

Metadata

There are three main metadata points that can be managed directly within BigCommerce:

- Page Title (tag is <title> and shows in both title bar and search results)
 - BigCommerce autofills these if they are left blank.
 - Current version of BC autofills is not 100% best practices for the current landscape of SEO
 - Home Page should be [Name of Company] | [Optional info about market]
 - Category and brand should be [Name of Category or Brand]
 - Web Page is already fine and can be left blank
 - Product should be
 - [Name of product] | [Optional Keywords] OR
 - [Name of product] | [Optional Keywords] | [Store Name]But Store Name should be on 100% of products or 0% of products
 - Blog Entry cannot be changed in BC but autofills the title of the blog entry
 - The title should be no more than 50 to 60 characters, but the total width is more important than the number of characters
- Meta Description (tag is <meta name="description" content=""> and shows only in search results)
 - This must be filled out, since BigCommerce does not autofill.
 - If this is left blank, search engines will display whatever they believe is the descriptive text for the page.
 - Ideally, this should be
 - [Summary of page] [Reason to click] OR
 - [Description of content] [Reason to click]for most pages
 - The homepage should be
 - [Who the company is] [What the company does] [Reason to click]
 - Product pages should be
 - [Brief description of product] [Brief value statement of category or brand] OR
 - [Brief description of product] [Brief description of category or brand] OR
 - [Brief description of product] [Brief value statement] [Reason to click]
 - A "reason to click" should be either a short value statement or a hook such as Free Shipping or Guaranteed Satisfaction
 - The value statements and reasons to click can be pregenerated in large groups then mixed and matched in their groups.
 - This is viable because the uniqueness threshold is 15% uniqueness.
- Meta Keywords (tag is <meta name="keywords" content=""> and does not show)
 - This can be ignored for most companies, as most search engines stopped using Meta Keywords as a ranking factor in 2009
 - If this is included, it should focus on the high level keywords and not the more granular keywords
 - Outside of attempting to rank in eastern Asia, this will do almost nothing

URL

There are two points of URL management within BigCommerce

- URL Structure (the pre-planned structure for new URLs, found in Settings > URL Structure)
 - The defaults are currently best practices with one exception:
 - If the business has a catalog that is highly complex or contains novel products they should update the product URL to include category data.
- URL Designation (the selected or autofilled URL on the specific page)
 - For most pages, this is fine as-is.
 - For products, merchant should consider setting them slightly differently
 - URLs are a source of keyword information with a strong weight to the first several words
 - After about 10 words, the keyword value of following words drops to negligibility while also hurting the value of the front words
 - The most important words should be in the first 5 positions, with supplemental words after
 - Most commonly, this should look like
 - /primary-product-name-at-first-with-secondary-information-following-after
 - If the products use /category/product structure, keep the length below 8 words for the same reason

Backlinks

Backlinks are the primary driver of SEO in the modern landscape.

This is because they heavily inform about two of the three key SEO factors:

- Authority
 - Authority from backlinks is measured by the relative authority of pages linking and the volume of authoritative pages linking
 - Authority is essential because it identifies the site as the “source of truth” for their specific business
- Relevance
 - Relevance from backlinks is measured by the context of the link on both the sending and receiving end.
 - Relevance is essential because it builds the overall credibility of the page within their area and increases the “relatedness” of the page.

Backlinks can be checked using several paid and unpaid resources

- ahrefs.com
- semrush.com
- moz.com

Each of these tools will have different ways of tracking authority, toxicity, and relevance, so reliance on the specific tool is necessary to know what the results mean.

A solid backlink profile can be built primarily by networking and social media.

Content

Content is the part of SEO over which a business has the most control. All content should have the following properties as much as possible

- **Relevance**
 - This measures how much the page relates to its keywords and how well the page relates to the pages linking to it.
 - This is mostly determined by the backlink profile
- **Authority**
 - This measures the level of authority the page appears to have with respect to its subject matter
 - This is mostly determined by the backlink profile unless the page is exceptionally novel in its space
- **Uniqueness**
 - This measures how much of the content is NOT repeated, either within itself or across the site or across the internet
 - The minimum measure of uniqueness necessary is 15%
 - This is because most web design is guaranteed to have repeated design and identifying elements
 - The minimum requirement attempts to guarantee that clone sites are less likely to rank higher than original sites
- **User-Friendly Design**
 - Descriptions should be conversational or technical based on market
 - Specifications should be in data tables or bulleted lists
 - Images should have alt-text
 - Pages should load quickly and not present frustrating design elements
- **Mobile-Friendly Design**
 - Because the internet is becoming increasingly mobile-first, design should consider the mobile experience first
 - Images and scripts should be optimised for mobile data experiences, using more compressible formats