HOW TO MARKET YOURSELF ONLINE TO ATTRACT TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION CLIENTS

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Apart from reaching out to our clients ourselves, we can make sure that our online platform is set up so that the companies and clients that DO need our services can easily find us online, plus use content marketing to attract them to us. This is also called inbound marketing.

WHAT IS INBOUND MARKETING?

HubSpot, one of the world's biggest proponents of inbound marketing (and content marketing), defines it as: "[A] business methodology that attracts customers by creating valuable content and experiences tailored to them." Unlike ads and other outbound tactics, this form of marketing puts you in the role of advisor and friend. It focuses more on being helpful and nurturing long-term relationships than on making a quick buck. Strategies are often passive and include things like monthly blogging, quarterly newsletter writing, and regular posting on social media. But you'd be wrong to think that its unobtrusiveness makes inbound less effective than traditional methods.

THREE STEPS TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS CAN TAKE TO USE INBOUND MARKETING

Ready to start marketing your translation services the inbound way? Great! Follow the three steps below:

1. **Narrow Down**

   While it is tempting to be open to work with anyone and in any subject, it will make it much harder to attract clients and use inbound marketing. It not only spreads you thin but also muddles your marketing, diminishes your expertise, and opens you up to quality issues. To make it easier for yourself and the client, it is best to narrow down to a specific industry or subject area. What subjects and markets are you passionate about? What do you have experience with? Once you've found your niche, you need to define your target market and build a buyer persona. Focus on what issues your clients are having and what parts of the internet they frequent (probably LinkedIn). Once these things are done, you can go on to step two.

2. Build and Optimize Your Online Presence

To grow a thriving freelance business, you need to be readily available online. You also need to be laser-focused on being where your customers are. When it comes to this stage of inbound, I'd suggest starting with your website. If you have one, make sure it's optimized for what your customers are searching for and written in a way that focuses less on how you can help them. If you don't have a website for your translation services, get one, even a one page one is a good start. Make sure to display your testimonials, certifications, and experience in a prominent place. Then, you can get to work on creating social media accounts on the sites your customers frequent. With all that done, you can finally start posting.

3. Report and Adjust

So, how will you know when your inbound marketing efforts bear fruit? You'll have to track them! Use a tool like Google Analytics to monitor your website traffic. I suggest setting aside an hour or two per month to analyze your current performance. See what pages receive the most views, where customers tend to drop off in the buying process, what kind of people end up filling out your contact forms, and where those leads coming from. Are there any questions you get over and over again? Did a process fail you earlier in the month? This reflection time will allow you to chart a new, more profitable course and keep your momentum going.

Here follows some checklists and guides to make the inbound marketing easier to do and master.
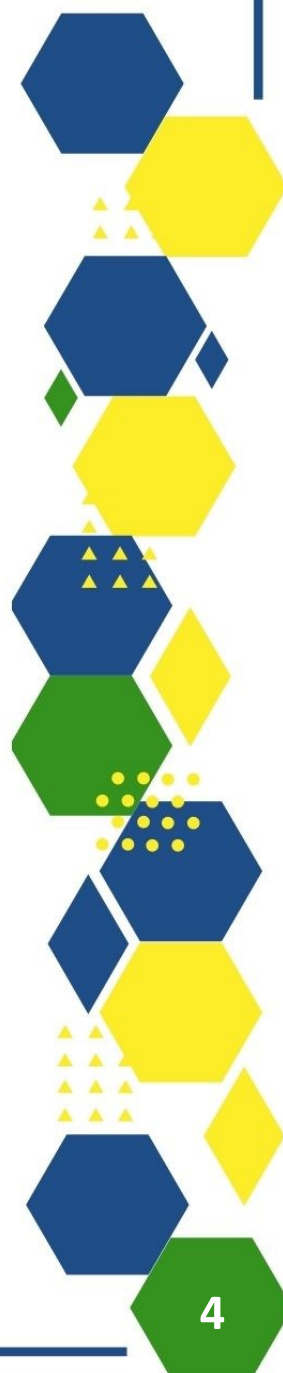
10 TIPS FOR EFFICIENT ONLINE MARKETING

Networking used to consist of going to functions, shaking hands and swapping business cards. Today, we do much more of our networking online. Here are my best tips/steps to network effectively online.

1. Set goals for your online networking

Instead of aimlessly browsing online groups and social media, determine what your goal is and who you would like to connect with. For example, find X number of new prospects, what types of companies you would like to connect with, connect and learn from
colleagues etc.

2. Create an online presence

Consider creating a website if you don't have one. There are many easy to use, affordable hosting and web template services out there these days, making it super-easy to do. If you're looking to build your online business profile, do not overlook the power and reach of LinkedIn.

Related:

Episode 255: All About Marketing Your Translation Services on LinkedIn

Using LinkedIn Efficiently to Find Translation Clients

3. Understand the Power of Keywords & Links

If you do build a site or start generating and sharing content, know the power of keywords, the basic principles of search engine optimization and the power of links.

