Identifying and Improving Cart Abandonment

A WordPress Guide

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Have you ever been in the process of ordering something online only to become distracted, experienced website issues, comparative shopping, unexpected costs, or forget about checking out your items? You're not alone. Let's take a deeper dive into this issue.

What is WooCommerce Cart Abandonment?

WooCommerce cart abandonment refers to a situation where a potential customer adds items to their online shopping cart on a website built using the WooCommerce platform *(a popular WordPress plugin for e-commerce)* but leaves the site without completing the purchase. This unfortunate behavior has become a real problem for online retailers and eCommerce businesses. Cart abandonment can occur from the following reasons:

1. **Distractions:** Customers might get interrupted or distracted while shopping, leading them to leave the site without finalizing their purchase.

2. **Comparison shopping:** Customers often add items to the cart to compare prices or products with other websites before making a decision.

3. **Unexpected costs**: When additional fees like shipping or taxes are presented at checkout, customers might reconsider their purchase.

4. **Complicated checkout process**: Lengthy or complex checkout processes can frustrate customers, causing them to abandon their carts.

5. **Website issues**: Technical problems or slow-loading pages can discourage customers from completing their purchases.

Cart abandonment can have a negative impact on an e-commerce business's conversion rate and revenue. To address this issue, online retailers often implement various strategies to reduce cart abandonment, such as optimizing the checkout process, providing clear information about costs upfront, offering incentives like discounts or free shipping, and sending follow-up emails or reminders to customers who abandon their carts.

Risks of shopping cart abandonment

When a shopper abandons their cart, it can initiate a cluster of risks that has an increasing effect on business performance. Depending on the e-commerce platform you use, placing an item in a shopping cart temporarily removes the item from the inventory, reserving it for the shopper. If this shopper doesn't complete their order, it could lead to site dropout for another user if their desired item is in an abandoned cart.

The higher the number of abandoned carts, the more likely that genuine users can't complete their orders through your site, and thus the greater the impact on the revenue for e-Commerce businesses. Some other effects that result from higher abandonment rates can include:

- Loss in customer lifetime value
- Boost in customer acquisition expenses
- Escalation of inventory and product availability issues
- Increase of skewed website traffic data
- Decrease of ad click-through rates
- Reduction of website speeds
- Expansion of retargeting expenses

According to 49 different statistical studies researched by the Baymard Institute they state an abandoned rate of **70.19%** of all customers do not complete their purchases at checkouts.

Is There a Viable Solution?

Luckily, since WooCommerce is a flexible and widely-used e-commerce platform, it offers various plugins and integrated strategies to help online store owners combat cart abandonment effectively. These tools can track abandoned carts and trigger automated email sequences to remind customers of their incomplete purchases or offer incentives to entice them to return and complete the transaction. The following steps in WooCommerce can help to remedy these issues. We want to **send email offers for coupon codes to help the customer come back to the cart**:
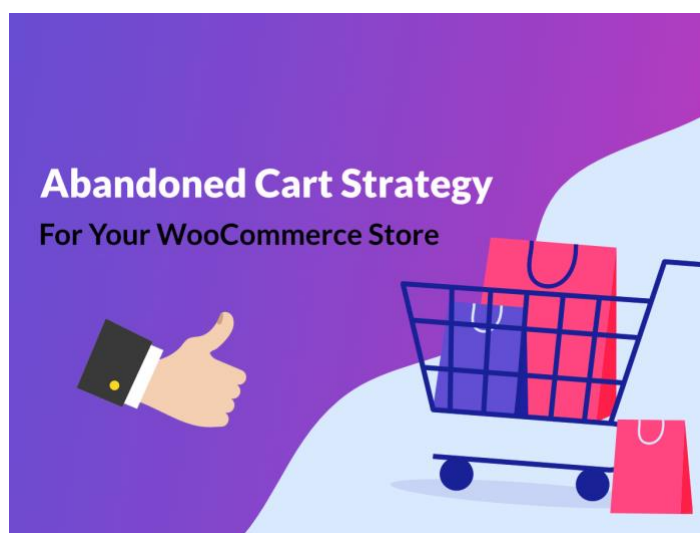

We need to ensure that the **Card Abandonment Recovery Plugin** is installed on your WooCommerce system.

