

eCommerce Marketing on Magento

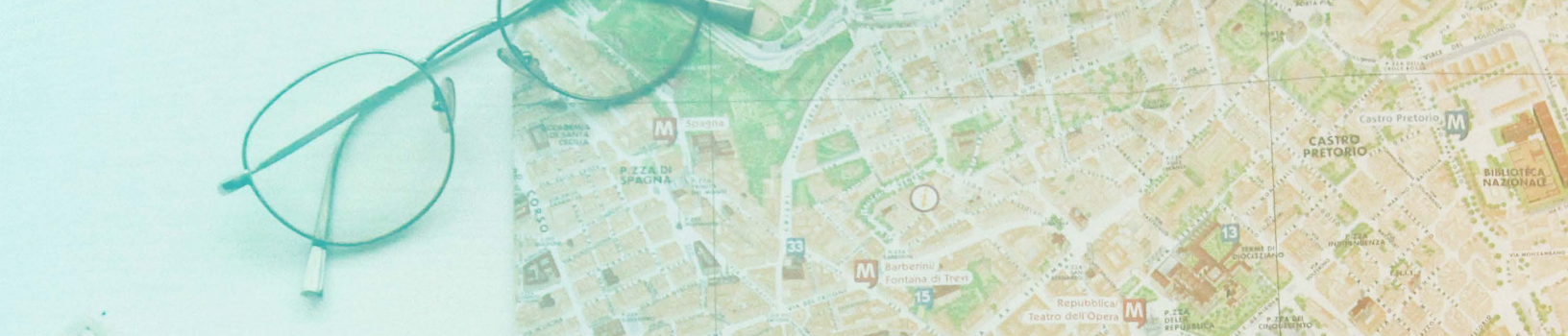


TIPS, TRICKS, & *GOTCHAS*

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Magento Social

Magento Social is now part of the Magento Digital Commerce Suite. It offers a few tools previously only available through third-party extensions; including social sharing and connecting your product catalog directly to Facebook. Should you utilize these tools for your eCommerce store? Maybe. Let's look at a few of the tools offered.

Social Sharing

Social Sharing icons are placed on product pages so that users can easily share with followers on their social media feed. This can be very powerful for certain subsets that include interesting content, unique products, industries with a large and active community, and sale items. For example, if you sell photography equipment and have a popular product on sale, a photographer might share the product on Facebook. Photographers are often part of a close-knit community that shares tips and information, so this is a likely action for those customers.

Social Sharing PROs

Word-of-Mouth Advertising Will Always Be King

Word-of-Mouth advertising will always be the best form of advertising. Everyone trusts a friend to tell us about a great product or service more than we do a company ad. When someone shares a photo of your product to their Facebook timeline, their friends and family are



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automatically more interested in the product than they would have otherwise. Social share icons create an easy opportunity for this action to occur.

Social Sharing CONs

Slower Page Load Speed

Too many file requests (RTTs) can slow page load time. Every small element on your site requires a different file request to load. Each CSS file, image, social sharing button, and code snippet of Javascript is a new file request. Your server can only handle a certain amount of requests per second. If your website uses 50 file requests with each load, and 100 people accessing your site at once, this means that there are 5,000 file requests in one second. If you're on a small server, it will really slow things down.

**According to Kissmetrics,
47% of consumers expect
a web page to load in 2
seconds or less...**

Users have very little patience when it comes to site load times, and it's getting worse. According to Kissmetrics, 47% of consumers expect a web page to load in 2 seconds or less and 40% of people abandon a website that takes more than 3 seconds to load. Social share buttons load in a fairly large amount of javascript from an external server. This will always slow down the page load time. Slow load times means frustrated customers. Frustrated customers lead to lower conversion rates. Lower conversion rates mean fewer sales.

It is recommended that you speak with a developer to determine what else on the page is sending a load request. If there are a lot of other elements, you should probably skip having social share icons on your product pages.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Are you pushing traffic the wrong way?

For most businesses, social media is used for brand awareness and driving traffic to the website. Social share icons have the potential to funnel customers away from the website, to which they do not return. If the purpose of your social share icons is to help increase followers on your social media, simply place the icon in the footer. Users are savvy enough to know what they need to do. Simply sharing a product doesn't mean they will "like" or "follow" your account, and may cost you the opportunity to continue engaging with them.

