

# SEO: Everything you need to know



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# Introduction

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) can be a pretty confusing subject for a lot of people, and if you struggle to tell your snippets from your schema, don't worry, you're definitely not alone.

**The good news is that SEO isn't as scary as it sounds. In this e-book we're going to run you through the basics, so you can get on your way to working your way up the search results!**



## What is SEO?

**People rarely venture beyond the first or second page of the search results and securing one of those coveted spots is important for driving traffic to your site and boosting brand awareness.**

Whatever the size of your business, there are plenty of things that you can do to work your way up the rankings. This process is known as SEO, Search Engine Optimisation.

# Before we get started...

There are a few common SEO terms knocking around that you should get familiar with:



- **BACKLINKS** These are created when another site links to yours. They're seen as a 'vote of confidence' from the original site and they're great for boosting your SEO.
- **CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR)** This shows what percentage of people click through to your site from organic search. You can use it to see how well your online activity is performing.
- **CONVERSION RATE** Your conversion rate measures the percentage of visitors to your site that complete one of your goals, like making an online purchase or filling out an enquiry form, out of the total number of visitors.
- **DOMAIN NAME** The address of a website.
- **DOMAIN AUTHORITY** A measure of how powerful a domain name is, based on several factors including its age, popularity and size.
- **GOOGLE ADS** This is Google's pay-per-click online marketing platform which allows you to manage and place paid search listings for your site on a search engine results page and third-party websites.
- **GOOGLE MY BUSINESS** This is a free tool offered to businesses and organisations to help manage their online presence. By giving Google relevant information about your business, you can become more discoverable to potential customers in search and maps.



# Before we get started...

- **KEYWORDS** Also known as 'search queries', these are words and phrases that people put into search engines to describe the kind of content they're searching for.
- **ORGANIC TRAFFIC** This relates to the website visitors who click through from unpaid search results.
- **PAY-PER-CLICK (PPC)** PPC advertising is a type of digital marketing in which the advertisers are charged whenever the ad is clicked. PPC campaigns can be run across social media networks as well as Google Ads.
- **RICH SNIPPETS** This is the name for enhanced search results which show up next to your website in search results. They include extra bits of text and visual content such as product information and ratings.
- **SCHEMA** This is a piece of code that you can add to your site to help search engines understand the context of your content.
- **SEARCH ENGINE RESULTS PAGES (SERPS)** When you see the term SERPS, it simply means the results pages that are shown on a search engine like Google.
- **USER- GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)** This is any type of content that has been created by users or consumers of a brand or product, such as reviews.



# Let's start with the basics...

If you're new to SEO, there are some techniques that we recommend you start off with to ensure you're in the best position possible to start moving your way up the rankings.

## Linking

Internal and external linking is really important when it comes to SEO. This involves **referencing other articles, getting other people to link back to you, and linking to other articles on your own site**. These links will help search engines crawl between the pages on your website and increase its authority.

## Keywords

Keywords are the topics and subjects that define what the content on your website is about. **You need the keywords on your site to line up with people are searching for**, so that you have a better chance of showing up in the results. For example, if you're a pet shop you may want to rank for the keywords 'dog food' or 'cat toys'. **However, you can't just cram as many keywords onto your page as you can** – there are some basic rules that you'll need to follow, such as using keywords in your page title and your meta tags as well as varying the use of your keywords.

You'll need to take some time to do some keyword research, and once you have a list, streamline it with a good keyword research tool.

# Let's start with the basics...

## Headings

Search engines look at titles to determine the subject of your page, so there are a few things you should keep in mind when creating them. **Place keywords at the beginning of the title, keep them short, and make them compelling.** When creating your content, make sure you use heading tags to separate the contents of your page (<h1>, <h2>, <h3>, etc.) You should use <h1> for all your page titles, and <h2> and <h3> for your subheadings. There should only be one <h1> per page, whilst you can have multiple subheadings.

