

Winning the SEO logic

I have a story to do with search engine optimisation and have been doing it since 1997, which is before Google even existed. The story I am going to tell here is about my recent website and how I managed to get to the top of Google in one month. It still shows up today listed as number two on Page 1 of Google.

 By [Gordon Barker](#) 19 Jan 2015

Web design company

We were a web design company. Two years ago, looking at Google trends, I saw that the demand for web design on the search engine was dropping fast. I then woke up to the fact that there is a proliferation of web design companies and clients were also training their own staff to manage this role from their offices.

With the introduction of fantastic technologies like WordPress and Joomla, being able to create and update your own company website has become easy. Not so with search engine optimisation.

The story

The question I asked was: Do I stay in the business of web design, where every Tom, Dick and Vusi are selling their services for a few measly bucks, or should I get into something else? I decided to re-position my company but how and when to do? After much thinking I decided all I could do was related to the web and the technology behind it. I am too old to start again on a new career.

For a while I thought that owning shopping cart websites was the way to go and bring in income over a spread of sites from gift products to clothing stores. This is definitely something to look into, as I have managed to turn over a certain amount of income, but found it to be seasonal and, more importantly, it takes all of your time sourcing products and getting them delivered at reasonable costs - particularly since you can no longer trust the Post Office... (Do we still have one?)

I still have an e-commerce site but treat it more as a hobby even though it is in the top two listings on Google for its target market; it's just that I don't have the time to keep sourcing new products (all other sites offer the same thing).

My strategy was to then turn my web design company website into a SEO website offering services, some of which were unique. This is what I did, but by the time I had finished re-branding and writing content after researching with a lot of friends (who were all trying to please me) I realised that the things I was saying did not have much - or any - resonance with them all. I felt like I was talking to a brick wall (the site was too technical, I reasoned).

The answer

Everyone has heard something about the power of video on the Web and how it is trending even on mobile. YouTube is South Africa's second highest search engine. The future of video is bright and I predict as soon as the bandwidth issue has been resolved the Web will turn to video overnight! The cost of video has come down a lot too since the inception of really good quality HD equipment but the hosting is still very, very high.

Typically, in America to live stream, you are talking about \$50 per month, which comes with restrictions. For example, you cannot link the video to your own website. You actually need to pay \$350 - \$500 per month to get any kind of ownership as to what you can do with your video. Also, what about the time lapse between America and South Africa? The streaming has major bandwidth issues.

Live streaming from South Africa is still in its infancy, but the big guys like DSTV, SABC and others have been doing it for a while now. In fact, they are gearing up for more as you can now stream movies to your devices from these broadcasters. However, I am talking about streaming out to the public from a company website, not streaming in from an entertainment

point of view. If you have a company and want to do brand promotion, conference, training sessions or product demonstrations you can reach thousands of people in the country and around the world using the power of live video.

This is what I set out to do by re-positioning my company to a video broadcast company. I did this by aligning all our strengths, which were:

- **Technology** - can we leverage the technology we have or build it to offer live streaming?
- **Video** - can we build a mobile outside broadcast system?
- **Video** - do we have any experience in shooting films?

The story ends here in so far as we spent nine months developing what was required and were now ready to go live, but we needed some hook to get us high on the search engines as this is the most important and cheapest medium we have to promote our new brand.

The hook

After visiting events companies to offer our services and after talking to our existing clients where we received warm receptions and best wishes, we ended up with nothing. I decided to sift through the many uses on the web for live video and ended up with a very tight well defined market, which was live wedding videos so your friends and family overseas can see you LIVE on your wedding day.

The search engine optimisation that works

Last month, I set out to totally re-position our website to Wedding Videos. So our search engine keywords, which were, "video design South Africa" were changed to "wedding videos Johannesburg".

I did all the keyword research I could and spent hours viewing competitor websites both here and overseas. It doesn't just happen where you go after certain keywords and lambaste the search engines with them. What you need to be able to do is to say something different while keeping your keywords in mind. What I have done that is different is to promote the Live Streaming aspect of weddings. There is much to say about that and all the information is different to what anyone else is saying, relevant to weddings. That is the secret.

Google has become very "intelligent" for a computer and understands so much about the content of a website and what it needs to look for when indexing and ranking you. It needs to be treated with the respect of a human being in order to have a meaningful relationship with it. Although the above sounds simple, it is not. Your content must be relevant and that is the tricky part, keeping it relevant in my case to the goal of "wedding videos Johannesburg" as opposed to "live streaming videos".

Now Google indexes your pages all the time and publishes your links on whatever page it deems fit, but every so often it does a major re-shuffle and at the time of writing, this started on Google - 13 January 2015 (maybe a day or two sooner). Prior to this shuffle, we had our pages on page two of Google like we had ALL of five links at the bottom of page two. Today (this may change over the days) - www.epnet.co.za is appearing number 2 on page one of Google for "wedding videos Johannesburg". We feature as well for many other keywords, like wedding video prices.

So the whole job was done in one month and we now have one of the most powerful mediums promoting our brand, without wasting time and money on AdWords, social media, links to other sites or anything else. The lesson I have learned to get ranked high on search engines is to create ONE set of keywords that you MUST get ranked for and build in the others during your journey of writing your content. Your other keywords will also feature highly as long as you are strong on the one approach.

Yours will only be strong for the one set of keywords if you are different from your competitors and the one set of keywords will strengthen all the other words you want to be strong with. You must also have a different story to tell. Simple logic does the trick. By the way, we also feature very strongly on Google for live web streaming, as a spin-off.

ABOUT GORDON BARKER

Gordon's passion and driving force is in Internet technology, building brands and bringing new ideas to the web and has recently launched a live web streaming service.
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