Digital Cowboys Ep #7 | On-Page SEO Master Class Transcript

Cameron Francis: If you want your page to rank, you want to prevent pogo-sticking, you want to increase your click-through rate, make sure the page looks good. Invest in the design. Invest in the content. Invest time in the layout. Make sure that there's clear call to actions. Make sure that there's clear goals on the actual page and you will win because that's the game.

Sam Roshan: The way that you present the content on the page is going to have an impact of how the user is going to digest that information. That is going to help to ensure whether they're going to stay on for longer or the information that is presented at the top or above the fold, below the fold and how it's presented is going to impact the user and how they read the information. This is where you invest in the design.

Voiceover: Digital Cowboys episode seven. We discuss everything digital marketing and growth hacking for small businesses, startups and entrepreneurs. If you want that competitive edge, well then saddle up because Cameron Francis and Sam Roshan are about to drop some value bombs.

Cameron Francis: Hey, everybody. This is Cameron Francis.

Sam Roshan: You're with Sam Roshan.

Cameron Francis: This is the Digital Cowboys. How you doing, Sam?

Sam Roshan: Very good. Very good.

Cameron Francis: Drinking your tea I see.

Sam Roshan: I'm loving it, this little cute cup that you gave me for our housewarming.

Cameron Francis: You're welcome.

Sam Roshan: Thank you for that.

Cameron Francis: You cleaned up from us? You cleaned up from ...

Sam Roshan: I didn't see you all day today.

Cameron Francis: Yeah. I was just at a client making that money doing the grind. It was really good. What about yourself?

Sam Roshan: The old hustle. I was doing the same thing. Outside, but not hustling or making money.

Cameron Francis: Did you win today?

Sam Roshan: I did.

Cameron Francis: Very good. What do you want to talk about?

Sam Roshan: I thought it would be really for us to talk about on-page strategy.

Cameron Francis: Very important. It's probably the most important ranking factor other than links. I look at websites all the time and I analyze them. So many people do it wrong. Like

they have not enough content. They've got wrong title tags. They just don't have it right. Not enough had been done from an agency or not, but what I thought we could do is just give a bit of a checklist on how we go about things, best practices and then give a formula to people to either check on their own to make sure they've it right or to actually just go and do it again.

Sam Roshan: Fantastic. I think it's a good step-by-step. I guess we will try and provide a very clear concise and I guess clear cut instructions on the process of on-page and what's good, what's not and how you should basically conduct it.

Cameron Francis: Right on. Where would you start?

Sam Roshan: Keyword research. At the end of the day what you want to do is you want to be able to rank for groupings of your particular services and offerings that you ... Services and products that you offer.

Cameron Francis: Tell me about what keyword groupings mean.

Sam Roshan: Keyword research. Where would I start off? If you don't have tools, you want to basically ... Things like SEMrush or Keyword Planner tool that you can basically go and find. Put keywords in various tools and it actually gives you the search volume and so on, but one of the easiest ways to do this, there's a specific plugin that you can put on your browser which is ...

Cameron Francis: Keywords Everywhere.

Sam Roshan: Keywords Everywhere. As soon as you install that, what you can do is it actually ... When you go and surf and you search for a keyword, it actually tells you the search volume and so on for that particular keyword. What I would do is probably start off there. Start putting the service offerings or the products keywords and just look at the search volume. What you can also do is scroll down to the bottom and the other recommended keywords that have been also highly searched, that is recommended by Google, will also be there. If you have [00:03:30] this plugin which is Keywords Everywhere turned on, you'll be able to see the search volumes next to them. That way you can collect the data pretty quickly.

Cameron Francis: We had an episode out, I think it was episode four or one of them, check back on SoundCloud or on iTunes, and we did an episode on how to use the Google services to your advantaged and we covered a lot on keyword research. I'd suggest to go there. We won't have to go over that now, but once you've got your keywords,] then you go and you map them to the right pages. Make sure that you've got a page for every keyword group. For example if I'm a plumber, a keyword group would be emergency plumber. It would be blocked drains. It would be air conditioning. The whole keyword group. Once you've done the keyword research, you've mapped them and you got your sitemap, then the first thing I'd look at is actually creating that metadata, so the title tags.