Related:

Episode 206: SEO Mistakes Freelancers Make and How to Fix Them – Interview with Mike Murray

Website Optimization Tips to Help Translation Clients Find You
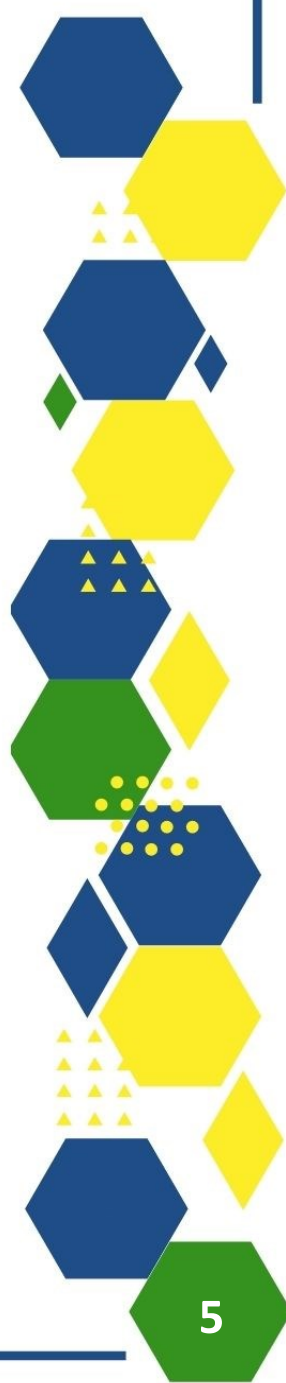
4. Share and build relationships

If you want to build a relationship with a contact online, it is important to share, communicate, and connect in a human and helpful way. This can be sharing helpful resources or sharing someone's post.

5. Think like a marketer when sharing content.

Get creative with your copy. What is memorable about your email, post or tweet? Are you being clear and direct? Is the subject line header of your email or post catchy enough to grab someone's attention?

### 6. Create a LinkedIn outreach campaign

If your goal is to connect with people in your niche, you can start by doing a search for your industry keyword on LinkedIn.

Once you have a list of people, get in the habit of connecting with 5 of them per day. But remember to personalize your connection message. Write what you have in common and be specific about why you want to connect. Remember to not try to sell or ask for anything. Begin by being a valuable resource, helping, or simply sharing a commonality.

7. Consider using Twitter's advanced search

If you're active on Twitter, you can use advanced search to find people to connect with. Think about who that exact person you're trying to reach is and the words they'd use in their bios, tweets, and as hashtags.

Search those keywords and you'll see a list of conversations happening around those words or phrases and hopefully find people there that you find interesting. Add 5 people you find in your research to a Twitter list – public or internal. This makes it easy to click into that list, see who is tweeting what, share their content or respond.
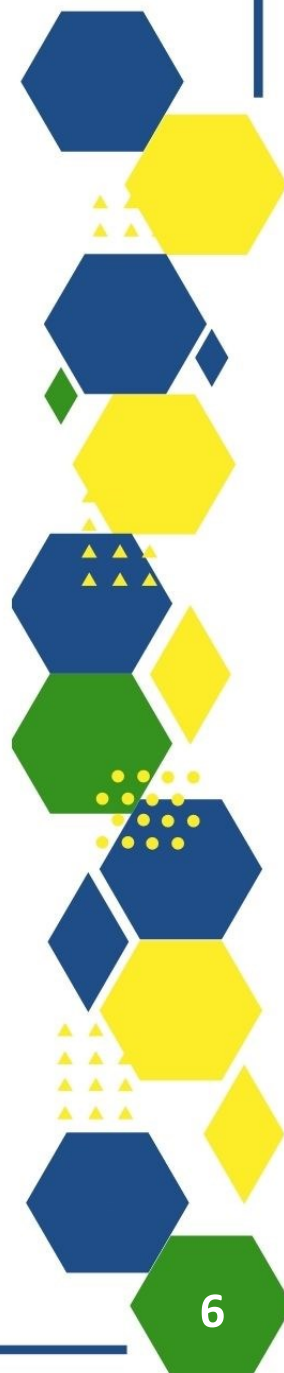
8. Attend online conferences

In-person conferences will not be possible for the foreseeable future, but many of them have moved online. Even if it is harder to connect over the computer, it is important not to give up. Instead, see this time as an opportunity to attend conferences that you normally would not be able to attend. Now that we don't have to spend time and money on travel, you can consider attending conferences both in our own industry and in the industry of our target clients and area of specialization.

9. Stay in touch with your current clients

During the pandemic, one of the most important things to focus on when net-working online, is to stay in touch with your current clients. Let them know when you are available. Stay updated on their situation and see how you can help.