1. From your dashboard, make sure that you have clicked to highlight *'Plugins'* from the lower left-hand side of the pane, and then begin by clicking **'Add New'** on the bottom-left corner of the screen.

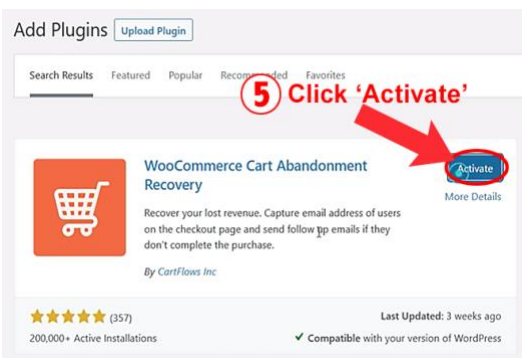2. Next, click in the search field in the upper right-hand corner of the screen to search for the plugin.

3. Type, *'woocommerce cart abandonment recovery'* and then hit **'Enter'** to search for the plugin.
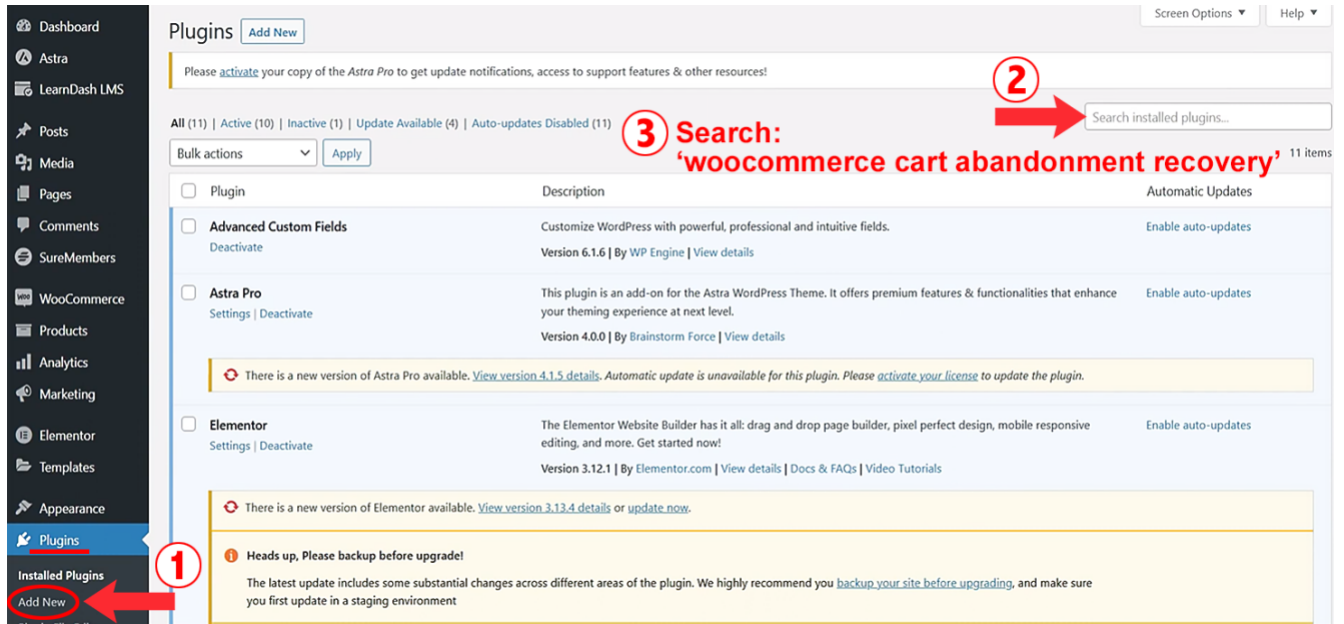
