

HOW TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID THE
MOST COMMON MISTAKES OF SEO

for the Best Optimization Results

for Your
Motorsports Brand



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Chapter 1

Learning from Others' Mistakes

When it comes to implementing the best SEO, half the battle is not making the same mistakes that others have in the past. After all, even the best strategies can be ruined in an instant by one simple mistake. To begin this part of our series on powersports SEO, we're going to discuss how learning from the mistakes of others can help you avoid making many of them yourself. Some of the biggest issues that people have with their optimization come down to simple faux pas, but you don't want those to become serious issues.



The powersports and motorsports industries are different than others, but the process of optimizing is almost always going to be similar, if not the same. You need to make sure that in addition to developing a solid plan for search engine optimization, you know what not to do to avoid negative rankings and other damaging effects. Take the time to see what other people are doing. Take advantage of the resources available and keep an eye on different campaigns. You might even want to do some research to find examples to help along the way.

After all, this is one instance where you want to lead by example, not be the example.

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Check Out the Competition

One of the best places to start is to check out your competition and industry peers. See what they are doing with their SEO campaigns and how effective their results seem to be. If you want, check out the biggest names in the industry and see what their optimization plans include. Find out what others are doing to optimize their dealership and other motorsports brands, and which parts of SEO are proving to be most effective.

Pay attention to how effectively people are using social media, too. Search optimization and improving your overall brand image isn't just about getting your website ranked higher. That is one of the major goals, of course, but you also want to bolster your off-page content and make sure that you have as many opportunities to make a good impression as possible. The motorsports industry has a huge community following and there are plenty of places online where you can connect with that community.

See how your competition is doing that, or if they're doing it at all, and then make sure that you do it better when you are integrating your optimization efforts across various channels.

Finally, take a quick look at how other power-sports brands are harnessing the available resources and take note of any glaringly obvious mistakes so that you don't make them yourself.

Ask Google-- No, Seriously

Google will be the FIRST to tell you what not to do with your search engine optimization. One simple search for "SEO mistakes" or "black hat SEO" will provide endless resources of all the things you need to avoid. We'll highlight the biggest offenders later on in this ebook to give you a head start. However, you can dig as deep as you want to find out about the biggest mistakes, what to look out for, and how others have worked around the biggest potential snafus of search engine optimization.

Whether you just want some quick tips or you are looking for a full list of SEO horror stories that can regale you with the worst possible ways to go about the process, there is plenty of insight out there. You can find firsthand accounts, third-party insight, and so much more. Take advantage of those resources to learn as much as you can about the biggest mistakes of this process and how to avoid them.

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See SEO as a Process, Not a Tool

Perhaps the biggest, or most basic mistake that starts it all is not seeing SEO in the right light. Too often, people see search engine optimization as another “tool” in the marketing wheelhouse. While it is a very useful element, it cannot be defined as a single tool. Doing this severely limits the benefits that it offers and ignores the fact that optimization is more of an ongoing process.

When you integrate your own optimization efforts, it's not going to be as easy as just putting things in place and leaving it at that. SEO is not a series of steps or group of one-off tasks, but a full, well-rounded marketing practice that allows you to increase your search rankings and your reputation at once. If you aren't looking at SEO like this, you're seeing it all wrong. Once you change your perspective here, the rest should fall into place.



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Chapter 2

Substantial Mistakes in Powersports SEO Campaigns

As mentioned above, you can search the Internet to find all kinds of information and insight on substantial mistakes of search engine optimization for powersports brands. You can even find examples of who's done what and see some of the worst practices in action to give you the cautionary tale that you desire. However, there are some big-ticket items that you need to focus on to make the most of your optimization efforts. Check out the top three mistakes that you'll want to avoid at all costs when it comes to your powersports SEO campaigns.



