when they are looking for keyword related content to show a user. These pages can include things like church activities, different ministries available, or Bible studies that are going on. It's a best practice to have your website set up for conversions. To help convert that traffic into leads, ask for an email address on your website and if they would like to receive your next e-newsletter or to download a free E-book on "Are You Planning a Wedding?" or "How Do I Join Your Church?" (They could buy the book for an upcoming Bible study that's been planned for Advent.) If you are offering something that requires a financial transaction, [PayPal](#) is an excellent resource.

Keywords are an integral part of the content. Great content marketing requires the use of keywords that are relative to the search query of the end user. Google indexes pages that are relative to what people are searching for to show up in the search results. For example, you are hosting a dinner for the community next month that is free. Keywords you could use are free dinner, free-will dinner, dinner for free at church. You get the message. Every possible way of stating that you are having a dinner, at your city and state, and that there is no cost. When a person goes online to see where there is a free dinner, they may put something like, "Where is a Free dinner in Seattle?" into the search engine. These multiple word phrases are called long tail keywords. You may need to include the phrases that someone may search along with short one-word keywords.

[48% of 1,200 global digital marketers](#) said on-page SEO is still considered to be the most effective tactic and the most sought-after commodity for getting their websites visited. These case studies have had a few decades to figure all of this out. It's a trial and error process of what works best for you. What is the most important item to have on the website: keywords, content, videos, pictures, coding, blogging and sharing? The answer is all of them. They all share important SEO information about your webpage to the search engines, which gets people to your website.

### **How do you start to make an SEO friendly website?**

- Who on your staff will be responsible for maintaining the website, updating information, changing pictures and videos, etc.?

- Organize your ideas on individual pages, one idea for one Page.
- Make a budget of how much you can and are willing to spend on your website.
- Do you have merchandise to sell or offer for free? Is there a person who can create merchandise, like e-booklets?
- Make sure there is an email sign up button on each or most of the pages.
- Are you connected to PayPal for accepting payments? Or another form of payment?
- Add pictures. If you need extra pictures, use the copyright free pictures. ([www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com), [www.freeimages.com](http://www.freeimages.com), or for a small fee [www.istock.com](http://www.istock.com))
- Pictures that are copyright free can be shared on Pinterest or Facebook. ([www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com), [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) You want your readers to share your information.
- Use engaging information that isn't just filling space. Keep them coming back to see what's new.
- Try YouTube for information on videos and slideshow videos for your website. People will stick around to watch if you have a great video on your pages. ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), [www.vimeo.com](http://www.vimeo.com))
- Put keywords and long tail keywords and phrases in the body of text on your pages. A rule of thumb is to have the keyword used 2-3x for every 300 words.

Many work hard to perfect the pages they post. It's a trial and error kind of thing. What works for one may not work for another. Title your pages and keep updating your information. Entertain and educate.

Now you have SEO. It's not a disease; it's the cure! The cure to getting your business noticed by search engines and the world's public. God Bless your efforts.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



"A Voice that Smiles, A Smile that Sings!"

Cynthia Saarie is a guest blogger for [Christian Marketing Company](#) and a copywriter for several church newsletters, a construction company, and has written and produced scripted slideshow videos for businesses and book launchings. A professional vocalist and voiceover artist, Cynthia has worked with the public in the Syracuse, NY area for over 30 years. She is a published award-winning author of "Are You in the Will?" a Christian workbook for your personal walk with God. A certified Lay Speaker for the United Methodist Church, Cynthia guest speaks and sings. If you would like to speak to her about a copywriting, speaking, video or a singing opportunity in your business, you may reach her at [www.ForevermoreOnline.com](http://www.ForevermoreOnline.com).