

WEBINAR

The Secrets to a Local SEO Strategy that Drives Traffic to Your Website & Store

Webinar Preview & Audio Available at:

<https://www.foottraffik.co/webinars/marijuana-local-seo-strategy/>

Slide 1	The Secrets to a Local SEO Strategy that Drives Traffic to Your Website & Store Rank Higher & Get Seen
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Slide 3	My name is Eduardo Silva. I'm the VP of Sales here at Foottraffik, and I'm really excited to be sharing this information with you today.



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Foottraffik is a digital advertising and analytics agency. We've been in business for over five years now, exclusively focused on dispensaries and delivery services within North America. We're really excited to be helping advance our industry forward.

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A couple of housekeeping items before we get started.

If you have your cell phones on you, please put them facing down on your desk or mute them. We are going to be covering a lot of information in a very short window of time and it helps to retain focus.

Familiarize yourself with the Zoom interface. If you haven't become a master at Zoom yet, if you go to the bottom of your screen there is a Q&A button. We do have moderators with us today that will be addressing questions throughout the webinar.

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SEO or search engine optimization is the practice of increasing the quantity and quality of traffic to your website through organic search engine results. This is unpaid traffic that comes from Google.

When customers want to find a dispensary near them, they turn to Google. And if you want to show up in those search results, then it's crucial that you have a robust SEO strategy and a team to implement it.

Otherwise, searchers will go right to your competition.



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Why? Because they'll be easier to find.

SEO is all about findability. It shows that your website is relevant for particular keywords. For us, that may be "Boston dispensary," "Detroit provisioning center," or "Sacramento marijuana delivery."

Optimizing your site around these keywords makes it more likely that people who are looking for your services will find you and shop with you.

When you have a good SEO strategy, two things will happen. One, you'll show up higher in search results, and two, you'll get more organic traffic.

Organic traffic is one of the most dependable sources of web traffic and revenue for many businesses. And it's not just any web traffic. Thanks to your optimization, it will be relevant, high-quality traffic. These are people who are already interested in what you're selling and want to buy from you.

Not every click will lead to sales, but many of them will. If you want to capture those potential customers, then you need to create a local SEO strategy that helps you own your market.

In the world of search engine option, "local" refers to searches having to do with a specific geographical area. If a user conducts a search for "dispensary near Boston," Google will display several pages of results for businesses that match those characteristics — and will even highlight a select few in a mini-directory at the top of the page. That mini-directory is called the "local pack," and it's exactly where you want your dispensary to show up because of its prominent positioning.



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Local search engine optimization is similar to SEO in general, however, the focus is geographically centered around the area your dispensary serves.

If your dispensary is in LA, you don't need to show up when someone is looking for a dispensary near them in San Diego. It's vital that you show up, though, when someone in LA is trying to find a place to shop.

So how is this different from regular SEO? Well, the ranking factors for local SEO are a bit different. While all the regular SEO factors like keyword optimization, backlinks, page speed, and mobile responsiveness still matter, there are other signals that Google looks for when deciding how to rank sites.

At its core, the Google algorithm aims to connect searchers with the results that are most relevant to their search. They try to match the intent of the search with sites that provide authoritative and trust worthy content that relates to the keywords used.

For "near me" searches, Google relies heavily on their own suite of business tools like Google My Business and Google Reviews, which we'll be covering shortly.

Google doesn't disclose how its algorithm works. Instead, we have to rely on testing sites and sharing best practices to see what impacts rankings. Sites like Moz and Brightlocal can also help us understand local SEO ranking factors. Though I want to mention that while those sites



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offer a variety of services, they don't really work with dispensaries and aren't aware of the various challenges that cannabis companies face.

Since Foottraffik has only worked with cannabis companies since we started offering SEO services over 5 years ago, we've found ways to overcome the challenges to help our clients get noticed and rank well.

Before detailing the important factors your local SEO strategy needs, I really want to hammer down how crucial it is.

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This client is an MSO of medical and recreational dispensaries in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Massachusetts. We've been working with them to create local SEO strategies for their dispensaries because they are each in unique areas.

In Q4 of 2020, they invested \$6,000 in SEO. Their investment led to 47 thousand orders and 6 million dollars in revenue.

This was powered by 125 thousand new visitors that we were able to get to their website with a robust SEO strategy.

They were able to make 938 dollars for every dollar they spent on SEO

Let's talk strategy now.



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As part of your local SEO strategy, you'll want to make sure you've claimed your Google My Business profile. You will need to do this for each and every one of your locations.

This is the most critical factor for getting found and driving traffic to your store or website.

Now, this makes sense right? If someone is running a search on Google—and most people are—then of course Google is going to look at the information they themselves collect on businesses and rely on that first.

When creating your GMB profile, make sure to use the actual name of your dispensary and then follow it by the word dispensary. For example, Rise would be Rise Dispensary. Do not add in the name of your city or try to stuff your name with keywords.

Make sure that your name, address, and phone number are correct and that they are the same as they appear on your website.

