

How To Hire A Quality Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Company (Part 1 of 3)

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Set Your Objective Before you begin to look for an SEO company, you will need to have a solid understanding of what the main objectives are for your Web site. Is your priority to just increase traffic? If you are running an e-commerce site, your main priority should be to increase sales. Increasing traffic is just one way to increase sales. Ask yourself questions such as:

- What is the main goal of my web site? (Do you run sales, generate leads, etc)
- Are you looking to increase sales/ leads in a particular category?
- Are there any areas of your web site that you know are not performing to their potential? These are just examples of questions that can help you get a better understanding of your true objectives. Try to stick to less than 3 so that you can stay focused, having 1 objective is fine.

Set your Goals Now that you have your objective, you need to define your goals that will help you get to your objective. If you think this sounds like marketing 101, you are correct, however you would be surprised at how many people skip this important step. The goals that you set should be easily measured. For example:

- Increase sales by 10% in 6 months.
- Increase sales of blue widgets by 20% in 6 months. You will want to share your objective and goals with the SEO company. This will enable them to understand exactly what you want. Plus it will save you money because the company will not bill you for the time it normally takes to gain this information from you.

Set reasonable expectations When hiring a SEO company, you have to be realistic. It is extremely unlikely that you will be #1 for widgets, and any SEO company that tells you they can do this is just flat out lying to you. The more specific the keyword phrase that you target, the better chance you have of achieving a high ranking. This is where your goals come in handy, for our example above, one of the goals is to increase blue widgets by 20%. If you have a lot of Xtra Large blue widgets, then this may be a keyword phrase that will help increase sales (your true goal).

Once you have completed these 3 tasks, you will have a solid understanding of what you need. And more importantly, you will be able to communicate it clearly while interviewing SEO Companies. Many companies skip these steps and then end up wasting their Internet marketing budget.

Coming in Part 2: Telling the good SEO from the bad SEO!