



ART\_SY

# The Gallery's Guide to SEO



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# Introduction

From artist names to galleries, visibility on search engines like Google plays a key role in facilitating discovery for any business in the art world. However, achieving visibility on search engines, and understanding the algorithms that drive search result rankings, can be complicated and intimidating.

Almost all of Artsy’s artist pages are on the first page of search engine results for artist keyword searches. How did we achieve this?

From the beginning, Artsy has dedicated time and resources to the health of its desktop and mobile website, as well as its high-quality written and visual content. Investing in on-site, off-site, and technical search engine optimization—also known as “SEO”—has helped Artsy’s pages reach the top of search engine results. Gallery partners benefit from this, as the higher Artsy ranks in search results, the more likely a collector is to find your gallery when searching for an artist you represent.

Whether you’ve invested in SEO before or are entirely new to the term, this toolkit will help you learn industry best practices—from on-site and off-site strategies to technical improvements—and help your gallery reach new collectors through search engines.

# Who Is This Guide For?

The Gallery's Guide to SEO is suitable for gallerists with all levels of SEO experience. Reading the guide from start to finish can help you and your gallery build an entire SEO strategy. However, certain chapters of this guide may be more relevant depending on your gallery's needs. The chart below will help you pinpoint which chapters of the guide will be most impactful for you and your gallery. Lastly, make sure to consult the glossary at the end of the guide for clarification on any new terminology.

# Who Is This Guide For?

BEGINNER

**FOCUS ON**

SEO Basics, On-Site SEO, Social and SEO, and the beginner portion of Your SEO Checklist.

**GOOD FOR**

Galleries that are completely new to SEO and want to start with the basics.

INTERMEDIATE

**FOCUS ON**

On-Site SEO, Off-Site SEO, and the beginner and intermediate portions of Your SEO Checklist. Skims SEO Basics.

**GOOD FOR**

Galleries who have started to optimize their websites, but want to expand and refine their SEO strategy.

ADVANCED

**FOCUS ON**

Technical SEO, Reporting and Tracking, and Your SEO Checklist. Skims SEO Basics, On-Site SEO, and Off-Site SEO as a refresher.

**GOOD FOR**

Galleries that already have a team dedicated to SEO, and want to learn more about technical improvements and reporting.

# Overview—SEO Basics

# Overview—SEO Basics

## WHAT IS SEO?

SEO, which stands for Search Engine Optimization, is the process of maximizing the number of visitors to a particular website by ensuring that the site appears high on the list of results returned by a search engine.

In short, SEO includes anything you can do to get your website content to show up higher and more frequently on search engines like Google. Employing a few strategies and best practices can help your website earn more traffic through organic searches—and more traffic means more eyes on your gallery.

## WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS OF SEO?

Google's main ranking algorithm analyzes over 200 factors, so it's impossible to cover them all. However, this toolkit will cover the most impactful SEO factors, so you can see results as quickly as possible. The three main factors are:

### 1. ON-SITE SEO

Perhaps the easiest to influence, on-site SEO covers anything you control on your website. This includes all of the content—text, images, videos, and internal links—that make up your site.

### 2. OFF-SITE SEO

Off-site SEO refers to anything off of your website and outside of your direct control. One of the most important areas of SEO, off-site SEO is about understanding how (and which) other websites are linking to your content, and how to influence those inbound links.

### 3. TECHNICAL SEO

Another area that substantially affects rankings on Google, technical SEO relates to the way your site is structured. This includes factors such as your site's URLs, how fast its pages load, and its mobile experience.

# Overview—SEO Basics

## HOW DOES SEO WORK?

Google, Yahoo, and Bing each have robots that are programmed to continuously crawl the web, attempting to index as much of it as possible. Usually, this is done by following links from one page to another. These search engine robots, or “bots,” make copies of the pages they find and store them in their caches, creating a library of billions of pages on the internet.

Each search engine attempts to have the most up-to-date snapshot of the internet so that when someone inputs a search—typically called a “keyword” or “query”—the engine can return the most relevant result based on the information in its cache. In other words, when you search for something online, you’re not actually searching the live internet—you’re searching the search engine’s index of it.

The higher your content appears on the search engine results page (SERP), the more often people will click on it. In fact, approximately 30% of all clicks go to the first result on the first page. This placement is also known as “rank one” or “position one.” For example, if the query “Andy Warhol” is searched 100 times and your site receives 20 of those clicks, it has a 20% click-through rate (CTR) for that search.

Understanding the main SEO factors ultimately helps your website show up more often and higher up in search engine results, leading to a higher CTR and more visits to your site. This is the main objective of SEO—getting your website in front of more people, leading to increased site traffic and more collector inquiries.

## INDUSTRY UPDATES: MOBILE SEO

Mobile SEO is the practice of optimizing your website for users on smartphones and tablets. As the number of mobile searches skyrockets, mobile SEO is becoming increasingly important—in fact, [58% of all searches on Google are now done from mobile devices](#). In response to this trend, Google is changing its algorithm to prioritize mobile over desktop.

To give you a sense of the impact that mobile SEO could have on your gallery, more than 50% of Artsy’s sales come through mobile. More broadly, according to the [2018 Hiscox Online Art Trade Report](#), the usage of mobile devices to purchase art online has risen to 20%, up from 4% in 2015.

For a more focused look at mobile SEO, read [this guide](#), which explains why mobile optimization is more important than ever, and shares tips to prepare your website for Google’s mobile-first index.



# On-Site SEO

# On-Site SEO

## **WHAT IS ON-SITE SEO?**

On-site SEO refers to improvements you can make on your own website to help improve its visibility on search engines. More specifically, on-site SEO involves optimizing the content—text, images, videos, and links—that makes up your site. The most impactful on-site SEO strategies for your gallery fall into five categories: keywords, title tags, meta descriptions, written content, and images.