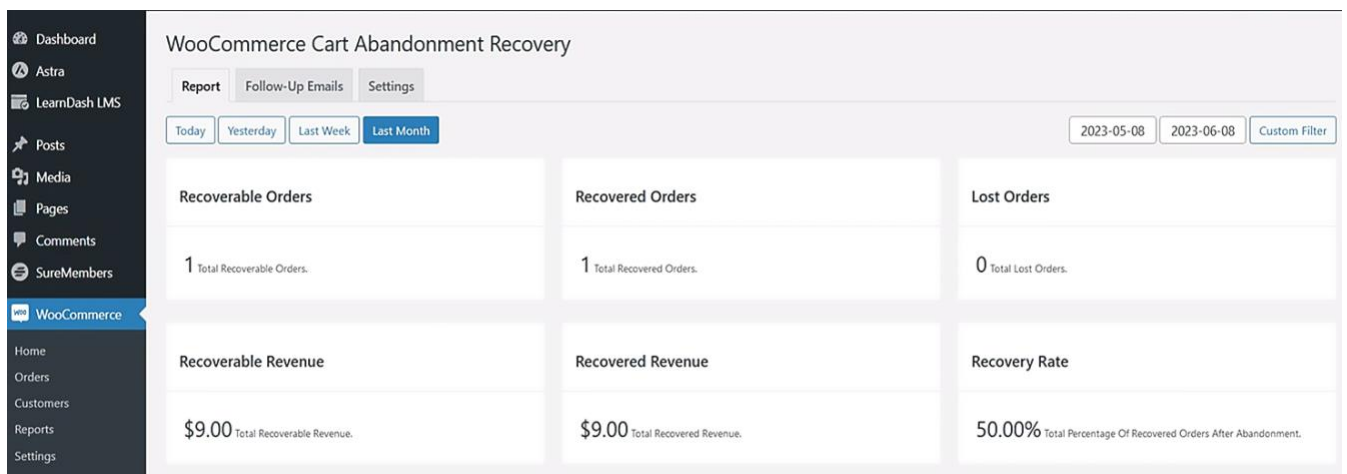4. Once your search results yield the following, click **'Install Now'**
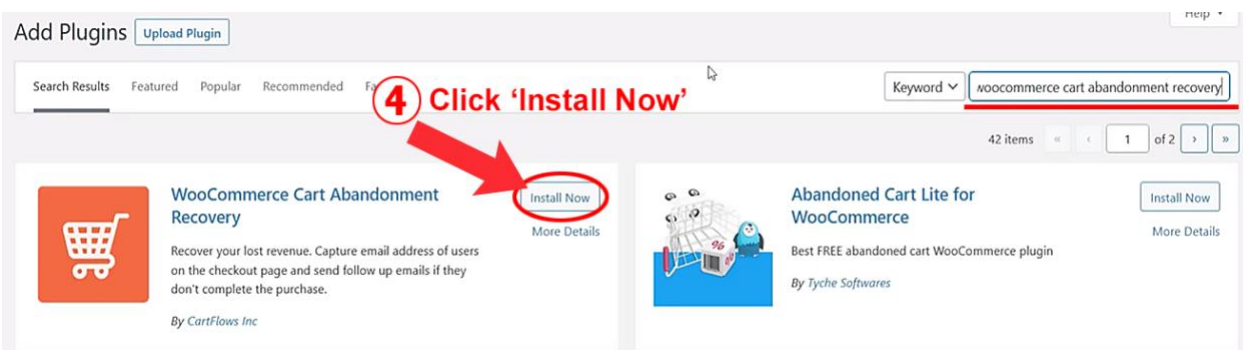
5. Next, the *'Install Now'* button will turn into a blue **'Activate'** button. Click to activate.
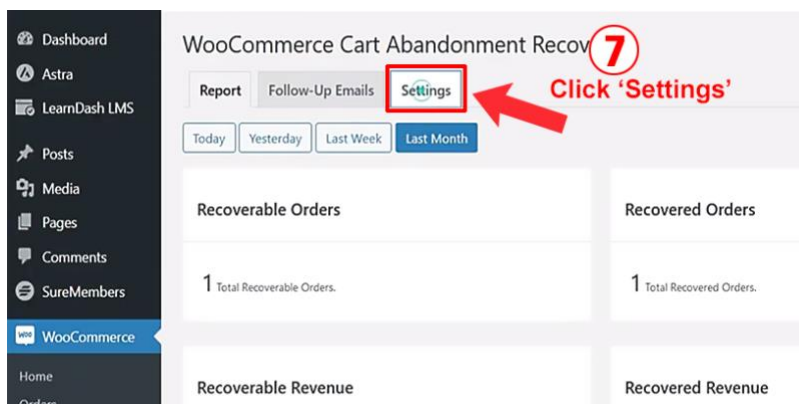
6. In the left-hand pane, click **'WooCommerce'** to expand the subdock category and then click **'Abandonment Cart'** at the bottom of the dropdown.
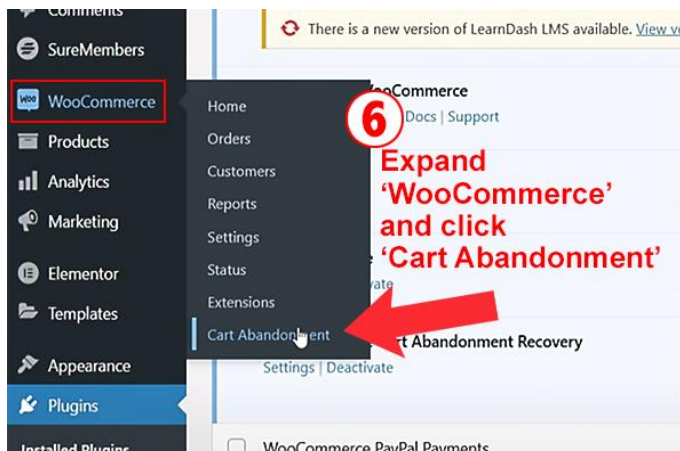
The dashboard will now show you all of the carts that are recoverable.