### → TOP TIP!

Of course, there are a whole load of techniques out there that can help with your SEO. **These are just a few to get you going!**

## Content

As a rule, keep your content updated regularly to make sure search engines see your website as **being relevant and up to date.** Adding a blog to your site and updating it regularly is a good way to ensure you're always uploading **regular, fresh content.**

## Sitemap





# Do online reviews help SEO?

**Yes, absolutely! If you're reviewing your SEO strategy, you should certainly consider using reviews to boost your position in search engines.**

## **?** How can reviews help with my SEO?

Customer reviews play an important role within SEO, and collecting reviews can improve your search engine visibility in a few different ways:

- The language and keywords that are used within your reviews will help you target more traffic
- Pages that have reviews are more likely to be linked back from other websites, which makes them more trustworthy and therefore have a higher chance to rank better in search engine results.
- Reviews provide your site with user-generated content (which Google also loves)
- You become eligible for Google's organic stars

## **→** **TOP TIP!**

**User generated content (such as reviews) lets search engines know your website is active, which can drive website traffic, generate organic stars and increase conversions!**

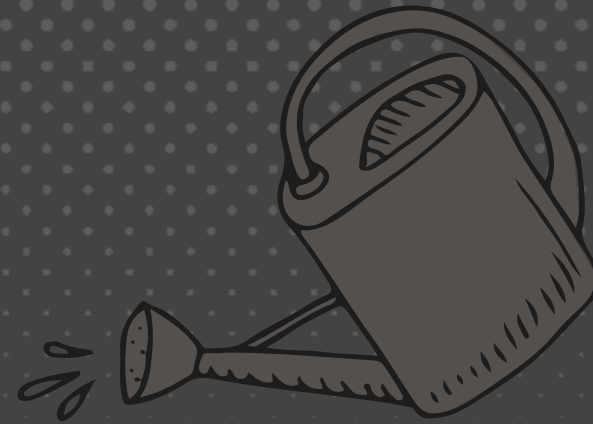


# Let's look at organic stars...

## ? What are organic stars?

Organic star ratings create instant trust in your brand and are a great way of boosting your click-through rates. All you need to do to be eligible, is start collecting reviews. The stars that can appear as a result of collecting reviews are organic stars, and as you may have already guessed, only appear on organic search listings rather than paid ads.

**These stars pop up in the form of a star rating, followed by the numerical rating out of five, and then the total number of reviews.**



## ? How do I make organic stars appear?

There are a couple of things you need to make your site eligible for organic stars.

- You need to be collecting reviews
- You need to mark up the pages on your website with the correct schema

Schema is really important. If your website isn't marked up, or the markup has errors, your organic stars won't show.