# On-Site SEO—Keywords

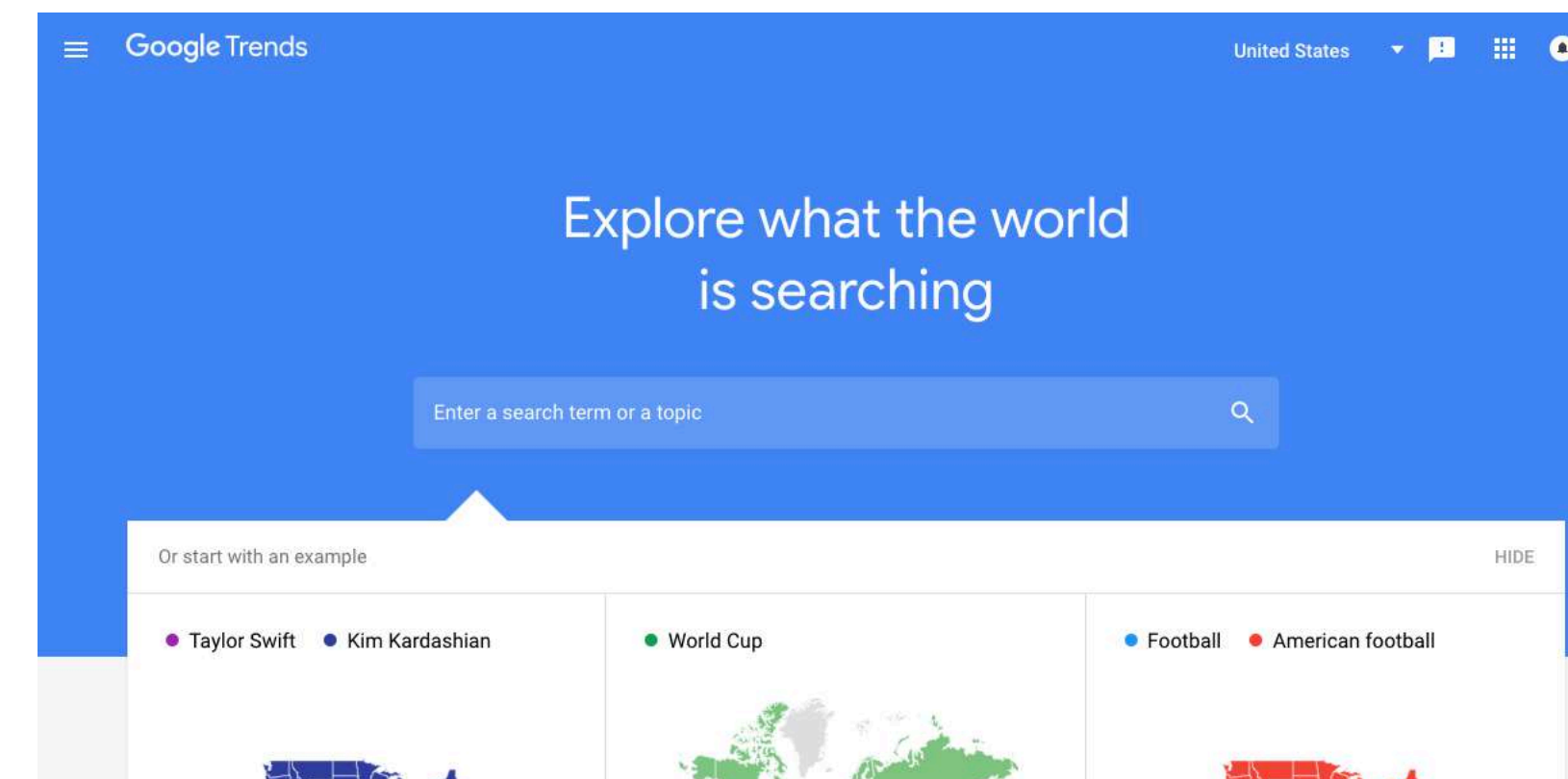
## **KEYWORDS: FIND OUT WHAT YOUR AUDIENCE IS SEARCHING FOR**

Online searching involves users inputting keywords into a search engine, such as Google. The search engine then returns what it deems to be the most relevant results to match the search.

As you consider implementing SEO improvements on your site, think about keywords as the building blocks for every SEO strategy. It is important to understand what keywords your site currently ranks for, which ones it should rank for, and how your audience uses search engines. Important keywords for your site could include names of artists, styles, movements, and even your gallery itself. Google has two tools that can help you better understand your audience and keywords: Google Trends and Google Keyword Planner.

## **GOOGLE TRENDS**

[Google Trends](#) is a free tool that shows patterns in what keywords users are searching for. When you enter a keyword, Google Trends aggregates overall search interest in that term since 2004. In the top section, you can select a few options, such as how far back you'd like to search; geographic location, down to a city; search categories; and whether to include results for desktop, mobile, news, or images. This type of research helps you understand which artists or art topics are related to the specific artists you represent, as well as regional demand.





