



## **Social Media Optimisation (SMO) for Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)**

This white paper has been prepared by Tug. Tug, is a Search Engine Marketing specialist agency, based in Shoreditch, London.

SMO stands for 'Social Media Optimisation'; SMO is quickly becoming the new hot property in SEO (Search Engine Optimisation.) Social media websites make up over 50% of the 100 most visited websites on the internet. In this article, we will go through what SMO is and how your company can use it to your advantage.

### **What is Social Media?**

Social media is the new generation of websites which enable users to interact with other users while introducing their own content. This consists of Image sharing websites such as Flickr, Video sharing websites such as YouTube, Blogging websites such as Blogger and Networking websites such as Facebook. Interest in these websites has sky rocketed since they were introduced to the public, with a high interest from the general public as well as big brands, with the most recent social media success being Twitter.

### **What is Social Media Optimisation?**

Social Media Optimisation (SMO) consists of a variety of different methods for generating brand awareness through the use of the Social Media websites. This could include setting up profiles on Facebook and connecting with other users on the Facebook network who may be interested in the particular brands offering or just posting regular videos on YouTube.

With SMO it is very important that your intended market are happy to use or are already using the social media website, for example if you run a gossip website; would your users like to connect with each other on Facebook. The number of users connected to you on these social websites will shape the success you have on these websites.

### **How does Social Media Optimisation help with SEO?**

The majority of social media websites will allow you to post links to a website, be this your website or a related website; this could be done using profiles, videos, pictures, blogs and more. It's also worth noting that once a user has interacted with you on a social media website; it's highly likely that they will link to your website at a later point; this could be on a forum or just an email. This can all result in an increase in both exposure and traffic, which will result in a higher page rank and therefore an improved search engine ranking.

### **Where should you start?**

First, you will need to choose which websites can help you're company. When choosing these websites, remember the following:

- How much time have you got? (Don't start something you can't maintain)
- Will your intended market use it?
- Have you got the required media for the website? (e.g. Pictures for Flickr)

Once you have chosen the websites you wish to use, you will need to create accounts on the websites. The following is a rundown of how to use the biggest social media websites:



## Facebook

Facebook is the largest of the social networking websites; it's great for companies who want to connect with their customers. Facebook allows you to use Pictures, Videos, Widgets, Discussions and much more. Facebook give you many options when it comes to building links for traffic, the following are the most popular options:

- **Groups:** Groups are generally created by Facebook users. They allow users to post pictures, videos, links to their website and discussions. Group administrators can also add Facebook widgets, which could for example; allow users to create and vote on a poll.
- **Pages:** Pages are created for companies & products or services. They work in the same way as Facebook Groups but they allow the user to add more company specific information such as company overview and products. Users are also seen as fans as opposed to members.
- **Networking:** Meet and connect with new friends. Message new found friends links to websites on user's walls or through private messages.
- **Widgets:** Widgets on Facebook allow companies to create applications which can interact with its users in whatever way the creator of the widget can think of. These widgets will then be displayed on the user's profile. When creating a widget, the creator can include links to websites.

Facebook is used by many retail brands to help increase exposure and help network with both past and potential customers. This results in a number of potential back links from interested customers.

## MySpace

MySpace is the second largest of the Social Networking websites with a smaller base of users than Facebook, but still not to be missed out. MySpace has a very large base for music fans; it allows users to listen to their favourite music for free. MySpace doesn't give you as many opportunities as Facebook, but the following are the most popular:

- **Profiles:** MySpace allows its users to create profiles for both personal and commercial use, but they are both the same. MySpace also allows users to create special music profiles, which give you the option to upload music. Profiles are created in HTML, so you may place links wherever you like on your profile.
- **Blog Posts:** MySpace allows users to post Blogs about whatever they like, take advantage of this system by posting blogs with links.
- **Networking:** Meet and connect with new friends and then post links to each other either by profile or by private messages.

MySpace is predominantly used by the music industry to help increase exposure to bands and products. There are many opportunities to introduce websites to users, which could result in back links.



## Flickr

Flickr is the largest of the image sharing websites, Flickr allows users to post images and categorise them in Sets & Groups. Flickr like many of the other Social websites is highly dependent on the popularity of your profile.

