

# Strategies to Optimize Your Dermatology Website for Bing Search

Despite Google's dominance in the business of online searching, Microsoft's Bing is an important search engine.

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A new deal between Yahoo! and Mozilla Firefox will make Yahoo! the default search engine for the popular web browser. This may not seem like significant news from a search engine optimization (SEO) perspective, but it may have particular relevance for dermatology practices.

It's important to note that Yahoo! is powered by the Microsoft-owned Bing. While Google controls nearly two-thirds of the search engine market share, Bing's share has been growing and has already reached about 20 percent, making it the second most popular search engine. Combined with Yahoo!, it represents almost 30 percent of the U.S. online search market. But a deeper look at Bing from a business and marketing perspective may reveal certain advantages for the search engine with regard to specific demographics.

According to various studies, the Yahoo! / Bing Network is typically favored by college graduates and graduate school students, apart from those in the age group of 35 and above. The number of women preferring this network is slightly higher than men. Households with children and households with income higher than \$75,000 per annum are more likely to choose Yahoo Bing search. These demographics will generally match with the average profile of a potential dermatology patient.

Here are a few simple strategies to optimize your dermatology website for Bing search.

## **CHOOSE OLDER AND ESTABLISHED DOMAIN NAMES**

According to many experts, Google tends to prefer websites that are relatively newer and popular in its search

results. Bing, on the other hand, appears to be placing emphasis on the age of a domain. Therefore, an older dermatology domain may have a better chance to rank higher in Bing search. A new entrant may consider purchasing an existing domain to optimize Bing search.

Secondly, Bing appears to be favoring domain names that are widely considered to be more official in nature. These may include .gov, .edu and .org. Analysts say that Bing will usually provide more factually relevant information in its search results as compared to Google, which focuses more on socially relevant websites. Therefore, if your dermatology website is strong on facts, figures, and content, it likely has a better chance to rank high in Bing search results.

## **GET YOUR SITE INDEXED ON BING**

Bing officially says that the primary step for a website to develop traffic is to get indexed. All you need to do is submit your website URL to Bing, and wait for the site to be indexed. You can sign-up and access Bing Webmaster Tools, and after logging in, you can provide the details of your site. You can include the URL for your sitemap, which will make it easier for Bing search engine crawlers to review and index your website.

If you discover that your practice website has been indexed on Bing, check whether Bing's search engine crawlers are facing some obstruction to crawl your site. Verify the setup of your robots.txt file, and ensure it is correct. In some cases, the URLs may be blocked or the site may have been removed from the Bing index as a penalty. We recommend taking corrective steps with assistance from an SEO professional to get the site indexed on Bing.

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**ENSURE EFFECTIVE TECHNICAL CONFIGURATION**

While ranking a website, Bing particularly focuses on the following technical configurations:

- Download speed efficiency
- Robots.txt file, which controls where the search bots of Bing may or may not go when crawling through your website
- Your sitemap, specifically whether it covers all the relevant URLs, while excluding any unnecessary ones
- Site technology, specifically whether it is hampered by rich media, which may prevent search bots of Bing from crawling your website
- Use of a 301 permanent redirect while moving content between multiple sites, which is something that Bing search engine prefers.

**PAY ATTENTION TO SEO TAGS**

According to search engine experts, Bing appears to be placing much more emphasis on SEO tags than Google. Therefore, to achieve Bing search engine optimization, it is important to create appropriate title and description tags for each web page that summarize the content of the page succinctly. Make sure these tags are optimized for relevant keywords.

Bing actually makes use of the page times in its search engine results pages (SERPS). To achieve its search goals, Bing will optimize display URLs, optimize snippets or descriptions, and optimize title tags for relevance.

**CHOOSE SIMPLE AND DIRECT KEYWORDS**

Some SEO studies have indicated that to achieve higher Bing traffic, verbatim keyword matching becomes more critical. In other words, unlike Google, Bing search may not work well with indirect or broadly matching keywords or key phrases. Too many different keywords for the same web page may not work well with Bing.

Clearly written and relevant keywords should be used for title tags and meta-descriptions. Long-tail key phrases with targeted keywords should also be utilized. Google Keyword Planner and other tools can be employed to research for currently popular keywords.

**FOCUS ON BUILDING LINK PROFILE**

Inbound links are considered to be more important for Bing rankings than Google. Searchmetrics had carried out detailed studies, which show that about back links have at least 10 percent greater influence on search rankings in Bing as compared to Google.

According to analysts who performed these studies, the number and quality of inbound links appears to be the single most important metric for Bing. Therefore, efforts should be made to generate organic back links from legitimate, relevant and reputed websites.

While the Yahoo! / Bing Network may not command large search numbers like Google, but it still makes up nearly one-third of the search engine market that is chosen by specific demographics. Keep Bing search optimization as a part of your overall SEO strategy for your dermatology website for maximum traffic generation. ■

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