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**THE ART OF SEO: MASTERING SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION [ERIC ENGE, STEPHAN SPENCER, RAND FISHKIN, JESSIE STRICCHIOLA, O’REILLY MEDIA]**

**SEO: SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION BIBLE [JERRI L. LEDFORD]**

**SEO WARRIOR: ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES FOR INCREASING WEB VISIBILITY [JOHN I JERKOVIC, O'REILLY MEDIA]**

**DISCLAIMER [દાખોજતોકરવો, હકળોડેવો]**

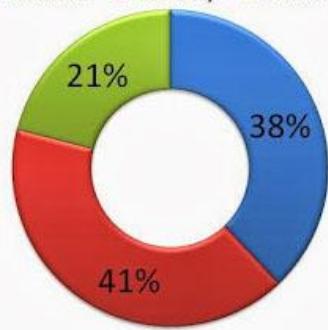
The below “Litho” [Material] is prepared [Modified] using above reference book and little search from Google. I don’t own any content.

# Search Engine: Reflecting Consciousness and Connection Commerce

- ▶ As a matter of Fact, Internet (www) has grown exponentially (အောင်) and is still growing at a rate which cannot be imagined.
- ▶ Day by day the number of people accessing Internet from their Desktops and Mobile devices (Tablets, Smartphone, Laptops etc...) is increasing at a rapid pace due to Technological Innovations.
- ▶ As the World is now 'MOBILE', the mobile users are set to overtake the Desktop users soon in 2014.
- ▶ If we take tablets and Mobile device users together, then they have already overtaken the Desktop users in 2013 it.

DEVICE STATISTICS 2013

■ Mobile ■ Desktop ■ Tablet



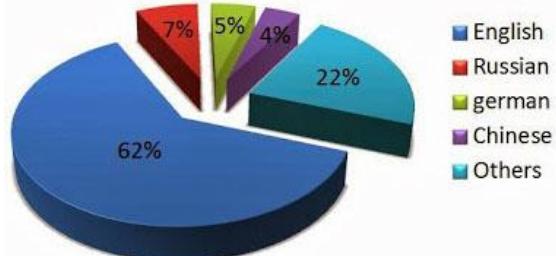
## World-wide Active Internet Users in 2013

- ▶ Out of entire Human population which is about 7.1 Billion, 4.3 Billion people (4.354 billion approx.) used internet in 2013 with Asia housing nearly 40% of the above users. Below are the statistics reading users.
  - ▶ 4.354 Billion - Active internet users.
  - ▶ 5.854 Billion - Total Cellular users in the world.
  - ▶ Desktop users are about 40.67% of the total active users.
  - ▶ Tablet users (Tablets, Tabs, Palmtops etc . . . users) = 21.10%.
  - ▶ Mobile users (Smartphone and other handheld device users) = 38.23%.

## Language on the Web - Statistics

- ▶ As you can see in the above graph, nearly 62% content on the web is in English (En-UK & En-US combined) language.
- ▶ Apart from that, Russian language reserves 7% out of the total and German language 5% while Chinese language holds 4%.
- ▶ The remaining 22% of the total language used on the Internet in 2013 belongs to other languages like Hindi, Swedish, Urdu, Arabic, Greek etc . . .

Percent of Languages used 2013



### **Internet Browser Usage Statistics 2013**

- ▶ The contents on the Web are accessed using some sort of software called Browsers. So, coming to the Internet browsers let's see what browsers were used to browse the Virtual Universe (WWW) in 2013.
- ▶ Google Chrome holds a whopping (भारेमोड़) 41% (41.084% approx.) while Internet Explorer secures 23.124%. On the other hand, Mozilla Firefox has risen to 27.054% from 24.215% in 2012. Opera holds 2.115% and the remaining 6.623% by other browsers.

### **Total Number of Searches on Google in 2013**

- ▶ Google is the most used Search Engine in the World. Google has a breathtaking (नमनायत्त्व) 63% Market share in USA alone. Next to Google, stands Microsoft's Bing, Baidu and many other search engines. Here are the numbers relating to Google -
  - ▶ 1,453 Million - Active Google Search Engine users.
  - ▶ 53% of AD's on the Web is from Google ADSENSE.
  - ▶ 2.0287 Trillion - Total number of Searches on Google in 2013. (2028700000000)
  - ▶ 'Google Maps' is the most used Smartphone app. (54% of the total).
  - ▶ 38.6 Billion Dollars - Total digital advertising revenue of Google in 2013.
  - ▶ Google with its wide range of products and Services, Dominated the Web in 2013.
  - ▶ 149.16 Billion - Average number (weighted) of Searches on Google per month in 2013.

### **Mobile (Smart phones& Tabs) Users Statistics - 2013**

- ▶ 1.9 Billion - Smartphone user's world-wide.
- ▶ 1.9 Exabyte - Global mobile data traffic per month.
- ▶ 62% of the above data traffic is for Video streaming itself.
- ▶ 5.526 Billion - Mobile and Hand-held devices world-wide.
- ▶ 834.252 MB (Megabytes) - Average amount of data consumed by a smartphone user in a month.

### **E-mails Sent and Received in 2013**

- ▶ 3.8714 Billion - E-mails users' world-wide.
- ▶ 5.3 Billion - Total number of Email Clients used.
- ▶ 182.567 Billion - E-mail traffic per day world-wide.
- ▶ 43.57% - Share of spam E-mails of the total E-mails.
- ▶ 13.246% - Share of E-mails considered Non-Essential.

## **Social Media & Multimedia Statistics 2013**

- ▶ 135,057 - Monthly posts by Facebook pages in Brazil, the most active country.
- ▶ 1.6 Billion - Active Facebook user's world-wide.
- ▶ 48.454% - Active Female users of the above total.
- ▶ 3.459 Billion - Facebook likes every day.
- ▶ 234 Million - Active Twitter users.
- ▶ 165.25 Million - Active Google+ users per month.
- ▶ 6.2 Billion - Google's '+ Button' used.
- ▶ 16.54 Million - Vimeo users worldwide.
- ▶ 5.215 Billion hours - Video watched in a month (All websites combined).
- ▶ 8.254 Pb (Petabytes) - Photos added to Facebook every month.
- ▶ 426 Million - Photos added to Facebook every day.
- ▶ 73 - Photo are uploaded to Instagram every Second!

## **Total Number of Websites on the Web**

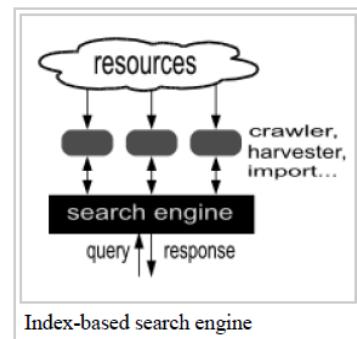
- ▶ The total number of websites on the web can be measured in different ways. Some are Live, many are Dead websites.
- ▶ Every day new websites come Live and some websites die due to many reasons. Even if a website survives for 6 months, there is no guarantee it will exist for a full 365 days!
- ▶ Only handful of websites survives on the net. Below are the numbers relating to Websites -
  - ▶ 759 Million - Total number of websites on the Web
  - ▶ 510 Million - Total number of live websites (active).
  - ▶ 103 Million - Websites added during the year i.e. 2013
  - ▶ 43% of the top 1 million websites are hosted in USA itself.
  - ▶ 48% of the top 100 blogs/websites run on powerful Word Press.
  - ▶ 23% - Increase in the average page size of a website.
  - ▶ 13% - Decrease in the average page-load time.
- ▶ The above Increase and Decrease in the average pages-size and page-load time are due to betterment of Internet. There has been an incredible shift from 'Content only' sites to 'Content + User-Friendly' sites.
- ▶ So, to aid easier navigation and user-friendly, more and more websites are becoming responsive. In 2013 itself, 38% of the live websites had responsive design.