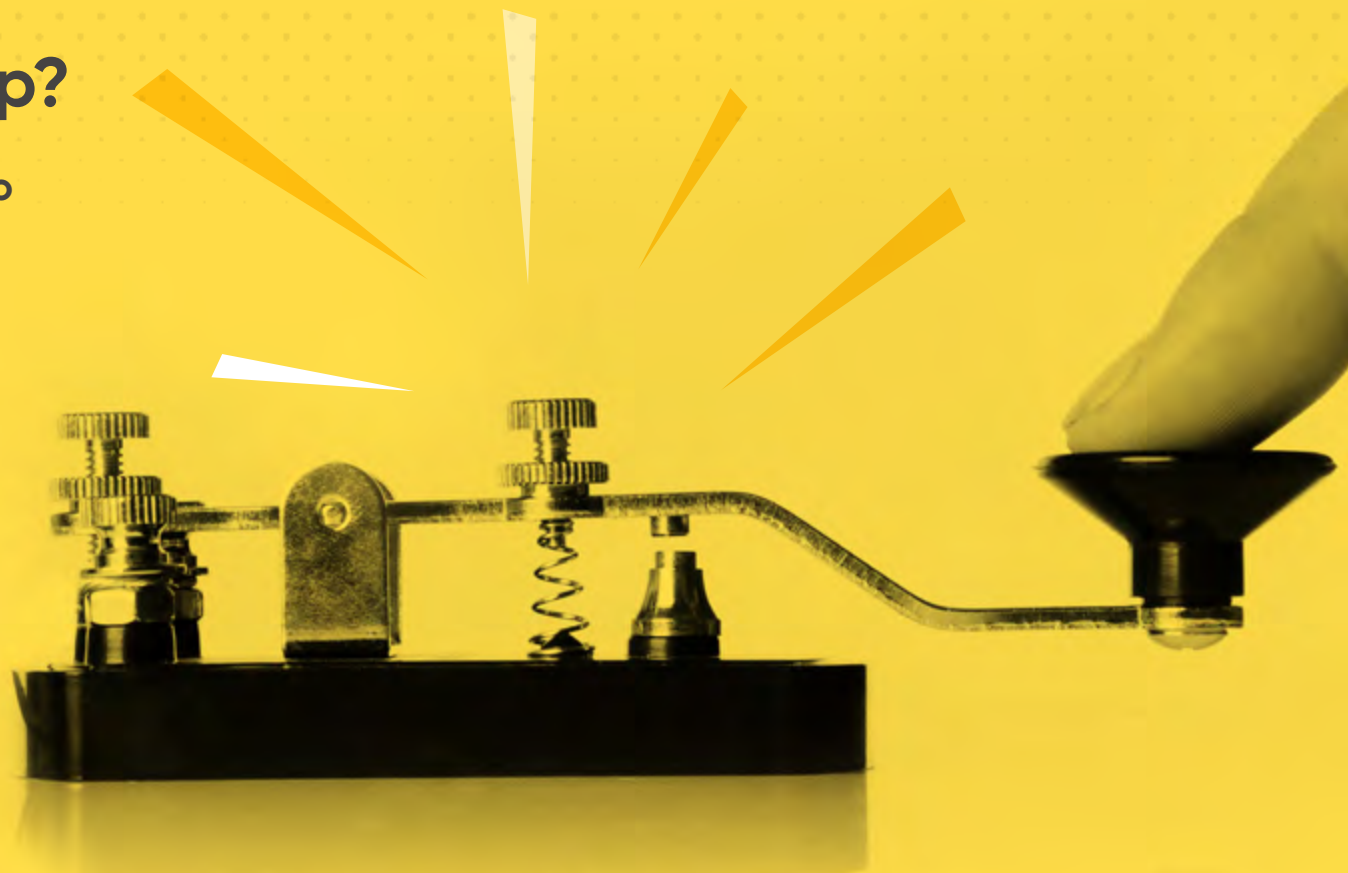
**There's no guarantee that organic stars will appear in your listings. Your schema will only make you eligible for the stars! It's all at Google's discretion, so be patient!**

# What is schema markup?

**Schema markup is code that is added to a website to help search engines return more informative results for its users.**

There are lots of different types of schema that you could add to your site such as 'organisation', 'product' and 'local business' schema. The schema you choose will depend on the type of page you are marking up.