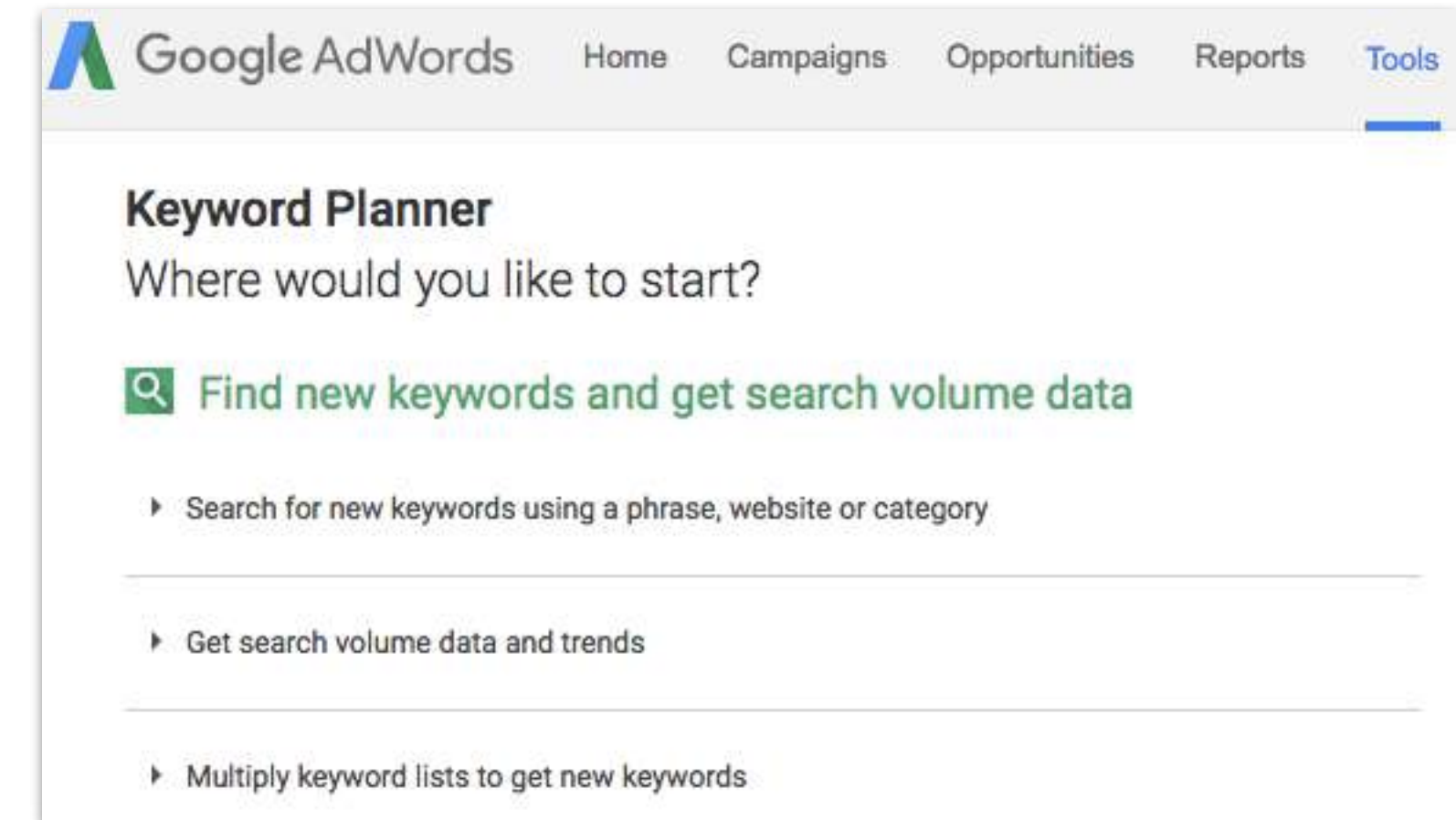
# On-Site SEO—Keywords

## GOOGLE KEYWORD PLANNER

After gathering insights about specific search terms, the next step is examining search volume, which is the number of searches for a keyword. In relation to your business, search volume tells you how many times people are searching for your gallery, consultancy, or artists in a given time frame. The best way to see search volumes is through another free Google tool called [Keyword Planner](#). Keyword Planner tells you the search volume for any term you enter into its search bar and also lets you download your results in case you'd like to keep track of search volume for your keywords.

The Keyword Planner tool was created to help search engine marketers plan paid search campaigns, though it's useful for SEO, as well. To access this tool, you'll need to make a free Google Ads account, which you can do [here](#).

In addition to showing the search volume for a given list of terms, Keyword Planner can provide you with new keywords based on your existing keywords, your website, or another website. For example, you could search the name of one of your gallery's artists, and Keyword Planner will provide a list of new keywords sorted by relevance to the initial keyword. This is a great way to generate ideas about which related keywords you should include in your website content.



# On-Site SEO—Keywords

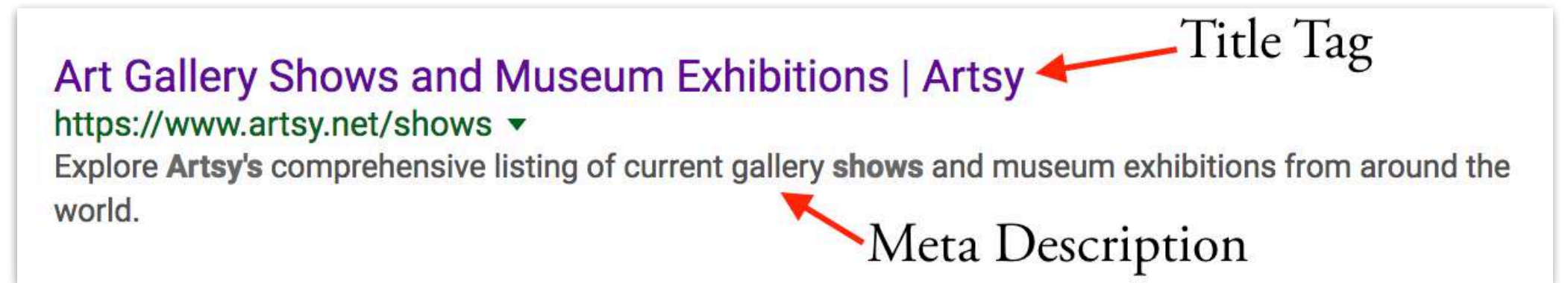
## KEYWORDS: STANDING OUT IN SEARCH RESULTS

After you identify target keywords, the next step is learning how to best utilize them. One place to utilize keywords is on the search engine results page (SERP). As mentioned above, the SERP is the list of results that appear after entering something into the search bar on a search engine.

On the SERP, each website is usually referred to as either a “listing” or a “result.” These results are ranked—position one, two, three, and so on. The goal of any business or service is to be as close to position one as possible, because it increases your business’s discoverability.

One of the ways to influence the ranking for a keyword is to make sure that it’s included prominently in the content displayed on the SERP—namely, the title tag and the meta description. In other words, if you want an artist page to rank for that artist’s name, it is important to include the full name of the artist within the title tag.

The title tag and meta description of a web page come from the page’s HTML code. They are particularly important, for they are key parts of how your gallery brands itself in search results.

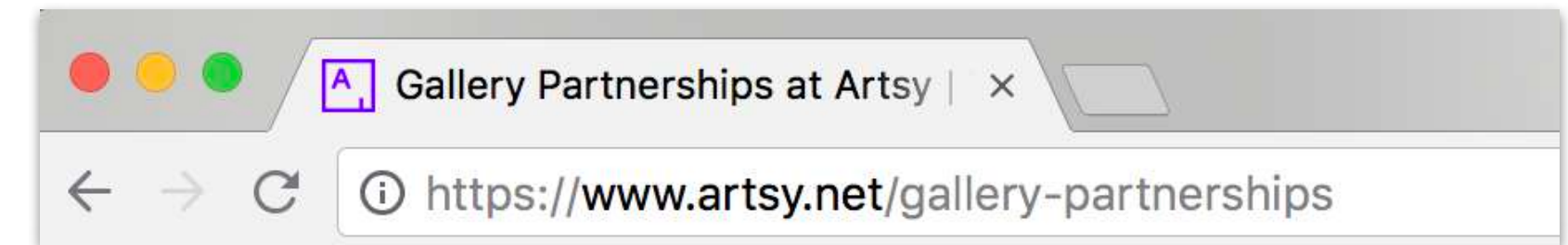


# On-Site SEO—Title Tags

## **TITLE TAGS: KEYWORDS AND STANDING OUT IN SEARCH RESULTS**

The length of the title tag (the page's HTML title) should be around 55 characters in order for it to display fully on the SERP; long title tags will be cut off. While it's okay to use fewer than 55 characters, you should try to take advantage of all the real estate Google provides.

Depending on the title tag's length, it is beneficial to include your brand name at the end of it. (Ideally, your website should already rank near position one for your brand name.) The first part of the title tag should be used to feature the page's main keywords in a coherent way. For example, the title tag of Artsy's [Gallery Partnerships](#) page is “Gallery Partnerships | Artsy.”





# On-Site SEO—Meta Descriptions

## **META DESCRIPTIONS: TELLING THE STORY**

The meta description is a snippet in a page's HTML code that summarizes its content within about 155 characters. Search engines show the meta description directly below the title tag in search results.

The meta description itself is no longer a direct ranking factor for search engines; however, your page's description does influence the odds of someone clicking on it, which is known as the click-through rate (CTR). Your site's CTR—formulated as clicks divided by impressions—is an important ranking factor. Making sure your pages have relevant meta descriptions can help users choose your listing over another, so it's worth putting thought into how these are written for your site.

The ideal meta description should be around 150 characters and include a call-to-action (CTA) to help people decide to click your result. Just as with title tags, if the meta descriptions are too long, search engines will truncate them, so try not to surpass 150 characters.

**PRO TIP** Each page on your website should have its own unique title tag and meta description. For large websites, writing this information for each page can become unwieldy. However, if your site contains multiple pages of the same type, such as artist or artwork pages, Artsy has created a [meta tag organizer for galleries](#). To use this template, follow the instructions in the Google Sheet.