## **Size of the Internet as of 31st Dec 2013**

- ▶ Coming to the Size of the Internet, its 'Huge'. As of 31st December 2013, the size of data available on the net has grown exponentially [अपनी] from 1993.
- ▶ Some say the size of the Internet seems to have crossed "The total number of words spoken by entire human race so far!" This is stored in a text format. (.txt extension).
- ▶ While many others still lost in their thoughts of estimating the true size.
  - ▶ 14.3 Trillion – Webpages live on the Internet.
  - ▶ 48 Billion – Webpages indexed by Google.Inc.
  - ▶ 14 Billion – Webpages indexed by Microsoft's Bing.
  - ▶ 672 Exabyte - 672,000,000,000 Gigabytes (GB) of accessible data.
  - ▶ 43,639 Petabytes - Total World-wide Internet Traffic in the year 2013.
  - ▶ Over 9, 00,000 Servers - Owned by Google.Inc, the Largest in the world.
  - ▶ Over 1 Yotta-byte - Total data stored on the Internet (Includes almost everything).

## **What is Search Engine?**

- ▶ A search engine is an information retrieval system designed to help find information stored on a computer system.
- ▶ The search results are usually presented in a list and are commonly called hits.
- ▶ Search engines help to minimize the time required to find information and the amount of information which must be consulted.



Year	Engine	Current status	Year	Engine	Current status
1993	W3Catalog	Inactive	2004	Yahoo! Search	Active, Launched own web search (see Yahoo! Directory, 1995)
	Aliweb	Inactive		A9.com	Inactive
	JumpStation	Inactive		Sogou	Active
	WWW Worm	Inactive		AOL Search	Active
1994	WebCrawler	Active, Aggregator	2005	GoodSearch	Active
	Go.com	Active, Yahoo Search		SearchMe	Inactive
	Lycos	Active		wikiseek	Inactive
	Infoseek	Inactive		Soso (search)	Active

			engine)	
1995	AltaVista	Inactive, redirected to Yahoo!	Quaero Ask.com Live Search ChaCha Guruji.com wikiseek	Active
	Daum	Active		Active
	Magellan	Inactive		Active as Bing, Launched as rebranded MSN Search
	Excite	Active		Active
	SAPO	Active		Inactive
	Yahoo!	Active, Launched as a directory		Inactive
1996	Dogpile	Active, Aggregator	Sproose Wikia Search Blackle.com Powerset	Inactive
	Inktomi	Inactive, acquired by Yahoo!		Inactive
	HotBot	Active (lycos.com)		Active, Google Search
	Ask Jeeves	Active (rebranded ask.com)		Inactive (redirects to Bing)
1997	Northern Light	Inactive	Picollator Viewzi	Inactive
	Yandex	Active		Inactive
1998	Google	Active	Boogami LeapFish Forestle DuckDuckGo	Inactive
	Ixquick	Active also as Startpage		Inactive
	MSN Search	Active as Bing		Inactive (redirects to Ecosia)
	empas	Inactive (merged with NATE)		Active
1999	AlltheWeb	Inactive (URL redirected to Yahoo!)	Bing Yebol Mugurdy Scout (Goby) NATE	Active, Launched as rebranded Live Search
	GenieKnows	Active, rebranded Yellowee.com		Inactive
	Naver	Active		Inactive due to a lack of funding
	Teoma	Inactive, redirects to Ask.com		Active
	Vivisimo	Inactive		Active
2000	Baidu	Active	Blekko Cuil	Active
	Exalead	Active		Inactive

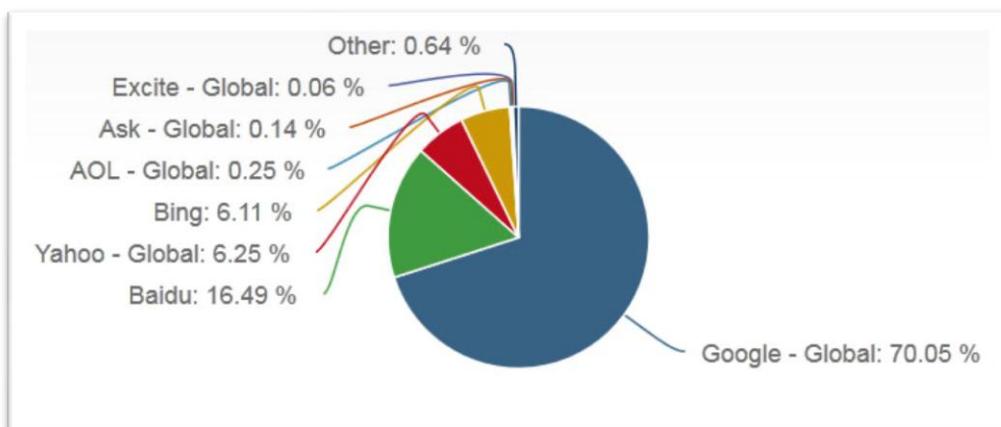
	Gigablast	Active		Yandex	Active, Launched global (English) search
2003	Info.com	Active	2011	YaCy	Active, P2P web search engine
	Scroogle	Inactive	2012	Volunia	Inactive

### **The Mission of Search Engines**

- ▶ Since web searchers are free to use any of the many available search engines on the Web to find what they are seeking.
- ▶ The burden is on the search engines to develop a relevant (संबंधित), fast, and fresh search experience.
- ▶ Search engines invest a tremendous [જાહેરણ] amount of time, energy, and capital in improving their relevance.
- ▶ This includes performing extensive studies of user responses to their search results, comparing their results against those of other search engines, conducting eye-tracking studies, and constructing PR and marketing campaigns.
- ▶ Search engines generate revenue primarily through paid advertising. The great majority of this revenue comes from a pay-per-click (or cost-per-click) model, in which the advertisers pay only for users who click on their ads.
- ▶ Because the search engines' success depends so greatly on the relevance of their search results, manipulations of search engine rankings that result in non-relevant results (generally referred to as spam) are dealt with very seriously.
- ▶ Each major search engine employs a team of people who focus solely on finding and eliminating spam from their search results.

### **The Market Share of Search Engines**

Search Engine Market Share from January, 2014 to May, 2014



## The Human Goals of Searching

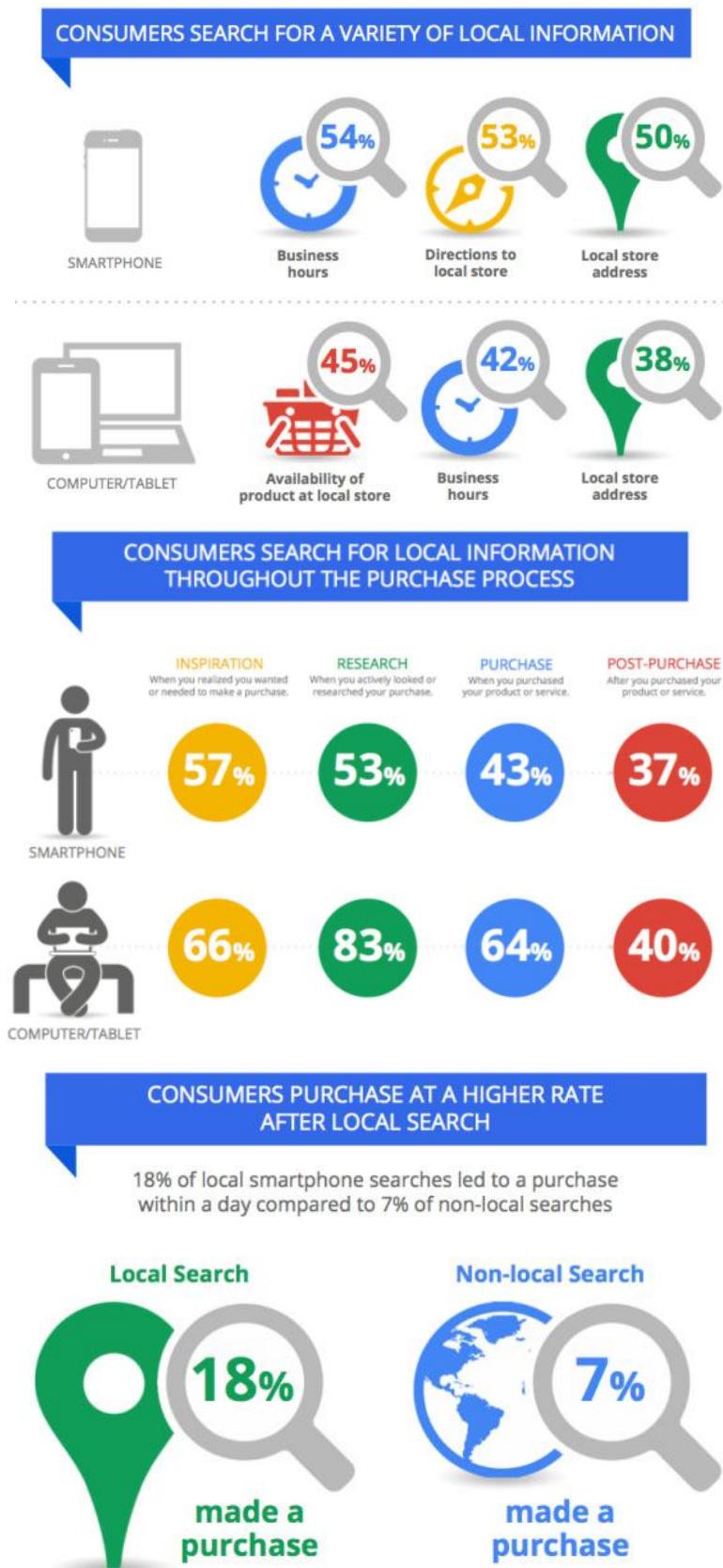
- ▶ The basic goal of a human searcher is to obtain information relevant to an inquiry. Searcher inquiries can take many different forms.
- ▶ One of the most important elements to building an online marketing strategy for a website around SEO and search rankings is developing a thorough understanding of the psychology of your target audience.
- ▶ Once you understand how the average searcher—and, more specifically, your target market—uses search engines, you can more effectively reach and keep those users.
  - ▶ Experience the need for an answer, solution, or piece of information. For example, the user may be looking for a website (navigational query) to buy something (transactional query) or to learn something (informational query).
  - ▶ Formulate that need in a string of words and phrases (the query). Most people formulate their queries in one to three words.
  - ▶ Execute the query, check the results, see whether you got what you wanted, and if not, and try a refined query.

