

Optimize For Search Engines- Increase Targeted Traffic to Your Site

OPTIMIZE FOR
SEARCH ENGINES

Increase Targeted Traffic To Your Site

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Why are Search Engines so Important?

Whenever any individual is searching for something on the internet whether it be information or products to buy, he/she usually enters a word or phrase into a search engine. Search engines remain the best way that most internet users search for information. Because of their widespread use, search engines will be the most fundamental way that online businesses gain exposure. It is by no means to say it is the best promotional method but it is the most primary and utilized one.

Advantages

1. If you want to promote your site a high search engine ranking can mean a major boost in traffic. Traffic means nothing if people just visit your site and aren't interested in what you have to offer. Clicking on a website from a search engine page usually means the visitor wants to see your product because they choose to. This distinction known as targeted traffic will mean more sales for you.
2. Another advantage with search engine ranking is increased visibility. Lots of times even though you're company is smaller it can still rank better than a website with more resources just by optimizing the pages for the various search engines.
3. For those internet entrepreneurs with tight budgets, the fact that it doesn't cost anything to be placed on the search engines' indexes means more money to be used for other functions of the business.

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Disadvantages

1. The major disadvantage with search engines is that many of them don't disclose exactly how they rank sites on their system. This may make even untargeted sites rank more than yours.
2. Each of the major search engines also have different ranking systems and rules which change often. This makes it nerve raking for websites who may take much work to reach the top of the rankings only to lose it later after a change in systems.(However there are some basic principles that never change and it is these that will be covered in the pages that follow).

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Different Types of Search Services

There are two main types of search services

1. Search Engines
2. Search Directories

Search Engines

There is no big trick to the way search engines work. They do three basic jobs

1. Crawl the Web

Search the internet based on what is known as "keywords", that is, words or phrases that define what the content of web pages are. Search engines use automated software "robots" called spiders that crawl the internet and the varied websites it possesses. A spider will also follow the links to other pages within your site to see how relevant they are. Importantly spiders will also return periodically, (every 2 or so months) to check for any changes that have been made to your website.

2. Index Websites

After the spiders have all your pages information they return to the search engine and index the words they find. It may take a while for search engines to index new pages.

3. Allow Users to Search their index

Users are then allowed to search for words or phrases found in the search engines' index. Your site will not be available for search until it has been indexed (added to the search engines' listing).

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Even though spiders are always crawling the internet, it is important to submit your site to the major search engines.

Google

Msn Search

Altavista

Inktomi (HotBot)

Ask (AskJeeves)

AOL NetFind

All the Web

Netscape Search

Gigablast

Search Directories

Directories differ from engines mainly due to the fact that Web sites are categorized in their listings. When a user looks for information on relevant sites from these directories, they browse through the array of directories and sub-directories.

For example, if a person is looking for sites selling fans it might be under Home Appliances. You can see here that the users will find your site based on relevance. Most directories will allow you to register your home-page for free.

Examples of the more well-known directories include:

Yahoo!

DMOZ (Directory Mozilla)

Search-Dir

Look Smart

Starting Point

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It is highly important to submit your site to both search engines and directories.

[SEO Spider](#) is a useful tool for doing website analysis and uses robots similar to ones used by search engines to crawl websites. It can increase targeted traffic to your site.

You can use [SubmitExpress](#) to submit your websites to multiple search engines.

Choosing The Right Keywords

Before we go into the HTML coding needed to optimize websites for search engines, it is vital that you look at finding the right keywords for your web pages.

Don't Use Common Words

Common words and phrases will generally not score high in search engine indexes especially if they are propositions or Web-related words.

Examples of these are "the, and, for, of, a, internet, web, homepage, etc."

You'll know if they are common if when put in a popular search engine you receive millions more results than normal.

Use Phrases

When people search the internet they usually use longer word phrases to find what they want. For example, an art enthusiast looking for deals on paintings wouldn't put in "paintings" as a search term.

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They would put in terms such as:

oil paintings, watercolour paintings, abstract paintings, impressionist paintings
painting gallery, painting store, painting sales
renaissance paintings, van gogh paintings, da vinci paintings

I want you to take a look at some common trends in these search terms.

- Quite a few have been pluralized. Most people when searching for something put the "s" at the end of the word or phrase.
- Most use something descriptive about the core search term to identify the specific type of painting they wanted.
- They didn't put in "paintings by famous artists" but used brand or household names for the famous artists. This can be applied to any other product as most will have different types and brand names.
- Search terms were not capitalized. It is so much easier for most people to just punch in a word without pressing the Caps Lock button. Also if you type in da vinci paintings search engines will additionally pick up Da vinci, Da Vinci, Da Vinci paintings. Whereas if Da Vinci Paintings was a keyword, da vinci and da vinci paintings probably wouldn't be found. Always try and use lower case letters.

[WebCEO](#) is a software used to optimize web pages with keywords and do submissions to search engines.

