

# SEO CASE STUDY

## Vapaura: Starting Out Strong

### The Problem

Ben Winterburn was starting a brand new eCommerce store in a very competitive industry, vaporizers. His template site on Shopify was not gaining any traction.

### The Solution

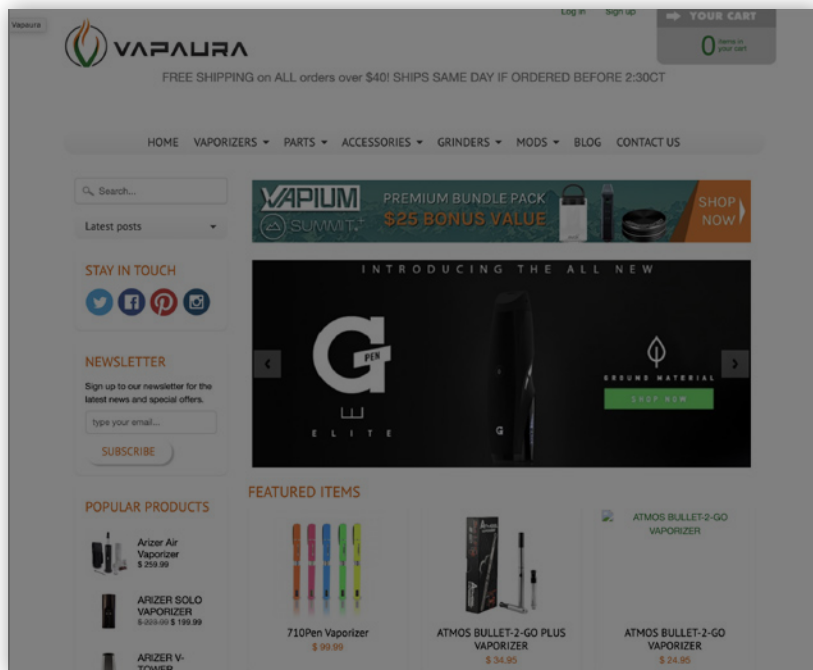
1Digital® partnered with Ben and gave Vapaura the full treatment, a full custom redesign, along with an SEO campaign which is starting to build rankings in one of the most competitive spaces on the web.

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When Ben Winterburn got in touch with us in October of 2016, he knew he was up against some long odds. He was well aware that starting a new domain selling vape products, one of eCommerce's most competitive spaces, would not be simple. Dry herb and wax vaporizers is one of the most crowded industries online, because of how complicated it is to sell them in brick and mortar, depending on where



