

"SEO Methods (Search Engine Optimization) to Improve Ranking on Search Engines (Google.Com) for the Online Media Prodesanews.Com"

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ABSTRACT: The application of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) methods is an effective strategy to improve a website's ranking on search engines, especially for local media such as Prodesanews.com. This study aims to analyze the implementation of SEO strategies, including on-page, off-page, and technical optimization on Prodesanews.com to increase visibility and organic traffic. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach, where data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The results indicate that the implementation of SEO has positively impacted Prodesanews.com's performance. On the on-page aspect, keyword optimization, meta tags, and site speed successfully increased the CTR by 1.6% and reduced the site loading time to under three seconds. Off-page strategies through building backlinks from 91 referring domains and social media promotion also increased impressions up to 365 in the last three months. Meanwhile, technical optimization such as the use of XML sitemaps and responsive design on mobile devices increased organic traffic by 35%. However, challenges like limited resources, Google algorithm changes, and low domain authority remain obstacles in SEO implementation. This study concludes that consistent SEO strategy application can enhance local media visibility in search engines, although its success requires resource support and regular monitoring. Strategic recommendations include strengthening quality backlinks, improving site speed, and diversifying locally based content to enhance Prodesanews.com's competitiveness in the digital realm. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for other local media in leveraging SEO for growth and sustainability in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: Search Engine Optimization (SEO), local media, Prodesanews.com, on-page optimization, off-page optimization, technical optimization, organic traffic.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of communication and information technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life. The world now feels more connected, where distance is no longer a barrier to sharing information. The pattern of information dissemination has accelerated from weekly, daily, to now happening in seconds.

In the legal context, Article 9 of Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press allows anyone to establish a press company regardless of their background. Data from the Press Council in 2023 recorded 1,798 verified media outlets, consisting of 54% online media, 24% print media, 21% television, and 1% radio. However, only 30.5% of these media outlets succeeded in administrative verification, and 55% achieved factual verification throughout 2023.

Online media, also known as cyber media or internet-based media, continue to grow rapidly alongside technological advancement. These include various platforms such as news portals, websites, blogs, social media, as well as internet-based radio and television broadcasts. One local media in Bengkalis Regency is Prodesanews.com, a news portal under PT Media Junjungan Riau Pesisir, established on September 29, 2021. As a local media outlet, Prodesanews.com has growth potential but still ranks low on the e-wartawan.bengkaliskab.go.id application compared to others. According to data, Prodesanews.com ranks 393 out of 509 online media, far below sites like Cakaplah.com, which ranks second.

This low ranking indicates the need for strategic efforts to increase Prodesanews.com's visibility and competitiveness, particularly through optimization on Google's search engine. One method that can be used is Search Engine Optimization (SEO), a technique to improve a website's ranking in search results by utilizing relevant keywords, optimized site structure, and quality content strategies.

Various studies show that SEO has proven effective in increasing rankings and reach of online media both globally and locally. Major media like Huffington Post and BuzzFeed utilize SEO strategies to reach broader audiences. Smaller media can also compete with larger players by optimizing SEO strategies, especially by leveraging specific keywords relevant to their target audience.

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Therefore, this study aims to explore how SEO methods can be applied to Prodesanews.com to improve its ranking on Google. The research is expected to provide practical benefits for local media development and contribute theoretically to the academic literature on SEO for local media.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

A. Definition of Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

SEO is a series of strategies or techniques used to improve the ranking of websites in search engine results like Google. SEO consists of three main components:

- **On-Page SEO:** Optimization of elements within the website such as keywords, content structure, and meta tags.
- **Off-Page SEO:** Focus on factors outside the website like building backlinks and promotion through social media.
- **Technical SEO:** Technical aspects ensuring the site can be accessed and indexed by search engines, such as site speed, data structure, and responsiveness.

B. Google's Algorithm and How It Works

Google uses complex algorithms to rank websites based on factors such as content relevance, site authority, and user experience. The process involves three main stages:

- **Crawling:** Search engines visit and gather data from website pages.
 - **Indexing:** The gathered information is stored in the search engine's database.
 - **Ranking:** Determining the order of search results based on specific criteria.
- Several factors influence Google's algorithm, including:
- **E-E-A-T:** Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness.
 - **Page Experience Signals:** Page loading speed, mobile-friendliness, HTTPS security.
 - **Local Context:** Google prioritizes geographically relevant keywords for local users.

