



The Importance of SEO

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SEO



Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of improving a website's position in search results. This is done by adding content to your site that includes keywords or phrases users commonly enter into a search engine when looking for a site. Site structure, navigation, coding, and naming conventions are also important to consider when optimizing a website to improve its placement in search results. Results found through SEO are often called organic, natural, or algorithmic search results.

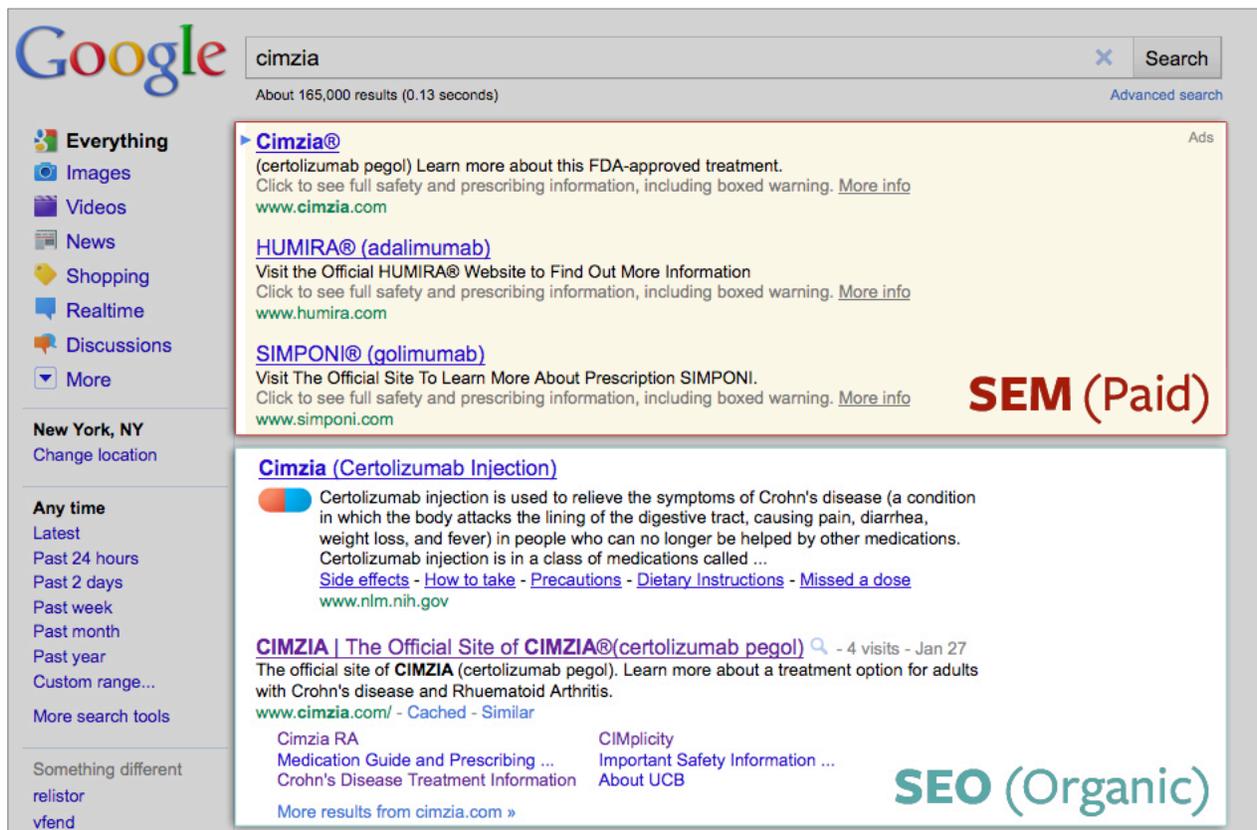
SEO is often confused with search engine marketing (SEM). SEM is a rather broad term that simply means using search engines to promote your website and increase its traffic. The term SEM encompasses search engine optimization, paid listings, and other search-engine related services and functions that will increase exposure and traffic to your website. Paid listings, or pay per click (PPC), will have a cost associated with the act of clicking on a search engine result. These are the sponsored text ads that you might see below or to the right of your search query when using Google, Bing, or Yahoo. In comparison, SEO is more focused on website optimizations as well as offsite optimizations via a linking strategy. Simply, SEO is a subset of SEM.

Why is SEO important?

SEO is important because if your website is not optimized, it will not rank highly in search engine results, and potential customers looking for you on the Web will not find you.

Search engines evaluate websites' content, and the sites with the most relevant content rank highest. To determine which have the most relevant content, Google and other search engines look for sites with content that is updated regularly. In addition, the number of times a particular word appears in a site's content can improve its placement in search results when a person's search includes that word. Engines also consider the number of links to your site. Sites that are frequently linked to from other sites are placed higher in search results.

Search engines also evaluate sites based on their architecture. A site that is structured for easy readability and flow ensures that search engine "spiders" can effectively crawl the site and index what they find. A well-designed site must not only be pleasing to the eye, it must also offer a positive user experience and still be clear enough for spiders to fully index it. A fully indexed site can help your site rank higher in search results.



The screenshot shows a Google search for "cimzia". The search results are divided into two main sections: SEM (Paid) and SEO (Organic).

