



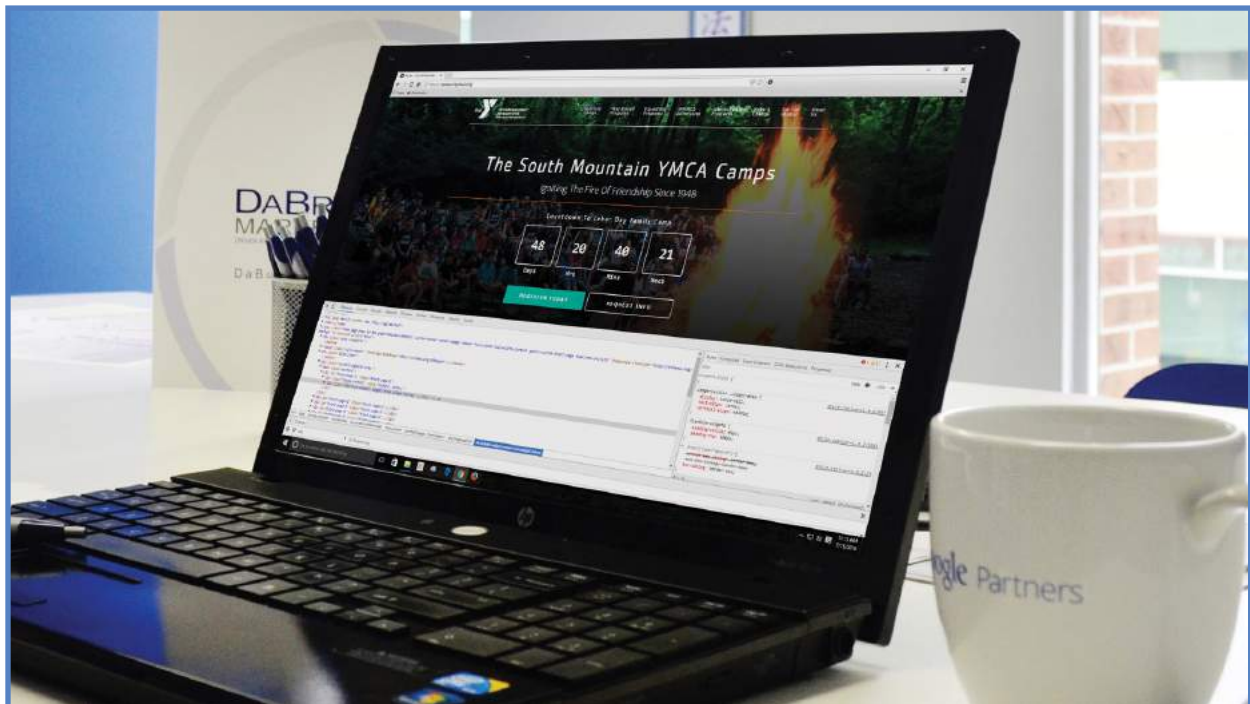
# How to Enhance Your Users' Experience and Improve Your SEO

A Search Engine Optimization (SEO) White Paper

# Put Yourself in Their Shoes and Their Money in Your Pocket

In the past, the primary focus of search engine optimization (SEO) was to simply provide keyword rich content and build links to appear in the search engine as high, and as often, as possible. While some of these goals are still relevant today, this is no longer the predominant mindset. Major search engines, such as Google and Bing, have updated their algorithms with the user, **not the marketer**, in mind. This is because search engines aren't just marketing opportunities. They are businesses, as well. Their search functionality and performance are their products or services. Search engines' main goal is to provide users with the most relevant and best performing websites. This ensures that users continue to have an enjoyable experience and keep them as a default. You need to develop your website with the same mentality.

[According to a report from the Society of Digital Agencies \(SoDA\)](#), 77% of agencies believe that poor website user experience (UX) is a weakness for their clients. This makes UX the most significant element to a high-performing website. Improving it needs to be at the forefront of your SEO strategy. Follow these steps with a [team of digital marketing experts](#) and your website will be an effective marketing tool.



