

SEO Action Plan

<https://www.integrativecounselingandwellness.com/>

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Audience, Scope & Disclaimers

This document was prepared for the site owner/webmaster of <https://www.integrativecounselingandwellness.com/> and is intended to communicate technical information to a technical audience. This report discusses Harmening Marketing Solutions (HMS) SEO audit findings and proposes recommendations to improve internet search-engine-friendliness. Any SEO recommendations presented herein reflect HMS's best professional effort based on the information received from our client. Due diligence should be exercised before implementing any SEO recommendations. It is essential to understand your SEO strategy and seek professional SEO implementation assistance before undertaking an SEO optimization effort.

On- Site SEO:

Summary:

Your site is in good shape. There are some issues that need to be addressed, but overall nothing too major. Basically, you have a new site that needs time and energy put into it in order to move up the rankings on Google. Below is a list of the things I believe you would need to do to move to the next level with your SEO. There are many other things you could do, eventually, but this will be plenty to get started with. Here is the list:

General Recommendations:

1. **You need links.**

If you focus on just one thing in SEO it should be to create great content and get people to link to it. If you can do that, you will be an SEO rockstar.

In your attached Audit, you will see you currently have a score of 1 for “domain authority”. This is a score from 1 to 99 for how much “weight” Google gives your site when deciding which sites to put at the top of search results. Links are the single biggest factor in raising your “domain authority”.

Currently, your site has zero backlinks. That’s not ideal. You are just starting, so it makes sense that you don’t have any, but getting some should be a very high priority. Links are the currency of SEO. Links, as far as Google is concerned, are instances of relevant websites naturally linking to yours.

Quality links can be hard to get, but are worth it. A good .gov or .edu link can be very valuable indeed, or a link from a trusted media outlet. Get yourself a small feature in the Wenatchee World and you are on your way. In addition, any link that is relevant to your business is also excellent, most especially reputable, authoritative industry sites, magazines, journals, etc. These links let Google know that your site is trustworthy because other sites are staking a bit of their reputation on sending their users over to your site.

There are lots and lots of ways to get links. You can just ask people or organizations you already have relationships with. You can write blog posts featuring one of the resources from your list on your site, send it to them and ask if they’d be willing to feature it on their site. You can guest post on other blogs in return for a link to your site. The possibilities are endless. BUT, you must keep it above board. Be very careful about any schemes to buy links. There are places, such as fatjoe.com that do a great job. It can be a bit expensive, but if you have more money than time, it is a great option. Don’t ever go for cheap links from India or some other place.

1. Fix Redirect Chain on Home Page.

You have a “redirect chain” on your home page. This is your most troublesome issue. Essentially, this is where a page is redirected to a page, which is redirected to a page, which may be redirected to a page, and so on. This dilutes “link juice” (the importance Google and others give to the amount and quality of links which are pointing to your site). We need to talk about how to rectify this. You have some time to fix it since you do not yet have any links, therefore, no link juice (see item #1). I assume it is that your previous domain was the same “page” as your updated domain. We may be able to fix it by copying your home page and having the original URL attached to it point to your new URL using a 301 redirect. Just as it sounds, it can be confusing to sort out.

1. Add page titles.

I have added “starter” titles for each page. You can review them by going to the “Pages” tab in Weebly, selecting a page, then selecting the SEO settings.

Each page should have its own unique title optimized for the meta keywords for that page (which I have provided). These should, ideally, be between 30 and 60 characters. Here is a tool to help with character counts: <https://www.charactercountonline.com/>

1. Add a meta description for each page.

This is called “page description” in the SEO settings portion of each page on Weebly. This should reinforce the title and be between 70 and 155 characters long. As with page titles, it should be unique to the page it corresponds to, and include, as close as can be managed naturally, 1 to 3 of your meta keywords. I have added initial descriptions, but you will want to take a spin through them yourself.

1. Add H1 Tags.

“H1” stands for “Header 1”. Search engines value the text of these headings as they see this as an indication of what the content of the page is about, and it should be exactly that. They should be written with the keywords for that page in mind. I have put my suggestions for keywords for each page in the meta keywords section of each page. Meta keywords have very little value, but can act as a reference point for the page as a whole. Weebly does not add H1 tags automatically, but I have added a free app from the Weebly App store which allows you to easily add them. Here is a screenshot of where this tool is located at the bottom of the “build” menu:

Just click and drag the <H1> Tag App Icon to the desired location (ideally the top of the page) and use the dialogue box to create a title for the page that tells what the page is about and incorporates (as best as possible without forcing them) the meta keywords for that page. This should further reinforce the page title and description. I can help you with these, but wanted to let you know about it before I just started changing the verbiage/appearance of your site.