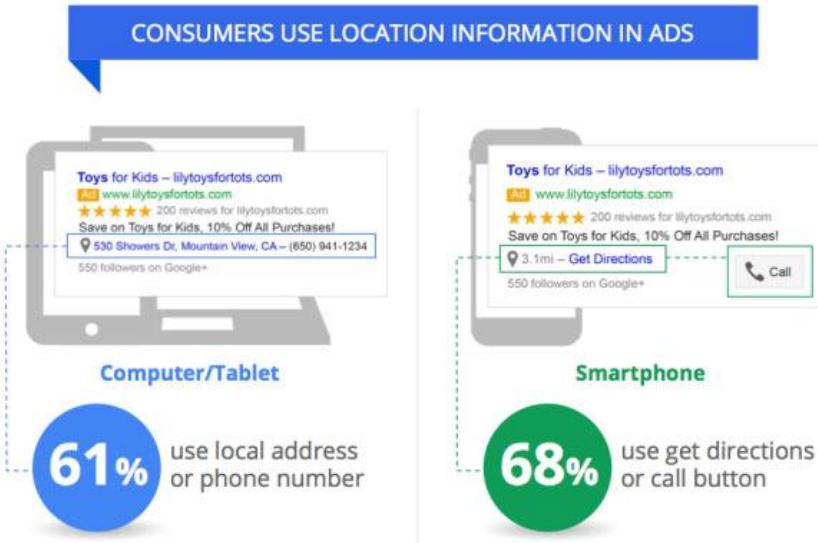
Words:	Google	Yahoo	AOL	ASK	Other
<b>Total</b>	65.89%	11.91%	0.14%	8.46%	13.60%
<b>1</b>	65.69%	17.62%	0.37%	4.73%	11.59%
<b>2</b>	61.16%	12.91%	0.17%	5.22%	20.54%
<b>3</b>	62.81%	11.13%	0.11%	9.37%	16.57%
<b>4</b>	65.00%	9.80%	0.06%	12.32%	12.81%
<b>5</b>	70.23%	10.10%	0.05%	10.42%	9.19%
<b>6</b>	74.29%	10.57%	0.04%	8.47%	6.63%
<b>7</b>	76.49%	10.16%	0.07%	7.75%	5.53%
<b>8</b>	76.34%	9.87%	0.06%	9.17%	4.56%
<b>9</b>	73.78%	10.71%	0.00%	10.68%	4.83%
<b>10+</b>	72.76%	7.92%	0.08%	12.33%	6.90%

*The Search Engine Market Share By Query Size* table shows the total percentage of searches performed on each major search engine (see the Total row) and the percentage searches that are 1 word terms, 2 word terms, etc. per search engine.

- ▶ When this process results in the satisfactory completion of a task, a positive experience is created for the user, the search engine, and the site providing the information or result.

## Who Searches and What Do They Search For?





*All of this research data leads us to some important conclusions about web search and marketing through search engines*

- ▶ Almost 90 percent of mobile users search for local information
- ▶ They expect information returned or presented on mobile devices to be localized
- ▶ These are high quality searches that often turn into (mostly offline) purchases
- ▶ Marketers need mobile optimized sites with complete location information (if applicable) to satisfy user expectations
- ▶ AdWords advertisers should be using Google extensions to localize/personalize their ads

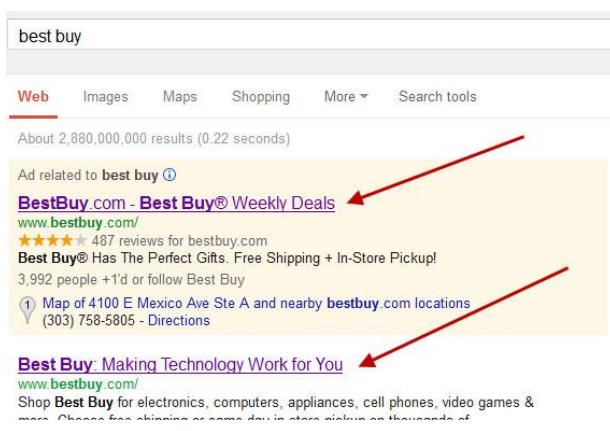
### **Determining Searcher Intent: A Challenge for Both Marketers and Search Engines**

- ▶ Smart SEO practitioners [practitioner - અધ્યક્ષ] and the search engines have a common goal of providing searchers with results that are relevant to their queries.
- ▶ A crucial (નિર્ણયક) element to building an online marketing strategy around SEO and search rankings understands your audience.
- ▶ Once you grasp how your target market searches for your service, product, or resource, you can more effectively reach and keep those users.
- ▶ Search engine marketers need to be aware that search engines are tools—resources driven by intent (ઉદ્દેશ).
- ▶ Using the search box is fundamentally different from entering a URL into the browser's address bar, clicking on a bookmark, or picking a link on your start page to go to a website
- ▶ Searches are performed with intent (fixed, focused); the user wants to find something in particular, rather than just land on it by happenstance (સંભોગ) (coincidence, chance).
- ▶ Search queries – the words and phrases that people type into a search box in order to pull up a list of results – come in different flavors. It is commonly accepted that there are three different types of search queries:

- ▶ Navigational search
- ▶ Informational search
- ▶ Transactional search

## Navigational Search Query

- ▶ A navigational query is a search query entered with the intent of finding a particular website or webpage.
- ▶ For example, a user might enter "YouTube" into Google's search bar to find the YouTube site rather than entering the URL into a browser's navigation bar or using a bookmark.
- ▶ In fact, "Facebook" and "YouTube" are the top two searches on Google, and these are both navigational queries.



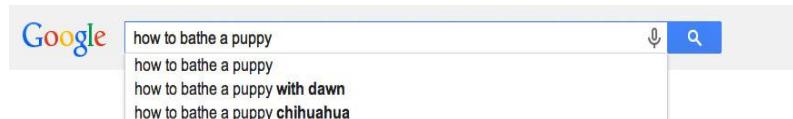
## Target Navigational Search Queries

- ▶ The fact is, you don't stand much of a chance targeting a navigational query unless you happen to own the site that the person is looking for.
- ▶ True navigational queries have very clear intent – the user has an exact site in mind and if you're not that site, you're not relevant to their needs.
- ▶ Google, which classifies this type of query as a "go query" according to some reports, has even taken the step of reducing the total number of results on the first page to 7 for navigational brand queries, leading to a 5.5% reduction in overall organic first-page listings.
- ▶ However, some queries that appear to be navigational in nature might not be. For example, someone who Google's "Facebook" might actually be looking for news or information about the company.
- ▶ *Tip: Make sure you own your own brand's navigational query. Ideally, your site will appear in both the top organic spot and as the top sponsored result in a search for your brand or company name. As Brad Geddes has pointed out, "in many cases, it is worth buying keywords even if you rank organically for them," because your total profits will end up higher. Branded keywords tend to drive both clicks and conversions.*

## Informational Search Query

- ▶ Wikipedia defines informational search queries as "Queries that cover a broad topic (e.g., trucks) for which there may be thousands of relevant results."
- ▶ When someone enters an informational search query into Google or another search engine, they're looking for information – hence the name.

