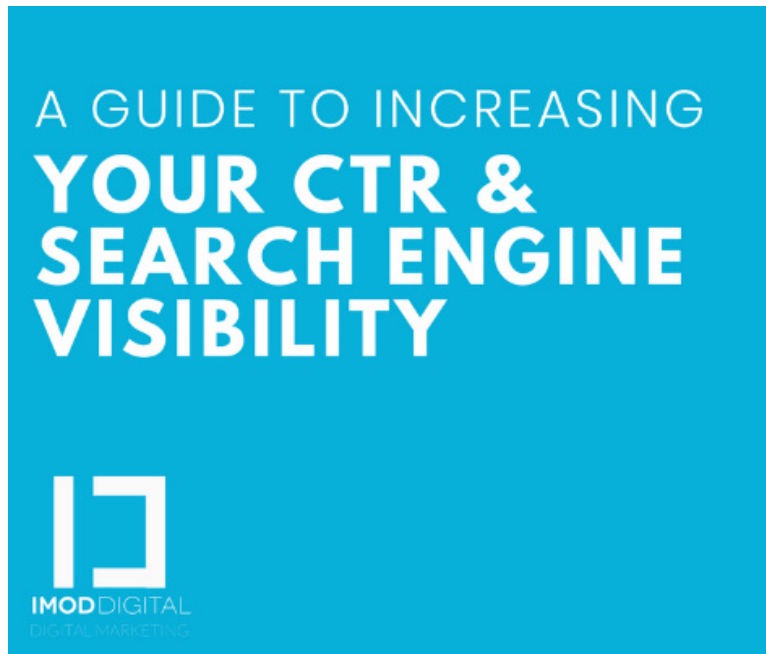




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DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY

IMPROVING CTR & POSITIONS

A couple of weeks ago I published a blog post about the [exact process we follow when performing a content audit on a website](#). The post was incredibly well received, it sparked up some good conversation and lead to some even better questions. One of the questions was: Right, I've done this but what are my options going forward for improving my website? It's a really good question and it's the question everyone should be asking after having read the article. In this post, I'm going to look at some of the options that are available to you that aren't too technical and that will make a difference to your website.



By Christopher Mills

What you'll learn:

1. Changing your title tag and meta data for greater click-through rates (CTR).
2. Content length and structuring for better positions.
3. Understanding "search intent".

Before we jump into that, let me give you a quick reminder of the post.

We looked at a 7-step process for analysing the pages on your website and then tying metrics such as click-through rate (CTR), impressions and positions to them in order to see which pages could be doing better. The outcome was an Excel document that detailed the pages on your website in an easy format that showed us which pages could do with some attention. Here's a screenshot of Excel to remind you:

Pages	Click	Impression	CTR	Position
https://www.imoddigital.com/	105	6937	1,51	48
https://www.imoddigital.com/search-engine-optimisation/	8	4401	0,18	45
https://www.imoddigital.com/social-media/	5	531	0,94	44
https://www.imoddigital.com/2016/11/27/serptrends-seo-extension/	2	482	0,41	26
https://www.imoddigital.com/pay-per-click/	0	362	0	40
https://www.imoddigital.com/2017/04/19/search-console-keyword-opportunities/	0	342	0	77
https://www.imoddigital.com/2017/01/10/amp-mobile-first-index-seo/	2	297	0,67	95
https://www.imoddigital.com/seo-tools/	0	290	0	99
https://www.imoddigital.com/web-development/	0	286	0	50
https://www.imoddigital.com/2017/09/15/link-redirect-chrome-extensions/	0	279	0	68
https://www.imoddigital.com/2015/08/24/monty-python-the-holy-grail-game-of-thrones-mashup/	7	270	2,59	12
https://www.imoddigital.com/2013/07/03/e-commerce-in-south-africa/	9	250	3,6	44
https://www.imoddigital.com/2016/08/30/expensive-keywords-2016/	0	204	0	85

If you remember or if you've just come from that post, you'll know that I touched on some ideas already. However, they were far from giving you a proper breakdown and this time I'm going to do exactly that. There are a lot of strategies and/or directions that we could take but for the purpose of keeping this post actionable, I'm going to select three and focus on breaking those down in an easy to understand manner. This approach strikes me as one that will put you in a position to immediately start taking steps to improving your website. I'll do a follow-up article on this where we look at more ways to approach this, stay tuned for that by subscribing to our newsletter.

