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How to Design a Website for the Search Engines

By John Aschoff

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What is the best way to build a website, in regards to ranking well in the search engines?

Here are some points to consider when building a website:

1. Website Text

Most recently Google is looking for exact keyword phrases in a websites text.

In the past it would look at the text on the index page and put keywords together, even if they were in different paragraphs. Google still does this, but now is putting more relevance on exact keyword phrases, rather than putting keywords together separately.

Example: If a website is selling 'checks', it should have exact keyword phrases in the text for all its related services:

'business checks'

'order business checks'

'deluxe checks'

'designer checks'

etc.

* On your main (index) page, the text should be informational and tell your visitors what your site is all about.

* Make sure your text contains your keywords and phrases, but don't make it hard for your visitors to read.....stuffing keywords into the text, just for the sake of higher rankings, will not do you much good for your visitors, if the text doesn't flow well.

* Conventional wisdom calls for around 250 words of text on the index (opening) page, in order to insert our needed keywords. Its not so important how much text. What is important is that you need enough text in order to insert all your important keyword phrases, without the text sounding 'spammy'.

* Search engines (Google especially) love information. This means that the more info you offer your visitors, the better you may rank. If Google sees that you are offering your visitors helpful information, they will reward you for it. If you have .pdf articles or files, create the article in HTML (and .pdf if you like, its fine to use both methods together). This will allow the search engines to read the article and

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index the information. Many .pdf files are images, which search engines won't index well. Convert it into HTML, and they will.

* Not only does Google like information, but other websites will link to you, if your site offers information that their visitors would be interested in. More links means a higher rank in the search engines.

* Create separate pages with information. Example: If you have a hotel website, create a page about local attractions. If your service is real estate, then have articles on 'How to Obtain a Home Mortgage' or 'Home Inspection Tips'. Not only will Google love you, but so will visitors to your site.

* Don't use promotional language in your text like 'we're the best' or 'the number 1 real estate service in the USA!'.....just reading that last sentence makes me ill. Your visitors aren't stupid, don't treat them like they are. Not only will it displease your audience, but it won't help with the search engines either. Do you think a search engine spider cares that you're service is the 'absolute best service ever offered

on the planet'? Nope.

* Be sure to use good text on your subpages as well.....the major search engines love text and will see ALL the text on your site, not just the index page. Google is trying to 'figure out' what your site is about. It will look at the whole site to do this. So, if one of your main keyword phrases is 'laser printed business checks', you should have a page devoted just to that.

* The key to good website rankings is to take advantage of the many keywords that relate to the services you offer, not just a few, and create pages for them.

2. Create a separate page for the many types of services you offer

Example: You have a website that sells autographs.

On the main page, have links to your major categories of autographs.

One link would be for 'Celebrity Autographs' one for 'Sports Autographs' etc.

Now, a visitor who is interested in sport autographs, will click on this link which will take him to the main page for 'Sports Autographs'. Now, break up the 'sports autographs' page with more links....

'Baseball Autographs'

'Football Autographs' etc.

Click on the 'Baseball Autographs' link, which will take you to a page about baseball autographs, or even just about baseball in general. Now, have links to each individual player.....

'Sandy Koufax Autographs' etc.

This now allows you to use many more keywords to be found with in the search engines. For instance, you can now use keywords associated with baseball: baseball autographs, baseball signatures, baseball memorabilia etc.

Take it a step further with each individual player, who has an entire page devoted to him: 'Sandy Koufax Autographs' etc. Have information about Sandy Koufax on the page, such as batting average, etc.

Now, not only will you be listed higher for 'Sandy Koufax Autographs', but also for just 'Sandy Koufax'.

This will allow you to pull in visitors who are interested in Sandy Koufax, who will come to your site for information, and end up purchasing his autograph, even if this wasn't the visitors original intention. You know the old saying.....the more you throw at the wall, the more will stick.

3. The bigger the website the better.... It's simple, the more pages your website has, the more keywords and phrases you can use. The major search engines will index all of your pages (for the

most part).

4. What pages won't a search engine 'see'?

It is best to build a website in a language search engines can understand. If you have a site that takes all its information from a database on your server, the search engines likely will not index that information.

Example: You have a website that sells tickets.

Since the tickets you sell are for shows and events that are constantly changing, your webmaster probably will build you a site that is dependent on pulling information from a database. Spiders generally have a harder time 'seeing' information from these types of websites. I recommend that for every 'dynamic' or database driven service on your site, you also create a basic HTML page, that search engines can follow.

