



# 14 Questions You Must Ask Before Hiring an SEO



*Which SEO is the best fit for your company?*

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## QUESTION 1

# “Can you explain SEO to me in just a couple sentences?”

### Reason for asking ...

The way they explain SEO to you in the most basic form will be indicative of how they will be able to explain more complicated concepts to you in terms you'll understand down the road.

### A good answer will be ...

SEO is simply the process of making your website easier for the Search Engines to find and evaluate, and more relevant to what your potential customers are searching for.

## QUESTION 2

# “How long will it take before my website ranks?”

### Reason for asking ...

There is no precise timeline for how long it will take for your website to rank and if an SEO is willing to give you a set time without knowing more details they are deceiving you.

### A good answer will be ...

A timeline for results will vary and can depend on a number of factors including how old your website is, how much content your website has, your backlink profile, how competitive your market is, how much SEO your competitors have implemented on their websites, and so on. Plus you need to define what you mean by “rank”. It will be much easier to have your website rank for your brand name or a specific product than for a very general search term.

## QUESTION 3

# “Do you guarantee rankings?”

### Reason for asking ...

Straight from [Google's mouth](#), “No one can guarantee a #1 ranking on Google.”

Furthermore, Google warns you to beware of SEOs that claim to guarantee rankings.

### A good answer will be ...

The honest answer - there is no way we can guarantee rankings. We will do our best to build visibility on relevant search phrases for your website and also track growth in traffic, leads and sales to help support the rankings we are pursuing.

## QUESTION 4

# “How do you stay up to date with Google updates?”

### Reason for asking ...

The Internet is a rapidly changing landscape. Google’s algorithm makes over 300 changes each year which means what SEO practices that worked a year ago may not work now. You want an SEO who is proactive about staying up to date and improving their skill set.

### A good answer will be ...

I follow Google Webmaster Guidelines and other SEO related blogs (such as MOZ, Search Engine Land). I also attend SEO conferences each year. I am connected to a number of SEO experts and we share what is working for each of us.

## QUESTION 5

# “What do you need to know about my website to build an SEO campaign?”

### Reason for asking ...

The answer will tell you the difference between an SEO that takes a “paint by numbers” approach and one that looks at your website to determine exactly what it is your site needs.

### A good answer will be ...

How long has your website been live?

Are you looking to attract local traffic or traffic from across the country?

What types of products or services do you sell?

Has anyone done SEO on your website in the past?

Do you sell things on your website?

What are you hoping to accomplish with SEO (ie. more traffic, phone calls, sale, leads)?

Who are some of your direct competitors?

What is your expected budget for SEO?

Do you have someone in house to help write content and implement changes on your website?

## QUESTION 6

# “What types of ethics do you follow?”

### Reason for asking ...

Do a search for “black hat SEO” or “white hat SEO” and you will quickly learn that there are plenty of grey areas when it comes to what is considered safe and what is more risky when it comes to optimizing a website.

### A good answer will be ...

We follow all of Google’s Quality Guidelines. Following the SEO Code of Ethics and SEO Code of Conduct developed by Bruce Clay Inc. is a good answer.



## QUESTION 7

# “What experience does your firm have?”

### Reason for asking ...

There are plenty of SEO's who have learned their skill in the last year. There are also Marketing firms that offer SEO as just one of their many services. These options are likely to provide a very basic approach to SEO and may not have all the experience needed to give your website the upper edge.

### A good answer will be ...

Look for an SEO with a number of years of experience in optimizing websites and an SEO company specializing in Search Optimization.

## QUESTION 8

# “Who will be working on my project?”

### Reason for asking ...

There are a lot of SEO firms that manage client projects within Canada and then outsource a lot of the work overseas. While this can be okay they should not try to hide the fact and you should be comfortable with who will be working on your project.

### A good answer will be ...

It is preferable to have an SEO who lives in your own country, due to a number of factors including time differences, language barriers and even an understanding of your local area if they are writing content for your website.

## QUESTION 9

# “What type of changes will you make to my website?”

### Reason for asking ...

SEO will most likely require a number of changes to your existing web page coding and content.

It's important to know what type adjustments they typically make on an average project.

[Google warns](#) that you should be careful of a company that is secretive or won't clearly explain what they intend to do. Remember, you are ultimately responsible for the actions of any company you hire so it's best to be sure exactly how they intend to “help” you.

### A good answer will be ...

It is normal for them to say they will need to make changes to your website but they should stress that they will always get your approval prior to make any changes.

