

Book 2 - Search Engine Optimization

1/18/12 8³⁰ PM

Chapter 1 - Getting Ready for SEO

Requires a lot of work + patience + consistent strategy

F. Understanding Why Search Engines Exist

153 A. Search engines drive the Internet

High placement in search engine ranking pages
can drive tremendous growth

Leave it to chance, OR

Use SEO - the practice of providing the
best possible target for search engines

B. Search engine terms

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1. Crawl - what SE does when it reads + indexes
2. Organic/natural search - unpaid result listings
3. SERP - result pages you see when you search.
4. Spiders/robots/bots - software SE uses to crawl sites
5. Black Hat SEO - uses tactics designed to
improve search rankings + fool SE into
providing a higher ranking than website
should actually receive acc. to SE algorithms

C. Search engines deliver relevance

Visitors click on search results

" = happy with what SE found for them

Result - visitors return
traffic to SE ^

search engine company's stock ^

D. Tips

Don't be tricked by hucksters!
you will be punished!

II. Knowing What Makes a Website Relevant:

155 Search engines want to know which site = most imp.
 for a particular concept

Concepts = represented by key phrases

SE = hierarchical

Read billions of pages of content using spiders

Determine relevance of each page for a key phrase
 based on a complex set of rules

1. site's authority on subject - demonstrated by links from other sites
2. Whether key phrase is main focus of each site as demonstrated by its site structure
3. Which pages on site = most dedicated to key phrase
4. Whether those pages = more relevant than all other pages in the SE's index

To get to the top of the pyramid, need to know
 how web pages = built

how search engines read them

this allows you to provide a structure that
 indicates what a page is all about

156 What matters in SEO

1. Title tags - 1st thing SE looks at. put keyword here!
2. Description meta tags - shows up as page "snippet"
3. Headings - provide content outline: keyword shows relevance
4. Paragraph copy - the more copy, the easier to rank.
5. Site age - older sites have higher rankings
6. Trust factors - having physical address on every pg

7. Image captions
- 157 8. Links = authority = ^{relevant} relevance. From other sites
9. Link text - use keywords when sites link to yours
10. File names - keyword rich names on images & pages
inserts keywords into site hierarchy
11. URL - every link to site that uses it creates keyword-rich link

What Doesn't Matter in SEO

1. Keywords metatag - overly used, now ignored
2. Bolded key phrases - doesn't help
3. Hidden text - ^{when} if search engines root it out → trouble
4. Submitting a Web site - can do it but it's better they find you through links on other sites
5. Number of clicks on my search listing - doesn't matter

III. Avoiding Penalties

No miracle path! SEO - a long process
Short-term fixes ≠ work

- 158 Better to rely on white hat tactics - content + natural link growth

Search engines ≠ the keeper of ethics or laws
But Black hat tricks ≠ work

It's a question of risk vs. benefit
You will get caught in time

IV. Setting Up Your Toolbox

- 159 Fantastic tools = available to see how SE will evaluate your ~~SEO~~ Website

A. Downloading & installing Firefox

It's speedy, has tabbed browsing, + 100's of addons

B. Installing add-ons

1. SeoQuake - collects + displays a few dozen relevant search engine statistics inc.
pgs. in Google index + Yahoo index
keyword density on page
site age
page rank
 2. Live HTTP Headers - shows what Web site is telling SE on each page
 3. Google Toolbar - gets details of your site as seen by Google
 4. Web Developer Toolbar - lets you change how Firefox displays a Web page. Great to see how it looks without images or styles!
 5. Yellowpipe Lynx Viewer Tool → see site as does a text-only browser
- Dozens of other add-ons, inc. Rank Checker + SEO for Firefox

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1. Adding + Using SEO Quake

Tiny icon appears in lower R corner (after downloading)
click to activate - but don't leave it on!