Before we get going, let's recap the 2 metrics that we'll be working with in this process:

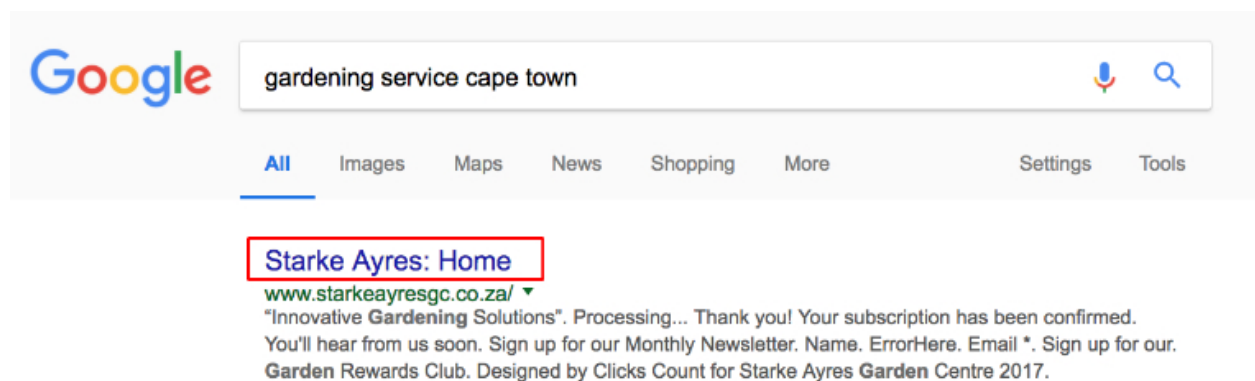
- **Position:** Where your website appears in Google's search results. As in, how high up or far down in the results.
- **CTR:** Click-through rate, the rate at which searchers click on the search result that leads to your website. The higher the rate, the more people are clicking through to your site rather than your competitors.

Remember, if you've got the impressions and your CTR is low, it means that an increased CTR will definitely bring more people to your website. If the position that your website appears for is very high (8+) then improving the position will increase your website's visibility in the search results. Improving both of these, will without a doubt, bring you more people to your website. And the best part is that because of the impressions we know that there are people searching so it's not a question of wondering whether a higher CTR or a better position will make a difference, it will.

Let's jump in!

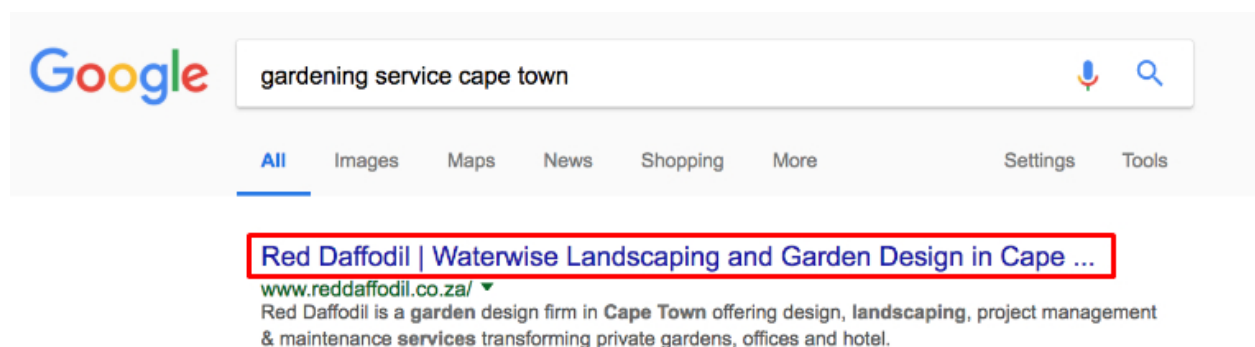
Title Tags

Title tags refer to the blue writing that appears for each search result when you're performing a search on Google. Let's look at this by way of an example:



Example of Title Tag (Bad Title Tag)

In the example above, I've highlighted the title tag. The title tag is the first thing that a person sees when looking at the search results. In my example, I've searched for a gardening service in Cape Town and one of the results is shown in the image above. What I can tell you immediately is that if someone hasn't heard of Starke Ayres then they'll have no idea, at first glance, what this search result is about and they'll probably click on another search result such as this one:



Example of Title Tag (Better Title Tag)[/caption]

