



*TAKING YOUR SITE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION*

# SEARCH ENGINES EXPLAINED

---

AN OVERVIEW OF SEARCH ENGINES AND  
THEIR USE IN PROMOTING WEB SITES

2975, boul. St-Charles, suite 255 Kirkland, (Qc) Canada H9H 3B5  
Tel: 514-425-0412 Fax: 514-694-1125  
<http://www.globalmilleniamarketing.com>

# SEARCH ENGINES EXPLAINED

AN OVERVIEW OF SEARCH ENGINES AND THEIR USE IN PROMOTING WEB SITES

*“This guide is intended to condense and present to the reader a practical overview of Search Engines and the Internet. Search Engines are one of the most popular and cost effective methods of directing visitors to your web site.*

*Planning and optimizing your web site for inclusion in search engines and directories is an ongoing process. It requires continual web site attention, updating and understanding of search engine requirements.*

*A well planned optimization and submission campaign can shine the Internet light on your web site to millions of potential visitors.”*

*-John Shenton, President - Global Millennia Marketing Inc.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><i>Are Search Engines Important For My Web Site?</i></b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b><i>Optimizing Your Web Site for Search Engines</i></b> .....	<b>6</b>
Competitive Analysis: The Basics .....	6
What to look for in a competitor's site .....	6
Check the HTML code for keyword usage .....	7
Using keywords in the text of your pages .....	7
Choosing keywords .....	7
Who needs your service? .....	7
Include variations of your keywords .....	7
Avoid wrong keywords .....	7
Alphabetical Priority and its Influence .....	8
Alphabetical Characters and Others .....	8
Alphabetical hierarchy of a web site .....	8
Naming your files.....	8
HTML Title .....	8
Key concepts .....	9
Keyword Prominence .....	9
Keyword Proximity .....	9
Keyword Density .....	9
Keyword Frequency .....	9
Analyze Link Popularity .....	9
Look at URL Name and Alphabetical Placement .....	9
<b>Meta Tags - Using the Meta Description Tags</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Keywords in the Meta Description Tag.....	10
The Length of the Meta Description Tag.....	10
Optimization Strategy .....	11
<b><i>Doorway Pages for Search Engines</i></b> .....	<b>12</b>
Doorway Pages?.....	12
Creating Effective Doorway Pages.....	12
A Doorway for Every Engine.....	13
Submit New Links to Search Engines .....	14
Directories .....	14
Submitting to Directories .....	14
<b><i>Is Your Web Site Link Popular?</i></b> .....	<b>16</b>
What Can I Do to Increase my Link Popularity? .....	16
Developing links .....	17
Exchange Programs.....	17
Relationships with Other Webmasters .....	18
Using ALT tags .....	18
The Limits of ALT Tags.....	19
<b><i>Submission to Major Search Engines and Directories</i></b> .....	<b>20</b>
Submit to whom? .....	20

How Do I submit.....	20
Why Submit Manually? .....	21
<b>Search Engines vs. Directories.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Paying search engines for rankings .....	22
All Search Engines are Different.....	22
Submitting to directories .....	22
Will Your Web Site be Accepted? .....	22
Why You Will Be Rejected: .....	22
Why You Will Be Accepted: .....	23
<b>Express Submissions .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Pay-per-click search engines .....	24
Are the Results Irrelevant?.....	24
Should I use pay-per-click engines? .....	25
How to choose a submission service .....	25
What Should I Consider When Choosing a Service? .....	25
Your Budget. ....	25
Your Preferences.....	25
Search Engines and Others. ....	25
Deep Submit. ....	26
Deep Submission .....	26
Final Checklist .....	26
Continue Optimizing.....	27
<b>Search Engine Position Monitoring.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Search engine position monitoring.....	28
Monitoring Options: .....	28
<b>About Global Millennia Marketing.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Requirements for Top Search Engines .....	31
Ranking Criteria for Major Search Engines .....	32
Where and how to submit .....	34
How Often? .....	35
Avoiding Spam.....	35

---

## ARE SEARCH ENGINES IMPORTANT FOR MY WEB SITE?

---

***The top 10 search engines have over 147,000,000 unique visitors each month according to MediaMetrix.***

***Every day, 57% of all surfers use a search engine, second most popular Internet activity only to checking email.***

***More than 75% of surfers use search engines to traverse the Web, according to RealNames***

Search engines are one of the most popular means of finding web sites, second only to following links on web pages.

Search engines help people find relevant information on the Internet. Major search engines maintain huge databases of web sites that users can search by typing in some text.

The table below gives the Showdown Estimate and recent claims as to how many millions of Web pages have been indexed and included in the various search engines' databases.

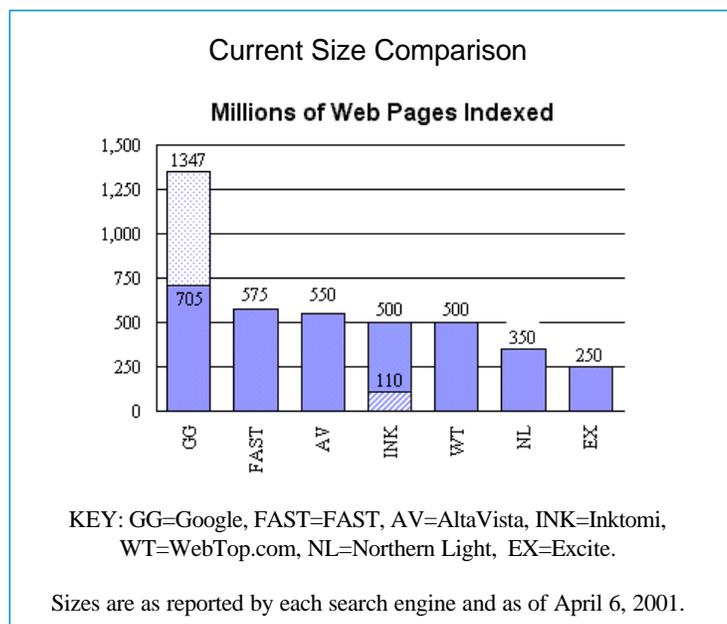
These estimates are based on exact counts obtained from Fast and Northern Light on the date of the comparison, and those numbers are multiplied by the percentage of a search engine's total hits from the searches used on the Relative Size Showdown as compared to the number found by Fast and Northern Light.

The Showdown Estimate is then an average of those to numbers aims to give the searcher a very approximate estimate of the effective size of the database -- the part of the database from which the searcher may actually see results.

To compile their databases, search engines rely on computer programs called "robots" or, more specifically, "spiders." These programs "crawl" across the web by following links from site to site and indexing each site they visit.

Each search engine uses its own set of criteria to decide what to include in its database. For example, some search engines index each page in a web site, while others index only the main page.

Also unique are the criteria each individual search engine uses to organize information for its users. Some list the results of a user's search according to which sites have the most links from other sites, a system known as link popularity.

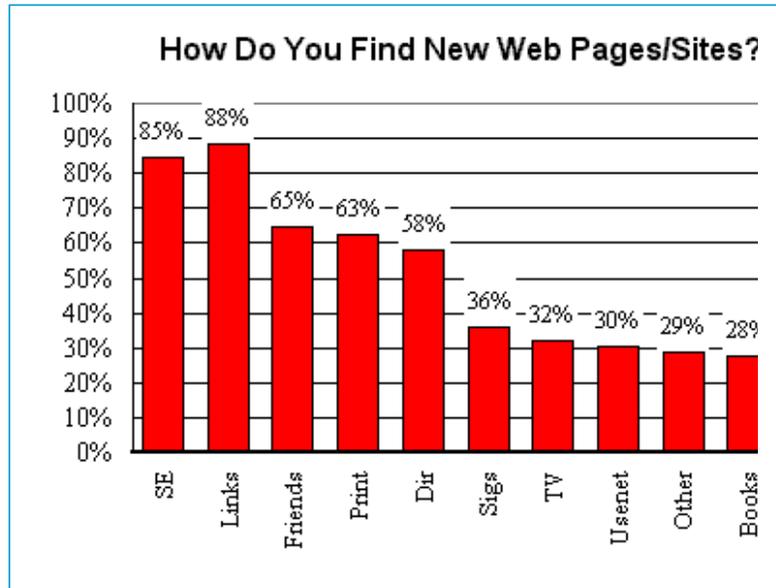


Other search engines prioritize results according to the summary information contained in a web sites' Meta tags, and still others look for common themes used throughout a site. There are many other ways to organize results, and most search engines use a combination of several of them.

