

Shop 'til You Drop

**Beat 97% of E-Commerce Sites
by Using Embryo's E-Commerce
Pillars of Success**

EMBRYO

We see
what
others
don't

About the Author

Leveraging decades of knowledge to maintain Embryo's status as the most innovative digital agency in the UK, James has worked in leadership and strategy roles across a number of companies in and out of the digital arena.

James has given seminars on search, sales, and marketing tactics all around the world, sharing his expertise. His abilities and passion for innovation and creativity know no bounds. As a result, Embryo leads by example, delivering exceptional strategies that generate lucrative results for a wide range of clients.

It's within the e-commerce sector that James' passion burns brightest. A frustration with current online industry practices, combined with a desire to help businesses disrupt the monopoly of well-established brands, has resulted in this guide.

Packed with in-depth descriptions of features and tactics that you can leverage to enjoy significant growth for your e-commerce business, 'Shop 'til You Drop' is a real goldmine.





Welcome to 'Shop 'til You Drop' – a collection of the core SEO pillars that Embryo has tested and used for e-commerce success. Every e-commerce website, no matter the software platform being used, can benefit from these tactics.

The aim of this guide is to showcase the pillars that will bring you the most impact – or those you can implement with minimal effort, at least. Of course, SEO pillars go beyond the ones mentioned here, so if an SEO tactic that you are more familiar with – like meta tags, page speed, etc. – is not listed, do not take it to be that we've discounted it. Simply, this is a core rather than comprehensive list.

Each suggestion is rated in two ways with both marked out of five stars:

The first rating is how easy this is to do (one is easiest, five is hardest)



with the second rating showing how much impact this will have if it is not already done (one is low impact, five is highest impact).



Breadcrumbs

Effort



Reward



Even though the use of breadcrumbs is now more commonplace, it still astounds me when I come across a platform/website not using them.

Often disliked by developers and designers, breadcrumbs help users to map their journeys around the site – they are integral to a website's navigation.

I had an occasion a few months back with a huge UK e-commerce website. It was middling in terms of its rankings compared to its direct competitors. Needless to say, when they applied the breadcrumbs, their rankings shot up across the board.

If you are not currently utilising breadcrumbs to their maximum effect, you are really leaving money on the table.

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All the SEO Tools You Could Need

Welcome to the largest page of SEO tools and digital marketing software on the internet.

These programs have the potential to transform your digital marketing strategy, allowing you to [work smarter and faster at your SEO](#).

At Embryo, we have access to a wide range of software that helps us to create [innovative SEO strategies](#) for our clients. If you have any questions about these tools, or want to find out how they can be used to optimise your website, don't hesitate to get in touch with our team today by phone on [0161 327 2653](tel:01613272653) or email info@embryo.com.

Category Pages: Content Optimisation

Effort



Reward



There are many approaches to optimising category pages on an e-commerce website. At the base level, however, it comes down to one core factor: high-quality content can significantly increase the contextuality of each category page, so its production is a key area where you should dedicate time.

Forging the best, most comprehensive category pages within your sector is a strategy that gets you some of the most 'bang for the SEO buck'. Firstly, though, you have to decide if you want that 'dreaded' content on your category page at all.

Here, let me help you decide... If you are selling so much product that you can't cope with demand, then you don't need content. However, if you would like to sell more products and believe that there's an untapped audience out there that is yet to discover you, then adding content to your category pages is how you'll reach them. For this, you need to create the best and most voluminous, interesting, and well-presented content on your category pages than those in your industry do.

'Category Hub' pages

The AAA+ class of e-commerce category pages is what I call 'Category Hub' pages. These pages are much richer than a typical category page that simply lists the products within. A good example of a great category hub page is Target's Kitchen & Dining category.

As well as linking to products and sub-categories in the collection (as a typical category page would), there are many other offers and discounts shown to entice the user. Not only that, but by making this page very unique in comparison to other category pages on their site, Target is helping its chances with Google. Why? Because Google loves pages that have been crafted over pages that are 'robotically' generated.

If you were to take the top 20% of e-commerce sites, across a range of sectors, a much higher percentage would have category hub pages.



