

TRIPLE SMART'S GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING SEARCH ENGINES

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SUMMARY

Your webpage has hidden code called **meta tags** that help search engines index your content. For each page you will need to come up with the following:

TITLE (65-70 CHARACTERS MAX OR 5 TO 9 WORDS) This appears on the tab of the browser and is the link that will appear in search results. This is the most important meta tag you have to work with because search engines place significant weight on it. Each page should have it's own unique page title. Your primary keywords should appear in the first 5 words. Avoid generic words and vary your page titles from your competing sites.

PAGE DESCRIPTION (100-200 CHARACTERS MAX OR 1 TO 2 SENTENCES) The page description appears below the page title link in the search results and a good meta description can help improve your click through rate. Each page needs to have it's own unique description.

KEYWORDS (255 -378 CHARACTERS MAX) These are comma separated keywords or phrases. Keywords are what people type into Google as searches. This portion of the meta data is not as important due to the fact that search engines are now placing less weight on this area dues to abuse. Don't use any word more than 3 times. Use only the words that are in the content of the page. Use caps only in the first letter of the word and separate the words and phrases with commas and spaces.

Note: In your word program you can highlight areas of text and go to **Tools > Wordcount** to find out how many words or characters are on your list.

Other key elements which you will have control over in your CMS panel and which will help your site rise in search engine rank are the following:

1. Place as many keywords as possible in your pages and format them using your CMS as **Header 1, Header 2, Header 3, and bold**. Header sizes are bigger than normal page text and should be used for such things as page titles, subtitles and bolded words.
2. Use these **keywords in the body** of your page text. If you would like to test your keyword density you can visit this site once your site is online. <http://www.keyworddensity.com/>
3. Always **name your photos and links** with a title.
4. **Link** to other important sites, and have others link to you.

KEYWORD RESEARCH/DISCOVERY

1. **Brainstorm**
 - a. The goal is to come up with a list of keywords which you can use in your meta tags, site text, and search engine marketing. Brainstorm all the words you think a customer would type into their search box when trying to find you. This includes thinking of phrases that are broad and targeted, buying and research-oriented, and single and multi-word. What is your site hoping to do or promote? Come up with enough words to cover all the services your site offers. **Avoid overly generic terms like 'shoes' or 'clothes'**. These words are incredibly difficult to rank for and won't drive qualified traffic to your site. Focus on words that are relevant, but not overly used. If you need help brainstorming ideas, ask friends, colleagues or past customers for help. Sometimes they are able to see your site differently than the way you yourself see it. Also, don't be afraid to take a peek at your competitor's

Meta Keyword tag. What words are they targeting? How can you expand on their keyword list to make yours better? It's okay to get a little sneaky here. All's fair in love and search engine rankings. To view a page's meta tags, go to the site and select view→view page source or simply press Ctrl-U.

2. Refine Your List

- a. **Google Suggest** <http://www.google.com/webhp?complete=1&hl=en> Type the keywords slowly and you will see possible alternatives
- b. **Thesaurus** <http://thesaurus.reference.com/> Another way to locate synonyms you may have forgotten

3. Test Your List

- a. **Google Trends** <http://www.google.com/trends> This tool will allow you to compare searches by separating them with commas.
- b. **Google Adwords Tool** <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> Google's keyword PPC tool doesn't provide actual search numbers for keywords. Instead, it displays a colored bar, giving users only an approximation. It does help you understand which words are competitive.
- c. **SEO Tool Set** <http://www.seotoolset.com/cgi-bin/checktraffic.cgi> Check the traffic in Google, Yahoo and MSN-Live Search.

OVERVIEW:

In 2006, North American advertisers spent US\$9.4 billion on search engine marketing, a 62% increase over the prior year and a 750% increase over the 2002 year. The largest SEM vendors are Google AdWords, Yahoo! Search Marketing and Microsoft adCenter. As of 2006, SEM was growing much faster than traditional advertising.

Search Engine Marketing, or SEM, is a form of Internet Marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in the Search Engine results pages (SERPs) and has a proven ROI (Return on Investment). According to the Search Engine Marketing Professionals Organization, SEM methods include: Search Engine Optimization (or SEO), paid placement, and paid inclusion.

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST POPULAR SEARCH ENGINES?

