

# SEO Made Easy – Marketing Your Business Online

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## INTRODUCTION

Getting your business to show on page one of Google results for a specific keyword or phrase has become the “Holy Grail” for marketing departments of most businesses.

The methodology of achieving Google page one presence is surrounded by mystique. A common misconception exists that the Google algorithm is some dark kept secret, a code which geeks the world over are trying to break.

Nothing could be further from the truth, but the IT industry doesn't share this truth as it is not in their interests to do so. Anybody can download the Google algorithm from the US patents office and Google's own Head of Quality (Matt Cutts) even has a You Tube channel which updates anybody who is interested in new or proposed amendments to the Google algorithm. Google want their search engine users to find what they are looking for with ease. The problem is that most businesses and the people designing their websites don't have the slightest idea how to help Google to achieve their objective and there are others who try to beat the system so the algorithm has to be constantly updated, the basic rules very rarely change though.

Most website designers are exactly that – DESIGNERS. They don't know the first thing about SEO, they don't need to, they simply bamboozle small businesses with 'geek speak' and fancy brochure style websites. Just because a web-site looks nice and does clever things does not mean it will be found. Most websites I look at are like well stocked shops, full of bargains, yet located in the North Pole, i.e. they are rarely visited.

These briefing notes explain:-

- exactly what Google are looking for – it's a simple filing system really
- how easy it is to provide Google with the right information to rank your web-pages
- how to rank your website pages on page one of Google for the search term you want to be found
- the relevance of Page Rank and website links
- how we persuaded over 700 websites to link to Property118
- my preferred website platform
- how to avoid the SEO sharks

## Let's now look at an example of what Google want to see.

Richard Gurthrie is a Notary Public at Leathes Prior. He's not too bothered about being found online as he's in a very luxurious position of being very well known and already has enough Notary Public work referred to him by his Partners. That's why I've used Richard's profile in the following example, I know it will not embarrass him.

If I Google search “Richard Guthrie Leathes Prior” his profile page comes straight to the top of the search.

However, if I search for **Notary Public Norwich** it doesn't.

The reason for this is that Richard's profile page doesn't tell Google that he is a Notary Public or that he's in Norwich. Allow me to explain.

The website address for Richard's profile page is

<http://www.leathesprior.co.uk/ourpeople/16/>

See the bit I have highlighted in yellow? That's called a URL extension, what information does the above URL extension actually provide to Google? **Not much!**

**Ideally, if Richard needed more work from his web-page, his URL extension would be something like**

<http://www.leathesprior.co.uk/solicitor/notary-public-norwich-richard-guthrie>

The reality is that Richard doesn't need this extra work so he will never implement this suggestion, hence he is the perfect candidate for my explanation.

## If only that was all it took hey?

Actually, sometimes a good URL extension is all that is required to get good SEO, especially if you are targeting a keyword or phrase which is seldom used or searched. However, the more information you can provide to Google, the better chance you stand of being ranked highly.

By the way, you do not have to be a computer geek to program this stuff. With the right website platform it's pure common sense, more about that later though.

## Meta Description and Meta Title

This is 'geek speak' for what you see in Google search results which look like the example below. I have highlighted the meta title in yellow, the meta description in green and the URL extension in red.

[Richard Guthrie — Leathes Prior](#)

[www.leathesprior.co.uk/workingwithus/.../richard-guthrie/](http://www.leathesprior.co.uk/workingwithus/.../richard-guthrie/) Share

74 the close | Norwich NR1 4DR | Telephone 01603 610911 Leathes Prior Solicitors. Search. Home · About Us · Our Affiliates · History · Timeline · Services ...

Again, what does that tell Google?

Do you think the one below might do better?

[Richard Guthrie — Leathes Prior Solicitors – Notary Public Norwich](#)

[www.leathesprior.co.uk/solicitor/notary-public-norwich-richard-guthrie](http://www.leathesprior.co.uk/solicitor/notary-public-norwich-richard-guthrie)

Looking for a Notary Public in Norwich to assist you with overseas business? Richard Guthrie is in Norwich city centre, free parking is available – call 01603 610911.

A page title or meta title (the bit highlighted in yellow) should contain 60 to 70 characters including spaces. This also goes for paragraph headings within pages (see <H> Tags below).

A meta description (the bit highlighted green) should be 130 to 160 characters including spaces.

**There are also things that Google looks for on the web-page itself, these include:-**

## Key Words in the first paragraph.

The keywords or phrases you are targeting need to be used in the first paragraph, better still the first sentence on the page. I have highlighted the key words we are targeting in this example:-

Richard Guthrie became a Notary Public as well as a solicitor in order to offer a full range of business services to clients with overseas business interests. Richard's clients find that the central Norwich location of our offices and free car parking are incredibly useful .....

