

To Google or Be Googled

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To Google or Be Googled

By Christie Turley

I Was Googled

It was just yesterday that an old friend of mine got in touch with me by Googling my first and last name. He found all sorts of articles, which mentioned my name, including my own website as #1.

Googling Your Name is Money in Your Pocket

This reminded me of a client I had who was nowhere to be seen when you Googled their name. This was a huge problem since they were 100% referral and many people searched for their company name on the Internet to find their website. It took two months for them to start showing up, but when they did, it was a HUGE money maker for them. Potential customers who had been referred were finally able to find them.

With the pursuit of optimizing a site for certain keywords, so many companies forget to optimize for their own company name.

The Proof is in the Puddin'

A recent study by Nielsen//Netratings suggest that when web users know the name of a website, they prefer to type in a domain name in the "search box" of Google or Yahoo, rather than typing a domain name into the browser bar.

What does this tell you? Well, it says that if someone has heard of your company, they're either going to type in your website name or your domain name into the search box and your website better be ready and waiting at the top of the search engines.

Do YOU show up when your name or company name is Googled?

Here's How You Do It

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To search engine optimize (SEO) your company name on your website, here are some tips. (This isn't an exhaustive list of all that you can do, but it's enough to get you started.)

** Choose one page on your website to optimize for your company name. It might be your Home page, Contact Us page or About Us page. I recommend your About Us page - it seems that it's easier and better to talk about you on that page than any other page. Conversely, the Home page should be all about them (What's In It For Me?) - not about you.

** Add your company name to the ALT tags where possible. ALT tags are the tags that are connected to the images of your website. Search engines don't index images, so any text on your site that is in the form of an image won't get indexed. The search engines read the text and the keywords in the ALT tags instead.

** Add your company name to your Meta Tags: namely, Meta titles, Meta description and Meta

keywords. A recent study showed that only 34% of Web site owners knew enough to include a simple keyword Meta tag on their website. Therefore, if you add a keyword and properly optimize the rest of your page, you'll be doing more than 66% of website owners. Of the 34% of owners who DO add Meta data, so many forget to add their company name to the titles, description and keywords! They only remember to add keywords related to their products/services. If YOU remember to do this, think how much further ahead you'll be...

** Add your company name as a keyword to your chosen page's body and work it into the content at least 3-4 times. Try to place it one time nearer to the top of the page body. Repeat your company name at the start and end of your paragraphs and near the end of the body. That way, search engines won't make any mistake about the content since your company name is used repetitively and throughout the content.

** Where possible, include your company name within your hyperlinks. For example on the Home page, you could include the words "Contact XYZ Company" within the hyperlink copy instead of just "Contact Us".

** Finally be patient. With these steps and ONLY these steps, I helped one company go from not showing up on Google at all, to #1 in Google for their company name.

Christie Turley is a web marketing expert and author of the Not-So-Dumb Blond Internet Guides.

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Googling for Love

By Kathryn Lord

Google: (GOO.gul) v. To use an Internet search engine such as

Google.com

to look for information

related to a new or potential girlfriend or boyfriend.

Have you Googled yourself yet? Can anyone resist? If you haven't had the pleasure, here's how:

Go to

Google.com

, type your name in quotation marks, and see what comes up.

A lot depends on how common your name is (like John Smith). I tend to get references to nobility (that's the Lord part), and the genealogy citations are many. But sure enough, there's my house in Maine (I rent it during the summer from an Internet ad) and stained glass courses that my husband Drew and I have taught. When I add my middle initial B, then the references are pure cyber romance. Yea!

Drew's name gets his scientific publications. If I had googled him when we were courting, I would not have made the embarrassing gaff of bragging about my publications (2). He had me beat hands down. But also, that Google search would have added to his credibility, because he is cited over and over as a scientist and connected with the Army Corps of Engineers. I would have been reassured.

But what if other connections had come up? Somebody with my name is a personnel expert. Also, it sounds as if my name is common in England. Maybe there is worse, buried under my name in the Net.

Seems like it is a good idea to be aware of what comes up if your name is Googled, sort of like keeping track of your credit report. If something negative comes up under your name and it's not you, you need to know that and be able to explain it to another. If it's not so good and IS you, you need to know and explain that, too.

While visiting some of my older relatives recently, they were quite interested in being Googled. My favorite uncle, who has an unusual spelling of his last name, shares that spelling with a rather well known gay porn star. Or at least, we assume the gay porn star and my uncle are not the same guy. The porn star does sound like he has some rather amazing physical attributes. That's the kind of

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Google citations associated with your name that it is good to know about!

There seems to be some embarrassment associated with Googling a prospective date or partner, but I can't see why that would be so. Unless it appears being a little too interested, like "I can't be bothered to check credentials, even though I have an easy way to do so. This person just doesn't matter that much to me." Why would you want to convey that message?

Especially if you are using the Internet for a mate search, it only makes good sense that you would use one of CyberSpace's best tools to help you make a safe and secure match.

But it also points out the need to keep one's cyber nose clean. It follows that if you are doing

something that you wouldn't want anyone to know that you are doing, maybe you shouldn't be doing it.

So Google away!

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Kathryn Lord, Romance Coach

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