

TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

School of Business and Governance

Department of Business Administration

Niko Länsiö

**SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO): A CASE STUDY  
FOR HELSINKI WILDFOODS OY**

Bachelor's thesis

Programme International Business Administration, specialisation Marketing

Supervisor: Iivi Riivits-Arkonsuo

Tallinn 2018

I declare that I have compiled the paper independently  
and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors  
have been properly referenced and the same paper  
has not been previously been presented for grading.  
The document length is 8248 words from the introduction to the end of summary.

Niko Länsiö .....

(signature, date)

Student code: 156123TVTB

Student e-mail address: niko.lansio@windowslive.com

Supervisor: Iivi Riivits-Arkonsuo:

The paper conforms to requirements in force

.....

(signature, date)

Chairman of the Defence Committee:

Permitted to the defence

.....

(name, signature, date)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	4
INTRODUCTION .....	5
TERMINOLOGY .....	7
1. THEORETICAL PART .....	9
1.1. On-page SEO .....	9
2. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN .....	17
3. CASE STUDY FOR THE WEBSITE OF HELSINKI WILDFOODS OY .....	18
3.1. Website design of <a href="https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/">https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/</a> .....	18
3.2. Measuring SEO efforts .....	24
4. RESTULTS AND SUGGESTIONS .....	25
CONCLUSION .....	29
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	30

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis is designed to provide guidelines for on-page search engine optimisation (SEO). The paper will go through the best practises and ranking factors by Google, to better the position of a website on search engine result page (SERP). With better position of first SERP the organic traffic that is showing interest towards the website in question will be increased. The theoretical part will explain the needed practises and factors for SEO and the case study will assess Helsinki Wildfoods Oy's webpage and give instructions on how their SEO practises have been implemented. Also, suggestions on how their SEO practises could be done better for the website will be presented. The Helsinki Wildfoods Oy's webpage can be used as an example for any website owner, or webmaster.

Keywords: SEO, On-page, Ranking factor, Google, Helsinki Wildfoods

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the modern era of internet, most of our actions concerning acquiring information are going through search engines. Whether it is finding information about a brand, its products or services, customers, or professional reviews, comparing different options of just about anything, finding locations, or even academic researches for which ever use, we tend to run this process through a search engine. The visibility in search engine result pages (SERP) can be the determining factor for a brand or company will it be found at all by the consumer running the search.

The activities that the term search engine optimization (SEO) holds within its practises consists of various compilations of actions that will increase the “right” kind of traffic to a web site. By “right” kind of traffic meaning the people who are already looking for a certain product, service, information, or whatever it is that the site is offering to them. With the right kind of traffic in a website a company is most likely to actually end up with a successful sale, rather than people just browsing through the site. As the number of search engine users is still growing at a steady rate the money companies are willing to spend on SEO practises grows.

The theory part of the paper will go through the literature and previous studies of SEO practises. Definitions for the terms used in this paper will be provided. The most important practises that should be implemented while working on SEO will be covered and an overview about the ranking factors used by Google. The case study will be done by investigating Helsinki Wildfoods Oy’s website and the information provided by Helsinki Wildfoods Oy about their website analytics. The platform for Helsinki Wildfoods Oy is an e-commerce site called Shopify. The case study of the paper will mirror the information gathered from the literature study with the collected data from Helsinki Wildfoods Oy’s website and Google Analytics. This paper is mainly focused on Google as a search engine, since it is the most commonly used and advanced search engine averaging to 80% of all existing services. (MOZ... 2015), and it is the search engine that Helsinki Wildfoods is using with their SEM strategies.

This paper will provide useful guidelines and understanding what is needed to be done to achieve better position on Googles SERP. By achieving better ranking on Googles SERP it can be guaranteed that traffic which has genuine interest towards the website and its offerings will be increased. The information and practises of this paper are relevant for any website owner, or webmaster. The same practises are applicable for any website, with some minor adjustments depending on the website host and what SEO practises have already been done for the website.

The paper is based on the following research questions, which were chosen to provide guidelines for implementing SEO for a web page, providing a better understanding how it works and what are the possible gains to achieve from integrating SEO to a web page.

The RQ1 is performed so that we have more understanding of the results for RQ2 and RQ3

**RQ1** What are the on-page practises and ranking factors needed for a website SEO?

**RQ2** How is the SEO implemented on to Helsinki Wildfoods Oy's website?

**RQ3** What changes should be made in order to get the website to be more SEO friendly?

## TERMINOLOGY

- **ALT Text** – The textual information used used in the HTML code to describe what is the purpose of a picture in a web page.
- **Bounce back rate** – The rate of visitors who enter the page and leave shortly after, rather than continuing to browse the site, or completing to the desired action.
- **Call-to-action (CTA)** – Usually, a button on a website to incite the visitor for a desired action.
- **Click trough rate (CTR)** – The number of gained clicks for an ad divided by the number of impressions.
- **Conversion rate** – The rate of the website’s visitors who yield to the desired action.
- **Cost per Click (CPC)** – The advertising model that costs the advertiser each time the tag, or keyword is clicked.
- **Dwell Time** – The time between clicking the SERP result and returning to the SERP page.
- **Impressions** – The number of times that the link, or ad is fully downloaded to the users display and is viewable.
- **Keyword stuffing** – A method to try to manipulate the search engines with adding numerous keywords, that are out of context to a website.
- **LSI Keyword** – Synonyms for already existing keywords.
- **Meta Description** – The textual description that search engines will include in their search results. In Google it appears under the “main” link. Also called as Snippet.
- **Off page** – The elements outside of the website, such as links etc.
- **On page** – The content and HTML elements of the website.
- **Organic results** – The unpaid results, which are closest and most relevant according to the query of the user.
- **Rich Snippet** – Has additional information between the title tag and meta description compared to regular snippet. Can also include picture.
- **Search engine result page (SERP)** – The page on the search engine that shows the results of user’s query.