Kitchen & Dining

Target / Kitchen & Dining (36,347)



Kitchen & Dining Deals



Kitchen Appliances



Kitchen Utensils & Gadgets



Tableware



Cookware



Kitchen Storage

Show 13 more

Trending in Halloween Kitchen & Dining



\$20.00 Halloween Skeleton Stoneware Platter - ...



\$20.00 Halloween Wooden Coffin Shape Serving...



\$10.00 Halloween Skull Silicone Ice Cube Tray - ...



\$15.00 48"x14" Halloween 'Happy Halloween' Tabl...



\$20.00 Halloween Stoneware Serving Platter 'Happy...



\$5.00 Halloween Stoneware Figurine 14.6oz Mug...

30% off


select seasonal Threshold™ kitchen & table linens*



Harvest tableware under \$20

from Threshold™






Meet Figmint™

Explore new, thoughtfully designed kitchen essentials. Only at Target.

Figmint



Trending in Figmint



\$3.00 Dual Sided Terry Kitchen Towel Cream/Sage Gre...

Add to cart



\$10.00 Ceramic Oil Pour Bottle Cream - Figmint™

Add to cart



\$5.00 9" Stainless Steel and Silicone Tongs...

Add to cart



\$5.00 3pk Silicone Mini Spatula Set - Figmint™

Add to cart



\$5.00 Acacia Wood Solid Spoon Brown - Figmint™

Add to cart



\$5.00 6pc Magnetic Bag Clip Set - Figmint™

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\$219.99 Whirlpool 3.1 cu ft Mini Refrigerator Stainless...

Add to cart



\$34.99 Mr. Coffee 12-Cup Programmable Coffee...

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\$10.99 GoodCook Ready 2pk Cookie Sheets (17"x11"...

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\$9.89 (reg. \$12.99) Sale Wilton Ultra Bake Professional 24 Cup...

Add to cart

Category Pages: Text and Product Positioning

Effort



Reward



Something that I mention to every e-commerce client I speak with is to – if they can – intersperse text midway through the product listings on a category page.


This does several things to help with SEO, including:

- Ensures that content is not just 'stuck on' at the bottom of the page
- Encourages Google to view the page as less 'robotically' created
- Allows for 'in-content' link text, which will produce much stronger links to other pages/products on a site

The sites that do better than 95% of other eCommerce sites (such as the example on the right from the brand OnBuy) intersperse reviews within their product listings and create text boxes that are the same shape as the boxes that contain each product between every eight products or so. Doing this breaks up the monotony of each product listing and keeps things fresh.

If a category hub page is not possible, then interspersing text among product listings is a good alternative and still far better than what the majority of your competition will be doing.

#46



Multiple Options Available

(Samsung Tab A 2019 10.1" T510 T515, Pink) Kid's Shockproof Cover For Samsung T580 T585


★★★★★ (6)

from **£8.99**

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#47



Foldable Tablet Soft Pillow Lap Stand


★★★★★ (109)

£8.89

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#48



All-new Fire HD 8 tablet | 8-inch HD display, 32 GB, 30% faster processor, designed for portable

★★★★★ (2)


£68.81

>> Fast & Free Delivery

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#49



All-new Fire HD 8 tablet | 8-inch HD display, 32 GB, 30% faster processor, designed for portable


★★★★★ (2)

£78.64

>> Fast & Free Delivery

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#50



Multiple Options Available

(Android 12.0 Tablet 10 inch Wi-Fi) 10.1" 32GB RAM 32GB Storage | Wi-Fi 6 | Quad-Core |

★★★★★ (3)

from **£75.00**

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POPULAR


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POPULAR


★★★★★ (12)

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★★★★★ (12)

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POPULAR


★★★★★ (12)

£144.99

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POPULAR

★★★★★ (4)

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(Blue) Shockproof Protective Case Samsung Galaxy Tab A 10.1 (2019)



POPULAR

★★★★★ (7)


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Multiple options available

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POPULAR


★★★★★ (3)

£10.15

>> Fast & Free Delivery

SPONSORED

(Pink) Shockproof Protective Case Samsung Galaxy Tab A 10.1 (2019)



POPULAR

★★★★★ (9)


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>> Fast & Free Delivery

Multiple options available

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HONOR PAD X9 4+128GB WiFi 11.5" GRAY



POPULAR


★★★★★ (1)

£139.00

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£1,899.00

>> Free Delivery

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Compact and lightweight, a tablet offers you ultimate freedom - whatever your computing needs and wherever life takes you. Nifty upgrades on the paperback and hardback, eBook readers store an entire library for you to access with the press of a few buttons. Find your perfect one in our brilliant range of tablets and eReaders!

