

FOR BUSINESS OWNERS AND MARKETERS
WHO WANT TO KNOW HOW TO RANK THEIR
WEBSITES AT THE TOP OF SEARCH ENGINES



STEP SEO PLAN

**Proven Online Marketing Plan
To Make Your Website Rank 1st**

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8 Step **SEO Plan:**

The plan that changes an esoteric process into a tangible product.

“It took 12 years of hard work and 1 white light experience to find the 8 Step SEO Plan.”

John Vincent Kriney

Falcor Publishing



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<http://8stepseoplan.com/>

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Preface

2014 marked my 12th year of running my own marketing company. I had just finished answering one of my top-billing client's e-mails at 11:30 pm, marked "URGENT!" Most of the e-mails he sent me had some sort of "end of days" in the subject line. All of his subjects were in all capital letters. The fate of the world of course depended upon my immediate response. Only the day before, I had a meeting with an uptight, clueless, overly-confident client who thought that she knew just what it took to make her online website the next tutor.com. I was building a website for this client but the end of the project would not come soon enough for either of us, it seemed. I had created websites for billion dollar companies, but in her mind we were just not moving fast enough, well enough, or professionally enough.

Well, *enough was enough*. I had just wrapped up my numbers for the year, which was another year of 50% growth, but I was so frustrated that I was ready to close the doors. I told my wife that I was firing all my clients and focusing all my energy on my own websites. I have read every business management book out there, and all their tips seemed to ignore the fact that some clients are just a pain in the ass. Right as I was about to jump off my roof, (don't worry — I live in a one-story house) my wife talked me off the ledge.

She asked me:

- How many of your current clients are happy?
- How many of your clients have achieved their target results?
- How many clients have been making good money with your help using OptFirst?
- How many clients are currently ranked 1st for their key phrases on search engines?

She and I both knew the answers. I had taken hundreds of companies from online zeroes to rock star heroes. These successful brick and mortar businesses, most of which would have been eaten up by online competitors, were turned into thriving enterprises, making good use of my balanced attack of real-world advertising and online positioning.

What my wife *didn't* ask me about was all the websites I had built over the past 12 years — probably because she knew they were the most time consuming and least

profitable part of my business. I figured since I was on the ledge, she was focusing on the things that she knew I was *best* at tackling. That's when I knew that Search Engine Optimization, SEO, needed to be OptFirst's specialty. We could build, alter, or focus on websites *if and only if* the work was needed for the purposes of SEO. The only problem was that my new primary target, the SEO industry, had the reputation as a field consisting of only charlatans and snake oil salesmen.

My largest early frustration with SEO was that I was being compared to other companies that *claimed* to offer the same product that I sell. These so-called "competitors" have given the industry a lousy reputation for a variety of reasons. I have discovered 3 types of SEO companies that have given my industry a bad name.

First come the large marketing agencies. These firms have high-spending clients, and they want to cater to the growing online market interests of these clients. In most cases, with no expertise or online marketing experience, these agencies offer Search Engine Optimization. These clients are used to spending \$25,000 to \$30,000 in just one month for a trial campaign. The client treats this SEO work as a test campaign — and so does the marketing firm. The problematic issue here is that the campaign is overpriced and already doomed to fail due to the lack of expertise of the agency. The failure of these test campaigns leaves big companies with a poor opinion of SEO in general, and of the ROI it can provide.

The next problem that contributes to the bad reputation of the SEO industry is the myth of the brilliant SEO whiz kid that someone knows through a friend of a friend. We have all heard of this guy, the one who supposedly eats, sleeps, and thinks in search algorithms. This kid genius usually burns' the website within 6 months. You may wonder how talented SEO kids can get a website in trouble with Google. The reason is surprisingly simple —they are lazy. They frequently use automated processes to promote websites. They always opt into the latest link farm, link-building program, or any way to automatically get links pointing to their client's websites. The truth is that they prefer to spend less time doing real online PR and more time playing Xbox.