- a. Google 49%
- b. Yahoo 23.8%
- c. Live Search (former MSN by Microsoft) 9.6%
- d. AOL 6.3%
- e. Ask 2.6%
- f. Other 8.5% Nielsen NetRatings Search Engine Ratings July 2006

2. WHAT TYPES OF SEARCH ENGINES EXIST?

- a. **Main Search Engines**
- b. **MetaSearch Engines** A meta-search engine is a search engine that sends user requests to several other search engines and/or databases and returns the results from each one –
 - i. Examples include: www.Info.com , www.HotBot.com , www.Excite.com , www.dogpile.com , www.webcrawler
- c. **Social Bookmarking Sites**
 - i. Examples include: www.del.icio.us , www.simp.com , www.furl.com , www.diigo.com , www.ma.gnolia.com , www.netvouz.com , www.stumbleupon.com, www.reddit.com www.digg.com, www.newsvine.com
- d. **Experimental Search Engines**

- e. **Blog Search Engines** – Examples include:
 - i. Examples include: www.Amatomu.com , www.bloglines.com , www.blogscope.com, www.icerocket.com, www.sphere.com, www.technocrati.com

3. WHAT SEARCH ENGINES USE WHAT DATA?

- a. **Google-based** search engines
 - i. AOL Search
 - ii. MySpace Search
 - iii. Netscape
 - iv. CompuServe Search
- b. **Yahoo!-based** search engines
 - i. AltaVista
 - ii. AlltheWeb
 - iii. GoodSearch
- c. **Windows-Live-based** search engines
 - i. A9.com
- d. **Ask.com-based** search engines
 - i. Lycos

COMPOSE YOUR PAGE TEXT WITH KEYWORDS

1. Keyword density is a big factor in page rank and SEO. Try to use your keywords as titles, subtitles, as links, in image descriptions and within the text of your pages.
2. This tool might help you test for your keyword density in your text.
http://www.seochat.com/?option=com_seotools&tool=6

SUBMIT YOUR SITE TO SEARCH ENGINES

1. **Google** www.google.com/addurl/ This will cover (AOL Search, MySpace Search, Netscape, CompuServe Search)
2. **Live Search – Microsoft MSN** <http://search.msn.com.sg/docs/submit.aspx>
3. **Yahoo** <http://submit.search.yahoo.com/> (requires yahoo account) This submission will cover AlltheWeb, Altavista Lycos and Goodsearch
4. **What you Seek** www.whatuseek.com/addurl.shtml
5. **Jayde** <http://submit2.jayde.com/>
6. **Open Directory Project** The Open Directory Project was started in 1998 as an alternative to the commercial directories like Yahoo and Looksmart. The entire directory is run by volunteer editors numbering 34,699 at the time of this writing.
 - a. Type in your site to see if it is there.
 - b. figure out what category it needs to be in by guessing a category and seeing what categories fit.
 - c. Go to that category and hit suggest URL.
 - d. Enter URL, title and description

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Pay per click (PPC) is an advertising model used on websites, advertising networks, and search engines where advertisers only pay when a user actually clicks on an ad to visit the advertiser's website. Advertisers

bid on keywords they believe their target market would type in the search bar when they are looking for a product or service. When a user types a keyword query matching the advertiser's keyword list, the advertiser's ad may appear on the search results page. These ads are called a "Sponsored link" or "sponsored ads" and appear next to, and sometimes, above the natural or organic results on the page. The advertiser pays only when the user clicks on the ad. Pay per click advertising is a search engine marketing technique.

Paid inclusion is a search engine marketing product where the search engine company charges fees related to inclusion of websites in their search index. Paid inclusion products are provided by most search engine companies, the most notable exception being Google.

The fee structure is both a filter against superfluous submissions and a revenue generator. Typically, the fee covers an annual subscription for one webpage, which will automatically be catalogued on a regular basis. A per-click fee may also apply. Each search engine is different. Some sites allow only paid inclusion, although these have had little success. More frequently, many search engines, like Yahoo!, mix paid inclusion (per-page and per-click fee) with results from web crawling. Others, like Google (and a little recently, Ask.com), do not let webmasters pay to be in their search engine listing (advertisements are shown separately and labeled as such).

Cost Per Action or CPA (as it is often initialized to) is a phrase often used in online advertising and online marketing circles.

CPA is considered the optimal form of buying online advertising from a direct response advertiser's point of view. An advertiser only pays for the ad when an action has occurred. An action can be a product being purchased, a form being filled, etc. (The desired action to be performed is determined by the advertiser.) Google has incorporated this model into their Google AdSense offering while eBay has recently announced a similar pricing called AdContext.