For avid readers, the idea of amazing tech will probably exist in the form of the e-Reader or a versatile device such as the iPad, Microsoft Surface, or other models of portable tablets.

Both of these offer a calm reading experience wherever you go, but taking the plunge and picking from such a wide range can be difficult. Although both seem similar in purpose, ideally they offer a huge book selection that can be accessed at your convenience, it's important to consider what you actually want out of your dedicated device.

What are the pros and cons of a tablet or an e-reader?

Although both are hand-held devices, the difference in size between a tablet and an e-reader is pretty big. If you want something small enough to fit in your pocket or in a handbag - like you would with a normal book! - a modern e-reader doesn't skimp on quality despite often coming in a smaller package. Meanwhile, the average tablet boasts a bigger screen, usually coming in two sizes: 7 inches and 10 inches. A smaller screen offers a great balance between portability and usability, while the larger tablets give you more room to view text and images.

It's also important to remember that their size doesn't always reflect better battery power - as tablets are not just dedicated e-readers, they use more juice to power other applications and processes at the same time. This is great for people wanting more from their electronic devices and who plan on using them to browse the internet, watch films, take high-quality photographs, curate a music library, write and view documents, and much more. They also boast a larger screen that makes it easier for you to view graphics and texts.

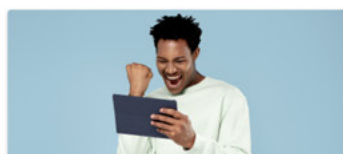
E-book readers, however, offer a much more streamlined functionality and come in a range of affordable models. They can be used in the same way tablets can, even with a stylus pen to annotate, write notes, and highlight passages - and can even be used with a compatible keyboard. The most common type of e-reader uses LCD screen technology that can be treated so it can be read in bright sunlight. For those wanting an experience closer to that of a conventional book, the other type of e-reader is called "electronic ink". This is because its screen looks like printed ink on paper.

Accessories, cases and helpful additions

Whether you choose a traditional tablet or an e-reader, we have plenty of e-book-friendly products and accessories here at OnBuy. From stylus pens to help you circle important passages, backup batteries and replacement parts, and even stylish cases that keep your electronic device free from scratches or accidental damage, we have your requirements covered. Plus, if you find yourself reading in bed or want to prop your tablet up at a more comfortable viewing angle, we also have plenty of beanbag rests, as well as poseable mounts and stands, to suit a range of desktops, surfaces and aesthetics.

Related Blog Posts for iPads, Tablets & eBook Readers

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Category Pages: Content Design