What is the right answer?

The first question you should ask is, "Does social sharing fit my business?" If you are a B2B business selling a niche product, it's probably not for you. If you are a retailer selling gift items, the answer is maybe. At this point, refer to the above - will it slow your load time down? Will it divert traffic away from your site? If the answer to both of those questions is yes, you should skip social sharing icons on product pages.

Social Store Creation

Magento Social provides an easier way to create a Facebook Shop to sell products directly on Facebook. The key question is if a Facebook Shop is an appropriate approach for your store. Let's consider the following pros and cons.

Social Store PROs

The easier it is to make a purchase, the more you will sell and the higher the average order value will be. The more clicks a user must make, the less likely they are to convert. Magento Social

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creates a streamlined sync of your product catalog with social sites. This inherently creates fewer clicks for users to purchase (Given they do not leave Facebook with this approach.) making it easier to purchase. This creates the potential for an entirely new revenue stream!

Social Store CONs

As with all features, it's best to not rush into them, but instead to analyze and decide if it's right for your particular business. While having your products for sale on Facebook does reduce clicks, it also prevents them from going to your site. Therefore, it is harder to track the original source of the traffic making it more difficult to analyze marketing efforts in the future. It also prevents retargeting efforts such as cart abandonment emails.

What is the right answer?

To decide if social stores are right for your business, the first step is thinking through your product types and industry. For instance, if your products have a long buying cycle and require a lot of research prior to purchase, users are not likely to make that type of purchase through a Facebook Shop. The same is true for higher price point items. In addition, if you deeply analyze data for retargeting and other marketing purposes, a Facebook Shop would not be ideal.

However, if you sell products that are in a low-to-mid price point or are typically purchased without a lot of research, a Facebook Shop may be a great addition to your business. If you determine a Facebook Shop is a proper addition, Magento Social is an ideal solution to consider.



Facebook Pixel

Have you ever wondered what makes up the “External Link Clicked” referral source in your Google AdWords account? With the Facebook Pixel code snippet, you can easily determine what portion of that unidentified traffic is sourced from Facebook. This powerful piece of code can track how many times a particular action occurs, how Facebook users behave once they land on your site, and be used for retargeting purposes. It is a key tool that can help you better understand what Facebook users are doing and help you increase conversions.

A Word of Caution

When the Facebook Pixel is added straight into Magento through the admin panel, we have seen instances where traffic information is collected in Google Analytics but revenue information is not. This could distort analytics and potentially lead you down the wrong path and decisions.

A HELPFUL TIP

Instead of adding the Facebook Pixel in the Magento admin panel, place it through Google Tag Manager instead. This route provides far fewer issues in our experience. Keep in mind, you will still need to monitor the data and compare revenue to the information you pull from Magento.





EMAIL

Email is an important channel for any marketing strategy. Particularly for eCommerce companies. It gives you the opportunity to keep in touch with customers for sales and promotions, upsells, cross-sells, order receipts and more. Most email service providers (ESPs) offer the capability for personalization, segmentation, various trigger points and more.

Depending on the ESP you are using, you might also need to have an additional service for batch and blasts and transactional emails to all come from one source. Not having it come from one source means your templates will not look the same. For example, your batch and blasts all come from MailChimp, but your transactional emails are coming from Magento. This is a challenge because your customers are getting emails that will not look the same because the configuration capabilities out of Magento do not allow for the same customization as you have from third party ESPs.

Here are some tips for working with Magento emails:

- Ebizmart makes the MailChimp for Magento Extension. If there is anything wrong with the connection, you will need to chat with Ebizmart, not MailChimp.
 - Make sure you have the most current version of the extension. Many of the issues with the connection can be solved with the update.
- MailChimp for Magento can't use product merge tags in a subject line, so in order to do that, you'd need to add something like Windsor Circle. Having merge tags in subject lines has been shown to increase open rates especially for cart abandonment emails.



EMAIL

- For Magento 1, the MageMonkey extension is no longer needed, you would use MailChimp for Magento + Mandrill for all transactional emails.
- Make sure your campaign URL is in the Analytics link tracking section. This is what will help you be able to tell one email from the other in GA.

PRO TIP

In order to be able to track email properly, you should connect MailChimp to your Google Analytics account. To do this, you must authorize a connection between MC and a GA account before you add Google tracking to Campaigns.



