

The objective of search engine optimisation is to increase web visitor counts by ranking very high in the results of searches using the most appropriate keywords describing the content of your site. This relative ranking is often viewed as a struggle to best use a few keywords, instead of a struggle to out-do your competition. If you search on your target keywords, you will see the leading site in the rankings. All you need to do is to be better than that number one site. This page suggests ways to optimise and improve search engine results with ranking and promotion advice, placement hints, tips, and clues to improve your search engine keywords relative to existing leaders. After all, better keyword ranking is your real objective

**It is not enough to simply add META tags and to submit your site to a million search engine indexes and directories. The first promotion step in obtaining significant web visitor counts is to seek first-page search engine results. An early step is to build a great content-rich site. One of the last steps is the proper submission of your great site to the search engine or directory. In the middle is a step that is VITAL if you want to obtain front-page results, and most sites skim past this step because it is forgotten or too complex, but without it you are destined to be search engine fodder. The following FREE advice describes how to design your keywords with search engine ranking and optimisation in mind.**

There are no search engine optimisation secrets -- just ranking and promotion methodologies to follow in order to beat your competition in obtaining a high search engine promotion ranking for desired search keywords criteria. For a major search engine, your search position, placement optimisation, and web site promotion ranking are commonly controlled by META keywords and top of page text. Once you know what keywords worked for the "leaders", you can "beat the leader" and do even better! Proper web ranking optimisation results requires that you beat your competition, so knowing the keywords used by your competition is the most important first step. It will become obvious that good ranking excludes keyword spamming the search engine, and that with the careful selection of your keywords that you will fare well for a little effort.

#### **Site Description tips**

- Keep the description of your site brief - no longer than 25-30 words.
- Avoid using promotional language. Words and phrases like "cool" and "best darn site" will be removed.
- Do not use ALLCAPS in your description.
- Avoid capitalizing every word in a sentence.
- Don't repeat the title of your site in the description.
- Check your spelling.
- List your site with the easy ones first. The following search engines simply require you to submit your URL

alta vista  
direct hit  
excite  
hotbot  
jayde

We've all heard the hype about the Web as a bustling electronic village, connecting millions of strangers from around the world. But let's face it: it's a lonely world out there for most Web sites. For every site that pushes the bandwidth limits of a T1 line, thousands of others languish in obscurity--unloved, unnoticed, and unprofitable.

Fortunately, filling in a few online forms can ensure your site gets the attention it deserves through search engines and directories. If you're willing to invest a little more time (and/or money), you can try ad banners, link exchanges, and/or promotion software to shepherd traffic to your site. The offline world is also a valuable source of publicity: many print publications that review Web sites are ripe for a well-written press release about your online offerings. And the right promotion on your own site is the best way to bring visitors back.

In the end, the quality of your site will determine its success or failure. But the online world can't judge your site if it can't find it. To give yourself a fighting chance, you need to engage in some Web PR. To help you get started, CNET has pulled together 31 can't-miss ways to tell the world about your site. The fastest and easiest way to start getting your site attention is to register it with the major search engines and Web directories.

Search engines use automated software (known as robots or spiders) to follow Web hyperlinks, harvesting information about sites as they go. When someone submits a query to a search engine, the engine returns a list of sites, ranking them on their relevance to the keywords used in the search. How search engines assess your site and determine the relevance of the words is difficult to predict, as it often depends on how the specific engine works. Some engines, such as Excite, use artificial intelligence to recognize concepts that frequently appear together. If you search for "animal health," for instance, Excite also returns sites devoted to "veterinary medicine." Other search engines, such as WebCrawler, first list more popular sites--those its database shows are more frequently linked.

Web directories have the modest task of being the yellow pages for the World Wide Web. Unlike search engines, which can find an unregistered site if other sites link to it, directories list your site only after you submit certain pieces of information: the title, the URL, a description, a few keywords, and sometimes a contact email address. (Although it's not necessary, it's also a good idea to register your site with search engines to ensure that your site comes up in queries.) Typically, a directory's reviewers decide whether a site meets their standards and where the site should be placed in the directory's hierarchy of categories.

