SEO CHECKLIST

SEO checklist for readers of SEO 2017 by Adam Clarke, available on Amazon.com

1. KEYWORD RESEARCH

	Completed?
1.1 - Competitive research Steal keywords from competitors using SEOBook Keyword Analyzer or SEMrush Domain Analytics **Resource/s** http://tools.seobook.com/general/keyword-density/ http://semrush.com	Y/N
1.2 - Brainstorm a master list of keywords Brainstorm your own master list by sketching out a grid of words your target customer might use. Split the words into different prefixes and suffixes. Then combine them into one giant list using the free Mergewords tool. **Resource/s** http://mergewords.com	Y/N
1.3 - Find traffic data for your keyword list Sign up to a free Google Adwords account and access the Keyword Planner tool to get information on how much traffic your keywords receive in Google **Resource/s** http://www.google.com/intl/en/adwords/	Y/N
1.4 – Find keywords for easy rankings Using Moz's Keyword Difficulty Tool, enter your keyword and click 'check difficulty' and then click 'view serp analysis reports' and it will show vital stats for pages appearing in the top 10. **Resource/s** https://moz.com/researchtools/keyword-difficulty	Y/N

2. ON PAGE SEO

	Completed?
2.1 – Enable search engine friendly URLs Simply enable the option in your site settings. If your site doesn't have search engine friendly URLs, talk to your web developer to fix this up.	Y/N

2.2 - Ensure that the site navigation is made of real text links – not images
If you do not have the main navigation featured in text, your internal pages will almost be invisible to Google and other search engines.

Y/N

2.3 - Add links to pages you want visible to search engines and visitors on the home page
By placing links specifically on the home page, Google's search engine spider can come along to your site and quickly understand which pages on your site are important and worth including in the search results.

Y/N

2.4 - Ensure that your chosen keywords are on your page
Easiest approach is to create relevant content around your chosen keywords. Then also make sure they appear in places like the meta tags, h1 tags, image alt tags, etc.

Y/N

2.5 - Ensure that you have related phrases in your content along with your main keywords
Use Ubersuggest to find related keywords you can add in your content
Resource/s
https://ubersuggest.io/

Y/N

2.6 - Fill out the meta tags on your site
By using the software your site is built on. If there's none, use a plugin or have your developer fix it. Character limit: 160 for meta description, 60 for meta title tags

Y/N

2.7 Analyze your website for load speed improvements
Resource/s
https://tools.pingdom.com/
https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/

Y/N

2.8 - Improve load speed
By compressing images over 200kb

Y/N

2.9 - Add sitemaps.xml in the main directory of the site
Wordpress, Magento and Shopify has this automatically added.
Resource/s
http://xml-sitemaps.com

Y/N

2.10 Add robots.txt in the main directory of the site
The robots.txt file is a simple file that exists so you can tell the areas of your site you don't want Google to list in the search engine results. You may skip this if there are none.

Y/N

2.11 Add canonical tag for duplicates
If you have duplicate content, add a canonical tag to original version so Google determines which page you want listed in the search results.
Example:
<link rel="canonical" href="http://www.yoursite.com/socket-wrenches"/>
As a general rule, include this tag on every page on your site, shortly before the </head> tag in the code.

Y/N

Make sure that the site is responsive -- which means that it automatically resizes across all devices and has mobile-friendly navigation for mobile users.

2.12 Check if your site is mobile friendly **Resource/s** https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/mobilefriendly/	Y/N
2.13 User clean code in your site and fix any code errors By using Web standards validator **Resource/s** https://validator.w3.org/	Y/N
2.14 Avoid using too much ads As sites with spammy and aggressive ads are often ranked poorly in search results	Y/N
2.15 Fix any 404 errors in your site By finding them in Google Search Console, click on the error and then click 'Linked From' to find the pages with the broken links. **Resource/s** https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home	Y/N

