

SEO – or Search engine optimization is the act of generating tags throughout your web structure to allow search engines to find you. Search engines use a variety of efforts to find your website on the internet, from robot crawling, site submission, and internal/external linking. Below are a few ways that you can help boost your rating on search engines.

1. Page title tags: The page title tag is the information that is displayed on the blue border on the top of the page. It is best practice to use the top 2 keywords in your title tag

2. Domain name: If it is possible, use a keyword in your domain name. This will give you an edge over your competition. If you already have a domain name, don't worry; just put a keyword in some of your pages. For example, if your keyword is 'Networking', it would be ideal to have your website URL be <http://www.yourwebsite.com/our-networking.aspx>, that way networking is not only a keyword, but it is in the link name itself.

3. Meta tags: Meta tags are the descriptions that go in the header of your master page or header file. These are not seen by any of the visitors except when they are looking at the source code. These meta tags and descriptions used to be the main way that search engines look for your website, however they have become increasingly less important over the years, but should not be ignored. For optimal SEO, your meta description and keyword tags should be no more than 150 characters each.

4. Header tags: Header tags are the HTML code that indicate a headline, like H1, H2 and H3 and show up as bolded headlines in your page content. The first 3 header tags are the only ones you need to be concerned about, and the primary header tag, H1, is the most important. Use your primary keyword once in the H1 tag, 2-3 times in your H2 tags, and multiple times in your H3 tags.

5. Alt image tag: The alt tag typically describes an image in a floating text window when you put your mouse over the image if the image isn't able to be displayed. The best use of any **<ALT>** tag is to use your keywords in your image descriptions.

6. Content formatting: Search engines pay attention to formatted content, as in when text is bolded, italicized, and underlined. Make sure that you are bolding your keywords in the content of your website.

7. Keyword density: Keyword density refers to the number of times a keyword or keyword phrase appears on a web page. Rather than trying to focus on the number of times a keyword appears in the content of your page, aim for a more natural density by keeping your keyword phrases in mind as you write the copy for your page. Optimally, keyword density should be between 2% - 7%. There are a number of keyword density checkers available online to assist you with determining the keyword density of a page.

8. Anchor text: Anchor text refer to links on a page that connect your visitor to other pages. So, rather than telling someone to "click here" in the content of your page, include a keyword in your anchor text, as in "click here for networking tips."

9. Inbound links: Reciprocal link exchange (you link to my site and I'll link to yours) used to be a great way to attract the attention of search engines to your site. Now, search engines pay attention only to the quality and popularity of the site providing you with an inbound link that is not a reciprocal link. One of the best ways to get quality inbound links back to your site is to submit articles to high traffic article directories and submit press releases to paid press release services. Another way to achieve the inbound links is to submit your site to search engine website. When doing this method, always remember it is not about the quantity of the links, it is about the quality of the links.

10. New content: Content is still king, so one way to improve your page rank for a search term is to write high quality articles containing one or two of your keywords in the title and posting those regularly (weekly is best) to your site. Search engines are always seeking good, fresh, content, so your goal should be to make your site into an information-rich resource for your industry.

11. Site maps: There are sitemaps that help a visitor navigate a site, and sitemaps that are expressly designed for the search engines. The two are not the same. To enhance your site, submit an xml sitemap to Google Webmaster Central and Yahoo Site Explorer. There are a few xml sitemap builders that are out there, so take advantage of the free SEO that is easily available for you