There's no way to guarantee that your site will come up on top in a search or stand out in a directory (though it helps if your subject matter is obscure and uses a unique vocabulary). But try these tricks to make sure your site pops up in as many searches as possible.

Search engines return their results in the form of titles linked to each site, so descriptive titles draw people to your site. A page with just the name of the site in its title is less compelling than one with a description. And if you don't include title tags at all, your site will be listed in search results as "No Title" or something similarly uninteresting.

### **Make the most of <META> tags**

You can control how search engines catalog your site with two types of <META> tags. <META> tags are part of the HTML code that some search engines, such as AltaVista and Infoseek, look for but most visitors to your pages never see.

Example of which meta tags to use

```
<title>www.your-website.htm</title> (enter a title for your website)
<meta name="keywords" content="keyword1, keyword2, keyword3"> (you can add phrases as well as words)
<meta name="description" content="www.your-website.com"> (enter a description for your website)
<meta name="author" content="www.your-website.com">
<meta name="copyright" content="www.your-website.com">
<meta name="robots" content="ALL">
<meta name="revisit-after" content="11 days">
<meta name="reply-to" content="info@your-website.com"> (your email address)
<meta name="document-distribution" content="Global">
```

### **<META> tag do and dont's**

- \* Identify and display your real Keywords in a priority order. The keywords must relate to your business and service scope. Never misspell them. The secret is to review the Top 10 sites that appear under keywords that fit your website. Study their titles, Meta tags, keyword density, alt image tags etc. before defining your own keywords.
- \* Keep Meta tag content to a maximum of 1000 characters. Most search engines will simply ignore the excess characters.
- \* Avoid using words like "Free, the Best, the only" and so on to describe your site.
- \* Always use your Keywords in the title of each web page.
- \* Use Alt tags in the first image on your website, and fill it with several important keywords in priority order.
- \* Avoid using frames when designing a website.
- \* Use WebsiteGarage.com to do a site analysis, then correct site deficiencies.
- \* Re-submit your website every two months.

Now, here's a list of things you don't want to do:

- \* Never hide invisible text on your website
- \* Never use misleading keywords in your Meta tags that have nothing to do with the site.
- \* Never try scamming search engines by writing bogus site descriptions.
- \* Never use the same keywords more than 3 times.

Make sure your keyword list includes both general and specific words related to your site. It's best to make them plural where appropriate and to include derivatives, since you can't rely on all search engines to account for such instances. Having trouble thinking of keywords? Check out eyescream interactive's list of top 200 search words (smuggled from Yahoo).

To ensure that you're making the most of your <META> tags, go to the Meta Medic site and submit your site's URL. This free Perl script checks your page's <META> tags and suggests ways to improve the descriptions or keywords.

### **Don't repeat keywords**

Repeating keywords--whether in the title tag, in the <META> keyword tag, or hidden against a colored background--has long been a popular ploy to convince search engines to list a site high on keyword searches. The tactic worked when search engines were unsophisticated and judged a word's relevance only by the number of times it appeared on a page. Now, most search engines are hip to the trick and count only the first few occurrences of a keyword or phrase. Thus, hundreds of repetitions of "Pamela Anderson" on your celebrity models Web page will probably have no greater effect on the search engines than would ten repetitions. Search engines also rely more on word density (frequency relative to the total size of the page) or distribution (how well the word is spread throughout the page) than on the number of occurrences when they judge relevance. Some search engines, such as Lycos, even penalize your page (by placing it further down the list or not listing it at all) if they suspect you of repeating words to improve its ranking.

### **Set out Web page "buoys"**

While repeating keywords may no longer score you points with search engines, setting adrift multiple versions of Web pages still works. This can be particularly useful if your site features a mix of interests. Let's say you are a Web designer with expertise in both Java and Photoshop. Search engines will give you more exposure to both audiences if you create one page with the title and <META> tags heavily slanted toward programming and another page with tags slanted toward graphic design skills.

