

# How long does SEO take to rank me at #1?

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In this arena there is a misguided misunderstanding of how SEO will affect your ranking. One of the many questions asked is: How long does SEO take to rank me at #1.



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In essence the answer is not as simple as one might think, as the question is seriously misguided. That question and the SEO rank practice has long out dated that kind of mind set. In the not so distant past, that was entirely true. Let's look at how things have changed.

In the past the strategy was to identify keywords relevant to your business, then we identify keywords that get the most traffic, and after that we identify keywords that were not very competitive... thus highlighting and exposing the 5-10 "golden keywords" that would bring about almost all of your traffic?

"I need to be #1 for my keywords" - When approached with that very question, I know that the person is stuck inside that paradigm of thinking. For in comparison to the long tail of search, that particular keyword strategy is all wrong. There is no golden metric, single rule or small group of keywords that is or will drive a lot of traffic to your site. In a nutshell, if you are focused on a small batch of keywords generic to your business, chances are you're not being found by those searchers who ARE looking for you.

Natural Language Search is increasingly driving SEO, as real people are asking the long question, using more detail in their queries and voice search (Google NOW) is fast coming up in the way SEO is done. So as the searchers are including more and more detail in their search terms, it makes sense that we should cater for these "long tails" by being more relevant. Keep in mind that these are REAL people asking a search engine the question, exactly what Google Hummingbird Algorithm is designed for.

In addition, the reality is that the number of searches we get from the long tail search is far greater than what we would hope to get for a batch of “golden keywords.”

Rankings... yes they matter, but not as much as you think they do. Well they shouldn't be your primary focus, so if by asking “how long does SEO take to start working?” you really mean “How long will it take before I get top rankings?” then you are; I'm afraid, mistaking outputs for outcomes.

Now the question becomes: How long does SEO take to start working? The right question and there is no simple answer. What I can tell you is that it depends on a few factors like what SEO already has been done, how trustworthy your site is, how long your site has been around, quality of site, content ratio's, link profiles, technical SEO, validation, social metrics, content marketing, only to name but a very few.

SEO only works once it has gained VELOCITY. It generally takes about four - six months to start seeing results, but this is only the start, as you should be expecting to see double the traffic in month 12 rather than expecting it in months one - six. What's clear is that SEO must be done continuously, it's not a once off application. You do not just plug and go.

So many times I have heard the following; “Sorry we are just not getting the results we wanted to see to justify the cost”, and this tells me that these people have an unrealistic expectation.

If you cannot afford top budget for a good SEO consultant or firm for **min** 12 months, you're better off investing that budget in something else. SEO is a long term online marketing tactic, and should never be seen to be a quick fix.

With proper investment in SEO, coupled with a water tight content marketing strategy, and a solid social media strategy, you'll be in using the marketing tactics with some of the best ROI's out there.

## ABOUT DEE STEPHENS

I am a dedicated individual, an analyst at heart, SEO professional, ORM professional, accomplished Content Marketer, SMO expert, and digital media award winner. Starting out as a content producer I have evolved this business to be the cornerstone of success in all things SEO and Content Marketing for my clients. My ability to identify and recognise the requirement, and craft the perfect online solution for my clients is un-paralleled.

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