The third damaging type is the hardest to pick out of the lineup. This company uses safe link and citation-building practices, making them harder to detect, as they appear to be real SEO companies with real knowledge and techniques. Under further examination, however, they can be weeded out quite quickly. This type ignores all website

performance data and visitor behavior data. They for some reason always have fixed prices — and the best presentations. Why is this true? *I have no idea*. It is just an observation I've made after watching these companies land clients that I was seeking. Often I later have to work with these same clients to de-penalize their websites with search engines. The key questions to ask this third type of company are:

- What's better, to blog on my site or to blog on other sites and then reference back to my website?
- What's W3C?
- Does bounce rate affect organic rankings?
- Is engagement the ying to bounce rate's yang?

If you get a blank stare and several stutters in response to these questions, then you can bet you are looking at the third type of bad SEO company.

So this was the state of the industry that I had just decided to dive into. I then had the task of trying to convince prospective businesses that I was indeed a real business too! I often have to overcome a company's previous experience with a bad SEO company. I found a positive side to all this, however: If we could convince prospective clients we were *NOT* one of those bad SEO companies, then these clients could become our loyal customers *and* chief referral sources. I became aware of this trend one day when, for the thousandth time, I was listening to a potential client rant about the frustration and disappointment of working with bogus SEO companies. This client had waited in vain for their rankings to increase. When they needed answers, they had to deal with an array of longwinded and nonsensical excuses that just did not add up. When you deliver to clients with past experiences like these, they will be quick to appreciate the results and will remain loyal customers. At one point I told my whole sales team to go after *only* companies that had previously used other online marketing companies. From that day forward, one of our main specialties became taking clients that were burning money on their advertising and turning them into companies that make a very high return on their marketing efforts.

Due to my SEO successes, my clients and colleagues always asked me how I had been so successful for so long. They asked me what was my secret sauce — and could they have the recipe. My answer was always the same: Hard work, and my competitive nature feeding my desire to beat my clients competition. I assumed I always “figured

out” how to get my clients ahead of their competitors. I thought somehow the answers were floating around in my head. The truth is, I really wasn’t sure *how* I did it. I knew I had a basic system, but it felt like it changed all the time based on new search engine updates.

As a rule, I would figure out how to rank a client’s website quickly, but every now and then the process took longer. I have always been an avid reader of great authors like Malcolm Gladwell and Deepak Chopra. As I was drifting off to sleep after reading one night, it occurred to me, thinking about all the information I have read over the years, that I *must* have some sort of system, but I didn’t know what it was. After finally falling asleep for a few hours that same night, I woke up and it all became clear to me. I jumped out of bed like I had just been shot in the heart with adrenaline (like that scene from *Pulp Fiction*). I ran to my home office and began writing furiously on my whiteboards, which cover every wall of that space. Out of these notes an orderly system began to crystallize.

By the time I was done, I was dripping in sweat and looking at the 8 Step SEO Plan. There it was — it practically wrote itself. I had finally seen, in a universal but definitively systematic way, how I get every company to beat their competition online. So here I present what took me 12 years of hard work and 1 white light experience to figure out: the 8 Step SEO Plan.

Step 1. MIGRATE

migrate - to shift, as from one system, mode of operation, or enterprise to another

“Don't dwell on what went wrong. Instead, focus on what to do next. Spend your energies on moving forward toward finding the answer.”

- Denis Waitley

My realization of this first step came quite quickly. To find success in online marketing, it is imperative that you keep all your data in one place, under one account preferably, where it is all easily accessible, where you and others can view and manage it. I have always let potential clients know that, more often than not, they have allowed their web masters to limit access to their own accounts. I also ask clients why they have accepted result reports that were obviously doctored and inaccurate. I have reviewed tens of thousands of these reports from fake SEO companies, and they are filled with inflated traffic numbers and under-reported cost-per-click values.

The first step is always to get all the data and website access into one unified account. The easiest way to do this is to move the data into one Google account that can be shared by business owners, web masters, and marketing firms alike. I often use the term *migrating account data* when explaining this to new clients. It is the first item of business, and I always explain how and why this is so important. When I started my own company, I vowed never to hold a client hostage by withholding information. I would never hold any keys without also giving my client a copy. The reason for my conviction in this was because I have had website access data withheld from *me*. I was still in college, and I hired a website company that kept all the passwords and the access from me. At that time money was tight, and they did this so that they could charge me \$100 an hour every time I wanted a simple change done. The crazy thing is that 15 years later, I still see website, IT, and marketing companies doing this to their clients! There is something inherently unethical about this practice. That is why working in a clear, transparent environment will always be a must for me with my clients. The first step in doing this is to MIGRATE all data into one shared and visible account.