To connect your MailChimp account with a Google account, follow these steps.

1. Click your profile name and choose Account.
2. Click Integrations.
3. Click Google: Analytics, Contacts, and Docs.
4. Click Authorize Connection.
5. If you're not already logged into your Google account, you'll be asked to log in.
6. Click Allow to grant MailChimp access to your Google account.

NOTE: MailChimp's Google Analytics integration will only use data from your analytics account. Your contacts, spreadsheets, and mailbox data are not used.

7. You'll return to your MailChimp account and a success message will appear. Now, you're ready to send a campaign with Google Analytics tracking.

Through the various updates that are now available with M2 will likely decrease the number of issues in the connections between ESPs and Magento. However, to what extent remains to be seen. We do advise if you are experiencing any of these issues with either M1 or M2 to upgrade your extension/connector to the latest version.





GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Properly Setting up Analytics for eCommerce and Magento

Google Analytics is one of the most powerful tools in a marketer's tool chest. As an eCommerce business, there are a lot of additional configurations to consider to obtain the most value. The following covers these key settings, what they are, why they are important, and additional quirks to be mindful of in Magento.

Data Collection For Advertising Features

By enabling Advertising Features, you allow Google Analytics (GA) to collect data about your traffic in addition to standard GA information.

- Turning on "Remarketing"
 - Enables data collection for Display and Search Remarketing. This will allow you to create personalized ads for users.
 - **NOTE:** This requires the data collection for advertising reporting features to be enabled.
- Turning on "Advertising Reporting Features"
 - Enables Advertising Reporting features like Audience Demographics and Interests Reporting to help better understand your users.



User-ID

To track how users interact with your content across different devices and multiple sessions, Google provides the User-ID feature. Without this feature enabled, your tracking is focused on devices and not the actual user who is most likely utilizing multiple devices to access your site.

NOTE: To use this feature you will have to click the toggle “I agree to the User-ID Policy”.

Referral Exclusion List

Referral Exclusion is an important tool to utilize for many merchants. It allows you to exclude certain domains from tracking information addressing disruptions due to redirects.

For example, if you previously used an HTTP protocol and switched to HTTPS, and are now directing traffic from HTTP to HTTPS. In this scenario, anyone that hits HTTP first will show in your traffic source as that domain. GA will not denote where they came from before the redirect. As a marketer, this can have serious implications. For example, if 25% of your traffic shows it is coming from your HTTP domain, and you see that traffic is very low from Facebook, you may decide to cut budget and resources from Facebook. However, if your Facebook ads and page are linking to your old, redirected HTTP site, you are missing out on all the data from users coming from Facebook.

Another site we often exclude is PayPal.com. If you utilize PayPal as a payment option, for a moment, the user is taken out of your site to sign into PayPal. They are then brought back to your site to complete the transaction. GA counts this as a new session, and will not attribute that



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revenue to the right source. Therefore, you will want to exclude PayPal.com so that the traffic is attributed to the correct source.

NOTE: We have seen instances where GA doesn't count the revenue from PayPal at all. If you notice that the revenue showing in GA does not align with Magento (with a 5% variance), review the transactions placed via PayPal to determine if that is the cause.

AdWords Linking

To gain more insights into the performance of your Pay Per Click (PPC) advertisements, add your AdWords account to your analytics. You can do this by clicking "+New Link Group" under AdWords Linking and adding your 10-digit AdWords ID number.

All Products

In this section, you can link to [your Google Search Console](#) (GSC, formerly known as Webmaster Tools) account. It is located at the bottom of the list. Visit [Google Search Console](#) for more information on GSC and the benefits of using it. The other items listed in this section may or may not be utilized depending on the merchant.

Site Search Tracking

Flip Site Search Tracking "On" to track users' search terms while on your site. Understanding what users are searching and their behavior afterward can help guide you in creating a better user experience. For instance, are users regularly searching for a specific term that you do not currently have a landing page for, and is not listed in the navigation? If so, you now know what categories or subcategories you should add. The better the user experience, and easier it is to purchase, the more customers purchase.



eCommerce Settings

GA will not track revenue if you don't enable eCommerce. You should also enable Enhanced eCommerce Settings. More about Enhanced eCommerce Analytics is provided in the following Universal Analytics section.



