

## Reaping The Unexpected Benefits of SEO



Everyone loves the concept of getting more bang for their buck. With organic search engine optimization (SEO), that's exactly the kind of value you get.

Of course, the basic intent behind optimizing your site is to be ranked highly for certain targeted terms or phrases, allowing you to be more easily found than the competition. On its own, that simple outcome sounds worthwhile. But there are many more benefits that come along with the gamut of today's SEO services that can really change the way you think about your web presence and your place in the market. Let's get down to talking about some of these unexpected perks.

### Reassess Your Market, or Find a New Niche

If you already have a website but don't make much use of it, or if you're new to the internet marketing game, when you begin an optimization project you'll quickly get a better feel for the overall market and your place in it.

Start by checking out your competition; see what search terms they're targeting and what other SEO practices they're implementing. There are even SEO tools — for example, sites like [keywordspy.com](http://keywordspy.com) — that

let you see some of your competitor's web statistics. Use them to get a better idea of what you have to do to capture more of your target audience's attention both online and offline.

SEO reveals a great deal more information about your customer or client demographics. Find out what search terms they're using to find your competition, and what search terms they're using to find you.

This really helps you get into the mindset of your audience — where are they coming from geographically? What sort of words and phrases do they use when they search? Are they browsing from the office or at home? Are they finding helpful information on your site, or are they on and off quickly?

Checking out the competition and analyzing your own web stats is a great way to find a new benefit or unique selling point you may have otherwise overlooked using offline marketing efforts.

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## You've Got Questions? We've Got Answers

### Why FAQs are Here to Stay

Before you dismiss that FAQ or "Frequently Asked Questions" page as an old-school

approach to online marketing, consider these arguments for making FAQs a mainstay of your web strategy:

- 1. First and foremost, FAQs are really simple to set up.** You already have all of the content you need in the form of previous interactions with customers and suppliers, plus any questions you think might be relevant based on your own expertise and knowledge of your field or product.
- 2. They're an organic SEO content goldmine.** FAQs can be written in a natural, conversational tone, and you can use keywords throughout that your visitors are searching for. As you know, organic SEO has the highest ROI and brings the most qualified traffic to your site. This investment is a no-brainer.

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# 3 Questions About...Email Marketing

LisaMarie Dias ([LisaMarieDiasDesigns.com](http://LisaMarieDiasDesigns.com)) works with business owners to create, optimize and maintain their online marketing materials, specializing in e-newsletter start-up with Constant Contact. She also offers social media consultations on creating an effective social media presence.

## What mistakes do you see businesses making when launching an email newsletter?

The single most common mistake I see is giving up too soon. People start out with a great issue and real enthusiasm, but after a month or so they get busy and don't follow through. To get real results, you should commit to publishing for at least one full year. Create a 12-month plan with an outline including the topic, article and images you will need for each issue. This way you can gather information as you come across it, building the content for your issues in advance so that the task is less daunting.

## What's the best way to ensure your online marketing integrates with your offline efforts?

Most importantly, the message must be consistent! A close second is that the visuals should tie together. While they need not be identical — don't waste your online efforts trying to mimic a static offline or printed ad — they should be similar in color, font and impression. The tone of your message, whether it is cheery, matter of fact, serious or humorous, should also be consistent with the "voice" of your other marketing materials.

**What's the current school of thought on effective subject lines?** I personally believe that more is better. There are many people out there that tell you to keep it brief and pithy — and by all means, if you can be pithy, go for it! But, if you are sending out an event announcement, rather than just saying, "Want to learn more about Twitter?" try something like, "Intro to Twitter webinar Tues 6/15 @ 11:00 w/ LisaMarie Dias." This way, even if recipients don't open the email, they've seen the key information you wanted to share. Different service providers display subject lines of varying lengths, so be sure to prioritize your message so the most important information comes first. Many services that do shorten the subject line, however, will show the full subject line as rollover text.

