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Web Directories for SEO

By Adrian Lawrence

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If you are looking for ways to promote your website, than web directories should definitely be considered a big part of your promotional plan. Web directories provide web visitors with a one- stop destination on the web to find the information they are looking for. Further, in using web directories, you can increase the visibility of your website and derive myriad benefits offered by web directories.

Let's take a look at the benefits that webmasters derive from web directories:

1. Some webmasters might wonder why they should bother to submit to web directories when 80% of all website traffic comes from search engines. The answer is simple when you consider the following: what about the other 20%? When you are attempting to maximize the traffic that comes to your website, every little bit of promotion helps and web directories can help you gain a big chunk of that 20% of web traffic you have been missing out on.
2. Did you know that a key factor in the ranking algorithm of search engines is link popularity? By using web directories you will be creating more links that point directly to your site and the higher your ranking becomes in various search engines across the Internet. Further, everyone knows that a higher search engine ranking is equivalent to easier accessibility and easier accessibility equals more traffic for your website.
3. The first way to increase your link popularity is to include keywords in your hyperlinks. When you submit to web directories, the links you submit should not only lead to your site, but also should possess themed keywords within the links. The themed keywords will not only make your site easier to find, it will also increase the rating of your links in various search engines—again getting more, free web traffic for you.
4. Links that are created within web directories are votes for a site and they use your keywords within your hyperlinks to associate your link with certain key phrases. As such, the keywords you select are

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extremely important because they determine how often your links will be pulled up whenever a key phrase is associated with your created links. Therefore, It is a good idea to research the most popular keywords associated with your website theme before submitting your website to various web directories: the most popular keywords can make all of the difference in the world.

5. If you are submitting to various web directories, there are a few things that you need to consider. First, for a directory to be valuable, the pages you submit your listings to must, at minimum, be listed in various search engines. For instance, if you submit your links to a web directory that doesn't appear in any search engines, chances are web visitors will not only have difficulty finding your website, but they will also have extreme difficulty finding the web directory you have listed your site in. In such cases, the listing in the web directory is a fruitless endeavor. Conversely, if you list your web site in several popular web directories and you utilize keywords in your hyperlink and short website description, you greatly increase the visibility and accessibility of your website.

6. The second consideration you must keep in mind when submitting to web directories is that when you are submitting your hyperlinks, you will derive the most benefit from submitting to directory pages that have a comparable theme to your website. For instance, if you have a website that is based on credit cards you will find that you get more web traffic from a web directory page that focuses on credit cards. Thus, when searching for web directories, look for web directories with topics that parallel the central focus of your website.

7. Here's a quick tip for you that can help you derive the most benefit from listing your hyperlink in web directories: watch out for Google Adwords as these are a good indicator of how Google at least categorizes the page. In other words, if you mirror your hyperlinks and descriptions to appear much like those seen in Google ads, you will more than likely increase your search engine ranking as well as your listing in various web directories.

8. In order to be successfully listed in any web directory, you will need to conform to the terms and conditions of the directory. Typically, web directories list a series of specific listing regulations that you must adhere to and it would pay for you to adhere to them. In addition, to improve the chances of your listing being accepted you should try to avoid promotional language and you should choose a category that is as close to your website theme as possible.

9. Webmasters have much to look forward to in terms of web directory posting. In fact, the next generations of web directories are now appearing that allows business card type pages. Not only do webmasters get the opportunity to post a short description of there website, but now they are afforded the opportunity to display their logo and contact information as well. Such offerings prove to be particularly appealing because eye catching logos and easy contact information will make a Webmaster's website that much more appealing.

10. In the end, web directories are a valuable part of your web promotional program and should not be overlooked in terms of their value. Along with the use of search engines, and article databases, a Webmaster will be pleasantly surprised at the free advertising available on the Internet. Finally, the increase in web traffic that webmasters will reap is truly astonishing indeed.

Adrian Lawrence is the webmaster of Indexplex a leading web directory,

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SEO Web Links: Directory Alternatives

By Joel Walsh

If you were writing a textbook on SEO linking circa 2001, you almost certainly would have included a chapter on web directories. They used to be the primary way of actively acquiring one-way inbound links, before content syndication, blogs, or the paid link market really took off.

Web Directories and SEO Links: What Went Wrong?

Fast forward a few years, and you'd have to rewrite the chapter on directories and web links. In fact, you would probably downgrade web directories from a chapter to a page or two. In the SEO world, nothing good ever lasts long, and so it is with web directories.

- * Traffic. With Google more accurate than ever, there was no more reason to turn to a human-edited list of websites. A directory might get you one or two click-throughs a month—or none at all.
- * Redirects. Once directory owners realized their link popularity was valuable, they started hoarding it. Overnight, many, if not most, directories switched their HTML links to search-engine-invisible redirects.
- * Fees. Most directories started charging for inclusion, or at least, for inclusion with a link rather than a redirect. If the fees were reasonable, that would not be so bad. But why would you pay \$35 for a link on a PR 3 page with dozens of other links and virtually no content, on a site with dwindling traffic?
- * Corruption. In the SEO world, low-hanging fruit quickly goes rotten. Any volunteer-edited commercial category in a link directory runs a very real risk of being taken over by a corrupt SEO.
- * Dubious link popularity. Given the notoriety of many directories for selling or inappropriately bestowing links, it's not hard to imagine a search engine quality control engineer turning the link popularity juice off from these sites.
- * "Welcome to our list." If a directory doesn't charge a fee to enter, it may ask for payment in the form of an email address. You'd better use your special Hotmail account for that one.
- * Anchor text. Many directories do not allow for anchor text to be specified, delighting in providing as little SEO value as possible for the effort involved in submitting to them.

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* Time. When link directories really were vital efforts to categorize the web, getting a link in them was as simple as having a good website and letting them know about it. Now that they've turned into tightly rationed supplies of link popularity, that kind of responsiveness is out the window.

* Idiosyncratic applications without any promise of timely follow-up.

* Application forms that often empty straight into a black hole: * No way of checking on the status of submissions. * Threats of scuttling submissions that are re-submitted when there is no response.

Web Directory Linking Alternatives for the 21st Century

* Reciprocal linking with a twist. If you network with other site owners, you can triangulate link trades so that they are not direct. Heck, if you really like each other, you may just link to each others' sites for the sake of it! It's worked for me with some high-PR links.

* Blogging. Blog early, blog often, and someone is bound to link to you. It's the nature of blogging. The fastest way to get inbound links from your blog? Write about other blogs. The more controversial, the better. Post this article on a webmaster blog, and in the same post, reference the blog of someone who thinks link directories are still a good idea! In the blogosphere, arguments mean lots of links.

* Article directories. These are the closest things to link directories, from an SEO standpoint, to emerge in the 21st century. You submit an article to one of these sites (of which there are over 200). In your article you include a link to your site. Article directories are everything link directories used to be: responsive, fair, fast, no-fee, relevant, and quality sources of not only links but information. OK, most of their pages are PR0 and the rest tend to be PR 1-2. But with most article directories, you can choose your exact anchor text for the link—often more valuable than PageRank for non-competitive search phrases. Besides, if most of your links are on PR 4+ pages, how natural will that look?

In short, even if web link directories do still have some SEO value, they should no longer be your first stop for one-way inbound links. There are much better, and much less aggravating, linking methods.

Joel Walsh owns UpMarket Content, which helps clients get one-way inbound links and web traffic by developing and syndicating website content:

<http://www.UpMarketContent.com>

[Put this article on your

site! Required: 1. Live link for above URL. 2. Link anchor text: "syndicating website content" OR include this bracketed message.]



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