

Search Engine Optimization And Marketing Kit

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Search Engine Optimization

What is Search Engine Optimization?

Search engine optimization is an overall strategy consisting of many techniques to help your site improve its listing position with search engines. It is a long term strategy that should be re-evaluated after its implementation to track results, make changes when necessary and track the results of the changes.

Why is it so important?

Being "found" on the internet is not a chance happening. People using search tools are looking for something specific. Search engine optimization assists your users in finding you, even if they do not know they are looking for you. Implementing a good search engine optimization tells users about the relevance of your site to what they are searching for.

When search engine results are displayed, the top positions showing are the web sites with the most relevance to what the user is searching for. Measuring relevance is a tricky and secret business.

"Search engine spiders are robots and they do not read your pages the way a human does. Instead, they tend to see only particular stuff and are blind for many extras (Flash, JavaScript) that are intended for humans. Since spiders determine if humans will find your site, it is worth to consider what spiders like and what don't." ¹

A good strategy will enable a company to obtain an effective and measurable marketing campaign with attention to (ROI) return on investment. A good strategy will get you noticed. A good strategy will be custom designed with measurable goals and results.

How is it implemented?

The strategy is to implement each step in the order listed below.

1. Current Web Site Analysis – find the current positioning with search engines.
2. Competitive Assessment – who is your competition, what are their positions.
3. Find the right keywords for your web site.
4. Optimize your web pages for these keywords so that they can get high search engine rankings.
5. Submit your web pages to all important search engines and directories so that web surfers can find you.
6. Get links from other web sites and make sure that these links contain your keywords.
7. Track the results.
8. Stay informed of SEO techniques, changes in algorithms
9. Re-evaluate and revise and resubmit as necessary

¹ Unknown. [See Your Site With the Eyes of a Spider](http://www.webconfs.com/spider-view-article-9.php), webconfs.com, 2006. March 11, 2006 <<http://www.webconfs.com/spider-view-article-9.php>>

Tool Kit

Each step in the strategy listed above contains many details. The "Tool Kit" was developed to identify resources necessary for the completion of each step.

1. Current Site Analysis and Ranking

The most logical place to start is with an analysis of the current site. This will give a benchmark for the site optimization. Asking the following questions about an existing site will assist in identifying specific goals for the optimization of the site. The analysis should reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the existing site. This is just an initial investigation. Later steps will be more in depth.

Question	Action to find the answer
Is the site listed at all? Where is it in the listings?	Search for your domain name with each search engine.
Can the site be found under the terms you think it should be found under?	Search each engine with each term. Record your results. Record the types of sites that are being found under those terms as well.
How long has the domain name been held?	whoIS lookup
How many users click on a link	Check your server statistics
How long do users stay at your site?	Check your server statistics

2. Competitive Assessment

Ask the same questions above of your competitor's site. Are they listing higher and being found quicker? Of course you will not have access to their server statistics, but if they are ranking higher than your site, there is probably room for improvement.

3. Finding the Right Keywords

In order to provide relevance to the search engines and to the users of your site, you will need to provide rich, informative content. Developing keywords and phrases will be the initial step in creating the content. These keywords will also be used in the site's structure so it is important to spend time and research the keywords as completely as possible. The tools listed below will help to refine your keywords and keyword phrases. These keywords will be peppered throughout the content, but will be concentrated especially on the home page of the site. You probably do not want to choose the most obvious keywords because they will also be the most popular with your competitors. Try and find that niche spot, use more specific terms than general ones.

address of link	brief description
http://searchmarketing.yahoo.com/re/srch	Yahoo's keyword generator and research tool
http://nichebot.com	define keywords and their popularity
http://www.webconfs.com/keyword-playground.php	define keywords
https://adwords.google.com/select/main?cmd=KeywordSandbox	Google's keyword sandbox (free)
Keyword Density Evaluators	use these to evaluate your content
http://www.ranks.nl/cgi-bin/ranksnl/spider/spider.cgi?lang	evaluate keyword density**
http://www.searchengineworld.com/cgi-bin/kwda.cgi	evaluate keyword density

4. Page Optimization

Once the keywords have been identified, it is time to put them to use. This next stage in the process is the most time consuming and the most beneficial. There are a quite a few things you can do to encourage users to visit your website more often and to stay longer. A website that's optimized for search engines is also optimized for users too.