Effort

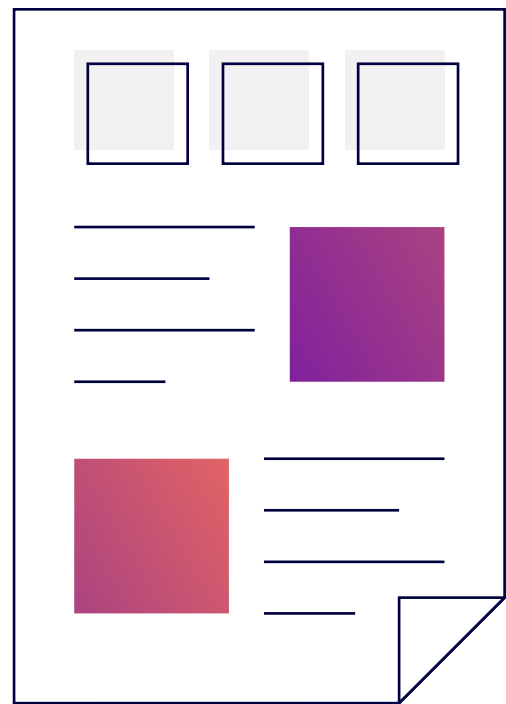
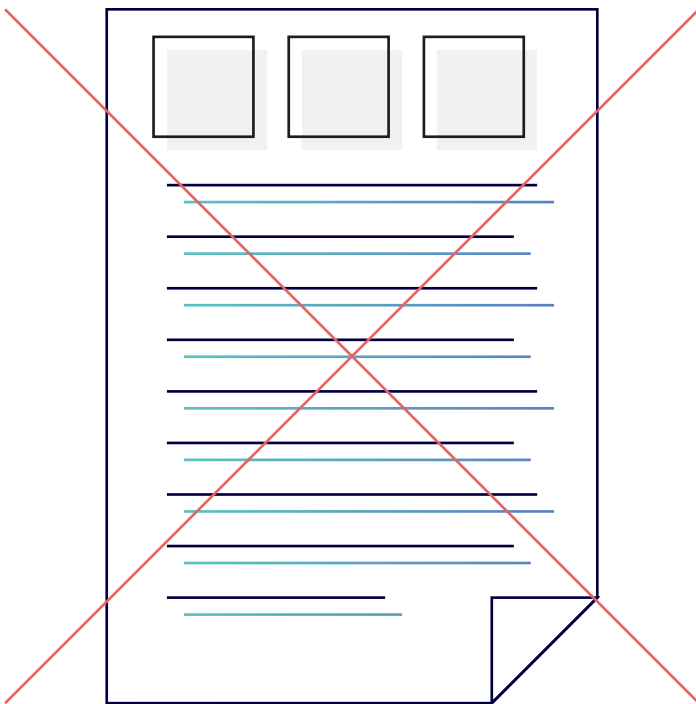


Reward



A category page on an e-commerce site with zero content faces an uphill battle. A category page that has content placed on it purely for the SEO benefit is better but not yet best. So then, what's missing? Content design.

With a few CSS and/or HTML tricks, content design (how the content is presented) can give the page even great chances of ranking if improved.



A page that is purposefully crafted (versus a page with content merely piled on it) not only appears more visually palatable to the human visitor, but it also helps to convince Google that this isn't a page created by a robot.

Category Pages: Sub-Category Pages

Effort



Reward



Creating subpages underneath a main category page – and filling them with great content – is a very solid SEO tactic for any website. This is especially the case for e-commerce websites. Why? Because e-commerce sites rarely create content-filled sub-category pages, you'll probably be one of only a few doing this in your sector.

The image below shows what Embryo would consider to be a 'premium SEO strategy' for how an e-commerce category should be optimised in terms of content structure.

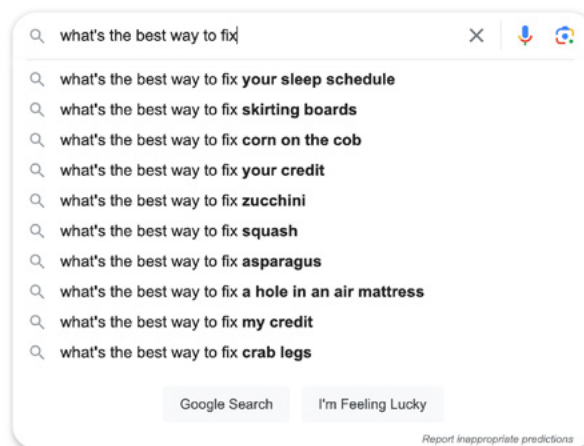


Category Pages: Answer Questions!

Effort



Reward



If you are ever struggling for content ideas for category (or sub-category) pages, then don't. There are always hundreds, if not thousands, of questions that people ask about products and how they are used.

A range of free and paid services can help you here, allowing you to collate these questions in seconds. On this, you must always think: for every person that knows what they want, there are anywhere from ~5 to ~100 people who are not yet sure. And what do those that are not yet sure do? That's right, they enter questions into Google. Questions such as 'How do I use a [product]?', 'What fashion labels does [celebrity] wear?', 'What's the best way to get [problem] fixed?'.