- **Search engine spiders** – Also called as search engine crawlers, or robots. They gather data for search engines from the websites to help them understand the context of the web page, so they can be ranked.
- **Snippet** – Is the result on SERP, which most of the time includes the Title tag, URL and meta description.
- **Through traffic** – The traffic of users going through different pages in the website.
- **Title tag** – The clickable headline shown on the SERP and should be a precise description of the page.



# **1. THEORETICAL PART**

The theoretical part of the paper will perform a literature study of the chosen articles and previous studies. It will assemble the most important ranking factors and methods, that should be taken into consideration while implementing SEO strategies to a company's web site. In SEO there are numerous different tools to measure and analyse different activities and events from a website. The basic functions and benefits from using Google Analytics will be explained, as it is the main tool that Helsinki Wildfoods Oy uses to measure their campaign success. The main findings of the literature review will be summarized at the end of the theoretical part of the paper.

As a whole, SEO basically consists of the efforts to achieve the best possible position in the SERP to gain the attention of the people who are performing the search about something desired. Based on a study performed by Forrester (2015), over 70% of consumers use search engines to gain information about products or services before making the purchase, whether it is online or offline shopping. The massive traffic occurring on the search engines has created a multi-million business on search engine optimisation. (Sullivan 2016) The performed search itself can be an indicator of desire to purchase the item that is being searched, so there is a lot of potential on converting this desire to a closed sale. With SEO and its objective to create traffic that have already expressed its interest towards the destination it should be utilised in the best way possible. Google has over 200 different factors to rank the pages with its algorithm, but in this paper only the most important on-page factors will be covered. (Luh *et al.* 2016) There are various strategies how to implement these to a company's website. SEM practises can be divided into two main categories, which are as follows: SEO and SEA, where SEO represents the organic model which necessarily does not cost anything for the website owner; SEA on the other hand represents the more traditional paid advertising in the field of marketing. (Kaukoranta 2015). The following chapters will go through the SEO practises as a priority.

## **1.1. On-page SEO**

On-page SEO consists of the elements appearing on the website, such as content and the structure of the site. These elements are the ones that Helsinki Wildfoods Oy is focusing on as website owners. For this reason, on-page SEO is the main focus of this paper's SEO practises and ranking factors. When on-page SEO is performed successfully it can boost the visibility, findability and

user experience of the site. In this chapter, different methods of on-page SEO according to the literature reviewed and previous studies will be presented.

Meta description is good to start off with, since it is the informative text that is being presented in the SERP under the title tag and the URL of the results. It is the description of the site and its content and, it should be presented in a way that lures the readers into the page.

### Cake Recipes - Allrecipes.com



<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipes/276/desserts/cakes/> ▼

See the best **cake recipes**. Trusted recipes for chocolate cake, white cake, banana cakes, and carrot cakes with photos and tips from home cooks.

← **Meta description**

Figure 1. Example of Meta description

Source: Google SERP

Each subpage of the website should have their own unique meta description, since the content should be also unique in each page. The search engines do not use the meta descriptions, or the keywords in them to rank the pages, but it still does highlight the searched keywords from the text. This usually catches the eyes of the user and confirms that they have found what they are looking for. These meta descriptions can be done in any length, but the search engines usually will not allow texts longer than 160 characters, so that is a good guide line for formatting a meta description. If there is no meta description created for a website the search engine will form one of its own using the content available in the page. (MOZ... 2015). This can cause problems as the search engine does not recognise if the description is fitting for the snippet. The meta description is written in the source code as follows: `<meta name="description" content="Description Goes Here" />` (Dover 2011).

Title tags are the clickable headlines that are displayed on the SERP pages and can be considered as the first impression of the website when it is being searched. They are one of the most meaningful factors for the search engine to comprehend what the website is about.

Basic Vanilla Cake Recipe | Food Network Kitchen | Food Network ← Title tag



<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/.../basic-vanilla-cake-recipe-20436...> ▼

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Rating: 2,9 - 65 reviews - 1 hr

Whisk 3 cups flour, the baking powder and salt in a bowl until combined. Beat 2 sticks butter and the sugar in a large bowl with a mixer on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Reduce the mixer speed to medium; beat in the eggs, one at a time, scraping down the bowl as needed. Beat in the vanilla.

Figure 2. Example of Title tag.

Source: Google SERP

A successful title tag should consist of precise and brief description of the content appearing in the web page. These title tags are also important for the web browsers since they are the titles of the browser tabs in the top part of the browser. The best way to create effective title tag is usually formatted in a following way: *Primary keyword – Secondary keyword – Brand name*. Google has the tendency to show the first 50–60 characters of a title tag and according to research done by MOZ, if the title tags are under 60 characters 90% of them will be shown successfully. This 90% is because the actual limit is built on a 600-pixels container. It basically means the number of pixels that are shown on the SERP. Some letters such as “W” and uppercase letters requires more pixels than others, so it is possible to write a title of 30 characters and it could still be too long for Google to display it as desired. For a company that is based on online sales of products and services it is essential that all the pages have their own unique titles. An effective format for these titles could be for example: *Product name – Product category – Brand name*. The value of the brand should be considered when creating the titles. If the brand is already strong and well recognized, it might be beneficial to start with the brand name, rather than having it in the end of the title. (MOZ... 2015) The code is written as follows:

```
<head>  
<title> Example Title </title>  
</head>
```

