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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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# SEO & Website Content

Updated January 2024



# Website

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One of your most important marketing tools



# Why is the Web so Important?

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- One of the first places prospective students visit
- Students expect higher education websites to be optimized for their phones, easy to navigate, and personalized to their needs

[2023 e-Expectations Trends Report by Modern Campus](#)



# Why is the Web so Important? Continued

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- The website is an external marketing tool – not an internal system
- Everything we do on the web should be with external constituents in mind
- A huge responsibility and important task – not an afterthought





# SEO

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An overview of SEO & quick wins to implement



# What is SEO?

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- **Search engine optimization:** How highly your website/webpage ranks in organic search results



- The ultimate goal is to optimize your page to satisfy a user's search query



# How Search Engines Work

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**You publish content on your site.**



**Google bots or “spiders” crawl your site and review pages.**



**Google indexes your page.**



**If your page meets the ranking criteria, Google will show it in its search results.**

SOURCE: SEMRUSH.COM



# What Does SEO Involve?





# Other Things to Know About SEO

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- A balance of optimizing for humans and for search engines
- Always changing and evolving
- Results can take anywhere from 6-12 months





# Quick Wins for SEO

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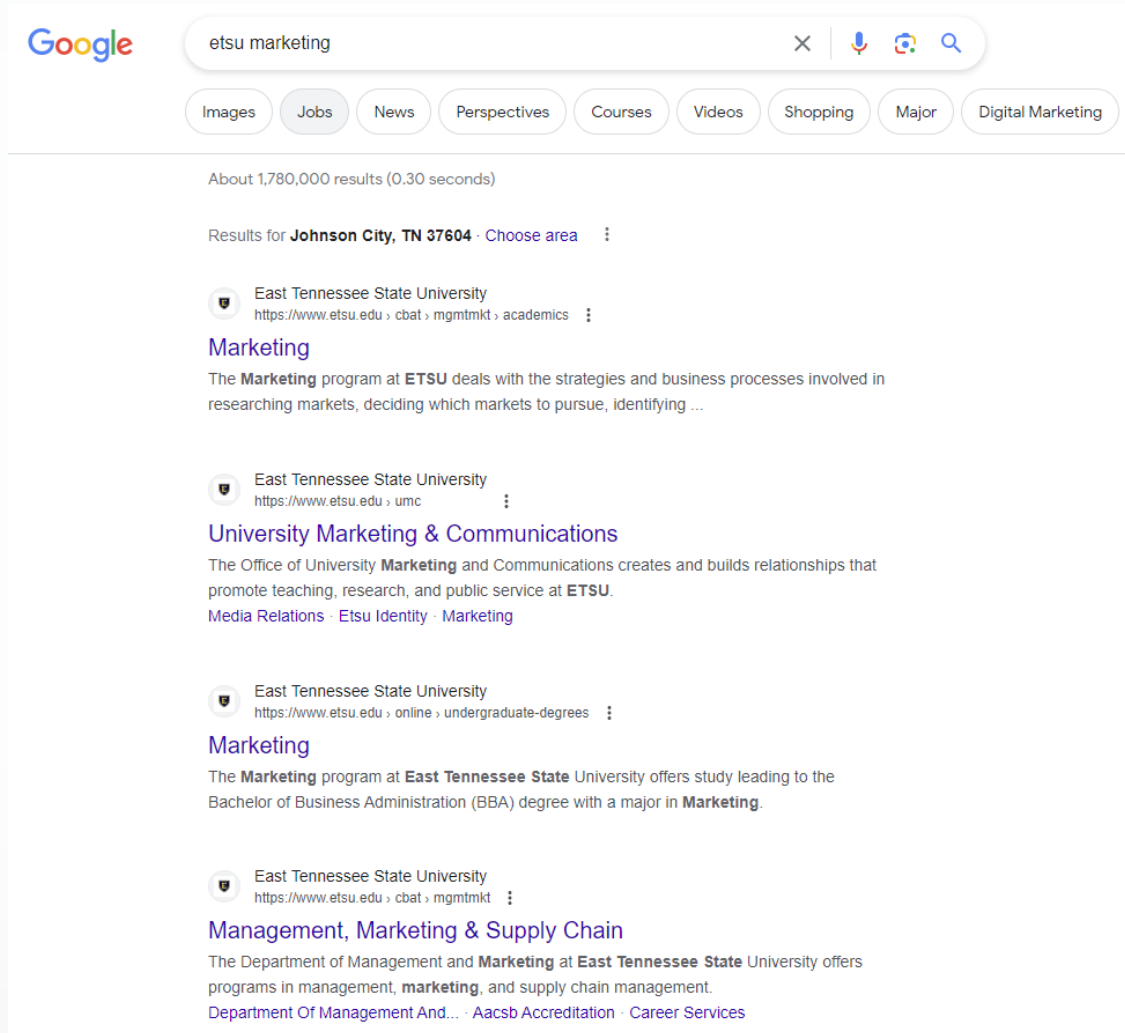