# 1

## Mobile Usability:

### If Your Website Doesn't Fit on Their Phones, You Don't Fit in Their Mind

The never ending year of mobile has continued into 2017, and shows no signs of ending anytime soon. With mobile traffic (in the US) now exceeding desktop traffic, Google has moved towards [mobile-first indexing](#). We can predict that mobile traffic will only continue to increase as more Americans obtain mobile devices, thus putting more importance on mobile design. Knowing this, it is imperative that you design your website with mobile as the first priority. Once it is finished, use your mobile website as the core basis for developing your desktop view. There is nothing you can put on the mobile version of your website that you can't put on the desktop version. Progressively enhance your desktop view with extra information and a more extensive navigation (as long as it's relevant).

In regards of how to design a mobile website: you'll need to put yourself in the shoes of your users. What are their priorities? What is the most important message you are trying to portray? These two questions primarily deal with content. Use your answers to establish which pages are in the navigation and which content (copy, images, and video), needs to be shown, immediately. What are common issues users face while searching via mobile? One of the biggest of these issues is accessibility to relevant information. Desktop users have time to scan and read your entire website. But, mobile users know what they want and they want it now. Get them to their destination as quickly and as easily as possible - or else they'll be off to see your competitors.

*According to Think with Google, 40% of mobile users abandon a website that takes more than three seconds to load.*

Other common problems that mobile users face are caused by smaller screens or less processing speed. Make sure buttons and links are designed with bigger fingers in mind so that they're easy to click. If they're too small, the user will get frustrated while attempting to navigate throughout your website. This will likely cause them to leave. The lack of processing speed on most phones often results in slow load speeds for many websites. With both load speed being a ranking factor and a large percentage of our population being impatient, it is absolutely crucial that your business adds [Accelerated Mobile Pages \(AMPs\)](#) to your website. AMP's will strip down the coding of your website and leave only the necessities, thus allowing the page to render more efficiently.

Don't think a couple of extra seconds hurt? [According to Think with Google](#), 40% of mobile users abandon a website that takes more than three seconds to load. Those few extra seconds could easily turn into a whole lot of dollars being lost. In the same article, 29% of smartphone users will immediately switch to another website if it doesn't satisfy their needs (e.g. they can't find the information or it's too slow).

## 2

## Desktop Website Speed:

### Make It Fast or Don't Make It

While mobile functionality and speed are highly important, don't forget about your desktop's performance. Aside from users across all devices wanting and expecting fast load speeds, a website's speed is also a ranking factor. That means that if your website is slow, you won't even have the chance to frustrate potential customers because they are less likely to find you.

### Issues your website may have that cause slow speed are the following:



#### Bulky and unnecessary code

How your pages are constructed affects how they work.



#### Too many or non-optimized (too large and unresponsive) images and videos.

People only like visuals that load fast and actually fit their screens.



#### Flash animation

An outdated method for responsive buttons and content that makes each page incredibly slow to use



#### Too many file requests

More complicated elements on your pages that must be "requested" from the server equals a longer time to load each page.



#### Too many plugins

A lot of feature-based parts of your pages - like social media buttons, latest blog posts, or fill-out forms - require more time to load.



#### Unnecessary redirects

Go easy on taking users to different pages than they want to see.

To test your website's speed, use [Google's Page Speed Tool](#).

Not sure if your website's speed will impact your business' bottom line? [According to Kissmetrics](#): if an Ecommerce website is making \$100,000 per day, a 1-second page delay could potentially cost them \$2.5 million in lost sales, every year.