1. Add Favicon to your site.

This is the little icon that is on each browser tab. Currently it is just the Weebly “W”. It can be added in the main site settings section of Weebly. This is a small thing, but it lends professionalism to your site and reduces confusion for users. It could be as simple as the blue “T” from “Tara” on your homepage. You can easily make this using [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

1. Add “alt-text” to all the images on your site.

You can do this by clicking on the image when in “build” mode, scrolling down to “advanced”, and then entering text in the alt-text section, which is at the bottom of the menu. Alt-text was developed to help visually impaired people use the internet, but has the added benefit of enabling search bots to tell what images are, since they cannot interpret images (yet). This gives another chance to communicate with search engines and lets them more accurately crawl and rank your site.

1. Keyword Research

Here is a keyword list I have created for your site based off of keyword research using various tools to determine what keywords will be easy enough to rank for, while still having enough traffic to be worth the time and energy:

Counseling Keywords:

1. counseling couples
2. counseling for adults near me
3. counseling psychologist
4. best counselor near me
5. counseling help
6. counseling services near me
7. counseling in my area
8. marriage counselor near me
9. grief counseling
10. marriage counselling
11. relationship counseling near me
12. couple counseling near me
13. counseling near me
14. anger management counseling
15. anxiety counseling
16. trauma counseling

Therapy/Therapist Keywords:

1. counseling therapist near me
2. family counseling near me
3. child counselor
4. counseling family

5. family therapist near me
6. relationship therapist
7. therapist near me
8. find a therapist
9. therapist
10. therapy for couples
11. child therapist
12. cognitive behavioral therapist
13. talk therapist
14. therapy for families
15. behavioral therapy

Other:

1. Depression
2. mental health professional near me
3. clinical psychologist near me
4. Psychologist
5. health coach

Many of these keywords were also selected because the results for these queries in Google have either a “local pack” (meaning your Google My Business Page would show up) and/or Ads at either the top or bottom of the results page, or both. So, these keywords can be used in your Google Ads, as well. Keyword research should be based on data showing what people are ACTUALLY searching for, not what we might think they should be searching for. They are often very different. Once you set up your Google Ads account, I will show you how to use the Keyword Planner Tool.

1. **Be Patient**

If you do all the things listed above, you will see results. BUT, there is no guarantee WHEN you will see them. My guidance is always to give it 6 months minimum. If you see results before then, that is fantastic. If you don't see major movement in that 6 months, something is wrong and needs attention. It is then time to change course. SEO is a marathon, not a sprint.

Home Page recommendations:

I recommend taking the ranking process one page at a time. After making the overall changes recommended above, continue with your homepage, get it ranking for your

meta keywords (I provided meta-keywords for your main pages, but this is your site, feel free to adjust as needed), then move to the next. The next could be new pages, such as in a blog, or landing pages for ads (we will talk about landing pages when we review ads). If you don't want to start a blog, I would then just move to your "about" page and move down the list.

1. Expand homepage content.

I would strongly consider adding a section summarizing each of the other pages on your site on your home page, with a link to those pages. They do not need to be titled the same as the pages they correspond to, but a basic bio (about), a paragraph about your services, a section featuring a specific external resource (could make great blog posts???), etc. could go a long way, especially in terms of SEO for your home page. Most especially if the content is written with the meta-keywords in mind.

The featured external resource could rotate out monthly, just as a thought.

Google wants to see a site that is visited and used, and that is also changed and updated often by the owner.

There is a concept in SEO and blogging called "cornerstone content". It refers to longer-form articles that serve as the cornerstone upon which the rest of your content is resting. A big blog might have several of these. The way your site is setup, your homepage may be a great spot to feature a keyword-rich (see keyword list above) sampling of all the other content on your site. Here is a great article on the subject: <https://yoast.com/what-is-cornerstone-content/>

I must add that, while you can use your other pages for reference for these content sections, you must avoid ending up with duplicate content. Duplicate content is a negative ranking factor that Google definitely takes into consideration.

1. A video introduction near the top of your home page.

With the intimate nature of your business, it could be a great resource for visitors to get an audio/video sense of who you are and what you are about. They can then know with more certainty if they can work well with you. This is the pinnacle of SEO in that Google simply wants websites to offer value to their visitors, and will reward sites that do so. All the technical gobbledygook is mostly just the way that Google attempts to measure "value".

Site Navigation & User Experience:

Summary:

You have a well-structured site, overall. It is best practice to have more than one way to access the various pages on your site. I have made recommendations regarding this below. People use websites in different ways. Give them options and they are more likely to linger longer on your site, which is something Google looks at when determining the value of your site.

Recommendations:

1. Use more internal links,

Such as having an arrow and the word “about” linking your homepage to your about page. Then, on your “about” page, at the bottom, place links with arrows, one on the bottom left pointing back to the home page, and one pointing to the next page of your top menu, and so on. This gives users one more option to keep engaging with your site. Here is an example from a site I manage where we were able to get bounce rate (the amount of people who don’t engage with your site before leaving) to drop and time on site to go up just by adding these links:

1. Link to subpages.

Put links to subpages on the pages themselves, not just in the navigation bar. For example, under “About”, you have your “special Interests” and “rates and insurance” pages in the drop down menu, but, on a desktop, an average user might miss these great resources just due to not hovering over the “about” in the nav bar. To alleviate this, incorporate links to these pages into the content of your about page. Maybe at the bottom with something like “check out these other great resources to learn more about Tara Clark’s Integrative Counseling and Wellness: (add links)”

1. Calls to Action!

EVERY page *must* have at least one call to action. Whether it is soft, as in “Is now the time to take control of your inner life” to a harder push, “Call Tara at ###-#### to get started with your journey”, it is imperative to let the customer know exactly what you want them to do. After all, the point of SEO is to get people to your site and in contact with you!

