



GROW YOUR BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ [SEO Setbacks](#)
- ▶ [What is Blockchain and will it affect your business?](#)
- ▶ [E-Commerce Disasters and how to Steer Clear](#)
- ▶ [Operation Save: How To Cut Back on Operational Costs](#)



SEO Setbacks

Did you know that Google receives more than 63,000 search requests per second? So how on earth is your web content ever finding its way to the top of those searches? The answer is SEO (search engine optimization).

By definition, SEO “uses certain best practices to rank well with search engine algorithms which determine how far up on pages a website is listed.”

The most commonly employed strategies are keywords, linking, content quality, HTML and website/mobile optimization- starting to sound more familiar? It’s likely you are already engaging in these practices with your web content and social media.

If you have never heard of any of these terms- hire an expert and get to work- SEO is not just necessary, it’s the lifeblood of a start up or small business’s development- it’s the only way to get to the top of those millions upon millions of search results.

Once you’ve invested in SEO, there are some common mistakes to avoid:

1. Neglecting niches. Not taking time to research, segment and directly target your audience means that your SEO will be diluted. Trying to appeal to the masses is not the strategy to take here- the internet is a vast expanse and carving out your niche is vital to staying afloat.
2. Getting too technical. Here again, consider your audience. While your product or service may seem like old hat to you, your typical potential customer may not recognize or know the terminology you see as commonplace. Avoid industry jargon, shorthand, or lingo in your SEO.
3. Putting the backend on the back burner. Ignoring the code that makes your website run like a website is another common mistake. All the work you put in on the frontend is nothing when you haven’t put the same effort into inspecting the code.

4. Investing only in images. Yes, we know- your site of all text is not user-friendly or appealing and high-quality, vivid imagery is vital. BUT. Don’t skimp on the words. The words are what get the customer TO the images.
5. Overdoing the keywords. Sure back in the day the SEO gurus were all saying stuff that page with your keywords- but- they’ve walked back that suggestion. Nowadays, best practice warns against an oversaturation of keyword use – the negative effects on user compatibility (read: its annoying and drives away your customer) outweigh any benefits.

What is Blockchain and will it affect your business?

Okay...so wait, what is blockchain?

Turns out this is a hard term to define in layman's terms but bear with us as we try!

"A blockchain is, in the simplest of terms, a time-stamped series of immutable record of data that is managed by cluster of computers not owned by any single entity. Each of these blocks of data (i.e. block) are secured and bound to each other using cryptographic principles (i.e. chain)." – www.blockgeeks.com

Confused? Same. Let's try utilizing the Block Geeks example: "Think of a railway company. We buy tickets on an app or the web. The credit card company takes a cut for processing the transaction. With blockchain, not only can the railway operator save on credit card processing fees, it can move the entire ticketing process to the blockchain. The two parties in the transaction are the railway company and the passenger. The ticket is a block, which will be added to a ticket blockchain. Just as a monetary

transaction on blockchain is a unique, independently verifiable and unfalsifiable record (like Bitcoin), so can your ticket be. Incidentally, the final ticket blockchain is also a record of all transactions for, say, a certain train route, or even the entire train network, comprising every ticket ever sold, every journey ever taken."

So why and how is this relevant to small business management? Well, the biggest caveat here is that blockchain is free. It removes the process of charging a fee for transaction- rendering its useful to cash-trapped small businesses.

Essentially, you could charge for any amount, for any product or service, without the need for a middle-man or a third party. This is monumentally disruptive to many common business models we see today (i.e. Uber, Airbnb, TurboTax, Amazon, etc).

In theory, blockchain would affect how the stock exchange works and would

eliminate the need for banks and other financial institutions, which will affect how everyone does business.

The short answer to our original question is yes, it's likely that in a future financial setting blockchain will affect your business. Either as a buyer or a vendor, the transactional fee elimination will hold some affect on your bottom line.