Here are some ways to stay in touch in non-invasive ways:

- Post updates about your business and share useful articles on social media

- Send messages through WhatsApp or other chat functions

- Send an uplifting postcard

- Consider giving them a call if you have a closer relationship with them

Related:

[Episode 258: Online Networking for Freelancers During the Pandemic](#)

10. Be strategic with your time

Relationships and connections matter in every business. However, that does not mean that you need to connect with everyone and anyone. Instead, be strategic in who you're networking and connecting with. Focus your time on making deep connections and build real, targeted relationships.
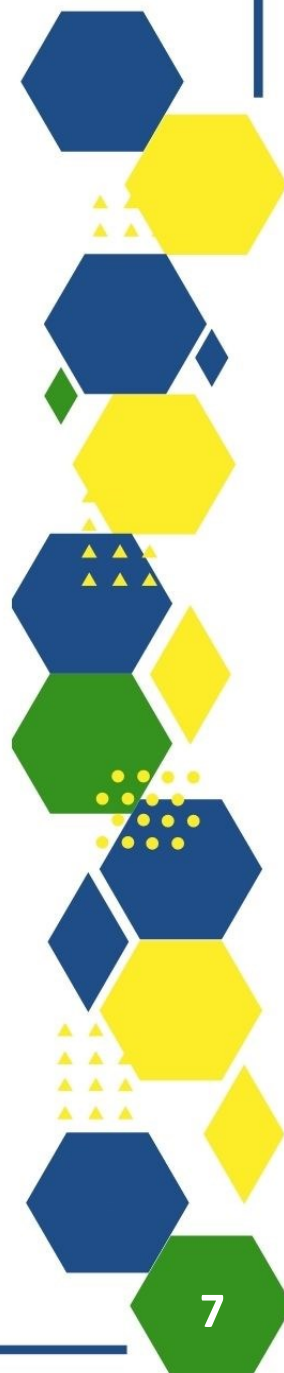
WEBSITE OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST:
# 30 POINTS FOR AN OPTIMIZED WEBSITE

WEBSITE FUNCTIONALITY

1. Does your website load quickly? (test the speed at http://tools.pingdom.com/fpt/)

2. Does the site load and look right in all major web browsers?

3. Does the site load correctly and quickly on mobile devices?

DESIGN

4. Does your company name show clearly?

5. Do the color schemes and template match your brand?

6. Do you use graphics adequately? Your site should have neither too much text nor too many images.

7. Have you eliminated all distractions (Flash, animations, music, strange colors)?

8. Does the visitor need to do a lot of horizontal scrolling? (try to avoid it)

9. Is it easy to navigate your site (menus, sidebars) and find what the visitor is looking for?

10. Are there prominent links to all the main pages?

CONTENT

11. Does your main message and call to action show above the fold?

12. Is there contact information, or link to contact information on each page?

13. Does it address the needs and problems of the target customer?
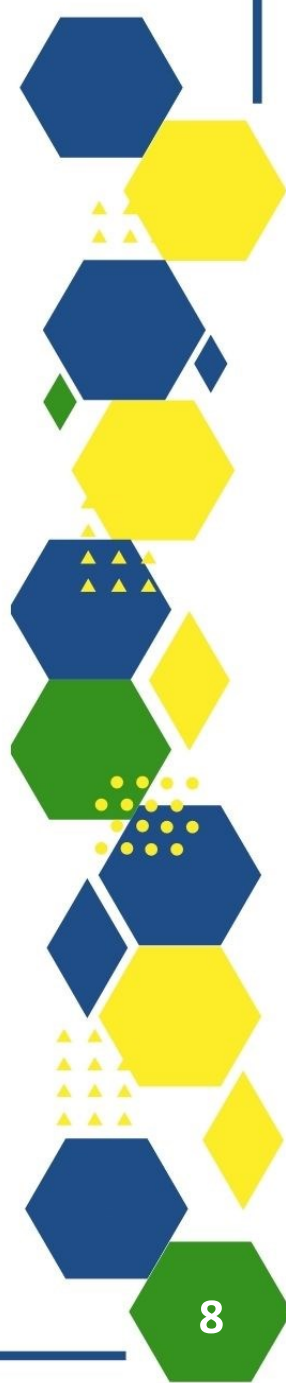
14. Is fresh content added consistently (for example through a blog or forum with updates)?