## Page Length and Headings

Google likes web pages to contain between 300 and 700 words. It also adds weight to headings and sub-headings and reads this in code called <H>tags. These are simple to add in to a page and should obviously include the keywords and phrases which you want to rank in searches.

## Pictures

A picture may say a thousand words but Google can't read them. Therefore, pictures can be coded with ALT Tags. These are also used by blind people who use voice recognition and reader software to tell them what is on the page. Therefore, it is important to use ALT Tags which describe your picture both to Google and to the blind. Remember to use your keywords and phrases in ALT tags but don't go over the top or Google might penalise you.

## Plagiarism

Google hates plagiarism and penalises websites which copy content from other pages on the web. The Google algorithm finds it very easy to check for original content. To prove this, simply copy a few sentences from any page of any website and paste the text into a Google search. Google will show which the first web-page was to publish those words. It is, therefore, vital that your content is unique. Google accepts that web-pages will need quote other peoples words from time to time (e.g. the Prime Minister said "blah, blah, blah") and makes allowances for this.

## Keyword Density and related search terms

Google have programmed their algorithm to think like people, i.e. if a page doesn't make sense they don't give it much value. There is, therefore, a balance to be struck by demonstrating the relevance of a page and using keyword phrases sufficiently often. The Google algorithm is also smart enough to recognise related phrases. For example, it knows that people who search for 'buy to rent' probably mean 'buy to let' and will return the same results. Therefore, when writing a page, feel free to use similar phrases to break the monotony for readers.

## Many websites make much work

Unless you have two completely different businesses ( e.g. manufacturing aircraft engines and a hot dog van) there is absolutely no reason to have more than one website. Bigger is better when it comes to websites as Google are interested in three things predominantly which I refer to as R.A.P.

<u>R</u> everance	As explained in these briefing notes.
<u>A</u> uthority	The more pages and links pointing to your website the more authoritative it becomes. That's why Wikipedia and the BBC show up in so many searches. Sometimes, creating the perfect page for Google isn't enough to rank on page one, there may well be lots of others. If this happens, Google will rank the pages with the with the most authority first. Links from other websites will increase authority and they are easy to obtain if you know how – see explanation below.
<u>P</u> opularity	If Google realises that people don't read your pages or move on after just a few seconds then Google will assume that they are not popular and rank something else which may be more relevant and authoritative. No point using your legal services website to try to sell your prize turnips then!

If you are a collection of individuals operating in a sector which can be summarised in a word or phrase (e.g. legal sector) then you only need one website. You can't say everything you want to say on one page and if you could people would lose interest before they ever found what they were looking for. What you need therefore, is a collection of easy to find website pages which will be

relevant to the person who finds them via search. Each page should provide the information needed to make contact or learn more. SIMPLES!

## **Making it all match up**

The same keywords or phrases should be used throughout a page, mixing and matching simply dilutes the effects of your targeted SEO. Think of it like decorating a room, everything needs to match, the next room can be completely different though.

## **Easy to implement**

My preferred website platform is wordpress, that's what Property118 is built on and also 30% of the worlds top performing websites. If the website platform you are currently using doesn't make it easy for you to implement the advice I've provided above I suggest you talk to your website developers. It may well be that they can show you how to use your existing website platform to achieve everything I've described. If they can't I suggest you move to Wordpress. I do not develop websites, I contract them out. There are plenty of good Wordpress developers to choose from. I strongly recommend you to ask for references from clients of existing website developers before you instruct a re-build of your website in Wordpress though.

If you are already using Wordpress then I strongly recommend a plugin called "Wordpress SEO by Yoast" – see >>> <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wordpress-seo/>

SEO by Yoast provides a very easy to use template to achieve everything I have described above. You literally complete the boxes, click a button and it tells you what else you could do to improve the SEO of the web-page you have created.

## **Beware the sharks**

As I explained in the introduction to these briefing notes, most website designers know very little about SEO and instead prefer to focus on making pretty websites which sadly are rarely visited.

All that glisters ....

One way to check out Wordpress website developers is to ask them to show you the busiest website they have ever built for a client. You can then look at the page and see if they have built in in line with everything explained above.

Another method you can use is an online tool called alexa.com which is owned by Amazon – see <http://www.alexa.com/>

This is an incredibly powerful algorithm which estimates the popularity of the worlds best performing 30 million websites. It also estimates average time on site, the number of page views, number of websites linking etc.

If your website developer can't refer you to a website he's built which ranks in the top 250,000 websites worldwide you are probably talking to the wrong people!