- ▶ They are probably not looking for a specific site, as in a navigational query, and they are not looking to make a commercial transaction. They just want to answer a question or learn how to do something.



[How to Bathe a Puppy for the First Time - wikiHow](#)  
[www.wikihow.com › ... › Dogs › Dog Grooming › wikiHow](#)  
 How to Bathe a Puppy for the First Time. It's completely natural and expected for puppies to get dirty very easily, but it's disgusting when they look and smell ...

[Bathing Your Puppy | Pet Care Article | petco.com](#)  
[www.petco.com/Content/ArticleList/.../Bathing-Your-Puppy.aspx](#) Petco  
 So, you're ready to give your puppy her first bath. That's great, because the sooner you start to bathe your pet, the sooner she'll learn to tolerate it. Be prepared to ...

[How to Successfully Bathe Your Dog | Cesar Millan](#)

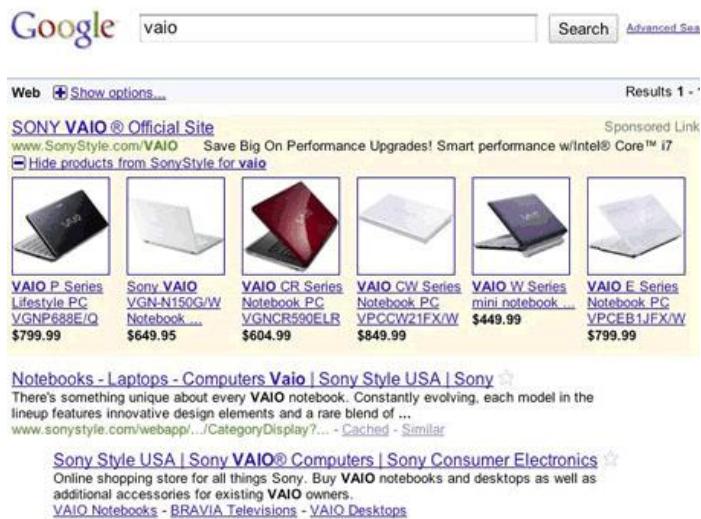
## Target Informational Search Queries

- ▶ Informational queries are hard to monetize (ખરૂકરણ). Google knows this, which is why it's been pushing the Knowledge Graph to address these types of queries.
- ▶ The best way to target informational searches is with high-quality SEO content that genuinely provides helpful information relevant to the query.
- ▶ Wikipedia, for all its flaws, is pretty good at providing basic, reliable-enough info on an extremely broad range of topics, which is why they rank on the first page for about half of all searches (well, that and their enormously(પુષ્ટા)powerful link profile).
- ▶ Wikipedia leaves a lot to be desired for a lot of informational searches, though. That's where you come in!
- ▶ Here are some of the ways you could target informational queries to drive traffic and leads to your site through organic search:
  - ▶ Write a blog post full of tips that would be useful for your prospective (સંભવિત) customers – if you're a PR consultant, for example, you could write a blog post on how to create a press release.
  - ▶ Create a how-to video that is relevant to your business (like this home improvement dude who made a video on how to build a tree house).
  - ▶ Write a detailed, step-by-step guide that elucidates (સમજાવે) a process relevant to your business.
  - ▶ Design an info graphic that illustrates a concept (like our info graphic on how the AdWords auction works).

## Transactional Search Query

- ▶ A transactional search query is a query that indicates intent to complete a transaction, such as making a purchase.

- ➡ Transactional search queries may include exact brand and product names (like “Samsung galaxy s3”) or be generic (સામાન્ય) (like “iced coffee maker”) or actually include terms like “buy,” “purchase,” or “order.”
- ➡ In all of these examples, you can infer that the searcher is considering making a purchase in the near future, if they’re not already pulling out their credit card. In other words, they’re at the business end of the conversion funnel (નાળિ) (channel).
- ➡ Vertical searches are a subset of transactional search queries, and they represent people looking to make a transaction in a specific industry. These include local searches, restaurant searches, hotel searches, flight searches, etc. Google’s moves in recent years to directly target vertical searches have led to accusations (આક્ષપ્તિ) of antitrust violations.



Sony Style USA | Sony VAIO® Computers | Sony Consumer Electronics

Online shopping store for all things Sony. Buy VAIO notebooks and desktops as well as additional accessories for existing VAIO owners.

VAIO Notebooks - BRAVIA Televisions - VAIO Desktops

[www.sonystyle.com](http://www.sonystyle.com) - Cached - Similar

## Target Transactional Search Queries

- ➡ We recommend a two-pronged approach here. There is no reason not to target transactional queries with organic content, like optimized product pages and local SEO strategies, but you should consider using PPC to target these search terms as well. Here’s why:
- ➡ These are exactly the kinds of queries that are mostly likely to deliver ROI (Return on Investment) in paid search. If people are looking for a specific type of product to buy, a sponsored ad is just as likely as an organic result to deliver what they need.
- ➡ Sponsored results take up a lot of the available space on the SERP (*Search Engine Results Page*) for commercial/transactional queries. If you want visibility above the fold for transactional keywords, you should consider PPC.
- ➡ Google offers lots of bells and whistles for sponsored ads and product listings. For example, you can include a picture of your product. Your options in organic results are more limited and less controllable.
- ➡ In one study, we found that people click on paid results over organic results 2 to 1 for queries with high commercial intent. This is probably because sponsored results take up so much of the above-the-fold real estate on these types of searches, because the new ad formats are so eye-catching clickable, and because

lots of search engine users can't tell the difference between ads and non-ads. (NB: Commercial search queries are just a small percentage of total search query volume overall, so organic results still take the lion's share of overall clicks. More on that here.)

- ▶ These are some of the reasons we recommend using AdWords for transactional search queries. It's a scalable and cost-effective way to drives leads and sales. However, know that if you want to drive more overall traffic, your best bet is to build out your SEO content as well, since there are more informational queries than transactional ones.

### **Adaptive Search**

- ▶ The search engines also look at sequences of search queries to determine intent. This was confirmed in Eric Enge's interview with Jack Menzel, Product Management Director for GoogleSearch.
- ▶ You can verify this by trying search sequences such as a search on Rome followed by a search on hotels.
- ▶ Normally, a search on hotels would not include results for hotels in Rome, but when the preceding query was for Rome, some results for hotels in Rome will be included.
- ▶ Keeping track of users' previous search queries and taking them into account when determining(ନିର୍ଣ୍ଣୟ)which results to return for a new query—known as adaptive search—is intended to help the search engines get a better sense of a user's intent.
- ▶ The search engines need to do this with care: excessive [ଅନେକ] changes to the results they return based on recent query history are likely to lead to problems, so usually these types of changes are fairly limited in scope.
- ▶ Nonetheless, it is useful to be aware of the types of sequences of searches that users go through in their quest for information.

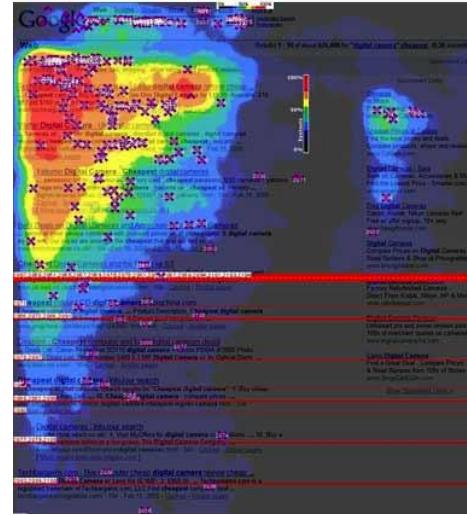
### **How Search Engines Drive Commerce on the Web**

- ▶ People make use of search engines for a wide variety of purposes, with some of the most popular being to research, locate, and buy products. Ecommerce sales reported by the US Census Bureau were a healthy \$47.5 billion in the second quarter of 2011.
- ▶ It is important to note that search and offline behavior have a heavy degree of interaction, with search playing a growing role in driving offline sales. A Google study from 2011 showed that each \$1 of online ad spend drives anywhere from \$4 to \$15 in offline sales.
- ▶ According to a March 2010 report from Forrester Research, over \$155 billion worth of consumer goods were purchased online in the US in 2009. While that seems like a big number, the influence on offline sales was far greater. Forrester

estimated that \$917 billion worth of retail sales in 2009 were “web-influenced (ગ્રાહક).”