Once you have created the tags for your web pages, speak with your webmaster (the person who creates and manages the content and organization of your website) to implement them on your site. If you don't have a webmaster, speak to whoever can make changes to the website.

# On-Site SEO—Written Content

## WRITTEN CONTENT: FOUR WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR WEBSITE COPY

After you've updated the title tags and meta descriptions for your key pages, there are four more ways to leverage keyword research data and optimize your website copy for Google.

### 1. THE 250 WORD RULE

Each page that you want to optimize for search engines should have at least 250 unique words. (Pro tip: This [website](#) will let you know how many unique words any given piece of content has.) Google places significant emphasis on this factor. Despite their growing complexity (and the many other factors that go into ranking pages), search engines still prefer large blocks of text.

### 2. USE ORIGINAL CONTENT

Copying text from other websites will not help you rank for your keywords over time. Google tends to penalize websites for what is known as “duplicate content,” or content that already appears in Google's index, either on other websites or your website's other pages.

In the eyes of a search engine, duplicate content does not help a person find the best or most relevant result, and it's inefficient to crawl and index the same content on multiple websites. If a website continues to use duplicate content over time, search engines may stop crawling it altogether.

This does not mean that any amount of duplicated content will penalize your site. Google knows that sometimes, content duplication has to occur. For example, an artist bio or artwork might need to be on multiple pages—this is a natural part of the web. As a rule, try to ensure that at least 70% of your content is unique. Websites with high rates of duplicate content will be outranked by the originator. For example, Wikipedia shows up ahead of pages that copy its content.

### 3. KEYWORD DENSITY

Keyword density simply refers to the number of times your keyword is mentioned, divided by the total number of words on the page. Once you have enough content written, the optimal keyword density is 2–4%. In other words, for every 100 words of text on the page, your target keyword should appear between two and four times—this is what search engines perceive as a natural density.

If your keyword density is too high, search engines may think of it as spam and deprioritize your page; if it is too low, they might not understand that you are targeting a specific keyword. The main point here is that you should write content for humans, and not try to strongly influence search engine bots. The idea is to strike a balance between your natural content and meeting the needs of optimal search engine performance.

# On-Site SEO—Written Content

## **4. FRESH CONTENT**

Another key way to optimize your website for SEO is to make sure that new content is added with some frequency. Search engines are drawn to new, fresh content—the more often a website is updated, the more often a search engine will go back to crawl it. For example, a great source of new content for your website could be your exhibitions or artists. Some galleries have a blog, a press release archive, or a related page to showcase new content—an area of the website that will allow for easy additions at least twice a month.



# On-Site SEO—Image Optimization

## OPTIMIZING YOUR IMAGES: TWO TIPS TO KNOW

As a gallery or an arts enterprise, images are likely a key component of your website. Therefore, they are an opportunity to gain more visibility via Google’s image search function. Since search engine robots cannot technically “see” images, it is important to provide alternate clues about the image and which keywords it should rank for.

Images are not crawled the same way as text, and they require different tactics for SEO. Here are two main elements that can help your images rank:

### 1. NAMING

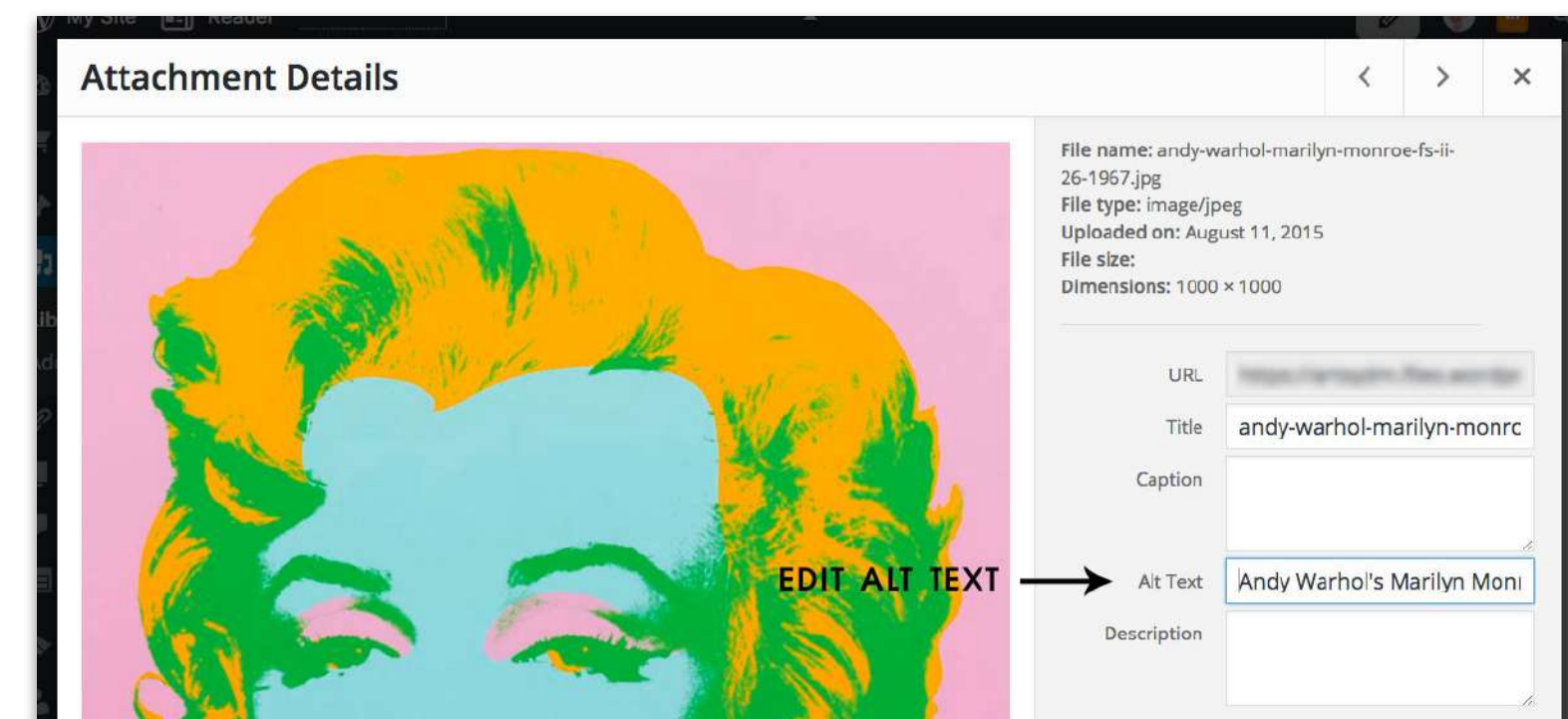
Image names are something search engine bots have the ability to read. First, use words instead of numbers when naming your image files, and use keywords where possible. In terms of length, there are no specific limits to character counts like there are with title tags or meta descriptions, but you should aim to keep your image file names under 100 characters each.

