SEO Fundamentals

Mike Le - COO, CBI Digital

mikele@cbidigital.com

ABOUT ME

✓Mike Le is co-founder and COO of CBI Digital, a digital agency that operates in U.S., U.K. and South East Asia

✓We provide performance-driven digital marketing for major clients in Ecommerce, Brands, B2B, and fast-growing startups

✓CBI Digital has offices in New York and Vietnam

✓Mike Le has Master degree in Information System at NYU

SEO OVERVIEW

- ✓ How SEO drives revenue
- ✓ Select right keywords and site structure
- ✓ Optimize web pages for keywords
- ✓ Make Google bots love your site
- ✓ Build links the right way
- ✓ Advanced SEO
- ✓ Conversion
- ✓ Q&A

SEO is about revenue
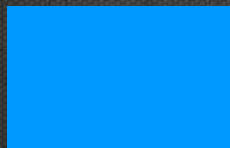
✓Organic search drives 30% revenue for an online phone retailer. Paid search spends over $100k/month and does just a little better at 40% revenue.

Default Channel Grouping	Sessions ⬇	Revenue	Transactions	Average Order Value	Ecommerce Conversion Rate
				$250.31 Avg for View: $250.31 (0.00%)	1.32% Avg for View: 1.32% (0.00%)
1. Paid Search	(52.64%)	(40.75%)	(43.94%)	$232.11	1.10%
2. Organic Search	(25.87%)	(30.93%)	(30.80%)	$251.40	1.58%
3. Direct	(12.50%)	(17.48%)	(14.01%)	$312.13	1.48%
4. Referral	(8.61%)	(10.64%)	(11.07%)	$240.47	1.70%
5. Social	(0.37%)	(0.21%)	(0.17%)	$299.98	0.61%

SEO is about revenue

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✓ SEO drives the most revenue (40%) for an online flower retailer, and has excellent conversion rate only after email

Default Channel Grouping	Sessions	Revenue	Transactions	Average Order Value	Ecommerce Conversion Rate
				$100.82 Avg for View: $100.82 (0.00%)	2.19% Avg for View: 2.19% (0.00%)
1. (Other)	(35.37%)	(16.92%)	(20.45%)	$83.44	1.26%
2. Organic Search	(32.15%)	(40.26%)	(47.58%)	$85.31	3.23%
3. Paid Search	(15.34%)	(15.48%)	(11.15%)	$139.97	1.59%
4. Direct	(10.57%)	(11.34%)	(8.92%)	$128.13	1.84%
5. Email	(3.84%)	(6.88%)	(7.43%)	$93.35	4.23%
6. Referral	(1.78%)	(7.72%)	(3.35%)	$232.72	4.11%
7. Social	(0.96%)	(1.39%)	(1.12%)	$125.88	2.54%