As people are usually visual it is important to engage pictures and video to the site which both are important ranking factors for the users. (Dean 2018) This leads to formatting effective ALT texts, which is also often called as ALT tags. They are the informative part of text added in the HTML code to describe what is the purpose of a picture in a web site. You can see the ALT text while hovering the mouse cursor over the picture on a given website. For SEO reasons this text is the

most important information for Google to rank the pictures to determine the results for a user's query. Besides the benefits of ALT text for the search engine spiders these ALT texts are essential for people who have disabilities with their sight, or problems with loading the picture on their browser. The ALT text is the only description that they get from the inserted picture, as it can be read by a screen reader, or by themselves, if it is a loading issue. A good example is a picture of a call to action button on a website to buy a product or service from the company. A successful ALT text should state, what kind of action and purpose the button holds within. For example, "click here to purchase product/service X", as the product/service X being the keyword in this description. (de Valk 2018.) The code is written as follows:

```

```

Content is the single most important factor for a web page to gain success when competing of the SERP positions. The content should be unique and provide value for the searchers query, so that it clearly stands out from the competition of similar kind of webpages and serves the demand of the visitor. To be successful the content needs to be formatted in as "natural" manner as possible, so that it does not sound too self-promotive. This type of organic content helps to create traffic that is more converse and keeps the bounce back rate lower, simply because it can be considered to be on topic, attractive and legible for the visitors. (Alden 2016.) If the content of the page does not flow naturally and is not educational, it will be highly unlikely to have a positive conversion rate.

A common example of poor content is keyword stuffing, which basically means repeating keywords on the content of a site in hopes to manipulate the page's ranking on SERP. This method is seen as a black hat tactic and will be penalized by the search engines, since Google is foremost prioritising user friendliness. The search engine spiders usually detect these methods of poor content creation and are likely to cause the search engine lower the page's ranking, or not to show the page at all on SERP listings. The search engine spiders value content that is specific and focusing preferably on one key topic, this way it is easier for the search engines to figure out what the page is about and offer better results for the users. (Marrs 2017)

One crucial factor of good content is its link ability. For content to be "link worthy" it needs to fulfil all the factors mentioned in the first chapter. When the website is linkable, and the users provide links to the webpage it seems more trustworthy from the view point of the search engine

spiders. This increases the ranking of the page on SERP and creates more desired traffic to the page. (Dennis 2016)

The post/text length of the content is also ranked by Google for the organic result factors. A search engine ranking factor study by Backlinko reveals that the average amount of words in a first page of SERP equals to 1890. Google tends to rank longer posts higher than shorter ones. (Dennis 2016) The longer good quality texts also help to increase the dwell time of the page, simply because the visitors need more time to read through the text before heading back to the SERP, to for example find more information on the topic. (Hardwick 2018)

Uniform resource locator, or what most of the internet users are familiar with; the web address of a site URL is ment to serve as the locator of a website and give identification for the arrangement of the web site. URL's consists of four main pieces, which are: protocol, domain name and path. Here is an example of a well structured URL:

[http://www.example.com/category\\_keyword/primary\\_keyword.html](http://www.example.com/category_keyword/primary_keyword.html)



Figure 3. Example of URL

Source: Google SERP

The protocol has few different options that determine how a browser can collect information of a resource. The most common ones are HTTP:// and HTTPS://. The domain name is often seen as the main part of the URL for humans reading it as it is the accurate location where the resource is placed (the textual part before the top-level domain). The top-level domain is the so-called category of the website. The most common one is .com, but for different purposes there are different combinations. The path consists of different folders/subfolders which allow to locate the website.

The most benefits attained from formatting good URL's SEO vice are enhanced user experience, which also serves the search engines. If URL's are too long and complicated for the users to read there are tools that should be used to shorten the link to be more user friendly. A good example of a URL shortening tool can be found from [tinyurl.com](http://tinyurl.com). (Farney, Tonyan 2016) The focus of URL's overlaps with some of the previous on-site factors like ALT text, Title tags, and Meta description with the clear and easy to comprehend indication what the actual destination and content is about. If the title tag of the page is not shown for some reason, an efficiently formatted URL can be the saving angel for the website, as the users can see directly from the URL what the source is about. The search engines do not give much load for URL's as a ranking factor. Therefore, keywords should not be forced to a URL, if it lowers the overall impression and readability of the URL. When a well formatted URL is shared as a link in for example social media, it is more likely to be clicked as it clearly indicates what the link is about. (MOZ... 2018).

The search engines use keywords to detect the content of a website. Search engines have rankings of which are the most popular keywords in user queries. When effective keywords are used properly in the content of the page, a search engine will rank the page well according to all pages where the keyword is being presented. This is why it might not be wise to create multiple keywords out of the blue, since it is essential that the keywords are relevant according to the content it is used within, but also the ones that people are using the most in their queries. (Skiera *et al.* 2010) For these reasons the most effective way to create user friendly content with good keyword placement, is keyword research and the use of LSI keywords. Before producing any content that will include keywords a list of most searched keywords of the topic in hand should be created. From this list the keywords that best suits the content are placed in a manner that does not disrupt the natural flow of the text in hand. MOZ has created a guideline for where and how much of keywords should be used: one time in the title and headline, two to three times in the content and one time in meta description. (MOZ... 2015) A good rule for keyword placing in the content by Backlinko is to insert the primary keyword within the first 100 characters. (Dean, 2018) This helps the search engines to rank the page higher on the SERP.