Want to be next issue's Subject Matter Expert? Send an email to [compost@fahouryink.com](mailto:compost@fahouryink.com) with "Compost SME" in your subject line.

## We're Cleaning Up Our Act!

Fahoury Ink is in the process of updating our subscriber list, and we'd really appreciate your housekeeping help. If you'd like to continue receiving **Creative Compost**, the marketing industry's most respected newsletter named after a gardening technique, please take a minute to re-subscribe today at [fahouryink.com/newsletter.php](http://fahouryink.com/newsletter.php).

As **Compost** is a quarterly print publication, be sure to include your complete postal mailing address as well as your email so we can confirm receipt of your free subscription. Be assured that the spam haters at Fahoury Ink will never release your information to a third party for any reason. We'll take it to the grave.

So if you enjoy skimming our quarterly musings — and have hopefully gotten a chuckle and a grand idea or two in the process — please don't let this issue be your last! Visit [fahouryink.com](http://fahouryink.com), click on "newsletter," fill in the requested fields and in less than a minute you'll be back to business.

“As a marketing expert, I love **Creative Compost** — it is by far the best marketing piece I receive.”  
Ellen Silverman  
[www.copythatgetsresults.com](http://www.copythatgetsresults.com)



This issue's compendium of useful, fun and just plain wacky online resources

**grungetextures.com** — Looking for cool background artwork for your website? Grunge Textures provides close-up shots of "weathered and worn" surfaces (think tree bark, machinery, and asphalt, to name a few) that lend pizzazz to any web or print project.

**compete.com** — This robust selection of web analytical tools takes a more personal approach than standard visitor counts and traffic patterns. Compete.com takes into consideration behavior and browsing activity data, to name just a few unique metrics.

**browsersize.googlelabs.com** — Another useful experiment from the G-lab lets you view your web pages based on various monitor resolution settings. Use the tool to be sure important content and calls to action are showing up "above the fold" for most window sizes and screen resolutions, so your visitors can see them without having to put in the extra (and often deal-breaking) effort to scroll down or sideways.

**onlineidcalculator.com** — Businesses venturing into online marketing need to be aware of the pitfalls of social media and their company's online reputation in general. The Online ID Calculator helps you regularly monitor your online presence, analyzing search results for your name or business to be sure you are enforcing your unique, personal brand online effectively and securely.

**topsy.com** — Known as "the search engine powered by tweets," Topsy is a fast, convenient tool for gauging the type of information your Twitter audience finds of value. Enter "site:yoursitename.com" using your URL in the search box, and quickly see your most retweeted postings. You can also search competitors' sites for some valuable reconnaissance. See more helpful Twitter tools at right.

## Follow This: Tweet Your Way to Fame

Back in March, Mashable reported that Twitter was “speeding toward 10 billion tweets.” This might seem like information overload, but there are plenty of tools and techniques available to make sure you’re following the right people, sharing the right information, and getting the most out of your Twitter experience.

### Follow Yourself: [tweetbeep.com](#)

If you already use Google Alerts to notify you when your name, business or brand (or that of the competition) is mentioned in online news, you’ll immediately grasp the beauty of TweetBeep. This service uses your Twitter username and email address to notify you whenever you get a mention somewhere in the Twitter-verse, and can be a great tool for monitoring your Twitter presence.

### Follow the Media

PR, in our opinion, is one of the most overlooked Twitter benefits — connecting with journalists who are covering your area of expertise and actively looking for sources for their next story. Get in touch with

reporters and editors who are active on Twitter with these tools:



**[journalisttweets.com](#)** — Similar to TweetBeep, JournalistTweets lets you track what reporters are writing about you or your subject area, and allows you to locate journalists by subject area.

### [justtweetit.com](#), [mediaontwitter.com](#) —

These also offer a journalist focus, the latter featuring 156 reporters and editors and the former offering detailed information like title, beat, media outlet and country.

**[muckrack.com](#)** — Tracks journalists by beat (world, U.S., business, technology, sports, arts, etc.) and by media outlet.