# Write Effective Meta Titles & Descriptions

- Need to effectively describe what the page is about
- Make sure keywords are included
- Think about differentiators ([brand differentiators](#) and department names)
- Titles: 50-60 characters
- Descriptions: 110-160 characters



# Meta Title & Description Example




Google etsu marketing

Images Jobs News Perspectives Courses Videos Shopping Major Digital Marketing


About 1,780,000 results (0.30 seconds)

Results for **Johnson City, TN 37604** · Choose area

 East Tennessee State University  
<https://www.etsu.edu/cbat/mgmtmkt/academics>


**Marketing**

The **Marketing** program at **ETSU** deals with the strategies and business processes involved in researching markets, deciding which markets to pursue, identifying ...

 East Tennessee State University  
<https://www.etsu.edu/umc>


**University Marketing & Communications**

The Office of University **Marketing** and Communications creates and builds relationships that promote teaching, research, and public service at **ETSU**.  
[Media Relations](#) · [Etsu Identity](#) · [Marketing](#)

 East Tennessee State University  
<https://www.etsu.edu/online/undergraduate-degrees>

**Marketing**

The **Marketing** program at **East Tennessee State** University offers study leading to the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree with a major in **Marketing**.

 East Tennessee State University  
<https://www.etsu.edu/cbat/mgmtmkt>


**Management, Marketing & Supply Chain**

The Department of Management and **Marketing** at **East Tennessee State** University offers programs in management, **marketing**, and supply chain management.  
[Department Of Management And...](#) · [Aacsb Accreditation](#) · [Career Services](#)



# Use Descriptive Page Headings

- Think of H1-H6 as your table of contents on a page
- H1 is the title of your webpage. It should always include your main keyword.



## ETSU Brand Guide

### ETSU BRAND

- Introduction ▾
- Community and Belonging ▾
- Brand Story ▾
- Messaging ▾
- Design ▾
- Presentations ▾
- Writing ▾
- Video ▾
- Sound ▾
- Photography ▾
- Halo Photobooth
- Social Media ▾

#### What is a brand?

A brand is not a logo, a tagline, or an ad. A brand is a perception. It is how the world views us and the impression we leave.

#### What is brand development and management?

Ideally, the world's perception of us (our brand) will align with how we see ourselves and want to be seen. Brand development and management are all about facilitating that alignment. By cultivating our brand, we can better express our mission, vision, and values as an institution and engage our communities.

#### Why are brand awareness and affinity important?

Increasing brand awareness and encouraging affinity for our brand helps build greater trust and stronger relationships with our constituents. These efforts serve as a critical foundation supporting nearly all of ETSU's goals, whether it's engaging the community, securing funding, achieving national recognition, or recruiting more students. For example, according to a [survey conducted by Niche.com](#)<sup>®</sup>, 69 percent of high school juniors said that a college's name recognition and brand are important to them.



# Remove Thin Content

- Thin content is a webpage containing 200 words or less
- Google does not place high authority on these pages
- Think of ways to combine content across your department's pages that satisfy a user's search



# Utilize Linking

- Link to other internal pages that users might be interested in to improve a page's visibility
- Use descriptive link names
- Test links to make sure they are not broken



# Descriptive Links Example



Helping the new Young Professionals of Johnson City to grow and serve the region is a big goal for Nathan Farnor in 2024.

Helping a relatively new organization to grow and serve the region is one of several items on the plate of East Tennessee State University's Nathan Farnor for the new year ahead.

Farnor, coordinator of [Leadership and Civic Engagement](#) at East Tennessee State University, is chair-elect of the [Young Professionals of Johnson City](#) (YPJC) for 2024.

