

UNDERSTANDING SEO



Canadian
Home Builders'
Association



Welcome to the CHBA Marketing How-To Series, designed to help builders and renovators boost their online presence. In this guide, we'll break down **SEO (Search Engine Optimization)** in simple terms and show you how it can help your business attract more customers—without paying for ads.

What is SEO?

SEO is the practice of improving your website so that it shows up higher in search results on Google and other search engines. The goal is to get more people to visit your site without paying for ads.

Why does SEO matter?

When people search online (e.g., “best kitchen renovation ideas”), they usually click on one of the first few results. If your website appears there, you’re more likely to get visitors, leads, or sales.

How SEO Helps You:

Think of SEO like putting up a big, bright sign for your business on the busiest street in town, except the street is Google.

► **More People See You:** If your website shows up near the top of search results, more people will find you.

► **More Clicks = More Customers:** People usually click the first few results. If you’re there, you get more visitors, which can turn into leads and sales.

► **Builds Trust:** Websites that rank high look more trustworthy. People think, “If Google likes you, you must be good.”

► **Free Traffic:** Unlike ads, SEO brings visitors without paying every time someone clicks. It’s like free advertising that works 24/7.

► **Long-Term Benefits:** Good SEO keeps working for you. Once your site ranks well, it can stay there with regular updates.

KEY PARTS OF SEO:



KEYWORDS

Use words and phrases that people are searching for.

Example: If you’re a renovation expert, use terms like “home renovation tips” or “Ottawa contractor services”



CONTENT

Create helpful, clear, and relevant content that answers client’s questions.



TECHNICAL SEO

Make sure your site loads fast, works on mobile, and is easy for search engines to read.



LINKS

Get other trusted websites to link to yours. This tells search engines your site is trustworthy.



USER EXPERIENCE

Make your site easy to navigate and enjoyable to use. Happy visitors = better rankings.

SEO CHECKLIST



SEO is essential for making your website visible to the right audience. This checklist will help you cover the key steps.

SET UP BASICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Install Google Analytics and Google Search Console• Submit your sitemap to Google• Ensure your site is mobile-friendly
KEYWORD RESEARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify keywords your audience is searching for• Use tools like Google Keyword Planner or Ubersuggest• Focus on long-tail keywords (e.g., "kitchen renovation Ottawa")
ON-PAGE SEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include keywords in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Page titles◦ Headings (H1, H2)◦ Meta descriptions◦ Image alt text◦ URL slugs• Write clear, helpful content for each page• Use internal links to connect related pages
TECHNICAL SEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve site speed (use tools like PageSpeed Insights)• Use HTTPS (secure your site)• Fix broken links and redirects• Make sure your site is crawlable (check robots.txt and sitemap)
CONTENT STRATEGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create blog posts or guides that answer common questions• Update old content regularly• Use images and videos to enhance content
LOCAL SEO (IF APPLICABLE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and optimize your Google Business Profile• Add your business to local directories• Use local keywords (e.g., "renovation services in Ottawa")
LINK BUILDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get listed on relevant directories• Reach out to partners or industry blogs for backlinks• Share your content on social media
MONITOR & IMPROVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track keyword rankings• Monitor traffic and user behavior• Adjust content and strategy based on performance