7. Next, click the **'Settings'** tab at the top.

8. Click the **'Enable Tracking'** checkbox so that abandoned carts are properly tracked.

9. Set your cutoff *(inactive user)* time to **10 Minutes**. This is a perfectly reasonable amount of time to expect the user to checkout their item/s and we want to ensure not too much time goes by.

10. Leave the next several checkboxes to their default settings, and scroll down to the **'Notify recovery to admin'** section and check that option to send a notification to the admin.

11. Click the checkbox beside the **'Delete Coupons Automatically'** option in order to delete expired coupons on a weekly basis.

12. Next, scroll down to the **'Email Settings'** section and enter the name of how you want your name on the email to display to the user. The **'From and Reply To Addresses'** are also self-explanatory. These addresses will display to the recipient on the email.

13. Just as you would guess, we want to ensure that the recovery email is sent to the admin as well, so we include the same admin email as the previous addresses in this field as well. At the bottom of the page click **'Save Changes'**.
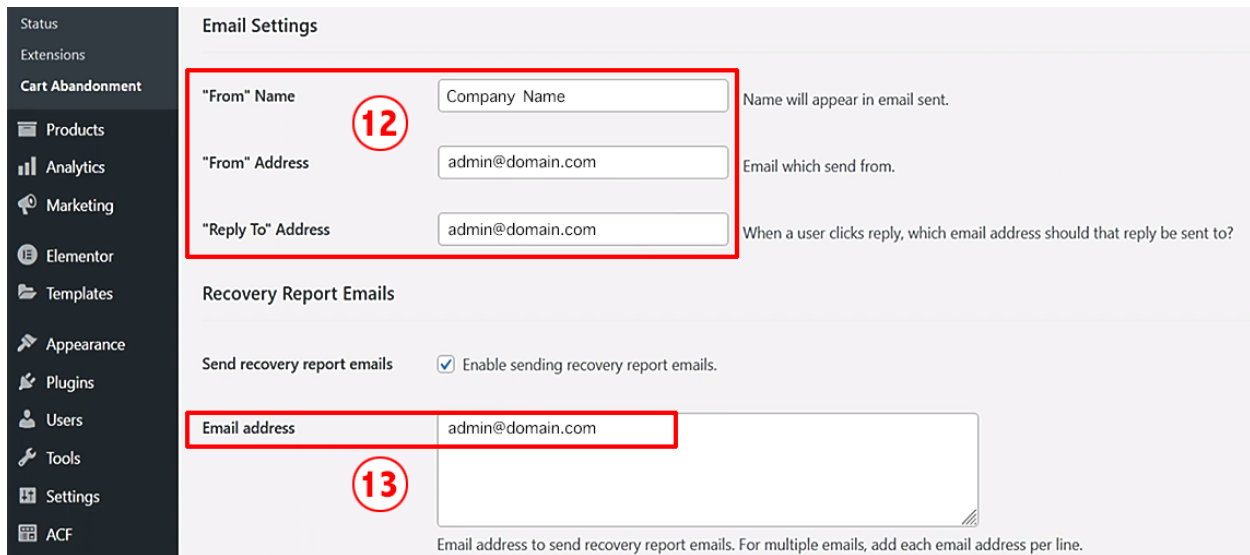
14. After you've saved your changes, we want to configure the *'follow-Up email'* section so click the **'Follow-Up Emails'** tab in the middle. As you can see, there are three settings in place for three follow-up emails. One is triggered to send after 30 minutes, the next after 1 day, and then finally a third email after 3 days.

15. Next, we need to edit the details so the follow-up emails are properly activated and configured. Hover over the one you want to make changes to, and click **'Edit'**
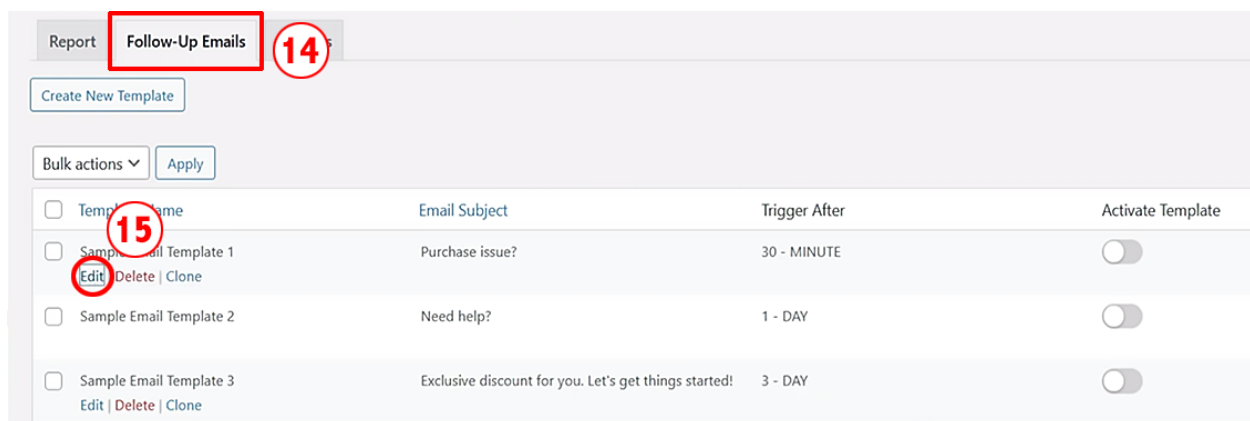
16. Activate the template by turning the slider on.
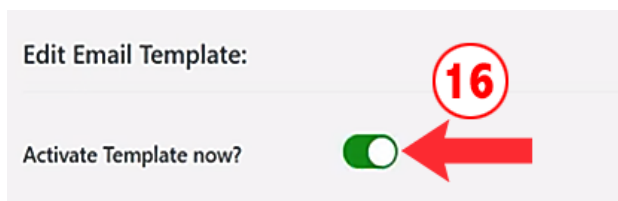
17. You can name the template whatever you like as it will not be displayed anywhere publicly. Give your template a designated email subject.