Step 2. VALIDATE

validate - check or prove the validity or accuracy of (something)

"Trust, but verify."

Ronald Reagan

The process of validating a client's website, phone number, business name, and physical address is the true starting point of any solid SEO effort. Most large search engines, local directories, and online social networking services will require some type of real-world verification when validating the true existence of a company. Most of the time the verification comes in the form of a phone call or mailed PIN to the listed business address. Currently, the phone call verification requires a phone number local to the geographical area of the business and does not permit 800 numbers. The validation process usually allows for 2 options: An automated call with a PIN, or a text message with a PIN. The mailed PIN option ships to the physical business address and has the code concealed in an envelope or within a taped postcard. The reason for this is logical and simple — to make sure that only real businesses with a physical location and valid local phone number show up in map results.

Google, Bing, and Yelp all stopped unverified users from creating potentially fictitious business accounts. The process can be annoying to most legitimate business owners, but to us real SEO companies, this process is a beautiful thing. In the mid 2000s, there were more fake map listings than real ones. At that point in time, companies and online marketers alike were frantically creating additional bogus listings to try to take over the newly introduced placements on Google's first page. The mad rush was urged on because all of a sudden there were more than 10 listings on the homepage of Google. The new maps injected up to 7 additional listings of local businesses. It was the Wild Wild West (or WWW, pun intended). Fortunately, this phenomenon lasted only 18-24 months. Such listings were quick to set up, quick to rank, and quick to disappear. That time period was truly the Dark Age of the Internet's map history. As consumers began to show up to physical addresses of businesses that didn't exist, their faith in Internet map results quickly waned. Of course, with search engines fighting over market share based on the new maps, the situation had to be better monitored. What was left was tighter verification, and the regulations and validation became more rigorous each year.

This was a frustrating time, because my company had always focused on real-world companies. Explaining to real companies why fake companies were outranking them was not a pleasant experience. In some cases, one competitor using fake addresses would have the top 7 listings. That's why now I always explain to new clients that the validation process is *very* important. It really is an asset to any real-world business. Currently, brick and mortar businesses have a huge advantage over would-be online competitors. Although the process can be tedious, our clients usually love getting PINs, calls, and texts. It helps them feel like they are a part of the process. It also lets them know that their newly hired marketing company is following through on their SEO plan.

Step 3. ORIGINATE

originate - have a specified beginning

“If you build it, you better be able to take it down.”

John Vincent Kriney

After carefully examining what I had always done for successful clients, I realized I had been using a basic initial list that I now call the OptFirst List. What is this magical list? Well, it is more pragmatic than magic. The list has changed and will continue to change, as the criteria for high rankings on search engines shifts constantly. The changes to the list are always based on the current landscape texture. The list also takes into account what's in vogue, and it deciphers fact from fiction. Following blogs and search engine news releases also helps me make necessary changes to my list. In deciding whether or not to make a list change, the most important questions I consider are as follows:

- Does this news make sense in respect to where the Internet is heading in the next few years?
- Why would this search engine or ‘expert’ release this information?
- Are they selling me a new product, service or belief that ultimately benefits them financially?
- Is this a classic misdirection tactic by those who have a vested interest in keeping the true state of search engine rankings a secret?

When advising clients and other SEO companies, I recommend using these filters to sift through search engine news before changing any SEO plans.

I counsel my clients daily through self-motivated upsells by their other service providers. A classic upsell job my clients get is when another website company tells them that if they have a blog on their website, then their SEO will *soar*. Then the social media company comes in trying to sell on-site content writing for the new blog, because that will make their SEO rankings *soar*. I tell my clients that the only thing that is going to *soar* is their service bill. The difficulty in this example is that there is a grain of truth to the benefit of having a blog, with freshly added content, added to any website. The

harsh truth is this: Unless other websites also blog about your website, you are adding content to it that will have little SEO benefit.

