**DIGM-243: Web Authoring II**

**Week 09**

**SEO What?**

**Search Engine Optimization**

Search Engine Optimization is a process that maximizes web page ranking in Search Engines. After all, everyone who has a website wants it to rank high in the search engines like Google and Yahoo. A higher rank means more visitors, and more visitors mean more sales, or more advertising revenue.

SEO tells Search Engine what the site WebPages are about and helps with easy WebPage crawling. This is done by creating effective Page Titles, Meta tags, Alt attributes, Anchor text, Search friendly HTML tags and code, Optimizing quality content, Keyword optimization and having a Link building strategy.

**Points to remember before you start optimizing**

Google suggest that you

* Write quality content for readers and help them with information for what the page is about.
* Use cascading style sheet for site page layout and clean code.
* Write meaningful page title with well researched keyword relevant to the page content
* Adding H tags for Headings and sub-headings for the content.
* Adding Alt attributes for images.
* Adding Anchor text for contents.
* Having content of 400 words minimum per page.
* HTML size should not be more than 50KB to 100KB.
* File name should be the same as page title.
* Adding text header navigation links, footer navigation links and Breadcrumb.

It may seem counter-intuitive, but you get good rankings by ignoring rankings and focusing on quality. Focus on quality and the rankings will follow. You get good rankings by building a quality site, not by trying to figure out exactly how the search engines rank pages.

As Google says on its philosophy page, "Focus on the user and all else will follow." Google wants web masters to feel the same way -- that if you build the best site possible, your good rankings will follow. http://www.google.com/about/corporate/company/tenthings.html

**SEO To Do:**

* Make pages for users, not for search engines. Don't deceive your users, or present different content to search engines than you display to users.
* Avoid tricks intended to improve search engine rankings. A good rule of thumb is whether you'd feel comfortable explaining what you've done to a website that competes with you. Another useful test is to ask, "Does this help my users? Would I do this if search engines didn't exist?"
* Don't participate in link schemes designed to increase your site's ranking or PageRank. In particular, avoid links to web spammers or "bad neighborhoods" on the web as your own ranking may be affected adversely by those links.
* Don't use unauthorized computer programs to submit pages, check rankings, etc. Such programs consume computing resources and violate our terms of service. Google does not recommend the use of products such as WebPosition Gold™ that send automatic or programmatic queries to Google.

**SEO Not To Do:**

* Avoid hidden text or hidden links.
* Don't employ cloaking or sneaky redirects.
* Don't send automated queries to Google.
* Don't load pages with irrelevant words.
* Don't create multiple pages, subdomains, or domains with substantially duplicate content.
* Avoid "doorway" pages created just for search engines, or other "cookie cutter" approaches such as affiliate programs with little or no original content.

**The SEO Recipe:**

* Write a <TITLE></TITLE> tag for each page that accurately describes that page (no more than about 64 characters).
* Try to create two new pages every week. If you can't do that, try to do one page each week. At a bare minimum, create a new page each month.
* As much as possible, your new pages should be unique, interesting, authoritative, and compelling.If you want to rank well for the phrase electric widgets, then make your site the best resource about electric widgets available.
* Make sure all of your pages are accessible through normal <A HREF> links (i.e., don't use JavaScript or Flash links exclusively).
* Link to quality relevant sites. After you do so, ask those sites to link to you, but don't make your link to them contingent on whether they link back.
* Follow standard website design tips and avoid the problems listed on Problem Websites. Your site should be not only attractive, but super-easy to use, and completely free of annoyances.
* Most importantly, purge your mind of trying to think of ways you can "trick" your way to the top of the results. Do NOT think about the specific nuts and bolts of how a search engine will rank your pages. Instead, build good, quality pages for your visitors, and trust that the rankings will follow.

**SEO Myths**

SEO Tricks that are no longer true:

* Submit your site to a search engine to get listed.
* Meta tags will improve rankings.
* Making keywords invisible improves ranking.
* Trade links with as may other sites as possible.
* JavaScript = penalized.
* Focus on ranking well for a single-word
* All visitors start at the front page of my site.