Optimization occurs on two levels when creating your site; content and structure. Creating valid W3C web accessible pages, ensures that spiders can make sense of your site. Creating informative rich content ensures that your site will be relevant to your users.

There are specific pieces of the structure that should incorporate your keywords. They are listed below:

- **Keyword metatags** - Some engines use them directly, some check them as part of a validation process - "do they match the content" If they don't then is this a spam site?
- **Meta description tag** - Most engines look at this tag. Use distinct ones throughout your site, and distinct ones for each page. Make them particular to that page.
- **Key term placement** - Terms that are higher up on a page are more heavily weighted.
- **Key term proximity** - Terms that are close together are probably related, and thus the site will show up in searches for those terms.
- **Comment tags** - Some engines use comment tags for content. Most engines look for them in graphic rich / text poor sites.
- **Title tag** - You need a relevant title, not just "Home Page" Use it for 5 keywords.
- **Headings** - The search engines view < h> tags as being terms of emphasis - they give weight to the words within them. Put key terms in them.
- **Bold** - Of lesser importance than < h> tags. the < b> tags still emphasize terms of importance.
- **First Words of First Paragraph** - incorporate your most important keywords use an inverted pyramid writing technique to catch the spider and the human reader.
- **Alt text** - Use descriptive short sentences in your alt tags. If it's a picture of a rose, and you're a florist try "Red Rose - Available at 'name' Flower Shop"
- **Email addresses on page** - if you put up an address, make sure the domain name in the address matches the web site domain. Does your domain name include your key words?
- **Keywords in the url**
 - Using keywords in the url does have an effect for the search engine algorithms.
 - You can use keywords in the filename. For example if the page is about yellow widgets then call it "http://www.sitename.com/yellow-widgets.html"
 - use dashes "-" and not underscores "_" to separate words in filenames.
- **Create specific pages using specific key words.** This is a useful marketing tool for creating landing pages (as will be discussed later in this document)

Other important issues to address in site production are:

1. **Page Last Modified (Freshness)**- a page that is updated frequently is favoured.
2. **Response Time** - If your site is fast, it's favored.
3. **Server Downtime** - If the search engine robot comes by and frequently can't connect sometimes, they penalize your site.
4. **Page Size** - The engines tend to weigh content at the start of a document more than content further down. If a page is long, look at breaking it into sections. If a page is over 50k, then it's too long.
5. **Redirects** - avoid them if you can. If you need to redirect use 301 Redirect, also known as a Permanent Redirect. When describing Redirects in their Webmasters Guidelines Google States: "If you're old URLs redirect to your new site using HTTP 301 (permanent)

redirects, our crawler will discover the new URLs. For more information about 301 HTTP redirects..." (<http://www.Google.com/webmasters/3.html>)

6. **404 Custom Pages** – customizing error pages can give your site a more consistent feel and reassure your users that they have done nothing wrong. Customizing the error page can lead the user back to your site.
7. Using a **site search** element within your site is highly recommended. Once you have been found by a user make certain the user can find the information on your site that they are looking for.(for more site search information, please see the links below in the "tool box")

Here is a list of tools to assist in the optimization process.

address of link	brief description
http://validator.w3.org/	W3C HTML validator
http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/	W3C CSS validator
http://microformats.org	Microformats – another way of "tagging" but tagging done within the html structure of a page. Makes it easier for spiders to identify content
http://www.visionaustralia.org.au/ais/toolbar/	Internet Explorer Accessibility Tool Bar: extremely useful tool. When a page is accessible it is already partially optimized for search engines.
http://www.wrensoft.com/zoom/	Zoom site search tool. Is not free, but is customizable and easy to install and user friendly.
http://www.webconfs.com/search-engine-spider-simulator.php	Evaluate site (spider simulator) See your site as a spider does. How do your keywords show up?
http://www.webconfs.com/url-rewriting-tool.php	URL re writing tool. Help for the structuring of content
http://www.webconfs.com/similar-page-checker.php	Check for similar content. Pages with similar content can be "bounced" from position.
*** http://www.seocompany.ca/tool/seo-tools.html	The tools provided and referred to in this document are only a few of many tools used to evaluate SEO. Here is a complete listing that also includes some of the tools discussed here. The site has an rss feed and also ranks the usefulness of the tools.