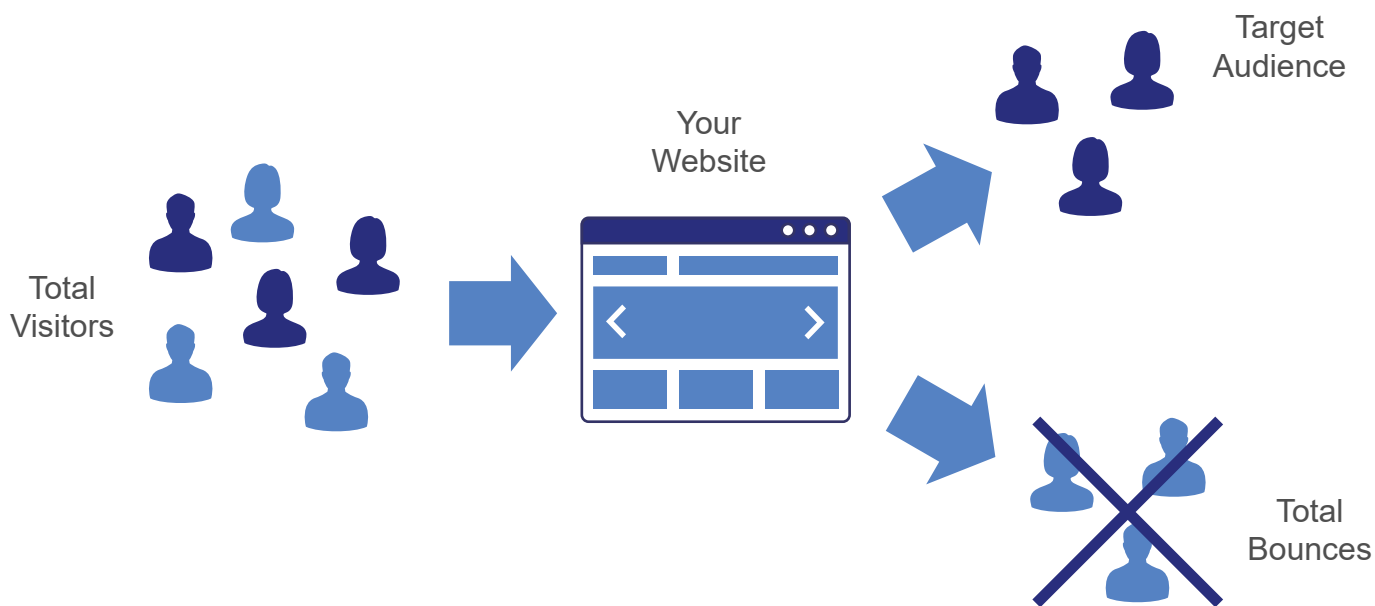
### 3 Your Content Is the King: Your Website Is the Kingdom

You've probably heard it a thousand times and will hear it a thousand times again, but the importance of high-quality content cannot be stressed, enough. The content on your website needs to speak directly to your audience. To do this effectively, it's best to establish personas for your target audience and assign which persona(s) your content is speaking to. This will help you determine the structure, design, positioning, tone, and language of a specific section or page.

The primary goal when crafting content is to answer all of your users' questions. To help establish these questions, we recommend doing the following:

- Record what your customers are asking via phone calls, email, or in-person.
- Evaluate what your competitors are doing. What are the industry standards?
- Review your own pages. What else would you like to know before ultimately completing that conversion (getting them to pay you)?

By answering most - if not all - of your customers' questions, your users will be more engaged on your website. They will search longer and further throughout your website, increasing the possibility of them contacting your business. If users on your website can't find the answers they are looking for, they're not going to take the time to ask you and wait for a response. They'll check out your competitors to find what they're searching for.