My first SEO teacher told it to me straight. He was a tough New Yorker and liked using examples to explain everything. Paul V. put it simply: “What matters is not what you say about you, it is what others say about you.” To take it even further, the effectiveness of those people blogging about a website in order to get good search engine rankings depends on their online reputation, or “street cred,” as Paul called it. He said a link is no good unless it serves as a “relevant reference.” The memorable Paul V. analogy he liked to give on this topic is, “If you asked both your best friend and a gourmet chef where you should go for dinner, and they gave different answers, you will take the gourmet chef’s recommendation every time.” Now most people would say you simply *should* take the chef’s recommendation, but Paul V. only spoke in terms of the *definite*, “every time.” This pretty much sums up the topic of link relevance, link weight, and website strength — all in one analogy.

I give the example of service providers not because I’m opposed to upselling or companies trying to make more revenue for themselves. I say it because it is a simple and everyday example illustrating why the source and financial motivation needs to be taken into account before changing any SEO plan. I always remember this before I consider changing my OptFirst List.

The basic starting list is simple and logical. If you have a website that you want to rank, you must be on sites like Facebook, Yelp, and Twitter if you want to have a chance. If not, then today’s search engines will never rank them above similar websites that do. In the eyes of the search engines, the website is not fully represented as a complete online business unless it is in these social networks. That’s why the Opt-List includes a list of current upwardly trending websites, local specific directories, and popular social media networks. To other SEO companies and DIY devotees, I suggest you make your own intuitive list from research and hard work. Then adjust the list depending on relevance to your specific industry. All businesses should be reviewed to see if your list makes sense before a blanket list is applied. For example, does your investment company really *need* an Instagram listing? Maybe not. Does your realtor need a Zillow and Trulia account? For sure! This book is about the process of SEO helping real businesses succeed online. So remember: THINK! Work hard and do not take shortcuts.

Here is an infographic about people looking for easy rankings, showing how that’s a rotating process for failure.



Step 4. REPLICATE

replicate - make an exact copy of; reproduce

“Those who do not want to imitate anything, produce nothing.”

Salvador Dali

Everyone knows that if you want to be successful in life, you have to stick with the winners. That’s the theme that runs through Step 4. Here we analyze every successful website on the first page and see where *they* are getting their links and citations. This is the fastest and most effective way to see who and what the search engines currently like for a specific key phrase. I realized years ago that finding the links, references, citations, etc. of your competitors is an SEO necessity. There is no better way to neutralize the competition than to replicate their link-building, social media, and citation effort. Most of the time, you can find their links and citations quickly using simple tools and search engine functions. When I first started, the easiest way to find competitor links was just to go to a search engine and enter the link itself: www.examplesite.com. Right there in the search results were the primary links for which the site was getting credit. These days finding links, social activity, and local citations is made faster by using a third party service or browser extension tool. These advanced tools can find 95% of the citations, links, references, images, widgets, and more that a website is using to rack up its rankings. Since it is now fast and easy to find where a website is represented online, the replicating effort is straightforward. In most cases it will just take a lot of hard work to match or outperform what a top website is doing in order to get that coveted first place listing on Google.

I have always found this part of SEO fun and exciting. This is where I believe that I start differentiating myself from other good SEO companies. Those bored by endless spreadsheets, dotting i's and crossing t's, should not try to rank websites online. If you're more OCD like me, then this means that you are halfway to mastering this competitive step.

You may be surprised to hear that this is only half of Step 4. Beware – the second part of this step can be tricky.

I have had hundreds of late night calls from clients asking about a new online competitor, one that appeared overnight. Of course the client insists that we do exactly what they are doing. When I look up this new website, I almost always find that the site is part of some risky, non-relevant, and honestly doomed strategy. In my 12 years of experience, I have seen hundreds of tricks fail. Here are some of the most common tactics:

- paid bloggers
- link networks
- paid or “sponsored” links
- free software with embedded links
- domain forwarding manipulation

Any and all of these have and will result in a ranking penalty for both the new competitor’s website and your website if you follow these strategies. Warning: Don’t follow your competition down a dark alley! You might *both* get mugged!

