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How To Integrate Keywords Into Your Web Site Copy

By Kalena Jordan

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The history of search engines is a bit like the plot of a soap opera. You know – Bo finds Hope, Bo loses Hope, Bo finds Hope again only to discover it's actually Hope's long lost evil twin Princess Gina and so on.

Just like the TV soaps, the search industry has a strange and illogical history. We started with a particular cast of search engines, new ones soon rose up and tried to usurp market share from the originals, some engines jumped into bed with each other, some of the well known characters died or were killed off by the newcomers, "good" engines decide to turn "evil" in the grab for market share, new industry darlings were born and so on.

Those of us who have been watching this particular soap opera for the past few years are quite addicted to all the plot twists and turns. The thing is, search engines seem to have finally come full circle. Most started up originally with a simple premise: to provide a useful service to persons surfing the Internet; a way to search the millions of web sites and find specific, relevant information, 24 hours a day.

However once a few key players became heavily trafficked, search engines became viable advertising vehicles, attracting mega bucks from companies willing to pay them for the privilege of displaying banner ads to the significant number of eyeballs viewing their sites on a daily basis. Soon everyone wanted in on the act. New search engines developed overnight, driven mainly by profiteers, hungry for their piece of the dot com boom. The "Who's Got the Biggest Index" game began and the searching public began to demand more relevancy and fresher results. Under pressure from over-inflated company valuations, the Dot Com bubble soon burst and everyone was left covered with the sticky mess of financial accountability.

Meanwhile, savvy webmasters had begun to study how search engines worked in order to understand how to structure their web site code to improve their ranking for target search queries. A whole new industry developed from this activity: search engine optimization. Webmasters who didn't have the time or inclination to learn search engine optimization techniques simply paid others who did. Popular

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directories such as Yahoo! and LookSmart took advantage of consumer demand for listings by introducing the first paid submission services. Industry players took note of the developments and introduced commercial search engines where web site owners could simply pay their way to the top of the rankings rather than rely on ranking algorithms – voila! – the first pay per click search engines were born.

It wasn't long before smaller search engines and directories followed the lead set by the larger directories and introduced services to assist webmasters to ensure a place for their sites in the search listings – either via a third party partnership with pay per click search engines, or by introducing a new guaranteed indexing service which became widely referred to as Paid Inclusion. Soon it seemed everyone was partnering with everyone else in order to get their cut of the deals being done. Some search engines were cannibalized by others or bought out by inexperienced companies and sacrificed

at the altar of mis-management. Search veterans left cash poor by the dot com bust, or unable to cope with the competition, fell by the wayside.

At this point, you could say that the search industry was almost exclusively driven by profit and share price. At many of the majors, the needs of the searcher were temporarily replaced by (or mistaken for) the needs of the shareholders.

>> But in the background a relatively small search engine had been slowly building their database and gaining market share since 1998. Increasing numbers of searchers, disappointed with the irrelevant or outdated results they were receiving at other sites, began to flock to this newcomer with the curious name: Google. Despite still being in BETA mode, the search engine began to get a reputation for the quality of sites in its database, the lightening fast results it produced and the simple, no-nonsense site design. Media attention arrived, as did more market share.

The major search engines and directories now had no choice but to sit up and take notice. Almost too late, they realized what they had been doing wrong for the past few years and why they were losing market share so easily to this young upstart firm. Searchers have always wanted fast, relevant, up to date results from their chosen search engine. The fact was that very few directories and engines were offering this any longer. Their sites had become portals packed with advertising and third party information sources; the original search function seemingly lost in the forest of information. But Google had made a point of ALWAYS offering searchers what they wanted, hence their success. The penny dropped and the majors scrambled to get back to basics. Yahoo! took things one step further and embraced Google as their new third party results provider, taking a small investment stake in the company and dumping industry veteran Inktomi in the process.