We'll go through a few title tag best practices and how you do it. Title Tags, that's 65 character max. What I would do is I would put the keyword group right at the very beginning. If it is blocked drains, I just put blocked drains and/or blocked drains Melbourne right at the beginning. You can either put a semicolon, comma, whatever it is. I mean it's preferential. It doesn't have any real impact, but I like to

make the title tag flow like a sentence. I'd also use the core keyword group at the front and then variations of that core keyword group throughout. Then at the very end use the business name. For example for blocked drains, it would be ... Actually I'll do something. I'll just say dentist.

It would be dentist Melbourne semicolon, I don't know, best dental practice in Melbourne and then the business name. That's the title tag. What you're looking to achieve there is variations of the area. You've got the core keyword group of dentists and then you also got best, people writing best dentist, best local dentist, or you've got dental practice in there as well. It's not just keyword stuff. The actual sentence make sense. That's really important. It's a really important factor to look at when you're writing your title tags. Also, put it right ...

Like the core keyword group at the front, because Google gives more weight to keywords at the beginning of the title tag, cover off variations and then leave the branding into the end. Then you've got a pretty good formula for a title tag.

Sam Roshan: Very good. Titles tags are the first thing that search bots or Google actually reads to try and identify what the page is about. It is really important. The next thing that you want to be looking at is the meta description. Now meta description doesn't have a direct impact on SEO. However ...

Cameron Francis: Ranking.

Sam Roshan: Yes. It doesn't have a direct ranking factor. However, when someone types in dentists or plumbers in Melbourne and if your site is indexed, the couple of lines below that is a quick description of what that page is about. The importance of it is is that when someone is looking at a particular piece of information or whatever it is that they're looking for, that meta description allows them to identify what that page is about. Therefore, if it's most relevant to them, you're going to get that visit up.

Cameron Francis: It sells the business into getting the person to click.

Sam Roshan: If you are getting more clicks, then Google will ... Other search engines will also identify that this is the most relevant information. Indirectly it is going to increase your organic visibility.

Cameron Francis: Basically your organic click-through rate impacts your SEOs. If you're not getting people clicking through when they see your organic listing, that decreases your click-through rate. Google sees this as a factor and you will eventually ... Even if you're ranked top five, if you're not getting a strong click-through rate, then that decreases.

Sam Roshan: Just because that's not relevant information because you're not getting those clicks. How you want to create the meta description? You just got to be quite creative about it. Have a call to action and ensure that it is enticing. I mean put yourself in your audience's position and see what it is that they would want to see and that would be your meta description.

Cameron Francis: I've actually got a formula that I use with some of our guys on creating meta description.

Sam Roshan: Tell me about your formula, Cam.

Cameron Francis: I mean it's very simple. It's question, value-add, call to action. It's QVC. I don't mean the infomercials. What it is, Q is question. Each page answers a question. Ask the question at the beginning, right? If you're targeting blocked drains and you want people to go to that page, what is it they have? Blocked drain. Right at the very beginning I've put in the Q which is the question, have you got blocked drains? Then the next part of that is value-add, talking a little about the business and how they can solve that problem. ABC Plumbing, a specialist in blocked drains all over Melbourne. Value-add. Now that can look different ways, different shapes, but the last one is the call to action. It's the C.

Things like find out more, learn how, unblock your drains today, yeah, and using that simple formula. There's going to be times where you can't use it directly, but if you use this as the general outline, you'll get the best possible chance to get that click-through to your website.

Sam Roshan: Great. Tell me a little bit about URLs, Cameron.

Cameron Francis: The next one I wanted to talk about was the URLs. Very, very simple. The URLs really should be the keyword group that you're targeting to the page. Keep URLs as small as possible. The cleaner, the nicer, the better. Never put any special characters like commas, apostrophes, numbers and things like that. In the case of the blocked drains, it would literally be blocked-drains. That's it. For more complex or for pages further down or like eComm pages or if you had blocked drains inner services, I would just keep it clean, so it'd be /services or /products or /category name, /keyword. The last one we worked on was for a tea brand. It would be /green-teas, /product name.