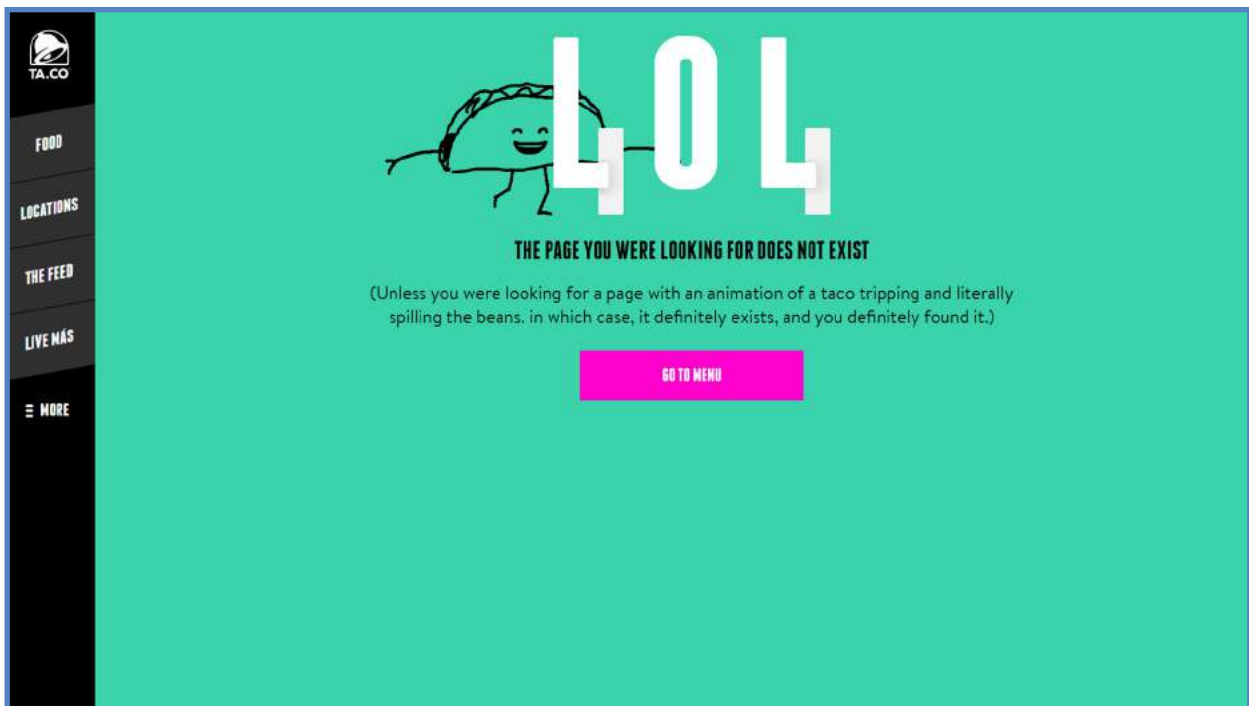


## 4

## Functionality:

### A Profitable Website Works to Make Profits

In a fast-paced society that lacks patience, functionality is a must. If your website is full of pages that render 404 errors, a page that cannot be found on the server, your customers will be looking elsewhere (on your competitors' websites). Prevent this from happening by setting up redirects that make sense and are appropriate. The redirections should take users to the new replacement pages, or the pages that aligns closest to desired page. If not, your users aren't likely to waste their time looking for it (see the Desktop Website Speed section, again). An improper redirect, or lack thereof, can potentially result in missed sales.



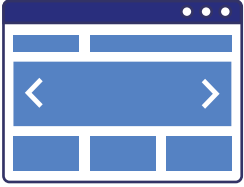
**Caption:** [Taco Bell's lighthearted 404](#) page gives users a clear direction of where to go from here.

If for some reason a redirect is not set up, or the user simply searches for a page that never existed (they make a mistake in the URL), make sure you have a custom 404 page ready. The custom 404 page should include a friendly and possibly humorous explanation of how the page doesn't actually exist. It should also provide an easy way back to the home page as well as a custom search bar. These help get the users back to where your content actually is. In addition to that, a less common (but recommended) approach to 404 pages is to provide the user with something for free. Whether that is a case study, white paper, or any other downloadable, your users will appreciate the gesture and it gives you another opportunity to have your work and expertise displayed. This naturally increases your exposure.

## 5

## User-Friendly Navigation:

### Your Website Is a Treasure Map



Having a navigation that is both easy to use and appeals to your target audience is essential to having an effective website. When creating and developing the structure of your navigation, take into consideration both your users' interests as well as search trends and volume. Answer the question, "What are your customers most interested in, right now?" Then, implement specific terminology and titles that have high search interests (as long as they make sense for your business). A prime example: if users on your bank's website are looking for "savings accounts," don't call them "bank accounts that store money." Your most important and relevant keywords should make up your navigation, page titles, and on-page headers.