### **Put the important stuff first**

Some search engines, such as Lycos, give precedence to text near the top of Web pages. If some of your must-see content is located far down on a page, move it up, put it on a separate page, or make sure the appropriate keywords from the text are in your <META> keyword tag.

### **Register via submission sites and services**

Sure, you could register with search engines and directories one by one, but there's a better way. At free sites such as Submit-It and Add-It, you fill out one form with your Web site's title, URL, keywords, and other pertinent information. The sites guide you through the submission process for the most popular search engines and Web directories, filling in the appropriate fields in each form. All you have to do is click Submit buttons to send your information.

If you're not satisfied registering with the dozen or so sites that account for 99 percent of the searches on the Web, you can use fee-based submission sites and companies to register sites with hundreds of specialized search engines and directories. These services, some of which are high-powered versions of free submission sites, submit your site even to niche search engines such as ChurchSurf, TextileWeb, and Curioscape.

### **Register via Web promotion software**

Web promotion software is similar to online submission sites: the program asks you for the information required by a slew of search engines and directories, then goes online to submit that information. As with fee-based submission Web sites, paying for this software gets your site listed in many more search sites than a free submission site would. Most of the applications offer free updates, so you can keep up when new search engines go online and existing search engines change their formats.

### **Register multiple pages from your site**

Registering the URLs of more than one page from your site is a good idea. Search engines vary in the depth to which they'll catalog your pages. Some, such as HotBot, are thorough, following all available links and cataloging each site in its entirety. Other search engines, such as AltaVista, go down only two or three levels of links before stopping. If your site has important pages that are more than a couple levels down, register them separately.

### **Search Engines**

**AOL NetFind** <http://www.aol.com/netfind> AOL NetFind is an Inktomi-powered search engine targeted at AOL users. Previously, it had been powered by Excite.

**AltaVista** <http://www.altavista.com> AltaVista is consistently one of the largest search engines on the web, in terms of pages indexed. Its comprehensive coverage and wide range of power searching commands makes it a particular favorite among researchers. It also offers a number of features designed to appeal to basic users, such as "Ask AltaVista" results, which come from Ask Jeeves (see below), and directory listings from LookSmart. AltaVista opened in December 1995. It was owned by Digital, then run by Compaq (which purchased Digital in 1998), then spun off into a separate company which is now controlled by CMGI.

**Ask Jeeves** <http://www.askjeeves.com> Ask Jeeves is a human-powered search service that aims to direct you to the exact page that answers your question. If it fails to find a match within its own database, then it will provide matching web pages from various search engines. The service went into beta in mid-April 1997 and opened fully on June 1, 1997. Results from Ask Jeeves also appear within AltaVista.

**Excite** <http://www.excite.com> Excite is one of the most popular search services on the web. It offers a medium-sized index and integrates non-web material such as company information and sports scores into its results, when appropriate. Excite was launched in late 1995. It grew quickly in prominence and consumed two of its competitors, Magellan in July 1996, and WebCrawler in November 1996. These continue to run as separate services. Excite also "powers" the results that appear in AOL NetFind.

**FAST Search** <http://www.alltheweb.com> Formerly called All The Web, FAST Search aims to index the entire web. It was the first search engine to break the 200 million web page index milestone. The Norwegian company behind FAST Search also powers the Lycos MP3 search engine. FAST Search launched in May 1999.

**Go / Infoseek** <http://www.go.com> Go is a portal site produced by Infoseek and Disney. It offers portal features such as personalization and free e-mail, plus the search capabilities of the former Infoseek search service, which has now been folded into Go. Searchers will find that Go consistently provides quality results in response to many general and broad searches, thanks to its ESP search algorithm. It also has an impressive human-compiled directory of web sites. Go officially launched in January 1999. It is not related to GoTo, below. The former Infoseek service launched in early 1995.