SEM (Paid) Results:

- Cimzia®** (certolizumab pegol) Learn more about this FDA-approved treatment. Click to see full safety and prescribing information, including boxed warning. [More info](#) www.cimzia.com
- HUMIRA® (adalimumab)** Visit the Official HUMIRA® Website to Find Out More Information. Click to see full safety and prescribing information, including boxed warning. [More info](#) www.humira.com
- SIMPONI® (golimumab)** Visit The Official Site To Learn More About Prescription SIMPONI. Click to see full safety and prescribing information, including boxed warning. [More info](#) www.simponi.com

SEO (Organic) Results:

- Cimzia (Certolizumab Injection)**  Certolizumab injection is used to relieve the symptoms of Crohn's disease (a condition in which the body attacks the lining of the digestive tract, causing pain, diarrhea, weight loss, and fever) in people who can no longer be helped by other medications. Certolizumab injection is in a class of medications called ... [Side effects](#) - [How to take](#) - [Precautions](#) - [Dietary Instructions](#) - [Missed a dose](#) www.nlm.nih.gov
- CIMZIA | The Official Site of CIMZIA®(certolizumab pegol)**  - 4 visits - Jan 27
The official site of CIMZIA (certolizumab pegol). Learn more about a treatment option for adults with Crohn's disease and Rheumatoid Arthritis. www.cimzia.com/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

Additional links for CIMZIA: [Cimzia RA Medication Guide and Prescribing ...](#), [Crohn's Disease Treatment Information](#), [CIMplicity Important Safety Information ...](#), [About UCB](#), and [More results from cimzia.com »](#)

Benefits & Considerations

BENEFITS OF SEO

- Potential for high ROI since long-term costs can be considerably less than other marketing efforts
- Essentially free traffic if the site is created with the searchers' ease of use and search engine indexing process in mind
- People trust SEO results more than SEM results: Studies have shown that more than twice as many people click on an organic SEO listing than on a paid SEM listing
- Increased awareness of your product/offering
- Visibility – potential customers can easily find their way to your website
- 24/7 marketing – your company can be found via the Web day or night, 365 days a year!

CONSIDERATIONS

- Results can't be guaranteed, so be wary of SEO companies that guarantee top rankings.
- It takes a while to achieve a good rank in search engines. It may take 3 to 6 months before you notice results.
- It is time consuming, making costs higher in the short run.
- Search results are not static: A top rank can fall because of factors that are beyond your control, such as changes to the search engine's algorithm.
- Ongoing maintenance is necessary to ensure your site adapts when search engines change the way they rank pages.
- Making a site search-engine friendly typically means making changes to the site itself.
- Targeting customers in terms of their location is more difficult with SEO than with SEM.
- Content that is too narrowly focused on keywords is rarely the most compelling or the easiest to read.
- Competition is fierce, and some companies use unethical practices to attain top rankings. If your site is flagged for unethical practices you will lose all rankings to your site, and undoing the damage can be difficult.

Conclusion

With SEO, patience is key. It takes time to find the perfect mix of onsite and offsite optimizations. Once you find the perfect mix, you will see results that may be fruitful for a long time.

Keep in mind that, although you are not paying per click, you will need to invest time to achieve results. That is why SEO is typically more of an investment in the beginning and levels off later. Once you achieve good page ranks and are able to maintain your position, you will begin seeing an increase in visits and, ultimately, leads. But only with time and patience will you get to this point.

If you need leads today, then SEM is the better option. SEM allows you to achieve top placement in hours instead of months. However, the cost of SEM can fluctuate every day, and to stay competitive and maintain traffic levels you must keep paying for placement. And if you discontinue your campaign you can expect your increase in leads to drop. By contrast, a well-optimized SEO campaign can provide longer-lasting results at a more efficient cost.

So what to do? Our advice: Do both.

We suggest using a combination of SEM and SEO. Use the short-term advantages of SEM to identify keyword phrases that produce quality leads and conversion. These keyword phrases can then be implemented into your SEO for longer-lasting results. Whatever combination of SEO and SEM you decide upon, when done correctly, both are sure to improve your website's performance and your business in general.

About Heartbeat Ideas

Heartbeat Ideas creates indelible brand experiences for an increasingly digital world. A privately held, full service agency, Heartbeat is committed to technology-enabled research, strategic planning, creative design and messaging, innovative media solutions, and analytics. A set of five proprietary research tools enables Heartbeat to mine competitive and audience insights from the complexity of the digital landscape, while the agency's versatile engagement process flexes to meet the needs of both traditional and digital environments. Founded in 1998, Heartbeat Ideas' clients include:



- Allmusic
- Amgen
- Con Edison
- Estée Lauder
- Johnson & Johnson
- McGraw Hill
- Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- Merck
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The agency publishes a blog and newsletter, *The Pulse*, <http://pulse.heartbeatideas.com>, featuring analysis and points of view on the leading integrated marketing issues of the day. Follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/heartbeatideas, or join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/heartbeatideas.

For more information about Heartbeat Ideas' search practices and capabilities, please contact John Sorto at johns@heartbeatideas.com or 646.701.6246.

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