Google has announced that they have taken mobile friendliness into account as a factor on search engine rankings since 2015. The mobile focused progression of Google was continued in the year 2016, when Google informed that they are going to indicate their results from a mobile point of view since most of the queries was done using a mobile platform. These additions to the ranking elements was made merely, because of the increased usage of mobile web browsing and Googles efforts to offer better user experience for people who are using different devices than the traditional computers. Today, it is out of question to be able to reach good results on a SERP without having mobile friendly website, as it is the form that Google sees, and evaluates it. When creating mobile friendly website there are some corner stones that should kept in mind. Page speed is important in general when formatting websites, but it is essential when optimizing website to be mobile friendly. If a website has slow page speed it means that the search engine spiders cannot crawl as much pages and possibly miss some other well formatted ranking factors appearing on the website. The overall design should be done in a way that serves “finger browsing”. If the site is constructed in a way that it is too small or need accurate clicking it will cause accidental clicks and lower the user experience. The design should also be responsive in a way that it adapts to the screens of different devices. (Anderson, Lindgren 2017)

Fast load time correlates directly to positive user experience. According to the information provided by Akamai (2017), 53% of visitors browsing the site with mobile devices leave the page if the load time is more than three seconds. As the page speed is important for usability, it also is one of the ranking factors used by Google. Some elements that can cause slower loading times are large sized pictures, java scripts and poor host services. The pictures should be compressed to as small as possible, as long as the quality of the picture does not suffer too much. The javascrippts should be combined to as few as possible. There are multiple free tools that can provide really accurate analysis of page speed on a desired webpage.

Google Analytics can be a very efficient tool to measure SEO campaign success. It provides useful data and statistics for almost all of the actions and attributes of the traffic on a website. Google Analytics gives reliable figures for the amount of traffic, its geographical locations, the routes that have led to the website, the conversion rate of the traffic, which parts of the website is working, and which are not. These features are just few to mention, but these are some of the most important ones for website owners, as they can be converted to indicators on how Google will rank the page. Google Analytics has the possibility to setup for Shopify online store, so it is the service that they have chosen to run with for their e-commerce platform. (Hines 2015)

The main findings from the literature review show that when performing on-page SEO strategies, they should always be done in a fashion where the user of the site is the number one priority. If the user experience is served well, it also works efficiently for the search engines and their spiders. If SEO is implemented blindly just to gain more traffic, it is likely that these efforts will be penalized by the search engine. A punishable SEO tactic may provide good results for a shorter period of time, but when detected Google is likely to ban the site from its SERP. (Malaga 2008)



## 2. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

The literature study was developed on the basis to provide answers to research question one and, to provide guidelines that are also more understandable for people that are new to SEO practises. Thoroughout explanations for the chosen ranking factors and SEO practises is essential in order to provide answers to research question two and three. The ranking factors and SEO methods were explained first and the instructions on how they should be formatted/implemented were presented after that.

When choosing the material for the literature study it was important that the articles and studies where up to date, as the SEO field is changing in a fast pace. Studies and articles that where published before 2015 where rejected. Few exceptions were made on scientific articles, but the data was checked to be up to date.

Vast majority of the blog articles used in the study were also referred in other scientific studies, which gave validity of their actuality. A lot of blog and instructional articles were used, since they were created, or updated in the past couple of years. These articles had the implication to inform and educate, so they were assessed to be objective. Also, a background check on the author was performed in order to reassure that the articles where trustworthy. In one article, no author was mentioned, but it was published by MOZ which is one of the leading SEO tools, information and study providers, so it was accepted.

The case study will lean heavily on the theoretical part of the paper, as it provides information and examples how to implement SEO practises on a website and presents what their expected outcomes could be. The case study's main purpose is to find answers for research questions two and three. This will be done by inspecting the website with the comparison to the information provided on the literature study and collecting data using different SEO tools, such as pingdom page speed test, Google Analytics, JavaScript usage tool by Vavry and Internal link analyser by SEO review tools. At first, the website design will be assessed from the user point of view to have overall impression of the website and then continued to the SEO assessments and suggestions. Last part of the case study will give an overview on how to measure and analyse the SEO efforts done to the website by using Google Analytics. This was possible since Helsinki Wildfoods Oy provided the access to the service for the author.

### **3. CASE STUDY FOR THE WEBSITE OF HELSINKI WILDFOODS OY**

The case study about Helsinki Wildfoods Oy is performed by investigating the company's website (<https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/>) design, the data from Google Analytics and how their pages are presented on SERP on Google. Helsinki Wildfoods Oy has granted the access for their Google Analytics account which made this case study possible. The findings from the investigation are then correlated to the framework from the literature review.

Performing a user query done with Finnish language settings with a keyword Helsinki Wildfoods the listing on Google's SERP provides links to two different paid ads:

[www.hyvinvoinnin.fi/Wildfoods](http://www.hyvinvoinnin.fi/Wildfoods) and [www.ruohonjuuri.fi](http://www.ruohonjuuri.fi). These two are large wellness retailers in Finland both of which are retailing the products of Helsinki Wildfoods Oy in their collections. The reason they are the first results on Google's SERP is because they have paid more on the tags such as Helsinki Wildfoods. As they have much bigger turnover than Helsinki Wildfoods Oy they are able to do so. To top them on the paid listings Helsinki Wildfoods Oy's only chance is to simply pay more for the tags. These practises are part of the SEM strategies.

In the organic results Helsinki Wildfoods Oy's home page is appearing first on the listings on top of the retailers mentioned above, which signals from good SEO. The following will go through, which elements are working, and which parts of the page would need improvements in order to gain even better SEO results.

#### **3.1. Website design of <https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/>**

The overview of the website design is good to start off with. The websites overall content is really good, it has informative and unique blog texts, nice variation of multimedia content (pictures and video), the navigation bar on the left side of the page is clear and easy to understand, about us section provides throughout information about the company including their values, story, contact information and additional services. There are multiple call to action buttons, whenever there is a desired action on hand for the visitor. The page speed is fairly good as it gets the score of 87 out of 100 on Google pagespeed performance grade. At the bottom of the page the social sharing

buttons can be found, which are a great way to encourage the users to link the page through social media.