**GoTo** <http://www.goto.com> Unlike the other search engines (except for AltaVista), GoTo sells its listings. Companies can pay money to be placed higher in the search results, which GoTo feels improves relevancy. Non-paid results come from Inktomi. GoTo launched in 1997 and incorporated the former University of Colorado-based World Wide Web Worm. In February 1998, it shifted to its current pay-for-placement model and soon after replaced the WWW Worm with Inktomi for its non-paid listings. GoTo is not related to Go, above.

**Google** <http://www.google.com> Google is a search engine that makes heavy use of link popularity as a primary way to rank web sites. This can be especially helpful in finding good sites in response to general searches such as "cars" and "travel," because users across the web have in essence voted for good sites by linking to them.

**HotBot** <http://www.hotbot.com> Like AltaVista, HotBot is another favorite among researchers due to its large index of the web and many power searching features. In most cases, HotBot's first page of results comes from the Direct Hit service (see above), and then secondary results come from the Inktomi search engine, which is also used by other services. It gets its directory information from the Open Directory project (see below). HotBot launched in May 1996 as Wired Digital's entry into the search engine market. Lycos purchased Wired Digital in October 1998 and continues to run HotBot as a separate search service.

**Inktomi** <http://www.inktomi.com> Originally, there was an Inktomi search engine at UC Berkeley. The creators then formed their own company with the same name and created a new Inktomi index, which was first used to power HotBot. Now the Inktomi index also powers several other services. All of them tap into the same index, though results may be slightly different. This is because Inktomi provides ways for its partners to use a common index yet distinguish themselves. There is no way to query the Inktomi index directly, as it is only made available through Inktomi's partners with whatever filters and ranking tweaks they may apply.

**LookSmart** <http://www.looksmart.com> LookSmart is the closest rival Yahoo has, in terms of being a human-compiled directory of the web. In addition to being a stand-alone service, LookSmart provides directory results to AltaVista and many other partners. AltaVista provides LookSmart with search results when a search fails to find a match from among LookSmart's reviews. LookSmart launched independently in October 1996, was backed by Reader's Digest for about a year, and then company executives bought back control of the service.

**Lycos** <http://www.lycos.com> Lycos started out as a search engine, depending on listings that came from spidering the web. In April 1999, it shifted to a directory model similar to Yahoo. Its main listings come from the Open Directory project, and then secondary results come from spidering the web. Lycos also feature another directory of web sites called Lycos Community Guides. Sites are automatically listed in these guides using technology from WiseWire, a company Lycos acquired in early 1998. Lycos is one of the oldest search services, around since May 1994. It began as a project at

Carnegie Mellon University. The name Lycos comes from the Latin for "wolf spider." In October 1998, Lycos acquired the competing HotBot search service, which continues to be run separately.

MSN Search <http://search.msn.com> Microsoft's MSN Search service is powered by Inktomi. On the MSN portal site, other search engines are also featured, along with directory results. MSN Search went live in October 1998 with its Inktomi results, although it had existed in various formats and under different names previously.

Netscape Search <http://search.netscape.com> Netscape Search's results come primarily from the Open Directory and Netscape's own "Smart Browsing" database, which does an excellent job of listing "official" web sites. Secondary results come from Google. At the Netscape Netcenter portal site, other search engines are also featured.

Northern Light <http://www.northernlight.com> Northern Light is another favorite search engine among researchers. It features the largest index of the web, along with the ability to cluster documents by topic. Northern Light also has a set of "special collection" documents that are not readily accessible to search engine spiders. There are documents from thousands of sources, including newswires, magazines and databases. Searching these documents is free, but there is a charge of up to £4 to view them. There is no charge to view documents on the public web -- only for those within the special collection. Northern Light opened to general use in August 1997.

Open Directory <http://dmoz.org> The Open Directory uses volunteer editors to catalog the web. Formerly known as NewHoo, it was launched in June 1998. It was acquired by Netscape in November 1998, and the company pledged that anyone would be able to use information from the directory through an open license arrangement. Netscape itself was the first licensee. Lycos also uses the information for its main service and within Lycos-owned HotBot.