Second, make sure to use hyphens (“andy-warhol”) between words instead of underscores (“andy\_warhol”). Search engine bots stop reading a URL when they reach an underscore; this is true for both images and URLs. With artwork images, for example, you might

consider using this naming convention: “[artist first name]-[artist last name]-[title of work].jpg” (e.g. “andy-warhol-soup-can-vegetarian-vegetable.jpg”).

### 2. ALT TEXT ATTRIBUTES

Alt text attributes, also known as “alt text” or “alt tags,” refer to the alternate information provided with an image to help search engines understand what an image is about. Alt text attributes matter for two reasons. First, they help search engines understand what the image is about, and are therefore another place to include your target keywords. Second, they help visually impaired people who rely on screen accessibility to understand what the image is. Alt texts should not be longer than the image name itself, but image names make a great jumping-off point for effective alt text tags.



# Off-Site SEO

# Off-Site SEO

## WHAT IS OFF-SITE SEO?

Off-site SEO is about understanding how other websites interact with your website—specifically, how other websites are linking to your content, and how to influence those inbound links.

An inbound link, also referred to as a “backlink,” is a hyperlink on a third-party web page that points to a web page on your site. Think about an inbound link as a vote for your website. When someone links to a page on your site, search engines view it as a trust signal. In general, the more high-quality links your web pages get, the higher they will rank on Google.

The basis of any inbound link is content that someone else wants to share, also known as a “linkable asset.” Think about when you’ve shared any web content—typically, you’re sharing something that you found useful or engaging. People link to websites to spread information, and this concept is fundamental to the modern web. For this reason, search engines place a heavy emphasis on links, evaluating link quality and quantity in their ranking algorithms. Because of this, the most important component of off-site SEO is creating and promoting linkable assets.

## HOW DO I INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WEBSITES THAT LINK TO MY CONTENT?

A linkable asset is content on your website that others could choose to link to, usually because they find it valuable, informative, or interesting. On Artsy.net, for example, artist pages are considered linkable assets. Note that people can choose to link to any part of your site, but Google expects that most inbound links will be to the homepage.

### STEP 1: IDENTIFY LINKABLE ASSETS

First, take an objective look at your website and try to identify some linkable assets. Are there areas that people might choose to link to? Examples could be artist pages, interviews, artwork pages, an interactive piece of a show, or any other high-quality pages.

### STEP 2: IDENTIFY LINKABLE ASSETS

Once you’ve identified content on your site that others would find valuable (or planned to create it), it’s time to think about how to jump-start the inbound linking process. Although these methods don’t guarantee any amount of links, nor the quality of them, it is important to think about each tactic and determine which ones might be right for your gallery.

# Off-Site SEO

## WAYS TO CREATE LINKABLE ASSETS:

WHAT TO DO	WHY	TOOLS
Maintain a steady blog (update it at least twice a month)	Helps your website develop linkable assets, while also improving its freshness factor	<a href="#">Blogger</a> , <a href="#">WordPress</a> , etc.
Repost current art world news with your own unique perspective	Leverages topics already being searched; lets Google see you as a source of fresh content	<a href="#">Google News</a>
Write a book review	A detailed book review has a high chance of getting linked to by the author, and by people discussing the book online	<a href="#">Contemporary art books on Amazon</a>
Create a list of resources	Serves as an ongoing reference, and people like linking to resources	Brainstorm what your target audience needs
Answer questions	Helps you gain credibility and include relevant links to your site	<a href="#">Yahoo Answers</a> , <a href="#">Quora</a> , <a href="#">Google Groups</a>



# Off-Site SEO

## WAYS TO CREATE LINKABLE ASSETS:

WHAT TO DO	WHY	TOOLS
Create an infographic or other type of visual content	People like sharing and linking to visualized data	<a href="#">An interactive visualization</a>
Create a presentation	People like viewing and sharing summarized visual information	<a href="#">Google Slides</a> , <a href="#">Slideshare</a> , <a href="#">Prezi</a>

# Off-Site SEO

## WAYS TO GENERATE INBOUND LINKS:

MEDIUM	WHAT TO DO	WHY	TOOLS
Your Blog	Create an RSS feed for your blog	Keeps readers up to date, and lets others show your content on their sites	<a href="#">Blogger</a> , <a href="#">WordPress</a> , etc.
	Get a guest writer for your blog	Guest writers will promote their post to their audiences	<a href="#">Google News</a>
	Create a list of industry experts, and profile or interview them	These people are likely to link to your list on their website, blog, or social media	<a href="#">Contemporary art books on Amazon</a>
	Link to other relevant blogs	Increases the odds of others linking to you	<a href="#">Search Google for “contemporary art blog”</a>
	Create a survey and publish the results	Bloggers like reporting on findings, especially when related to their blog content	Brainstorm what your target audience needs
Other Blogs	Write guest blog posts about an area of expertise	Most guest blog posts include links to the author’s website	Contact the owners of relevant blogs

# Off-Site SEO

## WAYS TO GENERATE INBOUND LINKS:

MEDIUM	WHAT TO DO	WHY	TOOLS
Social Media	Promote your content on social media to ensure that you get a steady stream of likes	Keeps readers up to date, and lets others show your content on their sites	2018 Social Media Toolkit: <a href="#">Beginner</a> , <a href="#">Intermediate</a> , <a href="#">Advanced</a>
	Use “tweet this” links	Helps people share your content on Twitter	We couldn’t find an easy tool, so we made one for you: <a href="#">Click here to save your own copy of Artsy’s “tweet this” tool</a>
	Install social sharing <a href="#">widgets</a>	Makes it easy for people to share any of your content on social networks	<a href="#">ShareThis</a> , <a href="#">AddThis</a> , <a href="#">more</a>
Your Gallery	Let others use your space	Most events will post a link to the location being used	Use your staff and your contacts
	Write a press release about interesting company news	Journalists can pick up your news and distribute it for you	<a href="#">How to write a press release for galleries</a>
Other Blogs	Send a joint press release when your news involves another company	Your news can potentially reach a new audience of collectors	Think about ways to collaborate with other galleries
	Be interviewed	Interviewers will often include quotes and links to interviewee sites	<a href="#">HARO</a>

# Off-Site SEO

Once you have some ideas in the pipeline to help generate links to your website, it's a good idea to have an understanding of your performance in off-site SEO, especially compared to that of other similar sites. You can do this using a free tool called [Link Explorer](#), developed by Moz. (If you'd like to learn about the tool in more detail, [read this](#).)

Two important data points to look at in the Link Explorer are domain authority and page authority. These metrics are important because they provide number scores that allow you to track your website's progress over time, letting you know how it may perform in comparison to other websites.

Domain authority (DA) is an SEO grade given to each domain on the internet, ranging from 0 to 100. DA is determined by both the quality and quantity of links to your website, as well as other factors, such as the website's age. For example, if you have a newer website, you might have a lower DA than you'd expect compared to other websites. This is perfectly natural and does not mean that your site will not perform well.

Page authority (PA) is the same metric as DA, but applied on a page level. PA helps measure the impact of link acquisition on individual pages on the website.

