

040 - SEO - A Necessary Evil

Prologue 0:00

SEO is really effective if you have content that convinces your target audience that corresponds to something a lot of people are searching for. And this is very tied to a normal customer journey. So a customer journey from one someone buying a car very often starts extremely early, where they don't even know which brand they want, which type of car they want. They might want a family car but not don't know yet if it should be a minivan or an SUV. So this journey can start really early. Or it can be really targeted geographically, for example, where someone is looking for a car retail in their area, and they might put in the city name or the name of their region of their province. So these kinds of searches would already be almost transactional, where someone is not almost really transactional searches, where someone is looking for retail in Sydney, for example, or a car dealership in Melbourne. And these kinds of tactics are really, really interesting. We see a lot of leads being generated through content being put out, and especially if you have the content to get multiple touchpoints throughout the customer journey, this is extremely effective.

Podcast Intro 1:16

Welcome to the SEO Leverage Podcast, where we talk about search, marketing, and conversion.

Gert Mellak 1:26

Hello, and welcome. This is Gert Mellak episode 40 of our SEOLeverage.com podcast. Today, the topic is whether SEO is a necessary evil. And the background here is really that this was raised by one of our clients at some point that they said, look, I've always seen SEO as something nice to have. But like it's like a necessary evil. It can hurt us as well, it fluctuates a lot. And this is feedback we get from a lot of people. And this is why today I just want to talk in general about SEO, is it necessary? Is it not necessary? Who should look into SEO as part of the strategy? Or should it be the only strategy? These are the things we want to talk about today. So stay tuned. If this sounds like this could be interesting for you. First of all, I'd like to make sure we're on the same page. SEO is search engine optimization, and what we tries to push rankings of content specifically targeting our clients potential client or potential audience. So when they search for something, they can discover our clients here and discover their brand, get exposed, get aware about their brand, convert into leads, and eventually sales. This is what we're trying to do. And this heavily is tied to search rankings. So if I want to rank for blue iPhone cover, or brown shoes, I need to put out content that first of all can rank for these terms, meaning this is content, very similar to what's already ranking there. And there are a lot of other things that go into the equation. But ultimately, what we try to do is make sure that Google understands the relevance and the authority of our clients pages, and takes them into account when they assess which page should be up, which page should be down. SEO is definitely one of the most effective tactics I have seen so far in order to drive relevant traffic to a website. We have seen SEO even very often outperformed paid ads. Just because the way people discover

a brand is very different when it's an organic strategy from content being found on Google. And then people click on this search result, come to the page, discovered is on their own. Whereas paid ads are very often making sure that people see a certain brand in a certain context, this can be done in a less offensive, less intrusive way. But very often people know exactly they were clicking on an ad even if it's really interesting and relevant, they still know they were clicking on an ad this was not something they discovered under on and the conversion behavior can then change. SEO is really effective if you have content that convinces your target audience that corresponds to something a lot of people are searching for. And this is very tied to a normal customer journey. So a customer journey from someone buying a car very often starts extremely early where they don't even know which brand they want, which type of car they want. They might want a family car but don't know yet if it should be a minivan or an SUV. So this journey can start really early. Or it can be really targeted geographically, for example. Where someone is looking for a car retail in their area, and they might put in their city name or the name of their region of their province. So these kinds of searches would already be almost transactional, where someone is not almost really transactional searches, where someone is looking for a retailer in Sydney, for example, or a car dealership in Melbourne. And these kinds of tactics are really, really interesting. We see a lot of leads been generated through content being put out. And especially if you have the content to get multiple touchpoints. Throughout the customer journey, this is extremely effective. I remember one of our clients started out having just let go off their only virtual assistant because their site dropped heavily. And right now when I have a call with them, I have five other people on the call. And this has really been just growing organically. They did a lot of work on their website. They're doing more and more work covering more and more ground on their website is really going in a nice direction. And I think they 4x or 5x their conversions in the last year at least, if not more. So the efficiency is absolutely there. This efficiency comes with the cost, SEO is not free. So even though clicks on your SEO results on your search results or search rankings are not going to cost anything. Whereas on Google ads, for example, you're paying per click most of the time, SEO is not free, because SEO needs dedicated resources. And those resources can come from different areas, this might be writer creating the content, it might be you investing time. This is going to be a hosting platform. This is going to be a tech person helping you with the tech probably. Even if it's you doing everything, we would still need to see that there's a lot of time and resources involved into maintaining this. But chances are that once you get to certain stage, you have a few people around you. And you might have an assistant or a small team. You might have an SEO consultant or agency like SeoLeverage.com, where we with Erica consulting, for example, help small teams, make sure they make strategic decisions and really focus on things that are actually going to move the needle. So SEO is absolutely not free. SEO needs dedicated resources. And this is where it's so important that already initially at the initial stages where you're not in a position to get an agency. You're not in a position to get a team in place you already at least know where things should be going. Get an initial assessment of the competitors, for example. This is where very often our quick audit comes in where people just want to really know where things should be heading. So they can then make the right decisions right off the bat. There are some SEO techniques that definitely need to be considered. So first of all, we definitely want to create content. Content creation needs a lot of research. We need to know what kind of content it is that Google wants to rank. And this is rather an article format. Is this a collection or category