Just nice and really easy to follow. If they're messy, if they've got special characters, leave them out. Keep them as short as possible and you've got the recipe for a successful URL.

Sam Roshan: Fantastic. The next thing that is really important as part of the on-page is the content. This is where, if done correctly, you'll be able to rank that particular page full of variations and a group of that service or product that you're targeting. For example if we're looking at dentists, you've got a title tag which is meant to be all encompassing. The contents you'd want to be able to write it for an audience, not just for it to be optimized and stuff keywords in there, but it needs to be natural, it needs to flow and just needs to be real. Within that, naturally you're going to have variations of for example dentist.

For example if you're targeting crowns and bridges, then you'd be able to within the content you want it to be anywhere between 250 to 300 words and in every paragraph have one or two times the actual targeted keyword within each paragraph. If you can get variations of it, then it helps with your ranking factor. It helps rank variations of that particular keyword group.

Cameron Francis: I think a good structure to go by is make sure as you were saying that the content make sense, that it's readable. The keyword group is in the headline which it really should be. Blocked drains should be in the headline because the page is

about blocked drains. Blocked drains specialist servicing Melbourne, right? That's the headline. I don't like to put a keyword limit on there, like 350, personally. Everyone's different. I don't like to put a limit. It just needs to make sense, right? When you start stuffing it full of bullshit, then it starts ... Like the user or the reader's not going to read it. Adding back to click-through rate being a ranking factor, if people are pogo-sticking off your page, so I click it because you got awesome metadata.

I land on the page. You've got crap content. I bounce back. It doesn't matter about your click-through rate. People are pogo-sticking off your site. That is a ranking factor and you will drop down. How you prevent that is as you were saying before is just making good content, making it readable. Yes. Actually I was going to talk about LSI which is latent semantic indexing. When you are writing your keywords, when you are writing it naturally, when you're making it emotive, you're enticing someone to do that very next thing whether it's to convert or whether it's to buy or whether it's to download, make sure that you've got variations of the keyword that mean the same thing, but are actually different.

Google's actually picking up the different variations of keyword based on intent. It's really important that you are using those other variations not just based on how many different ways can you say blocked drains, but things that mean the same but are said completely different. I would add LSI in there. The other thing I'd add on to the page is adding multimedia. Images, video, infographics or things like reviews, ratings. These can all be picked up with Author Markup. It actually provides a better user experience, but tell us a little bit about images and what you would actually do there.

Sam Roshan: Well firstly, on the actual site you want to ensure that when you're uploading these images they're about 200 kilobits. You want it to be poor quality. It needs to be well optimized.

Cameron Francis: Why is that?

Sam Roshan: Well, the larger the file, then it slows down the speed of the website. You'd want to make sure that although you keep the quality of the images on the sites. When you're uploading them, you want to make sure that they're optimized as well so it does not decrease the speed load of the site. Just again this really comes down to tending to the audience. What kind of images is going to have a positive impact for the audience to either take the next step, better understand what the content is about. There needs to be a correlation between the content and the images. Really just everything that you look at it and just whatever make sense and the way it's meant to be presented is quite natural.

Cameron Francis: I haven't got any data or any evidence, but if you upload a file] and the filename is the keyword group, I think it doesn't hurt to upload the file instead of having the file name as just random letters or numbers.

Sam Roshan: Definitely. All tag optimization to ensure that even the images, not besides just the file, but also the name of the images to be optimized too because they also get flagged. They also get indexed. If someone's looking for a particular product

and if we're looking at images, well if you've got it optimized, the images are going to get indexed.

Cameron Francis: Correct. Adding on to that, H1, H2 tags. Another thing I don't really have a lot of data on, but if all of the top ranking sites seem to have somewhat of H1, H2 tags, if they all deleted their H1, H2, would that have an impact? Do you know what I mean? I don't think so. I think there's too many more important variables. However, you do want to give yourself the best possible chance. If that's going to be the difference between one and zero, then you might as well do it. H1 tags are really, really simple. All I would do with H1 is I would add the heading of the page as the H1 tag. That's it. That's the game.