15. Does it explain how your services can benefit the target audience?

16. Is it free of spelling and grammatical errors?

17. Does the content contain proper keywords that the potential customer might use when looking for your services?

LAYOUT

18. Is the content laid out in short paragraphs so it can be skimmed?

19. Do you use bullet points?

20. Do you use sub-headings?

21. Do you have a call to action on every page?

CONTACT INFORMATION

22. Do you have a separate page with contact information?

23. Do you have a contact option on every page?

24. Do you provide more than one contact option?

25. Have you listed your time zone and business hours?

ABOUT PAGE

26. Is your about page easy to find?

27. Does the about page provide a clear description of your services?

28. Does it tell your story?

SEO

29. Have you used keyword optimization for the page title and title tags?

30. Have you placed some keywords in your content?
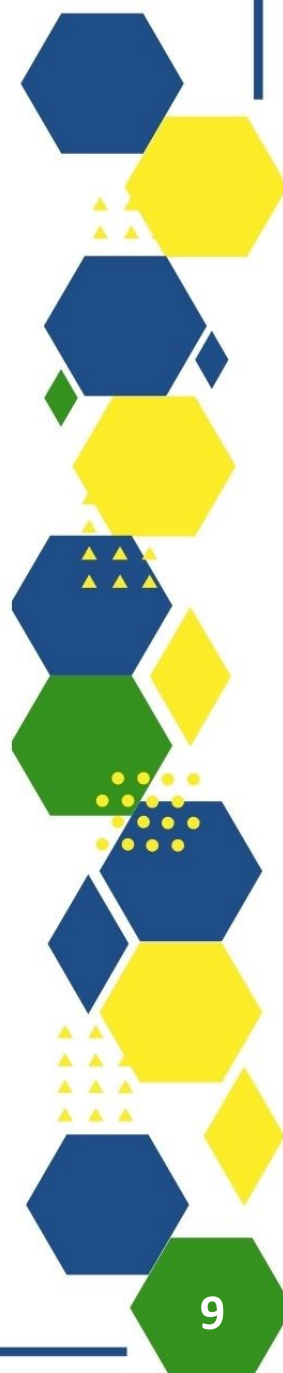
CRASH COURSE IN SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search engine optimization (SEO) helps your website be better ranked in search. This is a crucial step, but I do not recommend putting too much research into SEO. Gone are the days when you could stuff your site full of keywords and jump a few pages in a fortnight. Google changes its algorithms constantly. But one trend is clear: Google's algorithms are becoming more intelligent, more human, and they reward sites that focus on providing visitors value.

Image courtesy of Stuart Miles at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

PICKING THE RIGHT KEYWORDS

I previously said that keywords aren't everything, but you should pay some attention to them. Think of words your ideal clients would use to find your services on Google. Write them down. Below are a few points to consider:

- What keywords do your clients use to find your services?

- Are there similar keywords with comparable search volume and less competition?

- Can you easily work them into your text and headers?

You can also use sites like Google Keyword Planner and Mangools to generate a list of words associated with your market. They also tell you how competitive those terms are and how often they're searched.

MORE SEO TIPS

You no longer need exact keyword matches to drive your search ranking. Nowadays, search engines rely on a mixture of site authority, site content, and site popularity to determine search results. But, more importantly, they're searching for site's that satisfy user intent. So, you need to build your site in a way that drives customer interest and promotes on-page activity.

Here are a few tips from SEO experts:

- **Site speed is important**: Sites that are slow to load are penalized in rankings. To make your site load faster, remove extraneous widgets and compress images. To check how quickly your website loads, you can try using the "Pagespeed" app.

- **Remove broken links**: A 404 error can leave a sour taste in a customer's mouth. That's why it's important to go through your site and test its functionality. If you stumble onto a broken link, remove it. You can use this tool to help: www.brokenlinkcheck.com.

- **Content is sill king**: Though direct keyword use isn't as powerful as it used to be, it continues to be a vital part of your SEO strategy. Just make sure that you focus on satisfying readers first and search engines second.

- **Use related language**: Using terms closely related to your keywords makes it easier for Google to determine the purpose of an article. It's also thought to boost your search engine credibility. If you were writing an article about the software translation, you might have the words, software, localization, app, language. If those are in the body copy, it sends signals to the search engines that this is a pretty good article.

- **Prioritize more specific keywords:** Seventy-five percent of search queries are between three and five words long, so you need to cater your content appropriately. Instead of optimizing for the words 'freelance translator,' try and build your site around terms like 'freelance Chinese patent translator.'
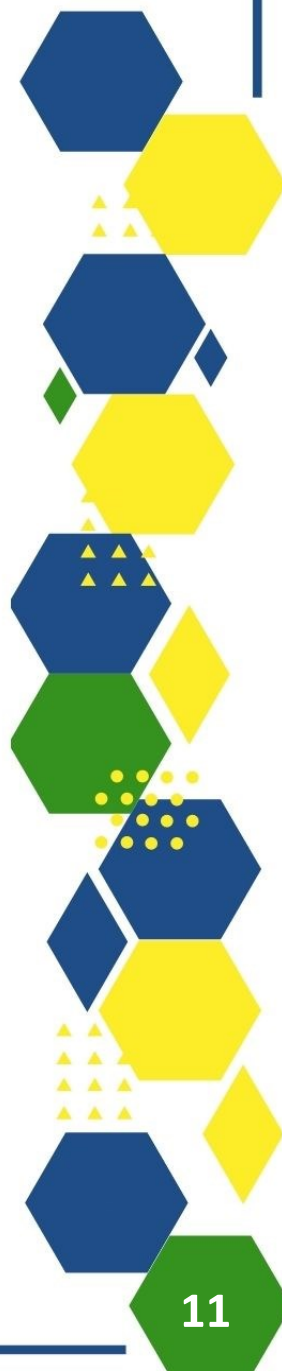
- **Mention your keyword within the first 100 words of a site page or blog post:** Believe it or not, by using keywords toward the start of a page, your site will rank better in search engine results.

- **Think mobile first:** Design your website with phones and tablets in mind. Since Google now starts indexing on smaller screens, having a responsive website is more important than ever.

- **Try using video**: We all know that videos are a great way to keep audiences engaged and entertained. But do you know that by using enough videos, you can improve the ranking of your page?

