

Web site Promotion Tips

By following these Web site promotion tips, you'll greatly improve your chance of ranking well with the major search engines such as Google and Yahoo.

SUBMIT RIGHT:

Submit your site once a month to search engines. Directories have their own rules for how often to submit. If your site is in the directory already, don't resubmit to it. Use your Web site Promotion tool to submit, including all of its links to search engines that require manual submission. Always submit using the same domain name. Google and others have cracked down on the submission of several domain names that all point to the same site or to identical content in another site (mirroring). Begin submitting as soon as you have a good home page and a few other pages with content (no "under construction" wording); you should also have a domain name pointing to your site which will be the only domain name you'll use in all submissions.

HOME PAGE:

Make sure your home page is the first one ready for the search engines -- and is friendly for humans as well as search engines. Disable pages that are under construction. "Coming soon" is okay if you include good text describing the coming content. Disable your splash page. Avoid putting anything onto your site's pages (especially the home page) that will cause them to load slowly, such as Java or huge images. Provide text links as well as buttons. Update your site often; visitors and search engines like fresh content.

TITLE:

Give each page a unique title, reflecting what the page is about. The page's title needs to be 60 characters long counting all characters including spaces. Start with your most important search words. Capitalize the first letter of each major word. Use no more than 2 commas. Use the same rules for the names of items, categories etc. in your catalog, since their names act as titles for their pages.

KEYWORDS:

Give each page and each item in your catalog a unique keywords meta tag, reflecting what the page or item is about. The keywords list can be long (even 1024 characters for some search engines) but don't add words just to make it long. More words can mean less power for each word. Put your most important keywords first. Include plural versions and variations such as hyphenations and common misspellings. Break up very similar keywords by putting dissimilar words in between, so it doesn't look as if you're stuffing the same word again and again into the list. Don't use the same word more than 5 times in the keywords list.

DESCRIPTION:

Give each page and each item, category, etc., in your catalog a unique description meta tag, reflecting what the page, item etc. is about. The meta description can be up to 250 characters. Don't use more than 2 commas. Put your most important search terms first. Avoid unnecessary words such as promotional language. Use correct grammar and spelling, since the description meta tag is displayed in some search results.

CONTENT:

The page's content needs to include a good amount of readable text. Search engines can't read images and most can't read Flash. Most won't follow frames or Javascripted or Flash links to other pages. Put your most important search terms early on the page in large font. Include two or three occurrences of your most important search phrases in the page content, ideally as links to related pages in your site. The words in text links are important to search engines like Google. Give each image a unique ALT tag using words that relate to the image plus a search term or two.

GEOGRAPHY:

If your business is focused on a certain region, then your content, title and meta tags need to include the appropriate geographical terms such as the city, region, and state(s) that you serve. Your site might also qualify for regional categories in directories such as DMOZ. Getting into regional categories can be faster than non-regional categories -- but check the rules for the category to make sure you qualify.

LINKS:

Get other sites to link to yours and link your site to others. Search engines don't like "dead end" sites that lack external links. Directories are a good source of links to your site. The DMOZ directory is most important, but be sure to exploit special resources such as your local Chamber of Commerce site, local business directory sites, etc. Get other sites to use your top priority search term as the text link to your site. Make sure that they link using the same domain name that you use when submitting your site.

HUB PAGES:

Enhance your catalog's visibility to search engines by adding "hub pages" to your site. On each hub page, feature several related products and offer text links to related categories in your catalog. Name your hub page using important search terms. A page for enamel bath tubs should be named "enamel_bath_tubs.html". Words in URL's are detected by some search engines including Google. On your home page, provide text links to these pages. Each text link should include the hub page's most important search term.

And the most important tip...**PLAY IT STRAIGHT:**

Don't cheat. A trick that works today could get you in trouble tomorrow, as search engine companies continue to thwart trickery. Just some of the tricks that have stopped working and can even get your site banned or penalized: redirects, hidden text, keywords listed anywhere other than in the keywords meta tag e.g. stuffed into ALT tags, tiny font, submitting the same content via different URL's, and too many occurrences of a word on a page.