Universal Analytics

Universal Analytics introduces a set of features that change the way data is collected and organized in your Analytics account. This provides a better understanding of how users interact with your online content. Benefits of Universal Analytics include:

- Connecting multiple devices, sessions, and engagement data with the User-ID
- Increased tracking code flexibility
- The ability to create custom dimensions
- The ability to implement Enhanced eCommerce (EC) where the real power is

Most merchants we engage are utilizing eCommerce Analytics, but few are using Enhanced eCommerce Analytics (EC). The difference is that with Enhanced you have the opportunity to track every step of the user's journey on your website, from impression to the transaction. You are provided solid data on how many customers are moving from one stage to the next and at what step you are losing them. This is priceless information. If you know where you are losing potential customers, you know where to focus efforts to create a better user experience and increase conversions.

Installing Enhanced Commerce

Once you have Universal Analytics installed and deployed, you can tag your site with the ec.js plugin. You can turn on EC under the eCommerce Settings area in the admin panel. Please note that this is a separate code and the "regular" eCommerce Analytics code must be removed. They cannot run at the same time.

Using Enhanced Commerce

With EC, you will be able to track much more than before including:

- Viewing product impressions
- Clicking product links
- Viewing product details
- Adding products to, removing products from shopping carts
- Initiating the checkout process
- Completing transactions
- Receiving refunds

Checkout Labeling

Once you have EC installed, go into the eCommerce Settings and create labels for the checkout-funnel steps you identified in your eCommerce tracking code. Steps may include; shipping, billing, payment information, review, PayPal Checkout, etc. By identifying creating the checkout labels you will have an easy way to identify exactly which step you are losing customers in the checkout process.

PLEASE NOTE

With Magento 1.X, Classy Llama has seen many cases of EC not deploying and tracking data correctly with the available extensions. You will have a higher chance of success with EC if you first install Google Tag Manager (GTM) and then utilize GTM to implement the Enhanced Commerce code. Magento 2 Enterprise has GTM built in. This means, to connect it, you simply have to turn it on and add the code provided by Google Analytics. No extension is needed.





GOOGLE SEARCH CONSOLE

Benefits of Google Search Console (GSC)

Sitemap

You can add your sitemap URL within GSC. By doing this, you're making Google's job easier by ensuring they have all of the information they need to do their job. Imagine taking off across the country in your car without a map. Eventually you'll get there through following signs and such. However, if you use a GPS, you will get there much faster and more efficiently.

Fetch as Google

If you have made significant changes to Google, the fastest way to get the updates indexed is submitting them to Google manually. This will allow any changes done to on-page content to appear in search results pages sooner.

Check robots.txt

Through GSC you can see if there are any errors or warnings in your robots.txt file. Addressing these issues will further help Google crawl your site more efficiently, increasing your visibility in SERPs.

Find Site Errors

GSC will identify crawl errors, such as 404s, and give you tips on how to fix it.

Organic Search Queries

You can identify organic search terms you are showing up for, your position rank, number of impressions, and number of click-throughs.

This is extremely valuable in understanding your organic traffic. Are there terms you are showing up for, but users simply aren't clicking through to your site? Are their terms that are important for your business that you aren't on top SERPs for? This information can help you create the proper SEO strategy. You can even break this down by sitewide, or specific landing page.

It will also give you important keywords for your AdWords campaigns.





SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

How many articles have popped up on social media or hit your inbox claiming that it will provide you with the **'5 most crucial things you need to know about SEO'**? More than you can probably count, and it's most likely occurring daily. Nearly all of these focus on one area: content. There are endless blogs available to help you with this area, so we aren't going to approach the subject in this white paper.

With that in mind, why is this section so large if we aren't going to talk about content SEO? Two words: Technical SEO. If content is king, then technical SEO is the strong, assertive, queen standing behind him making him successful...or bringing him down. So

why is nobody talking about technical SEO? It's less known, less understood, and vastly more complicated. In addition, it is often only an issue when you replatform or redesign your site.

“[Technical SEO] is less known, less understood, and vastly more complicated.”

Technical SEO

Why does a replatform or redesign anger the technical SEO beast? Why do companies launch a site that looks cleaner, has a better user experience, stronger content and runs faster but actually *loses* traffic? Below we will give an overview of why this happens, what to look for, and how it relates to Magento.