page? Is this like a more image heavy page, or should this really be a long form or short form article? Is this a homepage Google wants to rank or is this something really, really specific with scientific citations and stuff like that. You really want to do your research before you create content. So the content right from the beginning can be in line with what Google actually even considers ranking. Another technique to be aware of is link building. See Google is very reluctant to trust a page just because they have a piece of content and start showing it. Google is trying to protect the users. They don't want to show them irrelevant, or even wrong information. A lot of things are going on around the concept of EAT, expertise, authoritativeness trustworthiness. When you compare the results from 2018 to 2021, in certain spaces, like financial and especially the health space, rankings have changed drastically towards a situation where whatever needs wants to rank in the health and finance space really needs to be very reviewed contrasted content with citations resources where stating who has put this all of information together. What's the qualification, etc. So you really need to make sure that your content is there. Google is not going to trust you unless other websites do this first. And this is where link building comes in, or the backlinks come in. Backlinks are links from other websites to yours. And those websites should be relevant in your space. Should be, ideally authorities in your space. Respective or respected authorities pages that also come up when someone searches for this topic where you want to rank. So Google already identifies them as relevant in this niche, in this industry, in this topic, and if they then rank to you, it's like an endorsement on their end. The third technique I want to mention is geographic relevancy. And the reason why I do this is because Google just started showing the reasons why some pages rank on the search results, and essentially content plus links plus geographic relevance is really what sums it up the best. If you have a business that somehow has a geographic relevance, where people might be searching in your area, they're searching for a provider in their area. You definitely want to pay close attention to this geographic aspect. And make sure you strengthen this as much as possible. So this is really a broad overview SEO, is it a necessary evil or not? I think SEO gives a lot of efficiency. SEO sends you a lot of eyeballs to your brand. Exposes people in different at different stages of your customer journey to your brand. SEO, and I want to make sure that I stress this here as much as possible. SEO can't be your own, your only strategy. I would definitely advise against betting everything on SEO. But rather CSU is one of the pillars below your marketing strategy. SEO is one of the tactics, we're going to do. We're also going to do paid ads. We're also going to do remarketing. You might be building up a YouTube channel. We ourselves, engage in paid ads, we engage in YouTube, we create this podcast for you, for our audience, in order to get to know us, in order to see if we could be a good fit. And if you think we could help you, definitely reach out to Seoleverage.com. Head over to our website. Get in touch with us. Check out what we're doing with audits with the Erica framework especially or get a quick audit on our website. My name is Gert Mellak. Thank you so much for listening. This is Episode 40 and if you want to read an article about this topic, head over to Seoleverage.com/podcast and find Episode 40.