

# E-Marketing



A comprehensive guide to the factors that affect search engine ranking.

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## Where to start?

Logic would suggest that optimising your web pages would come before submitting to search engines. However, the major search engines are spammed with thousands of new websites to index every day. As a result, it takes weeks or even months before your website is crawled.

There are ways to speed up your inclusion into search engines:

Firstly, you could try paid inclusion, which usually does not guarantee your website a high ranking but it does guarantee that the search engine spider (for your selected search engine) will crawl your website every day or so.

If you have existing websites, which are crawled on a regular basis, you might want to add a link on one of those web pages to your new website. Deep-crawling search engines will then discover your website without you even suggesting it.

I prefer to optimise my web pages before submitting to search engines and exchanging links with other websites. This way the spider is sure to get a good first impression, which is important if it does not come back for weeks.

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## Search Engine Optimization

The process of search engine optimisation is making your web pages appear relevant to targeted keywords that are used in search queries. Search engine spiders collect various pieces of information about your individual web pages. Search engine spiders will visit a web page at set intervals, which depends on how often

it is updated. So it is a good idea to keep your web pages up-to-date because up-to-date web pages are relevant web pages.

### **Keyword Density**

Keyword density is the ratio of keywords to other non-keywords on a web page. Getting this right can be the difference between a high and low ranking. Too many keywords compared to other non-keywords on a page might be considered as 'cheating'. Cheating web pages are given a large penalty, which will either badly damage your search engine ranking or worse (ban your website from the search engine completely).

Of course I cannot just give you the ratio that I use to get a high ranking because it's a secret and besides, it is constantly changing. It is best to have a look at the ratio of other high ranking websites to work it out for yourself.

### **Title and Meta tags**

Keyword frequency is the amount of times a keyword is repeated rather than the ratio of the keyword to non-keywords. Keyword frequency and position is important in a web page's title and meta-tags. Google does not pay attention to meta-tags, just the title tag.

Meta-tags consist of the description and keywords tags.

In the keywords tag it is best to target search phrases rather than individual words, especially if there is a lot of competition online in your industry. For example, if I target the keyword "computers" I have no chance of appearing in the top 100 because there are thousands of online computer retailers. However, I might have a better chance of targeting users that are specifically looking for "extremely powerful computers" if I use that as a keyword phrase.

If I was targeting this phrase, I would also include it in the title tag and a few times in the body.

### **Website Content**

Content is King. Besides link popularity I would say that the previous saying is completely true. The more relevant web pages your website has, the more likely it is that the user will find what they are looking for – this is the way spiders are thinking.

### **Accessibility**

I bet you are thinking "What is accessibility doing in a marketing tutorial?"

Although this is probably unintentional, accessible websites get higher search engine rankings. How? Well, search engines also pick up alternative text for images specified by the alt attribute. Using style sheets instead of tables will also make search engine optimisation easier because there is less (x) HTML code in the way of that delicate keyword density ratio.

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## Link Popularity

If other websites link to your website then you must have something worth looking at. Link popularity on Google works on a quite complex point system. When you link to another web page, you donate some points to that web page. If lots of web pages link to your web pages, your web pages will have many points and become more popular in the rankings.

If you are serious about getting good link popularity with Google, download the Google toolbar, which provides some information on exactly how popular your web pages are (as well as your competitors).