



the VENUE BUSINESS BOOT CAMP

Expert-led strategies to elevate your venue business

FROM THE CEO OF HERE COMES THE GUIDE

VBBC BASICS MODULE 7

7 Simple Tips to Improve SEO

Before we begin, it's important to note that Google's main function is to deliver the most relevant and useful content to its users. So it's looking to best answer people's queries—first and foremost. And while that sounds all fine and dandy, there are literally hundreds of ranking factors in Google's ever-changing algorithm...and we're all trying to climb the ranks. #nopressure

So what can you do to help your website rise to the top? Above all else, your site needs to be a legit resource! Focus on delivering value in your own authentic, signature style to your target couples first—and the SEO will follow. (Though keep in mind it won't happen overnight. We're playing the long game here!)

Once you've got the value part down, move on to this SEO checklist to improve your organic rankings. Here are 7 simple things you can do to rank higher on Google—even if you're a total novice!

1. Update Your Content Regularly

Keeping your site up-to-date not only lets potential couples know you're still in the game, but it also encourages Google to regularly crawl and index your site. So make it a point to publish regular updates to your website! For example: Write bi-weekly blog posts, freshen up your photo galleries each month, or make regular updates to your packages or pricing page.

2. Use Relevant Keywords

The terms "keywords" or "key phrases" refer to the words or phrases that describe the core content of your site—and ideally, match what people are typing into Google's search bar.

As you update and add content, you'll want to put your "just engaged" hat on and think of how couples are searching for their venue. Whether they're googling “all-inclusive wedding venue in Nashville” or “ocean view wedding venue San Diego”, YOU are the venue they're looking for...but they'll only find your website if you're really spelling it out with these clear, key terms.

3. Link Within Your Own Website

Known as "internal linking", you'll want to link within your own website to other relevant pages of your site. For example, if you mention your Organic Garden or Rooftop Terrace in the web copy on your home page, you can then hyperlink that phrase to your “Event Spaces” page et voilà! An internal link.

Internal linking has a double benefit: It not only directs users to other helpful content throughout your site, but it also helps Google better understand your website—which leads to improved organic rankings.

4. Optimize Your Images

Don't upload humongous images because they'll slow your website down. (Read that sentence again and let it soak in!) To err on the side of caution, your website images should be no larger than 1500–2500px on the largest side. But this is plenty large for most screens and the quality of your images will still be high.

Compress the file size of your images in a program like PhotoShop, or use a website like tinypng.com or jpegmini.com. Once your images are a smaller file size, your site speed should ramp up—a key ranking factor and great way to improve the user experience.

5. Direct Traffic To Your Website

Implementing good SEO practices will result in organic traffic over time, but you'll also want to be intentional about pointing people to your website! After all, if you're not talking about your website, ain't nobody gonna be talking about your website.

There are plenty of free ways to shout out your site. A few ideas include:

- Sign up for a free [Google Business Profile](https://www.google.com/business/)
- Pin your website's images to Pinterest (and put a "pin it" button on your site)
- Promote your new real wedding blog posts on social media
- Send out an email newsletter that links back to your site
- Add social "share" icons to your blog
- Upload videos to YouTube or Vimeo

6. Get Some High-quality Backlinks

"Backlinks" refer to the number of websites (aka "referring domains") that link back to your website. And backlinks are a big ranking factor in Google because they show that your website has some authority. Other websites are linking to it, after all!

You'll want to get backlinks from other reputable sites, and there are a few ways to go about it: Offer to contribute a guest post to well-known wedding blogs, submit that gorgeous real wedding or styled shoot to be featured by a major wedding website, or do a Google search for your own opportunities by searching wedding intitle:"guest post" or wedding intitle:"write for us".

7. Embrace On-page SEO

On-page SEO refers to optimizing your website...one page at a time. Go to each page of your site and do these 3 behind-the-scenes things:

- Give each page a relevant, keyword-rich title
- Give each page a relevant, keyword-rich meta description
- Give each image a relevant, keyword-rich file name, title, and alt tag

Here's how you can come up with your titles, metas, and tags:

- In the most concise and to-the-point phrasing possible, what is this page about?
- If you couldn't *see* this image, how would you describe it?
- If your seven-year-old was asking what your website is about, how would you explain it to them?

If you're unsure where to plug in these titles and tags, Google where to write on-page SEO for your particular website builder, or ask your web developer or designer to do it for you.