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The "No META Tags, #1 Listing" Formula For High Search Engine Rankings

By Karon Thackston

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Thackston

by Karon Thackston © 2002

<http://www.copywritingcourse.com>

Depending on who you ask, you can receive two dozen different answers as to what factors will get you that coveted #1 spot on your favorite search engine. However, the proof is in the pudding, as the saying goes. Well, my pudding has bubbled and boiled and is now ready for tasting!

Let me tell you about my experience with getting my latest site ranked #1 for its chosen keyphrase on Google. Incidentally, it is also ranked #2 with Lycos.

Step One - Don't Guess About Keywords

This is an all-important step. Choosing the wrong keywords will stop you before you even start. A case in point... initially, the name of my site was going to be different. I was going to call it The Step-By-Step Copywriting Workshop. However, much to my surprise, the keyphrase "copywriting workshop" was not searched for by surfers. Had I chosen that keyphrase, I could have set myself up for lower rankings.

I use a service called WordTracker (www.wordtracker.com). This is, without a doubt, one of the best keyword analysis services I've come across. With WordTracker, I was able to find the exact keywords/phrases that those interested in learning to write copy were using online. Thanks to this service, I was able to come up with a much stronger keyphrase... copywriting course. That's what I decided would be the primary keyphrase for my new site, and the name of the ebook.

Step Two - Plan Your Site

In planning for the site I knew I needed to use my primary keyphrase wherever possible. I looked at placing it within the page links, but the link names would not have made sense. I - of course - used it

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as the URL (<http://www.copywritingcourse.com>). Next, I thought about how to use the phrase in the ALT tags of the images on the site pages. That worked well.

Finally, I turned my attention to the copy.

Step Three - Writing the Copy

I already knew that the copy was the major player of the game. For this reason, I strategically placed the keyphrase in the title bar of the site, used it in the header section and made very sure to achieve a keyword saturation ratio of around 3% – 4% within the body copy.

The End Result

When all was ready, I submitted the site to the major free engines including Google, AltaVista, Lycos, HotBot and others. The first submission took place on March 20th. My site finally hit Google and Lycos on May 8th - some 7 weeks later.

I typed in "copywriting course" and - low and behold - it was #1 on Google and #2 on Lycos!

The Amazing Part

What's so amazing? I used NO description tag or keyword tag! I had forgotten all about it. When I went back to the site to view the source code - I found no tags. (Go ahead and take a look... you won't find them either.)

So, *is* copy the key to good search engine rankings? I'd say this proves it beyond the shadow of a doubt.

While META tags are beneficial (especially the title tag), they are not the only factor at play. Search engine compatible copywriting plays a much more important role than any other "trick" in the book.

Meta Tags

By Clare Lawrence

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Meta Tags are hidden description fields that help search engines to categorise websites. They are also of reduced importance than a few years ago.

Correct use of meta tags is nevertheless a factor in search engine algorithms and worth getting right.

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A few considerations:–

- Shorter tags are more focused than longer ones.
- Usually the first phrase has greater weight than later ones.
- The title tag is of most value
- Description and keyword tags are of lesser importance

Over recent years, search engines have become much more sophisticated and are now able to identify the theme of a page by analysing the text.

It is important therefore to write your page copy first, ensuring its content is about your chosen theme. Once written your tags should reflect its content.

e.g. this article is `about' meta tags, a good title would be:–

Title Tag "Meta tags and how to use them" Description "Meta tags, their content use by Clare Lawrence"

Keywords "Meta tags, title tag, description tag, keyword tags, copy text,".

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that meta tags can boost your sites ranking alone.

To get a good search engine result placement or SERPS you need:–

- Good content, relevant to your chosen key phrases.
- Links on related theme sites.
- Meta tags, particular title tags.

Note Tags are third on the list and a long way behind content and linkage.

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