Search for anything using your favourite crawler-based search engine. Nearly instantly, the search engine will sort through the millions of pages it knows about and present you with ones that match your topic. The matches will even be ranked, so that the most relevant ones are presented first.

So, how do crawler-based search engines go about determining relevancy, when confronted with hundreds of millions of web pages to sort through? They follow a set of rules, known as an algorithm. Exactly how a particular search engine's algorithm works is a closely kept secret.

One of the main rules in a ranking algorithm involves the location and frequency of keywords on a web page. Pages with the search terms appearing in the HTML title tag are often assumed to be more relevant than others to the topic.



Search engines will also check to see if the search keywords appear near the top of a web page, such as in the headline or in the first few paragraphs of text. They assume that any page relevant to the topic will mention those words right from the beginning.

Frequency is the other major factor in how search engines determine relevancy. A search engine will analyze how often keywords appear in relation to other words in a web page. Those with a higher frequency are often deemed more relevant than other web pages.

Off the web page factors are those that a webmasters cannot easily influence. Chief among these is link analysis. By analyzing how pages link to each other, a search engine can both determine what a page is about and whether that page is deemed to be "important" and thus deserving of a ranking boost. In addition, sophisticated techniques are used to screen out attempts by webmasters to build "artificial" links designed to boost their rankings.

Another off the page factor is click through measurement. This means that a search engine may watch what results someone selects for a particular search, then eventually drop high-ranking pages that aren't attracting clicks, while promoting lower-ranking pages that do pull in visitors. As with link analysis, systems are used to compensate for artificial links generated by eager webmasters.

*Ranking well in the major search engines requires that you follow the rules, understand their individual (ever-changing) foibles and present well crafted, content and keyword rich web pages for their delectation.*

---

## OPTIMIZING YOUR WEB SITE FOR SEARCH ENGINES

---

A query on a crawler-based search engine often turns up thousands or even millions of matching web pages. In many cases, only the 10 most "relevant" matches are displayed on the first page.

Naturally, as someone who runs a web site you want to be in the "top ten" results. This is because most users will find a result they like in the top ten. Being listed 11 or beyond means that many people may miss your web site.

The following chapters outline the basic requirements and approach to improving your position in the major search engines as shown on the right.

Analyzing your competition is crucial to optimizing your site. By checking out sites like yours, you can learn which optimization techniques to focus on and which ones to skip. Plus, comparing and contrasting the sites that score high on various search engines can give you a quick snapshot of each engine's characteristics.



### COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS: THE BASICS

Competitive analysis requires a basic knowledge of HTML. Although you will be looking at each site's general features, you will also want to examine the HTML code for every page. *(To see a site's HTML code, use your browser's View/Source or Page Source command.)*

#### What to look for in a competitor's site

Does your competitor's site include pages with few images that do not look like they belong to the rest of the site? They may be doorway pages, specially optimized to meet a particular search engine's indexing requirements.

Some sites use a technique called "cloaking" or "bait and switch" to trick search engines into indexing a page that's different than the one a user sees. Here's are some suggestions on how to spot this:

- **Look at the title** - Is it the same as it appears in the results?
- **Why was the page ranked high?** - If you can't figure out why a page ranks high, consider the possibility that the search engine's spider saw a different page than you did.
- **Use Google** - Take advantage of Google's cache feature, which allows users to view the page Google's spider indexed. See if the page Google cached matches the one you reach by clicking the link.

**Check the HTML code for keyword usage.**

Analyze your competitor's HTML title, Meta tags, ALT tags and keyword frequency and weight. See how many characters are used in each element, how keywords are placed in relationship to one another and what keywords are used.

**USING KEYWORDS IN THE TEXT OF YOUR PAGES**

There are many issues to consider when placing keywords in the text of your pages. Most search engines index the full text of each page, so it is vital to place keywords throughout your text. However, each search engine uses different ranking algorithms. Difficult though it may be, you need to keep all of them in mind.

Make sure your main page is full of keywords. It has a higher chance of being indexed than your other pages, and it will be the only page indexed by some engines.

Some engines rank a page high if it has **at least 100 words**, so make that your minimum. Directories rank pages based on the quality of their content, so make sure your pages aren't simply lists of keywords.

Keywords should have also been chosen and placed in the Meta tag and Alt tags, etc., of your pages.

Most techniques to improve your search engine rankings have one thing in common, **'keywords'**. Choosing appropriate keywords is extremely important. Think about it! Keywords are what lead search engine users to your site.

**Choosing keywords**

Choosing the right keywords is the first step to better search engine positioning. Analyze your business carefully and think of all the words that relate to your company or product.

Let us assume you sell *puppy food*. What words would you search for when looking for the same product? Ask your colleagues and friends to think about the same question. This is perhaps the most important stage in your war for a spot in search engines' top 20.

As you think about keywords, consider the following:

**Who needs your service?**

Think about who will use your services, then target them with keywords. For example, people whose dogs are about to have puppies will need puppy food, so you can add phrases like "dog pregnancy" and "puppy health" to your list.

**Include variations of your keywords**

People will search for your site using all sorts of keywords. Making your site easy to find means including misspelled, capitalized and plural keywords. Always include the longer forms of keywords too. For example, use "domestication" as well as "domestic."

**Avoid wrong keywords**

Do not use "stop words" such as "and" and "the" and common words like "Internet." Remember, the more specific your keywords are, the better the chance that people who find your site through search engines will actually benefit from its content.

## Alphabetical Priority and its Influence

Whether a file name starts with A or Z can have a surprising effect on a site's search engine rankings. Some small search engines still use alphabetical priority as a ranking factor. Directories such as Yahoo! and LookSmart list sites in alphabetical order. It is important to consider the effect of the alphabetical hierarchy as you choose keywords.

Alphabetical priority is a way of ordering files based on the alphabetical hierarchy of the characters in their names. Simply put, it is why some search engines will list a file named "aaa.html" before a file named "bbb.html."

Some search engines use alphabetical priority in their ranking formulas. Also, **directories** list sites in alphabetical order.

### Alphabetical Characters and Others

The commonly accepted alphabetical hierarchy consists of more than just letters. It includes special characters and numbers that can rank higher than an "A". This is the actual order:

**! " # \$ % & ' ( ) \* + , - . / 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 : ; < = > ? @ A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z ` a b c... etc.**

This means search engines using alphabetical hierarchy will rank a file named "@ABC" higher than a file named just "ABC."

### Alphabetical hierarchy of a web site

If you're still looking for a URL name to buy, keep alphabetical hierarchy in mind. Choose a name beginning with special characters or numbers if possible. Otherwise, choose something as close to the beginning of the alphabet as possible.

If you have a widely recognized trademark, such as Microsoft, use that as your site name. However, if your company is called Zap Consulting, you may want to find a URL name that has keywords, rather than your exact name, in it.

Some businesses go so far as to rename themselves to achieve a better listing in directories such as Yahoo! If your company's name starts with a "Z," you may want to add a special character or number to the beginning of your name.

### Naming your files

Although file names are less important than your URL name to search engine rankings, they can make a difference. Keep alphabetical hierarchy in mind when naming your files, especially when optimizing for smaller search engines. Many small engines prioritize alphabetical hierarchy.