+27 21 671 0672
info@imoddigital.com
www.imoddigital.com

Suite 13, 48 Second Avenue
Claremont, Cape Town
7708

Imod Digital (PTY) Ltd.
CK2011/132987/07
VAT: 4800262471

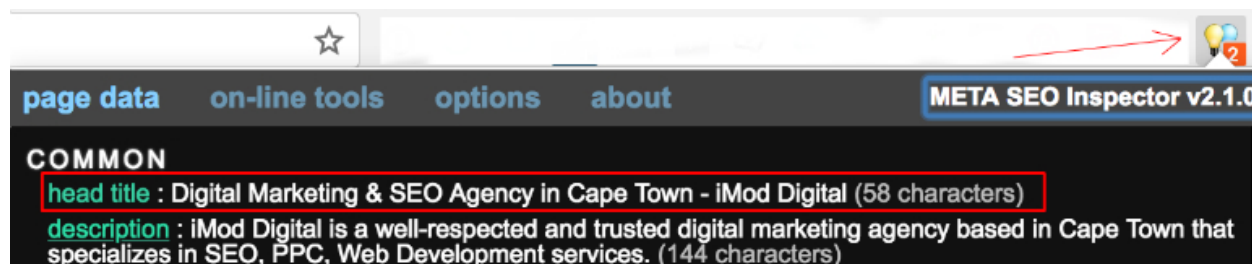
You see, in the second example, the person performing the search will quickly be able to identify that the search result shows the name of the company and what the company does, which matches up to what was searched for. However, it does lack a few elements:

1. It doesn't explicitly say, "Cape Town" as the Title Tag is chopped off. We usually recommend trying to stick to a maximum of 70 characters including spaces to avoid the "chop" but best practice is to test and see what Google does.
2. The Title Tag doesn't specifically say "gardening service", it refers to landscaping and garden design which may well not be what the person searching for was looking for. The person may have been looking for a service that simply comes to clean his or her garden.
3. One last thing is that it doesn't push for an action. There are lots of ways to write Title Tags to invoke action in the searcher. A question or a statement that pushes them to click are two examples.

Whenever it comes to Title Tags, we need to carefully think about what the searcher's intent was and present them with 70 characters of blue text that will have them wanting to click!

If your website is built on WordPress, then it's easy to use a plugin such as [Yoast SEO](#), which allows you to change the title tag for each of the pages on your website individually. Most content management systems do but if you get stuck, please ask your web designer or developer how you can go about doing this. It's a crucial requirement for any website and is not complicated for a web designer or developer to put in place. To be perfectly honest, your web designer or developer should have already put functionality in that allows you to change the title tag and meta description on a per page basis.

Take the time to go through all of the pages on your website and craft really great title tags. If you're uncertain of how to tell what the current title tag of a page on your website is, [META SEO Inspector](#) is a Google Chrome browser extension that will assist you. It's a free download and installs without hassle. Once it's installed, open the web page that you're curious about and click on the icon to see the Title Tag, here is an example:



Hint: When you search in Google, the black text that appears below the blue title tag is called the description, or meta description to be accurate. This needs to be looked at in the same way as the title tag. Once a person has read the title tag, they might go on to read the meta description which means it's crucial to review these too, make sure they are an extension of the title tag and are enticing. It doesn't warrant me creating an entire section in this blog post about meta descriptions as they're identical to the title tag, except that they are far longer, aim for around 160 characters as a maximum.

If you go through every page on your website and craft enticing and accurate title tags and meta descriptions, not only will your CTR increase but so will your website's overall position which means we're killing two birds with one stone essentially!