Your products – whether fashion, functional, or anywhere in between – solve a problem for a person. And people don't always know the answer. If they did, then the internet would be infinitesimally smaller than it is.

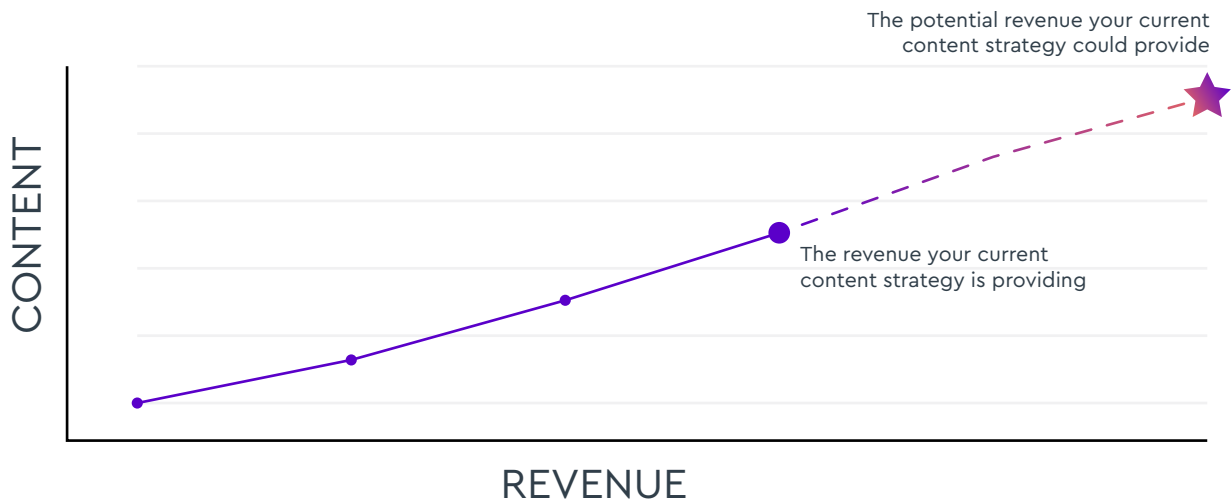
So, answering questions should be one of the major goals of any content that you produce on your category pages.

80/20 Product Descriptions

Effort



Reward



I ask every single person in charge of an e-commerce site this one question:



Do you write the same amount of content for the 20% of products that are responsible for 80% of your revenue as you do for the 80% of products that are responsible for just 20% of it?"

It is a mouthful of a question, for sure, but it has yet to fail in making e-commerce site owners review how they do their product descriptions.

Think about it – your popular products may only have a hundred words or so as their description, which could be the same as a product that perhaps sells one item per year. Why not create a much more well-rounded product description, including various use cases within the text?

On the previous page, I explained that most people are unsure about what exactly it is that they want. So, why not also answer questions for your key products? I have seen way too many times when a product can open itself up to a whole new audience (and revenue stream) with the inclusion of just one or two words and phrases.

What I like about this tactic is that, once people realise that much better product descriptions work for major products, they roll it out for lesser-selling products, too. This gobbles up a lot of hidden market share and keyword reach.

Descriptive Linking and Link Shingling

Effort



Reward



Of the e-commerce sites that do use content, they still make what I consider to be a glaring error when linking to other parts of their site – if they link to other pages at all, that is.

On 99% of sites that use links within their copy, they do so by applying exact-match link text every single time. These site owners are hugely underutilising the power at their hands.

Here's an example of how most clothing sites would link to the 'cycling shorts' page on their site:

If you're looking for a piece that can be paired with our tops, our [cycling shorts](#) are ideal.

...and here's how Embryo would craft the same link:

If you're looking for a piece that can be paired with a range of tops, our [Mesh Panelled Support Cycling Shorts](#) are ideal.