## QUESTION 10

# “What type of backlinks will you build for my website?”

### Reason for asking ...

Google has taken a very hard stand against “link building” in the last year or so and has gone as far as to penalize thousands of websites (including Expedia) for having spammy links. Backlinks are a very cheap, short-sighted approach to SEO that have a very high risk of hurting your website and rankings.

### A good answer will be ...

Google strictly says that buying or selling links can negatively impact a site’s ranking in search results. As a result we help you create compelling content that other websites will naturally link to. We also help you take advantage of your business connections and associations to get more links.

## QUESTION 11

# “How to you measure success of an SEO campaign?”

### Reason for asking ...

If the answer is simply “ranking reports” then the SEO is taking a very simplified approach. Rankings should lead to more qualified traffic on your website which leads to more customers which ultimately leads to increased revenue for your business. Additionally, success is in the eye of the beholder and the SEO should relate success to your specific goals.

### A good answer will be ...

Success will be achieving the goals we set out at the start of your campaign. Do you want to simply get more visitors on your website? Do you want to collect more email leads? Do you want to get more phone calls for your Sales team? Do you want to make more sales right on your website? We will set up goals in Google Analytics or your other software to track the progress of your SEO campaign.

## QUESTION 12

# “What is your general pricing structure?”

### Reason for asking ...

Before signing a contract or hiring someone you should be sure of what you will be responsible to pay and what you can expect to get in return.

### A good answer will be ...

There are four general pricing structures SEOs may use: hourly rate, monthly retainer, fixed price and a project-based price. Which one you choose will depend on your preferences. The SEO should also explain that since SEO is a service that requires manual labour. The more you pay the more hours of work will be performed or the more experienced the SEO will be, and the faster you will achieve the results you are aiming for.

## QUESTION 13

# “What makes you different from other SEO companies?”

### Reason for asking ...

There are plenty of fish in the SEO sea – why should you choose them? This gives them a chance to impress you.

### A good answer will be ...

Depending on your preferences and what you are looking for you may want the SEO to say their experience, their custom approach, they are enjoyable to work with, have proven results and happy clients or they live in you city so you can drop by their office any time.

## QUESTION 14

# “Do you have a few testimonials from clients or a few references I can call?”

### Reason for asking ...

Make sure they have happy clients and have achieved the results you want to see on your website for others.

### A good answer will be ...

Some testimonials that you are happy with and perhaps a few client names you can call if you want to ask some more questions.



## Want to get started with our SEO?

We'd be happy to tell you more about our SEO Company and start piecing together an SEO Campaign that will help your website get the traffic, leads and sales it deserves!



Call us today at **1-888-262-6687** to speak with one of our Consultants.



Request a call back using our [Contact Form](#).



Email our Consultants at [Sales@1stonthelist.ca](mailto:Sales@1stonthelist.ca) .

## More About 1st on the List

Over the past 15 years we have earned a strong reputation among the best in the industry for our SEO best practices that are guided by the belief that **integrity** and **value** are the key driving forces behind everything we do.

### OUR VALUES

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**Results Oriented:** Go the extra mile to achieve results, strive to exceed goals and expectations and work to find solutions rather than focus on challenges.

**Customer Focus:** Understand client needs and goals, listen to what clients are saying, respond in a timely manner and ultimately derive value from satisfied clients.

**Teamwork:** Share information and resources in order to achieve outstanding results, be realistic and seek to understand others' points of view and ideas.

**Flexibility:** Keep the big picture and end result in mind, look for new profitable opportunities and adapt practices to conform to changing trends and Best Practices.

**Innovation:** Challenge conventional thinking and learn from past experience and use it in the future.

### WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT?

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Our primary focus is to help our clients set realistic goals based on their market and to develop long term feasible strategies that have strong potential for sustainable success.

- As our client you will be assigned a veteran **SEO Project leader with at least 10 years of experience.**
- Our proven SEO methods are based on our ability to perform **Detailed Site Audits** which identify deeper SEO issues and work towards correcting them before optimization even begins.
- A deep understanding of Search Engine history and how Search Engines work enable us to achieve long term, **stable visibility** for our clients with scalable growth.
- We protect your website's integrity by following a **Best Practices approach** employing only ethical, industry accepted strategies.
- The ability to **explore the best options to grow your visibility** in the Search Engines means that you will have multiple solutions for any issue we come across.

## **VISIT US!**

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