



## SEO OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST:

# How to Get the Content You Already Have to Rank



Many firms rely on newly published content to drive traffic and improve rankings, but the truth is that optimizing existing content can be just as crucial to your site's position on Google. Not to mention, optimized content improves user experience on your website. This guide contains a general checklist you can use to assess and optimize your existing content.

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A FULL SERVICE MARKETING PARTNER FOR LAW FIRMS

## ASSESSING PAGES AND OPTIMIZING ON-PAGE SEO:

Below is a list of what to check when assessing whether a page needs to be optimized, as well what you can do to improve on-page SEO in response to your findings:



# KEYWORDS

### ○ DENSITY:

Make sure the keyword (page title) is well-dispersed throughout the page. One keyword per section is an example of good keyword density. Any more mentions of the keyword can come off as spammy to readers.

### ○ NATURAL/LONGTAIL KEYWORDS:

Not every keyword should be an exact match to the title, however. Keywords in the introduction and conclusion sections should be exact matches to the page title. Otherwise, using an exact match keyword in every section of a page can sound repetitive and spammy to readers. Instead, make sure the keywords in the body text sound natural to the reader by adding or changing the keyword around. A keyword has several pieces:

- THE GEO (LOCATION)
- THE PRACTICE AREA
- "LAWYER"

As long as a sentence contains every piece of the keyword, the pieces do not have to be placed next to one another for the sentence to qualify as a longtail keyword phrase. A good example of a longtail keyword for New York City Car Accident Lawyer is, "Call a lawyer in New York City to learn more about your rights after a car accident." This sentence contains every piece of the keyword but sounds very natural to the reader. This creates a better experience for the reader without sacrificing SEO.

### ○ SOFTENED KEYWORDS/KEYWORD VARIANTS:

Similarly, softened keywords can add variety to the associations Google makes while crawling your page. A softened keyword uses different words (variants) from the original title. "Local auto collision attorney" is a good example of a keyword variant for New York City Car Accident Lawyer. The pieces of a softened keyword can (and should) also be separated throughout a sentence to create natural sounding keyword phrases, but can be used together in place of an exact match keyword.





# TITLE TAG & META DESCRIPTION

It's not enough to make sure a page's Title Tag and Meta Description are green. The content in both boxes should include an exact match keyword (the page title verbatim) plus original content. This means you shouldn't put your firm name after the title in every Title Tag or have the same generic sentence in the Meta Description. Instead, customize the Title Tag and Meta Description to each page. An example of an SEO-friendly Title Tag is, "New York City Car Accident Lawyer | Auto Collision Attorney" What makes this a good Title Tag is that it contains the keyword and two keyword variants (auto collision + attorney).

A good Meta Description to pair with it would be, "Get in touch with a New York City car accident lawyer to discuss filing a motor vehicle collision claim." or something similar. The goal is to hit search terms that reader might be using to find the page. Try to predict what words a person in that situation might enter into the Google search bar and include them in your Title Tag and Meta Description to increase your page's traffic, impressions, and rankings. Any words in your Title Tag/Meta Description that are searched verbatim will appear as bold to readers, making your page stand out on the SERP.





# INTERNAL LINKS

A page that lacks internal links isn't going to do your website much good. Internal links create associations between pages on Google, essentially telling the bot to crawl each linked page while crawling the original one. The more pages that are linked on a given page, the more traction your website will get on Google. Over time, growing associations on Google will lead to your site becoming an authority on the topic(s), resulting in exponentially better rankings and traffic overall.

Furthermore, a reader is highly unlikely to read large chunks of "dead text," or paragraphs without any breaks in the text. Much of the information we consume nowadays is delivered to us in short bursts, leaving many modern readers vulnerable to fatigue in large bodies of text. One way to break up a paragraph is to add a pop of color with an internal (or external) link. Improving the reader's experience will decrease bounce rates and, in turn, increase engagement and intake.

Add as many internal links as you want, but make sure each section has at least one link, if possible. The same page shouldn't be linked more than once, so remove any duplicate links. Otherwise, you can add internal links that lead to the homepage and team page, but otherwise, only add links to pages with the same GEO. For instance, a New York City page shouldn't include links to any Rochester pages.

Furthermore, the parent page should be linked somewhere in the introduction paragraph to tell Google that the pages are related – this helps build authority on the parent page. For example, a New York City Car Accident Lawyer page should link to New York City Personal Injury Lawyer in the introduction.





# HEADINGS

Headings should be 100% original content on every single page. Generic, reusable headings won't do in today's SEO algorithm, meaning you'll have to ensure a page's headings are optimized for the specific keyword and correspond to their specific sections.

A good heading can make a huge difference in the way a page ranks, meaning attention to detail can go a long way. Try to construct headings using words you think your readers would search for to find the page. The closer you can get to their search queries, the more likely it is for the page to rank at the top. For example, questions make great headings because many people search in question form: "How long do I have to file a car accident claim in New York City?" "What is the Statute of Limitations for car accident claims in NYC?" Both examples include all pieces of the keyword and are tailored to the content in the section.



# GEO DENSITY

It is imperative for the GEO to appear 1-2 times in every section. Too many mentions of the GEO can cause your page to sound spammy. Without enough mentions of the GEO, the page loses a competitive advantage in your location of choice. If a section doesn't mention the GEO, either find a place to add it in or add it to the section's heading. Additionally, if there's a colloquial name for your GEO, don't hesitate to use it in the text and in headings to balance out the content and improve searchability.





# CLEAN UP THE CONTENT

- **TURN LISTS WRITTEN IN SENTENCE FORM INTO BULLET LISTS:**  
This can help make the text less cumbersome for readers. It also shows the reader what the section is about at a glance, making the content easier to navigate.
- **REMOVE TYPOS AND DUPLICATIVE CONTENT:**  
Give the page a thorough proofread and scan for spelling and grammar mistakes and duped content. If you recognize a piece of content from another page or website, rework or remove it. The Google bot penalizes pages with duplicative content, so it's crucial to ensure a page contains 100% original content. Don't worry if a page looks too short after removing duplicative content – Google tends to favor quality short content over duplicative long content, and you can always add more later.





# A Lot Goes Into On-Page SEO Optimization.

**Rely on Marketing  
Professionals to  
Get the Job Done.**

It can be hard to hit each of these criteria on every piece of optimizable content while running a law firm. That's why we recommend taking advantage of our marketing expertise so you can focus on helping your clients succeed in court. MeanPug can take the lead in assessing content across your website to catch discrepancies in SEO best practices. Our team's meticulous dedication to quality content will help your rankings on Google and improve your reputation in the minds of searchers and potential clients.

**For more information on what to look  
out for when assessing on-page SEO  
and insight on how to address your  
findings, [send us a message.](#)**