The difference between Technical and Content SEO

Content SEO is a marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content onsite and offsite. For eCommerce companies, this comes in the form of on-page content such as product descriptions, product videos, and blogs. Off-site content is represented by social media and backlinks, sighting a few examples.

Technical SEO determines how your site is crawled. Essentially, it's the way your website is set up to help search read and/or interpret your page content. If, when replatforming or redesigning your site, you change what and how search engines are crawling your site, you will lose the SEO value associated with that page. At that point, you have to reprove to those search engines that your new site is just as good, or better than it was previously. And that takes time.

WHAT AFFECTS TECHNICAL SEO & SITE CRAWLING

Robots.txt Files

Duplicate Content

XML Sitemaps

Pagination

Page Speed

301 Redirects

Site Architecture

Canonical Tags



Why Focus on Technical SEO?

Most aspects of technical SEO aren't ranking factors on their own. So why spend time working on something that's not going to give you a direct boost in SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages)? Because technical SEO can have an impact on your ability to even get indexed in the first place!

For example: Without a robots.txt file or sitemap, Google could waste all of its crawl budget trying to access a folder full of images. Additionally, if you don't use canonical tags correctly, people linking to alternate versions of a page will dilute your website's link juice.

In a replatform or redesign, many of the factors designating how and what are being crawled on the site get changed. Examples of common activities that impact crawling include:

- Homepage content changes
- Category name changes
- Product description layout changes
- Removal of pages

When Technical SEO is Ignored



Above, you can see a 50% drop in sessions year over year coming from technical SEO mistakes.



The Technical SEO Checklist for Magento

When it comes to Technical SEO and the Magento platform, following a simple checklist can help immensely. You can have the best of both worlds: maintain your organic SEO AND create a better user experience and content updates on your site. Here are the critical steps to take.

Prior to starting design and development for your new site consider the following:

- ☐ Perform an initial data review and know your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
 - You have to know where you've been to know where you are going

- ☐ Address URL structure
 - Analyze architecture/taxonomy changes
 - Seemingly innocent changes that will greatly improve the user experience, often have a highly negative effect on SEO.
 - Phase in changes slowly after the initial launch to help prevent major dips in organic traffic that could be permanent.
 - Determine your most valuable pages
 - Understand and map out entrances via organic search
 - If you are planning on making changes to a page that only receives .01% of your organic traffic, there wouldn't be a large impact on your overall traffic. However, it is receiving 15% of your organic traffic, consider making this change after launch.

Continued on next page

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

☐ Map out planned canonicalization

- Duplicate pages resolve to single canonical URL:
 - Single case
 - Naked or www.
 - HTTP or HTTPS
 - Trailing slash or not
- Pages contain self-referential rel="canonical" tags
- Print pages contain rel="canonical" tags pointing to non-print versions

☐ Behold the power of 301 redirects

- If you can only spend time on one part of site relaunch SEO spend it on your redirects.
 - Map old URLs to their closest counterpart new URLs
 - Go for as close to a 1-to-1 page match as possible.
 - Make sure the server isn't defaulting 301s to 302s

☐ Ensure Catalog and Product Canonical Meta Tag settings are configured correctly. Most of the time we would want these set to "yes" but this may vary depending on your URL structure.

There are a lot of options both with native Magento, and 3rd party extensions for assisting with your SEO. Below we dig into a some of these options and important tips and considerations.



Layered Navigation

In essence, built-in layered navigation is a predefined set of product filters. The theory behind this approach is that it helps a customer find products much quicker than they might otherwise, which would increase conversions. However, there are a few downsides to the native configuration options as they relate to SEO and single-select attributes.

SEO and the User Experience

Typically these predefined filters (layered navigation) are set up with the same name as categories and sub-categories. The user feels as if they are seeing a duplicate of the top navigation in a more visible way. However, if they use the top navigation and select “Women’s Shirts”, they land on a different URL than they do if they use the layered navigation function, also titled “Women’s Shirts”. With the layered navigation selection, they are seeing a filtered view rather than going to the actual sub-category landing page.

Depending on how your site is set up you will either experience duplicate content issues, or those pages and user engagements are being completely disregarded for your site’s SEO juice. Given that most eCommerce sites have 60-80% of their traffic and revenue coming from organic, both instances with layered navigation are bad and could be hurting your bottom line.

