

Search Engine Optimization Tips for Small Businesses

There are millions of web sites out there, and it's easy for a small business web site to get lost in the crowd. But there are ways to improve your search engine rankings and online visibility, so make sure you're doing everything you can to help customers and prospects find your site online. Here are some useful tips to help you build an online strategy and increase your rankings in the search engines:

1

Build a Search Engine-Friendly Web Site.

Avoid the stumbling blocks that cause the search engine spiders to skip over your site! Techniques such as frames-based structures, image-based pages and Flash web sites are invisible to the search engines, and can also cause slow download times for users. Make sure your site is built using only current, standards-based techniques and best-practices so that when the search engine spiders find your site, they can actually read (and index!) what's on it.

2

Optimize Your Web Site and Target Keywords.

Don't just guess which keywords you think people will use, do some keyword research and find out what searchers are actually using to find businesses like yours. Choose your keywords wisely, and use them throughout your entire site, making sure to optimize each page individually. Pay attention to keyword densities (how often keywords are used on a page), and use keywords in titles, headings, and links whenever possible. You can also use your keywords in your filenames, including image files. Also be sure to use meta data tags (like titles and descriptions) correctly in the HTML code of your pages.

3

Obtain Inbound Links from QUALITY Sites:

Search engines (especially Google) place a high value on the links from other web sites that point to your site, which are referred to as inbound links. Each link that points to your site is basically a "vote" for your site, but *only* if the link comes from a site that is credible or is related in some way to yours. If you have links from unrelated sites, low-quality sites, or link farms, you can be penalized or even banned by the search engines!

4

Monitor Your Progress Weekly or Monthly.

If you don't monitor your positions in the search engines, how will you know if you are on page 1 or page 1001, or if you show up at all? By monitoring your search engine rankings regularly, not only will you know if customers can find your business in the search engines, you will also know when to act or react to changes that occur from time to time. By keeping tabs on your positions, you can watch your rankings over time, and also take the steps necessary to stop any negative trends that could threaten your hard-earned rankings.

5

Add Fresh Content to Your Web Site Regularly.

Your web site isn't something that you can just cross off your to-do list once you take it live, you must regularly add fresh content and update the information on your site in order to have any chance of being ranked in the major search engines. Search engines thrive on fresh content, but if the content never changes, the search engine spiders will eventually stop visiting your site, assuming that it must not be very important if it's been left unattended or has gone "stale." Search engines strive to provide their users with the latest, most relevant information possible, and one of the ways they determine if a site is relevant is by looking at how often the web site gets updated or changed.



Five Sparrows, LLC

Web Sites & Marketing for Small Business

www.FiveSparrows.com

3889 Hartland Hills, Hartland, MI 48353

Phone: 810-923-1874

Fax: 810-746-0031

Email: sales@fivesparrows.com