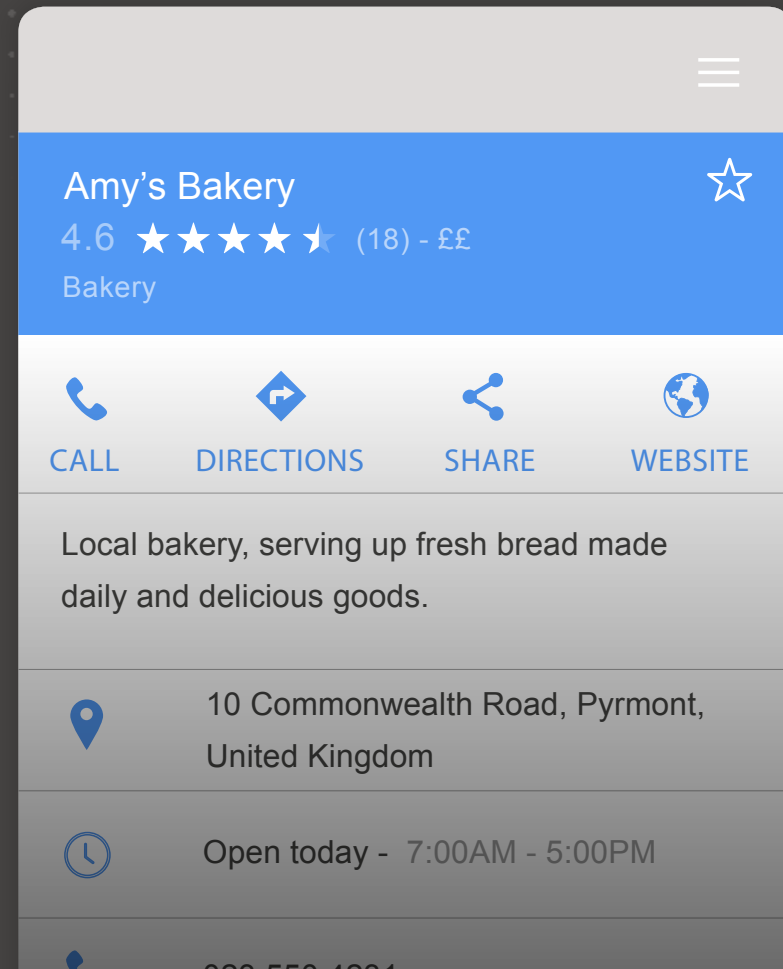
.....



# How do I get ratings to appear in a Knowledge Panel?

The Knowledge Panel, sometimes called the Knowledge Graph, is an information box which can appear on the right-hand side of the search results. The panel contains all the key bits of information customers need to know about your business, and lets users quickly see whether your site is what they're looking for.

If your business is collecting reviews with a trusted platform such as Feefo, you'll be eligible for an extra section in the Knowledge Panel called 'reviews from the web' so long as, yep, you've guessed it, you've added local business schema to your 'contact us' page!







## How do I set up Google My Business?

It's easier to setup than you might think.