## BEFORE

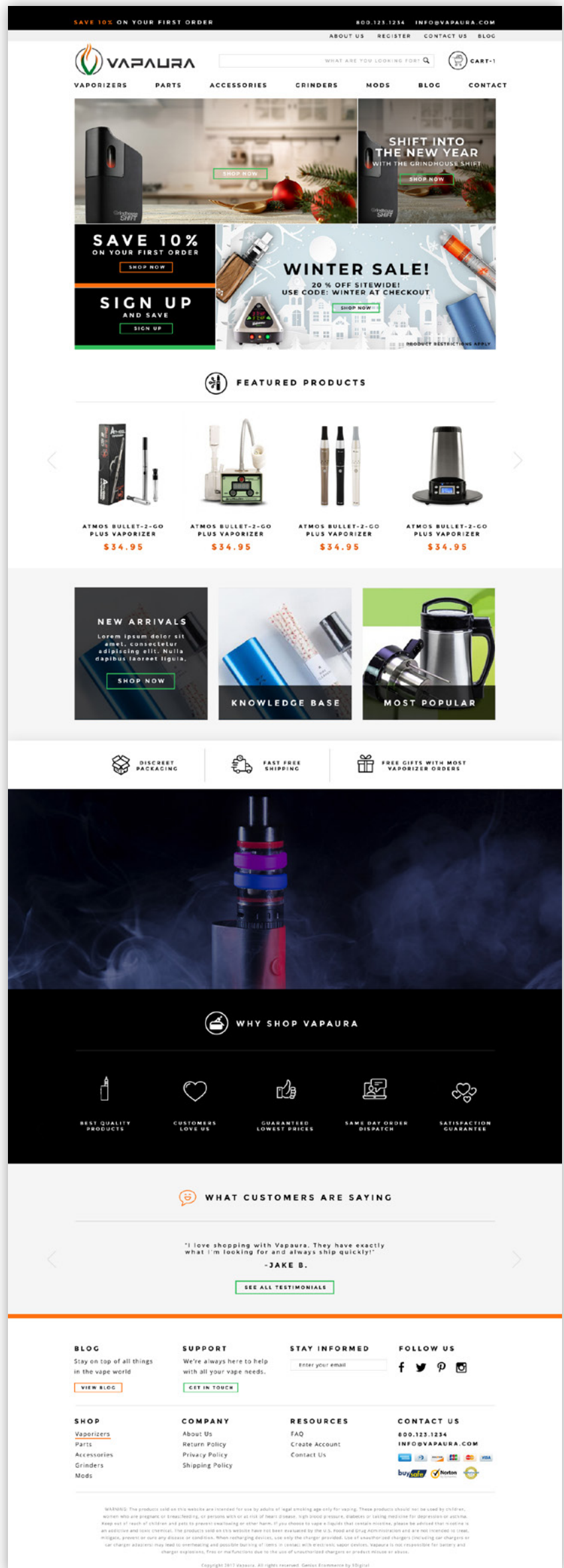


you live. Also, because paid ads aren't possible for these types of products, SEO marketing is not only crucial, but notoriously competitive. Ben knew, in order to climb to the top of the heap, he'd need to dig in his heels, and make a serious investment in his new business.

We began by updating Vapaura's design. The Shopify template that Ben was on was not sharp enough to compete with his more established competitors. He said that, at the beginning, he took a lot of inspiration from the sites already in the vape space. "A big part is learning from your competitors, because they're clearly doing something right" Ben said. But in the end, "you want to have your own brand, and your own vision. You need to send a message to your customers about why you're unique."

So Ben contacted 1Digital® to help him communicate that unique message for Vapaura. We took the example sites that Ben liked, and helped him transform those elements into something that was easy to use, looked polished, and communicated a brand identity all his own. His design and development process went extremely smoothly. "I couldn't have asked for anything better," Ben said. He pointed out that our project management system made