**Example:** If you have a choice between naming a file "puppyfood.html" or "food\_for\_puppies.html," choose the one closer to the beginning of the alphabet. As with your URL name, you may want to add a special character or number to the beginning of file names.

### HTML Title

Keep alphabetical priority in mind when creating a title for your site. Since many search engines use sites' HTML titles in their results listings, alphabetical priority can be as much of a factor here as in directory listings.

Start your title with something very close to the beginning of the alphabet, but **do not** use special characters and numbers in this case because directories' human editors may dislike it.

### **Key concepts**

When creating your pages' content, keep the following four concepts in mind:

1. **Keyword prominence**
2. **Proximity**
3. **Density**
4. **Frequency.**

### **Keyword Prominence**

The best place-to-place keywords in the text are at the **top of each page**, preferably the main page. The closer your keywords are to the start of the page or the start of a sentence, the better. This concept is known as "keyword prominence." You will frequently see it used to describe search engines' algorithms.

### **Keyword Proximity**

Some engines, such as Google, use the concept of "keyword proximity" as part of their ranking formulas. As suggested by the name, "keyword proximity" means the **how close keywords are to each other**. Put your keywords as close together as possible and make sure your sentences are clear.

### **Keyword Density**

This concept, also known as keyword weight, measures the **relationship of keywords to other text**.

*i.e., Requires a higher percentage of keywords in relationship to other text on a web page.*

Keyword density is almost never this high. **The recommended density is 3-7%**. Meaning your keyword should repeat 3-7 times for every 100 words.

### **Keyword Frequency**

Keyword frequency is a measure of the number of times keywords occur within a page's text. It is tied to the concept of keyword density. Search engines want to see more than one repetition of a keyword in your text to make sure it is not an isolated case. The recommended repetition is 3-7 times.

### **Analyze Link Popularity**

Find out how many links your competition has. Identify your weak areas and refocus your search engine placement efforts.

### **Look at URL Name and Alphabetical Placement**

See if your competitor has keywords in his URLs. If so, find out whether his rankings get a boost based on alphabetical hierarchy. Set realistic goals for yourself by examining these factors.

Once you have analyzed your competition's pages for all of the above factors, you will have some ideas about how to beat them. Do not copy your competitors' HTML code, but do use their techniques if it will help your site. For example, if you figure out one of your competitors is scoring high on Hotbot because of how their use of Meta tags, you can focus on refining your Meta tags for Hotbot. *(To optimize for each search engine individually, create doorway pages.)*

## META TAGS - USING THE META DESCRIPTION TAGS

The Meta description tag describes your site's content, giving search engines' spiders an accurate summary filled with multiple keywords.

**Note:** Meta tags are hidden in a document's source, invisible to the reader. Some search engines, however, are able to incorporate the content of Meta tags into their algorithms. No engines penalize sites that use Meta tags properly, so it is recommended that you always include them.

**The Meta description tag is especially important** because it is the only tag supported by some engines, such as Excite.

Here's an example of a Meta description tag:

```
<title>Logo Design, Corporate Identity and Name Branding by Global Logo Design</title>
```

```
<meta name="robots" content="FOLLOW" >
```

```
<meta name="revisit-after" content="10" >
```

```
<meta name="Rating" content="General" >
```

```
<meta name="Language" content="en" >
```

```
<meta name="distribution" content="Global" >
```

```
<meta name="Copyright" content="©1995-2001 JSA, Global Millennia Marketing" >
```

```
<meta name="Classification" content="Business" >
```

```
<meta name="description" content="Logo Design, Corporate Identity and Name Branding by Global Logo Design" >
```

```
<META NAME="KEYWORDS" CONTENT="Logo Design, Corporate Identity,Name Branding,Branding,Global Logo Design " >
```

A Meta description tag can boost your rankings on some engines. Another reason the Meta description tag is important is that some engines use it as a site's summary on their results pages. If they do, the **reader may actually see this hidden tag**. Make sure its contents are enticing to the reader.

### Keywords in the Meta Description Tag

The Meta description tag should contain multiple keywords organized in a logical sentence. Place the keywords at the beginning of your description and close to each other to achieve the best possible rankings.

### The Length of the Meta Description Tag

Search engines vary in their preferred size for Meta tags. The iWon search engine, or Anzwers.co.au, accepts a Meta description tag up to 250 characters long, while HotBot specifies 150 characters as its guideline. Try to use the smaller number, 150 characters, for your site. Never make your Meta tag more than 250 characters long because some results pages will cut it off.

**Optimization Strategy**

If you search for the keywords "search engine rankings" you will receive hundreds of pages, many containing information on how to improve your rankings in search engines' databases or how to get listed. Y

You probably also will receive lots of e-mail from companies offering search engine optimization services.

It is important to choose your optimization strategy wisely. If you're too reckless, you can be blacklisted for spamming. That's correct, your site could be excluded from an engine's index because of inappropriate behaviour! And since approximately 85% of Web users find sites through search engines, being blacklisted is serious. How can you avoid this?

Listen to what search engines are trying to tell you. Read their criteria for listing. By knowing what factors search engines use to rank your pages, you can focus your efforts and achieve top rankings without resorting to Spam.

Remember, competitive analysis is all about focusing your efforts. Do not worry about tinkering with your code for any search engines where you hold a Top 10 position. Work on improving your standing with search engines that do not rank you as highly.

---

## DOORWAY PAGES FOR SEARCH ENGINES

---

If you understand how the various search engines compose their rankings, you will be able to optimize your pages for higher rankings. You can improve your site's HTML to please the search engines, but that may only get you so far. Doorway pages take optimization to the next level.

### Doorway Pages?

Doorway pages are pages especially optimized for one search engine and 1-3 keywords. They are also known as "gateway," "bridge," "entry," "jump" or "supplemental" pages. You can achieve higher search engine rankings by tailoring doorway pages to conform to each engine's unique ranking formula.

Doorway pages stand on their own, separate from the rest of a site. They usually feature a logo, some text and a link that encourages visitors to enter the site proper.

Doorway pages provide webmasters with an opportunity to rank high for any keyword with any search engine. They are a must for sites with content that's typically overlooked by search engines, such as frames, dynamic content, multimedia files and large graphics. But other sites can benefit from doorway pages as well.

Doorway pages have received a bad name from webmasters who created thousands of them loaded with Meta refresh tags, invisible keywords and same text. If your site does not employ these Spam elements, the majority of search engines will not penalize you for using a moderate number of **'relevant'** doorway pages.

Recently certain search engines began penalizing sites using several nearly identical pages. Since all doorway pages contain basically the same text, some sites using them were blacklisted as Spammers. To ensure this does not happen, be sure to vary the text on your doorway pages. **Do not just substitute keywords** from one page to the next; vary sentences and the size of each page. The most effective long-term solution is to create Doorway pages with unique content.

### Creating Effective Doorway Pages

Effective doorway pages use only 1-3 keywords each. If you use more, your pages' effect will be diluted. Select your three most important keywords and optimize them for the top 5 search engines. Do not overdo - too many doorway pages can be easily detected and banned.

*Beware of any search engine optimization service that promises to create 20 or more doorway pages without first asking how many total pages your site has.*

Even though you will need to study each search engine's ranking formulas before creating its unique doorway page, there are certain guidelines you are required to follow for all such pages. You may not know yet whether you will need to use Meta or ALT tags, but you always need to pay attention to three elements:

1. **Keyword Frequency** - This is a measure of the number of times a keyword is repeated in a page.
2. **Keyword Weight/Density** - This refers to the percentage of keywords in relation to all the other words in a page. The higher the percentage, the better.
3. **Keyword Prominence** - Place keywords at the top of your page and the beginning of a sentence.