SEO done right - traffic

✓CBI helped a casual game platform increase organic traffic 25 times in 7 months, from 200,000 visits/month to over 5 million visits/month
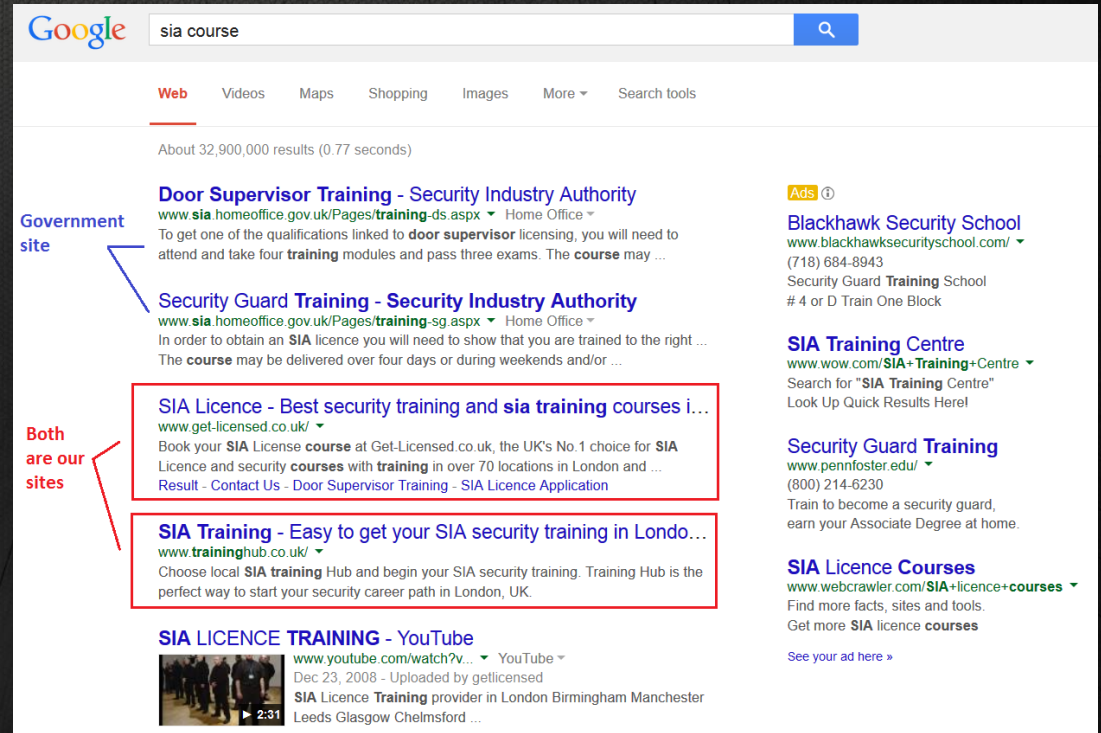
SEO done right - revenue

✓ A hotel booking platform doubled its organic search (91%) and increased its organic revenue 5 times (425%) in 9 months of doing SEO and Conversion Optimization
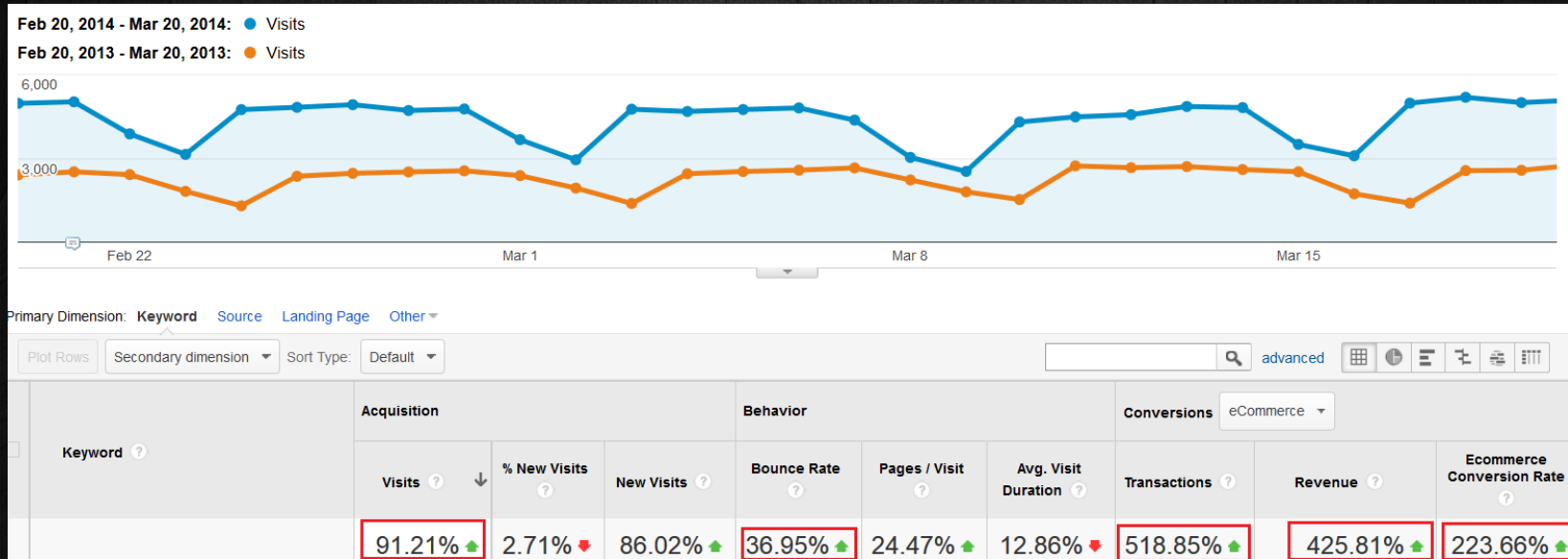
SEO done right - rankings