I have also found rare cases when the competition’s links and citations cannot be duplicated. As a rule of thumb, if a link does not relate to the client’s business or positively spread company news on their products and services, then simply *don’t build it*. Sometimes it takes innovation and financial resources to duplicate competitive efforts, but I have found it is always worth it. If the competition has been covered in a strong national publication, for example, then make a product or innovation that is sure to get picked up by the same publication. The purpose of Step 4 is to level the playing field so that the stage is set to pass all competitors in the search engine rankings.

Step 5. DIFFERENTIATE

differentiate - to make or become different in the process of growth or development

“Be different, stand out, and work your butt off.”

Reba McEntire

At Step 5, it is time to make the website stand above and rank beyond the competition. I often get questions about how each industry differs when ranking results are concerned. I found that it comes down to competition in general more than the specific industry. It very much reminds me of the story about two people who are trying to outrun a bear. One person asks the other if they really think they can outrun a bear, and the second person replies, “I don’t need to outrun the bear, I just need to outrun you.” Step 5 is about outrunning your competition.

The ability to think outside the box and create unique content and links for clients is what will differentiate you from the competition. Link building? Far from it. It is the never-ending process of finding valuable websites that a client should be or could be on. I found the key is to create a symbiotic relationship between the desired publisher and the client. This is done by creating legitimate, unique, and newsworthy content related to the publishing website. Create a great reason to link to the client’s site and the link or citation will have value in remaining live on their website.

Here is a recent success story stemming from Step 5. A client came to me to market his true love — dog breeding. He has become one of the largest and most legitimate breeders of his favorite breeds, but he needed help differentiating his business from thousands of his online competitors. The strategic advantage in this particular case was that the client’s other business is his own television show in an unrelated genre. Since he is a TV personality, we brainstormed ideas on how we could utilize this fact and differentiate him from his dog breeding competition. After we completed the Steps 1-4, we started linking his dog breeding business in biography sections of his online celebrity profile pages. These were websites where only TV stars with their own shows have profiles. I added additional information in the bio sections of these celebrity pages. This added value to the publisher, giving their pages more complete information about the celebrity, and the client’s dog breeding business also received additional links and citations that no other competitors could access. This example, although fresh and

recent in my mind, is by no means the cleverest Step 5 I have ever come up with, but hopefully it is enough to get your creative juices flowing. The idea that runs through Step 5 is to think outside the box, while remaining inside the search engine guidelines. Remember that the overall goal is always to create links, citations, and social mentions that add value to the person reading the information on the publisher's website, and awareness to the client's website.

Step 6. CALCULATE

calculate - determine the number of something mathematically

“You can't manage what you don't measure.”

Old management adage

I have always kept track of my clients' search engine rankings and analytics. This is something that I do on a daily basis. The first data I compile are their beginning search engine rank positions and initial website traffic. This establishes the first benchmark and leads to setting realistic goals. Early on I would send reports on a weekly or even daily basis, but my clients found this process bulky. It is inconvenient to be inundated with frequent e-mails, especially with file attachments, so I had to create a solution for each client based on the highest-priority information and figure out the best way to share it. Sometimes it was Dropbox, e-mail, online document sharing, or even text messages with reports. I was separately sharing documents with my writers, graphic artists, programmers, and in-house team members. Then I was figuring out how and when to share the important data in the optimal way. You can imagine what a mess this was for my clients and for me! The 8 Steps led me to create a new way of working with my clients.

A new shared space is a key part of the 8 Step SEO Plan.

In order to do this, I converted years of data into one client center. I always had migrated the different analytic accounts into one account, but never one that shared live access to the SEO Plan, documents, files, graphics, and business information. Needless to say, this was a massive undertaking, since some of my older clients have 10 years of data that we had to move. The new sleek Opt-Center is made up of one main area with 8 added tabbed step sections. Now I have a shared workspace with ranking data, traffic data, and Opt-Team work that is shared in real time. This has solved a lot of communication issues among the Opt-Team, clients, and myself. I like most of all that sharing the live work and data encourages everyone to work as a team. Now the data can be easily compared against previous benchmarks, goals, past ranking positions, and user behavior.

