

All About SEO Jobs

SEO jobs are among the youngest professions today. Search engines only came into existence during the dot-com boom of the late 90s. Today, the term “Google” has become part of our vocabulary. Practically every online user regularly “googles” things nowadays.

A couple of decades ago, ranking your website to the top of search engines only took stuffing your site with your targeted keywords. If your competition’s site had your targeted keyword appear 50 times, you simply place it 100 times on your website. The result is poor content all around.

Not even a decade ago, manipulating the number of links to your site was all it took to boost your ranking. That’s no longer the case today as [Google took measures](#) to punish sites that heavily relied on this technique.

As Google’s search engine algorithms become more sophisticated to increase the quality of search results, ranking websites now require actual skills. Hence, the increase in demand for SEO specialists.

With modern society’s dependence on search engines, [93% of online experiences begin with a search engine](#), embarking on a career in SEO is undoubtedly a viable option.

What exactly do these SEO experts do? How do you get into the SEO industry? How are SEO companies helping businesses and site owners? We’ll discuss all of that and more below.

About SEO

Before we delve into the specifics of what SEO professionals do, it’s important to understand what SEO is and why it matters in today’s tech-driven landscape.

What Does SEO Stand For?

SEO means search engine optimization. It refers to the process of optimizing a website to boost its ranking in search engines, and therefore receive more organic, unpaid traffics.

It matters because of the sheer volume of people who use search engines like Google. Most people tend to only click the first few links that appear in the results. Companies who want to drive more visitors to their site have to aim to be at or near the top of the search engine results page.

What factors affect a website’s search engine ranking?

Boosting a website’s ranking can be complicated but the following are among the main factors that SEO experts work on to improve a site’s position in the search engine results page:

- **Content.** As the saying goes, content is king, and that is certainly true when it comes to SEO. Part of Google’s efforts to deliver the best results for users is by ranking websites with great content higher.

Part of the services offered by SEO companies is providing quality content. If you have the knack for writing, you can find plenty of SEO writing jobs where you'll have the opportunity on this particular aspect of SEO.

- **On-Page SEO.** These are elements of websites that also factor in the search engine's algorithm. These include title tags, meta descriptions, internal links, sub-headings, and image name and alt tags. SEO specialists ensure that the site owner's targeted keywords strategically appear in these elements.
- **Off-Page SEO.** These refer to links from outside sources as well as social media signals such as shares and likes. Social media specialists and digital marketers can help in this part of SEO.
- **Site architecture.** Is the website user-friendly? Is it optimized for mobile users? The overall architecture of the site also matters in its rankings. SEO experts can work with web developers to improve this aspect of a website.

Most of the duties of SEO specialists revolve around these factors that impact websites' search engine rank.

What Does an SEO Company Do?

An SEO company offers services to improve search engine rankings and the quality of site traffic. Being able to reach a significant volume of targeted audiences is a boon for any business establishments, that's why there is a great demand for SEO services.

Jobs/Positions

- **SEO Specialist.** Tasked with various responsibilities like link-building, keyword research, site analysis, and strategy recommendations.
- **SEO Manager.** Oversees the work of SEO Specialists. Leads in the creation and implementation of strategies to optimize the client's website. Coordinates with sales and marketing team.

In addition, other related jobs that you can find in an SEO company include:

- **Content Writer.** Assigned to create web content based on targeted keywords. Some SEO companies prefer to outsource their writing services as it's more cost-effective.
- **Digital Marketer.** They help in the planning of content as well as in social media advertisements and promotions to increase awareness in the client's products and services.

It's also common for SEO companies to offer other services like website creation, so they also employ the services of web developers and designers, as well as graphic artists. It's a thriving industry, so chances are, a quick search of SEO jobs near me should yield plenty of work opportunities, especially for those living in major cities.

Important Skills and Qualities

To become a successful SEO specialist, you must possess the following skills and qualities:

- **Excellent verbal and written communication skills.** You will work with a variety of personalities. From workers of other departments in the company to the actual client, you have to be able to articulate your SEO plans and strategies clearly. Written skills are also crucial since part of SEO is creating quality content.
- **Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.** Among the primary duties of SEO experts include evaluating a client's website, analyzing traffics, keyword research and analysis, developing link-building strategies, and making recommendations for site improvement. All of these require sharp analytical thinking and superb problem-solving ability.
- **Multi-tasking skills.** SEO companies work with multiple clients at once. SEO specialists should be able to properly manage their time to be able to serve the needs of several clients concurrently. Their tasks are also not limited to one or two things, so being able to juggle multiple tasks while still performing them efficiently and effectively are must-have skills.
- **Fast learner.** Especially for entry-level SEO workers, you're not expected to know everything at once. You'll be figuring out many things as you go in your SEO career, so you have to learn fast. Google also periodically updates its search engine policies. SEO experts must be able to keep up with that to prevent violations and be able to come up with the best strategies in accordance with those policies.
- **Detail-oriented.** Optimizing a website requires that you pay attention to every detail, from keyword placement, traffic analysis, to the overall design and architecture of the site. SEO specialists must have a keen eye in spotting a site's weak points to be able to create effective strategies for optimization.