✓A major security training school with over 70+ locations in U.K. owns top 3 rankings for biggest keywords in the industry for 3 of its sites

I. SEO Keywords

✓How to select the right keywords for your website

➢Keyword ideas

➢Keyword research tools

➢Keyword search volume and keyword difficulty

➢Keyword grouping

➢Keyword allocation to web pages

✓School Choice International – high-end school consulting firm, K-12 & college

✓Target: Top American executives relocating / affluent people oversea coming to U.S. Focus on major cities like NYC, Boston, LA, Miami, DC, Seattle

-Big keywords: educational consultant/consulting + firm/consultancy/services + [location]

-School Search: [top/elite/best] + [private/public] + [boarding/day/special needs/catholic] + [elementary/middle/high] schools in + [location]

E.g. Top private schools in mid-town nyc

SEO Keywords

✓Start with keywords that your audience/customers are most likely to use to find your type of products and services (keywords that can convert into sales)

✓Use keyword research tools to elaborate more relevant keyword ideas

✓Choose keywords that people are searching for (has good search volume), and not too difficult (not too competitive). Long-tail & fat head keywords

✓Put keywords into relevant keyword groups, and organize main sections on your site to match those keyword groups

✓Go after a lot of keywords as long as they are relevant. Don't follow SEO claim "I'll optimize your site for 10-30 keywords". If your site has over 100 pages, find at least 300 relevant keywords.