Black Hat SEO

Black hat SEO is a topic that's come up a few times, and it will come up in just about every article that you read on how to properly integrate search engine optimization efforts. This refers to any practices that are designed to increase search engine rankings through practices that are a violation of the terms of service (TOS) or guidelines of search engines. These are unethical processes and tactics that are frowned upon, but more importantly, that can result in a negative ranking or all-out banishment from the search results.

As you can tell by the list here, these tactics refer to anything that is done in a less-than-reputably way in an attempt to bolster your search engine rankings or other optimization results. Search engines will be looking for all of these and other black hat tactics, and will promptly penalize or ban those who use them in their optimization campaigns.

Don't become a victim of accidental black hat optimization efforts by knowing what's allowed and what isn't, and by making sure that your optimization strategies are always designed to earn their place in the search results.

Black Hat SEO includes things like:

- Keyword stuffing
- Duplicate content
- Content automation
- Automated Google queries
- Hidden links or other link manipulation
- Phishing or redirects
- Article spinning
- Cloaking links
- Using private link networks



Monitoring Campaigns

Another huge mistake that many people make, in all industries, when it comes to their SEO campaigns, is that they don't monitor their progress or they monitor the wrong items. SEO analytics and reporting are an integral part of the process. We've mentioned it previously and will continue to discuss it because it truly does matter that much. You have to know how your campaigns are performing, but more importantly, you have to know which elements to monitor and how analytics can help you make the most of your search engine optimization.

The great news is that there are plenty of tools and reports, including real-time reporting, to help you follow-up on your SEO efforts. You will be able to track things like your page rank, traffic, visitors, conversions, and other details to ensure that your campaigns are on point. You can even find out which keywords are most successful by following user searches and performance based on specific keywords or pages.

You can essentially monitor your SEO any way that you'd like. You can have a custom reporting tool built into your platform, or you can use tools that already exist and have all of the features that you need, like Google Analytics. Here, you'll have access to tons of custom reporting features, but the most important part is the standard reporting that you get. Everything is covered, from page rank to conversions and even click-throughs and your bounce rate. Plus, since it's a tool made by Google, you can trust that it's got all of the reporting and monitoring features that will set you up for the best chances of success.



Your Sitemap

The final of the “big 3” SEO mistakes is the sitemap. Of all the things that you can do poorly or even overlook when developing your optimization strategy, not having a sitemap is a surefire way to fail before you even begin. A sitemap is a simple tool that offers a full list of your website pages, along with the URL, title, and any change information, such as how frequently the pages are updated. There are two types of sitemaps and they both have their place in your optimization efforts.

XML and HTML are your options for a sitemap. However, we shouldn't say “options” because you do need them both to have the best chances of success with your search engine optimization. The XML sitemap is an indexable tool that is scoured by search engines to learn about the pages available on your website, including when they were last updated and what content they offer. This needs to be part of your plan so that you can give the search engines the best part of finding your website and all of its pages.

An HTML sitemap is a tool that is designed more for the end-user. Again, this will be a list of the pages on your website, that should include page titles, URLs, and a certain order, or hierarchy, that users can follow. For example, under the “inventory” tab for your powersports dealership, you may have pages for new, used, and certified inventory. In your sitemap, you'd want to list them accordingly, in an outline-style format.

HTML sitemaps are especially important for large websites that have a lot of pages. Every website needs at least one sitemap, whether it's XML or HTML. After all, when you are ready to index your website, you do that by submitting your sitemap and letting the search engines know that your website is good to go. You can even add “nofollow” code to let the spiders know not to index certain pages if you don't want them found.





Chapter 3

Avoid Mistakes by Knowing the Best Practices

We'll wrap up our series on substantial mistakes in powersports SEO, and in SEO in general, by discussing the value of education. By taking the time to get to know SEO through guides like this, you will be in a much better position to avoid some of the most common pitfalls of SEO. After all, if you look at the list of the worst offenders, you'll likely notice that most of them are related to a lack of information or experience. Some mistakes are obvious and intentional, but most are the result of being unfamiliar with SEO best practices and how to properly execute the process.