## AFTER

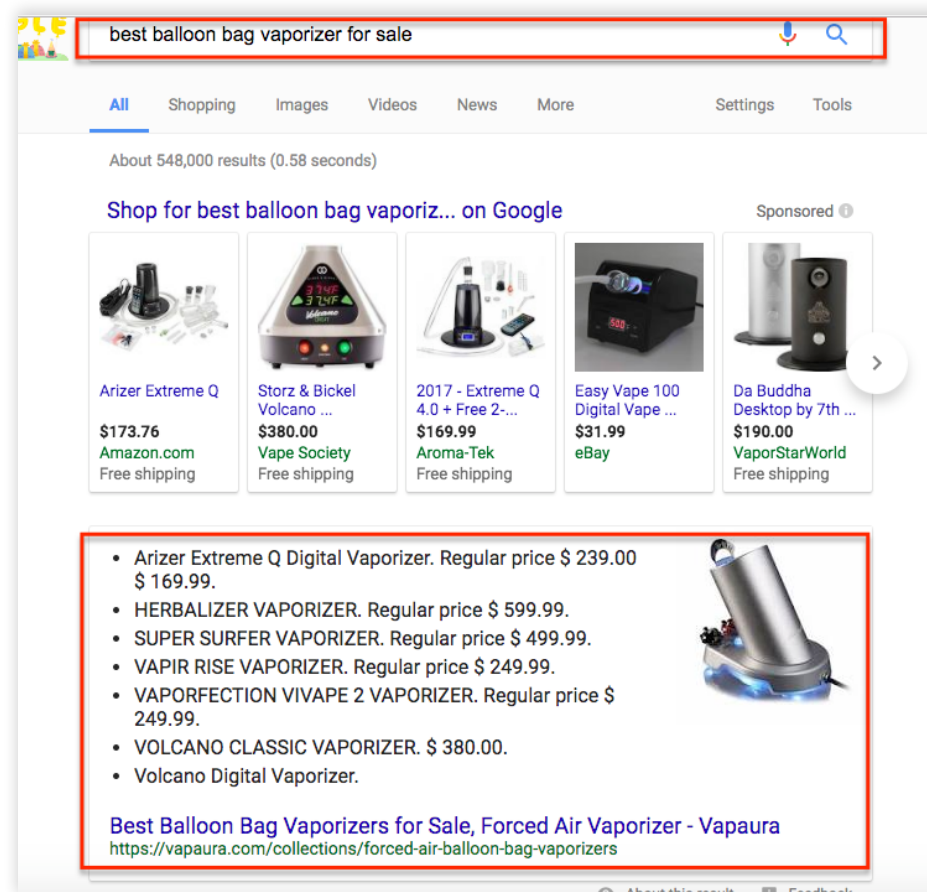


communication particularly easy. “It was so easy to connect in multiple different ways,” Ben said. “You guys were constantly on task and on point. I was trying to keep up with you guys.”

As soon as the site was completed and launched, it was time to get started on the SEO campaign, but we knew it was going to be a rough road. Digital advertising for vape or vaporizer products is especially difficult. Google includes these products under their Dangerous Products and Services policy, and therefore, paid ads are not allowed. The situation is similar for paid ads on Facebook, as well as other search and social media platforms. When a new eCommerce site starts out, they don’t have any domain authority, a metric of the trust Google places in a site. Domain authority is usually built naturally over time, however, the process can be sped up through SEO activities. The most common way for a new business to start to get traffic, before it has any authority, is to pay for ad space. Though it cuts into margins quite a bit to pay Google for those placements, it gets people onto your site, and helps you build your customer base, as your domain authority slowly builds. With vaporizers, this common beginning strategy is not possible. This makes quality SEO rankings necessary for vape, and also fiercely competitive.

As with many of our clients, we began researching a keyword strategy for Vapura weeks before the launch date of our custom site. SEO campaigns often have a significant amount of spinning up time which is necessary at the outset. This time is used to, settle on a keyword strategy, do a competition analysis, and begin to create both onsite and offsite content for publishing. When we begin concurrently with the development and QA of one of our custom eCommerce sites, we’re able to hit the ground running with SEO on launch day.

For the first sixth months of any campaign for a new domain, especially ones in vape, we select long tail keywords. Long tail keywords have lower search volume, and therefore are easier to rank for. Once you rank well for a few long tail keywords, your domain authority builds, and you’re suddenly in a position where ranking for higher volume keywords is possible. In a [good SEO campaign](#), the target keywords will get more and more general with each reformulation of the strategy. Long tail keywords can also be uniquely beneficial simply because they are so specific. Generally, when a customer types in a highly specific search phrase they both know exactly what they are looking for, and are highly motivated to buy.