So where are we now in the plot of "Days of our Search Engines"? Over the past 12 months, some search engines and directories lost their way completely, yielding to the pressure in the boardroom to become more profitable and in so doing, losing forever the trust of their market. Others simply slipped a long way off the radar and are desperately trying to claw their way back up the mountain. But with the KISS example set by Google and the glaring evidence that you CAN be profitable by listening to users rather than cash registers, the search industry storyline is finally getting back on track.

Yahoo! has recently combined Google results with their main search listings, new technically advanced engines such as FAST and Teoma are making an impact on the market and AltaVista appears to be making solid efforts to improve their index refresh rate and quality of results. The end result is a richer user experience for searchers and a more promising future for the search industry where content is, once again, king.

Getting Noticed by the Search Engines

By Charlie Cook

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You've got a web site; and you want to attract lots of people to visit it so you can grow your business. But you're only getting a handful of visitors currently. What is the first thing to do to help people find your site?

A top listing in the search engines, especially in Google, can increase visitors to your web site and help. Let's say you sell web design services. If your site was at the top of the list when people searched for "web design" in Google, it could increase the number of people who know you exist and know what you do, by a factor of ten or more.

You may already know that a top listing in Google will help your business, but at present you are having a tough time even finding your site in the Google search engine listings. What can you do to help Google find your listing and put it as close as possible to the top of the list?

Submitting Your Site

Google uses a "spider" to look for links from one site to another and to add information about additional sites and web pages to its database. Google's "spider" is very active and may already have found your site. If any other site has a link to your site and is listed by Google, Google may have found your site on its own. To find out if your web site is listed, just type in www.yoururl.com into the query box at www.google.com and press search.

If your site isn't listed, you can prompt Google to spider to it at <http://www.google.com/addurl.html> Submit your primary url and Google will find the rest of your site.

Getting your site listed by Google and the other search engines is the first step. Next you need to make it easy for the search engines to code your site pages correctly and move them towards the top of their listings. Here's how:

Picking the Right Keywords

If you want your prospects to find your site use the words and phrases most commonly associated with your product or service in your web pages. These are called keywords. In selecting your keywords, think about the problem your prospects want to solve. If you sell ergonomic chairs, which will work best, "comfy chairs" or "eliminate back pain" or "ergonomic chairs"?

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Pick keywords that people use the most frequently. Test different keywords and keyword combinations and compare the number of searches that result from each using <http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>

Using Your Keywords

To help the search engines know what a web page is about, use your top keywords 6 to 8 times on a page. If you sell a number of different products and services, build individual pages for each set of keywords.

Make sure you don't just repeat your keywords more than 6–8 times. In this case more repetition is not better. Search engines reject pages with too many keyword repetitions. Use natural sounding copy and integrate your keywords so the copy reads well for both visitors and the search engines.

Linking Your Own Keywords

Once you have your individual product or service pages optimized for your keywords, link other pages on your site to them using your keywords again. If you have articles on your site on back pain, link your keywords to the corresponding optimized page from 4 to 5 other pages.

Building Incoming Links to Your Site

The above steps lay the groundwork for getting noticed by the search engines. The next step in getting your site listed at the top of the search engines, and particularly Google, is the number of links found from other sites to your site.

Your site's "link popularity" is one of the most important factors the search engines look at in ranking your site. When the search engines see that hundreds of other web sites have links to yours, they rank your site higher than those with fewer links.

How many links do you have to your site? Use <http://www.linkpopularity.com> to see. You can also use this site to find the number of links to your competitor's sites, and identify who has links to them.

Getting other people to link to your site is easy. Ask for a link, ideally one using your keywords, and offer a link in return. Create a links.html page and when businesses link to your site, provide a link back.

Link Example:

Attract more clients with Charlie Cook's Free Marketing Plan Guide and grow your business. Learn how to generate more leads and increase sales with the articles and marketing manuals on this site. Highly recommended. <http://www.marketingforsuccess.com>

Get noticed by the search engines and many more people will visit your web site so you can market your products and services to them.



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