YPJC will celebrate its second anniversary in February. Farnor, who joined the organization in the fall of 2022, has served this year as a member of the Young Professional Advisory Council. In addition to providing guidance on YPJC's priorities and programming, this council offers support to McKenzie Templeton, director for Young Professional Development for the Chamber of Commerce of Johnson City-Jonesborough-Washington County.

Farnor and Templeton, both alumni of ETSU's prestigious [Roan Scholars Leadership Program](#), were instrumental in bringing the 2023 YP Unite Summit to Johnson City, leading the planning, coordination and marketing efforts for the event along with other members of the Young Professional Advisory Council. Farnor credits Templeton with initiating the process after she attended the 2022 event and saw that young professionals in the Appalachian Highlands region needed something similar.

This was the first time this annual gathering of young professionals from throughout the Southeast was held outside of Kentucky. The summit brought participants from Pennsylvania to Florida together in Johnson City in November for three days of professional development, networking and collaboration.

"Reflecting back on the summit as a whole, I hope it can serve as a reminder that the Appalachian Highlands has so much to offer and contribute to our state and country," Farnor said. "The people, communities and industries in our region have made a positive name for themselves and continue to make our home a place that others want to visit, live and learn from."







# Web Content

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How to write effective content for the web



# The average attention span of a website user is **8 seconds**

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From giphy.com

Statistic provided by [Leora](#)





# Tips for Writing Website Copy

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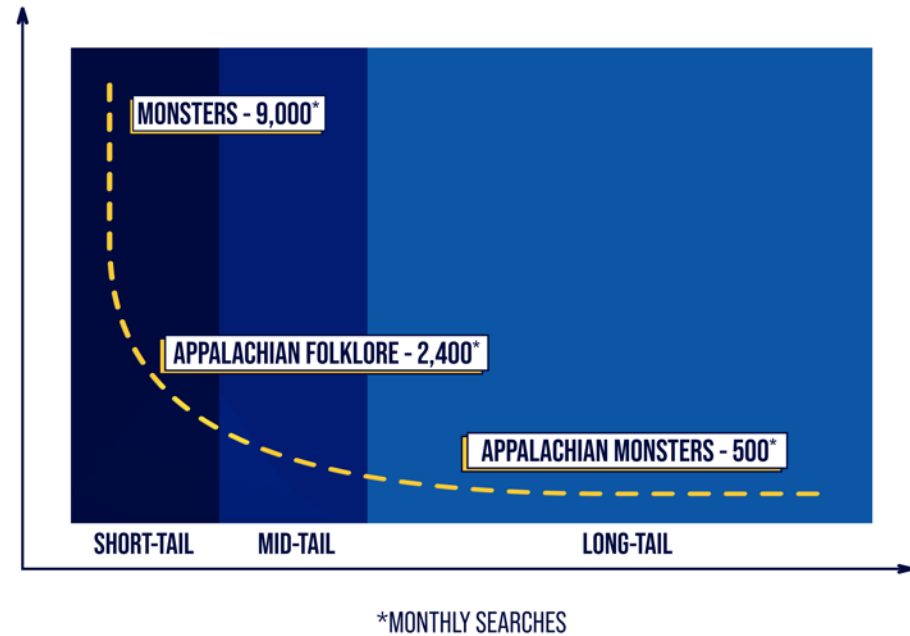
# Focus on the User

- Always have the user experience in mind
  - What are they looking for?
  - How long will it take them to find the info they need?
- Make content easy to scan
- Break up huge chunks of text with headings and appropriate visuals
- Write for humans first, then optimize for SEO
- Write with “you” language in mind



# Think About Search Terms

- Think about terms people will be searching for



# Tell the User What You Want Them to Do Next

- Make it as easy as possible for the user to take action
- Use appropriate call to action button(s)

## Take Your Next Step

Start Your Application →

Request More Information →

Attend a Virtual Info Session →



# Questions?

**America Duggan-Torbert**  
Digital Marketing Specialist  
(423) 439-7102  
[duggantorber@etsu.edu](mailto:duggantorber@etsu.edu)

**Romario Briscoe**  
Digital Marketing Manager  
(423) 439-4313  
[briscoer@etsu.edu](mailto:briscoer@etsu.edu)

**Sherry Martinez**  
Web Coordinator  
(423) 439-8249  
[martines@etsu.edu](mailto:martines@etsu.edu)