SEO Keywords

✓Sources for keyword ideas

➢Keyword Research Tools: Google Keyword Planners, Uber Suggest

➢Competitor Research: SEM Rush Competitor research

➢Google/Bing related searches

➢Industry information sources

➢The sense about SEO & industry expertise

II. Page-level SEO
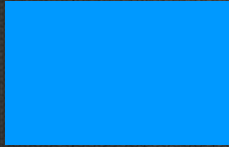
✓ SEO techniques to optimize page content for keywords

➢ Meta tags <title>, <description>

➢ Internal links

➢ Breadcrumb & rich snippets

➢ Heading tags <h1>, <h2>

➢ Text copy / Keyword density

➢ Images / Videos

Example

✓Heading <h1>

✓Internal links

✓Keyword insertion

✓Breadcrumb

✓Image

HTML code

✓Heading

<h1>Find the Best School</h1>
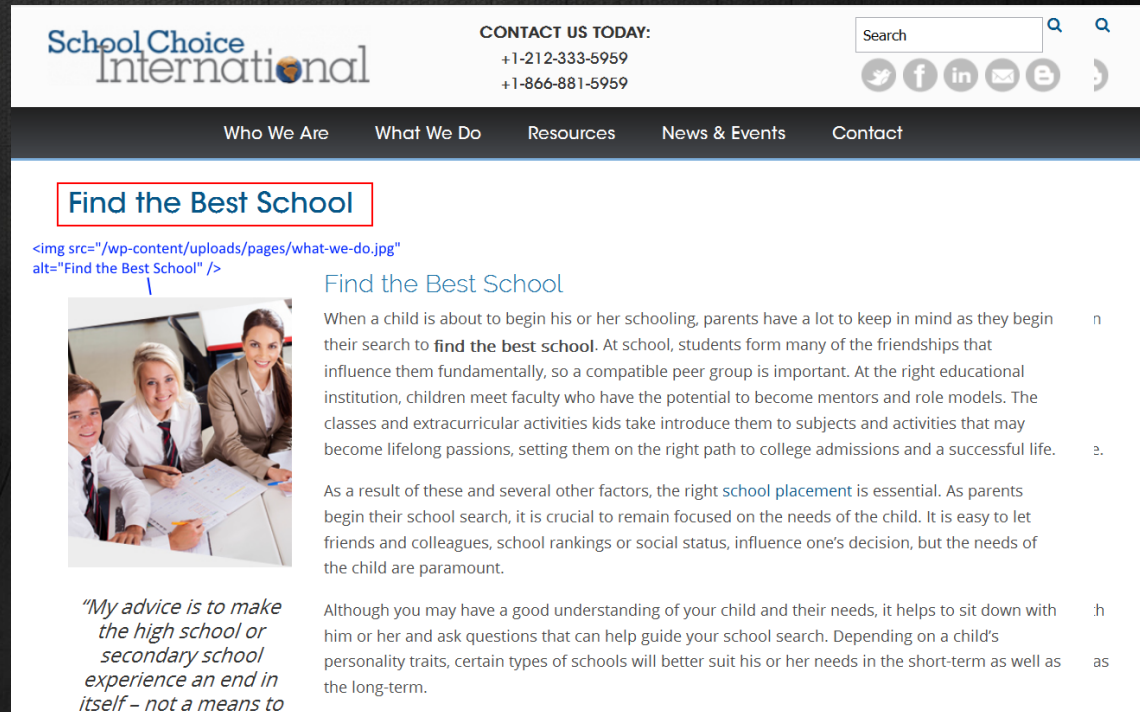
✓Image:

✓Internal link

private school

HTML code

✓SEO meta tags

<title>Find the Best School for Your Child | School Placement by School Choice Intl. | Education Consulting Services</title>

<meta name="description" itemprop="description" content="*The best school for your child is out there, the consultants at School Choice can help you find them*" />

<meta name="keywords" itemprop="keywords" content="*private schools,private high school, school search nyc, private school tuition*" />

Rich snippets

✓Rich snippet breadcrumb vs. basic breadcrumb

✓Rich snippet ratings & reviews

✓Good rich snippets make your site listing on search engine result page (SERP) looks more impressive and attracts more clicks

Page-level SEO

✓Each page should be optimized for no more than 3-5 *relevant* keywords

✓User only one heading <h1> tag per page

✓All on-page elements must be optimized consistently for selected keywords

✓How to do the optimization?

➢Via Back-end Editor (CMS) & SEO plugin, or done by a web developer

➢E.g. Wordpress platform & Yoast SEO plugin

III. Indexing Optimization

✓ SEO techniques to guide search engine bots to best "read" your website

➤ Robots

➤ 404 "page not found"

➤ Sitemap
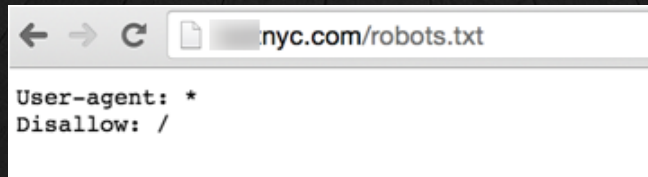
➤ Redirects

➤ Canonical

➤ Breadcrumb

Robots

✓Robots tag/file guide search engine bots to index or not index certain pages on your site.

✓Robots can cause panic. A client contacted us a few days ago *"We just launched our brand new website, but right now we don't even appear when someone searches for us which is horrible"*.