### **A Doorway for Every Engine**

To provide search engines what they want, you need to know what that is. If you aren't familiar with the different elements search engines consider when composing their rankings, review them here:

- **Keyword placement**
- **HTML title**
- **Meta tags**
- **ALT tags**
- **Link popularity**
- **URL names**

You will require extensive knowledge of each major search engine to create successful doorway pages. Any statistics you find will be useful in this stage. Analyzing other sites in your field may also help you strategize.

A series of tables as listed below are provided in the Appendix and provide all the necessary current information to optimize for each of the top engines.

1. **What search engines want** - This table was compiled from search engines' Help and FAQ pages. It provides the latest information about tactics you can use on each engine without being penalized for Spam.
2. **Search engine statistics** - This table tells how each of the major search engines ranks sites.
3. **Search engine partnerships** - This table provides information on services used by major search engines and directories. Learn to whom you should submit and create better doorway pages.

### **Never Use Doorway Pages for Directories**

Directories, which use human editors to review web sites, frown on doorway pages. You risk being blacklisted if you submit a doorway page to a directory.

Since meeting the specifications of all the search engines at once is practically impossible, let optimized doorway pages do the job. The table in the Annex provides comprehensive information about the major search engines. It even includes the number of characters that should be included in some tags.

*Important: All search engines use keyword frequency, proximity and weight in their algorithms. The "keywords" section in this table only highlights additional specifications.*

### **Submit New Links to Search Engines**

Every search engine assesses your link popularity by looking at the sites in its own database. Each engine's database is unique, so for your link popularity score with a given engine to be high, that engine must index all sites linking to you. Though you may have 1,000 links in AltaVista's database, if you have only 100 in Google's then Google will rank you accordingly.

Search engines will not automatically know every time you develop a new link. Since link popularity is search-engine specific, you need to make sure sites linking to you are indexed by every engine. Submit pages with links to your site to search engines so they can be indexed and start affecting your link popularity. You may want to ask permission from the sites first.

## **DIRECTORIES**

Directories are often confused with search engines, but actually they are completely different. Instead of using spiders to crawl the web, directories such as Yahoo!, LookSmart and Open Directory Project have real people who review and index their links. They also require web sites to adhere to rigid guidelines in order to be included in their indexes. As a result, directories' indexes tend to contain a comparatively small number of high-quality links.

The factors that influence search engine rankings simply do not apply to directory rankings. Instead, directory editors look at the quality of a site: its functionality, content and design. That means that webmasters hoping to see their sites listed on directories have to use very different strategies than for search engine placement.

### **Submitting to Directories**

Directories are different. People often confuse directories and search engines, thinking they are the same. This is not true. Search engines use spiders or robots to index web sites, while directories use people. Directories tend to have smaller but cleaner indexes.

**Yahoo!, LookSmart, Open Directory Project (ODP), NBCi and Ask Jeeves are the top directories.**

Directory editors do not look at sites' HTML code or link popularity; they are only interested in content. Therefore, you can **submit your site to directories before** you optimize your HTML code. Your site **does** need to be fully functional, well designed and feature valuable content to be listed.

When it comes to directory submissions, forget about software and web-based submission applications and do it yourself. You will need to choose an appropriate category for your site and write a description of it,

neither of which can be done by software. Many directories will only give you **one chance to submit your site**. Use it wisely.

### **Will Your Web Site be Accepted?**

Directory editors reject sites they consider to be of poor quality. Yahoo! is the toughest directory to get into; some sources claim it only accepts about 5% of all submissions. To increase your chances, avoid common mistakes.

Things that will get you rejected:

- **Temporary sites (submit these only to "announcement" categories)**
- **"Under Construction" areas**
- **Dead links**
- **Sites with little content or nothing but lists of links**

Doorway pages (though helpful for search engine optimization, these should never be created for directories)

Things that will get you in:

- **Fast-loading, well-designed pages**
- **Useful content (articles, instructions, tutorials)**
- **Full functionality**
- **Interactivity and a pleasant user experience**
- **An appropriate category and description**

---

## IS YOUR WEB SITE LINK POPULAR?

---

A growing number of search engines use link popularity in their ranking algorithms. Google uses it as its most important factor in ranking sites. HotBot, AltaVista, MSN, Lycos, Northern Light, Inktomi, Excite and others also use link popularity in their formulas. Eventually every major engine will use link popularity, so developing and maintaining it are essential to your search engine placement.

Link popularity can do a lot for your site. Not only will many search engines rank you higher, but links from other sites will also drive more traffic to you.

Link popularity is much more than a measure of how many links point to a site. Search engines use far more sophisticated formulas to gauge how popular sites are. In general, however, link popularity is measured by the following three factors:

Although lots of irrelevant links are less effective than a few relevant ones, they are better than nothing. Inktomi, a company that provides search results to engines like HotBot, still values the number of links more than anything else.

**Relevance** - Search engines prioritize incoming links from pages that are relevant to the page in question. For example, if you sell puppy food, a link from a dog food supplier can boost your rankings more than one from, say, your sister's gardening site.

**Link Text** - The text used to describe a link can also affect your rankings. These three links could all point to the same URL but use different text:

1. [SearchEngines.com](#)
2. [Search Engine Resources](#)
3. [Click here](#)

Search engines' spiders figure that any words other sites use to describe your site are particularly relevant. So, if lots of sites linking to you use keywords in their link text, search engines will boost your ranking for those keywords.

There are many ways to improve your link popularity. Perhaps the most effective method is a link popularity campaign, but this can be time-consuming and complicated if you do not have a clear plan of action.

### What Can I Do to Increase my Link Popularity?

The best way to increase link popularity is through a linking campaign. Other tactics of boosting link popularity, such as "Free-for-All" sites and exchange programs, have pros and cons. We outline them below.

**Warning:** Some search engines, such as Google, say that FFA sites are an artificial and illegitimate way to increase link popularity. Google considers "link farms" Spam, and may ban your site for participating in an FFA or link exchange program.

### Developing links

"Free-for-All" sites are created to capture your e-mail address and offer you a link in return. You can choose a category for your link. Most of the tools that submit to FFA sites submit to more than one, but that doesn't necessarily increase your link popularity.

Although links from "Free-for-All" sites aren't particularly relevant (see our discussion of link relevancy), you can control the link's text. Most FFA sites will use your own description of your site as the text of their links. The descriptions you provide to such sites should contain several keywords. They do not even have to be in the form of a sentence.

One downside to FFA links is that they are temporary. These sites receive new links all the time, and your link will quickly be superseded by new submissions. If you plan on using FFA sites, resubmit often, daily, if possible. Also consider submitting the URL of the FFA page containing your link to search engines to make sure the new link is indexed.

Another downside to FFA links is their poor quality. Most search engines use sophisticated formulas to evaluate links between sites. For an overview of the factors that determine link popularity, see our article on the subject.

Finally, since FFA sites are in the business of gathering e-mail addresses, whatever address you provide will be deluged with confirmation messages and Spam. If this is a price you're willing to pay, create a new e-mail box just for FFA submissions. It allows you to delete the contents every morning without having to sort through junk email.

*Note: Some search engines, such as Google, disapprove of FFA sites.*

### Exchange Programs

Exchange programs are comprised of webmasters who agree to link to one another. As a new member, you will be asked to upload pages of links to your server. About once a week or so you will receive new pages with links to new users.

If you enter an exchange program, **pick one that groups its links into categories**, thus improving link quality. The more specific the category, the better. Find an exchange program that allows you to place your site in a category related to your business. However, we do not recommend becoming a part of a link exchange program because of a possible ban.

The downside of exchange programs is that they oblige you to link to them on your site. **Many will request a link from your home page.** This link can be either text or a graphic, but in either case it can make your site look less professional.

If you do not wish to have a link in the middle of your home page, look for a way to hide it. Create an invisible link by using the same colour for the link and the rest of the text, or make the link a one-pixel-square image. For specifications, refer to the exchange program's guidelines.