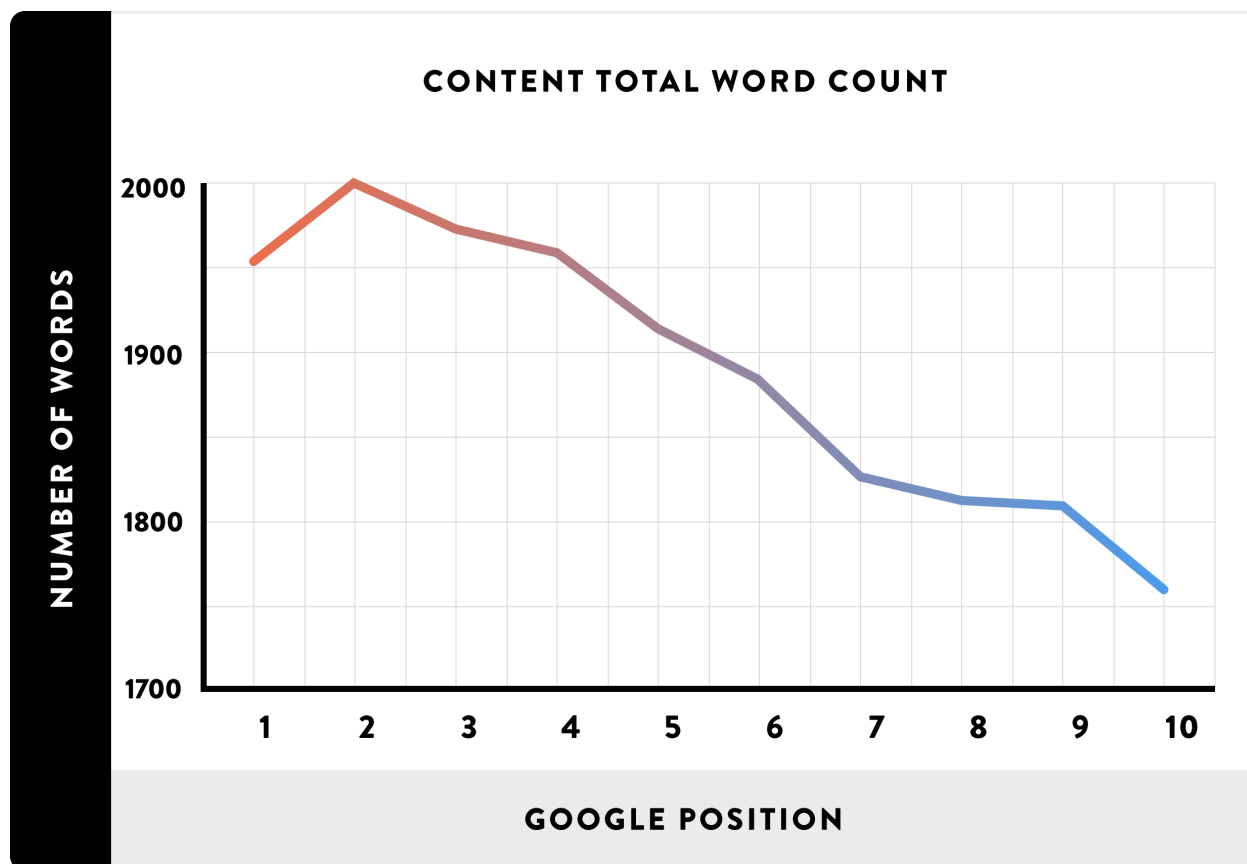
[LEARN: Take our SEO course to learn more about title tags and meta data!](#)

#2 Content Length

The importance of content (text on your website's pages) has become increasingly important and continues to become more and more important. The days of having a website with 10 pages, each consisting of only 100 words or so is, unfortunately, gone. Studies and tests have shown time and time again that pages with more content outperform those without much. It's important to note that "topic relevant" pages significantly outperform content that doesn't cover a topic in depth. In other words, increasing the amount of content you have on a specific page and

making sure that content talks to what the page is about, is crucial if you want to increase your position in the search rankings.

Below is a graph that was crafted when 1 million search results were explored. It clearly shows that pages that have between 1900 and 2000 words appear in the search results far higher than those with much less.



Hat tip: Brian Dean

Now, based on that, I come across countless situations where it's not easy or even possible to simply increase a page's content from 100 words to 400 words and I appreciate that. There's nothing worse than filler text (pointless text to make the content longer) so in some cases, you won't be able to increase the length of the content. In situations like this, you'll want to ensure that the content is topically relevant and then look to add additional pages to your website where it will be possible to add far more content. This is a really important point, just because the 10 pages that exist, only have a little content doesn't mean you cannot create additional pages. Supplemental content is crucial and the idea behind it is to find a topic that your target audience would be interested in, craft a long piece of topically relevant content and then link from this piece of content to one of the other shorter pages on your website that is relevant. Again, you'll want to make sure that this new page has the correct title tag and meta description, etc.

If you are able to increase the content on the existing pages, then you will find yourself in a very good position. Increase the content to around 300 or 400 words, make sure it's all useful and on topic, make use of headers, bolding and media to make the page easier to consume. What we don't want here is a page with 400 words of text that looks like a wall of text because that isn't attractive to anyone who's reading and will put a lot of people off. Obviously, 400 words aren't 2000 but it's certainly a great deal better than only 100 words, provided it's topically relevant and of use.

When you go through this exercise, think to yourself: What will keep someone arriving on a page on my website locked in? The content must be interesting, it must offer value and it should be of interest to the person reading. If you can get that recipe right on the pages on your site, you'll see good things happen with your positions.

Whilst on the topic of content, take a read of this article: [Content Marketing is a Smart Investment](#) (5-minute read).

#3 Search intent

Search intent is what we refer to as what a person's intent would be when performing a search on Google. In other words, what was their intent when searching for something. This is often overlooked, which is unfortunate because it forms the basis of what we're trying to do here with both title tags and meta descriptions as well as content.