These assessments are made purely from a user experience view point. The next chapters will cover the practices and factors mirroring to the theory part from the SEO point of view.

The Title tag is formatted very efficiently and follows the guidelines presented on the Title tag chapter of theoretical part [1.2.2.].

**Brand name:**      **Primary keyword**      /      **Secondary keyword**

**Helsinki Wildfoods: Natural Finnish Herbs | Ecological Living**  
<https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/> ▼  
Visit us! Get closer to nature, gain insight on ecological living, and be prepared to taste the taiga with our unique Just Add products!

<b>Contact Us</b> Visit us! Get closer to nature, gain insight on ecological living, and ...	<b>Shop</b> EUR. SIGN UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER & GET A 10 ...
<b>Workshops</b> Helsinki Wildfoods offers workshops that take you on a ...	<b>Our Story</b> OUR STORY. Helsinki Wildfoods is a nature brand that aims to ...
<b>Wild Plants</b> A friend is someone to share a cookie with in the wild. We use ...	<b>Nettle Crush / Nokkosrouhe 50g</b> Nettle crush can be used variously in cooking, much like spinach to ...

[More results from helsinkiwildfoods.com »](#)

Figure 4. SERP view on Helsinki Wildfoods home page with explanation of Title tag  
Source: Google SERP

The Brand name is first on the Title tag since this link is for the home page of the website. Primary and secondary keywords are following the brand name and providing valuable information for what the site is about.

The Title tag formatting that is presented above does not carry to their online store, which should be fixed by typing individual Title tags for all of the product pages, as the main focus of Helsinki Wildfoods Oy website is on online sales. The current Title tags for product pages are satisfactory but could provide better user experience by adding the product categories to be more informative.

**Nettle Pesto 35g | 'Just Add' | Helsinki Wildfoods**

## Nettle Pesto 35g (10 pesto portions) – Helsinki Wildfoods

<https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/products/nettle-pesto> ▼ [Translate this page](#)

€8,90 - In stock

Our **Nettle Pesto** is a delicious and sustainable alternative to your traditional pesto. **Just add** some of your favourite vegetable oil and splash of water and prepare just the right amount of pesto for each occasion. Use our **Nettle Pesto** like you would any traditional pesto; spread it on top of breads, mix with your favourite ...

Figure 5. Example of new title tag. Query is done with using the keyword Nettle Pesto

Source: Google SERP and authors additions

The URL's of the pages are providing clear information about the content and are using the HTTPS:// which the search engines prefer over HTTP://. The URL's are highly linkable and does not need necessarily any changes. Some of the website hosts like Shopify are formatting these automatically in an efficient way.

After the URL on the snippet appears the information about the price and availability of the product. These are additional information to the traditional information and are called as rich snippet. This rich snippet is really helpful especially for product pages as it gives useful information for the user. A great addition to the rich snippet would be a picture of the product which can be added on the page source code.

The meta description is clearly formatted only for the home page snippet of the website. It would be beneficial to do so for each page individually. As of now Google has created the meta description from the product description on the Nettle Pesto product page as can be seen from the Figure 5. Since the product description is well formatted this does not cause any major issues and is still quite user friendly, but it is missing some valuable information, since the whole text cannot fit in the meta description. For example, information like the product is “100% vegan” could be something that Helsinki Wildfoods would like to be part of the meta description, which is the last sentence of the product description and is left out, since it cannot fit in the snippet. According to Pauliina Toivanen, the marketing manager of Helsinki Wildfoods, they have had a problem with the search engine self-created meta descriptions before, when Google made the meta description out of the cookie policy of the website and it did not favour the users, nor the search engine.

Helsinki Wildfoods has a high priority on their content on the website since sharing education about foraging and ecological lifestyle is one of the corner stones of their business. These are valid factors for the users and search engines to rank the content well, as it provides unique value. From SEO perspective the blogposts have both positive and negative aspects in them. As they are highly informative and provide value for the users they have a lot of potential to be linked by individual users in different internet platforms. This can create a lot of natural traffic to the site.

The content on the website has good amount of internal and outbound links, which help the search engines determine what the content is about. Every post should have from two to three internal links. The content Suggestions from the SEO perspective for example are that the blogs and content pages could have more keywords embedded in them. There is good collection of keywords for each post, but they are only used as tags. When embedding keywords and LSI keywords to the text in a way that does not disrupt the natural flow of the text the search engines has better ability to recognize the content and rank it among other similar webpages. An easy way to find out your LSI keywords is to type the original keyword into Google and scroll the page down to “Searches related to...” and it provides the list for your LSI keywords. (Dean 2018)

The webpage has good multimedia content, but there is still room for more videos on the site, as they are a factor that makes the users spend more time in the website and lowers the bounce back rate. Possibly the largest mishap on the site lies within the ALT texts. Some of the pictures are lacking the ALT-text as a whole and for this reason a significant ranking factor information is not being reached by the search engine spiders. The users who are using screen readers, or users who have problems with loading the multimedia content on the page are missing on the call to action buttons, since they have no ALT texts. These ALT texts for the CTA buttons should be created immediately. There is an exception if the button has a web font, since these are readable by the search engine spiders. The ALT text formatting would be more beneficial for the screen readers and search engines, if the ALT text formatting would state that it is a picture. For example: Picture of Wild Berry Bowl 80g bag.



Figure 6. Examples of suggested ALT texts.