For instance, you may have a new comedy show coming to town that you want to sell tickets for. Just like the above example on autographs, you should create different pages and sections on each individual type of show. Have a link for 'Music Tickets', then a link for each type of music and create a separate page for that.....like 'Rock and Roll Tickets', 'Country Music Tickets' etc..... all with their own separate page. Now, you have created a way for the search engines to 'see' that your website not only

sells tickets, but also what types of tickets, down to the last detail. You will now find yourself listed in the search engines for a multitude of ticket related keywords. If your whole site is database driven, the number of keywords you will be found under will be much less.

5. Other Tips:

* Use keyword internal linking: Search engine spiders 'see' what each link to a page is being labeled.

Example: if you have a page that is about 'Sports Autographs', then label all your internal links to that page as 'Sports Autographs', rather than something like 'click here for more autographs'..... in other words, use keywords to label your internal links.

* Have at least your major links listed on the main (index) page. Also, a sitemap is a great tool for the search engines (and visitors) to use, to find all of your pages. Have a link to your sitemap from your index page.

* Make sure you have the location of your shop, office, store etc. on your main page (in HTML text), even if the services you offer are geared to a national audience, it is smart to appeal to your local audience as well. A good way to do this is to have your company name, address, town and state at the very bottom of your page, in an unobtrusive manner. Put it at the bottom of every page on your site.

* Its a good idea to make changes to your site at least occasionally. Since search engine spiders are constantly crawling the web, they will visit your site regularly. Updating your text (even just a little) or creating new pages shows that your site is active.

* Its ok to have external (outbound) links on your site. Again, it shows that your website is offering information. If your website is about 'Colorado Real Estate', then list some Colorado related sites such as: the official Colorado state website, or maybe a site that talks about restaurants in Colorado etc.

* Use 'Call to Action' language on your pages....i.e. 'click here to fill out our response form' or list your 800 number prominently on every page.

* HTML Tips

title= use this command for all your internal links (each link can have its own 'title')

Example: a href="http://www.web-promotion-specialist.com/searchengineoptimization.htm"

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title="Search Engine Optimization"

alt= use this command to describe what your images or photos are (search engines can't 'see' images, so you can tell the search engines what each image or photo is about)

Example: `img src="images/logo.gif" width="131" height="80" alt= "Company Logo"`

Website Promotion by John Aschoff <http://www.web-promotion-specialist.com/> phone:

605-332-3799 email: jaschoff@web-promotion-specialist.com Professional web promotion strategy for business. Link building, website text writing and search engine optimization. Articles and information on internet marketing.

Web design with a difference.

By Ralph Ramah

Anybody looking for a web designer is spoilt for choice. Type in web design in Google and you will come up with millions of websites offering web design around the world. The web design industry is indeed extremely competitive. So how do we go about choosing a web design company that offers websites that are not only well designed but equally important, a website that ranks well on major search engines?

A lot has been written on web design that sell products and services but relatively few web designers know how or are even bothered about developing websites with the basic elements required to give your website a head start on search engines.

Here are a few important web design tips that will set your website apart when it comes to ranking on search engines and selling your products and services.

1. Every web design should include the famous tags. There is no excuse for not including these in a web design from the outset. No matter what they say, tags have their say in the way search engines look at your website and no web design is complete without carefully chosen tags.

There are 3 important tags namely the Title tag, Description tag and the keywords tag. Each web page should have its own set of tags. What are these tags? These are words and phrases that are embedded in the HTML of the website and very easy to include in your web design.

Let us look at each of these tags.

2. The Title tag is an important part of web design for search engine optimisation. This tag is likely to be picked up by search engines and displayed as a result header when a visitor finds your website on a search engine. This tag also appears as the title that in the blue strip at the top of your browser.

A good web design will contain a short Title tag that includes the keywords you think visitors will use to find your site.

3. The Web design should also include the Description tag. This is a short description of what the web page is about and it often appears just below the title in search engine results. Although the importance of the Description tag in search engine ranking is uncertain, the description in a web design acts like a sales pitch. This is your opportunity to tell the visitor what the web page is about and why he or she should click on your website. Remember, web design is not just about building a website and getting it ranked. A good web design should do all this, get the visitor to click on your website when it is found

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and sell your products and services.

4. Let's look at the Keywords tag. A lot of web designs contain a mass of supposed key words in the Keywords tag. Keywords are the words or phrases that visitors use to search for websites on search engines. A good web design practice is to have focussed and themed web pages. This means that each web page should be focused on one keyword at a time and this keyword should be in the web page Keyword tag. It is very important that the keywords used in the tag also appear in the body of the text.

5. The h1, h2 headers are also important elements of a good web design. Use h1 and h2 headers as these are read by search engines. Use them as high up on your web page as possible and where possible use the keywords in the h1 header. H1 headers are by default large fonts. It is possible to format these so they match the overall look of the web design and retain their header properties.

Ralph Ramah is the webmaster of Discount Web Design (

), a

leading web design firm. Please feel free to republish this article provided you keep this resource and the hyperlink.



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