RealNames <http://www.realnames.com/> The RealNames system is meant to be an easier-to-use alternative to the current web site addressing system. Those with RealNames-enabled browsers can enter a word like "Nike" to reach the Nike web site. To date, RealNames has had its biggest success through search engine partnerships. In particular, it is strongly featured in results at AltaVista and Go (Infoseek).

Snap <http://www.snap.com> Snap is a human-compiled directory of web sites, supplemented by search results from Inktomi. Like LookSmart, it aims to challenge Yahoo as the champion of categorizing the web. Snap launched in late 1997 and is backed by Cnet and NBC.

WebCrawler <http://www.webcrawler.com> WebCrawler (part of excite) has the smallest index of any major search engine on the web -- think of it as Excite Lite. The small index means WebCrawler is not the place to go when seeking obscure or unusual material. However, some people may feel that by having indexed fewer pages, WebCrawler provides less overwhelming results in response to general searches. WebCrawler opened to the public on April 20, 1994. It was started as a research project at the University of Washington. America Online purchased it in March 1995 and was the online service's preferred search engine until Nov. 1996. That was when Excite, a WebCrawler competitor, acquired the service. Excite continues to run WebCrawler as an independent search engine.

Yahoo <http://www.yahoo.com> Yahoo is the web's most popular search service and has a well-deserved reputation for helping people find information easily. The secret to Yahoo's success is human beings. It is the largest human-compiled guide to the web, employing about 150 editors in an effort to categorize the web. Yahoo has over 1 million sites listed. Yahoo also supplements its results with those from Inktomi. If a search fails to find a match within Yahoo's own listings, then matches from Inktomi are displayed. Inktomi matches also appear after all Yahoo matches have first been shown. Yahoo is the oldest major web site directory, having launched in late 1994.

### **Pick Your Strategic Keywords**

How do you think people will search for your web page? The words you imagine them typing into the search box are your strategic keywords.

For example, say you have a page devoted to stamp collecting. Anytime someone types "stamp collecting," you want your page to be in the top ten results. Then those are your strategic keywords for that page.

Each page in your web site will have different strategic keywords that reflect the page's content. For example, say you have another page about the history of stamps. Then "stamp history" might be your keywords for that page.

Your strategic keywords should always be at least two or more words long. Usually, too many sites will be relevant for a single word, such as "stamps." This "competition" means your odds of success are lower. Don't waste your time fighting the odds. Pick phrases of two or more words, and you'll have a better shot at success.

### **Have Relevant Content**

Changing your page titles and adding meta tags is not necessarily going to help your page do well for your strategic keywords if the page has nothing to do with the topic. Your keywords need to be reflected in the page's content.

In particular, that means you need HTML text on your page. Sometimes sites present large sections of copy via graphics. It looks pretty, but search engines can't read those graphics. That means they miss out on text that might make your site more relevant. Some of the search engines will index ALT text and comment information, along with meta tags. But to be safe, use HTML text whenever possible. Some of your human visitors will appreciate it, also.

Be sure that your HTML text is "visible." Some designers try to spam search engines by repeating keywords in a tiny font or in the same color as the background color to make the text invisible to browsers. Search engines are catching on to these and other tricks. Expect that if the text is not visible in a browser, then it won't be indexed by a search engine.

Finally, consider "expanding" your text references, where appropriate. For example, a stamp collecting page might have references to "collectors" and "collecting." Expanding these references to "stamp collectors" and "stamp collecting" reinforces your strategic keywords in a legitimate and natural manner. Your page really is about stamp collecting, but edits may have reduced its relevancy unintentionally.

### **Use Meta Tags**

As mentioned above, meta tags can help you overcome problems with tables, frames and other trouble areas. Meta tags will also help you control your site's description in engines that support them. You should use meta tags, but keep in mind that they are NOT a guarantee that your site will appear first. Adding some meta tag code is not a magic bullet that cures your site of dismal rankings. For more information, see the tips on using meta tags. Site subscribers have access to extended information about meta tags.

### **Just Say No To Search Engine Spamming**

For one thing, spamming doesn't always work with search engines. It can also backfire. Search engines may detect your spamming attempt and penalize or ban your page from their listings.