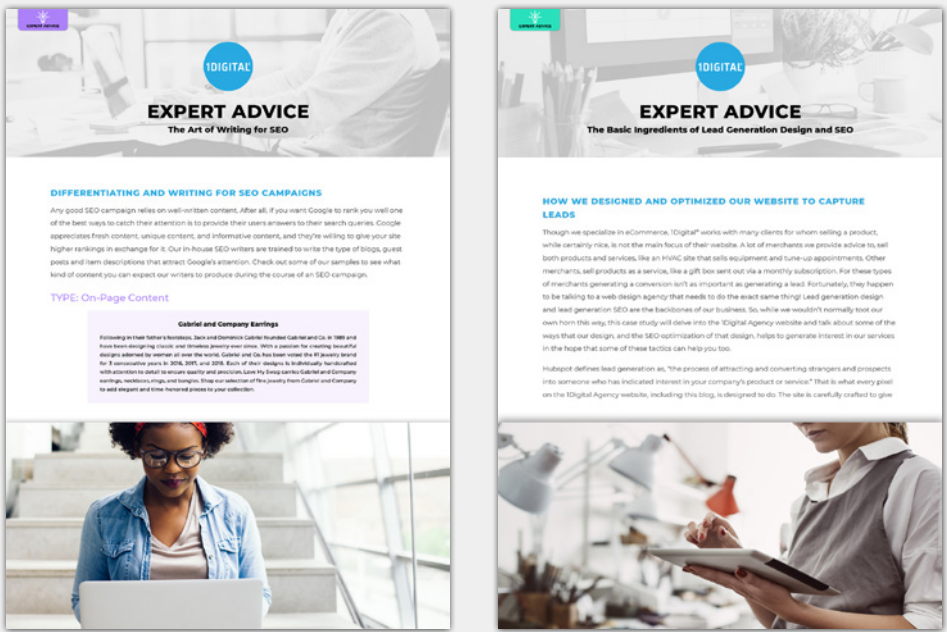


In the case of Vapura, Ben’s rankings have increased dramatically over the course of the 5 months during which we’ve been doing SEO activities. When the campaign began, none of the 25 keywords which we selected to focus on were ranking within the first hundred positions. Now Vapura ranks on the first page of Google for 3 of those keywords, and 20 of the total 25 have come

to the first five pages. Average organic search traffic on [Vapura](#) has risen by 41%. But most importantly, Ben is slowly but surely starting to see the fruits of his labors. “The biggest difference is the amount of traffic,” Ben said. “ I work in a difficult industry where competitors are always climbing on top of one another. I don’t have the volume that I want yet, but it’s a lot more than I had.”

Vapura’s fall sale will be kicking off within a few weeks, which will likely coincide with an exciting new product launch. Ben is focusing on improving his inventory, and maintaining a high level of customer service, as the strength of Vapura’s profile continues to build. “When I was first thinking about what type of business I wanted to open, a lot of people would have said: the vape industry... no. I thought about it differently,” Ben said. “I thought, if I can get myself to the top of the heap, my ability to become an industry leader is strong. It’s a struggle, but it’s well worth the fight, and I enjoy it.” We enjoy it too, Ben, and we look forward to helping you fight all the way to the top.

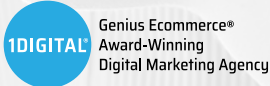
## 1Digital Agency Expert Advice Series on SEO



## CONSIDERING OUR SEO SERVICES?

SEO for eCommerce is a hard-fought battle. Everybody in your industry is competing for just 10 spots on Google’s first page. In order to be one of those people, you need to be smarter, quicker, and work harder than everybody else. 1Digital is the marketing partner that can help you get there. We employ intelligent SEO strategies that grow organic ranking, traffic and conversion. We have highly skilled eCommerce SEO experts that focus on eCommerce merchants and we’re widely recognized as one of the best eCommerce SEO companies online.

**SEO Experts.** 1Digital employs a talented team of eCommerce experts that focus on e-Commerce only. We’ve been working on eCommerce SEO since our inception and we’ve slowly grown into one of the top eCommerce digital agencies in the country. Our eCommerce search engine optimization skills have propelled us to the top of the talent pool and we’ve been helping our clients win more business with more sales and leads since early 2012. Our founder and CEO, Dan Kogan has been involved with eCommerce SEO since the late 1990s and he’s carved out our path to being the best in the eCommerce space ever since. If you’ve been looking for a top company that handles eCommerce SEO, you’ve found it.



**1DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY**  
**20 NORTH 3RD STREET**  
**SUITE 301 (DANIEL BUILDING)**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106**

**INFO@1DIGITALAGENCY.COM**  
**888. 982. 8269 | 215. 809. 1567**

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