Similar to developing content, you'll need to envision your navigation through the eyes of the money holders (your customers). What makes the most sense for them? Where do they want to go? Walk yourself through their logical progression and create a path that is both understandable and short. The least amount of clicks to the end goal, the better. More clicks lead to either heightened frustrations or quickly fading interests. Both of these increase the likelihood of a customer jumping ship and leaving your website.

Additional navigation related things you should add are breadcrumbs. Breadcrumbs essentially compose the outlined path that users have taken to get to their current page. This will help improve the user experience by allowing a user to easily retrace his or her steps at any given time with one click.

Finally, make sure that your navigation is consistent throughout the entire website. Nothing is more confusing than a website that has different navigations for different sections. Users won't know how to get around your website so they won't know how to give you their money.



## 6

### Provide Thorough Contact Information:

#### Tell Them Who You Are

The main goal of most businesses' websites is to generate leads and sales. Knowing that, you'd assume the contact information would be a top priority and would be provided, extensively. Not so fast. According to a collaborative [study by Huff Industrial Marketing, KoMarketing, & BuyerZone](#), 51% of people think "thorough contact information" is the most important element **missing** from many company websites. The same study also shows that 44% of visitors will leave a company's website if there's no contact information or phone number.

Not providing basic, yet extremely important contact information about your business can cut your possibility of a lead or a sale nearly in half. That's far too big of a loss to swallow just because you didn't provide a name, address, phone number, and links to social media accounts.

Place your contact information in the footer so that the user can find it on every page. Your website should also have a Contact Us page that explicitly and exclusively provides this information with a Google map embed. The map will not only allow users to see where you are located but also provide directions or easily enable their mobile devices' GPS.

*According to a collaborative study by Huff Industrial Marketing, KoMarketing, & BuyerZone, 51% of people think "thorough contact information" is the most important element missing from many company websites.*

Providing accurate and precise contact information throughout your website will also improve your local SEO. When search engines crawl your website, they evaluate local signals such as geographical information. Major search engines, such as Google and Bing, place such a high importance on locality that local businesses appear atop most service related searches. By providing contact information on every page, search engines will associate you with that geographical region and increase your search visibility (how often you appear within a search) in that local area.

Let's be honest - you put it on your business cards, brochures, and other marketing material. Make sure your contact information is placed throughout your website.



## Get a Head Start in Their Shoes

You wouldn't poorly treat a customer or not provide excellent service in-person. So, don't do it on your website. Put yourself in your customers' shoes. Create a digital experience that will have them coming back and referring it to others.

We know that these steps we've laid out are probably boggling your mind, right now. Don't try to go through them without a digital marketing agency that knows what it's doing.

Start improving your website's user experience and watch the profits rise. We'll be waiting for your click or call.

## Sources:

To read more about all of the articles, studies, and trends that are cited in this content, see the following list. Or, just talk to the smart folks that wrote it!

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**2015 B2B Web Usability Report, Huff Industrial Marketing, KoMarketing, & BuyerZone:**

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## Contact DaBrian Marketing Group

DaBrian Marketing Group is a full-service digital marketing agency. We deliver dynamic marketing content to our clients in the ever-evolving digital world of the 21st century. We provide [digital content marketing](#), qualitative and quantitative [web-analysis](#), and the continual improvement of your company's digital presence ([Search Engine Optimization or SEO](#)). We create and implement strategies that are based upon the measurement and testing of relevant dimensions of digital marketing. Our team holds [official certifications](#) from major analytical software firms to expertly interpret your data. Whether it is Bing Ads, Google AdWords, or Google Analytics (We're official Google partners, by the way), we are the best at what we do. Use our skills, intelligence, and proven abilities to improve your company's digital marketing presence. Contact us today by sending us an email or by giving us a quick call, today!



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