Also, search engine spamming attempts usually center around being top ranked for extremely popular keywords. You can try and fight that battle against other sites, but then be prepared to spend a lot of time each week, if not each day, defending your ranking. That effort usually would be better spent on networking and alternative forms of publicity, described below.

If those practical reasons aren't enough, how about some ethical ones? The content of most web pages ought to be enough for search engines to determine relevancy without webmasters having to resort to repeating keywords for no reason other than to try and "beat" other web pages. The stakes will simply keep rising, and users will also begin to hate sites that undertake these measures.

Consider search engine spamming against spam mail. No one likes spam mail, and sites that use spam mail services often face a backlash from those on the receiving end. Sites that spam search engines degrade the value of search engine listings. As the problem grows, these sites may face the same backlash that spam mail generates.

### **Submit Your Key Pages**

Most search engines will index the other pages from your web site by following links from a page you submit to them. But sometimes they miss, so it's good to submit the top two or three pages that best summarize your web site.

Don't trust the submission process to automated programs and services. Some of them are excellent, but the major search engines are too important. There aren't that many, so submit manually, so that you can see if there are any problems reported.

Also, don't bother submitting more than the top two or three pages. It doesn't speed up the process. Submitting alternative pages is only insurance. In case the search engine has trouble reaching one of the pages, you've covered yourself by giving it another page from which to begin its crawl of your site.

Some search engines have an instant spidering service, as described in the Search Engine Features page. In this case, you should submit all the key pages from your web site, not just the top two or three.

It can take up to a month to two months for your "non-submitted" pages to appear in a search engine, and some search engines may not list every page from your site. Search Engine Features page has the current times it takes for each search engine to add new web pages. Extended information is also available to site subscribers.

### **Verify And Maintain Your Listing**

Check on your pages and ensure they get listed, in the ways described on the Check URL page. Once your pages are listed in a search engine, monitor your listing every week or two. Strange things happen. Pages disappear from catalogs. Links go screwy. Watch for trouble, and resubmit if you spot it.

Keep in mind that a number of the major search engines are now providing country-specific versions of their directories. These mainly work filtering sites by domain. For example, a British edition of a major search engine might only list web sites with British domains, such as ".co.uk." A British site ending in a non-British domain, such as .com, would be filtered out. If this type of situation applies to your site, you may need to message the search engine so that they can manually include your site.

Resubmit your site any time you make significant changes. Search engines should revisit on a regular schedule. However, some search engines have grown smart enough to realize some sites only change content once or twice a year, so they may visit less often. Resubmitting after major changes will help ensure that your site's content is kept current.

### **Beyond Search Engines**

It's worth taking the time to make your site more search engine friendly, because some simple changes may pay off with big results. Even if you don't come up in the top ten for your strategic keywords, you may find an improvement for strategic keywords you aren't anticipating. The addition of just one extra word can suddenly make a site appear more relevant, and it can be impossible to guess what that word will be.

You should also consider negotiating reciprocal links with sites that do appear in the top ten lists, if you are having no luck. Perhaps some of these sites might be considered "competitors," but you'd be surprised how many are happy to link to your site in return for a link back. After all, your site may appear first when slightly different keywords are used. Links are what the web was built on, and they remain one of the best ways for people to find your site.

Also, remember that while search engines are a primary way people look for web sites, but they are not the only way. People also find sites through word-of-mouth, traditional advertising, the traditional media, newsgroup postings, web directories and links from other sites. Many times, these alternative forms are far more effective draws than are search engines. For some ideas, see some of the links on the Online Publicity page.

Finally, know when it's time to call it quits. A few changes may be enough to make you tops in one or two search engines. But that's not enough for some people, and they will invest days creating special pages and changing their sites to try and do better. This time could usually be put to better use pursuing non-search engine publicity methods.

Don't obsess over your ranking. Even if you follow every tip and find no improvement, you still have gained something. You will know that search engines are not the way you'll be attracting traffic. You can concentrate your efforts in more productive areas, rather than wasting your valuable time.

