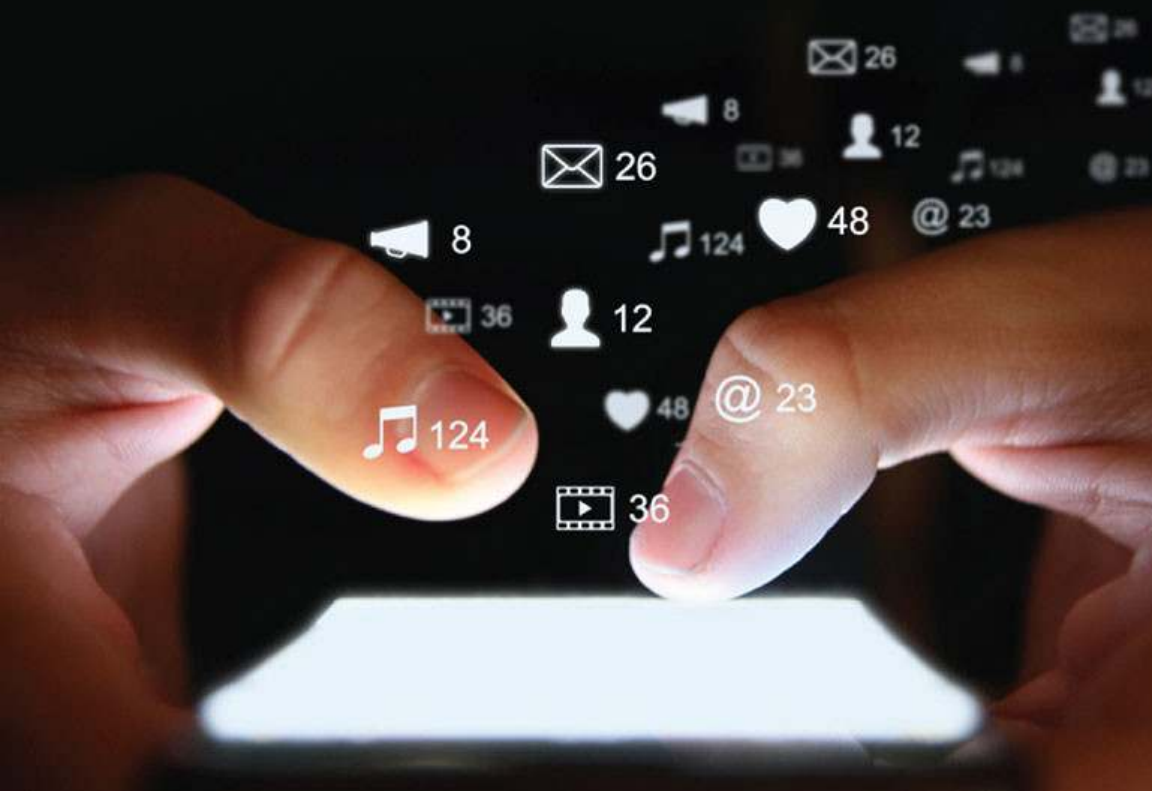
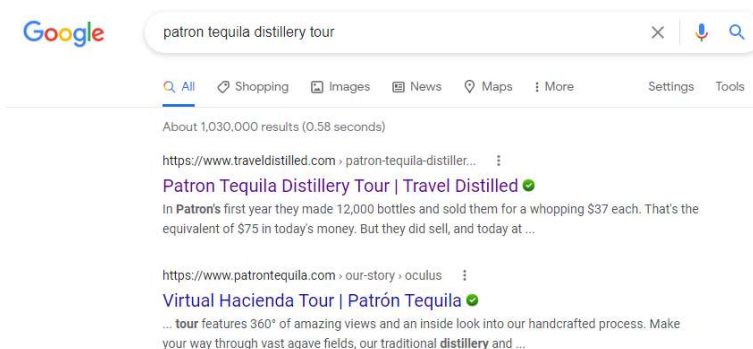