Local SEO (Google My Business)

Summary:

I have gone through and tweaked (there were only a couple things that I ended up changing) your Google My Business page. You are well on your way to getting lots of great reviews. I see that other verbal reviews have gone through, it was very strange about that other one. Do you have any other information about that? I did some digging and it's pretty much just disruption due to COVID. Mostly we can just wait for it to pass.

Recommendations:

- 1. Adjust your service areas.**

I would do this by county, instead of by town, at least for Chelan and Douglas Counties. That way you can free up more of your 20 available spots and not miss people living outside of city limits. In addition, I would personally focus on Chelan and Douglas County initially, then branch out. This is, of course, up to you.

1. Post regularly to your GMB page.

This is basically the crux of success with this page and local SEO, currently. If you engage more than your competition, do so with better content, and have great reviews, you will win. GMB is simple, but difficult to be consistent. Posting to GMB is one of the most overlooked opportunities for local businesses to engage with potential clients, for free. So, get after it and share anything and everything you think might be valuable to your potential customers. Ideas:

- a. Utilize the various categories for posts, most especially the COVID Update one to let people know you are doing telehealth!
- b. Start doing short video messages (make it a "VLOG" on your website?) answering questions people who are struggling often ask, such as: "Why do I feel so alone? Am I Weird? Am I Crazy?" Jot down three points you want to hit, keep it short and raw, and post often. Emotional impact and connection is how people make buying decisions, most especially with something like counseling, I would think. One major key to SEO (and marketing overall) is to understand what state of mind your potential customer is in when they search for your site. It would stand to reason that people looking for your services are either struggling themselves, or reaching out on behalf of someone else who is struggling. Using your cell phone and the GMB app, you could get an entire post done in 5-10 mins. You can "post" videos under the "photos" area of the GMB interface.
- c. Turn on messaging by downloading the GMB app to your phone. This way, people can get a hold of you quickly and can receive a response quickly, without the hassle. They find you quick, message you right in their search, and receive a response. Voila! Customer interaction!
- d. Start a blog on your Weebly site featuring your external resources and share these posts on your GMB page. The best way I know is to make an audio recording of your thoughts about a subject, then use a voice to text app to get a rough draft and shore it up from there. Structure is important, just like with the H1 tags spoken about above. Let me know if you are up for committing to a blog--I hesitate to even bring it up, as most people don't have the time or energy to be consistent enough to make a blog successful. I personally prefer the VLOG idea.
- e. Share each page of your site intermittently on Google My Business.
- f. To share, simply log in to GMB and then use the "posts" tab. It's the second one down just below the Home tab. I made a super simple initial post. I hope you don't mind. I just invited people to visit your website.
- g. Add photos! Photos of yourself in a professional setting. At least one headshot.
- h. If you were to have a mix of posts including links to pages on your site, Blog posts, and videos, you would be crushing it!
- i. Make posts utilizing this list of keywords relevant to your business which have a "local pack", meaning the list of local business results with the map: anger management counseling, behavioral health counseling, chelan counseling, child counselor, mental health counseling, telehealth

counseling chelan, telehealth counseling wenatchee, wenatchee counseling.

3. Create your NAP (Name Address Phone) Citation and submit to other local directories.

- i. Your NAP Citation is just a very precise and consistent listing of your Name Address and Phone number. So, mine would be:

Harmening Marketing Solutions
1100 Vista Place, #U
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(800) 674-3979

- i. There are other directories which can give you a boost in local SEO such as a FB Biz page, Yelp, Manta, Angie's List, etc.
- ii. It can be difficult to manage these directories. If you would like to move forward into this process let me know, we can discuss other services, either provided by me or another platform.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to review this document. This guide is meant to give possible next steps toward establishing a marketing foundation centered around SEO best practices.

There is no single way to go about achieving SEO success. In fact, there are infinite ways to do so. Always keep in mind that Google (and other search engines) succeed by delivering the BEST results to a person's query. So, if you are able to get into the mind of the person searching, and give them what they are looking for, and, ideally, even more, you will have success. There are basic things that need to be in place in terms of technical SEO, but great content can steamroll your site to the top of the results even without all the technical stuff in place. Great content that people find useful, want to interact with, and want to share is what it's all about!

I hope this guide is helpful. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out via email or phone. I look forward to speaking with you soon about getting you all set up with FB, Google, and YT ads!

Thanks,

Josh Harmening