## Do negative reviews affect my SEO?

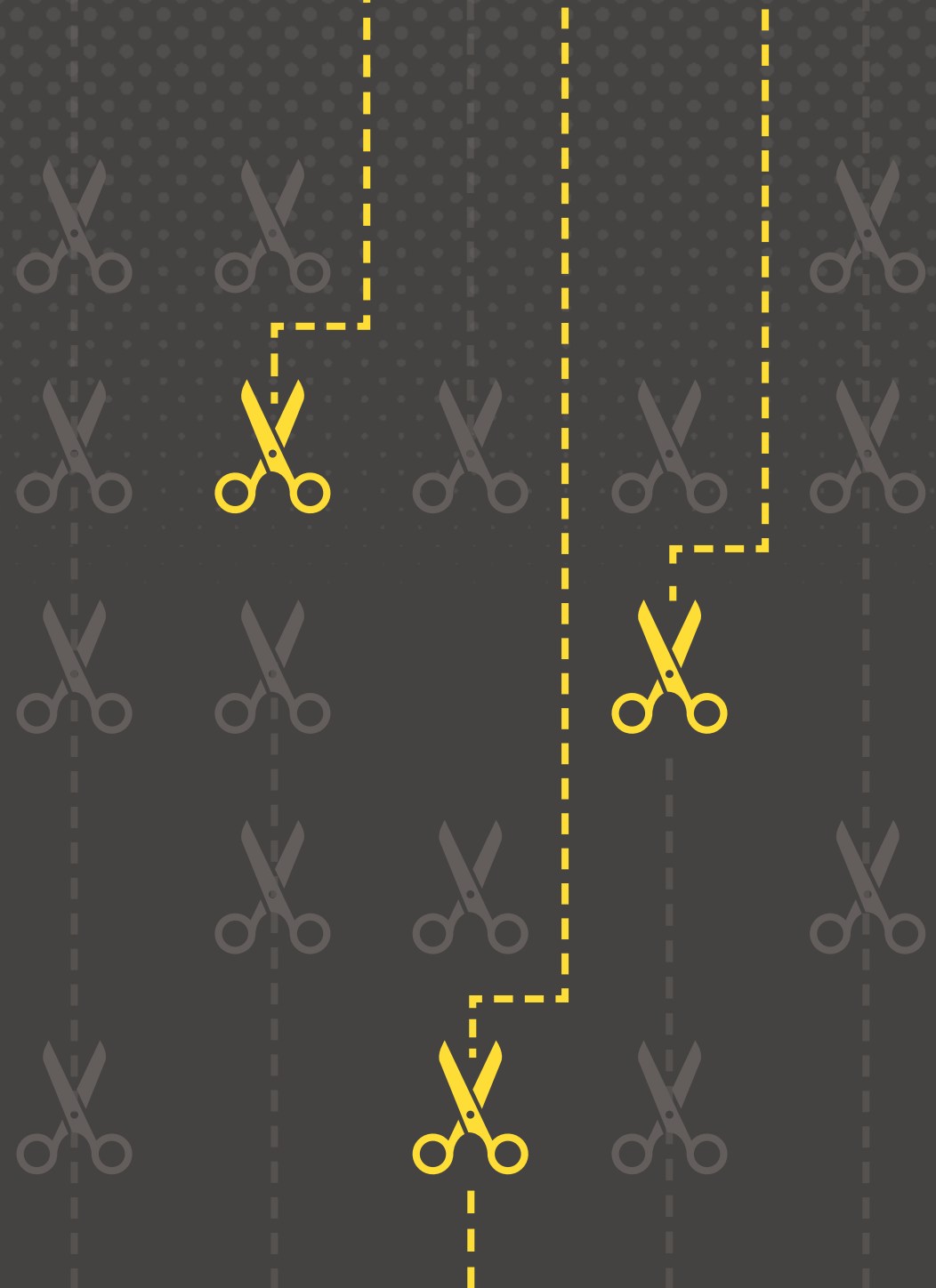
**It's totally normal to get a negative review from time to time.**

The good news is, negative reviews won't affect your SEO, and they could even help you out when it comes to your search rankings. The total number of reviews that you receive, good or bad, will contribute to your search ranking and it's good to have a wide range of opinions to show that you're an honest and transparent business.

## How can reviews improve my conversion rate?

The extra bits of information that appear in rich snippets such as star ratings help search engines work out the relevancy of a page.