These skills and qualities are what SEO companies mainly look for in hiring even for entry-level positions. Having these will help you navigate the fast-paced world of SEO and succeed.

Growth and Employment Rate

The growth of the SEO industry has been steady for the past few years. An article from Search Engine Journals reported that SEO-related jobs [rose by 43% from 2017 to 2018](#). It also grew [six times faster](#) than the overall US Job Market a year in 2018, and its upward trajectory should only continue moving forward.

How to Get a Job in SEO?

Getting a job in an SEO company doesn't entail years of study before you can even send your resume. But it also doesn't mean that you can simply apply without any background knowledge of SEO at all.

You still need to educate yourself first about the fundamentals of SEO. With plenty of tools available online, you should be able to do just that with patience and determination.

Requirements

Here are the requirements that will help you land a job as an SEO specialist:

- **Clear understanding of how search engines work.** It goes without saying, but if you want an SEO career, you must have a good grasp of how Google and other search engines rank websites. Knowing their criteria, and rules and policies would allow you to formulate the best strategies to rank your client's site.
- **Knowledge of SEO tools.** SEO experts use many tools to aid them in their work. Among them include Google Analytics, Google Search Console, and software toolsets for site audits and backlinks and SEO analysis. These are tools that you can learn to use on the job but it's best to at least have a background knowledge of them even before applying.
- **Basic knowledge of web technologies.** You don't have to be an expert web developer, but you must at least know how websites operate. A knowledge of HTML and CSS, which are easy to learn, is an advantage.

On-page SEO involves analyzing and optimizing website parts like the title tags, meta descriptions, sub-headings, and contents. SEO specialists also work closely with web designers and developers to enhance the site's design and architecture, so an understanding of web development is important.

- **Working knowledge of social networking sites.** Generating social signals via social networking sites is also vital in search engine optimization. SEO experts must know how to leverage these social media sites as an added boost to their client's off-page SEO.

There is no Google SEO certification, but they do offer a certification course in Google Analytics. Since analyzing site traffics is one of the duties of an SEO specialist, it's an excellent certificate to have. It's not a requirement per se, but it's an added advantage when you apply for jobs.

Responsibilities

There are many aspects to optimizing a website so the tasks of SEO specialists vary but these are the main responsibilities that they do:

- **Site analysis.** Before even coming up with an action plan, SEO experts usually assess a client's website first. They look for weaknesses that prevent the site from ranking higher. They check the site's design, architecture, and contents. From there, they can start making recommendations and creating strategies for optimization.

- **Business evaluation.** Knowing the nature of the client's business as well as their goals would help SEO experts in selecting which keywords and audiences to target.
- **Keyword research.** Specific keywords are among Google's criteria in ranking websites. It's part of the job of SEO specialists to look for the most powerful and most profitable keywords and strategically place them in the client's site.
- **Development and execution of link-building strategies.** Google places great emphasis on quality links. According to software company Moz, links are practically [the currency of the internet](#). It's the responsibility of SEO workers to create high-quality, non-spammy links, both internal and external, as they're critical factors in ranking websites.
- **Content management.** SEO specialists work with in-house or freelance writer to create top-notch content. They make sure that keyword placements and density are correct. They may also edit the content and provide feedback to the writer.
- **Keeping up with industry trends and algorithm updates.** Similar to what happened a few years ago, what was once an effective SEO strategy could stop working in an instant with Google's algorithm updates. To be able to continue coming up with effective strategies, SEO specialists must be able to keep up with emerging trends and changes in search engine algorithms.

While these are the primary responsibilities of SEO experts, their employers may also assign them other SEO-related works such as running pay-per-click campaigns, posting in the client's social media accounts, executing blogger outreach programs, and other ad-hoc tasks.

Salary

Several factors determine the average SEO specialist salary, including work experience, company size and location, and the type of work agreement (full-time, part-time, freelance, etc.).

According to [ZipRecruiter](#), as of December 2019, the average annual salary of SEO specialists in the United States is \$52,539. The pay can go as low as \$22,500 to as high as \$83,000, with the majority of the salary coming within the \$41,000 to \$62,000 range.

The Creative Group (TCG), Robert Half International's staffing solution, [published a 2019 report](#) on the salaries of creative and marketing professionals, which include SEO experts.