### **Eye Tracking: How Users Scan Results Pages**

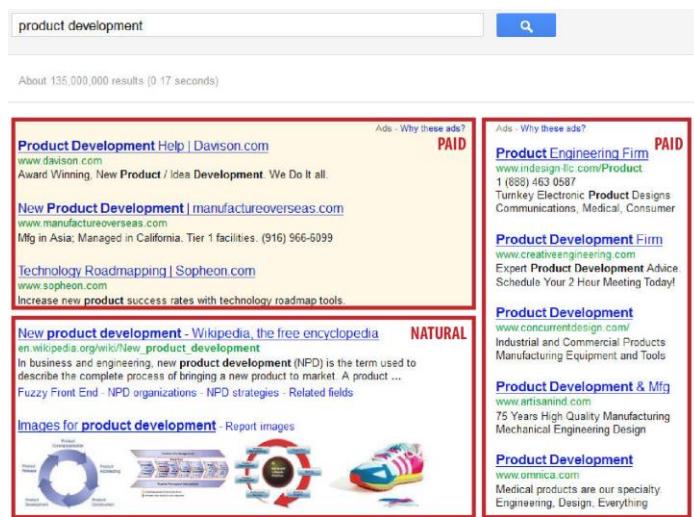
- ▶ Research firms Enquiero, Eyetools, and Didit conducted heat-map testing with search engine users that produced fascinating (રસપ્રદ) results related to what users see and focus on when engaged in search activity.
- ▶ The graphic indicates that users spent the most amount of time focusing their eyes in the top-left area, where shading is the darkest.
- ▶ This particular study perfectly illustrates how little attention is paid to results lower on the page versus those higher up, and how users’ eyes are drawn to bold keywords, titles, and descriptions in the natural (“organic”) results versus the paid search listings, which receive comparatively little attention.
- ▶ This research study also showed that different physical positioning of on-screen search results resulted in different user eye-tracking patterns.
- ▶ When viewing a standard Google results page, users tended to create an “F-shaped” pattern with their eye movements, focusing first and longest on the upper-left corner of the screen, then moving down vertically through the first two or three results, across the page to the first paid page result, down another few vertical results, and then across again to the second paid result. (This study was done only on left-to-right language search results—results for Chinese, Hebrew, and other non-left-to-right reading languages would be different.)
- ▶ In May 2008, Google introduced the notion of Universal Search. This was a move from simply showing the 10 most relevant web pages to showing other types of media, such as videos, images, news results, and so on, as part of the results in the base search engine.
- ▶ The other search engines followed suit within a few months, and the industry now refers to this general concept as Blended Search.
- ▶ Blended Search, however, creates more of a chunking effect, where the chunks are around the various rich media objects, such as images or video. Understandably, users focus on the image first. Then they look at the



text beside it to see whether it corresponds to the image or video thumbnail (which is shown initially as an image).

## Click Tracking: How Users Click on Results, Natural versus Paid

- ➡ Data shows that you may *not* want to be #1 in the paid search results, because the resulting cost to gain the #1 position in a PPC campaign can reduce the total net margin on your campaign.
- ➡ Many advertisers may seek the #1 position in paid search results, for a number of reasons.
  - ➡ If they have a really solid backend on their website and are able to make money when they are in the #1 position, they may well choose to pursue it.
  - ➡ Nonetheless [આમણની], the data from the survey suggests that there are many organizations for which being #1 in paid search does not make sense.
  - ➡ Even if your natural ranking is #1, you can still increase the ranking page's click rate by having a sponsored ad above it or in the righthand column.
  - ➡ The AdGooroo survey showed that having a prominent (અધ્રાયી) paid ad on the same search results page makes your #1 natural ranking receive 20% more clicks.
  - ➡ Example from Google shows how the paid results appear above and to the right of the natural search results. Note that Google often does not show paid results above the natural results, in which case the paid results show up only on the right.
  - ➡ Your position in the results has a huge impact on the traffic you will receive. In addition, the first 10 results received 89.71% of all click-through traffic; the next 10 results (normally listed on the second page of results) received 4.37%, the third page 2.42%, and the fifth page 1.07%. All other pages of results received less than 1% of total search traffic clicks.
  - ➡ Why are searchers blind to relevant results farther down the page? Is this due to the "implied [ગાંભીર્ય] endorsement [સમર્થન]" effect, whereby searchers tend to simply trust the search engine to point them to the right thing?
  - ➡ According to the Cornell University study, 72% of searchers click on the first link of interest; whereas 25.5% read all listings on the first page and then decide



which one to click. Both effects (implied endorsement (ગાર્ભિતસમર્થન) and rapid cognition (સમજશક્તિ)) most likely play a role in searcher behavior.

# Search Engine Basic

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## Understanding Search Engine Results

- ▶ In the search marketing field, the pages the engines return to fulfill a query are referred to as *search engine results pages* (SERPs).
- ▶ Each engine returns results in a slightly different format and will include *vertical search results* (specific content targeted to a query based on certain triggers in the query).
- ▶ Each unique section represents a snippet [piece –જાગ] of information provided by the engines. Here are the definitions of what each piece is meant to provide:
  - ▶ **Vertical navigation:** Each engine offers the option to search different verticals, such as images, news, video, or maps.
  - ▶ **Horizontal navigation:** The search engines also offer other types of navigation elements. Google offers the option to limit the date range of the content returned in the search results.
  - ▶ **Search query box:** All of the engines show the query you've performed and allow you to edit that query or enter a new query from the search results page. Next to the search query box, the engines also offer links to the advanced search page.
  - ▶ **Results information:** This section provides a small amount of Meta information about the results that you're viewing, including an estimate of the number of pages relevant to that particular query (these numbers can be, and frequently are, wildly inaccurate and should be used only as a rough comparative measure).
  - ▶ **PPC (a.k.a. paid search) advertising:** Companies purchase text ads from either Google AdWords or Microsoft adCenter. The results are ordered by a variety of factors, including relevance (for which click-through rate, use of searched keywords in the ad, and relevance of the landing page are factors in Google) and bid amount (the ads require a maximum bid, which is then compared against other advertisers' bids).
  - ▶ **Natural/organic/algorithmic results:** These results are pulled from the search engines' primary indexes of the Web and ranked in order of relevance and popularity according to their complex algorithms. *This area of the results is the primary focus of this section of the book.*
  - ▶ **Query refinement suggestions:** Queryrefinements [improvements –સુધારાઓ] are offered by Google, Bing, and Yahoo! The goal of these links is to let users search with a more specific and possibly more relevant query that will satisfy their intent.

- **Shopping search results:** All three search engines do this as well. Shopping results incorporate offers from merchants into the results so that searchers that are looking to buy something can do so quite easily.

