

Starting a New SEO Services Business

By Paul K. Gjenvick

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If you have ever considered starting a new SEO service company, there are several steps you can take that will get things moving in the right direction. I myself started a company this past year that is already realizing great results. Not only will an SEO business bring you amazing rewards, but in the process you'll learn how to get higher ranking for your own web site as a bonus.

Why SEO?

The passion began with my first SEO project for the Gjenvick-Gjønvik Archives; a large privately held family archives located in Atlanta, Georgia and Trondheim, Norway. My success in search engine optimization resulted in well over 1,000 top 10 rankings in the major search engine arena. The best part of all is that I accomplished these rankings without the benefit of any formal SEO training. Having done so well at my first SEO project, I began thinking about becoming an SEO Specialist.

On Becoming an SEO Specialist

My first step was in reading articles on the SEO profession where I learned that it was in its infancy as there were no formal standards or knowledge base that existed for practitioners. So, in June 2003, I finally decided to take a course called Master Search Engine Optimization Competencies for Web Developers (MSEOC). Several months later, I thought another course would be in order - this time I chose the Academy of Web Specialists programs offered by Robin Nobles: Essentials in Search Engine Marketing and Advanced Search Engine Marketing training. Upon completion of the first course and receiving certification in search engine marketing strategies, I decided to take the plunge and start my own SEO Company.

Essentials to consider before starting your SEO Company

Naturally there are a lot of initial preliminaries that needed to be worked out which included a domain name, name of the company, domain hosting, website content, website design, keywords, services to offer, pricing, payment options, and how to be found by the search engines.

It's all in the name

After a review of search results from other SEO Services, I discovered nearly 500,000 sites listed, most of which were already using the best names for SEO companies. Fortunately, my last name is unique so the domain name of Gjenvick-seo.com was a neat and simple choice. I then researched Google and Wordtracker to determine a company name that would draw traffic from the search engines. It became apparent that the term Search Engine Optimization was heavily used which meant the competition was fierce. Upon researching the term SEO, a third as many results were returned giving it a much better chance at ranking in the top 30 search engine results. Based on my

research, I ultimately selected the name Gjenvick SEO Services.

Geographic Differences

Next, it would be necessary to distinguish the site from all others, therefore considering geographic location made the most sense for getting noticed. The phrase "SEO Services Atlanta," accomplished the goal. Currently, gjenvick-seo.com ranks first and second of 12,200 listings in Google.

Ranking Awards?

Having been successful in obtaining many top 10 rankings for the Archives, I began wondering if there were any awards for reaching that status. I found that J. K. Bowman's Spider Food offered "Recognition for Your Top 10 Ranking." Their specific criteria required that ranking had to be on the index page of the site. Consequently, after giving it some thought, search engine optimization awards seemed like a good idea. As an added bonus it would also draw traffic to the new website and offer a challenge to any SEO practitioner.

Finding the right Web Hosting Company

The next formidable task was finding a web hosting company, which was not difficult. Several companies had an affiliation with the Archives so I gave iPowerWeb the nod, based on their reasonably priced package deal including free setup and domain name registration.

Content is King

Knowing that content is king and critically important to a web site, I had already started roughing out some ideas as to what I would put on the website... who we were, what we did, where we were located, how much for services and why choose Gjenvick SEO Services. To answer these basic questions, information in regard to the company, the services that were offered, contact information including address, email and phone number and a website that would project the right image were presented.

Web Design for the Users

I had already accomplished web design in the past, but frankly I wanted to see if there was a template available to use. After starting some research on Dreamweaver templates - it was apparent that there would be no shortage of websites offering templates for sale. After some serious shopping time, I chose the Monarch template for its clean uncluttered design.

Making a list and checking it twice

The gjenvick-seo.com domain name was now active so it was time to put all the pieces together although some initial changes were necessary in the navigational buttons. Before long though, I was ready to start loading the website. Having previously drafted out the web page content, it was only a matter of copying and pasting the entire web content into the templates. Since the site was new, no one knew the site existed which allowed some time to upload the website, making changes under live conditions. I performed preliminary checks - keyword analysis, validation of HTML and CSS, making sure images loaded correctly, and running spell check on all the pages. To avoid having listings filtered out by Google and other search engines, I ran a content rating (a self-rating process) by the ICRA or SafeSurf. With all that done, it was now time to go live. The quickest route would be paid inclusion, but the best way was for the search engines to find me.

Getting Found by Google

To start things off, the Gjenvick-Gjønvik Archives linked to my new website, providing a trail for the search engines to follow. I received the first Master SEO Top-10 Rankings Award for 642 top-10 rankings for my work with the Archives. I also provided a link from the award displayed at the Archives back to my new awards page on gjenvick-seo.com. Next I set up another link from the about us section of the Archives to the home page of the Gjenvick SEO Services followed by one more link from a resume that I have always had on the Archives website. Less than a week later,

gjenvick-seo.com was spidered by Googlebot and within the next few days listings started to show up in Google, Yahoo and AOL.

The Results are In

I managed a couple of top 30 rankings although I failed to rank on the majority of primary search phrases based on the research with Wordtracker. Next, I went through the web pages, reviewed their META description and keywords, and used a keyword analyzer to help develop potential search phrases to find Gjenvick SEO Services. Following, I compiled several hundred possible search terms. Then it was time to see if any of the search phrases would place in the search engine (top 30). Incredibly, I came up with over 200 search phrases - mostly top 10 rankings in the three major search engines. Gjenvick SEO Services was now open for business.

In Conclusion

For those interested in starting an SEO company the following overall steps should be considered:

1. Initially do as much reading and research about the SEO market that you can get your hands on; take courses offered by reputable people so you have a good foundation.
2. Prepare yourself by choosing a good domain name that will get noticed. In addition select an excellent hosting company that you feel comfortable with.
3. Make sure you have some good content to include on your site, as well as keywords, services you're going to offer, pricing and payment options and how you're going to be found by the search engines.
4. Perform preliminary checks to include keyword analysis, validation of HTML and CSS.
5. Make sure images load correctly and be sure to run spell check on all the pages.
6. Have your content rated by the ICRA or SafeSurf so search engines don't filter out your content.

Paul K. Gjenvick is a SEO Specialist from Atlanta, Georgia with an extensive background in database development and accounting / finance. Visit him on the web at <http://www.gjenvick-seo.com/> at the Archives: <http://www.gjenvick.com/> and at Gjenvick, a bookkeeping and accounting services company at <http://www.gjenvick-accounting.com/>

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