

058 - Prototype Article

Gert Mellak 0:00

At the end of the article, really important to have another call to action, give people something to do. You can call it where to go from here, what are the next steps and give them maybe a few options. One is to get the buyers guide. One is to get in touch with you. One might be to read more articles about this topic. And just make sure you don't end this with the last sentence and then leave them up to their own. They're going to head back to Google and click somewhere else to see if they find more guidance.

SEO Leverage Podcast Intro Music 0:31

Welcome to the SEO leverage podcast. Where we talk about search marketing, and conversion.

Gert Mellak 0:41

Hello this Gert Mellak, and you're listening to episode 58 of our podcast. Today, we are going to talk about the ideal layout of an article on your website, so it serves both the user and the conversions on your website. If you're interested in a visual form of what I'm going to explain, head over to SEOLEVERAGE.com/podcast, find episode 58, we are going to have a downloadable PDF there, so you get a visual clue of what I'm explaining here. Articles on many websites have a very big problem. They are not made for users to easily navigate them. They're not engaging users enough to drive them to the next step to an action, to an opt in, to a purchase, etc. So it really makes sense to think for a moment of what could be some sort of ideal layout. Let's create a prototype article. And this is what I do with our Erica consulting clients. We create the prototype article and then we have an article we can then use as a guideline when it comes to making sure we add more content to their website. So all articles are already in line with user experience, best practices, but also take into account the conversion path. If you think about many, many articles, they start with the title then a huge image and then text paragraph after text paragraph. This is a very usual layout we see. We are in an era where a lot of video content is published and that then ends up on a blog post and just publish the video and then an article or a transcription of the video and hit publish. This is just not a usual search result you're going to see rank too well. And the reason is because it's not user friendly. It's also not search engine friendly. It doesn't help the search engine figure out what's really important how things are related. So in this podcast today, I would like to explain quickly a few things that are really, really important, basing this on the layout you're going to find on our episode 58 as a PDF. So let's jump right in. Usually, ideally, we think a headline should be drawing the attention for the user headline. Very often is an exit sign for people. So the headline is going to determine whether they stay on the page or not. You could have the best article up there and not a copywriter. We're going to try to get one on the show soon. We had Anfernee Chansamooth already here talking about copywriting a bit. And we're going to focus on this a little bit more. But as far as I can tell, the headline is really going to determine whether people are going to stay on this page

and think this is what they were looking for. Or they hit the back button and go to Google. That is something we want to avoid at any cost. Usually after the headline, many, many sites have a featured image. And this is just based on the sites using WordPress and the default behavior is that there is a featured image showing for SEO purposes. And also for users, I think this is not ideal. And the reason is because the actual content that gives users and search engine some context is going to be pushed further down. And on some sites depending on a layout, you even need to scroll in order to find it. So what we usually prefer is to not use the featured image feature, but just start with a paragraph and then embed a feature directly after one or two paragraphs. And ideally, after the intro paragraph, we would recommend to have some sort of index section like Wikipedia has or jump to section, as you can see very often on sites where you can jump to a specific sections on this article. And the reason is because the answer a user is searching for might just be in the lower part of the article. And if they don't happen to scroll that far, they might not be seeing the actual answer and the index can help them to figure out that the answers further down below. So we will have an intro, with one or two paragraphs, we would have an index or a jump to section and then ideally, and this really comes from the Facebook ads world where we learn this. It makes sense to have a first call to action already. There are people who are going to be ready very quickly to opt in if the lead magnet is in line with their expectations. So imagine you want to purchase a car and you get offered a free buyer's guide for a family car. This could be really compelling for you even before reading the article. So having a small button or at least a link but ideally, a button in after the intro that helps people to opt in directly if they want, very often is going to get good results. I encourage you to test it. After the call to action, I would then have either a featured image or if this is an article you have a video on, I would embed the video there. For the embedding very often, if you just copy and paste over the YouTube code, it might take you a while. There was a technical workaround, where you just show an image I think, and then pressing the image of the video, you can then load the player you want. You might want to talk with your tech person about how this can be done. I've seen it and it definitely performs much better and loads the site much faster. Then after this embedded video featured image, you might have one or two lines of text before you actually start the first page two section or headline two. This is called very often. And it's just a sub headline. So ideally, your article should be structured in subsections. And every subsections should have a sub headline. This makes it really easy to scroll through the article and find the sections I'm really interested in. Hardly anybody, let's face it is going to read the whole piece from the beginning to the end. We're in such a hurry, we are certain on using mobile devices, when we're reading, we take a couple of minutes to research something etc. Hardly ever, we're in a position where we read an entire article from the start to the end, I think. So it makes sense to structure this. And it's also going to help Google to figure out what the main focus of the different parts of your articles. Every section of those shouldn't have, in my opinion, more than one or two paragraphs, ideally. And then you could already have another call to action. This could be a banner, this could be a button or so before you then get to the next sub section. You might have several sub sections of those, it really depends on the type of articles you're working on. My recommendation is that you break up the different sub sections with either a call to action, a button or banner, or whatever or an opt in. And also sometimes use an image or an illustration, an infographic in order to make sure you avoid like huge content walls or text walls, as I call them. Very often we're just scrolling scrolling, scrolling, it's all text, which makes it really

annoying. Little user friendly, and people might be dropping off. They might not be encouraged to read the entire thing. At the end of the article really important to have another call to action, give people something to do. You can call it where to go from here, what are the next steps and give them maybe a few options. One is to get the buyers guide. One is to get in touch with you. One might be to read more articles about this topic. And just make sure you don't end this with the last sentence and then leave them up to their own. They're going to head back to Google and click somewhere else to see if they find more guidance. So really, overall, we start with a headline. We have an intro paragraph above the fold meaning before we start scrolling down to give more context right at the beginning. And people and Google can make the decision very quickly whether this is what it's supposed to be or is this not a good fit. After the intro we have an index or a jump to section, call to action above the fold ideally should be tested at least. And then featured image or video and then different subsections separated with calls to action or images. Over at episode 58, I'm going to upload a PDF you can download where you see this schematically shown. And one last tip, you really want to make sure that you have one or two words in bold on every paragraph, or at least every subsection to make it easy to skim the article. So what the most important term in a paragraph if this is highlighted, I can easily decide if I want to read this paragraph or just skip it and read on on the next section. This makes it really user friendly and certain specific bold words are going to give Google also a very good overview which terminology is really important on your page, which is also going to give you a little bit of an SEO benefit here. If you want more information or want our help, specifically my help in order to set up a prototype article on your website and make sure that your articles are also driving leads and get better user engagement. Head over to Seoleverage.com and get in touch with me. My name is Gert Mellak. Have a nice day.