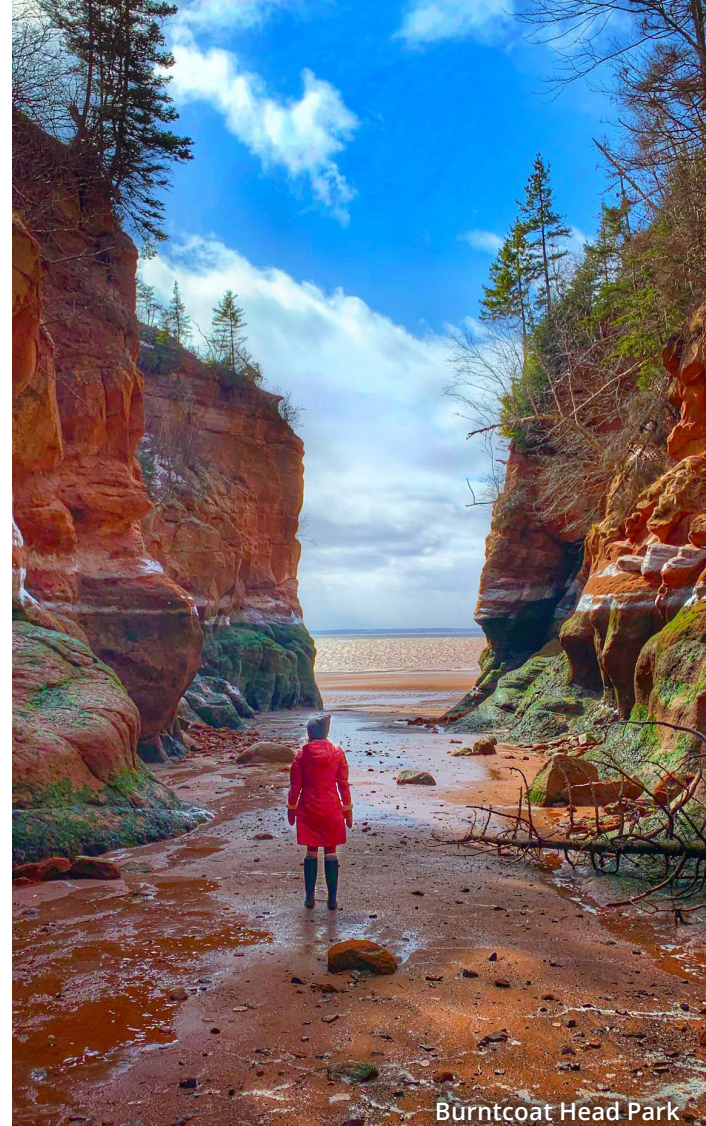


SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION COURSE 2021-22





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Participate in the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Course offered by Tourism Nova Scotia and Digital Nova Scotia to learn the basics of SEO and develop a strategy to get more eyes - and more conversions - on your website.

Your website is only effective as a sales and marketing tool if it is visible to your target audience. SEO can help bring more users to your website by getting it to appear higher in search engine results. SEO usually results in higher quality of leads for businesses because it uses the keywords people are searching for to connect them with your website.

This course provides in-depth training to give tourism businesses all the tools and experience needed to sustainably grow traffic on your website and manage your website's performance.

Participants in the SEO Course will work with [Mark Taylor](#) from Make Your Mark Today Inc. over six weeks, diving deeper into SEO to bring your website ranking higher on search engines such as Google, Bing and Yahoo.

Upon successful completion of this course participants will receive a Certificate of Completion from Make Your Mark Today Inc.



Vineyard at Authentic Seacoast

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The SEO Course is offered through DigiPort, the new digital support portal for Nova Scotia's tourism sector. Selected tourism businesses will participate in six different modules to help set them up for success in their SEO ranking. Self-scheduled recorded sessions and live discussion sessions will take place weekly in the late winter and early spring, with additional one-on-one appointments, for a total commitment of about three hours per week.