### Follow Fridays

Get in on #followfriday, a weekly mass Twitter participation event. Recommend a friend, colleague, or subject area expert to the community at large using the hashtags #followfriday or #ff and referencing that user’s moniker in your tweet.

## FAQs (from p. 1)

**3. The pure comfort factor.** Yes, FAQs may seem as old as dirt in internet years, but that’s the point: they’re a tried and true format that’s understood at a glance. There’s nothing to figure out, and no new conventions to grasp. Question; answer. Simple.

**4. They’re a go-to resource for your salespeople, customer service reps, and your customers themselves.** Publishing a brochure but don’t have room to answer all the questions your customers might have with the level of detail you want? Simply point them to your FAQ page and load it up with educational, searchable content.

The next time you’re tempted to add the latest bell or whistle to your site to improve rankings and attract more qualified traffic, remember...the humble FAQ might be just what you — and your customers — have been looking for.



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## Jumping on the Video Marketing Bandwagon

Video has become internet marketing’s latest obsession. The purpose: get found. But how?

Recording and editing video for the web, while not rocket science, can be time consuming. Before dedicating hours to worthwhile video content, think carefully about what you want to achieve and come up with a game plan before moving forward with writing a script, shooting, or live webcasting.

According to the inbound marketing experts at Hubspot.com, videos can fall into one of two categories: informative (webinars, interviews, how-tos) or entertaining (music videos, spoofs/comedy, drama). Many businesses will benefit from walking the line between the two, providing useful educational content in a fresh and interesting way.

In addition to producing your video, you’ll also need to think about ways to promote it. Simply posting it on your website won’t do the trick; you need to get out there and share your hard work with the world. Embed video on your blog, and tweet about it with your Twitter account. Sites like TwitVid.com also let you directly upload and tweet out your video, and Tubemogul.com offers distribution and analysis across the big online video players like YouTube and Vimeo.

Before diving onto this fast-moving bandwagon, spend a few minutes with Hubspot’s free webinar: [hubspot.com/marketing-webinars/online-video-archive](http://hubspot.com/marketing-webinars/online-video-archive).



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**Inside: Reaping the Bonus  
Benefits of SEO**

## Bonus SEO Benefits

(from p. 1)

### Get Interactive and Start a Conversation

With social media and networking now falling under the SEO umbrella, you'll find new ways to communicate with your customer base. Marketing ceases to become a one-way street in which you present information that hopefully compels your customers to take action.

With blogs and networks, you open the door to a two-way conversation with individuals and businesses happy to receive and share information. The informative editorial content on your blog might just contain the words that compel your client to complete a sale or recommend you to a friend — and they can tell you so by leaving a comment or forwarding a link.

Want to find out what your customers think of your product, and how you can improve it? With supplementary SEO initiatives like blogs and Facebook fan pages, all you have to do is ask. You can also respond to

concerns and pick up some fresh perspective when it comes to your marketing strategy. Find out what you're doing wrong, and pat yourself on the back when you discover you're doing something right. This level of interactivity also gives you the opportunity to detect and monitor trends in your market as soon as they start to take off.

### Spark and Maintain Customer Loyalty

Internet users can become fiercely loyal to brands and companies that "get them" — representing their interests and goals in a genuinely helpful and engaging way, and providing them with useful, relevant information.

Blogging and networking are some of the best ways to achieve this kind of relationship. On the technical side, all this social marketing is continuing to drive traffic to your website while establishing your company as a trustworthy resource in the online universe.

You can see now how SEO goes beyond keyword searches and link building to truly establish a web presence worth noticing. If you're doing it right, you'll gain much more than increased traffic to your website or blog. You'll see customers sharing your content across networks, giving you valuable feedback in real time, responding to special offers, and pointing you in the right direction when it comes to capturing leads — information you can apply to all aspects of both your online and offline marketing strategies.

With the help of SEO, you'll not only have increased visibility — you'll also have the ability to produce well-timed efforts that get better results.

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