C. Effective SEO Strategies for Local Media

Local media like Prodesanews.com need SEO strategies tailored to their target audience and geographic characteristics. Recommended steps include:

- **Quality Content Optimization:** Creating articles focused on long-tail keywords and region-specific news to increase ranking chances.
- **Backlinks from Local Media:** Acquiring backlinks from regional news portals or government institutions to increase domain authority.
- **Google My Business Usage:** Registering the site to help Google display search results based on location-based keywords.

D. SEO Application for Local Media

Local media can utilize:

- **Local Keywords:** Using keywords relevant to local audiences.
- **Mobile Optimization:** Ensuring sites are responsive for mobile devices given the high mobile usage in Indonesia.

E. Evaluation and Measurement of SEO Success

SEO success can be measured by indicators such as:

- Increase in organic traffic (visitors from organic search).
- Keyword ranking positions.
- Conversion rates (percentage of visitors performing actions like reading or signing up).

F. Online Media

Essentially, online media are mass media accessible via the internet. Like other mass media, online media adhere to journalistic principles. The internet as a new medium has characteristics such as being technology-based, flexible, interactive, serving both private and public functions, having fewer regulations, and being interconnected. The interactive nature of the internet can be an effective tool to build and maintain mutually beneficial relationships when used properly.

G. Prodesanews

Prodesanews.com is a private company engaged in electronic or online media aiming to deliver information to the public through an online news portal. It is based in Bengkalis, Riau, Indonesia, focusing on information dissemination down to the village level, covering categories like government, education, health, sports, law and crime, and culture. Prodesanews also maintains a Facebook page to reach a wider audience.

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Relevant Previous Studies:

- *"Implementation of SEO to Increase Visitors on the SCLEAN Website"* (Kharisma Tech 16(2))
Focuses on on-page SEO techniques like meta tags, descriptions, and image optimization, aligned with strategies suitable for Prodesanews.com. Results showed ranking improvement from page three to page one and a 90.2% increase in visitors.
- *"SEO Friendly Implementation to Increase Readership of Online Media Tribun Timur Makassar"* (St. Nurjannah)
Uses the Malaga RA concept involving indexing, on-page optimization, and backlinks. The study found significant traffic increases exceeding 1.5 million daily visitors, confirming SEO strategy effectiveness.

Both studies provide practical approaches and results applicable to Prodesanews.com, with the first focusing on on-page SEO and the second offering comprehensive guidelines including indexing and backlinks.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

A. Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach, chosen to explore and understand the implementation of SEO methods to improve ranking on Google for Prodesanews.com.

B. Location and Research Subjects

The study was conducted at Prodesanews.com's office located at Jl. Sultan Syarif Qasim RT 02 RW 06, Kelurahan Damon, Bengkalis, Riau. The subjects were the Prodesanews.com website structure, previously implemented SEO strategies, and the technical team managing the site.

C. Data Collection Techniques

- **Direct Observation:** Observing website structure, speed, and implemented SEO elements such as meta tags, descriptions, and keywords.
- **In-depth Interviews:** Interviewing site managers to learn about SEO strategies, challenges, and outcomes.
- **Documentation:** Collecting digital archives like website visit reports (Google Analytics), Google SERP rankings, and SEO implementation records.

D. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model:

1. Data Collection: Gathering all data from observations, interviews, and documentation.
2. Data Reduction: Filtering relevant data focused on SEO strategies impacting visibility.
3. Data Display: Arranging data into narratives, tables, and graphs for ease of analysis.
4. Conclusion Drawing: Drawing conclusions based on patterns or findings from the analyzed data.

E. Data Validation

To ensure data validity, triangulation was applied:

- **Source Triangulation:** Comparing data from interviews, documentation, and direct observation.
- **Technique Triangulation:** Using multiple data collection methods to verify the same information.

F. Research Focus

This study focuses on:

1. On-page SEO techniques like meta tags, meta descriptions, and image optimization.
2. The role of backlinks in increasing domain authority.
3. The effect of indexing on Prodesanews.com's appearance in Google search results.
4. Evaluation of SEO effectiveness in improving Google SERP ranking.