Source: Picture from <https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/> and authors additions

The average length of the news and blog texts on the site totals to 1123 words, which is slightly under the suggested 1890 words and only three of the 18 existing posts reach within 100 words to the suggestion. When formatting news and blog posts in the future a bit lengthier posts would serve the search engines better and could help the posts climb up on the SERP: s. When the quality of the news/blog posts stay relevant and interesting, it will increase the visiting times of the users. This will also help the search engines to rank the sites higher. When formatting longer posts they still should stay within one topic. Compiling multiple posts on different topics, or topics that are close to each other should not be done, since this will lower the actuality in the eyes of the search engine spiders. (Dean 2018)

The page speed of <https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/> was tested by using the free website speed test tool provided by Pingdom. Running the speed test is simple as inserting the URL of a desired website and choosing one of the pre-set geographical locations where the test will be running from. On this test for <https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/> the geographical was set to Stockholm, Sweden since it was the closest location to Finland where majority of the traffic is coming from according to Google Analytics. The following results where received:

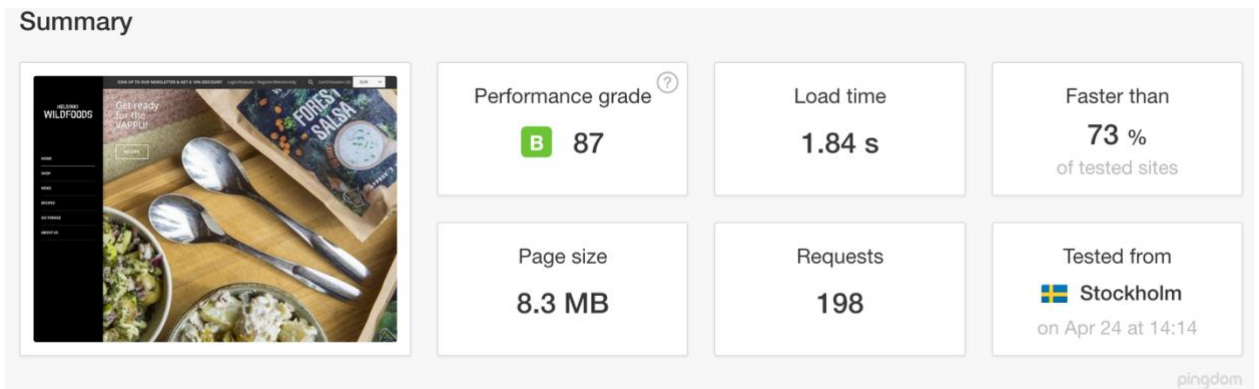


Figure 7. Summary of the website speed test.

Source: <https://tools.pingdom.com/>

The results are fairly good as the performance grade indicates. The performance grade is on a scale from 0 to 100. Load time is 1.84 seconds which is decent. The pingdom results also show what are the factors that slows the page speed down the most. In this case, they are multiple external JavaScript files and query strings from static resources, which basically are URL's that have “?” or “&” in them. According to Pingdom the JavaScript issue can be fixed by combining the files from each domain into as few as possible. In most cases this can be done by copying the contents of each JavaScript file from a single domain and pasting them into one. After pasting the files into one the others can be deleted. (Sexton, 2016) Most of the CDN based services, has the ability to ignore the query string. This can be done from advanced features section on the pull zone settings. (Keycdn... 2018)

Mobile friendliness is essential for all websites and it makes no exception concerning Helsinki Wildfoods as the Google Analytics data reveals that 61,9% of the traffic is browsing the site with a mobile device (phone, or tablet). When running Google's own mobile-friendly test it reveals that the site is working really well for these devices. It means that the page view is loading sufficiently on the screen of a mobile device, all the actions and links can be loaded properly, and the usability is user friendly.

### **3.2. Measuring SEO efforts**

The author of this paper was granted with the access to Helsinki Wildfoods Oy Google Analytics service. This allows to investigate the behaviour and actions of the traffic on the website, from which conclusions about bounce back rate, Time on page .... can be made. These scripts of data are not used as ranking factor by Google, but they can be used to draw conclusions how well the current SEO practises are working.

To find out from Google Analytics what is the amount of traffic created by SEO the user of the service should click on Acquisition, then All traffic and then the check box on the left side of Google/organic and click the Plot rows button. This creates the diagram of your SEO created traffic and provides the metrics for each recorded statistic by Google Analytics. By doing this, it is found out that the organic results are creating the most traffic between any other sources of visitors. This indicates that the SEO practises done already are working quite well. The amount of visitor gained by organic searches is within 100 users compared to cost per click traffic through Google. Bounce back rate of the traffic coming through organic searches is 43% and cost per click traffic bounce back rate is 86% (the lower the better). The Trough traffic and average session time are both higher than on traffic from other sources. E-commerce transactions from organic searches are also quite high, as it is equals to be the at the top with the direct link transactions. These statistics are measuring the general performance SEO on the website. (van den Berg 2017)

Google Analytics offers the ability to track which kind of searches has been made internally on the website. This helps to determine what the users are hoping to find from your site and should it be presented to them in a different way. If there are multiple relevant queries on same subject and the website does not offer any results for them, it might be beneficial to create one. This way it is possible to increase the visiting time of the users and lower the bounce back rate. This feature of Google Analytics had not been set up yet, so the results for the queries are not available for inspection. It is highly recommended to start using this feature, as it provides a lot of useful data for the website owners. (van den Berg 2017)



## 4. RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The aim of the study was to create guidelines for SEO practises for Helsinki Wildfoods website, by first assessing what would be needed for efficient SEO, how to implement them and how to measure if they have worked.