3. LINKBUILDING

3.1 – Add your site to high-quality business directories **Resources** http://www.manta.com/claim http://www.linkedin.com/company/add/show http://www.hotfrog.com/AddYourBusiness.aspx http://www.angieslistbusinesscenter.com http://www.merchantcircle.com/signup http://www.citysearch.com https://biz.yelp.com	Y/N
3.2 - Check your competitor's backlinks Find link opportunities to build links pointing to your site **Resource/s** http://www.ahrefs.com https://majestic.com https://moz.com/researchtools/ose/	Y/N
3.3 - Create videos and post on Youtube Make sure to have your targeted keyword or relevant keywords occurring on the page somewhere **Resource/s** http://youtube.com	Y/N
3.4 - Reach out to quality sites with broken links on their pages - Convince the site admin to provide an updated link to your site - Use the formulas below to find potential pages with broken links, replacing 'keyword' with the keyword you are targeting: keyword useful links keyword useful resources	Y/N

keyword useful sites keyword recommended links keyword recommended resources keyword recommended sites keyword suggested links keyword suggested resources	
3.5 - Track mentions of your brand If you see a mention of your brand without a link, send a quick email to the author, and they will often be happy to link to your site.they will often be happy to link to your site. **Resource/s** http://socialmention.com http://en.mention.com	Y/N
3.6 – Offer donation to charities and non-profits Search for "site:.org + donors" or "site:.org + sponsors" in Google for a list of organizations that have these pages, offer a donation, and request a listing on the page.	Y/N
3.7 – Sign up to Better Business Bureau Check your BBB listing to see if you are already linking back to your site, and if you're not already a member, then consider signing up. **Resource/s** https://www.bbb.org/	Y/N
3.8 Create your own authority links By buying a previously owned website or domain, you can turn it into a blog and unlimited source for powerful, highly relevant links back to your site. **Resource/s** https://flippa.com - Market place for buying and selling websites https://sedo.com - Buy and sell domains	Y/N
3.9 Build relationships with other bloggers in your industry Try creating or curating popular blog posts into a top-level summary, then send a quick email to the bloggers mentioned, let them know, and very politely ask for a mention or linkback.	Y/N

3.10 Give out testimonials to earn high quality, relevant links
Look for businesses or services with a testimonials page already, or a testimonials carousel or widget on their homepage. Speed up your search with a couple of Google search queries:
"keyword" +testimonials
"keyword" +recommendations
"keyword" +"client testimonials"
"keyword" +"what customers say"
"keyword" +"what our customers say"

`Y/N`

4. SOCIAL MEDIA

4.1 – Create a Google+ business profile
Resource/s
http://plus.google.com

`Y/N`

4.2 - Create a Facebook business profile
Resource/s
http://facebook.com

`Y/N`

4.3 - Create a Twitter business profile
Resource/s
http://twitter.com

`Y/N`

4.4 - Create a Linkedin business profile
Resource/s
http://linkedin.com

`Y/N`

4.5 - Create a Pinterest business profile
Resource/s
http://pinterest.com

`Y/N`

4.5 - Create a Instagram business profile
Resource/s
http://instgram.com

`Y/N`

5. LOCAL SEO

	Completed?
5.1 – Verify your business profile on Google My Business Fill out as much information as possible on your Google My Business profile, including description, category associations, images and videos **Resource/s** https://www.google.com/business/	Y/N
5.2 – Put NAP info on your site Include your business name and location somewhere on your website in a H1 or H2 tag, this could be your contact page or home page. Also include your full business name, address and phone number somewhere on your site.	Y/N
5.3 – Add schema.org tags in your website markup Follow the schema.org tag specification for local businesses **Resource/s** https://schema.org/LocalBusiness	Y/N
5.4 - Build reviews for your business By including links to your business Google My Business page on your site, email signatures, flyers, and business cards, prompting customers to leave a review. Encourage customers at the end of each sale or transaction to leave a review.	Y/N
5.5 - Submit your website to the major business directories Examples: Yelp, Yellow Pages, CitySearch and so on. You can use tools like Moz Local to submit your business to all of the major directories in one go.	Y/N
5.6 - Cross-check your business listings for correct NAP data NAP stands for name, address and location. These details need to be consistent across your Google My Business listing, website contact page, and external business listings.	Y/N

