

Why Being Search Engine Friendly Is Important

You have a web site, but nobody can find it ...

You need to do something to get search engines and directories (other than just submitting your site to all the search engines) to notice your site and then to rank your site within their listing. Obviously, the higher the ranking, the more likely that people will find your site when they do a search.

What can you do? If search engine rankings are important to your web site's success, you can plan for and implement search engine friendly design considerations as you design and develop you web pages. This can save you a lot of time and rework in the long run.

Making Your Site Search Engine Friendly

Depending on the purpose of your web site and your promotion strategy, optimizing your web site for search engines can be a small task or it can be a big job.

Search engines use programs to crawl through web sites that have been submitted for review or are linked to by another site. These programs, also called spiders, create their listings based on what they find at your site. These programs go through your web site word by word. You need to make sure that your site provides the right information that the search engine can use. For example, you need to make sure that your preferred keywords are found in your web site text.

Directories review the descriptions submitted by the web site owner. For some directories, the reviews are performed by real people. Other directories use software programs to do the review. To be properly indexed, you need to make sure that your descriptions accurately describe your site. Your keywords must also be included in the title and the description.

Most people go to a search engine or directory, enter a search keyword or phrase, and look through the first few pages of the results. Most of the time, they stop looking through the results after the first two or three pages. If you site ends up being listed in later pages, you will not get the traffic you expect.

There are not any search engine secrets that guarantee a top listing. However, optimizing for search engines and directories (that is, designing you site to match what search engines look for), improves your chances of getting a better ranking. Planning on how to optimize for search engines before developing your web pages is very important. You will not want to rework/rewrite everything on your web page later just to meet search engine requirements.

Things To Do As You Plan For Your Web Site

As you plan for your web site, following are some basic things that you can do to make your site "more friendly" towards visiting search engine spiders:

- Choose effective keywords.
- Think in terms of themes when choosing keywords or phrases
- Choose keywords and phrases that your audience typically uses
- Make sure your keywords and descriptions accurately describe your site
- Build content rich sites and include keywords. Place your keywords at the beginning of your important tags and towards the beginning of the contents.
- Put a heading tag, that contains your most important keywords or phrase, at the top of the page.
- Use your most important keywords in the first paragraph. Also, use your keywords in several places through out the page.
- Place your most important key words in your title tag. But, make sure that your title describes your web site. The title almost always appears in the search engine results as the title of the site.
- Place keywords in your alt tags text.
- Limit the use of frames, dynamic page content, flash, applets, Java, Java Script
- Each page should have a different keyword in the Title, but they should be part of a theme.
- Description Meta Tag should clearly state the main theme of your web site and contain some of your preferred keywords.
- Keep content high, graphics and the use of new technology low.

Things you should NOT do:

- Spam -- using the same keyword over and over in your text.
- Try to trick search engines. For example, using false keywords or hidden text that is colored the same as the background.
- Use the same tags and text on each page

Plan for External Links to Your Web Site

Having other relevant sites link to your site is *very* important in improving your overall rankings. Search engines view other relevant sites linking to your site as a good indicator of worthwhile content on your site. Basically, they feel that if other sites link to your site, you must be good.

Note: Beware of link programs. Having unrelated sites linking to your site can hurt your search engine ranking.