



## STRATEGIES TO INCREASE PAGE RANKING

### FIX YOUR TITLE TAG:

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- Title tag is the single most important ranking component on your web page.
- A good title tag accomplishes three objectives:
  - Features the exact phrase you want the page to rank for.
  - Makes that phrase the very first that appears in the title.
  - Repeats that phrase in some variation.
- Never make your company name the first thing in your title
  - Search engines will rank you for your company name anyway
- The second mistake is putting the most important keywords in the wrong order
  - Use the exact phrase you want to rank for.
- Repeating keywords in your title tags is extremely important, don't overdo it.
  - Keyword-stuffing is likely to get you penalized... keyword repetition.
  - A slight variation on your targeted keyword phrase should be repeated later in the title tag, but not more than once or twice.
  - You're writing your title for humans as well as search engines.
    - Sometimes modifying your title tag to rank better in the search engines makes the title less appealing to human readers.
    - Once you're ranked, then you can experiment with how effective your title is at enticing clicks.
    - Many times a #3 listing will get more clicks than a #1 listing, simply because it has a more engaging title.
- Don't get carried away w/ creating a unique title tag for every possible keyword
  - Pick the phrase you'd most like to target and put that in your title tag.
  - Then build links to that page, making sure the anchor text of those links contains those closely related terms that you'd also like that page to rank for.
- If you're going to be targeting a term that is significantly different, such as *Amsterdam Bed and Breakfast*, then that term deserves its own page.
  - But if you're only dealing with minor variations on a keyword, then they should be targeted using incoming link anchor text. This will keep you from having too many similar pages.

### INCREASE YOUR KEYWORD DENSITY

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- There's no *magic formula* for the # of times you should use a keyword on your page.
  - Increasing the # of times that keyword appears often increases rankings.
  - Adding a keyword phrase hundreds of times to a page will get you penalized.

- However, if your keyword phrase currently appears on your page five or six times, and you work that phrase (or some slight variation) into your page an additional three or four times, you'll almost always see an improvement in your search rank.
- True if you place keywords in locations search engines deem important:
  - headings (**H1**, **H2**, **H3** tags in your HTML code)
  - bulleted lists (**OL**, **UL** tags)
  - bolded or italicized text (**B**, **STRONG**, **I**, **EM** tags).

## **THE ULTIMATE KEYWORD PRIMER**

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- Like title tags, keyword density is a continual process of tweaking.
- Instead, just add your keywords to your copy a few more times and see what happens. Most of the time (especially with Yahoo) you'll see your rank improve within a few days.
- At a certain point you'll see diminishing or even negative returns, so closely monitor the effects your changes are having.
- As search engines have moved towards link-based ranking algorithms, SEOs have had a tendency to downplay the effects of keyword density.
- This is a mistake. Anyone who's had to fight for those top positions knows that the keyword density is still important, and the way you place keywords on your page can have a significant effect on rankings.

## **USE KEYWORDS IN YOUR INTERNAL LINKS**

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- Internal links are the links you use to link your site's pages together.
  - You don't always have control over the way other people to link to you, but you have complete control over the way you structure your own internal links.
- This is something you should take advantage of. When linking to your own pages, always use the link anchor text you want those pages to be found for.
- Here's a common example: Ever notice how everyone links to their homepage with the word **Home**? Unless you really want your homepage to rank for the search **Home**, what possible advantage could this provide?
- We've been experimenting with placing more keywords in internal links recently, and have seen very positive results.
- However, ranking algorithms evolve, so a process of...
  - making small changes,
  - monitoring their effects, and
  - Continuing to make changes based on those effects...
    - ... Safest route to take. That way, if you make a change that impacts your rank negatively, it's easy to reverse the change and get your rank back.

- That doesn't mean you should shy away from adding keywords to internal links. We've seen it have some very powerful and immediate effects, so you shouldn't be afraid to experiment (within reason).
  - Do it in a way that looks natural and is useful to your users, and you shouldn't have a problem.
- Images as Internal links
  - Add your keywords to the image's *title* tag, as well as its *alt* tag
  - Again, don't get carried away and "stuff" each of those tags full of dozens of keywords.
  - Do it in a way that looks natural and is descriptive and helpful to users who can't view images, but also contains your most important keywords.
  - And don't forget that text links beat the stuffing out of image links, so go with text if you can...

### **GET A LISTING IN EACH SEARCH ENGINE'S PREFERRED DIRECTORY**

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- Incoming links are probably the most important thing you can do to boost search rank
  - the effect of a good link can often take several weeks to manifest itself
  - While on-page changes can show results in a few days or less.
- There is one type of link that seems to kick in fairly quickly, and that's a link from a search engine's favorite directory.
- Each search engine has a preferred directory:
  - Google places a lot of weight on DMOZ Directory
    - Sites listed on DMOZ are used to populate the Google Directory
    - And gets you listed in over 400 other directories that use DMOZ data
  - Yahoo has a preference for the Yahoo Directory (obviously☺)
  - MSN prefers Microsoft's bCentral Directory (<http://sbd.bcentral.com/>)
    - Listing there will lead to immediately improved results in MSN search
  - We're often asked whether the price for a directory inclusion is worth the cost. *Especially in light of the \$299 Yahoo Directory listing. Our answer is usually yes, but there some things to look out for...*
  - Getting listed in these directories does boost your search rank, often quickly.
  - That's because search engines know that if a site's been accepted into the directory, then it's undergone a hand-review by a real human being.
    - a directory editor (working for one of the search engines, in the case of Yahoo and MSN) evaluated the site
    - determined it to be of good quality,
    - Listed it.
    - Search engines don't get much more of a guarantee of quality than that.
  - Downside is that, if your site is violating search engine guidelines:
    - let's say you've got some hidden text or links, or have created a mini-net to boost rankings- directory editor who reviews your site could flag your site as spam, seriously damaging your rankings.
      - This is especially a concern with Yahoo, and we've seen it happen many times.

- Remember, if you're submitting a site to a directory, you're asking someone to come to your site and manually review it for quality.
- make sure your site is totally clean and compliant with search guidelines
  - You may have just spent \$299 to have Yahoo ban your site.
- The other downside to a directory listing is that the search engine will often use the directory title and description for your listing in the regular search results.
- And directories create pretty boring titles and descriptions (they usually insist that your title be your company name).
  - If you've finely honed your title to attract the most clicks, then it can be very disappointing to find your hard work suddenly replaced by a bland directory listing, and it's not uncommon for this to put an unpleasant dent in your search traffic
    - although the title change doesn't appear to affect rank

Source: *SearchEngineNews.com*