After you have an understanding of how your website compares to others, you can begin brainstorming linkable assets. When considering whether a section of your site is a linkable asset, ask yourself: "Would I link to this content naturally?" If you add new and interesting content to your site consistently, you'll attract more new links over time. You can also make sure that your existing link efforts, such as press releases, go as far as they can in terms of helping your SEO by including links back to your site.



# Technical SEO

# Technical SEO

## WHAT IS TECHNICAL SEO?

Technical SEO relates to the way your gallery's website is structured. This includes factors such as your site's URLs and mobile experience, and how fast its pages load. Technical SEO helps search engines understand your gallery's website, but its best practices are also strategies that provide visitors with the best experience possible.

As you go deeper into technical optimizations, you may become more reliant on a webmaster or developer to help implement changes. Before making that decision, however, this guide will provide you with some tips to help you understand how your gallery website is working in terms of technical SEO; outline a few common pitfalls; and include some tools to help avoid or detect these issues on your website.

## URL STRUCTURE

URL structure is perhaps the single most important thing to remember with technical SEO. URLs are often the first signals that search engines receive to understand what a page is about, and therefore, they heavily impact what keywords the page will rank for in search results.

The technical structure of your website starts with how your URLs look. The URL is what you see in the address bar of any browser (www.example.com). URL structure refers to

how web pages are structured within your site. For instance, consider “www.example.com/christopher-wool” (where the individual artist pages are listed directly under the homepage) versus “www.example.com/artist/christopher-wool” (where artists are all placed within a directory called “artist”).

When creating your site's URLs, keep these tips in mind:

### 1. USE HYPHENS, NOT UNDERSCORES

URLs should use hyphens (“-”) and not underscores (“\_”) (e.g. “/andy-warhol” rather than “/andy\_warhol”), because search engines stop reading the URL after the first underscore.

### 2. USE A LOGICAL HIERARCHY

A good URL structure follows a logical hierarchy or path. The optimal site structure includes the homepage at the top, category pages in the first row, and subcategory pages underneath in a logical fashion.

# Technical SEO

Your site hierarchy is critical because it helps search engines understand where and how content lives on your domain, and search engines generally prefer order and logic. With a proper hierarchical structure in place, the link equity going to your homepage can properly trickle down to the other pages of your site.

### 3. USE SEPARATE PAGES

Finally, each page or link should have a separate URL. Certain web applications and content management systems make single-page applications, but any use of dynamically generated content can be problematic for search engines, such as infinite scroll (in which clicking on an element loads a new page, but the URL in the browser doesn't change).

Google, Yahoo, and Bing have become better at indexing content loaded through JavaScript, but there are still issues. It's best to have long blocks of written text that are separated by theme via URLs, and connected to other pages on the website and on the larger web via links. For your gallery's purposes, this means requesting that all pages load with minimal dynamic content (e.g. minimizing the use of JavaScript).

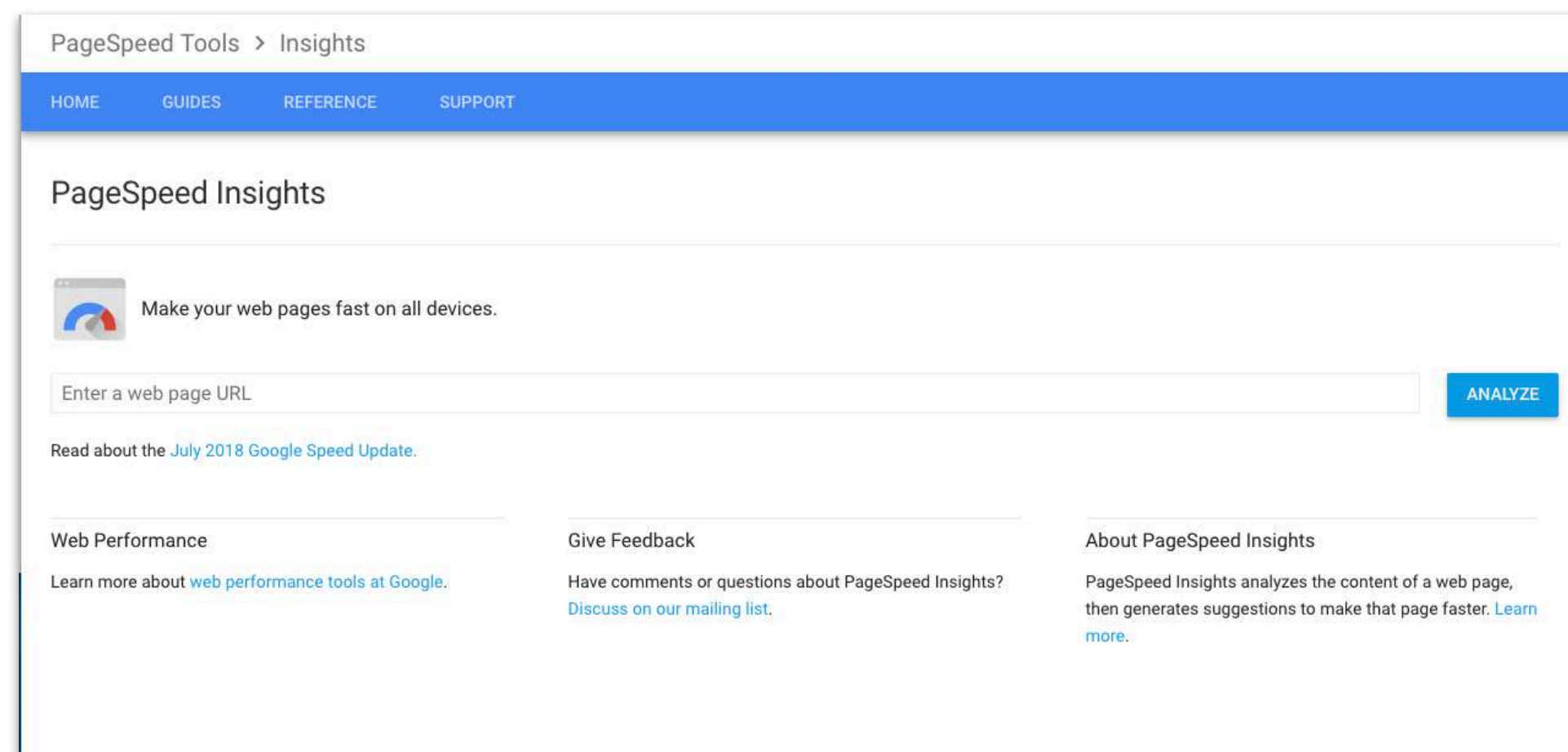
### OPTIMIZE PAGE SPEED

After URL structure, one of the most important factors in technical SEO is page load speed, which simply refers to how quickly your page loads. Search engines prefer to serve people content that is the most relevant and authoritative answer to a question, and pages that load quickly play an important role in making that possible. When content loads faster, visitors to your gallery's website have a better user experience.

Page load speed is also especially important on mobile: Mobile pages that take a long time to load can have vastly different ranking results than their desktop counterparts. There are several tools that can help you understand how fast your page loads, such as Google's [PageSpeed Insights](#).

