

How to Make the Best SEO Decisions for Your Site

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This paper is designed to educate you on handling Search Engine Optimization (SEO) in-house versus outsourcing. Making the wrong decision for your site could result in lost time, potentially harmful errors on your site and wasted money. Information on both options, as well as a quiz to help you determine what is best for your site and your goals can be found in this white paper.

The Right Decision Can Result in a Flood of New Traffic... The Wrong Decision Can Result in Wasted Time, No New Traffic and Worst of All: Being Banned From the Engines

It's unfortunate, but it's true. It is something that every business faces – it is in fact **the** key, the most important decision in your business.

How do you drive traffic to your site? Once you've determined how – do you handle it yourself and spend time you may not have, as well as risk errors based on lack of experience? Or do you shell out cash to a SEO Firm that may or may not be able to take your site to the top of the engines and flood you with leads?

Whether you are established online with Pay-Per-Click (PPC) and other marketing campaigns or you are a brand new site with no marketing in place, you can't afford to ignore the potential traffic and revenue resulting from a successful search engine optimization campaign.

SEO In-house or Outsourced? The Answer Lies in the Details.

Every industry is different; every business within an industry is different. There is not one cookie-cutter or standard solution that you can use to guide you in making this decision.

The only way the **right** decision can be made for your business, and your site is by looking at the details and evaluating the facts. With information and some understanding of the details, you can feel confident in your ability to decide what is best for your site.

**Brand New “SEO -- In or Out” Quiz.
We Remove the Mystery From the Decision Making Process and
Guide You to a Logical Decision.**

There are many factors to consider, including your budget, your time, your business model, your level of SEO knowledge, your technical skills, your current status in the engines and more.

Don't make the costly mistake of “saving a little money” and handling your SEO yourself, if you are not properly equipped.

This quiz is based on information gathered from SEO consultants and experts throughout the industry. All criteria referred to in the questionnaire is deemed relevant and necessary to a successful SEO campaign.

Answer honestly to determine the best option for your business goals.

Once you have completed the quiz, refer to the section that will help you interpret the results. Once you have determined whether you should handle SEO in-house or outsource, then read the rest of this white paper for final details you need to consider

Check the box that applies to you.

Question	Yes	No
<p>1. Can you work within simple HTML? At a bare minimum, you need to be able to add Meta tags to an HTML document. Ideally, you can also bold text, set up links, change formatting, rename images, move javascript into a .js file etc.</p>		
<p>2. Do you have enough time to make your site search engine friendly? Plan on a minimum of 3 hours for site's that are in great shape, and up to 25 hours (or more) for sites that may need a complete overhaul. In our experience, 6 – 10 hours seems to be the norm for time spent on updating SEO friendliness issues.</p>		
<p>3. Will you have this time for SEO friendliness work within the next week? Typically if people don't take action in the immediate future (within the next 5 business days), the project ends up being delayed indefinitely. You need a clear scheduled start date for your SEO work.</p>		
<p>4. Can your business afford to “lend” this time to SEO without experiencing some other negative impact? If the time is not truly extra time you have, then you would be “borrowing” the time from another area of your business.</p>		
<p>5. If you SEO project tends to be bigger than you imagined, will you have the time and attention to continue dedicating to it until completion?</p>		
<p>6. Are you an experienced and competent copywriter?</p>		
<p>7. Do you feel you can quickly master writing compelling copy that is also keyword rich?</p>		
<p>8. Is the content already on your site something you feel comfortable altering? Often people that have paid for high-end marketing copy on their websites do not want to make any SEO alterations themselves, for fear of altering the effectiveness of their current copy – and therefore affecting their conversion rates.</p>		
<p>9. Do you have any prior SEO experience?</p>		
<p>10. Do you have the tools or know where to purchase the tools that will help you in keyword selection, site analysis, reporting and current industry information?</p>		
<p>11. Would you rather spend your time working ON your business(i.e., growing it) than IN your business (i.e., taking care of the nitty gritty details rather than the big picture)?</p>		

Results:

If you said **No** to any question that has a shaded box, then at this time you are not qualified to handle your own SEO in-house.

Let's review those 3 questions.

Question 1: **Can you work within simple HTML?**

On-page optimization requires that you work within the HTML on your website. If you are not able to work with an HTML document and feel confident that you will not cause any errors or malfunctions, then you simply can not handle your own SEO at this time. You would need to learn HTML before you could consider handling SEO. Please note, if your site is more complex than simple HTML, you would need to be comfortable working within the code used on your site.

Question 2 and Question 4: **Do you have enough time to make your site search engine friendly? Can your business afford to “lend” this time to SEO, and therefore experience no significant negative impact? If the time is not truly extra time you have, then you would be “borrowing” the time from another area of your business.**

Both of these questions deal with the time factor. To get things started, you simply must have the time to address any search engine friendliness issues. You will also later need to write content, alter content and handle various optimization techniques, but to get started – before you can do anything else – you need to make the time to get the foundation ready for SEO. If you don't have time to do this, your project simply can not get off the ground.

The second component is, do you truly have the time, or are you just taking it from somewhere else. If you are taking it from somewhere else, that may be fine – you just need to be sure that you aren't harming your business in other ways. Getting rankings, and ultimately traffic to your site will not benefit you if your business falls apart while you work on the optimization.

The remainder of the questions are details for you to consider. Basically, the more **No's** there are, the more likely it is that you should **NOT** handle your SEO in-house.

If you aren't sure you have the time, interest, knowledge and skill to handle your SEO – you aren't really benefiting from handling your SEO yourself. Yes, you may have kept money in your pocket and not had to pay a pro --- but how does that help you if your business is not set up to grow and expand?

If you answered mostly **Yes**, and did not answer No to **any** question in a shaded box, then you are well suited to handle your own SEO.

Either way, there are still a few more details that you must consider to be sure that you don't harm your site, and your business.

If your results determined you can handle your own SEO, here are the final details you need you consider:

1. What is your time worth per hour? Which option is more cost effective for you - hiring someone or spending your own time?
2. Can you recognize when your choice is not working for you and are you willing to try the other option at that time?
3. You **must** commit to educating yourself and learning all that you need to know to truly run a successful SEO campaign. Inadvertently spamming, or using a questionable technique can result in a temporary loss of results or a permanent ban from the engines. Be 100% sure you aren't endangering your business.

If you results determined you should outsource your SEO, here are the final details you should consider:

1. Make sure you read "SEO Basics: How to Get Top 20 Search Engine Rankings" – it will guide you in selecting a legitimate SEO Firm.
2. Plan on spending anywhere from \$500 - \$1000.00 per month to run an aggressive SEO campaign.

One final option: If you don't want to invest long term in an SEO Firm, but realize you can't handle your own SEO right now – consider SEO Training and Consulting to get the knowledge you need. Consider paying to have the original optimization done, and then handling maintenance yourself.

No one but you can decide - we just wanted to arm you with some things to consider. It is all in the details, and you should consider them carefully before making a decision.

For questions about EcomBuffet and how our big-picture SEO services can improve your rankings, contact Jennifer Horowitz at 562-592-5347 or jennifer@ecombuffet.com.