1. Horizontal navigation (see top left)
2. Search query box
3. Results information
4. PPC advertising
5. Vertical navigation
6. Query refinement suggestions
7. Natural/organic/algorithmic results

The screenshot shows the Google search results page for the query "stuffed animals". The results are as follows:

- Search bar:** "stuffed animals" (highlighted in red)
- Results information:** "About 27,000,000 results (0.33 seconds)" (highlighted in red)
- Vertical navigation (left sidebar):**
  - Everything (highlighted in red)
  - Images
  - Maps
  - Videos
  - News
  - Shopping
  - More
- Location:** Honolulu, HI (Change location)
- Time range:** Any time, Past hour, Past 24 hours, Past 2 days, Past week, Past month, Past year, Custom range...
- Sponsored results (ads):**
  - Discount Stuffed Animals | TheJungleStore.com (highlighted in red)
  - StuffedAnimals.com - Your Stuffed Animals Super Store
  - StuffedAnimals.com™ - Stuffed Animals, PlushTeddy Bears, Toys ...
  - Cute Stuffed Animals
  - Cheapest Stuffed Animals
  - Stuffed Toy Manufacturers
  - Stuffed Animal Gifts
- Organic results:**
  - Discount Stuffed Animals At Great Prices. Buy Your Plush Toys Here!
  - Buy stuffed animals, plush teddy bears, wholesale stuffed animals, puppets, toys, gifts, plush animals & baby toys by Aurora, Ty, Gund, Steiff, Melissa & Doug, Giant ...
  - Check out our stuffed animals & plush toys shop. We carry all your favorite stuffed toys
- Side panel (right):**
  - Over 1500 Stuffed Animals
  - Stuffed Animal Superstore
  - Wholesale Stuffed Animals
  - Stuffed Animals
  - Wholesale stuffed animals

The screenshot shows the Yahoo! search results page for the query "stuffed animals". The results are as follows:

- Search bar:** "stuffed animals" (highlighted in red)
- Results information:** "21,300,000 results" (highlighted in red)
- Horizontal navigation:** WEB, IMAGES, VIDEO, SHOPPING, APPS, BLOGS, MORE (highlighted in red)
- Vertical navigation (left sidebar):**
  - FILTER BY TIME (highlighted in red)
  - Anytime
  - Past day
  - Past week
  - Past month
  - RELATED SEARCHES (highlighted in red)
  - build a bear
  - gund
  - stuffed dogs
  - toys r us
  - teddy bears
- Sponsored results (ads):**
  - Discount Stuffed Animals (highlighted in red)
  - StuffedAnimals.com™ - Stuffed Animals, PlushTeddy Bears ...
  - Stuffed Animals, Plush Toys & Puppets - Barbie & Baby ...
  - Stuffed Animals, Aurora, Ty, Webkinz, Douglas, Gund
  - Amazon.com, Stuffed Animals & Plush, Toys & Games
  - Stuffed Animals - Teddy Bears, Pillow Pets, Zhu Zhu, Target
- Organic results:**
  - Send the Only Bear Made in America! Free Gourmet Chocolates & Gift Card
  - Adorable stuffed animals by Jellycat, Huge selection
  - Explore 500+ Plush & Puppets. Save on Cheap Stuffed Animals!
  - Receive A Free Quot! 100% Customizable Stuffed Animals. 500 pc min
  - Big Selection & Low Prices - Free Shipping Offers

1. Horizontal navigation
2. Search query box
3. Results information
4. Query refinement suggestions
5. Vertical navigation
6. PPC advertising
7. Natural/organic/algorithmic results
8. Shopping search results

The screenshot shows the Bing search results page for the query "stuffed animals". The results are as follows:

- Search bar:** "stuffed animals" (highlighted in red)
- Results information:** "1-10 of 77,700,000 results" (highlighted in red)
- Horizontal navigation:** Web, Shopping, Images, News, Videos, More (highlighted in red)
- Vertical navigation (left sidebar):**
  - RELATED SEARCHES (highlighted in red)
  - Stuffed Animal Dogs
  - Stuffed Animal Cats
  - Small Stuffed Animals
  - Large Stuffed Animals
  - Plush Stuffed Animals
  - Giant Stuffed Animals
  - Disney Stuffed Animals
  - SEARCH HISTORY
  - stuffed animals
  - new york pets
  - See all
  - Clear all - Turn off
- Sponsored results (ads):**
  - StuffedAnimals.com™ - Stuffed Animals, PlushTeddy Bears, Toys ... (highlighted in red)
  - Shop for stuffed animals
  - Stuffed animals Los Angeles
  - Stuffed Animal World - Stuffed Animals, Stuffed Toy Animals
- Organic results:**
  - Buy stuffed animals, plush teddy bears, wholesale stuffed animals, puppets, toys, gifts, plush animals & baby toys by Aurora, Ty, Gund, Steiff, Melissa & Doug, Giant ...
  - Shop for plush animals
  - Shop at our animal Megastore. Over 5,000 products. Free Shipping!
- Side panel (right):**
  - Cute Stuffed Animals
  - Discount Stuffed Animals
  - 1000+ Stuffed Animals
  - MORE ON THIS PAGE
  - POPULAR LINKS

*Be aware that the SERPs are always changing as the engines test new formats and layouts. Thus, the images may be accurate for only a few weeks or months, until Google, Yahoo!, and Microsoft shift to new formats*

## **Algorithm-Based Ranking Systems: Crawling, Indexing, and Ranking**

- ▶ This section primarily covers the way Google and Bing operate, and does not necessarily apply to other search engines that are popular, such as Yandex (Russia), Baidu (China), Seznam (Czechoslovakia), and Naver (Korea).
- ▶ The search engines must execute multiple tasks very well to provide relevant search results.
  - ▶ Crawling and indexing billions of documents (pages and files) on the Web (note that they ignore pages that they consider to be “insignificant[नोंचपात्र],” perhaps because they are perceived[दिखीता] as adding no new value or are not referenced at all on the Web).
  - ▶ Responding to user queries by providing lists of relevant pages.

### **Crawling and Indexing**

- ▶ To offer the best possible results, search engines must attempt to discover all the public pages on the World Wide Web and then present the ones that best match up with the user's search query.
- ▶ The first step in this process is crawling the Web. The search engines start with a seed [beginning –शुरू] set of sites that are known to be very high quality sites, and then visit the links on each page of those sites to discover other web pages.
- ▶ Through links, search engines' automated robots, called crawlers or spiders, can reach the many billions of interconnected documents.
- ▶ Crawling the page would start with loading the page, analyzing its content, and then seeing what other pages it links to.
- ▶ The search engine will then load those other pages and analyze that content as well. This process repeats over and over again until the crawling process is complete.
- ▶ Once the engines have retrieved a page during a crawl, their next job is to parse the code from them and store selected pieces of the pages in massive arrays of hard drives, to be recalled when needed in a query.
- ▶ The first step in this process is to build a dictionary of terms. This is a massive database that catalogs [lists] all the significant terms on each page crawled by a search engine.
- ▶ A lot of other data is also recorded, such as a map of all the pages that each page links to, the anchor text of those links, whether or not those links are considered ads, and more.
- ▶ To accomplish [पूर्ण] the monumental [समाप्त] task of holding data on hundreds of billions (or trillions) of pages that can be accessed in a fraction of a second, the search engines have constructed massive data centers.
- ▶ One key concept in building a search engine is deciding where to begin a crawl of the Web. Although you could theoretically start from many different places on the Web, you would ideally begin your crawl with a trusted seed set of websites.

- Starting with a known trusted set of websites enables search engines to measure how much they trust the other websites that they find through the crawling process.

### **Retrieval and Rankings**

- The next step in this quest occurs when the search engine returns a list of relevant pages on the Web in the order it believes is most likely to satisfy the user.
- This process requires the search engine to scour [ભરકુલ] its corpus [quantity, amount, mass] of hundreds of billions of documents and do two things: first, return only the results that are related to the searcher's query; and second, rank the results in order of perceived [દિનિતો] importance (taking into account the trust and authority associated with the sites).
- Relevance is the degree to which the content of the documents returned in a search matches the intention and terms of the user's query.
- The relevance of a document increases if the page contains terms relevant to the phrase queried by the user, or if links to the page come from relevant pages and use relevant anchor text.
- If your site is not relevant to a query, the search engine does not consider it for inclusion [સમાવેશ] in the search results for that query.
- Importance refers to the relative importance, measured via citation [સંદર્ભઆપો] (the act of one work referencing another, as often occurs in academic and business documents); of a given document that matches the user's query.
- The importance of a given document increases with every other document that references it.
- You can think of importance as a way to determine which page, from a group of equally relevant pages, shows up first in the search results, which is second, and so forth.
- The relative authority of the site, and the trust the search engine has in it, are significant parts of this determination.
- The equation is a bit more complex than this and not all pages are equally relevant. Ultimately, it is the combination of relevance and importance that determines the ranking order.
- Importance and relevance aren't determined manually. The engines craft careful, mathematical equations—algorithms—to sort the wheat from the chaff and to then rank the wheat in order of quality.
- These algorithms often comprise hundreds of components. In the search marketing field, they are often referred to as ranking factors or algorithmic[ગાણિક] ranking criteria.