✓The reason was they blocked Google bots from indexing their site entirely

➢ Robot meta tag is set "no index": <meta name='robots' content='noindex,follow' />

➢ Robots.txt is also set "disallow" indexing all pages


```
← → C | 🗋 nyc.com/robots.txt

User-agent: *
Disallow: /
```

Sitemaps
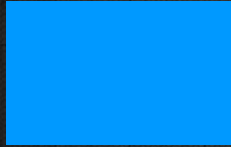
✓Sitemaps are special files that contain links to all pages on your website to help search engine bots index your site better

✓A site can have many sitemaps. Each site map should have maximum 50,000 links

#	Sitemap ▲	Type	Processed	Issues	Items	Submitted	Indexed
1	/api/solrapi?solr_action=articles_feed&type=rss&limit=999999	RSS	Oct 23, 2015	-	Web	789	513
2	/api/solrapi?solr_action=events_feed&type=rss&limit=999999	RSS	Oct 19, 2015	-	Web	383	143
3	/api/solrapi?solr_action=press_feed&type=rss&limit=999999	RSS	Oct 18, 2015	-	Web	12	1
4	/api/solrapi?solr_action=programs_feed&type=rss&limit=999999	RSS	Oct 22, 2015	-	Web	39	1
5	/sitemap.xml	Sitemap	Oct 13, 2015	-	Web	9	5

404 error page

✓404 "page not found" page displays when user access a non-exist link

✓Scan your site with Xenu or ScreamingFrog to find & fix all broken links

✓Soft 404 error: *http code* return code 200 instead of 404. Test with tools like web-sniffer.net.

✓Should have a developer to setup 404 properly
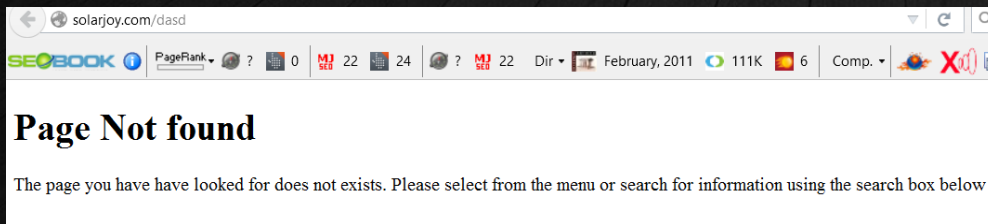
HTTP(S)-URL: http://solarjoy.com/dasd

HTTP version: ● HTTP/1.1 ○ HTTP/1.0 (with Host header)

☐ Raw HTML view ☑ Accept-Encoding: gzip • Request type

User agent: Web-Sniffer

HTTP Request Header

Connect to 104.130.43.198 on port 80 ... ok

GET /dasd HTTP/1.1[CRLF]
Host: solarjoy.com[CRLF]
Connection: close[CRLF]
User-Agent: Web-sniffer/1.1.0 (+http://web-sniffer.net/)
Accept-Encoding: gzip[CRLF]
Accept-Charset: ISO-8859-1,UTF-8;q=0.7,*;q=0.7[CRLF]
Cache-Control: no-cache[CRLF]
Accept-Language: de,en;q=0.7,en-us;q=0.3[CRLF]
Referer: http://web-sniffer.net/[CRLF]
[CRLF]

HTTP Response Header

Name
Status: HTTP/1.1 404 Not Found

solarjoy.com/dasd

SEOBOOK PageRank ? 0 MJ 22 22 24 ? MJ 22 Dir February, 2011 111K 6 Comp.

Page Not found

The page you have have looked for does not exists. Please select from the menu or search for information using the search box below

Redirects

✓ Redirect automatically transfers users from an old link to a new link

✓ Redirect correctly helps transfer SEO value from the old link to the new link

✓ Redirect is extremely important when doing website upgrade

✓ E.g. redirect non-www to www:

like *http://jbeautybrands.com* → *http://www.jbeautybrands.com*

✓ Redirect is set in .htaccess file. Usually need a developer/webmaster
RewriteCond %{HTTP_HOST} ^jbeautybrands\.com$ [NC]
RewriteRule ^(.*)$ http://www.jbeautybrands.com/$1 [R=301,L]

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✓Canonical tag is used to tell search engines if your site has 2 or more pages with identical content, so search engines only ranks one of those.