G. Research Flow

Steps undertaken:

1. Problem Identification: Analyzing Prodesanews.com's Google ranking and low site traffic.
2. Literature Review: Reviewing relevant studies like those on SCLEAN and Tribun Timur Makassar websites.
3. SEO Strategy Implementation: Analyzing on-page SEO, indexing, and backlink application for Prodesanews.com.
4. Result Evaluation: Comparing data before and after SEO implementation to measure effectiveness.

H. Success Indicators

Measured by:

1. Ranking Improvement: Change in Prodesanews.com's position in Google search results.
2. Visitor Increase: Traffic data before and after SEO measured via Google Analytics.

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3. SEO Technique Effectiveness: Evaluation of SEO elements' impact (meta tags, descriptions, backlinks) on site visibility.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Improvement through SEO Optimization

- **On-Page SEO:**
 - Relevant keyword selection and metadata optimization increased CTR by 1.6%.
 - Site speed optimization reduced load time to below 3 seconds, improving user experience.
- **Off-Page SEO:**
 - Backlinks from 91 referring domains increased total impressions to 365 in the last three months.
 - Social media promotion expanded local audience reach, contributing to traffic growth.
- **Technical SEO:**
 - SEO audits showed all pages were properly indexed, supported by XML sitemap usage.
 - Responsive design increased organic mobile traffic by 20%.

2. Performance Results and Data Analysis

Based on Google Search Console and Ahrefs data:

- Impressions and Clicks: 365 impressions and 6 clicks in three months with a 1.6% CTR.
- Average Ranking: Improved from position 20 to 12, requiring further optimization to reach the first page.
- Backlinks and Domain Rating (DR): 91 backlinks from 57 domains yielding a DR of 8, indicating a need to improve backlink quality.

4. SEO Challenges and Strategy Evaluation

Challenges include:

- Limited technical resources causing suboptimal SEO management.
 - Low-quality backlinks with limited impact on DR improvement.
 - Google algorithm fluctuations affecting site ranking stability.
- It is concluded that the structured SEO method improved Prodesanews.com's position from the second page to 12th place on Google SERP. Further improvement requires:
- High-quality backlinks from authoritative sources.
 - Diversification of SEO strategies, such as multilingual content.
 - Better technical resource management.

5. Future Implications

This study provides strategic guidance for local media in leveraging SEO for digital competition. Algorithm changes like Google's Helpful Content Update 2024 necessitate continued emphasis on content quality and AI-based keyword research and traffic analysis.

5. CONCLUSION

a. Conclusion

This study shows that applying Search Engine Optimization (SEO) methods to Prodesanews.com effectively improves site ranking and traffic. On-page optimization strategies such as relevant keyword selection and meta tag configuration resulted in a 1.6% CTR and a 35% increase in organic traffic. Off-page optimization through quality backlinks from 91 domains and social media promotion strengthened domain authority and increased site impressions to 365 in the last three months. Technical optimizations, such as faster site speed and mobile responsiveness, supported user experience and optimal indexing.

With a targeted and sustainable approach, Prodesanews.com has successfully leveraged SEO to enhance its competitiveness in the digital ecosystem. To support ongoing performance improvement, the following strategic steps are recommended:

1. **On-Page SEO Optimization:**
 - Use specific keywords in titles, meta descriptions, and URL structures.
 - Implement internal linking to improve user navigation.
2. **Backlink Enhancement:**
 - Build backlinks from authoritative sites via guest posts and business directories.
 - Monitor backlink quality using Ahrefs or SEMrush.
3. **Quality Content Creation:**
 - Publish in-depth articles consistently, with a minimum of 1,000 words and visual elements.
 - Focus on long-tail keywords to target specific audiences.

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4. Site Speed:

- Compress images using tools like TinyPNG or ShortPixel.
- Upgrade hosting and use caching plugins to speed up site load times.

5. Local Traffic Expansion:

- Register the site on Google My Business and create content relevant to specific regions.
- Optimize local keyword usage to attract regional traffic.

b. Recommendations

Recommended tools:

- SEO Tools: Ahrefs, SEMrush, Moz.
- Content Tools: Grammarly, Canva.
- Site Speed: Google PageSpeed Insights, GTmetrix.

By combining these steps, Prodesanews.com can sustain positive growth, reach more audiences, and compete effectively in the digital arena.

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