



## **10 SEO EXPERTS SHARE COMMON SEO MISTAKES THEY SEE BRANDS MAKING**

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# KRIS NICOLAOU

## Brain Box Labs

Hiring a reputable SEO company to better your visibility in search engines is excellent, but they cannot increase your rankings alone. If users come to your website and it takes five to ten seconds to load, you're optimistic to think they will (be able to) convert. There is only so much your SEO team can do to increase conversion on a slow site.

They need your help. There are quick fixes you or your "webmaster" (an antiquated term for the person who manages your website) can do to better your website speed. First, speed up the time it takes to load images. Using modern image formats on the web like WebP is an excellent way to decrease load times. If that is not an option, compress all your images with TinyPNG. Second, turn on server caching.

This technical request sounds a bit daunting, but again, a competent webmaster should be able to quickly enable server caching, which will give your site a significant speed boost. And third, remove unnecessary website bloat. If you are using WordPress, that means fewer plugins. If not, analyze your website's network activity using Google Chrome DevTools.

With this tool, you can see how fast your site is load and what are the specific bottlenecks that are affecting your overall site speed.



# CURT STORRING

## Floor 500



Since we work mostly with producing and editing content, the biggest mistake I see from brands when it comes to SEO is that they're not utilizing their blog correctly.

### Some common issues are:

1. Using their blog to post basic news updates that don't add value (in other words, they're not even targeting keywords)
2. Not meeting search intent for keywords they're targeting
3. Putting minimal effort into their content (for example, posting a 300 word article on an in-depth topic)

Instead, brands should see their blog as an avenue to more targeted traffic, and focus their time and energy on it.

Building it right now will pay dividends in the future.

Brands should remember that the content they post should be targeting their potential customers, they should understand the SERPs and know what type of content Google is looking to serve up before writing a post about a topic, and they should invest properly by producing amazing blog posts that they would be proud to share far and wide.



# JOE DAVIES

## Fat Joe



Common SEO mistakes I see brands making are the following:

1. Building too many links! Yes Brands really go overboard we find when it comes to links and beating their competitors. We always advise brands to take it really easy, even when competitors seem to be flying ahead. Google will catch up with them one day!
2. Spammy anchor text! Brands love building keyword anchor texts. So much so that they hardly have any brand anchors in their profile. We always tell brands to go really heavy on brand anchors and lay off the keyword anchor texts. The site will gain enough authority over time that the inner pages will rank for the keywords you have optimised for.
3. Not diversifying links enough. Brands will sometimes only build one link type, like guest posts, or press releases. We tell them to mix it up and diversify massively.



# AMANDA THOMAS

## Konstrukt Digital



One of the biggest mistakes I often see brands make, is not properly considering their SEO in a new website design or rebrand. Instead, SEO is often bolted on after-the-fact, or as a bandaid, when website performance plummets.

The user journey, including how they can potentially find your website, needs to be baked in to your website's strategy from Day 1. Often, brands decide to do a "design first" approach which instead hinders SEO going forward.

A great example would be the failed rebrand and site launch of "Logojoy" to "Looka". There were several SEO failures in their process:

1. No realization that removing of the word "logo" from their brand would impact not only their domain (removal of primary keyword from domain), but also impact their anchor text going forward.
2. Poorly migrated site: much content was either culled, or missing in the new site architecture, resulting in indexed dead URLs.
3. Expanded services with thin content: Looka expanded their product line away from just Logos on the new site. Diffusing their focus, and with thin content, diffusing their relevancy.

As a result, the company lost 50% of its revenue and had to lay off 80% of its staff.



# JORDAN CHOO

## Kogneta



The biggest mistakes that I see brands making is thinking that SEO is a one and done investment. The reality of SEO is that it is an iterative and on-going process that also works with other marketing initiatives in a synergistic manner such as PPC ads for keyword mining and public relations for link building.



# TOM DE SPIEGELAERE

## Mango Matter Media



When it comes to SEO, the mistakes we see are plenty, so much so that's hard to pinpoint the most important ones.

But, if we had to choose a few of the most common ones we come across... they would be the following.

**Too much content:** With this I mean a combination of thin "fluff" content that doesn't add any value, and the additional problem of keyword cannibalisation, where pages are competing for the same search terms, and dragging each other down in the serps.

**Basic technical audits:** Something a lot of sites don't do... and it's really easy with something like ahrefs for example. Just check all the technical stuff like speed, 301s, 404s, orphan pages, etc. This is such an easy one to do, with massive upside.

**Over-optimization:** This is still an issue we see, businesses getting so focused on ranking for a specific search term, then end up over-optimizing the content by adding the target keywords in every heading, bolded text, etc.

