Analysis, Dekalb Roofing Company Web Site

Client: Dekalb Roofing Company

Site: dekalbroofingcompanyinc.com

Overall Look & Design

This is a very good-looking site. It's clean, tasteful, has well-coordinated colors and strong graphics and is interesting. I'd give it an A+ on look.

Overall Navigation

This is a very simple, straightforward site. It basically has a home page, four service pages, portfolio page, blog and contact information. The site map lists 10 pages total, including the blog. So, you would think it would be easy to find your way around; and it is, if you're not looking for specific information. If you are, you're sunk. There is no search function, unless you end up on a 404 page. There isn't even a search mechanism for the blog. Also on the blog, there is no index of categories, topics or tags, so someone is lost if they're trying to find specific information or trying to find their way back to a post they liked. There is basically no navigation within the blog at all – except for going to "previous entries" or "next entries."

On the other hand, I like the menu at the top and the menu at the bottom. Both are very helpful.

As far as the sitemap, it's almost worthless. There are actually 105 pages total on the site. So a sitemap that lists only 10 is not telling the whole story.

As far as SEO: the lack of categories and tags in the blog, the lack of search functions and a very skimpy sitemap do not bode well. Just FYI, search engines need a sitemap in XML format. So you actually need two sitemaps – one for search engines and a second, HTML version, for users. They should not be significantly different as far as content – after all, it's a map. Do you really want to leave information off a map?

I'd give the site a generous C- for navigation.

Overall Effectiveness / Strategy

For what they are trying to do – get people either to call the number at the top or fill out the form in the upper left (both of which I like, by the way) – I'd say the site has the potential to be very effective. However, I cannot know if it is or not without comparing the traffic numbers with the conversion numbers, neither of which I have. Being able to see which pages they're visiting and for how long, bounce rate, how much traffic is coming from search engines, etc. (all Google Analytics stuff) would also help. But based upon what I was able to discover, I'm guessing that traffic and conversion numbers are probably not very high. There are many selling opportunities that have been overlooked – some of which I mention below – as well as other mistakes that could affect conversion. So, I'm going to reserve my grade on effectiveness until I can look at those numbers. However, I would say the design of the site gives it the potential to be very effective. And, by the way, I like the Angie's List tag at the top, although where it takes you is kind of funky. Dekalb Roofing Company is #1 on Angie's List – excellent. Also, Kudzu. ☺

Links

There are 311 links on the site, none of which are broken. That's excellent. However, most of the internal links are to the home page. Why is that? It doesn't help the visitor, and it is kind of an obvious play for the search engines. I found so many other words

and phrases that should have been linked and were not, which I will get into when I talk about individual pages below.

Keywords

I tested several dozen keyword combinations. As might be expected, those that contained "Dekalb" or "Decatur" tested relatively well. Those that contained "Atlanta" or other towns around Atlanta other than Decatur tested less well or even poorly. My conclusion was that Dekalb Roofing Company is just that – a roofing company for Dekalb county.

For "dekalb ga roofers," they occupied the first three slots in the organic listings – all search engine listings, by the way, like Angie's list – but their own site did not come up until further down the page.

They were #1 on Google for "best roofing contractors decatur," "gutter installation dekalb ," and "leaf solution gutter covers;" and in the top 10 for "gutter replacement dekalb," "gutter covers dekalb," "gutter covers decatur," "roofing companies decatur," "shingle installation decatur," "dekalb roofing company," "roof damage storm dekalb," "storm chaser roofers atlanta," "best roofers atlanta" (I think these two were the only combinations that contained the word "Atlanta" that did well). Of course, most of the keywords did much better on Yahoo and Bing.

For a company whose name contains what they do, I would say that this is a relatively weak showing. It doesn't take much for a name like that to rank high. But when they stray very far away from their name, their showing drops.