### **Evaluating Content on a Web Page**

- Search engines place a lot of weight on the content of each web page.

- ➡ After all, it is this content that defines what a page is about, and the search engines do a detailed analysis of each webpage.
- ➡ You can think of this as the search engine performing a detailed analysis of all the words and phrases that appear on a web page, and then building a map of that data that it can use to determine whether or not to show that page in the results when a user enters a related search query.
- ➡ This map, often referred to as a semantic map, is built to help the search engine understand how to match the right web pages with user search queries.
- ➡ If there is no semantic match of the content of a web page to the query, the page has a much lower possibility of showing up in the results page.
- ➡ Therefore, the words you put on your page, and the “theme” of that page, play a huge role in ranking.

### **What Content Can Search Engines “See” on a Web Page?**

- ➡ Search engine crawlers and indexing programs are basically software programs. These programs are extraordinarily powerful.
- ➡ They crawl hundreds of billions of web pages, analyze the content of all these pages, and analyze the way all these pages link to each other.
- ➡ Then they organize this data into a series of databases that enable them to respond to a user search query with a highly tuned set of results in a few tenths of a second.
- ➡ Software is very mechanical, and it can understand only portions of most web pages.
- ➡ The search engine crawler analyzes the raw HTML form of a web page. If you want to see what this looks like, you can do so by using your browser to view the page source.
- ➡ Once you view the source, you will be presented with the exact code for the web page that the web server sent to your browser.
- ➡ This is what the search engine crawler sees (the search engine also sees the HTTP headers for the page).
- ➡ The information the search engine crawler is most interested in is the HTML text on the page.
- ➡ In addition, search engines read a few other elements. One of these is the page title.
- ➡ The title tag is also often (but not always) used as the title of your listing in the search engine results.
- ➡ In addition to the title tag, the search engines read the Meta keywords tag. Here, you can specify a list of keywords that you wish to have associated with the page.
- ➡ Spammers (people who attempt to manipulate search engine results in violation of the search engine guidelines) ruined the SEO value of this tag many years ago, so its value is now negligible [ନେଗ୍ଲିଜ୍ସଲ].
- ➡ Google never used this tag for ranking at all, but Bing seems to make some

reference to it. The Meta description tag has no influence in search engine rankings but it nonetheless plays a key role, as search engines often use it as a part or all of the description for your page in search results.

- ▶ A well-written Meta description can have a significant influence on how many clicks you get on your search listing, so time spent on Meta descriptions is quite valuable.
- ▶ A fourth element that search engines read is the alt attribute for images. The alt attribute was originally intended to allow something to be rendered when viewing of the image is not possible. There were two basic audiences for this:
  - ▶ Vision-impaired people who do not have the option of viewing the images
  - ▶ People who turn off images for faster surfing (this is generally an issue only for those who do not have a broadband connection).
- ▶ Search engines also read the text contained in the alt attribute of an image tag. An image tag is an element that is used to tell a web page to display an image.
- ▶ The alt attribute (in this case, alt="Top Search Agencies") provides some text describing the image. The src= part of the tag gives the location of the image to be displayed.
- ▶ The search engines read the alt attribute and interpret its content to help them determine what the image is about.

### **What Search Engines Cannot See**

- ▶ For instance, although search engines are able to detect that you are displaying an image, they have little idea what the image is a picture of, except for whatever information you provide them in the alt attribute.
- ▶ They can only recognize some very basic types of information within images, such as the presence of a face, or whether images may have pornographic content (by how much flesh tone there is in the image).
- ▶ A search engine cannot tell whether an image is a picture of Bart Simpson, a boat, a house, or a tornado. In addition, search engines will not recognize any text rendered in the image.
- ▶ The search engines cannot see the pictorial aspects [પાસાઓ] of anything contained in Flash. This means that when text is converted into a vector-based outline in Flash, the textual information that search engines can read is lost
- ▶ Audio and video files are also not easy for search engines to read. As with images, the data is not easy to parse. There are a few exceptions where the search engines can extract some limited data, such as ID3 tags within MP3 files, or enhanced podcasts in AAC format with textual "show notes," images.
- ▶ A technology that the search engines cannot see is AJAX. AJAX is a JavaScript-based method for dynamically rendering [અનુવાદ] contents on a web page after retrieving the data from a database, without having to refresh the entire page.
- ▶ This is often used in tools where a visitor to a site can provide some input and the AJAX tool then retrieves and renders the correct content.

- ▶ The problem arises because a script running on the client computer (the user's machine) is responsible for retrieving the content, after receiving some input from the user.
- ▶ This can result in many potentially [possibly संभवित] different outputs. In addition, until that input is received, the content is not present in the HTML of the page, so the search engines cannot see it.
- ▶ As of HTML5, a construct known as the embed tag (<embed>) was created to allow the incorporation of plug-ins into an HTML page. Plug-ins are programs located on the user's computer, not on the web server of your website. This tag is often used to incorporate movies or audio files into a web page.
- ▶ The <embed> tag tells the plug-in where it should look to find the data file to use. Content included through plug-ins is not visible at all to search engines.
- ▶ The search engines recognize an iframes or a frame used to pull in another site's content for what it is, and therefore ignore the content inside the iframes or frame as it is content published by another publisher.
- ▶ In other words, they don't consider content pulled in from another site as part of the unique content of your web page.

### **Determining Searcher Intent and Delivering Relevant, Fresh Content**

- ▶ Modern commercial search engines rely on the science of information retrieval (IR). This science has existed since the middle of the twentieth century, when retrieval systems powered computers in libraries, research facilities, and government labs.
- ▶ Early in the development of search systems, IR scientists realized that two critical components comprised the majority of search functionality: relevance and importance.
- ▶ To measure these factors, search engines perform document analysis (including semantic analysis of concepts across documents) and link (or citation) analysis.

### **Document Analysis and Semantic Connectivity**

- ▶ In document analysis, search engines look at whether they find the search terms in important areas of the document—the title, the metadata, the heading tags, and the body of the text.
- ▶ They also attempt to automatically measure the quality of the document based on document analysis, as well as many other factors.
- ▶ Reliance [dependence, trust, support] on document analysis alone is not enough for today's search engines, so they also look at semantic connectivity. Semantic connectivity refers to words or phrases that are commonly associated with one another.
- ▶ For example, if you see the word aloha you associate it with Hawaii, not Florida.
- ▶ Search engines actively build their own thesauruses and dictionaries to help them determine how certain terms and topics are related.

- ➡ By simply scanning their massive databases of content on the Web, they can use Fuzzy [uncertain, unclear, indistinct] Set Theory and certain equations to connect terms and start to understand web pages/sites more like a human does.
- ➡ The professional SEO practitioner does not necessarily need to use semantic connectivity measurement tools to optimize websites, but for those advanced practitioners who seek every advantage, semantic connectivity measurements can help in each of the following sectors:
  - ▶ Measuring which keyword phrases to target
  - ▶ Measuring which keyword phrases to include on a page about a certain topic
  - ▶ Measuring the relationships of text on other high-ranking sites/pages
  - ▶ Finding pages that provide “relevant” themed links
- ➡ Although the source for this material is highly technical, SEO specialists need only know the principles to obtain valuable information.
- ➡ It is important to keep in mind that although the world of IR incorporates [include, integrates, combines] hundreds of technical and often difficult-to-comprehend [સમજવાનો] terms, these can be broken down and understood even by an SEO novice [શિખાઉ].
- ➡ The following are some common types of searches in the IR field:
  - ▶ **Proximity searches:** A proximity [નિકટતા] search uses the order of the search phrase to find related documents. For example, when you search for “sweet German mustard” you are specifying only a precise [ચોક્કરા] proximity match. If the quotes are removed, the proximity of the search terms still matters to the search engine, but it will now show documents whose contents don’t exactly match the order of the search phrase, such as Sweet Mustard—German.
  - ▶ **Fuzzy logic:** Fuzzy logic technically refers to logic that is not categorically true or false. A common example is whether a day is sunny (e.g., if there is 50% cloud cover, is it still a sunny day?). One way engines use fuzzy logic is to detect and process misspellings.
  - ▶ **Boolean searches:** Boolean searches use Boolean terms such as AND, OR, and NOT. This type of logic is used to expand or restrict which documents are returned in a search.
  - ▶ **Term weighting:** Term weighting refers to the importance of a particular search term to the query. The idea is to weight particular terms more heavily than others to produce superior search results. For example, the word the in a query will receive very little weight in selecting the results because it appears in nearly all English-language documents. There is nothing unique about it, and it does not help in document selection.