Although exchange programs can be more permanent than FFA sites, they are no longer effective. Search engines consider exchange programs "artificial link popularity" and may even ban your web site for participating in such a program.

### **Relationships with Other Webmasters**

Many webmasters choose to develop high-quality links through simple arrangements with each other. If you know of a company that is related to your business, contact its Webmaster with an offer for a reciprocal link.

When you send another Webmaster a link request or reciprocal linking offer, let him know what you would like your link to say. We suggest including a piece of HTML code in your e-mail such as the following:

```
<a href="http://www.yoursite.com">Your Keywords</a>
```

Avoid using images as links from other sites. Not all engines index ALT tags, and the use of an image can mean giving up keywords. If you do decide to use an image, ask that a text description be placed at the bottom.

### **Using ALT tags**

You have a good-looking web site. You have a variety of images, including one containing your business name, logo and slogan. Is this sufficient?

Though your site may look fine, it may not be optimized to score high with search engines. Since search engines do not index images, they will not index any text your web site presents in image format, in this case the above-mentioned business name and slogan. To resolve this problem, there are ALT tags, which are basically **images' descriptions**.

**Always add ALT tags to your images** to ensure search engines recognize all the content on your site. ALT tags filled with keywords can also be used to boost your keyword frequency and help you achieve better rankings.

Use an ALT tag to describe every single image on your site. If you use text in an image, use the same text in the tag.

Try to include important keywords in your ALT text. That way, when a search engine spiders your site, it may give you a higher ranking for those keywords. At the very least, use ALT tags for the top images on your page, since the top of the page is particularly significant to search engines.

Here's an example of an ALT tag:

```

```

ALT tag text should be in the form of a sentence rather than a list. There are all sorts of situations in which users see them -- and not just the 25% who use text-only browser settings. Readers see ALT text when they mouse over images and while images are loading.

### **The Limits of ALT Tags**

ALT tags are an excellent way to deal with images, but they are not the solution. Not all search engines are capable of reading ALT tags. Engines such as Excite, Inktomi and Northern Light do not pay attention to them, so you need another way to indicate the content of your images. On the positive side, however, none of the engines will penalize you for using ALT tags.

If your site has extensive graphics, consider creating an all-text version. Also, if you have a graphic with a link, always provide a description of the link below. You will gain a broader audience and make your site easier for search engines' spiders to index.

**Note:** *ALT tags also make your site more accessible to visually impaired people using text readers. That's because text readers cannot read images, but can detect text in ALT tags.*

---

## SUBMISSION TO MAJOR SEARCH ENGINES AND DIRECTORIES

---

Web Site submission is the process of bringing your site to the attention of search engines and directories. It is the next step after optimization in search engine positioning.

By submitting your site to search engines, you will dramatically improve your likelihood of being indexed by them.

Site submission is the process of suggesting a site to a search engine. Usually you fill out a form telling the search engine's spider to visit and index the suggested site. Submitting your site greatly improves the likelihood that it will appear in users' search results.

As previously discussed, search engines all use different formulas for indexing and ranking sites. Each one considers a multitude of factors in devising its own unique formula. To score high with search engines you must have optimized, or modified your site's HTML code and other features the engines consider when composing their rankings. You should never submit a site without optimizing first. If you have already submitted your non-optimized site, you can resubmit later.

### SUBMIT TO WHOM?

After optimization, it is time to submit your site. We recommend submitting to all the major search engines, since about 90% of search-engine-generated traffic comes from 15-20 search sites. View a list of major search engines and their submission pages in the Appendix.

Do not rely on search engines to index your site on their own. It may be months before an engine's spider crawls out to take a look at you. Search engines have their hands full indexing sites that have requested their attention and your competition is probably one of them.

Even if your site has been around for a while, it may be time to resubmit. If you have made changes to your content or simply want to rank higher in search engines' results, you need to make sure they have the best possible picture of your site.

Review our comprehensive tables in the Annex to find details of major search engines' submission forms and guidelines. Understand what to do if a search engine uses outsourced results from DirectHit, LookSmart or Inktomi.

You can also submit your site to country-specific or topical search engines for targeted results.

### HOW DO I SUBMIT

Top search engines have standard forms for site suggestions. A link to a search engine's submission form can usually be found on its home page labelled "Add a site" or "Suggest a URL." Use our table in the Appendix to find links to all the major sites' submission forms organized in one place.

Submission forms will usually ask you for a URL, your e-mail address, your site's name and the category it fits into. Whenever you fill out a submission form, double-check to make sure you specified the right URL to be spidered.

It is helpful to keep records of the date, time and outcome of each of your submissions. You may need this information if you have to send follow-up email to a search engine's staff.

Search engines with automated submission forms aren't the only types of search sites out there. Directories and pay-per-click engines can increase traffic to your site as well.

*Learn to understand the difference between search engines and directories, take advantage of pay-per-click search sites and use manual submission to improve your placement with top engines.*

There are many software programs and web applications out there that will submit your site to hundreds or even thousands of search engines. But when it comes to the top search sites, we recommend submitting **manually**.

### **Why Submit Manually?**

Since major search engines account for over 90% of search-engine-generated traffic, they are too important to leave to an automated procedure.

Some search engines, such as Northern Light and more recently Alta Vista, do not allow automated submissions.

Directories require manual submission (you will need to suggest a category and a description)

*N.B. A guide to major search engines' submission forms can be found in the Annex at the end of this document.*

### **SEARCH ENGINES VS. DIRECTORIES**

Although optimizing your site for search engines is complicated, the submission process is relatively straightforward. Usually you only need to provide a URL and an e-mail address. Directories, on the other hand, expect you to:

- **Find the appropriate category for your site**
- **Write a site description**
- **Provide a URL and an e-mail address**

Nonetheless, since you do not have to worry about all the technicalities involved in HTML optimization to submit to directories, you should probably approach them first.

## PAYING SEARCH ENGINES FOR RANKINGS

"Pay-Per-Click" search engines allow participating sites to pay for high rankings in their results. GoTo.com, one of the Web's top 10 search engines, is a noted pay-per-click site.

To be listed by a pay-per-click search engine, you choose a few relevant keywords and the amount you're willing to pay for each click-through from that engine. When a user enters a keyword, the search engine lists sites in order of how much they agreed to pay for that keyword.

### All Search Engines are Different

It is not only their ranking formulas. Search engines also differ in how they index sites. Some engines may take three weeks, while others need three months. Use our site submission table in the Annex to guide you in your submission decisions, from how many pages to submit per engine to when to resubmit.

## SUBMITTING TO DIRECTORIES

People often confuse directories and search engines, thinking they are the same. This is not true. Search engines use spiders or robots to index web sites, while directories use people. Directories tend to have smaller but cleaner indexes.

**Yahoo! LookSmart, Open Directory Project (ODP), NBCi and Ask Jeeves are the top directories.**

Directory editors do not look at sites' HTML code or link popularity -- they are only interested in content. Therefore, you can **submit your site to directories before** you optimize your HTML code. Your site **does** need to be fully functional, well designed and feature valuable content to be listed.

When it comes to directory submissions, forget about software and web-based submission applications and do it your self. You will need to choose an appropriate category for your site and write a description of it, neither of which can be done by software. Many directories will only give you **one chance to submit your site**. Use it wisely.

### Will Your Web Site be Accepted?

Directory editors reject sites they consider to be of poor quality. Yahoo! is the toughest directory to get into; some sources claim it only accepts about 5% of all submissions. To increase your chances, avoid common mistakes.

#### Why You Will Be Rejected:

- **Temporary sites (submit these only to "announcement" categories)**
- **"Under Construction" areas**
- **Dead links**
- **Sites with little content or nothing but lists of links**

Doorway pages (though helpful for search engine optimization, these should never be created for directories)

**Why You Will Be Accepted:**

- Fast-loading, well-designed pages
- Useful content (articles, instructions, tutorials)
- Full functionality
- Interactivity and a pleasant user experience
- An appropriate category and description

**EXPRESS SUBMISSIONS**

Yahoo! And LookSmart both require commercial sites to use their paid submission programs. These programs can also help speed up the review process for non-commercial sites.