Under the guidance of Make Your Mark Today Inc., businesses will participate in the following:

SEO Foundations

- What makes a good website?
- 4 pillars of SEO
- Local SEO & Google My Business
- Keyword research
- Site architecture

On Page SEO

- Optimize & improve your title & description
- H1 - H6 tags, image optimization, internal linking
- UX design and E.A.T. pages

Content

- Conduct a content audit
- Keyword analysis, increase time on page, decrease bounce rate
- Increasing site speed
- Managing URLs and permalinks

Off Page SEO

- Google search console errors
- Sourcing backlinks

Technical SEO

- Hreflang, canonical tags
- Writing and creating schema
- Robots.txt, sitemap.xml

Monitor, Optimize, Rank

- Health score optimization
- Map out conversion funnel
- Monitor and track rankings

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The program is open to Nova Scotia tourism businesses and organizations who are open and operational prior to applying and who plan to operate in 2022.

Eligible tourism businesses must:

- have a functional website that the participant can access as an administrator or editor
- have a link to at least one of their social media on their website
- have Google My Business set-up
- be listed on NovaScotia.com
- be in good standing with the provincial Registry of Joint Stock Companies
- be registered with the province's Tourist Accommodations Registry (if applicable)
- maintain a DigiPort Account for the duration of the project



Priority will be given to tourism businesses:

- who demonstrate how the course will help them achieve their SEO goals for their business
- with intermediate or advanced experience managing a website and at least a basic understanding of SEO objectives
- whose primary focus is attracting and servicing visitors
- whose website has up-to-date and relevant information
- who have a dedicated team member to maintain their website
- who dedicate efforts to their SEO

Applications will be reviewed by a panel from Tourism Nova Scotia and Digital Nova Scotia. Although an applicant may be eligible, eligibility does not guarantee acceptance into the program.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION?

Search engines are constantly scouring and crawling websites to determine if information and content on the site is relevant to users' keyword search results. There are millions of websites across the internet that are fighting for top search results with the same keywords. Effective SEO practices will help your business rank higher in search results, getting more users to your site who are more likely to take action or make a purchase.





Grand-Pré National Historic Site

HOW TO APPLY

Interested businesses and organizations can register or login to [DigiPort](#) and submit the online application at: <https://nsdigiport.ca/programs/seo-course/>

(Note: you must have or create a [DigiPort](#) account to participate in this program. DigiPort is a one-stop resource where you can access services and support to enhance your online presence. There is no cost to sign up).

The deadline to submit applications is:
Monday, February 7, 2021 at 4pm.

Advice on the outcome of your application is available after a formal decision has been made and communicated to you in writing.

PROGRAM CONTACT

For more information about the SEO Course, please contact:

Emily van den Hoogen, Digital Nova Scotia
info@nsdigiport.ca

Jennifer McKeane, Tourism Nova Scotia
902-717-3623 | jennifer.mckeane@novascotia.ca

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR

President & Director of SEO, [Make Your Mark Today Inc.](#), Mark Taylor has a MIT entrepreneurship certification. He is Google certified in SEO and digital marketing, and holds local, advanced, and technical SEO certifications with SEMrush. Make Your Mark Today Inc. is an optimization company that helps businesses with search engine optimization and conversion rate optimization and to build faster websites.

ABOUT DIGITAL NOVA SCOTIA

Digital Nova Scotia is the industry association representing the tech sector in Nova Scotia. We connect our digital community, promote its successes, and lead skills development to help the digital sector grow and thrive. We are a membership driven organization, with more than 230 members that include start-ups, small-to-medium enterprises, large multinational corporations, universities, colleges, government entities, and non-profits.

ABOUT TOURISM NOVA SCOTIA

As a division of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, Tourism Nova Scotia works to grow Nova Scotia's tourism industry and maximize the value of tourism to Nova Scotia's economy through marketing, experience and sector development, and visitor servicing.

ABOUT DIGIPORT

DigiPort is the meeting place of tourism and tech; a curation of digital marketing resources designed for local tourism businesses and organizations in Nova Scotia. DigiPort is a one-stop resource where tourism businesses can access services, training, and support to improve their online presence and digital marketing so they can be more visible, reach more potential customers and close the sale.