

10 Of The Most Important SEO Design Tips

1. Optimise every page on your website

The major search engines are not looking at individual websites and ranking them, they are ranking pages from every website in the world. This means that if your website contains more than one page you should optimise for the specific content that is found on each page.

Optimising each webpage is overlooked by so many websites within Ireland and can be the difference between competing for a highly competitive keyword phrase such as "Irish Hotels" and competing for a much less competitive keyword phrase such as "Hotels in County Galway". After that they can check out the rest of your website that is all about "Irish Hotels".

2. Pick appropriate keyword phrases

This is the single most important thing to do when it comes to optimising your website for search engines. The keywords that your potential customers type into Google, Yahoo, MSN, and Ask Jeeves are the keywords that your site should be using within the specific areas of your webpage (see below; Optimizing your Page Titles and Optimizing your Content). There are a number of useful keyword research tools available on the web. The most recommended and user-friendly are Wordtracker and Keyword Discovery. Both offer trial versions.

3. Optimizing your Page Titles

All of the major search engines have 100's of different algorithms that compute where your webpage should be listed for different keyword searches. Putting your keywords within the Title description (the blue bar you will see at the top of your screen) of your pages is one of the most important SEO techniques and will help your website climb through the rankings and allow your visitors to remember exactly what your page is all about when they save it to their "favourites".

4. Optimizing your Page Content

It is sometimes very difficult to write content for your website. Not only do you need put the information that you want the visitor to see in front of them in an easy-to-read style, you also have to keep in mind the keywords or keyphrases that your page is targeting so that you can rank better within search engines.

One of the best pieces of advice that I have come across is to write for your visitors and include the keywords and keyphrases as much as makes sense. Read what you written out loud to yourself and a few others. If it sounds stupid... lather, rinse, and repeat.

5. Create an inbound linking strategy

Submitting your site to online directories is a very beneficial way to drive targeted traffic to your website. People will find your listing in a directory and click on the link to go directly to your site.

This not only brings visitors to your website, but it also creates links for search engine "spiders" or "robots" to find your website and index your pages within their results. If your site doesn't have a link pointing to it on the World Wide Web the search engines will never find it and you will never see any traffic from Google or the other big ones.

6. Descriptively labeling your links and images (aka the anchor text)

This technique is both common sense and good practice. Telling your visitors what the link that they are going to click on allows them to know exactly what they are going to be directed to. Saying "click here" is not enough to help them understand what they're going to find once they click through. Be as descriptive as possible with every text and graphical link on your site. The cool thing about writing your anchor text and alt attributes to be descriptive is that you can almost always describe the page you're pointing to by using its main keyword phrase which is another one of those many factors search engines take into account when it comes to ranking your web pages.

7. Make sure your site is spider-friendly

Your website may look fantastic. You and your web designer may be talented graphic designers that can make Flash and Javascript dazzle your visitors with a show that would put RiverDance to shame. However, if your website contains Flash and Javascript it's important to know that search engine spiders can't read this code (or appreciate the effort you put into the design). The way around this is to provide navigation alternatives to allow the spiders to crawl deep within your website and index the web pages within their results.

8. Create Fresh Content

When you are optimizing your website properly you will see a trend. If you are doing something that benefits your website's visitors then the search engines will reward you for it.

Search engines do tend to like websites that create fresh content regardless of the format. If they know any given site is adding new articles on a frequent basis, they will come around often to index it.

Blogs and forums are effective and easy ways of adding new information to your site on a regular basis.

However, if your only purpose of setting up a blog or a forum is for better search engine rankings then there really is no point in doing it. Only add a forum if it contributes something beneficial to your website and if you have the traffic to make it interactive enough for visitors to return to it. And, only add a blog if you have something of interest to say on a regular basis.

9. Do not think that you can trick Search Engines

As noted before, "If you are doing something that benefits your websites visitors then the search engines will reward you for it".

If you try to trick the search engines by hiding keyword phrases in your pages by making the text colour the same as the background colour, hiding keyword phrases in tiny font, joining link farms, or any other sneaky practice your sites will be removed from the search engines and it will take you a long time to get back in (and you will also have to spend more time cleaning up your website before they will accept you).

10. Offer something unique

If your website offers something that is unique and interesting to your target market and it is properly optimized (by applying all of the techniques that are listed above) you will not only rank well within the major search engines, you will also get the added benefit of people linking to your website in forums, blogs, and through other websites which will send your site more visitors and create more inbound links which will help it rank higher.

About the Author:

Barry Fenning is the owner of www.betteririshwebsites.com.