When was the last time you used a search engine?

Probably in the last few hours or minutes.

Perhaps you just wanted to quickly look something up or

maybe you needed more in depth information on a topic.

Either way, the search engine you used will have returned a list of results that

were most relevant to what you searched for.

But how does a search engine determine which

web pages are most relevant in this video?

You will learn how search engines analyze web pages and

how meta tags help provide information for search engines.

A major part of launching a website is a process called search

engine optimization or SEO.

This process involves making improvements to a website's content semantics and

delivery to improve its ranking in search results.

You might be wondering what exactly does a search engine do when it analyzes

a web page?

Well when a search engine visits your website,

it analyzes the html document and media content.

If it finds a link to another html document,

it follows the link to that document and

continues following links until it is finished analyzing the entire website.

Based on the results of the analysis and the content on your website,

the search engine will rank the website for various search terms.

So while your website might be the number one result for one search term,

it could rank very low for another.

Every search engine has its own algorithm for ranking websites.

And while it's not disclosed how the ranks are determined, there

are many best practices you can follow to influence how search engines analyze and

rank your website.

But for now let's just focus on how meta tags influence website ranking.

Meta tags define metadata about a web page.

What is metadata?

You ask?

It's data about other data which in this case is data about the web page.

Meta tags are added inside the head element of your html document and

as you know, nothing inside the head element is displayed in the web browser.

In other words, meta tags are unseen elements within the browser.

Note that there is no closing tag for the meta tag.

The meta element has two attributes, name and content.

The name attribute specifies the name of the metadata and

the content attribute specifies the value of the metadata.

Let's examine some examples of metadata.

The author metadata specifies the author of the web page.

The name attribute is author and the content attribute is the person and

company who are the author of the web page.

The description metadata describes the content of the web page.

This is often used by search engines as descriptive text in search results.

The name attribute is set to description and

the content attribute is the descriptive text.

The keywords metadata was previously used to provide search keywords for

search engines.

However, this led to a lot of websites using the keywords metadata to

manipulate search rankings.

One of the major search engines now ignores this metadata and

another uses keywords metadata as a spam indicator because of this,

it's recommended not to include this metadata in modern web pages.

Another type of metadata is the robot's metadata and

it tells search engines if and how they should analyze your web page.

The name robots comes from the automated software often referred to as bots,

that search engines used to analyze websites.

The content attribute for Robots has four possible values.

Index tells the bot to analyze the page.

Follow tells the bot to also visit all links on the web page.

No index tells the bot not to analyze the page.

Some bots will ignore this so

it's best not to rely on this to stop bots from analyzing your page and

no follow tells the bot not to visit links on the web page.

Again, some bots will ignore this value so it's best not to rely on it.

Finally, there's the view ports metadata.

The view port metadata is important when designing responsive web pages.

Why you might ask because when a web pages viewed on a phone or

tablet, the device will by default attempt to render the web page

as if it is being viewed on a desktop.

This results in a poor browsing experience for the user.

The solution is to define view ports metadata.

There are many values available for view ports metadata.

The most used value for the mobile experiences is to set the width to device

dash with and the initial scale to 1.0,

you can learn more about view ports in the additional reading.

It's important to note that view port metadata does not solve all the issues

with browsing websites on mobile devices.

The other part of the solution is responsive web design.

But we were talking about search engine optimization, right?

View port metadata is important for the user experience and

it's also important for search engine optimization.

This is because many search engines now include websites mobile experience as

a part of their ranking algorithms, there is more metadata that you can define on

you web page to specifically improve its presence on social media.

But that's for later video.

For now it's important to know that author description, keywords, robots and

view ports metadata all play a role in the search engine optimization of web pages.

You want to improve the SEO of a website. What metadata should you add to the head element of the website and why? Check all that apply.



Keyword metadata to let the website show up in results of keyword searches.



Description metadata to help search engines understand what the web page is about.

Correct

That's right. The description metadata describes the content of the web page.



Robots metadata to improve how search engines analyze the website.

Correct

That's right. The name “robots” comes from the automated software, often referred to as “bots”, that search engines use to analyze websites.



Author metadata to inform search engines who the author of the web page is.

Correct

That's right. Author metadata specifies the author of the web page.



Viewport data to help web browsers display websites at the appropriate scale on the device being used.

Correct

That's right.  Mobile devices will by default attempt to render a web page as if it is being viewed on a desktop. The solution is to define viewport metadata.