5. Submit to Search Engines and Directories

After you have spit polished your site and tweaked it for performance, it's time to submit the site to search engines and directories. It is important to know what a search engine requires for site submission. It may be as simple as submitting your URL. It is also important to understand the relationship of search engines with each other. Listed below are two charts describing these relationships. Since not all site submission is free, it's best to evaluate which search engines you want to submit to and how they meet your site's specific goals.

Who crawls what and how?

This chart explains how sites are crawled and what is crawled. There are some very informative articles linked in the chart. The source is listed below:

Search Engine Features For Webmasters. Court Case, March 11, 2006
<http://searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/article.php/2167891#Deep%20Crawl#Deep%20Crawl>

Crawling	Yes	No	Notes
Deep Crawl	AllTheWeb, Google, Inktomi	AltaVista, Teoma	
Frames Support	All	n/a	
robots.txt	All	n/a	
Meta Robots Tag	All	n/a	
Paid Inclusion	All but...	Google	
Full Body Text	All	n/a	Some stop words may not be indexed
Stop Words	AltaVista, Inktomi, Google	FAST	Teoma unknown
Meta Description	All provide some support, but AltaVista, AllTheWeb and Teoma make most use of the tag		
Meta Keywords	Inktomi, Teoma	AllTheWeb, AltaVista, Google	Teoma support is "unofficial"
ALT text	AltaVista, Google, Teoma	AllTheWeb, Inktomi	
Comments	Inktomi	Others	

Who Powers Whom? Chart

This is an extremely useful chart for choosing which engine(s) you decide to submit to. There are links within the chart to informative articles as well. The source is listed here:

Sullivan, Danny. Who Powers Whom? Search Providers Chart. Court Case, 2004, July 23. March 11, 2006 <http://searchenginewatch.com/reports/article.php/2156401>

Search Engine (Read Down)	Provider: Google	Provider: Yahoo/Overture	Notes
Google	Main & Paid		Open Directory an option
Yahoo		Main & Paid	Yahoo Directory an option
MSN		Main & Paid (12/05 & 6/05)	
AOL	Main & Paid (est. 10/05+)		AOL-owned Open Directory an option
Excite Network	Main & Paid (at iWon, MyWay, My Web Search)		Excite.com is InfoSpace-powered
Ask Jeeves	Paid (until 2007)		Main from Ask- owned Teoma.
InfoSpace	Runs several meta search engines . Dogpile is most popular, representative of others. Google (2006) , Yahoo (3/06) & many small providers have distribution deals.		

<u>AltaVista</u>		Main & Paid	<u>Open Directory</u> an option; owned by Yahoo
<u>AllTheWeb</u>		Main & Paid	Owned by Yahoo
<u>HotBot</u>	Paid (<u>see note</u>)	Main	Backup from Google & Ask; Owned by Lycos
<u>Lycos</u>	Paid (<u>see note</u>)	Backup (<u>see note</u>)	Main from <u>LookSmart</u> ; <u>Open Directory</u> an option
<u>Netscape</u>	Main & Paid (<u>est. 10/05+</u>)		Owned by AOL; <u>Open Directory</u> an option
<u>Teoma</u>	Paid (Sept 05)		Main from Teoma; owned by Ask; Paid can <u>end</u> as early as 9/04

There are other steps that can be taken to increase the ease with which a search engine can find your site. They are listed below.

Submit to Search Engines and additional submission tools	
address of link	brief description
http://rorweb.com/	Create a ror.xml - - "provide a feed (a machine-readable description of your products) ROR information is typically stored in a ROR feed called ror.xml placed in your website's main directory. Unlike Google Base, ROR feeds can be easily accessed by <u>all</u> search engines: at http://www.your-website-name.com/ror.xml "
There are many generators or create one from scratch	Create a site map
http://www.google.com/webmasters/	Create a google site maps feed
http://www.cre8asiteforums.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=8412	Create a robots.txt file (what robots can and can not crawl in your site)
https://www.google.com/froogle/merchants/home?qsessionid=uLqVUtuGwwM	Create a Froogle feed
http://search.msn.com/docs/submit.aspx	MSN url submission page
http://www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl	Google Submission Page
http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html	Yahoo has two submission options: "Standard," which is free, and "Yahoo Express," which involves a submission fee.
http://searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/article.php/2167941 - Danny Sullivan	This is a great article if you need to be listed FAST and have the money for it!