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Html Tags

After choosing some words and phrases you'd like to use to describe your site, take a look at the competition. Enter your better search terms into popular search engines and search for which sites rank best. You can actually look what other terms they are using to describe their site by checking their html source code. Some may be useful to you in elevating your search engine ranking.

Now take a look at the top menu bar on your internet browser. Go to **View....** then **Page Source/Source**. If that specific web publisher is using correct tags you should see something like this at the top of the page:

```
<html>
```

```
<head>
```

```
<title> "The Page Title Goes here"</title>
```

```
<meta name="description" content= "Description of the contents of the web page goes here">
```

```
<meta name="keywords" content= "key terms and phrases for the web page goes here">
```

```
</head>
```

The Title

The title of the page is what will show at the very top of your browser in white writing on a blue background. It is also what will show up in search engines as your title if someone puts a term related to your site into the search bar.

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Therefore it is very important to write something both interesting to catch people's eyes and descriptive. One thing you don't want to do is write your company name or your name in the title section. Have you ever read newspapers and seen how they sell their front page. They have something eye-catching in bold and then probably a byline afterwards. The words in bold is similar to your title. The byline is like your description.

The Description

Your description is what will get people to click a link to enter your site. Therefore it must make the user want to know more about your site or product. Listing benefits of your products or how it can help them will be helpful here. It must also grab the person's attention.

Which title and description would you find more appealing?

Oil paintings for sale- At this gallery we sell paintings at low prices

Oil paintings you'll love- Watch as the art jumps right off the canvas

Keywords can be very beneficial in this process as you can implement your better ones into your title and site description.

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Including Keywords In Your Source Code

Meta Tags

Including meta tags into your site's source code is very essential as this is what the search engines spider will read to verify your page's title, description and the main words and phrases used on the site. If they aren't used then search engines tend to crawl through the entire site and pick the first 150-200 characters and use as a description.

This could spell trouble for some people who tend not to put relevant content in the first part of the body of their page. Imagine someone seeing your website welcome or contact information as the description and title of your web page.

Lets use the example about the art enthusiast. Suppose he was building a site to sell oil paintings in his collection. He could create something similar to the html heading for his paintings site as below.

```
<html>
```

```
<head>
```

```
<title> "Oil Paintings You'll Love"</title>
```

```
<meta name="description" content= "Watch as the art jumps right off the canvas">
```

```
<meta name="keywords" content= "oil paintings, paintings sale, still-life, abstract art, renaissance art, impressionist paintings">
```

```
</head>
```

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As you can see the meta keywords tag allowed the art buff to place some words not found in their title or description that may relate to content on their web page. Try to place six or more keywords in the tag but ensure it is relevant to your page content. We will see why later.

Don't Spam

Some people feel that repeating the keywords or phrases without any real purpose will trick the spider into thinking that the page is more relevant. That is to say that the page contains content containing these words repeatedly.

They'll do something like this for their keyword meta tag:

oil paintings, oil paintings, oil paintings
paintings sale, paintings sale, paintings sale

This is what is known as '*keyword spamming*' and is dangerous as it can get your site banned off whatever particular search engine crawler picks it up. If you repeat words in the keyword tag more than three times it may result in your page not being indexed.

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Optimization factors

Search engines further factor in certain criteria as to the page that should rank well for a specific search term. Therefore certain on-page optimization techniques are vital in trying to increase rankings in search engines. Factors that will affect page rankings include:

- Keyword prominence
- Keyword density
- Keyword placement and proximity
- Keyword frequency

Keyword Prominence and Placement

Placing keywords prominently in titles and description of your websites makes it more relevant to the search engine index. In fact, those words that appear as the first 150-200 words/characters will feature prominently to the search engine spider.

Generally placement of a keyword dense paragraph at the beginning of the page where the first part of the body of the page resides increases your chances of success.

Keyword Frequency

You'll receive better ranking the more your keyword(s) appears in the title, description and body text of your web site. This increases the overall relevancy of the site and improves keyword density.

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Keyword Density

Keyword density or weight relates to the number of keywords on a particular web page compared to the actual total number of words on the web page. So for example, if your page contains 200 words with 3 or 4 of the words containing a particular keyword; then it will rank better than a page with only 1 or 2 of the same keywords on their 200 word page.

Use "*Doorway Pages*"

One interesting tactic that some experts use is to create smaller sub-pages, preferably on sub-domains, that contain a short paragraph or article targeted to a particular keyword. The shorter nature of the web page keeps the total number of words to a minimum and optimizes the page for ranking based on keyword density. These pages are sometimes called 'doorway pages.'

Then they place a link on this page to their main page or product to attempt to pull in more traffic from these pages.

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Relevant Places for Keywords

ALT tags

Web publishers put alt tags (alternate text) for pictures within their web pages. This allows text to be shown while the browser prepares picture that hasn't finished loading yet. It also provides alternate text for pictures on browsers that have the option for graphics off. People tend to do this when they have slow connections (eg. dial-up) or low memory on their computers.

