

# FREE

## 10 STEP GUIDE TO SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION



### 1. UNDERSTAND YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

This is critical, as you will never meet your expectations if you don't know what they are! Write down a clear profile of the sort of web surfer you are looking to attract to your website. Think about their company, age, IT abilities and preferences.

**DO:** write this profile down before you continue!

**DON'T:** think you can appeal to every possible target group in your customer profile in one website

### 2. RESEARCH AND IDENTIFY YOUR KEY TERMS

Unless you have a totally obscure product or service keyword, you will not attract visitors searching for just 1 word. Instead write a list of short "key phrases" that you ideal customer would search for.

**DO:** focus on a list of about 10 key phrases of 2-6 words each

**DON'T:** try and compete for the obvious search terms that everybody in your industry is trying to reach (unless you are prepared to be disappointed for a long time!)

### 3. MONITOR THE NEWSGROUPS AND SEO FORUMS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SEO

Try the newsgroup [alt.internet.search-engines](mailto:alt.internet.search-engines) and the website [www.seochat.com](http://www.seochat.com). Here you will learn what professional SEO people think about the latest developments in this rapidly changing field. Have a good search through the back postings for answers to questions that previous "newbies" have asked.

**DO:** keep a regular (at least weekly) "eye" on the latest news in the SEO world

**DON'T:** ask basic questions on a newsgroup that you can find in previous postings – you will be abused or ignored by the regulars.

### 4. HAVE A WELL DESIGNED SITE WITH LOTS OF CONTENT

A good site that people will remember and bookmark will have lots of free useful information on your products, your company and useful tools for your industry. Make it aesthetically pleasing, easy to navigate and include lots of pictures.

**DO:** have as many pages as possible, & make it obvious how interested visitors should contact you with their inquiry.

**DON'T:** bother too much about image sizes, is your target audience using broadband?

### 5. OPTIMISE THE SITE

Be careful to optimise at least 1 page for each of your key phrases using techniques such as header tag highlighting, carefully constructed meta tags and most of all key phrase rich content!

**DO:** make navigation around your site easy for search engines –

**DON'T:** javascript, flash and frames – leave them for your competitors!

### 6. GET LISTED IN DIRECTORIES

Once you have an excellent site, only now is it time to tell the world about it! You must get entries in [www.dmoz.org](http://www.dmoz.org), [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) and as many others as you can find.

Try the newsgroups for current listing of directories that may be interested in listing your site, such as

<http://www.internet-search-engines-faq.com/submit-url-free-directory.shtml>

**DO:** be polite and patient with DMOZ editors, they are unpaid volunteers

**DON'T:** spend money on directory entries as there are a lot of scams about that aren't worth the money

### 7. OBTAIN AS MANY RECIPROCAL LINKS AS POSSIBLE

This is absolutely vital! Your google pagerank and ranking is heavily dependant on the number and quality of backlinks from other websites back to you. You must spend many hours patiently finding non conflicting, non competitive quality websites that already have reciprocal link programme in place, and email the webmaster for a reciprocal link.

**DO:** make sure the websites you link to are respectable and not blacklisted – start with <http://www.selfadhesivelabels.com/endorse.html> !

**DON'T:** join so called "link farms, as you will get your own website blacklisted!

### 8. MONITOR YOUR POSITIONS

Time to watch and wait. Do not expect a decent ranking in the important search engines for several months. Monitor your positions using the google toolbar or free online tools such as <http://www.digitalpoint.com/tools/keywords/>

**DO:** appreciate that SEO is part of a wider website promotion strategy, and include your new website in all your marketing material to your customers

**DON'T:** forget to keep abreast of SEO news (step 3) so you don't inadvertently fall foul of the latest change to the search engine algorithms

### 9. CONSTANTLY UPDATE THE WEBSITE

Dull websites that don't change get marked down by google. Keep your pages current, even if you can't immediately see the returns. Try for at least 2 updates a week, especially to the homepage

**DO:** include a "last updated" date on your pages to show visitors how current your pages are

**DON'T:** forget, or decide that SEO is not important this week. It's a long term project.

### 10. GET MORE RECIPROCAL LINKS!

Whilst you are building up visitors and inquiries the best think you can do to improve you rankings is get as many reciprocal links as possible.

**DO:** look up the links from sites that you aspire to, and ask for similar links from their webmaster

**DON'T:** become fixated with google pagerank as the only indicator of a website's importance. Reciprocal links from newer sites that are relevant will always help in the long term.

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