## The value of links

One way to get more links is to have lots of articles written on as many websites as possible (preferably newspaper owned websites), which include links to your website embedded into target key words you want your website to rank highly for. This will improve your Google Page Rank – see >>> [http://www.prchecker.info/check\\_page\\_rank.php](http://www.prchecker.info/check_page_rank.php)

## Google Page Rank

The phrase “Page Rank” is so called after Larry Page who was one of the founders of Google. Mr Page was an academic and wanted his algorithm to reflect something which academics have realised for many years, i.e. a search for information will, more often than not, lead back to the most authoritative source of that information. For example, if you were studying gravity the name Sir Isaac Newton would be certain to come up.

The relevance of Page Rank is that some keyword phrases are more sought after than others. The phrase “Business Lawyers Norwich” is not particularly sought after so good on page SEO will usually result in Google indexing the page highly so long as the on-page SEO is done properly.

If you are targeting a more sought after phrase, for example if every lawyer in Norwich was targeting the phrase “Business Lawyers Norwich”, Google will consider Page Rank when deciding which results should show first.

The Page Rank scale goes up to 10. Not all pages are ranked and the first step on the ladder is a Page Rank of zero. This simply means that Google have managed to find the page and index it.

Property118 currently has a page rank of 3, Rightmove is a 6, the BBC website is a 9. The more relevant links you get the higher you climb in search results. As a general rule of thumb (*it's much more complicated than this I'm afraid*) you need 25 websites linking to you with a Page Rank of 3 to get a page rank of 1 for your website. Every rank thereafter is 10 times the previous so to achieve a page rank of 2 would need you to get 250 websites linking to you with a page rank of 3. To get to a page rank of three you need around 2,500 websites linking back to you with a page rank of 3 and so on.

If you were to manage to get the BBC or Wikipedia (both page rank 9) to link to your website each one of those links would be worth significantly more than another website linking to you with a lower page rank. Google also adds weight to whether the link is placed on a page or in the body text of a post or on a comment on a post (in that order). That's why I suggested above that you approach an agency which can get articles written for you and linked to your keywords via newspapers, most have very good page ranks. You could get SEO by commenting on Newspaper websites but most don't allow embedded links to keywords these days and such links are very low value so you would need to have thousands to increase your Page Rank. Also, even if you are allowed links they may well have code known as “nofollow” which tells search engines to ignore them for SEO purposes.

Property118 has achieved a page rank of 3 with just over 700 links. This is because many of the links are written into pages and the body text of posts on websites with high page ranks, e.g. the solicitors we work with. We also get a lot of links as a result of the competitions we have run. We presented the winners with a nice prize winners logo containing an embedded link and they proudly display it on the home page of their websites. That's how we got most of our links but I can assure you it's not as easy as it sounds.

## Simple isn't always obvious!

Armed with this information you will now probably start to notice that website designers always put a link back from every clients home page to their own website. Also newspapers and magazines all have competitions and give out logo's to the winners to put on their websites. Now you know why!

I don't provide link placement services but there are several agencies out there which do. Don't even think about using the overseas link building companies who email link building services to you. If the offer looks too good to be true it probably is and the links may well be from crappy websites which Google refuses to recognise! If you use them Google are more likely to withdraw your page rank through association than increase it.

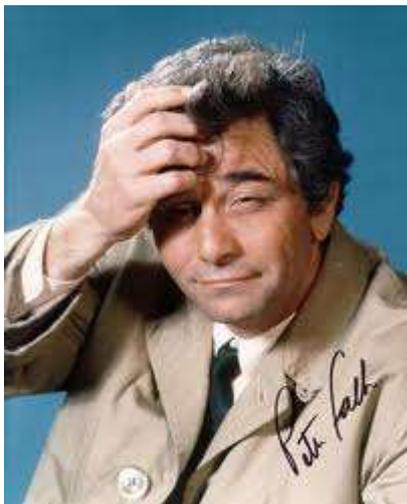
Obtaining links is where a huge chunk of the Property118 marketing budget was spent. See the following as an example of what we did >>>

<http://www.property118.com/index.php/category/website-awards-2012/>

Now that we have a good Page Rank our on-page SEO is more relevant and highly ranked too.

**I hope you have found this helpful.**

## One more thing



If your business provides a product or service which may be of interest to landlords and/or letting agents I may be able to help you promote it by creating a fully Search Engine Optimised web-page for your preferred keywords on Property118.

In addition to text, the page could also include pictures and video. Something else which works really well is contact forms which, when completed, allow your prospective clients to download a free brochure about your product and/or service. Whatever data they input is then emailed to you for your sales team to follow up as a hot lead. For further details please email me:- [mark@property118.com](mailto:mark@property118.com)