When will we start to see those affects? That part we are less sure about- while it grows in popularity of concept and infiltrates widely into tech circles and businesses, the common business owner is not yet going to see blockchain on the radar.

As a growing trend and powerful influencer, tech concepts like blockchain shouldn't be ignored. It's a great time to do your research, read up on the ideas and familiarize yourself as best you can.



E-Commerce Disasters and how to Steer Clear

Ecommerce Statistic #1: It's estimated that there will be 1.92 billion global digital buyers in 2019. In fact, with an estimated global population of 7.7 billion people, that's about 25 percent of the world's population shopping online.

That's a lot of shoppers! No matter the size and scope of your site, the potential for disaster remains the same: if your buyer cannot buy, you've got problems.

What are some of the most common disasters and how can you steer clear? Read on!

Oh, just to be clear: while disaster preparedness is a very worthwhile topic, it's not the kind of disasters we are discussing here in this article.

1. Check out process nightmares. Arguably the most pivotal part of your customer experience is the check out process. Spending time continuously adapting and improving this process will do

wonders for your bottom line.

Sample check out nightmares: not offering an Order Review page, poorly prepped for error handling (check out process commonly requires personal info to be entered, a common place for user error), and not providing a step-by-step process that allows for simple repopulation.

2. Copywriting Woes. Competition is fierce and if your copy cannot compete, you may as well get out of the game. Product descriptions require finesse, strategy and planning- always know what your competitor is doing to describe their products and services and make sure your copy is superior.
3. Site crashes. During peak periods? It happens! Don't be a victim. Experts say that being cheap when it comes to a hosting site is the best way to expect an issue right when you don't want one. Consider spending more on a reliable host and prepare for your peak periods with confidence.

A big area prone to disaster striking is within e-commerce marketing. While some of these suggestions may seem so obvious it hurts- read on with a sense of humor and a mindfulness that they happen to even the biggest and best of businesses!

- * Beware the bad domain choice- I think you can see where we are going with this one but, be really careful when selecting your domain and read it out loud with varying inflections. Have friends and family take a look before you buy!

- * Don't over promise and under deliver. If you are going to talk up the "Sale of the Century" you better have the deals to deliver. People don't like being taken advantage of, having their time wasted or waiting around to be let down.

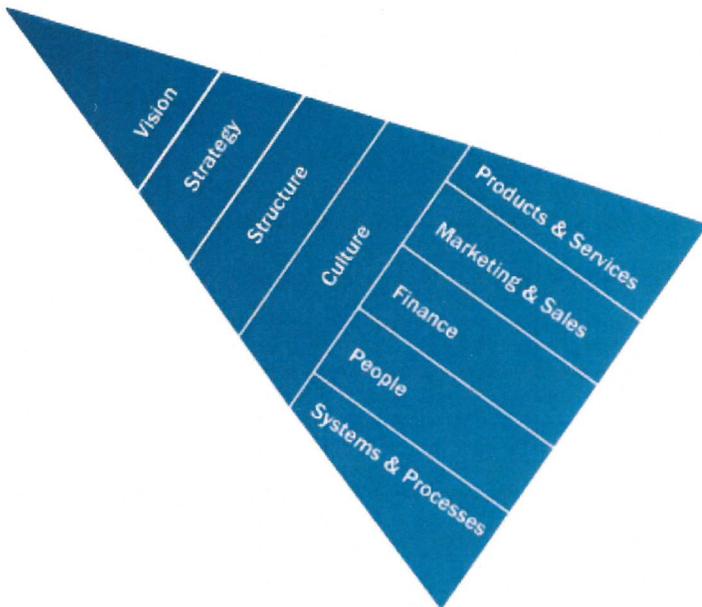
- Bad timing, begging, keywords attached to negatives, blindly inserting keywords, trying to make good out of bad- all things to stay away from!