The median salary of SEO specialists, according to their report, is \$62,500. Those in the 25th percentile are making around \$52,000. Those in the 75th percentile are earning \$72,750, while the ones in the 95th percentile are making approximately \$94,500.

TCG's report came from a survey of over 1,000 respondents from all over the United States, making for an accurate representation of the salary of SEO workers.

Work Environment

SEO specialists typically work in tech startups, which are mostly composed of the younger workforce. The hours are similar to other jobs. A 40-hour workweek is standard for those working in an office setting.

Remote SEO jobs are becoming popular these days as more companies realize the cost-effectiveness of having employees work from the comfort of their own home.

Depending on the agreement between the company and the home-based SEO workers, some work on a more flexible time instead of the fixed 9-to-5 schedule of office workers.

Working for an SEO company can also be stressful as specialists must essentially be jacks of all trades with design, development, data analytics, and content writing. It's not the job of the specialists to do all of those things, but they have to have at least the technical know-how to be effective at their job.

SEO jobs also require specialists work closely with the clients, giving updates, and explaining the progress or possible setbacks that they may encounter. This can also be a significant cause of stress, depending on the personalities that they're dealing with.

The SEO technology is ever-evolving with Google's constant updates, so specialists must also be able to keep up to stay productive. All in all, SEO experts work in a fast-paced environment, but one that has a lot of promise as this profession continues to grow.

Job Outlook

Notwithstanding the changes in Google's algorithm, the job outlook for SEO specialists remain optimistic.

Before Google's Panda and Penguin releases, companies mainly hired SEO workers to build as many backlinks as they can. Google's updates changed the nature of SEO jobs, but the demand never diminished.

Today, SEO workers have taken on more of a hybrid role, building quality backlinks while also providing excellent content. That is to say, the functions of SEO specialists may evolve as time goes by, but the demand will keep growing as more site owners try to harness the power of organic traffic from search engines.

More work options are now available for those who want to pursue a career in SEO. Eventually SEO experts can move to other related jobs like content writer or business marketing consultant. They also now have the option of doing contractual or freelance SEO jobs from home.

Establishing a career as an SEO expert may not guarantee you large paydays in comparison to other tech jobs like web developing and software engineering. Still, you're sure to have a stable career within this industry.

FAQ

Is SEO a good career?

Considering that around [4.5 billion people](#) are browsing the web and with more companies realizing the importance of having an online presence, this is certainly a great career to have. The demand for SEO services is only going to continue to grow in the coming years.

There are several paths you can take in your career, from working as a digital marketer, content writer, marketing analyst, or SEO manager. As long as you continue to learn as much as you can in this fast-paced and ever-evolving industry, you won't have a hard time finding available jobs.

What is SEO job description?

SEO specialists aim to maximize the incoming traffic of websites by optimizing its content and structure.

Among the primary responsibilities of SEO experts include analyzing a client's website, link-building and keyword research, ensuring that websites contain optimal keywords, producing high-quality content, consulting with web developers to enhance the site architecture, and preparing strategies and reports.

Also a part of their job is also keeping abreast of search engine updates to ensure that they don't violate policies that can negatively impact their client's website ranking.

How much does an SEO specialist make?

This varies depending on factors such as experience and location. On average, though, SEO specialists make anywhere from around \$40,000 to a little over \$60,000, with a few making close to \$100,000.

How do I become an SEO specialist?

The great thing about embarking on a career in SEO is that you don't need a degree to get started. You only need to have a strong determination to learn and some tech-savviness as well.

There are online SEO courses available that you can take to get your feet wet and give you an overview of what SEO is and what specialists do. There is also a wide selection of books on the subject of SEO.

You don't need to be an expert before you land your first job. You only need to demonstrate enough knowledge of how search engine optimization works. There are entry level digital marketing jobs and other SEO work opportunities that don't require prior experience.

Summary

It's incredible to think that the term "search engine optimization" didn't even exist until the late 90s but is now an integral part of having a successful website.

As people continue to spend an increasing amount of time browsing the internet, more businesses are beginning to realize the necessity of having an online presence. And having a website optimized for search engines is their best way to attract a significant amount of audience to their products or services.

This is why SEO services aren't just fads that will wane in time. It's an industry with demands that will only continue to rise as websites compete to get the best landing spot in search engine results pages.

Becoming an SEO specialist is, therefore, an excellent career choice for those who desire longevity and career stability. With no required degree and plenty of available tools out there, such as online courses, books, and tutorials, it's relatively easy to get started.

With [close to two billion websites and over four billion web users around the world](#), the majority of which mainly uses search engines, there will always be people and companies who will seek search engine optimization experts. SEO jobs will continue to thrive.