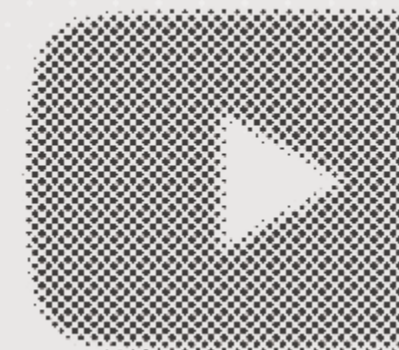
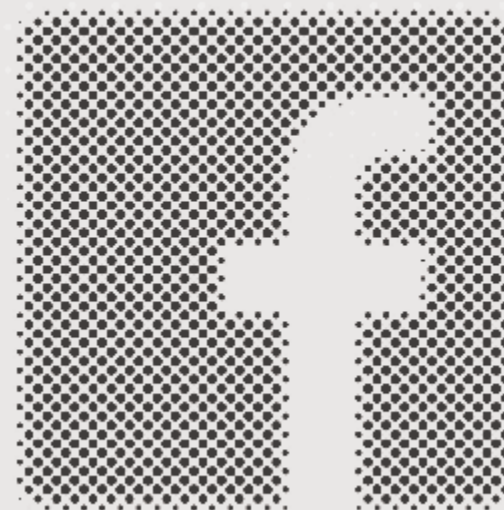
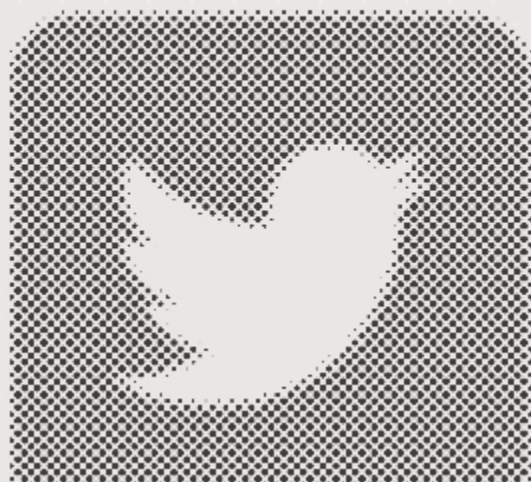
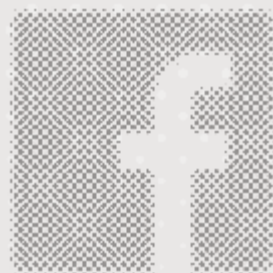
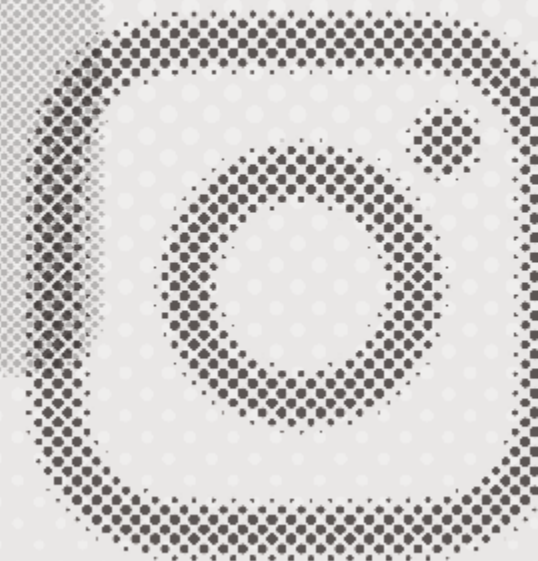
With these rich snippets and some clever integration of reviews onto your website, the quality of traffic headed to your site can get a real boost, and you can see an increase in conversion rate. Lovely.



# Will sharing my reviews on social media affect my SEO?

## In a word, yes!

It's widely believed that social signals such as shares and likes on Facebook will help to improve your search ranking. Sharing your reviews on social media will not only build trustworthy backlinks to your site, but it will also increase your brand awareness!







## Do reviews count as user-generated content?

Yep! You may already know that fresh user-generated content on your site is absolute gold when it comes to SEO.

# The key takeaways

Reviews can have a huge impact on the effectiveness of your SEO, and you don't need to be a rocket scientist to reap the rewards.

- ✓ Collecting reviews with Feefo can make you eligible for organic stars.
- ✓ Even if you have everything you need to be eligible for organic stars, they're not guaranteed and it's up to Google whether your stars show or not!
- ✓ Rich snippets can help you stand out in search results, improving your CTR.
- ✓ Reviews can act as a great form of content marketing helping to deliver fresh content which can help your search engine ranking.
- ✓ Socially sharing your reviews will help build your site's backlink profile.



**To find out more, contact  
a member of our team**



**Email us:**  
[sales@feefo.com](mailto:sales@feefo.com)



**Call us:**  
0203 362 4209



**feefo** 



Feefo Holdings Ltd  
Heath Farm  
Heath Road East  
Petersfield  
GU31 4HT

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