- **Use meta and title tags correctly**: Your title tag is one of the first things Google looks at when categorizing the individual web page. The combination of title tag and snippet (meta description) is what your prospects are going to see in their searches. Include keywords but make titles and snippets sound natural and focus on motivating prospects to click. For best results, keep it to 65 characters or fewer.

THE 4 KEY PARTS OF SEO

While there are hundreds of factors influencing ranking, there are few that have a big impact on your search engine ranking:

Meta and title tags

These are the descriptions and headlines that clients see in search. Your title tag is one of the first things Google looks at when categorizing the individual web page. Include keywords but make titles and snippets sound natural and focus on motivating prospects to click. For best results, keep your title tag under 65 characters.

Images

These are the things that get the most attention on your website. But, they're not just eye candy. They're actually valuable to SEO. So, make sure each image has a title and an alt tag. Since alt and title tags are often used to help the visually impaired, make sure your tagging is relevant to the image itself.
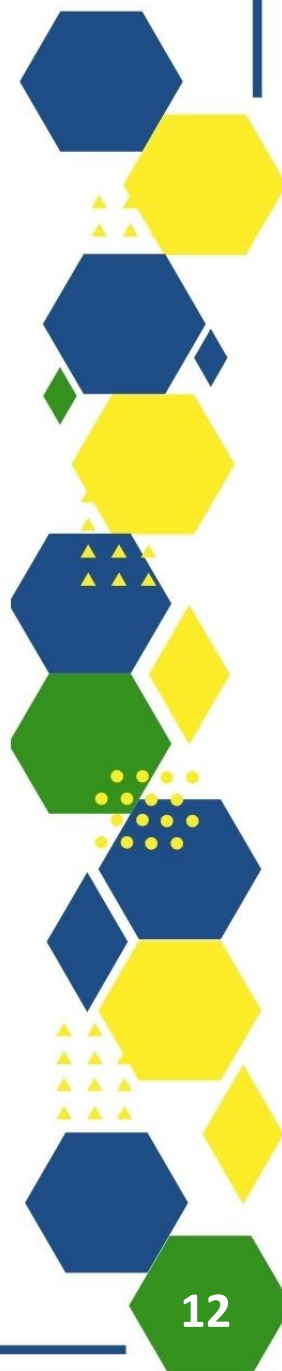
Backlinks

Backlinks, also known as inbound or incoming links, are what happens when one website links to another. Analytics can be used to track visitors from all referring sites, including search engines, social networks, and directory sites.
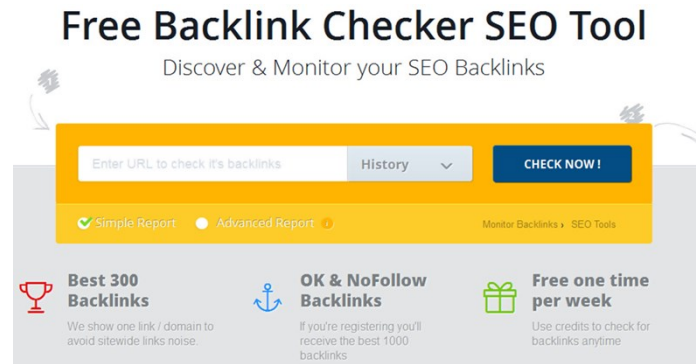
Analytics

To see if your SEO efforts are paying off, you'll need to install Google Analytics. Offered by Google, Analytics generates detailed statistics about a website's traffic and traffic sources and measures conversions and sales. It can also track where visitors came from and provide some insight into how well your marketing efforts are doing.

After you have created your website, you should connect it to Google Analytics. You'll start by going to Google Analytics and creating an account. You will then get a tracking code that you install on your website. There are lots of tutorials and step by step instructions for this, so don't worry. It is quite easy. Go to Google Analytics, hit "View Report" on the initial screen. This will bring you to the main dashboard.
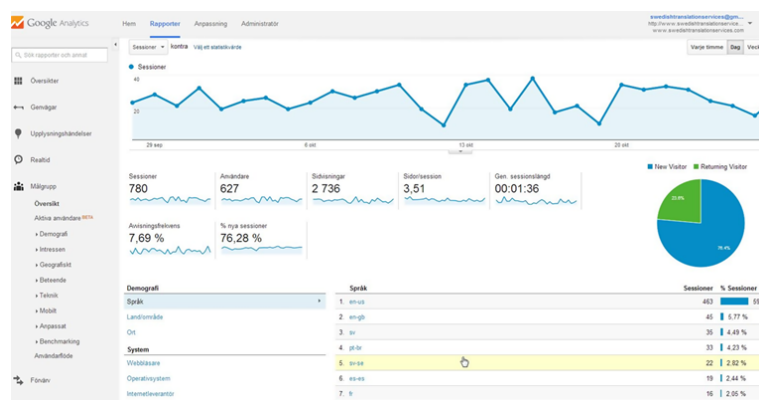
In the left column, you'll see the various types of data Google Analytics provides:

Visitors: This shows many things about the people coming to your site, including where they're located geographically, what language they speak, how often they visit your site and what computers and browsers they use to get there.

Traffic sources: Here you'll find how people got to your site. You can track which sites link to your page or keywords people search to find you.