RQ1: What are the most effective on-page practises and ranking factors needed for website SEO? There are numerous different practises and factors for on-page SEO and they have different kinds of affects. Some of the factors mean more for search engines and some less. User friendliness is one of the most important aspects of a website, since creating traffic to webpage that the user does not find attractive does no good for the website owner. A website owner should be aware that different factors overlap. For one ranking factor to work, it might need other not so important factors to do so. This gives weight to some factors that are not necessarily on top of Google's ranking factors but should still be accounted for. A good example of this is URL's; They are really important for users, since they are much more likely to click a clean looking and informative URL rather than URL which is a series of number and letters, even though the search engines do not give much weight to URL's as a ranking factor. From ranking factor perspective URL's play a big role in page speed since they can include query strings from static recourses that significantly slower the page speed. This kept in consideration a list of ranking factors and practises is presented below, which has the scale of one to five for their effectiveness.

### **Meta description** 2

Meta descriptions are valuable information for the user as they are a so-called advertisement of the web page and can be very efficient on increasing click trough rate. It is not a ranking factor, but it is a really important SEO practise.

### **Title tag** 4

Title tags is one of the most significant factors for the website and its snippet in the SERP view. It is the first impression of the page and should always include the brand name and primary keyword.

**ALT text** 3

ALT texts are essential for the search engine spiders since they are the only thing that is available for them to see of a picture. The text should tell clearly what is on the picture.

**Content** 5

The single most important factor as it is the “pillar” of the website. Without good content there is nothing to guide the traffic to.

**URL** 2

URL’s does not count for much as a single ranking factor but can create value for the user experience and other factors.

**Keywords** 4

Keywords have a lot of meaning for both users and the search engines, since they are catching the attention of these both, when user queries are made. They should be researched, mixed with LSI keywords and not to be over used.

**Mobile friendliness** 5

Mobile friendliness is key to provide good browsing experience for most of the traffic. Majority of the search engine traffic is performing on mobile devices.

**Page speed** 4

A low load speed and response time will cause the users not to enter the page or leave it without any actions on the site.

RQ2: How the SEO is implemented on the Helsinki Wildfoods OY web page?

The SEO was implemented on the web page fairly well. To reach this conclusion the web site was assessed and traffic data from Google Analytics was interpreted from the SEO stand point. By doing private search queries after clearing the browser history with the keyword Helsinki Wildfoods, it appeared first in the organic SERP listings. Most of the subpages could have better results on the SERP, if suggested additions to the SEO would be made. Google Analytics shows that most of the traffic for the web page comes from organic google searches, so that indicates that SEO of the page is good. The traffic from organic searches is among the best sources for creating conversion for the webstore. If the suggested additions and changes for the SEO of the website would be made, the traffic from organic searches could reach even higher rate.

RQ3: What changes should be made for the website to be more SEO friendly?

### **SERP snippets edition**

The SERP snippets should be formatted individually for each subpage of the website. This should be done so that each subpage would have its own effective title tag and meta description. The title tags should be more precise and include only keywords and brand name.

The meta descriptions should also be formatted to be suitable for each individual subpage, so that Google does not have to create its own from the content of the page. If this is not done there is a high possibility that some valuable information is being left out from the description.

### **Content edition**

The content is informative and unique. It provides undisputable value for the visitors. The suggestions for reformatting the content would be adding more researched keywords and LSI keywords to the posts and to the titles of the posts. For those posts that does not have internal links, they should be added, at least two to three per post. ALT texts seem to be a bit of a problem on the current version of the site, since most of the pictures does not have any ALT texts. The ones that have ALT texts should also be reformatted, so that they would state that it is a picture. For example: “picture of nettle pesto bag”. Also, the call to action buttons are lacking ALT text, so these should be added to them.

The average length of the news and blog texts of the site is 1123 words, which is decent, but adding length to all of the posts would benefit the posts in the eyes of the search engines and rank them higher. As the content producer of Helsinki Wildfoods is a professional writer the quality of the posts should not suffer from adding length to them.

### **Usability edition**

The page is mobile friendly according to test ran by Google. The page speed of the website is decent, but some issues where found from external JavaScript files and query strings from static resources. If these where to be fixed by compiling the JavaScript files to as few as possible and the query strings from static sources would be ignored from the pull zone settings the page speed would be excellent and also more mobile friendly.

In addition to the results and suggestions there where some useful tips that came up while performing the study. A highly beneficial off-page factor would be to get more external links from

the retailers of Helsinki Wildfoods products. Helsinki Wildfoods has a list of all the retailers of their products on their site. If these retailers would also offer links to Helsinki Wildfoods website it would provide valuable justification for the search engines that <https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/> is a trustworthy site. This could be done by offering links to blog/news posts of Helsinki Wildfoods site to provide additional information concerning the products, since there is no reason for the retailers to link the product pages, as they are selling the same products themselves.

All the news and blog texts should have a sentence that encourages users to leave a comment or rate the article. This provides trustworthy and organic information from other users and the search engine of the quality of the content.

Traffic from social media sites are one of the most significant conversion rate creators for Helsinki Wildfoods Oy, so sharing product page links on Instagram and Facebook could be a way to create more retail.

Google has users as their number one priority, so it is important that the user experience is not suffering when the webpage is being formatted to be more SEO friendly. If the users are satisfied, most likely the search engines will be satisfied too.

## CONCLUSION

When determining which are the most effective on-page practises and ranking factors the fact that most of these aspects overlap and one should not be dismissed even if it seems less important. The single most important factor is the content of a website and when it is formatted in a way that it includes all of the individual factors mentioned in this research it can provide the best possible outcome.