✓Canonical tag help avoid one of the most popular SEO errors: duplicated content.

✓Example: <link rel="canonical" href="http://www.flowerexplosion.com/by-flower/roses.html" />

✓Canonical tag is important for paging (only index page 1 and ignore page 2,3,..n) or product pages that have various sizes or colors or else (only index the main product page without specific size or colors)

IV. Deeper technical SEO

- ✓ SEO techniques to guide search engine bots to best "read" your website
  - ➤ Speed optimization
  - ➤ Mobile friendly
  - ➤ Https as a ranking factor
  - ➤ IP blacklist check
  - ➤ And more

Page speed

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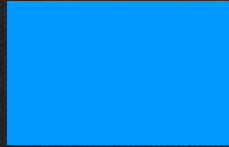
✓Google uses Pagespeed score to measure and reward fast websites.

✓Pagespeed score should be 90/100 or higher.

✓Example: Optimizing mobile speed, need solid coding skills to implement.
  - Add specify image dimension
  - Compress images
  - Compress HTML file for homepage, CSS and JavaScript file
  -Reduce HTTP requests
  - Avoid using @import in CSS file
  -Leverage browser caching
  - Inline small JavaScript file, and more

Before

http://m.tghairacademy.edu/

Mobile   Desktop

64 / 100 Speed

After

http://m.tghairacademy.edu/

Mobile   Desktop

90 / 100 Speed

V. LINKS & OFF-PAGE SEO

✓ SEO techniques to build strong external link portfolio

  ➢ Back links

  ➢ Social media: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Pinterest, etc

  ➢ Guest blogging done right

  ➢ Digital PR

  ➢ And more

Back links

✓SEO techniques to build strong external link portfolio

➢Try to get "do follow" links. "no follow" links have less SEO value

➢Diversify your link anchor texts, do not abuse exact match keywords as link anchor text too much

➢.gov, .edu links are valuable, get them if you can, just don't buy them

➢You should get links from sites that are relevant to your websites only, and has domain authority 30/100 or higher

➢Blog comments, forum seeding no longer work

Link Analysis Tools
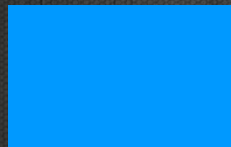
✓Favorite Link Analysis Tools: Moz Open Site Exlorer

✓Google Search Console/Webmaster Tools

Link building

➢Integrate your link building with digital PR & social media efforts: PRNewswire, PRWeb, etc

➢Build links with social media, Youtube, blog, etc

➢Guest blogging could be good source for link building *if done right*

http://www.expatexchange.com/article/3328/Abrupt-Repatriation---Minimizing-Schooling-Challenges-

➢Link building frequency: You should build links continuously over time, do not build a huge amount of links in short time

Link building
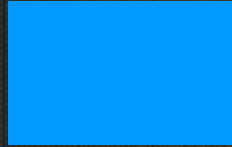
➢Make your site so awesome that people want to link and share to it

➢Do not apply black hat link techniques, like link tiers, private blog networks (PBN), mass link building with black-hat tools, etc. It wastes time, money, not sustainable, and may negatively affect your brand

Beware with black-hat links!

✓ A leading online marketplace lost 60% of its search impressions due to Google penalty for unnatural links, and ask us for support

➢ It took us 2 months of hard work to clean/disavow bad links while preserve good links

➢ Report to Google to remove the penalty when the links are clean

KEY POINT: CONVERSION

You must setup goal/conversion tracking to measure the business return of your digital marketing effort.