Content: This tab gives you insight into specific pages on your site. It can help answer questions about how people enter and exit your pages, as well as which ones are most popular.

Behavior: This shows which pages they have visited and for how long, if they have clicked on anything etc.

Analytics are actually kind of fascinating to me. And, if you give them a chance, you might like them too. So, go play around with it and decide which metrics to follow.

SEO FOR WORDPRESS

Here is a screenshot from the tool I use on my website to track keyword density, title tags, and metatags. The tool is called SEO by Yoast. It also shows how the page will look in the search engines.
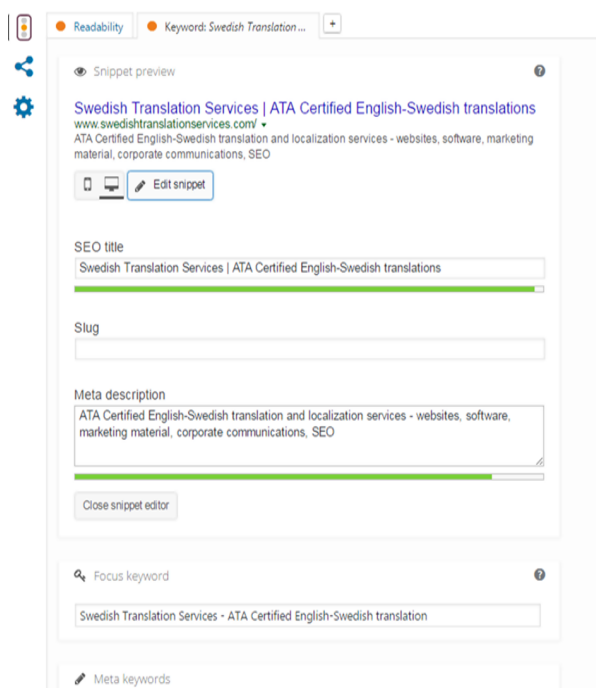
LINKEDIN - OPTIMIZE YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE BY FOLLOWING THIS CHECKLIST

1. Professional picture

2. Professional headline including language combination and specialization – focus on target market

3. Location and industry clearly listed

4. Create custom LinkedIn URL so people can easily find you

5. Include contact info with website address

6. Use the About section to your advantage, with compelling copy, examples of projects, specializations, testimonials etc. Include keywords

7. Media added to Featured section - for example slide share presentation or link to website or portfolio

8. List all your experience in the Experience section, including relevant volunteer positions

9. List all your relevant education with keywords

10. Add all relevant certifications, volunteer work, memberships

11. Join appropriate LinkedIn groups

12. Ask for and give recommendations
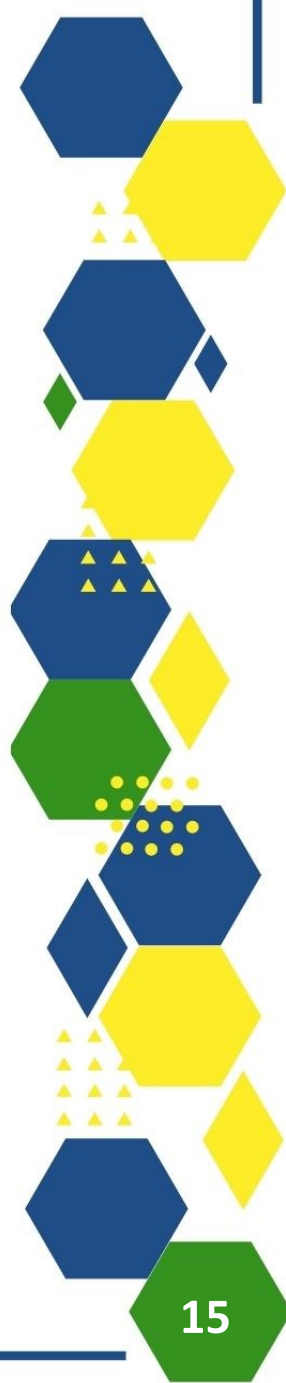
LINKEDIN MARKETING IN 15 MINUTES

ACCEPT CONNECTION REQUESTS AND SEND A WELCOME MESSAGE

- [ ] Review and accept (if appropriate) any new connection requests.

- [ ] After you have accepted a connection request, send your new connection a quick Welcome Message to thank them for

REPLY TO MESSAGES

- [ ] Review and reply to any new messages you have received to build relationships and get to know your network.

- [ ] Be interested. Ask questions. Add value.

POST A STATUS UPDATE

- [ ] Post a daily status update to stay top of mind and build your authority and credibility on your topic with your network.

- [ ] If you have a blog, share a link and relevant comment every time you post.

- [ ] Pre-schedule status updates once a week to decrease the amount of daily time you need to be on LinkedIn.

RESPOND TO ENGAGEMENT

- [ ] Respond to any engagement on your status updates or comments on LinkedIn.