To better prepare yourself to avoid things like black hat SEO or forgetting to include a sitemap, you should get to know as much as you can about the optimization process. That includes learning about search engine optimization, its best practices, and what others are doing that is effective. Plus, you'll have much better chances of success when you hire the right people to help you along the way.

Get to Know SEO

Even if you're hiring someone to help execute your powersports SEO campaign, you still need to know what they will

be doing and how the process works. Fortunately, the Internet is ripe with information about the process of optimization, including everything that it entails, how to best succeed, and what differences there are for powersports and dealerships as compared to other businesses that are optimizing online today. Read up on the most recent guidelines set forth by the search engines and check out the latest tools for unique SEO integrations that get results.

Take the time to learn about white hat SEO or the best ways to get your brand noticed with search engine optimization. Find out why these methods are effective and how they

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outshine black hat tactics. If you want to make sure that you're on the right track at all times, you can find outlines and guides that will walk you through the process of optimization one step at a time, giving you even more control and a better chance at success.

It doesn't matter how you learn or what you learn, so long as you take the time to **learn**.

See What Others are Doing

Just as we discussed watching the competition to see where they are committing fatal marketing and optimization mistakes, you'll want to see how they are building success, as well. There is more to it than just checking in to make sure that they have optimized, of course. You will want to look at things like:

- How well the competition ranks compared to you and what makes their ranking better or worse
- How people are optimizing their off-page content, including local reviews, business listings, social media, and more
- What keywords they are using and how much they are focusing on them in their content (remember, you want to avoid keyword stuffing)
- Whether they're optimized for mobile or not, since more than ¾ of all searches start from a mobile device
- If they are optimizing local SEO properly, including how the leaders in your industry are approaching it
- Any other efforts that are noticed that result in a better ranking or optimization process

You're looking out to see what other people have already done to create success with search engine optimization. In the powersports and motorsports industry, that can be invaluable information because it allows you to see how to set yourself up for success. Building a strong reputation and online presence through SEO is critical to the success of your brand, whether you are a dealership or any other type of motorsports brand.

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Take notes when you are looking around. Perform a simple search for your preferred keywords. See which sites come up first. Then, figure out how they got there. Look at the various elements of their website and off-page content and explore what they are doing that's keeping them at the top. In an industry like this, you're not competing against giant brands and international names like you might in traditional ecommerce, and that's something that you want to take advantage of. However, because of that, you'll also have to look harder to find the successful resources that you want to model your campaigns after for the best outcome.

Hire the Right People to Help

If you truly want to make the best move with your motorsports optimization efforts, you need to enlist the assistance of professionals. SEO experts can take care of everything from start to finish, and beyond. After all, once your campaigns have been implemented, they will need to be monitored to ensure that they're successful or that changes can be made when needed.

Not only that, but they can take care of real-time monitoring and analytics to make sure that things are running smoothly and changes are integrated as quickly as possible to minimize any damage or reduce the risk of poor results in optimization efforts. Because there is so much information

readily available about SEO and how it works in various industries, including powersports and motorsports, several people assume they can handle the process themselves.

However, SEO is a process and it's one that needs to be done with the best practices in mind at all times. It is an ongoing effort that requires monitoring, as we discussed above, and it is almost a full-time job in and of itself. Therefore, you might not have the time or resources to keep up with everything. There are endless reasons why you could benefit from hiring SEO experts to help with your powersports marketing, but the fact of the matter is that they know best.

When you hire the right people to assist with your search engine optimization, you won't have to worry about simple mistakes and things like forgetting to add monitoring to your strategy. You will never have to stress that things are done incorrectly, and you'll avoid the risk of black hat tactics because the pros know all about them. Ultimately, you'll be able to create a robust SEO campaign and have it implemented seamlessly, which resolves most of the risks and mistakes of optimization in the first place.

Get to know the SEO process, but let the pros do the work when it comes to your powersports marketing and optimization needs.

Thank you for reading

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