# Technical SEO

This is a free tool that provides detailed recommendations on how to improve your page load speed on both mobile and desktop, and its insights can be given directly to a webmaster or IT consultant if something needs to be fixed. Some of its recommendations—specifically around reducing JavaScript and CSS—are not necessarily feasible for all websites, but overall, PageSpeed Insights provides a good barometer for how your website is performing in terms of loading speed.



## MOBILE SEO

One of the more intricate SEO topics is mobile SEO. As mentioned in the introduction, Google’s algorithm is moving to prioritize mobile over desktop, also referred to as [mobile-first indexing](#).

Responsive web design—a key component of mobile SEO—means that a website will dynamically change to fit your screen, making the pages fit seamlessly on all devices, regardless of its size. Google has specifically endorsed responsive web design because all links get attributed to one URL, whether the source is desktop or mobile.

Because most major content management systems adhere to Google’s recommendations, responsive design is increasingly becoming an out-of-the-box feature. It’s worth asking your webmaster about your website’s setup, and if you’re in the early stages of planning a website, make sure that you request responsive design. If you don’t have a responsive site, there are still ways to prepare for mobile-first—[this guide](#) from Google shares best practices for mobile-first indexing.



Social and SEO

# Social and SEO

Search engines take into account social signals—likes, comments, shares, retweets, and so on. Content with these signals is more authoritative than a piece of content with no social activity.

Currently, it's impossible to know what level of social activity is required to move a page up in the rankings (i.e. “500 more likes mean you’ll move from position four to three in Google” is inaccurate). However, search engines generally understand that the more social signals and activity a domain has, the more authoritative it is—and, therefore, the better it should rank.

To that extent, social media is another area where you can leverage your SEO efforts to improve traffic to your website. Share your content on social media, and learn more about social media strategy in Artsy’s [2018 Social Media Toolkit](#).

# Reporting and Tracking

# Reporting and Tracking

Once you start implementing on-site, off-site, and technical SEO strategies for your website, how do you measure its progress? The easiest way to start is with [Google Analytics](#). Google Analytics is a free tool that helps you understand and measure traffic on your website, mobile website, and mobile app, as well as the behavior of your visitors, such as potential collectors or critics looking at your artists. To understand the impact of your SEO strategy on your gallery's website, you can break down tracking into three categories: sessions and visits; engagement and behavior; and conversions and goals.

## 1. SESSIONS AND VISITS

The first thing to look at in Google Analytics is the number of your website's sessions, which can generally be thought of as website visits, and should not be confused with visitors or page views. A website's session count is a key metric that's included in most individual reports within Google Analytics.

Sessions help you understand how many visits there were to your website in a given time period, including where they came from (i.e. traffic sources). By default, in a process known as "channel grouping," Google Analytics segments your website's visits into several traffic types, such as organic search, email, social, referral, direct, and paid channels.

Looking at website sessions by traffic source lets you understand which channels are performing better or worse than others. For instance, if an artist in your show promotes your website through his or her social networks, you might see an increase in social traffic. If your show receives a mention in a large publication, you might see an increase in referral traffic. If your gallery is mentioned in an offline setting, such as the news, an ad, or a movie, there will likely be a boost in direct or organic traffic.

## 2. ENGAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR

After understanding what sessions are and how different channels can be affected, you should consider engagement metrics: indicators of how visitors interact with your website and its content. Engagement metrics are also referred to as "behavior metrics," and are included in many of the reports within Google Analytics. The basic engagement metrics are bounce rate, pages per session, and average session duration. Definitions for these terms are included in the glossary at the end of this toolkit.



# Reporting and Tracking

## **3. CONVERSIONS AND GOALS**

Depending on your website, you might consider tracking additional metrics focused on conversions, which refer to the desired actions visitors complete on your website. The types of conversions you track depends completely on your business. Conversions should not be common or non-essential actions, such as a session or an artwork view; they should be meaningful actions that can bring value to your gallery. Examples of website conversions include a user opting in to an email list, registering to be a member, or completing a form.

If your website isn't quite ready to track things like registrations and inquiries, you could start by determining which level of engagement might count as meaningful. For example, a meaningful interaction could be when a user spends three or more minutes on your site, or visits five or more pages. To learn more about setting up conversion tracking in Google Analytics, read [this](#).

# Your SEO Checklist

# Your SEO Checklist

## BEGINNER

- Make sure you have a Google [account](#)
- Conduct keyword research using Google Trends
- Conduct keyword research using Google AdWords Keyword Planner
- Write custom title tags and meta descriptions for key pages
- Use Artsy's [Meta Tag Organizer](#)
- Write 250 words of custom text content on key pages, targeting keywords with a 2–4% density
- Rename images to include keywords

## INTERMEDIATE

- Create or maintain a blog, press archive, or some other content repository
- Update your website twice a month
- Optimize press releases for SEO
- Research domain and page authority using Link Explorer
- Compare your website to your competitors
- Consider some of the inbound linking strategies

## ADVANCED

- Evaluate URL hierarchy and structuring
- Rewrite URLs (if necessary)
- Evaluate mobile website performance
- Set up proper rules in conjunction with Google's recommendations for mobile configurations
- Run your website through Google's PageSpeed Insights tool
- Work through PageSpeed Insights recommendations
- Add Google Analytics
- Schedule Google Analytics reports to be emailed to you

# Conclusion

There's one question that is frequently asked about SEO: "This sounds like something I should be doing, but how long will it take for my website to start receiving more traffic?"

The answer depends on several variables, such as how optimized your site already is; where you currently rank for your top keywords; which tactics you're best equipped to implement first; and how quickly you can make those changes to your site.

Unlike other digital marketing channels, SEO is a long-term investment with long-term, compounding returns. When you invest in SEO, the payoffs will benefit your website for years to come.

As an aggregator of the world's art, Artsy's partners benefit from strong SEO. In other words, if your works are listed on the Artsy platform, collectors visiting Artsy and searching for a given artist will be exposed to those works. Learn more about how your gallery can benefit from Artsy's organic reach as an [Artsy partner](#).



# Glossary

## **AVERAGE SESSION DURATION**

The average number of seconds a session lasts. The longer people stay on your site, the better.

## **BACKLINK PROFILE**

The quality and quantity of links coming to your website, either from other websites (referred to as external backlinks) or links from within your own website (internal links).

## **BOUNCE RATE**

The percentage of sessions to your site that end after one page view (i.e. someone arrives on a page and then leaves without visiting another page). The lower the bounce rate, the better your website and content are at keeping people engaged. Always aim for a lower bounce rate.

## **CACHE**

A search engine's copy of a page at any point in time. As a verb, "cache" refers to the process of a search engine crawling and storing a page.

## **CHANNEL GROUPING**

Google Analytics's rule-based groupings of your traffic sources, typically categorized into direct, referral, organic search, paid search, and social. This is similar to (and sometimes interchangeable with) "medium."