- **Profiles:** Flickr allows users to create a profile, describing your account with links to websites. This is formatted in HTML.
- **Images:** When uploading images into Flickr, you are given the chance to add a Title, Keywords and Description. The Description is again formatted in HTML, so users are able to post links.
- **Photostream:** Once a user uploads an image into Flickr, it will be automatically moved into the users Photostream.
- **Sets:** Standard users on Flickr are able to create 3 sets (premium users can create unlimited sets) in which users can place their images and put a Title and Description, which is formatted in HTML.
- **Groups:** Flickr allows users to create Groups in which you can place your images along with other users; the front page of the group allows users to add a Title, Keywords and Description which is again formatted in HTML, allowing users to add links.
- **Networking:** In order to gain popularity in Flickr, you will have to network with other people interested in your pictures. This can be done in a number of ways including adding other people as friends, adding other people's pictures as favourites and joining other people's groups and posting photos. To find other people/photos or groups simply use the search box.

Flickr is successful for both the Travel industry and Retail industry. Posting pictures of holiday photos or celebrities wearing your favourite T-Shirt.

## YouTube

YouTube is the largest of the many video sharing websites, YouTube is a Social Media phenomenon; first owned by some students, it kicked off like they could have never expected and was bought by Google for over 1.5 billion dollars. Since then, Google have been looking for ways to make money out of the YouTube platform. The following are the most popular techniques used on YouTube:

- **Videos:** YouTube allows users to upload as many videos as they wish, when a user uploads a video, the user is able to add a Title, Description and Keywords. In the description a user is able to add a link; this is used by many to generate a high volume of traffic, free of charge.
- **Channels:** Each YouTube user has a channel, in the channel a user may showcase their videos and add a channel description. This can then be promoted and users can then connect to the channel.



YouTube is used by many industries; videos can result in thousands or even millions of free views and click throughs. Videos on YouTube can also be embedded into a user's website, which will also result in increased brand exposure. YouTube works great for any websites that features videos.

### **Blogger/Wordpress**

Blogger & Wordpress are the 2 largest external blogging websites; these are free of charge and enable users to network their content throughout the web. The registration is very straight forward and quick to setup. The following are some tips to take advantage of these magnificent platforms:

- **URL:** Both services allow you to choose the blogs URL; it's highly recommended that you include your blogs keywords to help with rankings.
- **Title & Description:** When choosing a title & description, remember to include all the keywords that your market will be interested in; this is similar to that of your own websites on page search engine optimisation.
- **Writing a Blog:** As with any website, keep content relevant, full of keywords and unique. Remember to link certain keywords to your website.
- **Pages:** Both services allow users to create pages in addition to the blog, this could be used as a product or service page or even just an about us, these are good places to place links in.

Blogs are used by many business to business companies along with magazine and news related websites. Blogs result in a high number of links, be it by posting them yourself in the blog or by a user reposting an article on their blog and linking back to your blog.

### **Twitter**

Twitter is the newest and recently most popular social media website; Twitter allows users to setup a profile and connect with other users on the Twitter network. The registration process is free and straight forward; once you have registered you will be able to instantly start participating. The following is the most effective methods of using Twitter:

- **Username:** Your username will determine both the Title in your Twitter Profile and the URL at which you can be found at; this could be a company name, your name or even a subject of interest such as "CelebGossip".
- **Profile:** When setting up your profile, be sure to fill in all the details as these all help both users and search engines to find your profile.
- **One Line Bio:** The One Line Bio is your description, make this as descriptive as possible, while making sure your keywords are in there and it makes sense.
- **URL:** Enter the URL of your website or if you would like to promote one of your other social websites; you could enter the URL of your blogger profile.
- **What are you doing?:** This is the main activity that you will be doing on Twitter, if you are a personal user; this could be similar to your Facebook Status update. On the other hand if you are doing a profile for a business, you should use it to market your services or your



website. Make sure you are not spamming, this will just result in people not connecting with you. Keep it relevant to your business while being informative and useful to the user.

- **Networking:** The best way to network your profile is by linking to your Twitter profile on your website or on other social media websites. If you are not able to do it this way you can add people from your email address book, or simply use the Twitter Search (<http://search.twitter.com>) to find other people. Once you find people, simply follow people and they will usually follow you back. Once you have a good amount of followers, people will find you themselves and you will not have to go out to find them.

Twitter is used by many industries, but by far the most successful industry to date on Twitter is Celebrity related websites such as gossip blogs. Using Twitter correctly will result in a high number of links and traffic.

### **Conclusion**

Social Media Optimisation is a fast growing tool in the search marketers toolkit, it is good for conversing with customers and also good for brand. Social Media Optimisation also works great for the search engine optimisation of a client's website through the use of clever methods as outlined in this document. No Search Engine Marketing strategy should be without Social Media.

### **Tug**

Creative Search Marketing  
77 Leonard Street  
London, EC2A 4QS

<http://www.tugsearch.co.uk>

<http://www.tugsearch.co.uk/blog>

<http://twitter.com/tugsearch>