We need to understand what someone's intent is. If someone searches for "gardening service cape town", the chances are that they're looking to do research on hiring a gardening service in Cape Town. The website that appears in the search results and gets clicked through to, needs to hold important information about the company in question so as to build trust but taking it one step further, it's perhaps a good idea to provide the searcher with information about the service, what's involved, how it works, what to expect and what someone wanting a gardening service should look out for. Think about it this way, a person searching for such a service probably isn't certain of what exactly a service provider would provide but would have something specific in mind - perhaps thinning out trees, mowing the lawn, cleaning up leaves and so forth. Increasing the content length to incorporate what's included in the service and what each thing means is a great way to hold someone's attention, present them with something useful and in turn, increase the chances of converting them into a client. This is all because we understood the intent, we created a page on the website for the intent (or updating a current page) and we provided useful information.

People searching on Google, for example, are able to click to and from pages within seconds, and that's how people search. We only have one shot with someone arriving on our page and we need to make sure that we capture them. Failing to do so prevents our website from performing as optimally as it could and it's especially concerning if we're investing time into crafting title tags and meta descriptions - getting someone to the website is only half the journey, keeping them engaged is the other half.

A nifty trick that we do to see what sorts of things people are searching for is to search for "gardening service cape town" and then scrolling all the way to the bottom of the results to see the related searches:

Searches related to gardening service cape town

[garden services southern suburbs cape town](#)

[garden services bellville](#)

[garden services northern suburbs cape town](#)

[garden services parow](#)

[garden services cape town city bowl](#)

[garden services durbanville](#)

[landscaping cape town southern suburbs](#)

[garden service prices cape town](#)

From this we're able to get an idea for additional pages to create on our website, ideas for topics to write about on existing pages and how to frame the content on our website to match the potential search intent. I'm not saying that you should now go ahead and create pages for the City Bowl, Bellville, Parow and Durbanville (that's a topic for another day), but you might be inspired to provide pricing ideas and/or incorporate information on "landscaping" specifically.

Repeat this process by clicking on these terms and then seeing which related searches come up for them. Here's another example when I clicked on "landscaping cape town southern suburbs":

Searches related to landscaping cape town southern suburbs

affordable landscaping cape town

garden services claremont cape town

garden services southern suburbs cape town

landscape designers cape town

landscaping **northern** suburbs cape town

garden design cape town

garden services cape town

garden services kenilworth cape town

You may repeat this process several times, also look at the title tags of the search results that appear as well as the adverts that appear, each time looking for different words or phrases that are being used. Repeating this process and investigating like this will give you a strong idea of what sort of things people are searching for within your industry and that will have you understand the search intent really well. Furthermore, this will assist with the title tags, meta descriptions and topics for your content.

Another useful approach is that of a tool called [Ubersuggest](#), which allows you to type in your search phrase and it will output all sorts of suggestions, like this:

Keyword: **garden service cape town**

VOLUME	10	CPC	\$	COMPETITION
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122 Keyword Ideas Found For garden service cape town

KEYWORD SUGGESTIONS

I want to see keyword suggestions from

Google Keyword Planner

Google Suggest

FILTER RESULTS

Find Keywords Within Search Results

Clear All Filters

NEGATIVE KEYWORDS

Put your negative keywords in this box, one keyword per line

<input type="checkbox"/>	KEYWORD	SEARCH VOLUME	CPC	COMPETITION
<input type="checkbox"/>	a cut above garden service cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	acacia garden services cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	affordable landscaping cape town	10		
<input type="checkbox"/>	agapantha garden services cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	amy's garden service cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	basic landscaping durbanville			
<input type="checkbox"/>	best garden services cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	better garden services cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	cape garden centre cape town	10		
<input type="checkbox"/>	chelsea garden services cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	cleancut garden services cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	cost of garden service cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	cutting edge garden service cape town			
<input type="checkbox"/>	garden centre gardens cape town	10		
<input type="checkbox"/>	garden centre hotel cape town	10		
<input type="checkbox"/>	garden cleaning services	30	\$ 2.76	0.93

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I cannot stress enough how important this process is. I've been working with strategies like this for a number of years and there are three types of people:

1. Those who get told this but don't act on it,
2. Those who action several pages in a rush, and
3. Those who take their time to improve all their pages.

The people in group 3 are the ones who end up getting increased traffic to their website continually as time goes on. I've worked with a few companies that invested many months into slowly but surely updating all their pages and the results I've seen from these websites are quite incredible.

We're going to leave things there for now, but in our next post, we're going to take things even further by extracting data from Google Search Console and Google Analytics, and then using Excel to merge them with the end result

being a document that truly breaks down which pages need help. We'll then go on to looking at these 3 strategies above along with several others.