I would like to point out the keyword phrase "leaf solution gutter covers." That is a company that they have given a decent amount of coverage to – no pun intended – and also have included a link to their web site. That is why it ranks so well. I would also

like to point out "storm chaser roofers atlanta" – another item that they have given good coverage to, and so it ranks highly. These are both unique, specific items – not general words or phrases in their industry – so they rank well. That is the key – differentiation. How can they differentiate themselves? What products (like leaf solution gutter covers) or ideas (like storm chaser roofers atlanta) can they promote that most of their competitors do not.

Home Page

Now for some specifics about the individual pages. On the home page, for the longest time, I thought there was only one testimony on the site. I thought, "Poor Mary Portier of Decatur, Ga, it's all resting on your shoulders." Then I realized there was a different testimony on each page. I don't think that idea works. I think you need to have the testimony panel on the home page rotate testimonies, and I also think you need to have a testimonies page. When people leave the home page, they are looking for specific information, so they are probably not even going to notice the testimony panels. On the home page, it's obvious – and, it's very attractive, the way it's done. It just looks like there's only one.

Here's something else about testimonies – you ask people to leave them, but you don't give them an incentive. Why should I take the time to leave you a testimony? If you will give me something… Then I look up at the top of the page and see "$200 Off." For what? Why not use that $200 as an incentive to get people to do something: leave a testimony, recommend a friend, etc? And why is the "$200 Off" not clickable? As a matter of fact, everything across the top should be clickable. Making images, as well as words, clickable builds SEO.

By the way, when you click the phone number at the top, it goes to a blank page. Technically, that's a broken link; but it doesn't register as such because it actually fills in the URL address box with the phone number - strange.

I love the "Request a Free Estimate" panel.

Here are some copy issues:

"Our 'tools of the trade' are top quality." At first that statement didn't make sense to me. I thought they were saying that "top quality" was the tools of their trade, which would have been bad English. Now I see that they are saying that their tools are top quality tools. I think there's a better way of saying that, as I just did. ☺

"We have **all major manufacturer products** available" - great place for a link to show some products that will help differentiate them.

"Along with roof replacement, …" They just kind of drop that one in your lap. It needs to be led up to with a sentence about roof replacement, and then have this sentence.

"With thousands of **satisfied customers**…" What a great place for a link to a testimonials page.

I notice that they make a big deal about free written estimates, and even have links to a page about it. Doesn't everyone give free estimates? Is it the written aspect that makes them unique? It just seemed strange to me, like a grocery store advertising, "We have grocery bags!" Well, only at Aldi's would that be an incentive. ☺

"Come visit our showroom." – This would be a good place for a link with directions to the show room, and I would repeat the location address. (I know it's given up at the top of the page, but why make them search?)

"Contact our Atlanta roofing contractors today!" – Another good place for a link, or a phone number.

Here are the selling points I notice on the Home page:

1) free written estimates

2) most jobs completed in 1-2 days

3) they haul off the debris when they're finished

4) they use top quality products

(Under "Gutter Installation," they add "we guarantee your satisfaction." Why not here?)

What's missing:

5) competitive pricing

6) quality workmanship

7) expert advice

8) trustworthy people

Some of those may be mentioned later, like the "we guarantee your satisfaction," but why not have them all on the Home page? Most visitors never make it past that first page, so you'll lose the opportunity with them if they happen to be looking for one of those last four points.

I could go on, but you get the idea. I just want to add that I thought the explanation of the process under "Roofing Installation" was very good, and that there were some misspelled words under "Gutter Installation" – not biggies, but still.

Overall, the copy seems to be keyword-driven on the main pages of the site. But when you get to the blog, which contains the bulk of the content, the keywords seem to have been forgotten, along with the categories, tags, navigation and everything else. Categories and tags are a GREAT place to use keywords, so it bothers me that they were left out.

I'm going to stop at this point. I think that gives you enough to go on. If I had Google Analytics to work with, as well as the backend of the web site, I could do a lot more. This is pretty much from the outside looking in. But if I could find all this from the outside, imagine what I could find from the inside. ☺

Thanks for this opportunity,

Waitsel

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