You should also create a description of your location that includes relevant keywords, the types of products you carry, and anything that helps set your dispensary apart.

Enter accurate business hours and keep them updated. This is especially crucial right now with COVID. You want people to know when you are open and how they can get your products.

If you are only offering curbside pickup right now, mention that in your description so that potential customers know to order ahead. Don't forget about holidays and special events. Put a reminder in your



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calendar to update your hours on your profile for those.

If your hours ever change — even temporarily — make sure to update your listing. Not only is this a best practice for Google, but it's also an important business practice.

Google also allows you to post pictures to your GMB listing. Customers enjoy being able to check out a dispensary before they visit, so make sure to upload some photos that help show off your location.

Your reputation matters, and Google takes it into account for local searches.

Ultimately, Google wants to send people to the websites that best match their search intent. Part of this is ensuring they have a positive experience there. To do this, they rely on what others have said.

To rank well on Google, you'll want to get at least one new review a day and score a 4.7-star average.

Fewer stars will result in fewer sales. Customers take reviews into account when making a purchase, so this isn't just about SEO. It helps you on two fronts.

Because we're talking about SEO, Google reviews are the most valuable. While other reviews are helpful when customers are shopping around, when it comes to SEO, Google is King.

To get reviews, you'll want to make sure your budtenders are asking your customers for them after a positive experience. You can also create flyers with a QR code to



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place in bags or re-engage customers with SMS to ask for a Google review.

In terms of reputation management, you should check your reviews regularly and respond to both positive and negative reviews.

If you don't have a reputation management system in place, it's time to implement one. This includes regularly checking your reviews and responding to both positive and negative reviews. And yes, we can help! Just schedule a call at foottraffik.me/call.

This is crucial for your local SEO. Reviews are the second-most important local ranking factor and you cannot overlook them.

To maximize your reach, you'll want to research which keywords you can rank for and create a strategy for ranking for the most relevant and desirable local keywords.

This can be harder for more crowded markets like LA or San Francisco.

To create a keyword strategy, you'll need a tool like Ahrefs or SEMrush to look at what you are currently ranking for, what keywords your competition is ranking for, and how much traffic potential different keywords have.

You should also take a look at your Google Analytics data to determine which keywords are driving the most traffic to your site right now and which have the highest



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conversion rate.

Once you have your list of keywords that you want to rank for, you'll need to optimize your site around those keywords and create new content around them. Let's talk more about using those keywords.

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When it comes to local SEO, many marketers mistakenly overlook developing a content strategy. That's a huge missed opportunity. Developing a content marketing strategy that targets your local keywords can be surprisingly beneficial.

Unique, high-quality local content will attract inbound links, boosting your rankings in the process. And it will differentiate your dispensary from your competition.

Keywords should appear in both headings and content, and your content should be relevant to the keywords you're using.

For cannabis, you can create content around your products, the plant, your local area, and more, and remain relevant for crucial search terms. This helps improve your site authority and shows Google that you know what you're talking about.

For example, if you go to our website, you'll see pages for each of our services, and then you'll also find that many of our blog posts relate to our services or to clients' interests.

There are a few different types of content you can create. Of course, you have your webpages, like your location page that clearly shows where your dispensary is and



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should be optimized for your city or neighborhood. You can also create pillar pages and blog posts about particular brands, how to use different products, and qualifying conditions for medical cannabis to help increase your authority and strengthen the likelihood that your site will rank for those keywords.

All content on your website should have title tags, alt tags, and meta-descriptions. This tells Google what your page is about. Content should also contain internal links to other relevant content and external links to useful content.

As you add pages to your site, you should have a site map in mind. Your URLs should be structured so they follow a hierarchy, including category and title, and are easy to understand.

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Another important local SEO factor that you need to incorporate into your strategy is backlinks.

Creating a link building strategy will help showcase the relevance and authority of your website.

According to WhiteSpark, a local SEO tool provider, link signals account for about 31% of organic ranking factors and 15% of Google's local pack ranking factors, so you can't ignore it.

When people link to your site, they're essentially endorsing you. Those links help to build site authority. They tell Google that people like your content and that it's relevant.

The best way to get backlinks is to create good content



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that people want to share via social or on their own blog posts. By showcasing your knowledge of the industry and of cannabis in general, you can create content that people want to link to. You can also guest post on relevant sites to help build your links as well.

Another way to get links to your site is by ensuring you're listed in directories like Yelp, Weedmaps, and Leafly and by speaking or presenting at cannabis events and conferences.

The quality of the links matters, of course. While you want many links, they should be from relevant sites or individuals as their domain authority helps increase the value of the link. Plus, the text that they use to link to you, known as the anchor text, should be relevant to the content that's being linked to.

Since Google's inception, link signals have been the foundation of Google's algorithm. Creating and executing a link-building strategy should play a key role in your SEO strategy.

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If a person does a search for a dispensary near them on their phone, do you think your website will show up if it's not optimized for mobile?

Now, it may, but it probably won't be the top result.