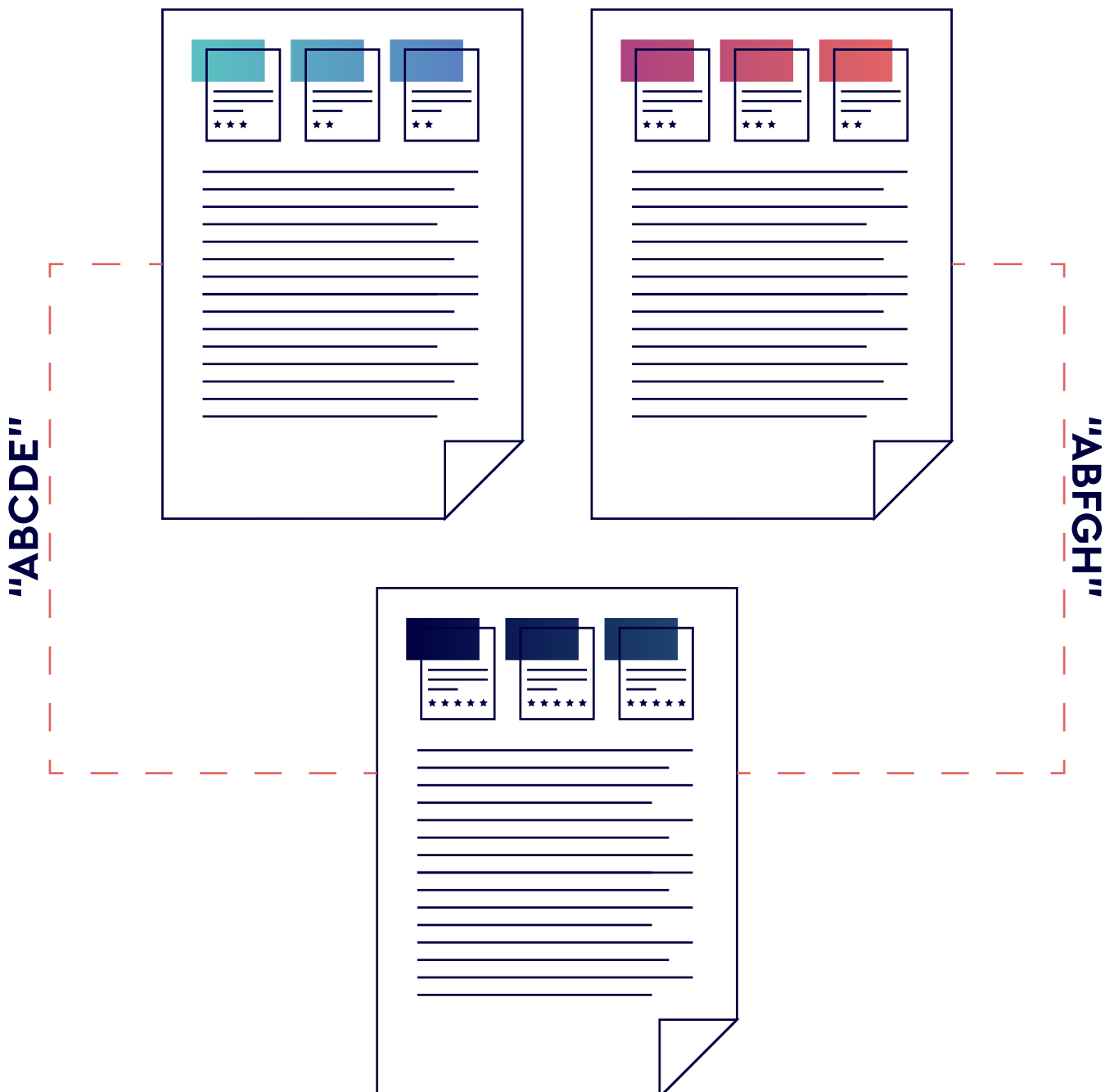
In the Embryo example, not only did we create a more descriptive sentence, but we also used the link text that contained various words that helped the user AND Google to understand much more context about the linked-to page. Applied across every link on the site, this tactic becomes a 'thing of beauty'.

Link shingling in action

Across your site, different pages will use different link text to link to the same page. This tactic is what we refer to as 'link shingling', and it helps Google to understand each page in far more vivid detail.