Directories

Getting listed with the web's key directories is very important, because their listings are seen by many people. In addition, if you are listed with them, then crawler-based search engines are more likely to find your site and add it to their listings for free. Directories are search engines powered by human beings. Human editors compile all the listings that directories have. Listed below are some key directories and a brief explanation. Choose a directory that is appropriate for your site and its audience.

Submit to Directories	
address of link	brief description
http://www.zeal.com/	ZEAL Accepted sites are also added to LookSmart's index (which is normally a pay-for-inclusion service) as well as LookSmart's partner sites, such as Lycos, InfoSpace, RoadRunner, CNET, and Inktomi.
http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html	YAHOO supplemented Yahoo!'s directory through the years are AltaVista, Inktomi and Yahoo!'s current provider, Google.
http://www.smarter.com/advertise/	Smarter's model is to provide users with a method of researching and comparing products

	before purchasing. Smarter's partners include: Linkshare, Channel Advisor, Mercent and Snap.
http://www.dmoz.org/help/submit.html	Open Directory Project or DMOZ is a human edited directory
http://us.my.alibaba.com/intro.biz?mn=0	Alibaba is a specialized directory service that centers on both international and domestic trade.
http://beanadvertiser.about.com/opps.html	About is a unique online guide that promises high quality and relevant up-to-date information.
http://www.abilogic.com/submission-guidelines.php	Based out of Russia, AbiLogic is a family oriented, spam free web directory service Through paid service, AbiLogic allows users to add their sites to multiple, relevant categories. The free submission service does not allow this.

6. Link Analysis

Links drive your rank. When folks link to your site or refer to your site in a relevant manner, it's all good for you. Here is a list of pointers when using links.

1. Reciprocal Links- Search engines like to see a closed loop - which a referring site as also used as a reference. So when you are giving away a link, ask for one back. It will help both websites.
2. Link Popularity (PageRank in Google's case).
 - a. How may other web pages around the Internet point to your web site?
 - b. Do these other pages relate?
 - c. Are they considered valuable resources?
3. Anchor Text of inbound links
4. Does the link to your web site have relevant keywords in it?
5. Do the keywords used match keywords in your content?
6. Rating of pages linking to this page
7. Even if it is not directly relevant, a web page that is important that links to your site will still help your web site.
8. Number of links on pages linking to this page. If the link to your web site is the only one from a page, it's viewed as being more valuable than being one link among 100.
9. Freshness of links on pages linking to your web site. While the engines will count all links, a link from a web site that has not been updated in a year or two will be less valuable than from one that is updated daily. It indicates activity / interest levels.

address of link	brief description
http://www.bad-neighborhood.com/	Check that the links are from safe places
http://www.webconfs.com/backlink-builder.php	potential places with similar content that will allow you to add a link
http://www.webconfs.com/anchor-text-analysis.php	analyze the text used in back links
http://www.webconfs.com/domain-stats.php	back link checker
http://home.snafu.de/tilman/xenulink.html	Broken Link Checker
http://www.seoachat.com/seo-tools/link-popularity/	Who links to you – tool. Find out who is linking to you.

7.Tracking Results

Ongoing maintenance, modifications, re-submissions and re-coding are required by the frequent changes in search engine ranking algorithms. It is best to keep track of your result and resubmissions. Although most of these tools do have a cost (other than time) attached to them, it is well worth the investment. If goals can not be measured, how will you know if your time and money has been well spent? You need to know where changes can be made to increase your exposure and or profitability.

address of link	brief description
http://www.webconfs.com/domain-stats.php	free - check some stats for you and your competitors checks msn yahoo and goolge checks number of pages indexed and backlinks
http://clicktracks.com	Fee Based – another great tool for Pay per Click campaign analysis as well
http://www.analyticsguide.com/articles/index.php/Google_Analytics	Google analytics – free if you are lucky enough to get on the “cool kids” list!
http://www.cnstats.com/	Fee Based but has just about any report you can think of and it displays nicely as well

8. Stay informed of SEO techniques, changes in algorithms

address of link	brief description
http://www.metamend.com/seo-articles.html	Lots of pertinent articles regarding SEO ..NO ADS...
http://www.webmasterworld.com/	Great SEO resource with rss feed
http://feeds.feedburner.com/seochat/articles/	Have ads, but this link is to the RSS feed. Updated articles and suggestions, lots of useful tools as well.
*** http://www.seocompany.ca/tool/seo-tools.html	The tools provided and referred to in this document are only a few of many tools used to evaluate SEO. Here is a complete listing that also includes some of the tools discussed here. The site has an rss feed and also ranks the usefulness of the tools.