**What Search Engines Search For**

* The page is relevant to the terms being searched for
* The page is considered an authority about its topic
* The page has good, useful content
* The page has been around for a while
* The page is part of a site with lots of information
* The page loads quickly
* The page doesn't have a bunch of broken links
* The page isn't filled with a cheap list of keywords

**Content is King**

There's a saying in the SEO community, "content is king". That means that what's most important to the search engines is what you have on your page. The substance of your page, the paragraphs that make up an article or the descriptions of products, is the content. As far as the engines are concerned, the more content text the better, because the more words on a page the better job they can do of figuring out what a page is about.

But that's not the only reason content is king. When you have high-quality content your page is useful to the world. And as we know, the engines want to show high-quality pages. Further, when your page has useful content you're much more likely to get inbound links from other sites. Let's say you were putting together a list of websites to recommend to your visitors. Would you be more likely to list a page that was nothing but a bunch of ads, or would you be more likely to list a helpful article that demystified some topic (like this one) or showed readers how to do something interesting or useful?

**SEO for WordPress**

There are a lot of SEO plugins for WordPress. We will discuss these and other useful tips for optimizing WordPress for search engines.

**Permalinks**

Set your permalink structure to **/%category%/%postname%/** . This allows you to structure your clients website better which helps with search engine optimisation.

This structure also works well if the website has a blog as well. If it does, all you need to do is set up a category called Blog, and the blog ‘homepage’ will be / blog/ . All posts should be tagged with either the category “Blog” or a sub category. Make sure you set the default category to Blog.

When you create new pages, edit the slug in an effort to try and keep the url as short as possible and use the keywords you want to target. By default, WordPress will take your whole page title as the slug, which is not always the best option.

**Use H1 Tags for your Page Titles**

It very common that themes are set up with the name of the website (usually the logo) being used as an H1 tag, then use H2 tags for Post titles. This is not optional from a search engine point of view, because they look at H tags as though they were chapters of a book, which break down what the page is really about. It is okay to keep the H1 tag in your header. Just make sure you use H1 tags for the titles also.

**Don't Forget the ALT Tag**

In WordPress it is very easy just leave the default values in the image editor. Take the extra 10 seconds to think about the keyword the page is trying to target and choose an appropriate description for the image.

**Update Services**

This is not a very well known feature in WordPress, but there is a feature under Settings that pings aggregation sites, every time you create a new page. Unfortunately, by default it only includes http://rpc.pingomatic.com/. You should update this list to all news aggregators and search engines. Here is a pretty detailed list:

http://1470.net/api/ping

http://www.a2b.cc/setloc/bp.a2b

http://api.feedster.com/ping

http://api.moreover.com/RPC2

http://api.moreover.com/ping

http://api.my.yahoo.com/RPC2

http://api.my.yahoo.com/rss/ping

http://www.bitacoles.net/ping.php

http://bitacoras.net/ping

http://blogdb.jp/xmlrpc

http://www.blogdigger.com/RPC2

http://blogmatcher.com/u.php

http://www.blogoole.com/ping/

http://www.blogoon.net/ping/

http://www.blogpeople.net/servlet/weblogUpdates

http://www.blogroots.com/tb\_populi.blog?id=1

http://www.blogshares.com/rpc.php

http://www.blogsnow.com/ping

http://www.blogstreet.com/xrbin/xmlrpc.cgi

http://blog.goo.ne.jp/XMLRPC

http://bulkfeeds.net/rpc

http://coreblog.org/ping/

http://www.lasermemory.com/lsrpc/

http://mod-pubsub.org/kn\_apps/blogchatt

http://www.mod-pubsub.org/kn\_apps/blogchatter/ping.php

http://www.newsisfree.com/xmlrpctest.php

http://ping.amagle.com/

http://ping.bitacoras.com

http://ping.blo.gs/

http://ping.bloggers.jp/rpc/

http://ping.blogmura.jp/rpc/

http://ping.cocolog-nifty.com/xmlrpc

http://ping.exblog.jp/xmlrpc

http://ping.feedburner.com

http://ping.myblog.jp

http://ping.rootblog.com/rpc.php

http://ping.syndic8.com/xmlrpc.php

http://ping.weblogalot.com/rpc.php

http://ping.weblogs.se/

http://pingoat.com/goat/RPC2

http://www.popdex.com/addsite.php

http://rcs.datashed.net/RPC2/

http://rpc.blogbuzzmachine.com/RPC2

http://rpc.blogrolling.com/pinger/

http://rpc.icerocket.com:10080/

http://rpc.pingomatic.com/

http://rpc.technorati.com/rpc/ping

http://rpc.weblogs.com/RPC2

http://www.snipsnap.org/RPC2

http://trackback.bakeinu.jp/bakeping.php

http://topicexchange.com/RPC2

http://www.weblogues.com/RPC/

http://xping.pubsub.com/ping/

http://xmlrpc.blogg.de/

**Can you Digg It?**

If you are launching a website for a client, then the fasted way to get it indexed is by Digging it. Google seems to love Digg, and because of this sometimes sites get indexed within hours rather than days.

**The Google XML Sitemaps Plugin**

Install the plugin for the client, and it will automatically update when each new page is created. We always set up Google Webmaster Tools for our clients, and make sure the sitemap is verified in the webmaster tools. This only takes a few minutes to do.

**The All On One SEO Plugin**

Make sure you modify the Home Title, and the Home Description. Google has always claimed that meta keywords are not part of its algorithm, but it is still part of other search engines algorithms, so it does not harm to have them there.

The plugin does a number of things very well and we recommend keeping the default settings for everything. The plugin will create meta descriptions automatically, and meta keywords from the tags. It also gives you the option to change the page titles as well, which we highly recommend you do.

Target the SEO page title to the keywords you want to rank for, but use the post title to be more descriptive for your users. This is a common technique used by news organisation. This example is from the BBC website: The headline (title) meant to lure the human reader: “Tulsa star: The life and career of much-loved 1960’s singer.”, but the SEO title is “Obituary: Gene Pitney.”. If you want to read more about this, take a look at this 2006 article in the New York Times. The advice is still relevant today

**The Robots Meta Plugin**

This plugin is very important if you are working on a redesign of a website. It is a common mistake for inexperienced web developers to just redirect every old page to the new homepage. This is not good SEO practice. If possible each page should be redirected to the corresponding new page.

**Statistics & Analytics**

Everyone wants to know how many people are visiting their site. Google Analytics seems to get the most attention. This will require setting up an account with google.com/analytics

* **Google Analyticator**  
  Allows you to set up the tracking code by simply knowing your tracking code number. Can also disable tracking for admins, set up additional codes and more.
* **Google Analytics for WordPress**  
  Allows you to set the extensions of downloadable files you want tracked, can also set different prefixes for different types of tracking.
* **WordPress Google Analytics Plugin**  
  Can set it to not log anything done in the admin area, record 404s, keep track of searches and more.
* **Shift This | Mint State**  
  Mint, a competitor to Google Analytics, is starting to get some good recognition and reviews ( http://haveamint.com/ ). The WordPress Mint Stats Plugin will allow you to view your Mint statistics from within the WordPress Admin area. It also includes the ability to include the Mint tracking javascript into your WordPress Theme.
* **WordPress.com Stats**  
  Simple, concise stats with no additional load on your server. Plug into WordPress.com's stats system. Installing this stats plugin is much like installing Akismet, all you need is to put in your API Key and the rest is automatic.
* **WP-Stats**  
  Display your WordPress blog statistics. Ranging from general total statistics, some of my plugins statistics and top 10 statistics.

**The best things in life are free?**

There are a few different ways you can make money off of your website. The most obvious is using it to promote and sell your services.

**Advertising**

This is likely the most common means of leveraging a blog to generate income. If yours happens to become a well-known blog, or one that is well-received in a particular niche, it's always possible to sell ad space on your own. With services such as Google's AdSense (google.com/adsense) or BlogAds (blogads.com), bloggers can establish ad programs.

AdSense lets you select several ads that are consistent with the content of your blog and pays you based on how many readers click on the ads for further information. Even better, it's free, and there are a lot of WordPress plug-ins to helo you get them working on your site.