That's because Google takes into account the device on which an individual is conducting a search when it provides results. And with more than half of searches happening on mobile devices, if your website doesn't look



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good on a phone, you're going to miss a lot of sales.

This is a lot to implement, though you may have some of these factors in place already. To know where you stand, you need to run an SEO audit.

While conducting an audit of your local SEO strategy should be an ongoing task, there are a few steps you can take right away.

Research Your Keywords: Using a tool like SEMRush.com, type in your site's URL to see a list of the top keywords that are driving traffic to your site. Are they what you expected? Are they any important ones missing?

Research Your Competition: Now do the same for some of your local competitors. Is there a qualitative difference in their organic search traffic? Take notes of any competitive advantages they may have when it comes to keywords.

Check Your Content: Once you have an idea of which terms are bringing people to your site and which terms are lacking, you may want to develop a content strategy to improve your local SEO profile.

For example, if organic products are part of your business model and you'd like to rank higher for the term "organic dispensary" in your area, consider hiring an SEO writer to create some articles that incorporate those keywords and mention your location.

Check Your Metadata: This may sound obvious, but it's important to make sure your site includes the basics that allow search engines to identify your business: name,



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location, telephone number and operating hours are all essential when it comes to ranking in local search results and showing up in Google's Local Pack.

Look at Reviews: Although they can be unpredictable, online reviews can actually improve your search rankings; they can serve as a measure of your digital reputation -- and the more reviews you have, the better. Even negative feedback can help boost your credibility, as it decreases the chances that you're artificially inflating your dispensary with fake positive reviews. Just make sure you're responding to them.

This is just a simple audit, we can do a more comprehensive audit for you to help highlight additional opportunities.

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So now that you have an idea of some of the most important parts of a local SEO strategy, are you ready to implement it yourself?

I'll be honest, SEO is a lot of work, and it's not set-it-and-forget-it.

If you want to continuously rank well, you'll need to stay on top of all Google algorithm changes, including the ones they don't announce.

To create and maintain a robust local SEO strategy, you'll need to have someone who can do your keyword research, a copywriter familiar with SEO, a web guru that can update anything in the backend of your website, someone to keep your profiles up to date and manage



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your reviews, and time.

That last one is the real kicker! Creating and implementing a robust strategy is an investment. If you don't have the time to do it, don't cobble something together and hope it works. Go to the experts.

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For over 5 years, we've helped dispensaries raise their search profiles and rank higher to increase their sales.

Everyone wants to get to the top of Google, it's valuable real estate, but not many people want to do the hard work to get there. Those top three results get 75 percent of the clicks. By creating a robust SEO strategy, you can start moving your website up the rankings and get more customers to your site.

We understand the challenges that dispensaries face when trying to advertise, and we aim to remove as many of those obstacles as possible to help dispensaries grow and make more sales.

At Foottraffik, SEO is in our blood. It's the first service we offered, and it's one that continues to drive sales for our clients. In fact, our SEO provides our customers with the greatest return on investment in comparison to all of their other digital marketing strategies.

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Of course, we all want to know when we can start seeing the returns on our investments. And let's be clear—SEO is



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an investment. And just like any other investment, it takes some time to mature.

During the first 45 days, it's all about that initial optimization and building a site. We want to build trust and authority so that Google views your site as a reliable source of information and points searchers to it.

Between 3 to 6 months, you can start seeing improvements to your rankings. We offer reporting to our clients and are constantly measuring our efforts so that we can make adjustments as necessary and continue to improve or maintain your rankings.

Once you've hit the six-month mark, you can more easily start seeing the results of our SEO efforts. We will continue to focus on growth and capturing more of the market to increase your sales while working on capturing more relevant keywords.

Again, SEO is not set-it-and-forget-it. When you stop investing in SEO, you'll still get organic traffic, but it will lessen over time. Plus, you'll be more susceptible to page rank drops when there's an algorithm update.

Don't let algorithm changes mess with your revenue. Make sure you have a robust SEO strategy in place to monitor ranking changes and protect your website.

I do want to mention that if you want fast results, you should combine Google Ads with your SEO. That way, while you're building authority and increasing your ranking, you're also driving traffic to your website by securing that top ad spot.



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Too many dispensaries don't realize that SEO is crucial for getting found by potential customers. To help you get started capturing new market share, we're offering a special deal for the rest of the month.

Schedule a call now at foottraffik.me/call to get \$200 off your first month of SEO! Not only will you help make your website easier to find, but our SEO strategies also make your website more user-friendly. It's truly win-win.

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Questions?

Do I need to do a separate SEO and local SEO strategy?

This depends on the scale of your company. If you are a one-store dispensary, you just need a local SEO strategy in order to reach people who can actually buy from you.

If you are a multi-store operator or a national company, you will want to focus on each of your individual locations as well as your national brand.

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Thanks so much for joining us today.

Also, for sticking with us, you've qualified for your free yeti.

Let's get your shipping information and get one of those to you quickly. Schedule a call at foottraffik.me/call



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