In the filtered view the user sees, they cannot further filter by additional attributes. Meaning if they have selected “Women’s Shirts” they now see all of the women’s shirts. But what if they want to see only green shirts under \$30? You cannot perform this action natively. This leads to a bad user experience and a decreased likelihood they will convert.



How do you fix it?

The easiest option to address this issue is an extension. At Classy Llama our go-to is typically Amasty's Improved Layered Navigation extension. This will add the option to multi-select attributes allowing users to see women's green shirts under \$30. In addition, it will easily allow you to point the layered navigation menu to the actual subcategory page.

CONFIGURE EXTENSION

By default, the Amasty extension will add "no follow" to any links from the layered navigation. Therefore, it would make your category and subcategory pages invisible to Google for your SEO ranking. Use the following steps to correct this in the Magento 2 admin panel:

Stores > Attributes > Product > Category_Ids

- Improved Layered Nav SEO
- Add rel="no follow" to filter links
- Defaults to "yes"; change to "no"



This will leave "no follow" on filters, but remove it for categories.

An additional word of caution: many common SEO extensions will have default settings that are the opposite of the default settings in layered navigation extensions. Please check your configurations carefully so that you do not have unintended consequences, either with your SEO, or site performance.

If your site does not designate the layered navigation with the same name as sub-categories, but you have created additional custom widely used filters, you can also use this extension to create custom content on those pages. This includes sliders at the top of the page, as well as customized URLs for these pages.

Problem solved! You are now building your site SEO value and created a better user experience!

URLs

Your URL is often the first thing that users (and Google) will see. As a result, it plays an important part in the user experience and by extension how Google values your site from an SEO perspective. For the sake of this white paper, we are going to focus on what this means specifically in Magento.

Parameters

You can easily spot a URL parameter; they are often visible after a question mark (?), ampersand (&), equals sign (=) or another attribute. Parameters are also referred to as “query strings” and are natively used in Magento. Google views these as dynamic URLs. Unfortunately, Google prefers static URLs over dynamic. Any good SEO professional will tell you to minimize dynamic URLs as much as possible. However, with Magento that is quite difficult, therefore you need options for your site to minimize SEO impact while increasing user experience.

IN MAGENTO, DYNAMIC URLs/PARAMETERS CAUSE SEVERAL ISSUES

Duplicated Content

Not-So User-Friendly URLs

Lacking Keywords



How do we fix it?

Extensions

There are several available extensions that will create custom, readable, URLs for those that contain a query string. This will solve part of the problem, but will still cause duplicate content issues. Utilizing canonical tags on the page you're pointing Google to in addition to the readable URL will put you in the best position to overcome a negative impact.

Google Search Console

Through your site's Google Search Console, navigate to Crawl/URL Parameters. It is set to "Let Google Decide" by default. You can change this to "Ignore". Note that Google views this as a suggestion only and may still try to follow and index these pages.

Consistency

Google really likes any URL that is consistent and reliable; this includes your URL. If your URL structure doesn't follow the same methodology throughout the site, Google will notice and will ding you for it. Plus, it creates a bad user experience. How do you maintain consistency?

- Make sure URL matches the page title and page content matches both
 - This will help search engines index your site, but will also build trust with your users.
- Ensure proper use of .html
 - By default, Magento adds .html to the end of category and product pages. However, it does not do this for content pages.
 - To keep it consistent across the site, you either need to disable the .html extension in the admin for the catalog, or go to CMS pages and add .html to each URL key.



Canonical Tags

With a site full of content, products, and categories, it's pretty common for the same content to be on multiple URLs. That's where Canonical Tags (`rel="canonical"`) come in. This tag tells Google what your preferred URL is so that search results will be more likely to show that URL in search engine results pages (SERPs). Without using canonical tags in these instances, you can suffer duplicate content issues. In addition, you are forcing Google to decide which content to give SEO value to, or splitting its value.

Canonical tags are kind of a hybrid of a NOINDEX tag and a 301. You're basically telling Google:

1. Don't show the other pages with similar content in search results, and
2. Push ranking signals to this page

It also reduces the amount of resources Google Bots will spend crawling pages so it's a win-win-win.