- [ ] Review your Notifications and Activity pages and respond accordingly to all of the people who have engaged with your content, followed you, liked your updates, or taken any other action that involves you on LinkedIn.
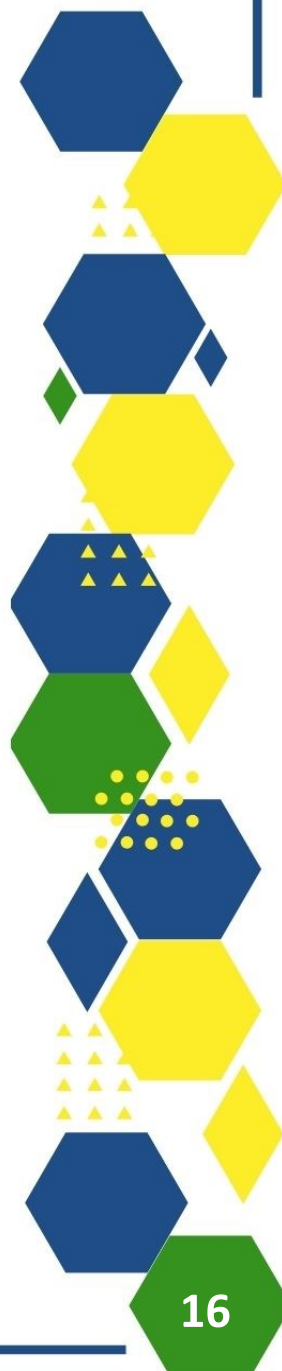
☐ Send a connection request to people but you are not already connected to (but want to be), when they engage positively with your content.

ENGAGE YOUR NETWORK

☐ Engage with the content or status updates of your connections as networking requires two-way conversation and effort.

☐ Scroll through your newsfeed each day and find few posts that you can like, comment on or share.
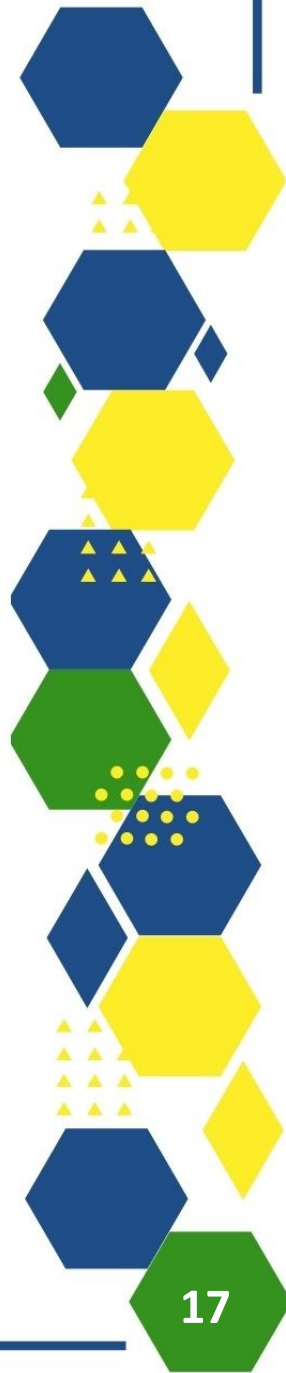
CONTENT MARKETING CHECKLIST FOR B2B MARKETING ONLINE

Blogging for your business is so much more than writing an article and throwing it up on your website. Publishing content that matters to your ideal clients that they want to read and share involves planning, optimizing, promotion, plus writing and editing to ensure that you create something that truly resonates with your ideal clients.

HERE ARE 5 CRITICAL STEPS:

1. **Planning and research**

   - Use resources such as Google Keyword Planner, social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook), and customer questions and comments to plan your blog topic.

   - Take your audience and topic into consideration, choose the most appropriate format (blog post, video, infographic…) for your content.

   - Search Google, social media platforms, and industry newsletters and publications for the latest news, trends, stats and other relevant information on your topic.

2. **Writing your content**

   - Create a compelling headline/title for your content.

   - Add sub-headers to your post to give readers a visual cue to what they will learn.

   - Keep paragraphs short (around 2-3 lines or 75-100 words) to make it easier for readers to scan and read.

   - Include visual elements such as images, graphics or videos to make the content more engaging.

   - Use bullet points and lists to break up text and make it easy to read.

   - Link to other valuable resources within your post to provide readers with additional information, without making the post too long.

   - Include a short and appropriate call-to-action at the end to tell readers what you want them to do next.
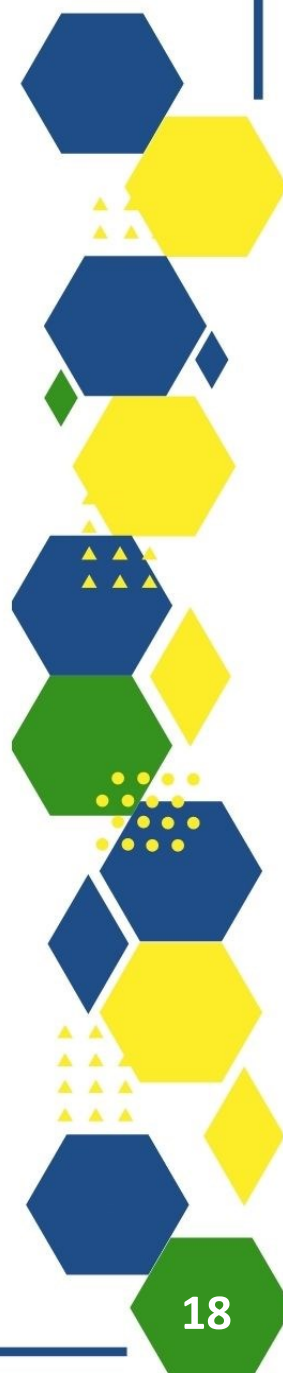
3. **Optimizing your content for SEO**

- Aim for a blog posts that are 750-1500 words to improve your Google search rankings.