18. The body of the email should be pretty self-explanatory. You will simply replace the details of the names within the curly brackets. As you can see from the screenshot, the provided hyperlink will route them back to their cart. Add any additional new lines with details in the email.

19. Make sure the next two boxes are checked so the WooCommerce format is used in the email, and that we create a coupon. The dropdown should be set to **'Percentage discount'** and the coupon amount should be set to 10 for 10% off.

20. Leave everything else default, but set the email to send in 2 minutes.

21. Next, we can send a test email to the company/organization email. Type the email you wish to send the email to, click **'Send a test email'** and then click **'Update Changes'** and if successful, it will generate a message that the email was successfully sent.

Per my earlier screenshots, you can go back and make changes to the other two templates the same way as we did here. Everything is the same process and layout. At this point, you can test these settings by preparing a purchase, but holding off and waiting for more than 10 minutes. At this point, if you go back and refresh your dashboard if everything is working properly, it will display the total amount currently sitting in your cart. Additionally, you will receive the follow-up email confirming that you have not checked out, and a coupon for 10% off has been provided to you to apply to your purchase.

22. Once you confirm this data, you can go back and complete your purchase. At that point, if you go back to your dashboard and click on **'Orders'** in the left-hand pane you should see that the purchase has been made, but is currently on hold. With the completed purchase click the checkbox to mark the order as complete.

The status will automatically update to **'completed'** so we can now go back to the dashboard, filter by **'Today'** and confirm that the revenue from the order has been recovered.

This concludes the process of configuring the WooCommerce Cart Abandonment Recovery Plugin in WordPress.

Improving Shopping Cart Abandonment

From a UX standpoint, it's important to be mindful of the things we can do on a website to prevent cart abandonment for the consumer, while also retaining new customers and keeping them long term. These methods can help to improve cart abandonment:

1. **Optimize website performance** - The first thing you can do is try to ensure that the users have good experiences using your website. In particular, focus on improving the speed and reliability of the site. Quicker page loads help to satisfy shoppers' requirements for convenience and fast processes while preventing crashes and other errors prevents potential frustrations and obstacles.

2. **Provide multiple checkout options** - Many online retailers offer multiple checkout options, such as:
    - Members checkout: This option is for shoppers who already have accounts with the retailer. They usually have their addresses, payment information and order histories stored in the retailer's database.
    - Registered checkout: Registered checkout gives new shoppers the choice to create a membership account with the retailer. Often, there are long-term advantages to becoming a member.
    - Guest/fast checkout: This option is for new shoppers who aren't interested in becoming members and want to complete their purchase with as little data input as possible.

3. **Present multiple payment options** - Having multiple options for payment removes another of the major obstacles related to order completion. If possible, offer your shoppers the choice between all popular methods. This ensures that every shopper's preferred option is available, helping to persuade them to go forward with the purchase.

4. **Offer free shipping** - Because shipping costs are another common cause of cart abandonment, offering the choice of free shipment is another method that can foster order completion. Many retailers provide this service for orders that meet a minimum cost threshold, usually $50 or $75, while orders below the threshold are subject to regular shipping costs. A potential added benefit of a free shipping option is that it can encourage shoppers to purchase larger orders so they meet the minimum threshold.