The overall implementation of the SEO for Helsinki Wildfoods Oy was fairly good, as the site had not gone through a targeted and goal-oriented SEO. The SERP listings for the website were positive. To point out flaws on the website's SEO the subpages of the site should be given more attention. SEO vice, the pictures should have better descriptions and the page speed could be enhanced. The blog posts of the site could be longer since Google values longer posts higher than shorter ones.

The assessment of Google Analytics data indicates that most of the traffic to the site is coming through the organic searches and shared links in social media. For future suggestions, it would be advisable to focus on the mishaps on SEO concentrating even more on social media platforms. There are some additional social media services that could enhance the SERP listings for the company. For example, adding a Google + profile for the company would provide an additional view of the company on Google's SERP as it shows any query matching Google + profiles on the first SERP page.

The search engine optimisation is never complete, and it needs continuous attention and updating. Also, the algorithms and AI are evolving on daily basis, so it is an ever-changing landscape. When the on-page factors and practises are in order it would be highly advisable to move to off-page practises as they approximately carry half of the load of all ranking factors.

For further research, it would be beneficial to study the new age search engines and their optimisation. New age search engines can be any service that are comparable to the amount of search queries to the more classical search engines, such as Google and Bing. For example, the most popular social media channels like YouTube have huge potential as a search engine, because of the traffic within them. They are likely to have their own modifications to the traditional ranking factors and different practises to optimise them for user queries.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Andersson, V., Lindgren, D. (2017) *Ranking factors to increase your position on the search engine result page*, Accessible: <http://bth.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1119358/FULLTEXT01.pdf>, 14 May 2018.
- Alden, M. (2016) *Organic content made simple*, Accessible: <http://kmguru.com/organic-content-made-simple/>, 19 April 2018.
- van den Berg, A. (2017) *Tracking your SEO with Google Analytics*, Accessible: <https://yoast.com/tracking-seo-google-analytics/>, 19 April 2018.
- Dean, B. (2018) *On page SEO: Anatomy of a perfectly optimised page*, Accessible: <https://backlinko.com/on-page-seo>, 4 May 2018.
- Dean, B. (2016) *We analysed 1 million Google search results here's what we learned about SEO*, Accessible: <https://backlinko.com/search-engine-ranking>, 14 May 2018.
- Dennis, A. (2017) *Content and SEO: Building linkable content*, Accessible: <https://searchengineland.com/content-seo-building-linkable-content-259166>, 14 May 2018.
- Dover, D., Dafforn, E. (2011). *Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Secrets*. 1st ed. Wiley.
- Farney, T., & Tonyan, J. (2016) *Measuring the Success of Your Social Media Presence with Google Analytics*. *Library Technology Reports*, 52(7), 38–42, Accessible: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=118579477&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, 14 May 2018.
- Fishkin, R. (2015) *Beginners guide to SEO*, Accessible: <https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>, 14 May 2018.
- Fishkin, R. *MOZ Title tag*, Accessible: <https://moz.com/learn/seo/title-tag>, 14 May 2018.
- Forrester Research, Inc. (2015) *Why search + social = success for brands*, Accessible: <https://www.catalystdigital.com/wp-content/uploads/WhySearchPlusSocialEqualsSuccess-Catalyst.pdf>, 14 May 2018.
- Hardwick, J. (2018) *Dwell time: is it really a ranking factor? (And if so, should you care)*, Accessible: <https://ahrefs.com/blog/dwell-time/>, 14 May 2018.
- <https://helsinkiwildfoods.com/> Accessible: 14 May 2018.
- Hines, K. (2015) *The absolute beginner's guide to Google Analytics*, Accessible: <https://moz.com/blog/absolute-beginners-guide-to-google-analytics>, 14 May 2018.
- Kaukoranta, M. (2015) *How to reach more target customers by search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine advertising (SEA). Case: Clean Solutions Finland Kb*,

Accessible:

[http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/90227/Thesis%202015\\_Minttu%20Kaukoranta.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/90227/Thesis%202015_Minttu%20Kaukoranta.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y), 14 May 2018.

Keycdn, (2018) *Remove query strings from static sources*, Accessible:

<https://www.keycdn.com/support/remove-query-strings-from-static-resources/>, 14 May 2018.

Luh, C-J., Yang, S-A., Huang, T-L.D. (2016) *Estimating Google's search engine ranking function from a search engine optimization perspective*, Online Information Review,

Vol. 40 Issue: 2, Accessible: <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-04-2015-0112>, 14 May 2018.

Malaga, R. (2008) *Worst Practices in Search Engine Optimization. Communications Of The ACM*, 51(12):147–150, Accessible:

<http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=13&sid=b37cc500-ae96-44e4-a242-4e3a7d34b91b%40sessionmgr4006&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=bth&AN=35609293>, 14 May 2018.

Marrs, M. (2018) *The Dangers of SEO keyword stuffing*, Accessible:

<https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2012/03/21/dangers-of-keyword-stuffing>, 14 May 2018.

Sexton, P. (2016). *Combine external JavaScript*, Accessible:

<https://varvy.com/pagespeed/combine-external-javascript.html>, 24 April 2018.

Skiera B, Eckert J, Hinz O. (2010) *An analysis of the importance of the long tail in search engine marketing. Electronic Commerce Research & Applications*, Accessible:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1567422310000396?via%3Dihub>, 14 May 2018.

Sullivan, L. (2016) *Report: Companies Will Spend \$65 Billion On SEO In 2016*, Accessible:

<https://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/273956/report-companies-will-spend-65-billion-on-seo-in.html>, 14 May 2018.

<https://tools.pingdom.com/> Accessible: 14 May 2018.

de Valk, J. (2018). *Image SEO alt tag and title tag optimisation*, Accessible:

<https://yoast.com/image-seo-alt-tag-and-title-tag-optimization/>, 14 May 2018.