* Adsense Deluxe  
  offers advanced options for managing the automatic insertion of Google AdSense or Yahoo Publisher Network (YPN) ads to your WordPress posts. Easily switch all AdSense ads to a new color scheme across the entire site.
* Adsense Injection  
  inserts Adsense code randomly into a pre-existing blog. Takes a random paragraph (or br tag) break in your article and inserts adsense code. It does one per story on multi-post pages (home, archive, category) and let’s you pick how many to show on single post pages.
* Adsense Beautifier  
  makes your Adsense look beautiful by placing images beside them to increase your clicks (CTR) and subsequent Adsense earnings. (May not be compliant with Adsense TOS now)
* AdRotator WordPress Plugin  
  rotates your adsense ads with other affiliate programs like Chitika Eminimalls wherever you want. Helps to reduce ad blindness and test different ad formats and affiliate programs.
* Adsense Earnings WordPress Plugin  
  displays your adsense earning details within wordpress admin panel.
* AdSense Manager  
  is a WordPress plugin for managing AdSense ads on your blog. It generates code automatically and allows positioning with Widgets.
* AdSense Sharing Revenue and Earnings System  
  allows you to view your adsense earnings and share your adsense impressions with your friends and co-authors.
* Google Ad Wrap  
  wraps posts and comments inside Section Targeting tags for better targeted ads.

BlogAds, on the other hand, hooks bloggers up with would-be advertisers and levies a commission in return for any ad placements that result.

**Affiliate Programs**

Affiliate programs enable your blog to serve as a the middle man between your users and online sales sites. Amazon.com and BestBuy.com are two popular choices.. If, for instance, you offer book reviews or even just mention a book in passing in your blog, an affiliate program provides a means for your readers to click directly from your blog to Amazon to obtain further information about the book. In fact Amazon will pay you a royalty if someone clicks through to amazon from a link on your site and make a purchase, even if they do not purchase the product you linked to.

**WP-Amazon**

With WP-Amazon, the Amazon.com product catalog is available right from WordPress. This plugin adds an “Insert from Amazon” link below the post text area on your entry and page editor pages. This link launches a page that will allow you to search Amazon.com by product line.

**Best Buy Products Widget**

This plugin allows you to display and sell Best Buy products on your blog. An affiliate account lets you make commission on the products you sell

**Soliciting Contributions**

Not every blog-related income opportunity involves hawking goods or services. As Blanche DuBois said in A Streetcar Named Desire, "Consider relying on the kindness of strangers." Ask for contributions. Even if you've attracted a group of regular followers who simply enjoy reading what you have to say, they may be willing to underwrite their loyalty with a little financial help. Programs such as PayPal make it easy to establish a simple on-site contribution collection button.

**WP Paypal Donation**

WordPress plugin to recieve donation in multiple currencies in one click. Can be used in the sidebar, posts and pages. WordPress PayPal Donations Plugin uses IPN to ensure the values are correct and you can also chose to display your total donations to date.

Or you can add items from your Amazon WishList on your site, sometimes people will buy them form you. And if you use the **Amazon Associates Wishlist** plugin you can earn you associates referral fee at the same time.

**Ethics?**

Whether you do or don't use advertising or solicit contributions on your site is sole up to you. But keep in mind people's attitudes toward online advertising. Does your potential employer want to see ads or be bombarded with wish lists and paypal solicitations when looking at your portfolio?

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**Homework:**

**Recommended Reading:**

* **WordPress for Business Bloggers: Promote and Grow Your WordPress Blog with Advanced Plug-ins, Analytics, Advertising, and SEO**by Paul Thewlis  
  Packt Publishing © 2008 (356 pages)  
  ISBN:9781847195326  
  Helping you take full advantage of WordPress' rich and powerful features, this practical book shows you how to transform your basic blog into a more advanced and professional blog as quickly and painlessly as possible.  
  http://library.books24x7.com.ezproxy2.library.drexel.edu/toc.aspx?bookid=30137

**Build:**

Continue coding your theme

Bring your files to class for review.

Be able to show your instructor what progress you have made on your lists:

* Changes you believe you will be able to make in the Dashboard.
* Changes you believe you will be able to make in CSS.
* Changes you believe you will have to make with PHP.

**Submit:**

N/A

**[Instructor NOTE: Check it see if students have made progress, if students has NOT made progress ask them why, offer assistance (during class lab time), and remind him/her that their final project is the Majority of their grade for the class]**