There many many more mistakes we see, but the ones above pop up more often.



# CHRIS SLOANE

## Heaviside Group



I'd say the most common mistake I see brands making in SEO is lacking a proper content marketing strategy. Many brands will write content just for the sake of writing content without having a solid SEO game plan in place.

The questions they should be asking are - "What are my customers searching for at the beginning of the buying process (top of funnel)?" "How do their search patterns evolve as they move towards a buying decision?" "Am I properly positioned to capture bottom of funnel buying traffic?"

These questions can only be answered through careful keyword research. Then, once the proper keywords are identified the content marketing strategy almost writes itself. The content brands write should speak to the problems customers are trying to solve and should compete for the keywords they are searching for to find answers.

Then, if that content is linked together properly brands can "flow" those customers right through the buying funnel and to the shopping cart.



# NICK BESKE

## PointClickPro



Probably the biggest mistake we see brands making is separating SEO from brand building. SEO shouldn't be compartmentalized and needs to be integrated into the brand's business development and marketing efforts. Google loves brands and they have spent a lot of time creating the knowledge graph and knowledge panel to help people find brand info easier and faster.

The trick is to combine SEO and brand building together to get even better results for both. When your business gets mentioned online, be sure to work with the publisher to ensure your business info is included in a way to help boost your brand. Can we include the business address and get an unstructured citation? Can we include a link to a recent blog article or the homepage? Most organizations will be happy to work with you if you make their job easy and provide them the info in advance.

When you start looking at SEO and Branding as complementary efforts you'll start to find a lot of crossover opportunities. Have you joined an association, chamber of commerce, or a networking group? Make sure you take advantage of any profile pages and participate in activities that get you mentioned in their newsletters or websites. Do you support a non-profit or charity? Make sure your business info is correctly displayed on any supporter pages and links back to your website.

All of these things can be enhanced to provide SEO benefits once you realize the two are so closely connected.



# CHARLIE MORLEY

## **Movement SEO**



The biggest SEO mistakes I see brands making, often big brands with international reputations, are related to technical SEO.

These technical issues often relate to the vast size of these sites, which have grown over the years often unnoticed and the SEO team, or often lack thereof that is in charge of monitoring the site and ongoing issues. For example, a multinational brand can often operate in more than 20 countries; that's a lot of Hreflang tags to monitor and canonical tags to keep under control.

There are several sitewide tracking tools that can help in this regard, with ContentKing being one of them. I find the easiest way to manage a huge site is to break it down and treat it as a number of different microsites, for example targeting the UK, US, Canada etc. This makes working through and fixing technical issues on a site wide-scale far more manageable and effective.



# MICHAEL COSTIN

## Local Digital



Unfortunately, I see quite a few of the same mistakes playing out over and over again when it comes to brands and their SEO campaigns.

The first and most common is clients not truly buying in to the medium to long term window for SEO to have an impact. In the sales process we will communicate that it takes time, set expectations and seemingly have the prospect onboard. But then in some instances, within weeks of the campaign starting, client demands around rankings, traffic and sales are already coming in. Sometimes, clients can get cold feet and stop a campaign before it has had a chance to work. With SEO, it inherently requires a little bit of a leap of faith from the client, and the buy in that you invest now for results months down the track.

The second common mistake is clients price shopping. Getting the lowest price possible and good SEO rarely (if ever) go hand in hand. There are unavoidable costs associated with providing SEO as an agency - team member salaries, publishing costs, content creation costs, exchange rate costs. Building links and growing the authority of a site via SEO takes significant investment.

Anyone that claims they can do it at a super low rate is simply not providing a good service to their client, and the client will find that out in six months time when the results aren't there. Unfortunately, too many clients get seduced by low fees and end up paying the price for the low quality work that goes with it.



***BONUS TIP***

# KEVIN HILTON

## Multi-Layer Media

The mistake we see most often is that brands are so focused on their actual rankings that they forget to truly optimise the user experience once users reach their website.

Ranking high on Google for target search terms is clearly very advantageous and many businesses who achieve and maintain high positioning in SERPS for their target terms continue to flourish.

However, traffic is worthless if the users are not carrying out your desired action once they reach your website. This all comes down to user journey and how your website is designed.

I have countless conversations with brands that “need more traffic”, when in reality they actually just need to convert more of their existing traffic to hit their revenue targets.

Using heatmap software such as Hotjar or Smartlook can help you identify issues that are currently stopping users converting. You can then use Google Optimize to split test landing page variations to have data backed answers on what amendments to your website produce the best ROI and conversion rates.

The beauty of this is, of course, as you continue to improve your conversion rates, you know when your traffic does increase from you SEO efforts, you ROI will also continue to increase as this new improved rate.

