



## **Search Engine Optimization: Build It and They Will Come?**

If you want traffic coming to your site, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is one of the ways to get it. SEO has become a specialty of internet marketing; however, you can optimize your content yourself, if you know a few of the basics.

SEO is the structuring of your website and page content, text or multimedia, to enable search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN to easily find your site. Search engines index web sites so that when a user enters a search term, the search engine can quickly find the most relevant content to match the word. When done correctly, optimizing your web site will result in higher rankings in the search engines. This is sometimes referred to as a "natural" or "organic" search.

To take advantage of organic searches you first need to identify your keyword and keyword phrases. These are the words and phrases that someone searching for your skills or service may use. Let's say you decide the top three words/phrases a potential client looking for your skills will use to search are: *leadership coaching*, *team building activities*, and *leadership training*. As you develop your web site, your web copy should contain these phrases where appropriate, and at least one page of your website should be devoted to each of the three keywords.

It's not necessary to force the use of the terms nor overuse them. In general, your pages should have a keyword density of 3 to 5%. Following this guideline, a 500-word page, would mention the keywords 15-25 times.

Another relatively simple approach to help the search engines find you is to create a site map. A site map is similar to the table of contents in a book; it shows the structure of the web site and where to find information within the site. In the example above, each of your pages, each with a title bearing a keyword, will be listed in your site map. This gives the search engine another opportunity to find you.

The right keywords are central to an effective SEO strategy. WordTracker ([www.wordtracker.com](http://www.wordtracker.com)) and Yahoo's Overture ([www.inventory.overture.com](http://www.inventory.overture.com)) are effective tools to find appropriate keywords for your business.

Other factors that can also help your web site ranking in the search engines are:

- Using your keywords, in the title, description and html coding of each page.
- Placing your keywords and most important points in the first paragraph of your copy is critical because this is where the search engines look to determine how well the page relates to the search.
- Submitting your site to directories such as ODP - Open Directory Project . Directories feed the search engines so that your site is picked up more quickly by the search engines.

This is a very broad overview of how SEO works. As the search engines start to index video and audio, it is going to become an even more important subject. Having an understanding of how SEO works, gives you a better chance of getting your site to rank higher in the search engines.

### **WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR EZINE OR WEB SITE?**

OK with me as long as you include the following:

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