Operation Save: How To Cut Back on Operational Costs

Cutting to the chase on this one- here we go:

1. Reimagine your office space. Do you have employees who could work remotely? Staff who would work part time or share spaces? How much could you downsize if you really got creative? Shrinking your office space can shrink your costs on insurance, utility bills, office supplies and tech costs.
2. Bartering for better business. Your products or services are worth more when you can find ways to trade. Often other business owners are keen to find ways that trades can work for everyone interested in saving on cash. Not sure how to navigate? Don't be afraid to approach a fellow business owner and brainstorm.
3. Use a programmable or smart thermostat. Lots of office personalities means lots of different opinions on the office temp! But you are the one paying the bills at the end of the month- keep things monitored wherever possible when it comes to utilities.
4. Reevaluate your equipment policies- develop something that maintains when and how equipment is replaced.
5. Automate wherever you can, embrace and employ technology. Employees often fear the term 'automation' because they worry about being replaced, but studies actually show that automation boosts employee productivity by removing busy work from the equation.
6. Along the same lines, consider outsourcing whenever possible. Some areas to start looking at would be customer service, IT, tax preparation, payroll, etc.
7. Cut down those bloated travel budgets. Its no longer par for the course for business to require travel in order to close deals. With advancements in technology, meetings, deals, purchases, and closings can be done without the need to spend on hotels and airfare.
8. Freelancers are also your friend. Consider short-term contracts for as needed projects like copywriting, SEO, graphic design, and web development.
9. Consider the cloud if you haven't already. Its natural to fear the unknown but cloud computing has solidified itself in the world of tech and is a simple and safe way to ensure your info is backed up and available at all times.
10. Depending on your business size, considering buying pools to save on resources. Also look into trade associations for discounts, cooperatives and partner networks.



**DICKSON
STOJAK
HUANG**

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

OUR SERVICES

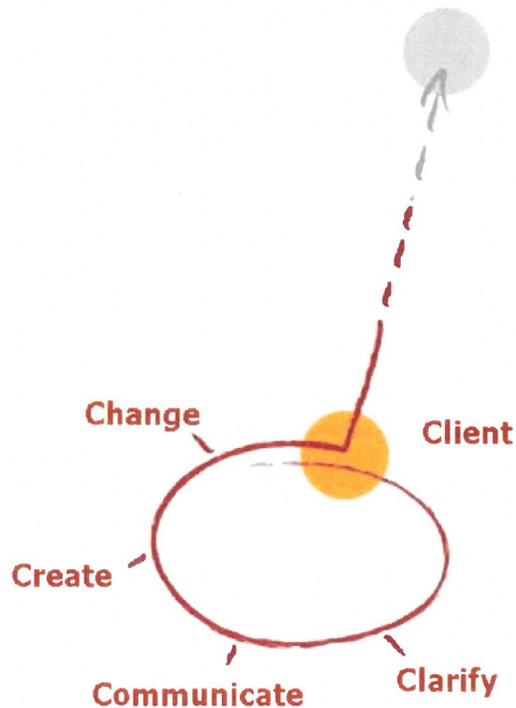
- Accounting & Audit
- Corporate & Personal Taxation
- Financial Statement Preparation
- Estate Planning, Succession Planning
- Accounting Software Training
- Management Control & Systems Evaluation
- Valuation & Cash Flow Projection

ROCG

global consultants...local experience

OUR SERVICES

- Business Consultation & Diagnostics
- Strategic Business Planning
- Business Transition Services
- Cash Flow Management
- Executive Coaching & Mentoring
- Contract CEO & Contract CFO
- Marketing & Business Development
- Financial Modelling & Projections



**DICKSON
STOJAK
HUANG**

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

140-10271 SHELLBRIDGE WAY RICHMOND, B.C.

T: 604.273.1277

F: 604.273.8876

www.dshcpa.com

info@dshcpa.com

ROCG

global consultants...local experience

140-10271 SHELLBRIDGE RICHMOND, B.C.

T: 604.247.1077

F: 604.273.8876

www.rocg.com

