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Why Optimize Your Site For Search Engines?

By John Metzler

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Sometimes a search engine optimization company will miss that glaring question posed by potential clients and assume the benefits of search engine optimization are obvious to everyone. While shelling out a couple thousand on an SEO campaign is common sense to some, others may find it hard to part with the cash unless they know it is an investment in their business that is sure to bring a good return.

Search engines account for a huge portion of traffic to web sites. Data varies depending on what sources you read, but the bottom line is that search engines are used millions of times each day by consumers searching for goods and services. And having your business displayed at the top of search results is essential if you want to do any business from the major search engines. Nine in every ten users will find what they're looking for in the top 10 results and won't go to page 2.

It's obvious that people can make a lot of money from online sales, but how you advertise your products has a large bearing on what kind of profit you make. If you buy advertising space on Google AdWords or other services that charge per click, you may only shell out 10 cents for every visitor to your site – But what if it takes 100 clicks to make one sale? If your products only sell for \$10 a piece, then there is no profit being made. Pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns will also never stop costing you money. Search Engine Optimization, on the other hand, can be very affordable over months and years.

Many SEO and Internet Marketing companies will say that ongoing maintenance is needed to reach and keep top search engine rankings. While this is true, be careful how the company says they do it. There is an affordable way and then there's a way to pad the pockets of the "experts." For more on this issue, read my other article entitled "What Constitutes a Complete and Effective SEO Campaign?" In short, the affordable way will involve an intense content optimization followed by work to raise link popularity. This link popularity development should be the bulk of any ongoing maintenance. A couple times a year keyword research should be done again and the content should be looked at. Search trends can sometimes fluctuate so you want to make sure your content is still aimed at the right audience.

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What is affordable and what isn't varies greatly from company to company, industry to industry. In the bed and breakfast industry, \$30 per month may be enough to keep a top 5 ranking on Google if the market is not very competitive. A web site competing for a top spot in a database administration field may be looking at several hundred a week if not more. The bottom line is, if you pick the right Search Engine Optimization company, your return on investment from an SEO campaign can be over 1000%.

While there are other ways to advertise a web site (No, search engine optimization is not the be-all and end-all of online advertising) very few can match the wide targeted audience and affordability that search engines provide.

John Metzler is the co-creator of Abalone Designs, Inc. www.abalone.ca, a Search Engine Optimization company in Vancouver, Canada. He has been involved in web design and web marketing

since 1999 and has helped turn Abalone Designs into one of the top SEO companies in the world.

The Importance of Title Tags on a Web Page

By Brian Basson

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This is a crucial point many times neglected by webmasters. Are the Title of a web page really that important, and if so, how would one optimize a title tag of a page for the search engines ?

Google and most other important search engines place a relatively high value on the "title tag" of a web page, as this normally gives a pointer or indication of what one can expect to find in the contents of that page. It is therefore very important to spend some time deciding on the best possible title for every page of your website – but stick to a title related to the contents on the specific page – failure to do so can result in that page being penalized by the search engines ! One can basically say that the title and contents need to compliment one another.

An important pointer in this regard is to have a title incorporating important keyword phrases, eg. if the contents of a page is about a Radio Controlled Car Club situated in Scotland, UK, a good title choice could be : "Scotland Radio Controlled Cars , UK Remotely Operated Car Clubs". Should you have various similar content pages on the same website, you can play around with additional synonyms, plus variations of the above title.

Stick to the focus, in this instance "Radio Controlled Cars". Do not try to optimize a title for too many different keywords / phrases at the same time. This will only be confusing for people doing a search on the search engines, for they will not know exactly what your page is about. In a way search engines can be "confused" and the indexing of your site not done correctly.

How long should the title be ? A web page title should not be longer than 10 words. Try to fit in the crux of what the page is all about, within a 10 word or less title tag. (The description tag can be a bit more explanatory)

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Brian is a freelance writer, website marketing expert & webmaster of 3 websites, including Rank Advance at <http://www.rankadvance.com>



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