

13.3: Algorithms

Understanding Search Algorithms to Rank High

As the video explaining how Google works showed, more than 200 variables are taken into account for ranking websites. Namely, we can identify three grand categories of highly important ranking factors:

Top Ranking Factors

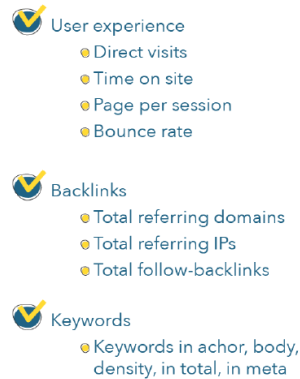


Figure 13.2 Top Ranking Factors

- User experience
 - Direct visits
 - Time on site
 - Page per session
 - Bounce rate
- Backlinks
 - Total referring domains
 - Total referring IPs
 - Total follow-backlinks
- Keywords
 - Keywords in anchor, body, density, in total, in meta

*Note: A **backlink** is a link back to your website from another domain. For example, www.thersite.com has a link somewhere on their website that links to www.yoursite.com.*

Search engines use these three grand types of factors because they are trying to evaluate: For a specific search query, which website should I show first? Which should I show second? Etc. Again, as a reminder, their goal is to show websites in the order they believe will best answer the search query. As presented in the video, the role of search engines is to make users happy: if you can easily and rapidly find an answer to what you are looking for, you will continue to use this search engine. Your job, as a digital marketer, is thus to create pages that best answer people's needs when they do specific search queries. This is the key general idea behind search engine optimization.

But search engines cannot read the whole Web to evaluate how well a web page answers a search query. Rather, they based themselves on a set of variables to rank webpages. Web pages are ranked for each and every independent search query.

Let's look at these three sets of factors one by one to understand how this affects our work as digital marketers.

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