

The Search Engine Lo-Down

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So, you want to get you site listed in the major search engines. Great! Problem is that so does virtually every other web site out there. And at last count, there are certainly quite a few of them. So what can you do to get in the top 10?

While there is no guarantee you will ever make it to the top 10, there are steps to take to make the best effort. I have listed what I think are your best bets for getting listed and perhaps make it into the coveted spot at the top of the list.

1.) Keyword Research

Think about how people would search for your site. What keywords or phrases would they type into Google or AltaVista to find a site like yours? Brainstorm and create a list of keywords and keyword phrases. Ask you friends, co-workers, and family. What would they type in?

Then spend some time searching the web using those keywords in search engines like AltaVista, Google, Yahoo and Excite and see what comes up. Remember to think about specific keyword phrases, not simply keywords.

Here is an example of good and not so good keyword choices:

| Too General | Much Better! |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. jewelry | 1. fine silver jewelry |
| 2. women's rings | 2. women's 14k gold rings |
| 3. men's socks | 3. men's heavy wool socks |

Once you feel you have come up with some very relevant keyword ideas you will place them in the top of your HTML pages in special tags called META TAGS.

There are two types of tags for this. The first is for your keywords and called the Meta Keywords tag. The other is called the Meta Description tag and describes the contents of your website in a way that will entice readers to click and visit. Include at least 3 or 4 of your most important and relevant keyword phrases in your Meta Description. And if possible, place the most important keywords at the beginning of your description. Sometimes Search Engines will cut off the end of a description so your message should be up front. Do a random search for anything using Google. Notice the brief sentence that follows each result. This is the Meta Description.

For Example: A Meta Description for speedboats may return this:

"Boats and Outboards for sale and wanted, advertise your Boat or Outboard for FREE, search database of used boats and outboards for sale and wanted"

Tip

If you're working with a web designer or webmaster ask them to help you insert your Keyword Phrases and Meta Descriptions into the HTML pages of your web site.

2.) Creating Content

After your Keyword List and Meta Description is complete you should begin to develop content for your site that contains as many of your keywords as possible. It's great for the search engines when they are indexing your site and it will also help your visitors find what they are looking for.

3.) Create Keyword Rich Page Titles

Many of your keywords should appear in your web page's Title tag. If you're a real estate company for example, don't use a title like "Welcome To XYZ Home Sellers". Instead, be more creative with something like "Real Estate in California – XYZ Home Sellers, 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed!"

Once you've adopted the three points we just talked about and then submit your URL to the major search engines, in time you will more than likely be indexed. However, this is only the beginning. Perhaps the most important role your site can play in the search engine battle for supremacy is explained in the next topic:

4.) Link Popularity

Since Meta tags were introduced and used, people began taking advantage of the search engines by "spamming" or filling their pages with keyword overload or using words that weren't related to their sites, but were known to be popular. As they say, a few rotten apples ruin it for everyone, and such is the case with the search engines. That's why link popularity has become a strong determining factor in how your site is ranked.

The key to your success however isn't a popularity contest. Say you have 10,000 web sites that link to your site. This won't actually help you. The key here is a bit more challenging. What you want is for those sites to be directly related to your site. Also of interest is that this popularity is measured for single web pages and not for an entire site. So each page in your web site can have different page rankings.

In fact the most successful search engine today [Google](#), explains page ranking this way:

PageRank Explained

PageRank relies on the uniquely democratic nature of the web by using its vast link structure as an indicator of an individual page's value. In essence, Google interprets a link from page A to page B as a vote, by page A, for page B. But, Google looks at more than the sheer volume of votes, or links a page receives; it also analyzes the page that casts the vote. Votes cast by pages that are themselves "important" weigh more heavily and help to make other pages "important."

Important, high-quality sites receive a higher PageRank, which Google remembers each time it conducts a search. Of course, important pages mean nothing to you if they don't match your query. So, Google combines PageRank with sophisticated text-matching techniques to find pages that are both important and relevant to your search. Google goes far beyond the number of times a term appears on a page and examines all aspects of the page's content (and the content of the pages linking to it) to determine if it's a good match for your query.

This brings us to the other tips you can try. The difference here is that these will cost a fee. The pricing structures vary for the different browsers and some are more useful than others.

1.) Paid Per Click Advertising

The Paid Per Click Advertising or (PPC) allows you to decide how much you are willing to pay per customer each time someone clicks on your ad. Take a look at almost any Google page and you'll notice small ads to the right of the search results. Web sites buy these ads and stacked on a per-cost bidding basis.

For a very clear explanation please visit:

<https://adwords.google.com/select/?hl=en>

and click on **Quick Tour**.

2.) Paid Placement

This actually gives web sites an advantage in that you can pay for the assurance that your site will get listed. You see just submitting you URL to a browser does not determine when you will actually get indexed but paying for it will help speed up the process. Pretty clever, huh?

Click here for a great website explaining all the details:

http://www.adroit.net/support_submit_paid.html

Oh, I almost forgot, what about those companies who PROMISE to get you into the top 10 or even the top 3 ranking in the most popular search engines? There are even those who promise "submission to 100,000 search engines and directories." I am not really sure there are even that many search engines out there, but if there are, remember that almost all of your traffic is coming from the majors - Google, Lycos, AltaVista, AOL Search, MSN Search and the like.

These companies are basically doing what I have already told you about. Most of which you can do yourself. However, if you decide that this is too overwhelming or too time consuming then finding a web professional might actually save you money in the long run.

If you have any questions or just want to learn even more techniques not listed here, please contact <http://www.webanello.com> and we'll be happy to assist you.

Good Luck! See you in the rankings!!

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