- Include your keyword phrase in your blog post title (H1).

- Add your keyword phrase in your sub-headers (H2, H3).

- Use your keyword phrase a few times throughout your post, without keyword stuffing.

4. **Making it shareable**

- Create a custom graphic of your blog post title, to make the content more shareable and eye-catching in social media.

- Include tweetable quotes that allow your readers to take action.

- Increase engagement and time spent on your post by embedding a video (optional).

- Embed social media posts from LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to increase engagement and grow your social media following.

5. **Promoting your content**

- Send a newsletter with a link and a brief summary of your post to your email list.

- Share your content as a LinkedIn status update on your personal profile and company page, plus in relevant groups.

- Share your content on other social media platforms that your readers are using.

- Look for any niche opportunities where you can share your content (hashtags, groups etc.)

Using a strategy like this content marketing checklist will make you more effective and efficient at creating and sharing content that your audience wants and needs, and that will represent your services professionally.
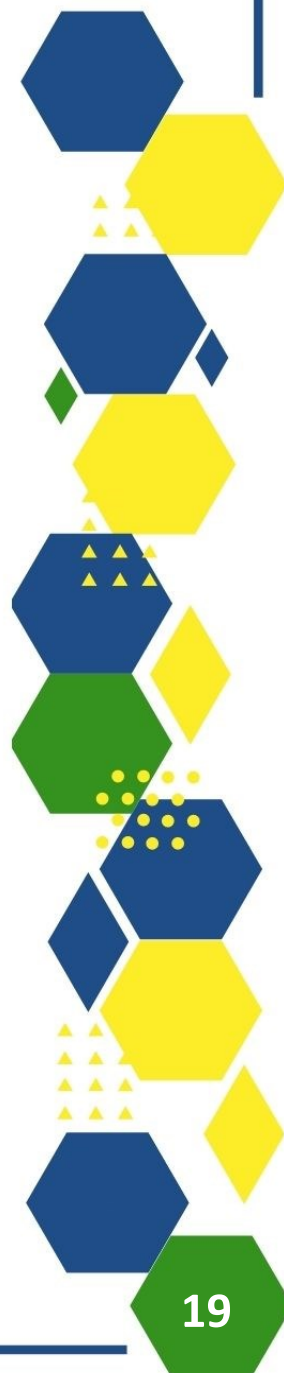
CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

I hope you found these tips useful. Here's what to do next.

1. Make a plan to implement some of the tips

2. Share your next step with me on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/marketingtipsfortranslators and/or Instagram at @marketingtipsfortranslators, or Twitter at @Tesstranslates. I can be your accountability partner or just simply cheer you on.

3. Share the link to this ebook with any colleague you think could also benefit from it

4. Celebrate each small step you take to being more visible to your ideal clients online.
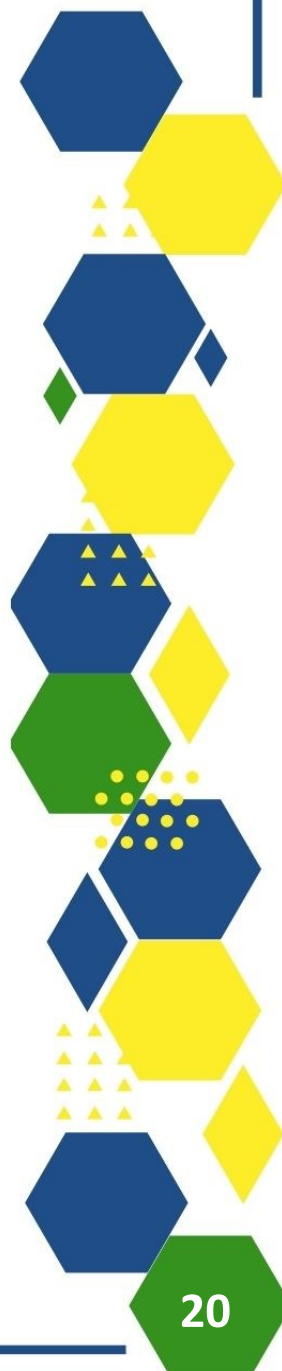
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tess Whitty is an English-Swedish freelance translator specializing in corporate communications, software and IT. Before she became a translator she studied and worked with marketing, and now shares her knowledge and experience in marketing and business as an award winning speaker, trainer, consultant, author and podcaster. For more information, or to connect, go to www.swedishtranslationservices.com or www.marketingtipsfortranslators.com.