**1) Yahoo! Business Express**

- Cost: \$199, \$600 for adult sites
- Review within 7 business days
- Doesn't guarantee inclusion in the directory
- No refund if the site is rejected
- Yahoo! chooses appropriate category
- Required for commercial sites

**2) LookSmart Express Submit**

- Cost: \$199
- Review within 48 hours
- Doesn't guarantee inclusion in the directory
- No refund if the site is rejected
- Choice of one category
- Express or Basic Submit waived only for non-profits

### 3) LookSmart Basic Submit

- Cost: \$99
- Review within 8 weeks
- Doesn't guarantee inclusion in the directory
- No refund if the site is rejected
- Choice of one category
- Express or Basic Submit waived only for non-profits

**Important:** It may take weeks before LookSmart's partners -- including **MSN, AltaVista, iWon, Excite and Netscape** -- update their directories.

### PAY-PER-CLICK SEARCH ENGINES

Pay-per-click search engines allow companies to bid on keywords that relate to their sites. Companies submit their site's descriptions and titles, along with a list of keywords to the engine. They also specify the amount of money that they are willing to spend on each keyword.

After a pay-per-click search engine processes the company's request, their results start showing up when someone searches for a keyword that the company paid for. Depending on how much money others paid, rankings for a particular keyword may be very high or low.

For example, if you choose to pay \$.20 for the keyword "puppy food," while others pay only \$.19, your site would rank first. If, on the other hand, you pay \$.02, you may rank low.

For most pay-per-click engines, **companies pay only when a visitor clicks on their web site from the search results (click through)**. Most engines specify a minimum amount of money needed for a company to open an account.

#### Are the Results Irrelevant?

Many think that paid rankings will decrease the relevance of search results by allowing any site with money to rank high for any keyword. Pay-per-click engines understand that they will lose searchers, and eventually advertisers, with irrelevant results, and therefore, make relevance a priority. However, pay-per-click engines will provide results with commercial, not informational information. **Relevance does not guarantee the quality of the site.**

**Many pay-per-click engines utilize editors to review incoming requests for bidding.** These editors are responsible for making sure that the submitted keywords relate to the site's content.

Pay-per-click engines, however, are mostly commercial. Most non-for-profits do not have the resources for advertising. As a searcher, **choose another search engine if you're looking for non-commercial information.** Non-profit organizations should think twice before bidding at a pay-per-click search engine. Chances are their audience will not be using it.

**Should I use pay-per-click engines?**

This decision is individual for every company. You should check keywords and prices for your site before answering this question.

Pay-per-click engines may prove to be cheap advertising for your web site. The most popular pay-per-click engine, GoTo.com is one of the Top 10 search engines. GoTo.com attracts many searchers and advertisers. Since search engine optimization may be a long, expensive and fruitless process for some sites, GoTo.com presents a perfect opportunity for a high ranking on a Top 10 search engine. Traffic generated by pay-per-click engines is usually more targeted than from other engines (this is because webmasters can control keywords they are found under).

Another benefit of pay-per-click engines is instant traffic. Achieving high rankings may take a long time, but with pay-per-click engines people find you immediately after you set up your account and your bidding request is approved.

**HOW TO CHOOSE A SUBMISSION SERVICE**

Submitting your web site manually to top search engines may sound like a good idea... if it has five pages. If your web site is large, manual submission will take too much time. Deep submit (submitting every page to each engine) will mean that to submit only ten pages to top ten search engines, you will need to do 100 submissions!

Choosing the right service or software for your site submission will save you time and ensure comprehensive submission. We at Global Millennia Marketing can certainly help you with all your web site needs including web site optimization and search engine submission services.

*Manual submission to top search engines is still recommended for the home page and other pages that you think will score high.*

**What Should I Consider When Choosing a Service?****Your Budget.**

If your marketing budget allows it, choose a service where people that specialize in search engine optimization and submission will do the submissions for you.

**Your Preferences.**

Choose what you're most comfortable with. Some people prefer the ease of online submissions, while others like the security of software programs.

**Search Engines and Others.**

Look for services that will promote your site to top and country-specific search engines. You may also want to pick a service that submits to thousands of small search engines, or you may want to go with only the most important ones. Never use software or online services that submit to directories. A service that allows you to choose which search engines should be included can be very beneficial.

You may also want a service to allow submissions to link pages, award sites, classifieds, etc.

**Deep Submit.**

If your software is asking you for the URL of every single page, you may as well do manual submission. Choose services that will spider your site automatically (either from the web or your computer). This will save you time and make sure that every page is submitted. Check how many URLs are allowed for each service.

**Deep Submission**

Search engines claim their spiders follow all the links in the sites they visit, indexing every page linked to the home page. But many submission gurus debate this statement. To be safe, it is a good idea to submit every page in your site independently, a practice known as deep submission.

Deep submission ensures that all your pages will be indexed. However, since many sites consider the practice of submitting numerous pages each day to be Spam, use the table in the Annex at the end of this document to determine how many pages you can safely submit per day.

Search engines often make their URL submission pages difficult to find. To make your life easier, we created a list of search engines (see Annex) to which you should submit manually, and their "URL suggestion" pages.

If you'd like to learn more about each engine, check out our information tables in the Annex.

- [What search engines want - Compiled from search engines' FAQ or Help pages](#)
- [Search engine information - Exact information for major search engines](#)
- [Partnerships - What technology does each engine use?](#)

**Final Checklist**

You have been hard at work optimizing your pages. Use this checklist to see if you have forgotten anything:

- **HTML Title** - Your title contains properly placed keywords
- **Meta tags** - You use the meta description and keyword tags on every page
- **Keyword prominence, density, proximity, frequency** - You use your keywords correctly within your pages
- **Keywords in the URL or file names** - You name your files with keywords
- **ALT tags** - You have got a way for search engines to recognize what's in your images
- **Link popularity** - You have addressed this increasingly important ranking factor
- **Themes** - You have given your pages a consistent theme
- **Design** - You have made your site fast, pleasant, clean and easy to navigate
- **No Spam or frames** - You have avoided tactics that search engines frown upon

**Continue Optimizing**

Search engine algorithms change all the time. AltaVista could decide tomorrow that it will prioritize pages using a new Meta tag, requiring you to optimize your site again. If you want to keep your high rankings, you have got to keep up with search engines' policies. Check back with us often for the most frequent updates.

You should also analyze your high-ranking competitors' techniques and apply them when you can. Finally, stay on top of search engines' Spam policies.

*Remember! Search engines algorithms change all the time.*

---

## SEARCH ENGINE POSITION MONITORING

---

For a web master or web site promoter, monitoring is the process of tracking a site's traffic or search engine positioning in order to gauge the effect of current marketing strategies and develop new ones.

Although sites can be monitored at any point after they launch, it is particularly important to monitor your site after you have optimized it and submitted it to search engines or conducted any other type of marketing campaign.

The following outlines basic web site monitoring in search engines. It is divided into two categories: search engine positioning and web traffic.

### SEARCH ENGINE POSITION MONITORING

Search engine position monitoring is the process of tracking a web site's rankings with search engines. After optimizing and submitting your web site to the search engines, you hope for high rankings that will increase traffic to your site. Check your rankings to tell if your optimization worked, or if you need to analyze your competition and redesign your site.

You should start monitoring your rankings about **two months after your submissions**. Search engines need time to index your site.

#### Monitoring Options:

1. **Manual** - You can check your rankings by visiting every engine, typing in your keywords, and looking for your site.
2. **Software** - There are paid and free programs that will check your site's rankings for specified keywords.
3. **Web-based** - You can use one of the numerous web applications to check your rankings, usually for a limited number of keywords at a time.
4. **Hire Consultants**- Companies such as Global Millennia Marketing that specializes in search engine optimization and submission usually include position monitoring as a part of their service packages.