Step 7. INVESTIGATE

investigate - carry out a systematic inquiry to discover and examine the facts of an incident so as to establish the truth

“There is always room at the top - after the investigation.”

Oliver Herford

Every SEO company that has been around for a few years hates to be on the other end of the question: ***“How much longer until we are 1st on Google?”***

There are two inherent problems with this question. First, it depends on the plan that was set at the beginning of the campaign and how Google reacts to our live adjustments made based on their changing criteria. Second, only Google knows the answer! I am always upfront and honest with clients before they sign up for a new campaign that I am in no way in control of Google or any other search engine. The intention of any new campaign is to *make the website attractive to Google*. This is done with simple planning and a clear strategy, *always aiming to exceed the competition*. It remains at the discretion of each search engine which sites they want to rank first, second and so on.

The benefit of bringing clients and all of my departments onto a shared space platform is that everyone is now on one team. The calls asking, “Why are we not first yet?” and “What work is being done?” have ceased.

Once everyone is acting as a cohesive unit, it is time to analyze the data. It is a daily task at my agency to run ranking reports, check website analytics, and track user behavior. Since creating the shared workspace, clients can view this data in real time. The center makes clients a part of Step 7, instead of depending only on my assessments of the data.

The two data areas that we focus our attention on are on-page and offsite. On-page applies to visitor activity and website performance, while offsite analysis consists of

monitoring links, local citations, and social mentions.

On-page analysis looks at website user behavior and website performance. I have seen search engines begin to weigh on page data higher than ever in the last 3 years. Currently, to achieve top rankings a website needs to deliver a good user experience and meet updated code standards. The key is for the website to out-deliver, out-perform, and out-promote their online competitors. The negative side of this is that search engines are starting to penalize websites if their performance is below industry averages. The strongest and most common penalty I have seen related to on-page is when a website has an above average bounce rate. This is the percentage of people that leave a website after only a short time period without interacting with the website. The exact amount of time that leads a search engine to consider a visitor bounced is not known, but the assumption is around 5 seconds. You may wonder why it makes sense for search engines to use something like a bounce rate in their ranking criteria, but the answer is simple. Search engines, as with any business, are concerned with keeping their customers. Every user is a customer who potentially yields them thousands of dollars in paid ad clicks. In order for search engines to keep their customers, they need to provide a pleasant and predictable user experience. People trust their favorite search engine to send them to websites that have the products and services they are searching for. If a user does not find what they are looking for on a regular basis, they are likely to switch their default search engine. That's why bounce rate makes sense as an important ranking factor. If the website has poor information, is not relevant to the query, or simply not appealing to the user, it will have a high bounce rate. I have seen client websites disappear from the first page overnight just to have them come back even stronger once we addressed their bounce rate. To lower the bounce rate, it might be time to investigate the website's appeal. This can be as simple as creating better content, improving graphics, or clearly defining each page on the website.

Offsite analysis requires careful examination of current ranking, traffic, and website data. This starts by building up from the compiled data from Step 6. It is time to look at all the work done so far and the ranking results of the website to determine if a new course of action needs to be taken. If you or your client is not ranking 1st after the benchmarked period of time, the data will show if there was something missing, or if there was an unanticipated search engine shift.

If the website is not on track, the first thing to do is review the plan against the work completed. This must logically be done in the order of each step and meticulously reviewed. Check to make sure all accounts were

- 1.) **MIGRATED**, all main listings are
- 2.) **VALIDATED**, all links added from the
- 3.) **Original Opt-list**, all competitors' links are emulated, all possible unique links created, and that all data is being tracked properly.

If there was nothing missing from Steps 1-6, then it is time to review the original plan against a possible new plan. After reverse-engineering old troubled accounts using the 8 Step Plan, I found that more often than not it was not a flawed *plan*, but a missed *step*!

Step 8. DUPLICATE

duplicate - to do or perform again; repeat

“Oops!... I did it again.”

Britney Spears

The final step is ongoing and constant. Step 8 is critical, because criteria from Steps 1-7 change monthly, weekly, or sometimes daily!