6. SSL UPGRADE

	Completed?
6.1 – Install a security certificate Contact your web host or domain registration provider for this. Common fees can range from $50 to $500 per year depending on the type of certificate.	Y/N
6.2 – Make sure both HTTPS and HTTP versions of your site continue to run.	Y/N

6.3 – Upgrade all internal resources and internal links in your HTML code to use relative URLs This includes references to HTML files, CSS files, Javascript files, images, and all other files referenced in your HTML code. This means instead of referring to internal resources in the website code with an absolute address (e.g. 'http://www.yourwebsite.com/logo.jpg'), it should use a relative address (e.g. './logo.jpg')	Y/N
6.4 - Update all of your canonical tags to point to the new HTTPS version of your site.	Y/N
6.5 - Upload 301 redirects for all HTTP URLs to point to the new HTTPS secured URLs.	Y/N
6.6 - Verify the new HTTPS version of your site in a new profile in Google Search Console. **Resource/s** https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home	Y/N
6.7 - Upload an XML sitemap to the new HTTPS Google Search Console profile This sitemap should include all of the old HTTP pages from your site and the new HTTPS pages. We are submitting the old pages to encourage Google to crawl the old pages and register the redirects. Resource/s https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home	Y/N
6.8 - Update all links on your social media accounts and other marketing materials Make sure they all point to the new URLs.	Y/N

7. SEO TROUBLESHOOTING

	Completed?
7.1 – When your site is not listed in Google at all Generate a handful of links to your site and start some social activity (i.e. tweeting a link to your site)	Y/N
7.2 – When business is not ranking for your own business name - Build links to your site with some of the links with your brand name as the anchor text - Create citations in common business directories used in your country - Setup Facebook and Twitter accounts for your business - Use Open Site Explorer to spy on competing sites ranking higher for the brand name	Y/N
7.3 – When your rankings have dropped of - Use Open Site Explorer to spy on competitors, find out how many backlinks they have, how much social media activity they have, and set these amounts as your target to build your rankings back up	Y/N

- Start a link building campaign with the targeted keywords	
7.4 - When your site has been penalized by a Penguin update - Check Google Search Console to see if you received a penalty notice - Check your link profile for indicators if your site has been penalized 1. Your site has a much larger quantity of links than competitors, but isn't ranking in the top 50 for the same keyword. 2. Your site has a very large quantity of links from shoddy looking sites, e.g. sites that look like the following, seolinksdirectory.com, addurlsfree.com, freelinkdirectory.com, and so on. 3. Your page has anchor text pointing to the page for your targeted keyword greater than 20% as a general rule. 4. Use the Panguin tool to see if you have any sudden traffic declines around the times of the Google updates. - Recovery steps: 1. Export all the backlinks to the page that has been penalized, using your Google Search Console account, Open Site Explorer and Majestic SEO. Compile all of the links together into an Excel spreadsheet. 2. Visit each of these spammy sites and look for a link removal page. If there is no link removal page, find a contact page and request the site administrator to remove your link from their site. Provide a link to the page in your message to make it easier for the webmaster. 3. After you have allowed one to two weeks for the webmasters to remove the links to your site, find the spammy links for the sites you have not been able to remove and put each of these bad links into a plain text file, with each link placed on a new line. 4. File a reconsideration request in Google Search Console. This should only occur after you have made a very thorough effort to remove your links manually and then disavowed the links through the disavow link tool. 5. Await response and monitor rankings changes.	Y/N
7.5 - How to seek professional help for free Post your questions in a variety of SEO websites for highly technical responses **Resource/s** http://moz.com/community/q https://webmasters.stackexchange.com/ https://www.quora.com/ https://stackoverflow.com/ https://wordpress.stackexchange.com/ http://www.highrankings.com/forum/index.php/forum/67-indexing-and-serp-display-problems-and-questions/	Y/N