It scrapes the SE's for info = pestering
Visit favorite Web page - SEobar at upper L
Click arrows to expand it

Hover over items to see what they are

Click on any item for more detail

- a. ie Google Links shows all incoming links
- b. Yahoo! link domain - # of links to site

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c. Google + Yahoo! index - gives # of pgs. indexed by each
 d. MSN links + index

e. Site age

f. Density = critical feature - see which phrases
 = most popular / common on that page - shows
 shows how optimized page - for specific phrase

g. Links that are set to nofollow with rel tag
 links are shown with strike through

Can get specific data about links from within
 from robots.txt file and
 IP address of that Website

Take it with a grain of salt - but it's
 = great way to compare Websites +
 to measure progress

2. Adding + using Live HTTP Headers

To use it, choose Tools / Live HTTP Headers
 Browse to Web page to check

Lots of info streams by, but notice only
 the first HTTP note: 200 OK is fine!!

Test your site's Page Not Found error page

Go to nase65.org/abcdefgh + dist

HTTP note should read 404 ≠ 200!

3. Adding + using Google Toolbar

Some SEOs love it + some hate it

Go to toolbar.google.com - download

Click settings, click More - inc. PageRank ^{7 selected}
 Page Info

Not an accurate rank (0 to 10 w. 0 to Billions) but useful

May 13
13th Mother's Day Sun → Fri
birthday is Friday
Aria

B2C1-6

163 4. Adding + using Web Developer Toolbar

Most complex of any tools discussed here

164 After installation, choose View/Toolbars/WDT

Disable Javascript + styles → more accurate view
of what average SE sees when it crawls site
explains tool but watch out - it's addictive

5. Adding + setting up Yellowpipe Lynx Viewer

Lets you see how site looks to text-only browser

After installation, Rclick on page + choose it

Popup window shows page as text-only
= great test of any site - if blank
or gibberish
or links + show

} trouble!

C. Setting up + using Webmaster Tools

165 Every major SE has one - Yahoo, Live Search, Google

1. Notice if they find problems such as duplicate content

2. Show you who's linking to your site

3. Report most common queries used to find your site

4. Tells the last time SE crawled your site

5. Allows you to modify how your listing appears (in a few cases)

Find them here

1. Google - www.google.com/webmasters/tools

2. Yahoo! - siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com

3. Live Search - webmaster.live.com

To use Webmaster tools, follow these steps.

1. Set up account with each SE as directed

2. Verify site ownership - upload authentication file
add metatag to site

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1. Using Google Webmaster Tools - inc. 20+ gadgets
 - a. Diagnostics → Content Analysis - shows if site has duplicate title or description meta tags
site is missing " " " "
 - b. Links / Pages with external links - tells which pages on your site have links from others
will drill down to see where links come from
 - c. Statistics / Top search queries - peek at key phrases (& your rankings for these)
that drive your traffic

Can export reports to TSV format

This is a must have tool!

2. Using Yahoo! Site Explorer - simpler, but provides a deeper look at incoming links
shows you
 - a. all the pages on your site that Yindex
 - b. the last crawl date of each of pgs
 - c. incoming links

Be sure to check out

a. Inlinks - show Inlinks Except from this site and to Entire Site

b. Pages - shows which are indexed, which aren't

3. Using Live Webmaster Tools = treasure trove

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- a. Crawl issues - shows pages & find in File Not Found
- b. Keywords Report - type in phrase, shows which pages Live Search considers strong for that phrase
- c. Outbound Links - single report shows all
Export to TSV format

D. H. Installing Xenu Link Sleuth = free

To install: <http://home.snfu.de/Hilman/xenulink.html>

To use: double-click program, type in Web address

Results - Xenu tells you the pages of broken link

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But - only available for Windows

Also Peacock Media has a similar tool

<http://peacockmedia.co.uk/integrity>

V. Creating Your SEO Worksheet

SEO takes a long time

Changes you make today might impact rankings
months from now

Keep a record of relevant data + changes made over time

Refer back to it

Better understand what worked + what didn't

1. Traffic from organic search

2. Keyword diversity - the # of key phrases
driving traffic to your Web site

3. Incoming links, by SE

4. Indexed pages, by SE

5. Sales / leads / other results from organic search

If site has a goal, + analytics package allows it
record the results you get

Traffic is great; sales are better

6. Keyword rankings - don't matter!

Record numbers by month - see ¹⁶²Chapter 8 for analyzing