9.Re-evaluate – revise – and - resubmit

As I stated earlier, search engine optimization is a long term strategy. If the above tools are used wisely, your site will not only be more relevant to human readers, it will be easier for those human readers to find the information they seek... Keeping your site findable, spider friendly, searchable, using relevant content and accessible structure you can increase your chances that you will be found. As described above, many factors will influence the ranking of your site, but you are now prepared with a tool kit to adjust your site to stay near the top.

There are “all in one” tools existing for SEO. And these tools may be well worth investigation and investing in if you have many sites to upkeep or optimize. I might suggest you use the information contained in this “free” toolkit to further evaluate those solutions.

One that looks promising is Web CEO. You can find information about it here:

<http://www.webceo.com/>

E-Marketing Kit

It is all well and good to have the optimal optimized site out there on the internet, but there is even more you can do to get yourself some positive exposure.

The Blog

Blogging has been one of the fastest ways to increase link popularity. Although this author is not a fan of blogging, it is clear – blogging works to increase exposure and site ranking. Blogs should contain information that is relevant, new and or original. Blogging uses social tagging as a means of popularity. Blogs are another place where you can find out if you are being “talked” about and if that talk is positive or negative. You can monitor your company’s images by following blogs.

There are some search engines specific to blogging.

address of link	brief description
http://www.daypop.com/	Daypop
http://www.feedster.com/	Feedster
http://blogsearch.google.com/	Google Blog Search
http://www.icerocket.com/	Ice Rocket
http://www.technorati.com/	Technorati
http://microformats.org	use microformats whenever possible especially when blogging!

E-Mail Campaign

Email Campaigns are another effective tool to use with your customers. Your customers must opt in to receive the email. Emails should be used to inform your customers of information they will find useful or interesting. Some tips for creating a successful email campaign:

1. Make the subject line informative not tacky.
2. Offer something of value
3. Code with HTML table structure (this will ensure that your emails can be read by most browsers)
4. Optimize your email campaigns using keywords (store your emails on you site as content)
5. Develop landing pages. – direct your email readers to the specific page or item you are targeting

A great resource for email Marketing campaign tips www.mailchimp.com

Press Release

“PRWeb is the largest Newswire catering to small and medium sized companies and organizations and one of the largest online press release newswires.” **Free submission**----
<http://www.prweb.com/about.php>

By performing some simple search engine optimization techniques on a PR by PR basis, you can greatly enhance its ability to attract attention, add to its longevity and expand its reach. Your PR after all, is nothing more than a page of text that will soon be transferred to the Web. Why not treat it the same way as every other web page?

Viral Campaigns

do 6 things²

1. Gives away seemingly valuable products, services or content
2. Provides for effortless transfer to others
3. Scales easily from small to very large
4. Exploits common motivations and behaviors
5. utilizes existing communication networks
6. Takes advantage of the resources of others

Effective techniques for viral e-marketing include "tell a friend" or "email a friend", comments and reviews. Think about social e-networks, create a buzz.

Google – many services

AdSense - <http://www.google.com/ads/>

On-line Catalog - http://catalogs.google.com/googlecatalogs/catalog_vendors.html

Other Marketing Suggestions

- 1...Write articles and submit them to ezine banks such as ezinearticles.com and put your link in the article at the bottom.
2. Become an expert at a popular forum/s and have your link in your signature and that will bring traffic and lots of inbound links...
3. List community service type information on your site – arts events, cultural activities. This will provide you with fresh content and something useful and of interest to your readers.
4. "Quote of the day" is another way to incorporate fresh material into the site.
5. Put your web site address on your business card and all other print collateral.

² Wilson, Dr. Ralph F. "The Six Simple Principles of Viral Marketing". Web Marketing Today. 1 Feb 2000. <<http://www.wilsonweb.com/wmt5/viral-principles-clean.htm>>

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Also the author would like to thank [Aarron Walter](#) and the [Art Institute of Atlanta](#)

and the IMD465 Special Topics Findability class. The [discussion board](#) holds lots of useful information regarding SEO and internet marketing...And of course, [google.com](#). Happy searching, hope you find what you are looking for. Remember, employing these techniques will get you found.