Sam Roshan: Very good. You know what? You're right. I mean it probably is not the best on-page strategy, but these are all the one percenters. When crawlers are looking at the site, they read the title to be able to understand what that page is going to be about. If the headings again reflecting the title and its content in variations reflecting the heading that reflects the title, of course it's going to help with your organic visibility. How much? Well, that is the variable that you really need to test. Highly recommend that you ensure that there is a H1 and a H2 tag if possible. The next one is the page speed. All search engine's end goal is to provide not only the best, the most relevant search results to the end user, but they want to ensure that the users are having the best experience.

Therefore, people are going to use their search engines more. Therefore, all these algorithms are in place. You got to make sure that the website not only just your main domain, you got to ensure that you review every single page and the speed of every single page is well optimized.

Cameron Francis: This is what people don't do. They check the speed of the entire site, but they don't check the speed of the individual pages. You need each page to be fast. You could have an 80 plus speed for the entire website, but that doesn't mean you got an 80 plus speed for the actual inner pages.

Sam Roshan: What would you use to be able to find the speed?

Cameron Francis: Great question. I would use GTmetrix. I'd still use the Google PageSpeed Insights, but the GTmetrix gives you enough data for the developer to execute on fixing them. Would you use anything else?

Sam Roshan: No. I think they're the two that I would use really.

Cameron Francis: Really it's just GTmetrix, but the Google PageSpeed. It says Google and people like that a lot better when they look at the actual design.

Sam Roshan: I agree. With Google PageSpeed Insights, when you are loading it, it gives you some indication, but no longer does it consider ... Google's moved away I believe from the way that it's been created and how it presents the data. If you fix them, then possibly are not the actual ranking factors, but at least it's giving you indication of what needs to be fixed. Just address those individually and make sure you go through page by page.

Cameron Francis: The last thing I wanted to cover off was how to slash bounce rate. A couple of pro tips on what a web master can do on their website to decrease it. One thing I

would do would be to add social media sharing buttons on the actual page. Better use Experience. Looks better. It gets the user engaged a little bit more.

Sam Roshan: You can also look at Search Console. I mean that should be your bible really for everything.

Cameron Francis: I love it.

Sam Roshan: You go through Search Console, just look at the pages and see I guess if there's any messages and notifications, but also look at the actual page and the bounce rate to see what areas you can address. I guess that's how I would use Search Console is for the bounce rate.

Cameron Francis: Overall, if you want your page to rank, you want to prevent pogo-sticking, you want to increase your click-through rate, make sure the page looks good. Invest in the design. Invest in the content. Invest time in the layout. Make sure that there's clear to call to actions. Make sure there's clear goals on the action page and you will win because that's the game.

Sam Roshan: Something to just add to what you've just mentioned to provide some context around the design, the way that you present the content on the page is going to have an impact of how the user is going to digest that information. That is going to help to ensure whether they're going to stay on for longer or the information that is presented at the top or above the fold, below the fold and how it's presented is going to impact the user and how they read the information. This is where you invest in the design.

Cameron Francis: That's it for today. Thank you very much everyone for listening. Now we would really, really appreciate it if you guys could write a review on the podcast. We're getting some really good feedback and we want to push this out a lot more. The reviews that you give we take it all in. We absolutely love it. We're loving the conversations that are arriving.

Sam Roshan: Share it with your friends. Share it with your friends, colleagues if you think that it's valuable. If you got any particular questions, I believe that we ... Is our social media and stuff like that on the podcast?

Cameron Francis: It's all up and running. It's all being shared. Yeah, things are going to really good. Really, really happy with the feedback that everyone's giving. I think you did really well, Sam. I know you came in feeling a little bit down and thinking that and you want to ...

Sam Roshan: I wasn't. I feel like you make up stories and I like that. I like that about you. That's how we became friends. Over and out, guys.

Voiceover: Thanks for listening to the Digital] Cowboys with Cameron Francis and Sam Roshan. Now if you enjoyed today's episode, head on over to iTunes and give us a five star rating and please write a review. Also, head on over to DigitalCowboys.com.au where we post the latest episodes and content pieces for all of our listeners. Saddle up and join us next time for another edition of the Digital Cowboys.