Paginated Content

Paginated content occurs when you have a series. For example, five pages of products under the category "Women's Shirts". Using tags similar to the following indicates the relationship between these unique URLs:

```
<link rel="prev" href="http://www.example.com/category?p=2" />
```

```
<link rel="next" href="http://www.example.com/category?p=4" />
```


SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

The URL string used in pagination tells Google that you want the series treated as a logical sequence. This will then link their properties and SEO value while sending searchers to the first page.

How Magento Handles Category Pages

Natively you can toggle canonical tags on or off for categories under the Catalog > Search Engine Optimization settings in your store's configuration. Turning this setting on adds the rel="canonical" link tag to all category pages.

Search Engine Optimization

Popular Search Terms <small>[store view]</small>	Enable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use system value
Product URL Suffix <small>[store view]</small>	.html <small>You need to refresh the cache.</small>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use system value
Category URL Suffix <small>[store view]</small>	.html <small>You need to refresh the cache.</small>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use system value
Use Categories Path for Product URLs <small>[store view]</small>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use system value
Create Permanent Redirect for URLs if URL Key Changed <small>[store view]</small>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use system value
Page Title Separator <small>[store view]</small>	-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use system value
 Use Canonical Link Meta Tag For Categories <small>[store view]</small>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Use system value
Use Canonical Link Meta Tag For Products <small>[store view]</small>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Use system value

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

This is helpful to tell search engines the “main” version of your category page. If you’re using the layered navigation to filter a category, parameters are added to the URL for each filter. This can create many variations of your main category URL. The canonical tag tells search engines to treat all of these variations of the category as if they are the “main” canonical version. Therefore, any SEO value these variations provide is transferred to your main category URL.

The same is true for pagination parameters. From page 2 on, a parameter such as ?p=2 will be added to the main URL to indicate which page you are on for the category. The canonical tag tells the search engine to only show the “main” version of the page in search results while transferring any link value of the additional pages to the canonical URL. This is done because it is likely not going to index any of the following pages.

However, a canonical tag is designed to be used on pages that contain the same (or very similar) content. On a category product listing page, your category description and some content may be the same on each version, but the products listed on the page will be different for each page. Thus where pagination comes into play - to break up a large category into multiple pages. So, this presents a conflict in the canonical tag’s intended use.

Ramifications of Not Addressing Paginated Pages

The damage occurs in a few ways. If you enable canonical tags, you’re losing potentially valuable keywords because you’re telling Google to ignore everything after the first page. If you don’t, then you run the risk of creating duplicate content issues and/or Google simply not recognizing the pagination at all.



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

In addition, we have also theorized that if you are migrating from a different platform that employed rel=next/prev to Magento where your URL structure will undoubtedly change, you can create some very undesirable results by canonicalizing one page (effectively asking Google to ignore the series). You have a strong possibility of really damaging your SEO and seeing a big dip in organic traffic because you are pushing Google to ignore content that it previously crawled. This devalues your pages.

How do you fix it?

Use rel="next" and rel="prev". This is the recommended fix. However, Magento does not have a native setting for using next/prev. You can address this with your SI or internal developer with custom development. There are also a number of extensions available that will help. Most that address next/prev are catch-all SEO extensions. As noted above, carefully comb through the configuration of these extensions and make sure they will not counteract other extensions you may be using.

For more information on Google's recommendations, as well as a deeper dive into Canonical Tags, read our blog post: [Canonical Tags: Did You Get It Right on Your Magento Site.](#)





ABOUT CLASSY LLAMA

[Classy Llama](#) is an agency of a different breed. Despite our playful name, we could not be more serious about the level of integrity, excellence, and commitment we bring to our clients. Our passion is to help merchants leverage technology to sustainably grow and build their business. We serve our clients through digital commerce consulting, marketing, design, development, and support. With over 125 commerce sites and 400+ customizations and integrations under our belt, our team of commerce veterans has what it takes to create a great digital experience.

ABOUT MARKETING SERVICES

The Classy Llama [Marketing Services](#) team is a [Certified Google Premier Partner](#) that specializes in eCommerce Strategy with the following services: consultation, SEO (both technical and content), email, paid search, social leverage, and more. The team holds all five Google Specializations; Display, Search, Video, Shopping, and Mobile which are awarded through high levels of ongoing client success.

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