WORK WITH ME

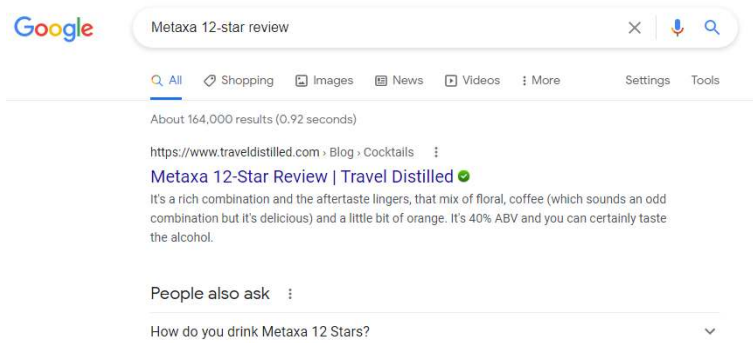
Mike Gerrard



Wouldn't you like your business to be ranked #1 on Google? And on Bing too, which is used for 36% of US desktop searches?



My Travel Distilled site even beats Patron's own page in Google search results for a Patron distillery tour. And below, my Metaxa 12-star review is also number one on Google.



It's not impossible. It's what I've achieved with numerous pages on my one-man website, Travel Distilled. At the time of writing it's getting about 7,000 page views a month, up from 2,000 twelve months earlier. It's a modest number, which makes it all the more pleasing that for many pages I outrank much bigger sites like Total Wine, Master of Malt, Difford's Guide, The Whisky Exchange, Drizly... even Wikipedia and TripAdvisor!

Check out my claims by searching on both Google and Bing for some of the following key phrases. Bear in mind that search rankings change constantly, but as I write this, the following pages rank in the first three search results on Google and/or Bing. They bring large numbers of visitors to my website every day:

'Metaxa 12-star review'

'Roku Japanese gin review'

'Is mezcal stronger than tequila?'

'Patron Tequila Distillery tour'

'1800 Tequila cocktail recipes'

'Stray Dog Wild Gin'

I could go on (and on) but you get the point.

How did I achieve this? Well, for a start I've had over 10 years' experience of using Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques.

It also pays to go niche. To post regularly. And to answer people's questions. To anyone in the business, 'Is mezcal stronger than tequila?' might seem like an obvious two-word answer: 'It depends'. But it's sometimes wise to forget your own knowledge and remember that there are a lot of people out there who don't know the answer. That page has been read several hundred times in the few weeks since I wrote it, thanks to the fact that at the moment it ranks #1 on both Google and Bing.

Maybe I could work with you to try to achieve the same results?



*At Balfour Castle on Orkney in Scotland, where I went to visit the
Scapa whisky distillery.*

Clients

Among the better-known clients I have written for are Diageo, Metaxa, Microsoft, Google, National Geographic, and American Express.

'Social media has become an increasingly important avenue for promotion in the spirits industry. It gives brands a fresh way to communicate with their consumers, offering a scale of interaction that has previously not existed. It's imperative for brands to create powerful campaigns to gain the trust of consumers and to drive sales – and, as such, the global spirits industry is home to some of the biggest spenders on marketing and advertising.'

The Spirits Business

Some of my recent projects include:

- Working with Metaxa to rewrite their media packs and provide new material prior to an all-important launch in the Chinese market. It made sense to them to ask a journalist to write something that was largely aimed at journalists.
- Working with Diageo writing features on rare and exceptional whiskies for a joint online project with Bloomberg.
- Working for a US importer of Polish vodka to improve and expand their website and write monthly blogs about vodka.
- Working with a Kentucky distillery writing two blogs a month about them and their spirits.

I'm an Editorial Staff Writer on the US drinks magazine, Chilled, and many of the stories I write are profiles of distilleries and brands, which are advertising-led but I find the human interest stories that turn them into an enjoyable read. You can see lots of my Chilled stories [here](#).

I review spirits and write occasional features for the [Drinkhacker](#) website, which gets over 400,000 page views a month.

I've written for [The Alcohol Professor](#), [Tucson Foodie](#), [Waitrose Drinks Magazine](#), and reviewed spirits for the [BBC Good Food website](#), amongst other outlets.

Maybe I could work with you too?