### **Search Engine Promotional Software**

Many site owners submit to search engines on a regular basis. If you are serious about web site promotion, I recommend using one of these windows based submission programs. Most have demo versions available.

Submissionspider <http://submissionspider.com/>

Submission Spider will automatically register your website with over 950 of the Internet's most prominent search engines, Internet Directories, and Indexes. By instantly and frequently making sure your Web Site address is always visible across hundreds of search engines, you are unleashing the true power of automated promotions.

Exploit Submission Wizard <http://www.exploit.com/wizard/>

Unlike most other on-line packages, the Submission Wizard gathers all the data it requires before logging onto the net, then handles the whole submission process for you, relieving the requirement to press a button for every submission and allowing you to use your time more effectively.

Globalnet Promotion Spider <http://globalnetpromotions.com/spider.htm>

In addition to automatically submitting your site to over 1000 major (and growing daily...) search engines, directories, and links pages, the Globalnet Promotion Spider for Windows 95/98 will dynamically optimise your site or page, ensuring maximum visibility on the Internet.

Dynamic Submission 2000 Version 5 <http://www.submission2000.com/sub2000.htm>

Up to 10 multiple Connections for super-fast submission processing. Unlimited URLs Auto Meta-Tag generator web page optimiser to improve your web ranking. Save and re-load failed engines for easy re-submission. View history of your submission reports. Easy top engines selection Export Engine list.

### **Understand search engine rules**

We usually spend hours identifying and analyzing website keywords and developing meta tags for each site I design. If you really want your website to rank high, you must study and understand the rules of each search engine.

Yahoo, for example, has very specific rules that you must follow in order to get listed. If your site is still under construction, then don't submit because they never accept websites that are not ready for viewing. If you have already submitted your site to Yahoo, then wait patiently. It takes at least six weeks for Yahoo surfers to review your site. If your site is well designed and has quality content, it will eventually be listed in the appropriate categories you have chosen. It might even take up to six months to get your site reviewed by a real person at Yahoo. Do not keep re-submitting your site to Yahoo. If you lack patience, Yahoo offers its Business Express service which charges £199. They guarantee to review and respond within 7 days. However, they don't guarantee to list your website.

Since Yahoo receives thousands of site submissions on a daily basis, it's said they only list sites that are professionally designed with good and useful content. Websites using free website hosting services or that simply have a bunch of website links are rarely getting listed. If you are serious about your business, get a domain name and have your website designed by professionals. Yahoo is the most popular search engine and directory and getting listed with them is important.

If you don't know how your website is doing, before submitting your website to major search engines such as HotBot, AltaVista, Infoseek, WebCrawler, Excite, Snap and AOL Netfinder, you should double-check the spelling of your Meta tags and site descriptions. If you submit incorrectly, it takes a lot of time and effort to have errors removed from search engines. I manually submit our clients' sites to major search engines. So do it right! AltaVista and Infoseek recently have toughened rules on spamming. Remember, do not submit your site more than once every 2 months, keep your site keywords and descriptions related to your website content and never use terms like "the best, the only, number one."

Review your site ranking about two or three months after your initial submission. If necessary, modify your site keywords and then re-submit. Search Engine 2000 Checklist

Check your web site for search engine readiness with this quick overview about what to do and what not to do for effective listing in the search engines. This list in and off itself is not the true path to millions of hits, but it can help you towards the goal of appropriate, effective search engine listings.

#### **- Keyword Phrases**

Identify your most important keyword phrases and design your site around them. In our experience keyword phrases are much more attainable than individual keywords for a high search listing. In addition keyword phrases are more descriptive than single keywords so they produce more targeted traffic. For example "Handmade Furniture" is not only more descriptive than "furniture" but is also easier to get the top spot in search results.

#### **- Title Tags**

The title tag should be the first thing after the head statement and should say what you do, not who you are. In most search engines the title of your document carries a lot of weight, in many they are the most important part of your document. Think of it this way - how many times do you think "Tamara's Terrific Teas" is searched for? A lot less than "organic tea", so which should be in your title tag.