Position monitoring is important. Search engines have different ranking formulas. This means that your pages can score high for one engine while scoring low with an engine that focuses on other criteria. When you monitor your rankings, you find out which search engines look at your pages favourably and which do not.

This knowledge can prove to be highly valuable and save time. If you already rank high with some engines, do not alter your pages in an attempt to improve rankings on other engines. Create doorway pages (as previously discussed) for those search engines.

Search engines change their ranking formulas often. Your competition is working hard to achieve a Top 20 ranking. What does this mean? **Your search engine rankings may fall unexpectedly!**



Search engine position monitoring ensures that your rankings are current by alerting you when your site's position drops. This will help you make timely web site submissions and re-optimize, when necessary.

Search engine position monitoring and web traffic analysis should help you tailor your search engine optimization efforts and other web marketing campaigns.

Search engines remain an important part of online marketing. Used in conjunction with your other on-line and traditional marketing endeavours should increase the number of potential customers who can view your products and services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Now all you have to do is handle the increase in business!

---

## ABOUT GLOBAL MILLENNIA MARKETING

---

**Global Millennia Marketing Inc.** is one of the first of a new breed of integrated Internet marketing communications companies and is comprised of four on-line divisions. Our ability to work closely at all levels optimizes synergy between the different divisions from the strategic planning stage right through to tactical execution of all our projects.



John Shenton B.Eng., President of Global Millennia Marketing, is a dynamic, adaptable and results driven Senior Executive with many years experience in building and operating companies in N. America & Europe, creating market presence and increasing sales throughout domestic and International markets worldwide.

His strong technical and analytical background is supported by comprehensive sales, marketing, operational, and general management skills in the computer, Internet and telecommunication industry.

He has a great deal of International experience, having lived and worked within the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland and Canada.

established corporations.

As the use of New Digital Media such as the Internet, CD-ROM's, DVD's, increases, the importance of coordinating its use with traditional printed media becomes paramount. We are uniquely placed to address this need, having evolved from genuine specialists in both fields. We work with our clients to develop effective, long-term partnerships, which encompass every facet of the management and marketing functions, from initial project consulting through creative design and production, to corporate presentation management.

Our teams have many years' industrial experience in the fields of Sales & Marketing, Finance and Information Technology in North America, Europe and Asia. This background allows us to quickly empathize with our clients to understand their markets, their objectives and to identify their business needs. Through strategic planning and the creative application of our skills and experience, we deliver effective total marketing communications solutions, which meet, and typically exceed, their pre-defined goals and expectations.

Operations are controlled from Montreal, Canada. From here we are able to provide service on a global basis in English, French, Chinese and Arabic to a diverse range of companies from start-up to



Integrated Internet Marketing & Web Site Design



Graphics, Identities, Illustrations and Branding



A leading Internet Solution Provider



Consulting, Promotion and Planning

## APPENDIX

## REQUIREMENTS FOR TOP SEARCH ENGINES

Search Engine	Keywords	Location of Keywords	Document Length	HTML Title	Meta tags	Themes	What's spam?	Other info
<b>AltaVista Search Engine</b>	Only the first two occurrences are indexed, use in <title> and top of the page	Top of the page, <h> tags	Longer pages favoured, 600-900 words	Most important keywords here, 300 characters, short titles preferred	Not very important, but use them just in case	Yes, consistent keywords throughout the site	Repetition of keywords one after the other, meta refresh tags, invisible text, identical pages, excessive submissions.	Repeat keywords in files names. Use keywords in text links.
<b>Excite</b>	Higher frequency than usual in body text - 7%	<h> tags, <style> tags, top of the page	Medium-sized pages, 200-300 words	Keywords here, multiple titles recommended, 6 words or less	Not indexed, description used for summary only	Yes, consistent keywords throughout the site.	Repetition of keywords one after the other, meta refresh tags, nearly identical pages, invisible text	Repeat keywords in files names, use comment tags
<b>Google Search Engine</b>	Weight and proximity matter most	<h> tags, bold text	Wide range, from 50-600 words.	Keywords here, up to 90 characters	No	Yes, consistent keywords throughout the site	Use of link farms, cloaking, excessive repetition	Link popularity is the most important factor
<b>HotBot Search Engine</b>	Frequency and weight in the body are most important	URL text and title	Short, 100-250 words	Most important, keywords here, up to 105 characters	Very important, both description (150 characters) and keywords (75 characters)	Yes, consistent keywords throughout the site.	Repetition of keywords one after the other, meta refresh tags, nearly identical pages, invisible text, irrelevant keywords, too many submissions	Use keywords when describing links, and naming files
<b>iWon Search Engine</b>	Keywords should be in title, body and meta tags	Throughout the page	Short, 100-250 words	Up to 105 characters	Both are supported; description limited to 250, keywords to 1017	Yes, consistent keywords throughout the site.	No info available, should be similar to HotBot	iWon uses DirectHit and Inktomi. Site popularity counts.
<b>Lycos Search Engine</b>	Keywords spread throughout the page and in the title	Top of the page, <h> tags	Short, 100-250 words	Keywords here, second word, up to 1129 characters	Not indexed by Fast, but shows up in top rankings	Yes, consistent keywords throughout the site	Repetition of keywords one after the other, nearly identical pages, invisible text	Fast, which powers Lycos, seems OK with meta refreshes (for now) Not recommended Use ALT tags
<b>Northern Light Search Engine</b>	ALT, comment and meta tags aren't used. Frequency in the text is important.	Top of the page	Wide range, from 50-600 words.	Keywords here, 10-12 words	No	Yes, Northern Light does examine keywords in "context", meaning that keywords should be consistent	No Spam policy found on the site	Hidden text was found on some pages (not recommended)

**RANKING CRITERIA FOR MAJOR SEARCH ENGINES**

The following table provides a basic guide to some of the factors search engines weigh in ranking pages. It combines official information provided by the listed search engines with our own research. None of the recommendations below are considered to be Spam.

Search Engine	What's not indexed	Slow Pages play a role?	Content and location	HTML Title	Meta tags	Keyword Frequency	Link popularity	What it likes
AltaVista Search Engine	Registration pages, text in graphics and multimedia files (use Alt tags), XML, Java applets, comment tags, Acrobat files, Spammers	Yes	Very important, Top of the page	Very important, should be unique for every page	Not important, but should be included just in case	Not mentioned, but the best location is title and top of page	Important	Uncommon words, good navigation, plain HTML pages with text only, themes, inbound links and keywords in link text.
DMOZ Users: AOL, Netscape; AltaVista, HotBot, Google and Lycos directories	Spammers	Yes, considered poor design	Worthy of indexing as determined by editors, and in appropriate category	No, but the title filled in plays a role.	No, but the description and keywords filled in play a role.	No	Not important for DMOZ, but is Important, for some of its partners, who use Inktomi	Concise and accurate descriptions and keywords, choice of appropriate category
Excite	Not mentioned, but look at AltaVista, should be the same for all robots	Not mentioned	Home Page should have necessary keywords	Not mentioned, but seems to be a factor	Meta description is important other meta tags are not.	Not mentioned, but make sure they are all over your home page.	Important	Keywords on the front page, meta descriptions, themes
Google Search Engine	Not mentioned, see AltaVista for approximate guidelines; Spammers	Not mentioned	Keywords should be close to each other. Content should include keywords in text or links	Not mentioned, but seems to be a factor	No	Not mentioned	Very important, especially from relevant pages	Link popularity, keywords near each other, keywords in URLs and link text, themes
HotBot Search Engine	Frames, pages with cookie requirements, URLs with special characters (unless submitted through Inktomi's paid program) , Spammers.	Yes, pages can be dropped if a server is too slow	Ranks on the length of the document and frequency of keywords.	Most important	Very important, both description (150 characters) and keywords (75 characters)	Very important (standard requirements are 3-7%)	Important, uses Inktomi	Lack of stop words, meta tags, HTML titles, lots of keywords, link popularity, and click popularity (HotBot uses DirectHit)
iWon Search Engine	Spammers	Not mentioned	Keywords should be in title, body and meta tags	Important, should contain keywords	Both are supported; description limited to 250, keywords to 1017	Important, 4-12 times	Important, uses Inktomi	Site popularity, submit to LookSmart for directory entries, theme present throughout the site
LookSmart Directory	Pornography, violence, illegal sites; sites with few pages, or little quality, temporary sites, Spammers	Yes, may be excluded	Must be of high-quality, interesting, useful	No, but you can fill in a title, which can be edited	No, but you can fill in a description, which can be edited	No	Not important	Quality content and look, good functionality and interactivity. Since a part of LookSmart uses AltaVista. see that