'Tom Harvey, new-client director at YesMore, said core brands have overstretched themselves on social media. Spirits companies typically have a minimum of three social media accounts (usually Twitter, Facebook and Instagram), but keeping these up to date and responding to consumers is a labour-intensive task and, increasingly, companies are reluctant to hand the work to an unskilled intern.'

The Spirits Business

The Business of Blogging

One of the services I offer is the writing of original features and blog posts. Many brands and businesses start a blog because they know they ought to have one, but then lack the resources to keep it up-to-date. The answer is to outsource the work.

A blog that isn't up-to-date is a good way to create a bad impression on a visitor to your website. If the blog was last updated 1-2 years ago, it suggests that the rest of the website may not be up-to-date either. A blog that was updated last week tells a very different story, and remember – you only get one chance to create a good first impression.

A blog that is regularly updated has many advantages, which is why more and more companies are starting blogs within their websites.

- A website that is updated frequently alerts the search engines to the fact that the website is active and has new material, which keeps it higher in the search results.
- Regular original blog content also tells the search engines that the site is growing, and a growing site also gets treated more favorably in search results.
- Original blog content using good SEO techniques also adds to the ways in which potential customers can find you through Google, Bing, and the other major search engines.

If you want me to produce original material for your blog on a regular basis then get in touch to discuss requirements and costs.

In addition, I can work on promoting your blog posts on social media channels, or running your social media channels for you.

The Importance of Twitter

In the first quarter of 2015, Twitter reported that it had 236 million active monthly users. *Active* users. Over 200 million tweets are sent every single day. It's estimated there are now over 500 million Twitter users around the world, and still growing. Twitter now puts out figures for what it calls 'monetizable daily users', and in the third quarter of 2020 that was 187 million people.

Some other 2020 Twitter stats:

- 330 million monthly active users
- 500 million tweets posted every single day
- 23 percent of the internet population are on Twitter
- Twitter is the number one social network in Japan
- Twitter's user base is predicted to grow 2.4% in 2021

It is a cheap and effective way of building your brand. Larger companies have staff whose sole job is to monitor and post to their Twitter accounts. They respond to tweets by the company's followers, and generate original content to keep those followers loyal and to find new fans.

Smaller companies can't usually afford that, and the job becomes an extra part-time chore for someone in the office. Or simply doesn't get done at all. I've lost track of the number of drinks companies I've found whose Twitter accounts started off hopefully and then trailed away and became inactive for months at a time.



At the Metaxa Distillery in Athens with the Metaxa Master

Costas Raptis

Number of Twitter followers

Patron Tequila 217,000

Jack Daniel's 198,800

Maker's Mark Bourbon 134,400

Jägermeister US 90,000

Grey Goose 89,600

Ciroc Vodka 77,800

Jose Cuervo Tequila 64,400

*You might think you could never compete with
the marketing clout and cash of the big guys,
but remember the story of David and Goliath.*

My Twitter Services

This is where I come in. I've been active on Twitter for many years, running several Twitter accounts for myself and the websites that I publish. If you know you ought to be more active on Twitter but don't have the time, the staff, or the know-how, then get in touch.

I'm happy to run Twitter campaigns for people, either ongoing or for a limited time so you can monitor results. I'll tweet however many times a day or week you want me to tweet. I also use professional services like HootSuite and Buffer to target the best times, and to set up a steady stream of tweets in advance.

About Me

I write about travel and the drinks business and have won many awards for my writing:

- A Travelex Award for Best Travel Consumer Magazine Feature
- A British Guild of Travel Writers Award
- Two Awards for Excellence from the Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild
- A Benjamin Franklin Award in the USA for a guidebook to Paris
- One of the Press Gazette's 50 Most Influential Travel Journalists in the UK
- AITO Online Travel Writer of the Year
- Shortlisted for AITO Travel Blogger of the Year for my Travel Distilled website

I publish three travel websites and two drinks websites, publish the Beyond Travel Guides, and divide my time between my homes in Cambridgeshire in the UK and near Tucson in Arizona.



*On the Herradura Express while visiting
nine tequila distilleries in five days in
Jalisco, Mexico. Salud!*

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