Ecommerce Tracking

✓Ecommerce sales report for an online retailer
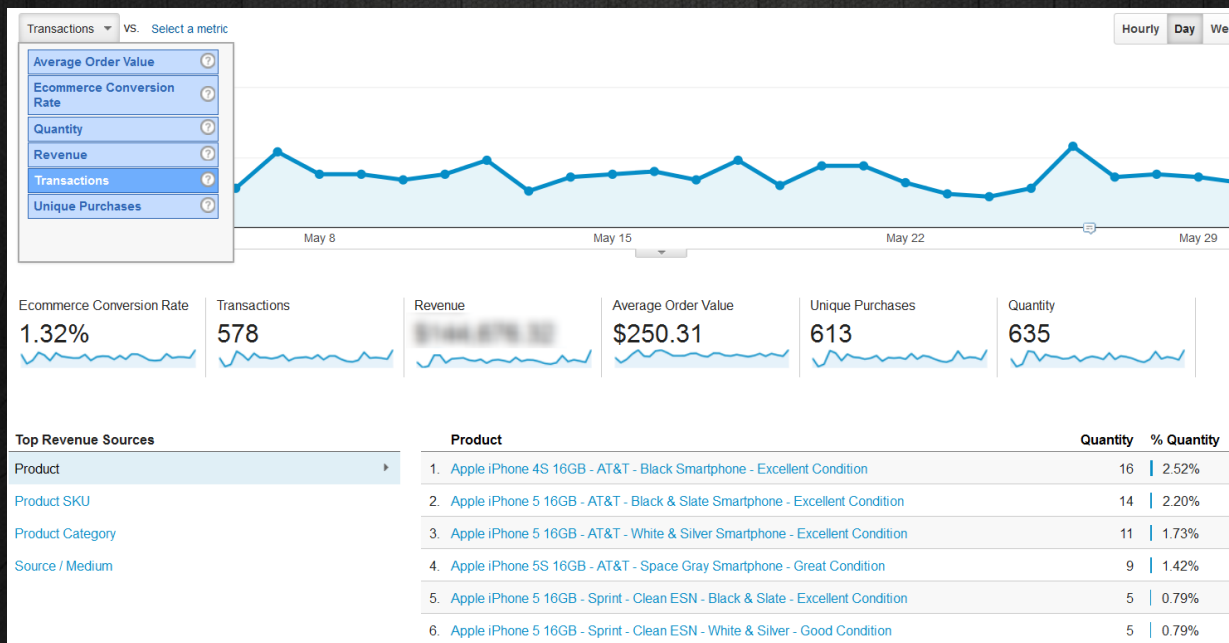
Landing Page Optimization

✓ How to get business results from organic search

➢ Make sure your headline matches with the search terms you selected

➢ Write key selling points in the copy

➢ Add proper Call-to-actions

➢ Each type of page needs different approach: product/service detail page, category page, homepage

➢ Test, test, and test every page element

Landing Page Optimization

✓Examples:

- Solar lead-gen landing page https://solarjoy.com/s1/

-Beauty school landing page: http://lp.tghairacademy.edu/lp2/

SEO APPROACH

A website should only gain top ranking for a search term if it deserves to have that top ranking.
Continuously improve your site.

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SEO Questions

✓*How long before I see SEO results?*

SEO is a long-term process that may take from 6-12 months to see measurable results, although in many cases we can see results in 3-4 months after launch.

✓*What should I do as a client to boost SEO performance?*

SEO clients who devote time to build great content, take care of the online users, and constantly improve their site will achieve SEO results faster.

✓*What are the biggest SEO mistakes?*

In our view, the biggest SEO mistake is to believe simplistic promises. Second is to abuse black-hat SEO. Third is not spending time to take care of the site. There is no shortcut in SEO. It is all about hard work of both SEO team AND Client team.

THANK YOU!

If you have any questions, please let me know at
Mike Le | mikele@cbidigital.com

401 Park Ave South, 10th Fl, NY, NY 10016
Tel: +1 646-688-4899 Fax: +1 646-216-9789
www.cbidigital.com

58 Nguyen Binh Khiem, District 1, HCM City, Vietnam
Tel: +848 39103190 Fax: +848 39103160
www.chidoanh.com