5. **Show a progress indicator during checkout** - A progress indicator is a header displayed during checkout that shows how many stages are involved in the process and which stage the shopper is on. Usually, it's important to number the progress indicator, which can consist of at least the following:
   - Shipping: At this stage, the shopper inputs their shipping address and chooses a shipping option.
   - Payment: The payment stage is when the shopper chooses a payment option and inputs their payment information. If applicable, they may also input codes for coupons, gift cards and other discounts.
   - Review and completion: Here, the shopper can look over the information they've inputted and confirm their order.

Why Page Optimization is Important to SEO

Page optimization is a crucial aspect of SEO (Search Engine Optimization) because it directly impacts how well your webpages perform in search engine rankings and influences user experience. Optimizing your pages for search engines helps them understand your content better, leading to improved visibility and higher rankings in search results. Here's why page optimization is important to SEO:

1. **Improved Ranking:** When search engines crawl and index your webpages, they analyze various factors to determine their relevance to specific search queries. Page optimization, which includes on-page SEO techniques like keyword usage, meta tags, and structured data markup, helps search engines understand the content and context of your pages. By aligning your pages with relevant keywords and providing valuable information, you increase the likelihood of ranking higher in search engine results.

2. **Increased Organic Traffic:** As your pages rank higher in search results due to optimization, they become more visible to users searching for related topics. This increased visibility leads to more organic traffic, as users are more likely to click on links that appear on the first page of search engine results.

3. **Better User Experience**: Page optimization not only helps search engines but also improves the user experience. When you optimize your content, you make it more accessible, relevant, and valuable to your target audience. This, in turn, increases user

satisfaction, encourages longer on-site dwell times, and reduces bounce rates—all of which are positive signals to search engines that your content is valuable and engaging.

4. **Faster Page Load Times**: As mentioned earlier, page speed is an important SEO factor. Optimizing your pages involves practices like image compression, minification of CSS and JavaScript files, leveraging caching, and using Content Delivery Networks (CDNs). These measures improve your website's loading speed, which positively affects both user experience and search engine rankings.

5. **Mobile-Friendliness**: With the increasing number of mobile users, search engines prioritize mobile-friendly websites in their rankings. Page optimization involves ensuring that your webpages are responsive and provide an excellent user experience across different devices. A mobile-friendly website is more likely to rank higher in mobile search results.

6. **Better Click-Through Rates (CTRs)**: Effective page optimization, especially in crafting compelling title tags and meta descriptions, can influence how your pages appear in search results. If your titles and meta descriptions are well-optimized and enticing, users are more likely to click on your links, increasing your click-through rates.

7. **Higher Conversion Rates**: Well-optimized pages provide clear and relevant information, guiding users to take the desired actions on your website. This could be signing up for a newsletter, making a purchase, or filling out a contact form. Higher conversion rates are not a direct ranking factor, but they do indicate to search engines that your content meets users' needs.

8. **Reduced bounce rate:** Faster-loading pages tend to have lower bounce rates, meaning visitors are more likely to stay on your site instead of leaving immediately. Lower bounce rates indicate to search engines that your content is relevant and engaging, which can improve your rankings.

9. **Improved user experience:** Users prefer fast-loading websites, and a positive user experience leads to better engagement and increased time spent on your site. This, in turn, signals search engines that your site provides valuable content.

10. **Mobile optimization:** Page speed is crucial for mobile users, as they often have slower internet connections than desktop users. With the growing emphasis on mobile-friendly websites in search rankings, having a fast-loading site is essential for SEO success.

In summary, page optimization is vital to SEO as it helps search engines understand your content better, improves your website's visibility in search results, enhances user experience,

and ultimately drives more organic traffic and conversions to your website. By implementing effective on-page SEO strategies, you increase your chances of success in the competitive online landscape. Good SEO practices can indirectly contribute to faster loading times. Google and other search engines consider page speed as one of the ranking factors for search results.