								section as well
Lycos Search Engine	Spammers, URLs with special characters	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned, but seems to be a factor	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned, but seems to be a factor	Themes
MSN Search Engine	Spammers, frames - <noframes> tag needed	No	Not mentioned	Important, should contain keywords	Both are supported; description limited to 250, keywords to 1017	Important, 4-12 times	Important, uses Inktomi	Theme present throughout the site, site popularity, see LookSmart for directory submissions
Northern Light Search Engine	Alt tags, hidden or invisible text, Spammers.	Not mentioned	Ranks visible text on the page, important to have keywords in text and title.	Important, use keywords, up to 250 characters	No	Very important in the text (standard requirements are 3-7%)	Very important	Lots of links, lots of keywords in the text, uncommon keywords (common are of less importance).
NBCi Directory (formerly SNAP)	Spammers	Not mentioned	Worthy of indexing as determined by editors	No, but the title filled in plays a role, up to 128 characters	No, but the keywords and description filled in play a role, up to 255 for keywords	No, only 5 are allowed	Important, uses Inktomi	Concise and accurate descriptions and keywords, choice of appropriate category, click popularity
Yahoo Directory	Spammers	Yes, may be excluded	Worthy of indexing as determined by editors, and in appropriate category	No, but the title filled in plays a role. It should be condise	No, but the description and keywords filled in play a role.	No	Very important, uses Google	Concise and accurate descriptions and keywords, choice of appropriate category
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>What's not indexed</b>	<b>Slow Pages play a role?</b>	<b>Content and location</b>	<b>HTML Title</b>	<b>Meta tags</b>	<b>Keyword Frequency</b>	<b>Link popularity</b>	<b>What it likes</b>

**WHERE AND HOW TO SUBMIT**

Services such as Inktomi, DirectHit, LookSmart and ODP (Open Directory Project) have partner sites that utilize their search results or listings. We advise that you submit to these sites only once. All of their partners will be updated when you are indexed.

Search Engine	Submission Page	Best submit to:
<a href="#">AOL Search</a>	Find an appropriate category and submit to it	Inktomi and ODP
<a href="#">AltaVista</a>	<a href="http://www.altavista.com/cgi-bin/query?pg=addurl">http://www.altavista.com/cgi-bin/query?pg=addurl</a>	Altavista and LookSmart
<a href="#">AskJeeves</a>	E-mail URL and description to <a href="mailto:url@askjeeves.com">url@askjeeves.com</a>	AskJeeves
<a href="#">DirectHit</a>	<a href="http://www.directhit.com/util/addurl.html">http://www.directhit.com/util/addurl.html</a>	DirectHit
<a href="#">Excite</a>	<a href="http://www.excite.com/info/add_url_form">http://www.excite.com/info/add_url_form</a>	Excite and Looksmart
<a href="#">Google</a>	<a href="http://www.google.com/addurl.html">http://www.google.com/addurl.html</a>	Google and ODP
<a href="#">Hotbot</a>	<a href="http://hotbot.lycos.com/addurl.asp">http://hotbot.lycos.com/addurl.asp</a>	Inktomi, DirectHit and ODP
<a href="#">Inktomi</a>	submit via <b>one</b> of their partners. Anzwers.com is said to be the fastest: <a href="http://www.anzwers.com.au/cgi-bin/print_addurl.pl?">http://www.anzwers.com.au/cgi-bin/print_addurl.pl?</a>	Anzwers.co.au
<a href="#">iWon</a>	Submit to Inktomi	Inktomi, DirectHit, LookSmart
<a href="#">Lycos/Fast</a>	<a href="http://www.lycos.com/addasite.html">http://www.lycos.com/addasite.html</a>	Fast, DirectHit, ODP
<a href="#">LookSmart</a>	<a href="http://submit.looksmart.com/info.jhtml">http://submit.looksmart.com/info.jhtml</a>	LookSmart and Inktomi
<a href="#">MSN Search</a>	<a href="http://search.msn.com/addurl.asp">http://search.msn.com/addurl.asp</a>	MSN, Inktomi, DirectHit, LookSmart
<a href="#">Northern Light</a>	<a href="http://www.northernlight.com/docs/regurl_help.html">http://www.northernlight.com/docs/regurl_help.html</a>	Northern Light
<a href="#">Open Directory Project (ODP)</a>	Find an appropriate category and submit to it	ODP
<a href="#">NBCi</a>	Find an appropriate category and submit to it	NBCi and Inktomi
<a href="#">WebCrawler</a>	<a href="http://www.webcrawler.com/info/add_url/">http://www.webcrawler.com/info/add_url/</a>	Excite
<a href="#">Yahoo!</a>	Find an appropriate category and submit to it	Yahoo! and Google
Search Engine	Submission Page	Best submit to:

## HOW OFTEN?

Search engines vary in all sorts of ways -- they use different indexing formulas, require varying amounts of time to index sites, and apply different definitions of Spam. For example, Google allows webmasters to submit an unlimited number of pages per day, while AltaVista allows a maximum of five submissions per URL done manually.

The following table provides information about submitting your site to top search engines. It includes data gathered from search engines' help pages and the results of our own research.

Search Engine	Maximum pages allowed per day (for deep submission)	Time required for indexing (search engines' estimates)	Time required for indexing (our estimates)
<b>AltaVista</b>	5	28 days	1 month
<b>Excite</b>	25	2 weeks	2-3 weeks
<b>Google</b>	5	Not mentioned	3-4 weeks
<b>Hotbot</b>	50	3-7 weeks	3-8 weeks
<b>Lycos</b>	no limit*	Not mentioned	3-6 weeks
<b>Northern Light</b>	no limit*	About 6 weeks	3-6 weeks

It may take a while before search engines index you. Submit your site and wait patiently. If your rankings do not go up after two months, re-optimize and resubmit your site.

## AVOIDING SPAM

Apart from the well-known Spam technique of 'Unsolicited email' there are a few less obvious ways of spamming Search Engines. A few pointers are below indicating what to avoid.

- Do not tell directories your name is "@123acme" when your name is actually "Acme." You risk being rejected on the spot! Remember, human editors who can confirm your actual business name review directories.

- Be careful choosing keywords. If all your keywords do not relate to your sites content you risk being penalized for spam. Do not include "MP3" and "Pokemon" in your keyword list if you sell puppy food. Sure, it will drive up traffic temporarily, but it can also get your site rejected from important search engines.
- Do not be tempted to use tiny or invisible text to put keywords at the beginning of your pages. Search engines define this behaviour as Spam and can reject your site for it.
- Avoid repeating keywords more than 3-7 times in your Meta description. Some search engines consider it to be Spam.
- Search engines do not penalize for using ALT tags or even for packing them with keywords. Still, to be safe you should adhere to the generally accepted rule of not repeating keywords more than 3-7 times.
- Avoid FFA sites and link exchange programs.