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Google – The Ultimate Web Writers Style Guide

By Nick Osborne

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Indulge me for a moment.

Forget that Google is a search engine. Just for a moment, imagine it is a style guide. A very different kind of style guide.

Instead of this particular style guide being written as a static book by an expert or two, it is written by studying the searching and browsing habits of hundreds of millions of web users.

Get the idea? Not a search engine. A style guide. A constantly evolving style guide that works from its insights into how people use and read web sites.

A style guide that puts the visitor first, puts their needs ahead of the academic opinions of experts.

A style guide that automatically rewards sites that serve their readers the best.

If we study Google not as a search engine, but as a style guide, what does it tell us about how we should write our web pages?

>> 1. Make the subject of each page absolutely clear.

As visitors arrive at your site, regardless of the entry page, the first question in their minds is, "Am I in the right place? Will I find what I want here? Can I achieve what I want to achieve here?"

Fortunately, the web page format gives us a title, headlines, first paragraphs and subheads we can use. So it makes sense to use them to make it abundantly clear to our visitors what the page is about.

We'll do this for our visitors. But, because doing so helps our visitors, Google will reward us.

>> 2. Make your home page short text clear

First-time visitors to your home page are unlikely to be able to achieve their objective through that page alone. So you need to write short text that will quickly and clearly let them know if you have what they want deeper in your site, and how to get there.

This means using the right words in your headings, subheads and short descriptions. It means anticipating the words and phrases most visitors will have in their minds and will scan for. It means understanding which words and phrases best correspond to your visitors' needs.

Write these headings and short descriptions with your readers in mind and, once again, Google will reward you.

3. Make your text links relevant and descriptive

A text link that says, "More..." or "Click here" or "Learn More..." tells the reader nothing about the destination page.

Visitors scan your text links in the same way as they scan headings, subheads and short text. So provide them with clues. If you have an interior page about a weight-loss hypnosis service, write a link that says something like, "More on weight-loss hypnosis".

Do this and you'll be helping your readers a great deal. And yes, Google will reward you for your efforts.

>> Concluding thoughts...

By all means use a traditional style guide. They are great for getting your grammar right and choosing the right words. That said, many of them conflict in their recommendations as to the correct online terms. To some, a web site is a web site, to others it's a website.

But back to Google as a style guide for a moment. This whole exercise, this make-believe about Google being a digital, interactive style guide is all about the importance of writing for your readers.

Yes, what I have been talking about is using the correct keywords and phrases in the appropriate places.

However, too many people write their pages with Google as the primary audience. I think that's the wrong approach. You get a clunky text flow that, intuitively, feels wrong to the reader.

Instead, write with a clear understanding of what your readers need. Do this and you'll find that the best keywords fall into the right places with an appropriate frequency.

And Google will reward you.

Nick Osborne is a copywriter, author and speaker. You can access all his newsletter articles on writing for the web at his

site. You'll find articles and resources on how to make money as a freelance writer at

Make Free Money With Google

By John Baker

Have you received your check from Google? If you own a business web-site you should be receiving a check from Google. Why not accept a check every month from Google by placing their ads on your site?

Google AdSense allows you to serve text-based Google AdWords on your web site, (ads are relevant to your web site subject) and receive a share of the pay-per-click payment. There are pay-outs of 50 cents or more per click being achieved through AdSense. It is simple to join and it's free.

Go to google.com/adsense and you should be serving Google AdWords usually within 24 hours. You can choose between either horizontal or skyscraper AdSense ads, and they also have a large variety of color schemes to choose from. After your site has been approved you will paste a code into your site and the text ads will appear. Always backup your site before you paste your code, as you may decide to change your AdSense location.

Google also is doing a good job of finding ads that are highly relevant to your site. They go beyond simple keyword matching to understand the context and contents of web pages. They are able to know what a page is about, and can precisely match Google ads to each page. Then they also give you the ability to block certain ads from appearing on your site if you choose.

So what are you waiting for? It's Free and you get paid!

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