

CASE STUDY FOR VEGAS.COM

Industry: Travel
Client: VEGAS.com
URL: www.vegas.com
Services: On Site SEO Consulting

Background

Since 1996, VEGAS.com has been serving both visitors and residents and the Greenspun Corporation, our parent company, has supported and helped Vegas grow for more than 50 years, starting with the publication of the oldest family-owned newspaper in Nevada, the Las Vegas Sun.

When this company initially contacted SEO Inc., they were very frustrated with their rankings. Their ultimate goal was to beat out their competition through increased rankings, which would translate into increased hotel room reservations through their online booking engine. Vegas.com also had specific categories which were important to improve rankings including Las Vegas hotels, Las Vegas golf, and Las Vegas shows.

Initial Rankings

Vegas.com Visibility Statistics May 2003				
First Place Rankings: 13	Top 5: 35	Top 10: 60	Top 20: 95	Top 30: 111

Goals

When this company first called SEO Inc. they were very frustrated with their rankings. Needless to say, they were very skeptical and on guard. They had specific questions and goals to be achieved. Their ultimate goal was to beat out their competition through increased rankings. They obviously hoped that increased rankings would in turn increase reservations.

A secondary goal was to increase their knowledge about SEO Best Practices and create a workflow for all new content, so that it would be well optimized.

Strategy

The client expressed to us that they had a capable development team but they were not well versed in SEO best practices or strategy. After several conversations with our client, we mutually decided that the fastest way to complete the optimization and provide the client the necessary knowledge transfer would be through a series of onsite consulting sessions. These consulting sessions included building "Best

Practices” for site content, making recommendations on site architecture, and code review of the content management system.

Step 1: SEO Inc. completed a targeted keyword analysis for their industries based on results and analysis of the competition. This analysis, along with our competitive analysis, determined that the site would see a dramatic increase in traffic from the search engines through improved rankings on top level category keywords like “Las Vegas hotels,” “Las Vegas Tours,” “Las Vegas Weddings,” etc. We also determined that the site would get higher conversions by targeting more specific keywords like hotel names, show names, and golf course names. The strength of the site was the vast amount of content. Our job was to make sure that the spiders indexed the content, that the content on the page was keyword rich, and that the code on the page was optimized for those keywords.

Step 2: The most important part of the optimization was to improve the site architecture, so this was the first thing we consulted on with the Vegas.com team. We worked with them to change the URL structure seen by the search engines so that the dynamic pages would have a flat URL structure. The primary page for the “Las Vegas hotels” category previously was located on non-seo friendly URL. We consulted with them to change this URL structure so that the search engines would see a flat URL, currently <http://www.vegas.com/resorts/>. Our consultation also included several recommendations to improve the navigation by incorporating a more search engine friendly use of text links in the navigation and content within the site.

Once the site architecture improvements were made, we provided consulting and built “Best Practices” for the site's code optimization. This included Best Practices for META and robots tags, implementation of accessibility attributes, cross browser compliancy, and other body optimization. SEO Inc. also helped optimize their dynamic site templates and conducted a full review of the implementation of the code optimization.

We developed a customized optimization strategy which included improvement of the global website architecture though URL re-writes and implementation of a more robust internal text link architecture. In addition we worked with the Vegas.com development team to optimize their dynamic category page templates including hotels, tours, shows, and all other categories. The strategy was implemented by the client’s team during a series of onsite meetings.

Accomplishments

The client was ecstatic with the organic results. The number of 1st place rankings increased by almost 2000% within 12 months, including rankings on high value keywords like “Las Vegas hotels.” We were able to beat out two of their main competitors on most high value keywords and achieve high rankings for most of the top Las Vegas hotel names and related keywords.

Vegas.com's revenue stream has increased tremendously, in return increasing optimization campaign budgets. Below are the results of our initial campaign.

Final Rankings

Vegas.com Visibility Statistics August 2003				
First Place Rankings: 258	Top 5: 873	Top 10: 1305	Top 20: 1779	Top 30: 2091

Keyword	May 2003	August 2003	
First Place Rankings	13	258	+245
Top 5 Rankings	35	873	+838
Top 10 Rankings	60	1305	+1245
Top 20 Rankings	95	1779	+1684
Top 30 Rankings	111	2091	+1980

Vegas.com was client from May 2003 through January 2004