## **CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR)**

The rate by which people click on your result when it appears on the search engine results page. For instance, your website might be shown 20 times for a given keyword, and people click on it five times out of the 20 times that it appears. This would give you a CTR of 25%.

## **CONVERSIONS**

Sometimes referred to as "goals," these are actions completed on your website that are defined by you, and of distinct business value. Artsy measures many types of conversions, including artwork inquiries for galleries. You can also set up tracking for engagement metrics at a certain threshold to count as conversions, such as the number of sessions that lasted three or more minutes, or users that visited five or more pages.

## **CRAWL**

The action of the robots browsing and copying the web.

## **DIRECT TRAFFIC**

Traffic that comes to your website by users directly typing your URL into their browser, or when the referring site is unknown.

# Glossary

## **DOMAIN AUTHORITY (DA)**

A metric developed by Moz that is based on a 100-point scale, and helps predict how well websites will rank in search engines based on link factors. Moz is also the company who developed Link Explorer.

## **DYNAMIC CONTENT**

Content on a web page that is not static HTML, and gets loaded dynamically through languages such as JavaScript.

## **BODY CONTENT**

The main text copy of any email.

## **EMAIL TRAFFIC**

Traffic that comes to your website through email, typically marketing emails.

## **ENGAGEMENT METRICS**

A group of metrics, sometimes also referred to as “behavior metrics,” that measure how engaged the people coming to your site are with your site’s content. Typically, engagement metrics include bounce rate, pages per session, and average session duration (see below).

Keep in mind that Google pays close attention to these metrics, which therefore impact organic rankings.

## **INDEX**

A search engine’s copy of all of the pages it has crawled at any point in time. Similar in concept to a library or filing cabinet.

## **KEYWORD**

The word or phrase you search for in Google, Yahoo, or Bing.

## **LINK EQUITY**

The amount of weight a link carries in terms of its value or potential to rank in the search engine result pages for a given query. Sometimes referred to colloquially as “link juice.”

## **LINKABLE ASSETS**

Any part of your website that your audience (including collectors) will naturally be inclined to link to.

## **EMAIL SERVICE PROVIDER**

The software that allows marketers to facilitate their email marketing campaigns. i.e.

# Glossary

## **ORGANIC SEARCH**

Another way to refer to unpaid search results, often called “natural” or “earned” results. Sometimes also referred to as simply “SEO.”

## **PAGE AUTHORITY (PA)**

Similar to domain authority, page authority (another metric from Moz) measures individual pages rather than the overall domain.

## **PAGE LOAD SPEED**

How fast a single page loads (specifically, how quickly the browser can get the first byte of data from the server), measured in seconds. Typically, the faster the page loads, the better it fares in terms of user experience—which, in turn, helps SEO.

## **PAGE VIEW**

A request to load a single HTML file (web page) of an Internet site. This is what happens when someone clicks through to any page on your site. One session can include one or more page views.

## **PAGES PER SESSION**

The number of pages a user visits during a session on your website. The higher the average pages per session, the better the site is doing.

## **PAID SEARCH**

The paid search ads you see on a search engine results page, sometimes also called “PPC” (pay per click) or “SEM” (search engine marketing). This is the opposite of SEO, as it involves paying a search engine for higher rankings, versus making content or technical optimizations (in organic search).

## **PAID TRAFFIC**

Traffic that comes to your website through paid media, i.e. Google AdWords, Facebook ads, etc.

## **RANK**

Where a website shows up on the search engine results page, in order. The higher a website’s rank, the more organic traffic it will receive.

# Glossary

## **REFERRAL TRAFFIC**

Traffic that comes to your website through another website. It is not considered organic, email, social, or paid, but is still known. An example would be traffic from Artsy, a news website, or another gallery site.

## **ROBOTS (BOTS)**

Robots developed by major search engine companies that help them browse and index (copy) the web via links, so that when you search for something, a relevant result is returned quickly. Google has Googlebot; Yahoo and Bing use Bingbot.

## **RSS FEED**

A type of web feed that allows users to access updates to online content in a standardized, computer-readable format.

## **SEARCH ENGINE RESULTS PAGE (SERP)**

What you see on Google, Yahoo, or Bing after searching for a keyword. Results on the SERP are typically displayed in increments of 10—that is, the first 10 results are on page one of Google; results 11 through 20 are on page two; 21 through 30 are on page three, etc.

## **SESSIONS**

A group of interactions on your website that take place within a given time frame. Think of a session as a single visit to your site.

## **SOCIAL TRAFFIC**

Traffic that comes to your website through social media networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

## **TRAFFIC SOURCES**

A list of places where traffic to your website comes from.

## **URL**

Acronym for “uniform resource locator”; otherwise known as an address that identifies a particular file on the internet (typically a web page address).

## **VISITORS**

The uniquely identified clients that are generating page views or hits within a defined time period (e.g. day, week, or month). Think of these as the number of unique people visiting your site in a given time period from a single device, like a laptop or a phone.

## **WEBMASTER**

The person that creates and manages the content and organization of a website.

# Additional Resources

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Search Engine Optimization \(SEO\) Starter Guide](#)
- [The Beginner's Guide to SEO](#)
- [Keyword Research Guide](#)
- [Mobile SEO](#)
- 2018 Social Media Toolkit
  - [Beginner](#)
  - [Intermediate](#)
  - [Advanced](#)

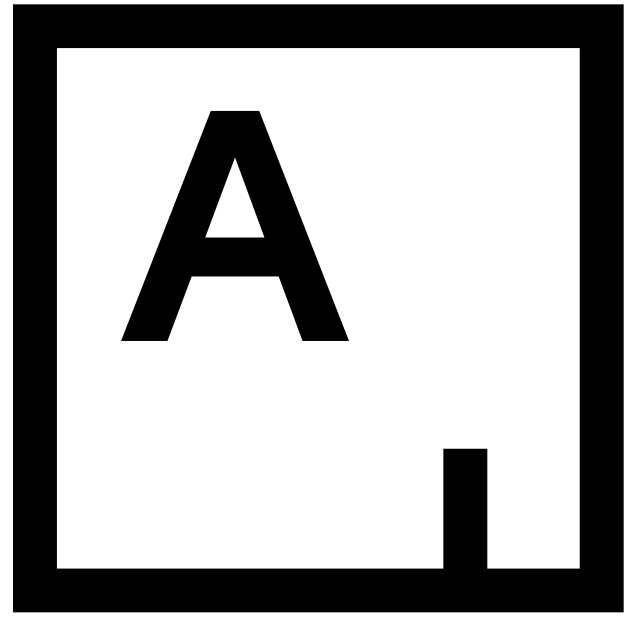


A world map with a light gray background. Overlaid on the map are numerous purple circles of varying diameters, representing visitor locations. The largest circles are concentrated in North America, Europe, and East Asia. Smaller circles are scattered across South America, Africa, and Australia. The text and list are positioned on the left side of the map.

# Grow your gallery presence on a global scale with Artsy

- Ⓢ Nearly 2.5 million visitors each month
- Ⓢ Top ranking art marketplace on Google
- Ⓢ Visitors from over 160 countries

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