The image below shows how two pages (teal and pink) link to another page (navy) with different link text. In this example, both link texts use 'AB' (e.g. the product), but there are also other words in the mix - 'C,D,E,F,G,H' - when you combine the text of both links. These (CDEFGH) may be words that users search for when searching for such solutions to their problems.

Because a site uses these words on both the linked-to pages AND pages that are doing the linking, this means that Google will have far greater opportunities to deliver each related page to searchers.



Guide Pillar Pages

Effort



If taken seriously, and done with assurance, the creation of long-form guide pages on an e-commerce site – usually housed outside of the Shopify/Magento/etc. platform – can significantly increase site authority.

This is down to several reasons. Google loves to 'chew' on well-crafted long-form guides that provide readers with heaps of insight and value.

Any links (internal and external) that point from such a page are likely to have strong SEO influences for the pages that they link to.

Also, such excellently produced content is more likely to get cited and linked to by external sources over flimsily produced, short-form content.

Here is one such example of a high-quality guide pillar page: choosemycar.com/usedunder10k

Reward



The screenshot shows a webpage titled "Best used cars under £10,000 in the UK 2021" from choosemycar.com. The page is structured with a navigation bar at the top, followed by a main heading and a sub-heading. Below this, there are several sections, each featuring a car model with a small image and a detailed description. The cars listed include the Citroen C1, Skoda Citigo, Mazda 2, Fiat Panda, Volkswagen Up!, and Peugeot 108. Each section provides information about the car's features, performance, and value for money. The page is well-organized and easy to read, with clear headings and sub-headings.

Another such page, although not as long-form as the previous example, is Tiffany's Guide to Diamonds.

Rather than create all of the content in one long-form piece (Embryo's chosen method), Tiffany creates sub-pages that deal with subjects such as 'carat', 'colour', and 'cut'.

This type of page is likely to be shared by those looking for engagement rings, or by people whose friends may be doing so. This page ranks #2 (at the time of writing) for 'diamond ring guide' and is likely responsible for tens of thousands in revenue per year for the company.

Purchases made on this site will ship to U.S. addresses only. Do you want to shop the U.S. site?

Shop the U.S. site Or Choose location

TIFFANY & CO.

Book an Appointment

Jewelry Gifts Love & Engagement Fine Watches Home & Accessories Fragrance Men's Stories

The Guide to Diamonds

At Tiffany & Co., nearly 1,500 of the world's most talented artisans craft our diamonds. Leading the industry, Tiffany offers a triple excellent cut on all round brilliant diamonds. As a result, only the most expertly crafted diamonds earn the right to be placed in the legendary Tiffany Blue Box®.

The 4Cs

Every diamond, like a human fingerprint, has certain distinguishing characteristics. The 4Cs—color, clarity, cut and carat weight—are the globally accepted standards for assessing the quality of a diamond. At Tiffany, we only accept 0.04% of the world's gem-grade diamonds.

Cut

Cut is determined by how a diamond's facets interact with light.

[Learn More >](#)

Clarity

Clarity is a measure of the purity and rarity of the stone.

[Learn More >](#)

Color

Color refers to the natural tint inherent in white diamonds.

[Learn More >](#)

Carat

Carat denotes the weight of a diamond.