Let's review all the steps and their moving pieces:

Step 1, MIGRATE, is about moving all the data into one place. This is done so that all accounts operate from a unified center. A top priority now is moving various Google and Bing accounts into one verified account. This has changed recently, as the top priority 5 years ago did not include Bing Tools, nor did Bing as we know it exist at all. This step also includes migrating all client data into the client center shared space, the Opt-Center. In **Step 2, VALIDATE**, the primary outlets that need verification change quickly. Also included are websites that currently do not require tedious validation, but will in the near future. In **Step 3, ORIGINATE**, the top websites that clients need to be on change, as new mega-sites seem to appear overnight now. **Step 4, REPLICATE**, has to be checked daily as new competitors and new links to current competitors change constantly. Keeping an eye on the competitors' movements and making smart follow moves is a daily ritual of SEO. **Step 5, ORIGINATE**, is also ongoing in nature. I never stop thinking about clever ways to promote my clients' websites in their industry. This step is the ongoing marketing effort to create great content and engage customers in social media, maximizing the assets of the business owners. It is about thinking outside the box about how to get coverage from high-value websites and online news outlets. In **Step 6, CALCULATE**, gathering and collecting data is the foundation. Without diligent tracking of website rankings, traffic results, and user behavior, there is no Step 7. You would be flying blind when the time came to evaluate the results against the original plan. **Step 7, INVESTIGATE**, is a two-part effort. First is the on-page analysis. There needs to be an ongoing process for monitoring traffic spikes and dips. There also needs to be an ongoing website checklist to make sure that the bounce rate stays low,

engagement remains high, and that the website is functioning at a high level of performance. Second is offsite analysis. We watch for ranking increases and decreases on a daily basis to monitor the health of the campaign. Increases or decreases in rankings need to be investigated to distinguish the issues from the anomalies. What I do is set shift points in the beginning of the campaign so that the whole team can spot a possible issue or note a distinct success on a daily basis. **Step 8** is the link that completes the circle, so that Steps 1-7 actually comprise a process that never ends. The entire **8 Step SEO Plan** changes an esoteric process into a tangible product. It has allowed me to hold my head up high about owning an SEO company. It is the driving force behind this book, so that others can know there is something different at work in my company, OptFirst.

It took 12 years of hard work and 1 white light experience to find the 8 Step SEO Plan. I hope it helps you find your way in the vast, deep, and beautiful waters of SEO.

John Vincent Kriney



Author Biography



John Vincent Kriney

- Founder and Current President of OptFirst Inc. Helped over 1000 brick and mortar businesses compete and dominate online.
- Cofounder of Shirtmagic LLC, a worldwide custom t-shirt company with millions of custom t-shirts printed
- Founder of Bodykits.com, an aftermarket auto parts company with multimillion dollar sales online in 2007.
- Cofounder of TVTopTen, an Internet startup that sold the top 10 infomercial products based on customer reviews and demand.
- Consultant at 7-Eleven, helping franchisees make more money by reducing costs and streamlining processes like computer systems.

When I was a junior in college at the University of San Diego, 7-Eleven began a strong corporate recruiting campaign, collecting bright minds to go through their paid training program. After 2 years with them, they promised the equivalent of a master's degree in franchise management. I leapt at the chance and signed up. I saw myself owning a hotel franchise — I had yet to see my future in technology. During my training at 7-Eleven, I helped franchisees make more money by streamlining computer systems and reducing costs. I also caught the Internet bug.

I started living and breathing technology, using my free nights to build a side business called TVTopTen. We offered listings of the 10 highest-rated infomercial products, with ahead-of-the-curve reviews, to customers across the United States. I eventually sold my stake in TVTopTen and used the money to start BodyKits.com, a multimillion dollar aftermarket auto parts company. I turned around and sold this business in 2007.

Next I co-founded Shirtmagic LLC, an online custom t-shirt company that prints millions of shirts worldwide. Even with the success of my entrepreneurial endeavors, I knew that I wanted to offer more — I wanted to help other businesses grow and see success like my online projects. I've since taken hundreds of companies from online zeroes to rock star heroes with my own marketing company, OptFirst Inc., based out of Miami Beach, Florida.