The html source code for a picture might look something like this:

```

```

Headings

Some search engines rank pages based off terms and phrases listed in the heading sections of the pages. The relevance of this relates to the fact that most times headings make note of specific themes and list key phrases in relation to the pages content.

Html codes have tags for headings from <H1> to <H6> which go from larger to smaller headed fonts. Search engines will rank <H1> better than <H2> and <H2> better than <H3> and so on.

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Bold and Underlining

Similar to headings, **bolded**, underlined and *italized* words will rank well as key terms with search engines.

Linked Text

More relevancy is added to text that is linked to some other page. It would be even better if it is linked to another keyword optimized page.

Keywords in URLs

One thing that some experts try to do is make their page links keyword optimized. Putting keywords in your url could look like this:

http://www.your_homepage_goes_here.com/keywords/other_keywords.html

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Fresh Content

Just as having good relevant content on your site is essential to gaining traffic and visitors, providing fresh content regularly will cause persons to not only come to your site once but to revisit.

The webmaster must ensure that the information or product offered is not only beneficial to the user but it must also be easy to find. It a good practice to keep updated content just one click away from the homepage or on the homepage itself.

Ways to provide fresh content include producing a newsletter, writing e-zine publications or having a course that the user can access via e-mail auto-responders.

Webmasters can also get free content and articles for their site from web pages like [Go Articles](#) and [Free Sticky](#).

One other useful way that webmasters can give useful new content is by establishing RSS feeds on their websites. This is basically lists of articles from other websites linked to your page. It's easier and more affordable than publishing a newsletter or an e-zine.

[RSS Equalizer](#) can create fresh content from RSS feeds and help increase search engine rankings.

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Building Link Popularity

The more well used search engines will additionally use link popularity to score relevancy points for a website. Link popularity basically refers to the number of websites that have links connecting to your site. The majority of links to your site initially should come from reciprocal links. This means that you offer sites links and request that they link back to your site.

Years ago, people tried to manipulate this knowledge of ranking well from links by establishing link networks. In this case, website publishers could join a network of interconnected linkers and promote their link popularity.

The nature and complexity of search engine spiders have evolved to score not only for links to you site but the “content” from this site must be relevant and related to your keywords and content.

This meant that some networks would actually now become blacklisted as they were connecting to non-related websites. Be careful! Involvement in these systems nowadays could mean your website being penalized.

Many search engine also employ complex link analysis and page ranking algorithms. This causes improved scores not only for sites linking to yours but scores based on the ranking and popularity of the pages linking to yours. For analysis of links imagine a chain of pages connecting to your site with “weights” and scores related to each. Your site will now garner a weight based off the popularity of the other pages.

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Reciprocal Linking

Looking for web publishers to swap links with could be a time-consuming yet rewarding task. The simplest method for finding link partners is to enter some of your keywords into the search engines , finding similar sites and taking down contact information. Then you can contact web publishers either by phone or e-mail requesting a link exchange.

Ensure that you have a recommended links page or resources page and place those sites that you want to link to on that page. Write the webmaster telling them something you saw and liked on their site and tell them you'd already put a link to their site on yours. Tell them where this links page is and emphasize it is one click away from the homepage. Make sure to tell some detail as to the type of service or product you provide.

One thing to always keep in mind is to ensure that the possible link partner has a content based site and that his site is relevant and related to yours.

You can use [SEO Elite](#) as a link building tool to enhance search engine optimization. It is the premier software for finding link exchange partners and improving link popularity.

Remember we spoke about “doorway pages”? Search engines crawl the web looking for relevant links to your site. Putting up a related page may not be enough nowadays as the spiders also look at links from *different* IP addresses. That is why it is important to build and establish links from different sites.

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Do you remember the example of the art collector building a site to sell his oil paintings? He could look for partners from other sellers of paintings, galleries or maybe even persons who write articles on the artists whose collections he has.

Increasing Inbound Links

Apart from reciprocal linking, you can attempt to improve your optimization from links by creating genuine content and distributing it to others. The easiest way is to write articles based off your niche market and submitting them to websites.

You would include a link back to your website in the footer of the article with some information about yourself. In this way web publishers will gain much needed content for their visitors and you can enjoy the benefits of a link back to your site.

Other methods include posting free e-books, newsletters and press stories to other sites within your niche market. Of course, all these material should contain links pointing to your site.

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THANK YOU

I hope you've enjoyed reading this e-book as much as I've enjoyed writing it. This e-book covered some of the essentials in optimizing your website for search engines. It also included some techniques and tactics to increase traffic into your site.

However one has to keep updated in order to stay at pace with the moving trends and vast array of optimization tactics. Be sure to stay on top of things by getting as much information as possible and using some of the tools listed here in this e-book.

Keep utilizing optimization techniques to increase your success!

Best Regards,
Joneil J. Alcock.

P.S. Check out the wide array of search engine optimization and website promotional tools we offer at our [internet marketing centre](#).