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Variable Footer Content

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Reward

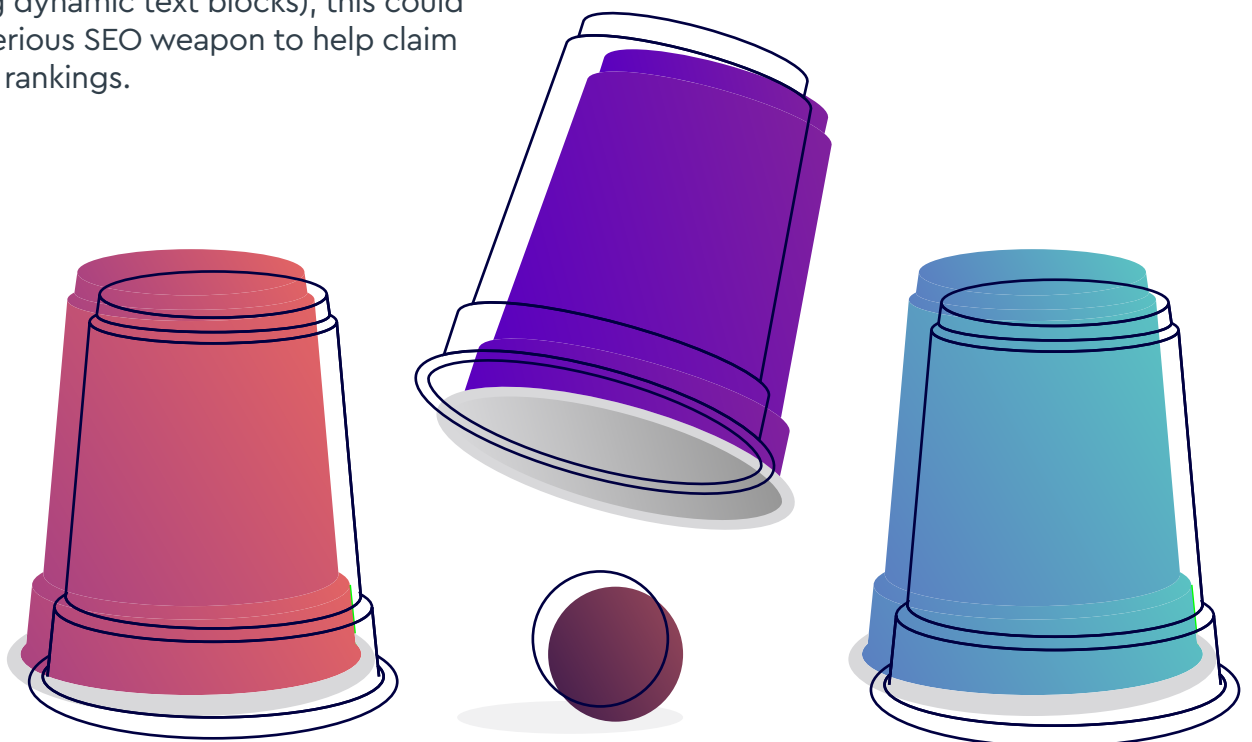


Google does its best to ignore what it considers to be 'boilerplate' content – this term simply refers to the reusable content that can be used across multiple webpages, think the header and footer. Instead, Google is more interested in concentrating on 'the goods'.

Because e-commerce sites typically have less content than other sites, the footer is likely to form a larger part of the overall page code. So, e-commerce sites can be smart here. Make your footer variable in terms of design, structure, and content – by this, almost making them non-footers, so that Google can crawl the footer content with more interest.

For example, most footers contain 2-4 columns, with each column housing information such as key links, maps, contact details, social media links, and so on. By creating code that shuffles the order of these 'columns' of information, Google is likely to re-read them each time a page loads. This is because the content will be different from the footer content on previous pages that it visited.

Add to this changes in footer height, footer colour, different links depending on the page content, and other variables, and you start to create content on a page that is absorbed much more than a typical footer would be. Done correctly, and with lots of thought (e.g. adding dynamic text blocks), this could be a serious SEO weapon to help claim higher rankings.



Summary

Along with having a fast-loading website that adheres to Google's Core Web Vitals and all-round best SEO tactics, adopting our 'Shop 'til You Drop' strategies will pave the way to outperforming your competition.

There are still big gaps in terms of optimum SEO tactics that most e-commerce website owners either ignore or do not know of. This guide has highlighted just a few, but there are still more.

Open innovation in e-commerce

A strategy that is grossly underutilised is to observe what successful e-commerce sites in totally unrelated industries to your own are doing. Some of the most powerful tactics for online success will not come from adopting what others in your own sector are doing. Who knows, the key to huge success in wedding dress e-commerce could be found on a site currently dominating the SERP for golf clubs!

Intent-led content is king

So, you already know the great importance of content, but did you know that on 99% of e-commerce sites, the content used is almost always not catering for various user intent. Most e-commerce content is written about a product itself – and not what the product solves.

Do this, and you open up your site to a huge new audience that doesn't yet know who you are, but that you can solve their problem.

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