## - Where to Be Listed

We believe that the most important place to be listed is in Yahoo! Pay very close attention to the instructions and write a description with zero hype if you are lucky, you might get listed. Next we suggest getting all your pages listed in the Inktomi database that handles the spill over search results for Yahoo! and also powers HotBot, Direct Hit, Canada, Anzwers, and others. Finally we suggest getting all pages listed in The Open Directory Project, AltaVista, Infoseek, Lycos, Excite, Northern Light in that order.

## - Getting into Inktomi

We've noticed that it's easier to get listed in Inktomi if you submit your pages to Canada or Anzwers then if you try to add them to HotBot itself. If you get them into the Inktomi database they'll show up in HotBot searches in around 7 days.

## - Keep Good Records

Where is your site listed/not listed? When is the last time you submitted to Yahoo? Where is the majority of your search engine traffic coming from? These are questions you really should know the answer to. Refer logs help here, if you don't have access to them get your hosting provider to set them up for you. If they won't - change providers, they're that important.

## - Check Out the Competition

Now, I'm not abdicating stealing another site's title, tags, etc. but you do need to check out the sites at the top of the search engines for your chosen keyword phrases. This can show you not only what they are doing right, but can also give you insight into how the search engine works. Make sure you check out the top 2 or 3, as examining only the first result can sometimes be misleading.

## - Make a "SiteMap" Page

One very simple idea is to include a page on your web site that has links to every page on your site. This way you can submit this page to search engines with good spiders to get all of your pages listed without having to submit them all individually. As an added benefit some search engines like Excite seem to favor lists of html links with descriptive titles.

## - Use those Alt Tags

At least half of the large search engines index Alt tags, if you are not effectively using them you're loosing ground to the competition. This does not mean keyword stuffing though - give it a little thought and come up with alt tags that are descriptive as well as effective. One new thing we've been fooling around with is alt tags not only for pictures but also for hyperlinks.

## - Make use of Heading Tags

A few of the large search engines rank words inside of <H1></H1> very highly. Our recommendation is to put your keyword phrase inside of a heading tag near the top of your page. With a little work you can usually work it out so that it is aesthetically pleasing and if not there is always cloaking.

## **6 Ways to optimise the HTML on Your Website for Better Search Engine Rankings:**

1) Add Input tags into your html code, right under the <body> tag. <input type="hidden" value="keywords, keywords, keywords">

2) Add comments to your code with plenty of keywords. A website I recently did <http://www.Herbal-Treatments.com.au>, comes first on Google and ranks extremely well on all the other Search Engines. Check out the code and the first thing you'll see when the code comes up is a whole paragraph that is a comment. <!-- Put your info in here -->

3) Add 'ALT' tags to all your image and link statements.  <a href="http://www.panav.com" alt="The best I-Commerce people are here. We do ecommerce, mobile commerce, internet marketing blah blah blah" >

4) Name all your files after your keywords. For example, on my website [www.Panav.com](http://www.Panav.com), you'll find the website essentials page actually called `website_essentials.html` , the ecommerce page is called `ecommerce.html` not `ec.html` or `ecom.html` . Even if it takes a few extra minutes of your time, name your images and your files after your keywords.

5) Use Meta Tags within the head of every single page on your website. The code looks like this:

```
<META name="description" content="www.Panav.com, A website offering professional website services - hosting, design, development, strategy, ecommerce solutions, e-service and net marketing. See how I've added my keywords in here.">
```

```
<META name="keywords" content="Web Page, Home Page, Websites, Web development, Internet Services, ecommerce, e-service, marketing, internet marketing, free news, statistics, e-business, Panav Technologies, credit card transactions, online shop, e-marketing, website marketing. Keep it simple here , don't repeat words and don't put in too many words or Search Engines like Yahoo will get offended.">
```

```
<Meta name="author" content="Panav's Web People">
```

```
<TITLE> Add your keywords in here too instead of your name or your business name. </TITLE>
```

6) Add a Sitemap to your website and link to it from every page on your website.