## Measuring Content Quality and User Engagement

- ▶ The search engines also attempt to measure the quality and uniqueness of a website's content. One method they may use for doing this is evaluating [મૂલ્યાંકન] the document itself.
- ▶ For example, if a web page has lots of spelling and grammatical errors that can be taken as a sign that little editorial effort was put into that page.
- ▶ The search engines can also analyze the reading level of the document. One popular formula for doing this is the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability Formula, which considers things like the average word length and the number of words in a sentence to determine the level of education needed to be able to understand the sentence.
- ▶ Imagine a scenario [દ્રષ્ટિ] where the products being sold on a page are children's toys, but the reading level calculated suggests that a grade level of a senior in college is required to read the page.
- ▶ This could be another indicator of poor editorial effort. The other method that search engines can use to evaluate the quality of a web page is to measure actual user interaction.
- ▶ For example, if a large number of the users who visit the web page after clicking on a search result immediately return to the search engine and click on the next result, that would be a strong indicator of poor quality.
- ▶ Google has access to a large number of data sources that it can use to measure how visitors interact with your website.
- ▶ Some of those sources include:
  - ▶ **Interaction with web search results:** For example, if a user clicks through on a SERP listing and comes to your site, clicks the Back button, and then clicks on another result in the same set of search results, that could be seen as a negative ranking signal.
  - ▶ Alternatively, if the results below you in the SERPs are getting clicked on more than you are, that could be seen as a negative ranking signal for you and a positive ranking signal for them.
  - ▶ Whether search engines use this signal or not, and how much weight they might put on it, is not known.
  - ▶ **Google Analytics:** It is hard to get a firm handle on just what percentage of websites runs Google Analytics. A 2008 survey of websites by immeria.net showed that Google Analytics had a market share of 59% and the Metric Mail Blog checked the top 1 million sites in Alexa and found that about 50% of those had Google Analytics. Suffice [પૂરતે] it to say that Google is able to collect detailed data about what is taking place on a large percentage of the world's websites. Google Analytics data provides Google with a rich array of data on those sites, including:

- ▶ **Bounce rate:** The percentage of visitors who visit only one page on your website.
- ▶ **Time on site:** The average amount of time spent by users on the site. Note that Google Analytics only receives information when each page is loaded, so if a visitor views only one page, it does not know how much time is spent on that page. More precisely, then, this metric tells you the average time between the loading of the first page and the loading of the last page, but it does not take into account how long visitors spent on the last page loaded.
- ▶ **Page views per visitor:** The average number of pages viewed per visitor on your site.
- ▶ **Google +1 Button:** In April 2011, Google began public testing of a new feature, the +1 button (<http://www.google.com/+1/button/>). This enables users to “vote” for a page, either directly in the search results or on the page itself, thereby identifying their favorite websites for a particular search query.
- ▶ **Chrome Block listExtension:** In February 2011, Google released the Chrome Block list Extension. This provides users of the Chrome browser a way to indicate search results they don’t like.
- ▶ **Google Instant Previews:** Google also offers Instant Previews in its search results. This allows users to see a thumbnail view of the web page behind a search result before deciding to click on it. If a user looks at the preview for your page and then decides not to click on it, this can act as a negative vote for your site.
- ▶ **Google Reader:** Google also provides the world’s most popular RSS feed reader, which provides it with a lot of data on which content is the most engaging.
- ▶ **Goo.gl:** In September 2010, Google released its own URL shortened. This tool allows Google to see what content is being shared and what content is being clicked on, even in closed environments where Google web crawlers are not allowed to go.

### Evaluating Social Media Signals

- ▶ The rise of social media on the Web has created a host of new signals that search engines can consider. Sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ have engendered [ȝɛl] whole new ways for users to share content or indicate that they value it.
- ▶ If a recognized expert shares a piece of content, this may be considered a stronger vote in its favor than if the content is shared by a less well-known person.

- ▶ Using Twitter as an example, search engines could potentially determine people's level of influence by looking at the number of followers they have and how many people they themselves follow.
- ▶ Someone who has hundreds of thousands of followers but only follows a few hundred people herself could be considered more influential than someone who has a large number of followers, but also follows a large number of people.
- ▶ Bing has a partnership with Facebook that allows it to access data on user behavior on Facebook and use that to influence [પ્રભાવ] rankings and the presentation of its search results.
- ▶ For example, if a friend of yours has "Liked" a particular piece of content, it may show up higher in the results for you, and Bing will show a picture of your friend next to the result. This makes sense because we know that people value recommendations from their friends.
- ▶ Google does not have the same access to Facebook data, but has its own social network, Google+, and its companion, the +1 button. With Google's Search, plus Your World, Google makes use of this data in much the same way that Bing uses Facebook data, but since Google owns the Google+ network, it can do more substantial customization of its search results based on that data. Google also sees other connections you have made, such as which people are in your Gmail address book.

### **Problem Words, Disambiguation, and Diversity**

- ▶ Certain words present an ongoing challenge for the search engines. One of the greatest challenges comes in the form of disambiguation [વિભાગના].
- ▶ For example, when someone types in boxers, does he mean the prize fighters, the breed of dog, or the type of underwear?
- ▶ Similarly, the term jaguar may refer to a jungle cat, a car, a football team, an operating system, or a guitar. Which one does the user mean?
- ▶ Search engines deal with these types of ambiguous queries all the time. The two examples offered here have inherent problems with regard to interpretation [આર્થદાન], but the issue of resolving [ઉકેલવા] ambiguities [અનિશ્ચયતા] is much bigger than these extreme cases. For example, if someone types in a query such as cars, does he:
  - ▶ Want to read reviews?
  - ▶ Want to go to a car show?
  - ▶ Want to buy one?
  - ▶ Want to read about new car technologies?
- ▶ The query car is so general that there is no real way to get to the bottom of the searcher's intent based on this one query alone. One way that search engines deal with this is by looking at prior queries by the same searcher, which may provide additional clues to the user's intent. ("Adaptive Search")

## **Where freshness matters**

- ▶ Much of the time, it makes sense for the search engines to deliver results from older sources that have stood the test of time. However, sometimes the response should be from newer sources of information.
- ▶ For example, when there is breaking news, such as an earthquake, the search engines begin to receive queries within seconds, and the first articles typically begin to appear on the Web within 15 minutes.
- ▶ In these types of scenarios, there is a need to discover and index new information in near-real time. Google refers to this concept as query deserves freshness (QDF). According to the New York Times, QDF takes several factors into account, such as:
  - ▶ Search volume
  - ▶ News coverage
  - ▶ Blog coverage
  - ▶ Social signals from Google+, Facebook, Twitter, and other sites
  - ▶ Toolbar data (maybe)
- ▶ QDF applies to up-to-the-minute news coverage, as well as to other scenarios such as hot, new discount deals or new product releases that get strong search volumes and media coverage.

## **Analyzing Ranking Factors**

- ▶ SEOmoz periodically conducts surveys of leading search engine optimizers to determine what they think are the most important ranking factors. Here is a high-level summary of the top nine results:
  - ▶ **Page Level Link Metrics:** This refers to the links as related to the specific page, such as the number of links, the relevance of the links, and the trust and authority of the links received by the page.
  - ▶ **Domain Level Link Authority Features:** Domain level link authority is based on a cumulative link analysis of all the links to the domain. Factors considered include the number of different domains linking to the site, the trust/authority of those domains, the rate at which new inbound links are added, the relevance of the linking domains, and more.
  - ▶ **Page Level Keyword Usage:** This describes use of the keyword term/phrase in particular parts of the HTML code on the page (title element, <h1>s, alt attributes, etc.).
  - ▶ **Domain Level Keyword Usage:** This refers to how keywords are used in the root or subdomain name, and how impactful [અસરકારક] that might be on search engine rankings.
  - ▶ **Page Level Social Metrics:** Social metrics considered include mentions, links, shares, Likes, and other social media site-based metrics. At the time of the survey, the considered sites were Facebook and Twitter. Since then Google has launched Google+, and Search, plus Your World, which would also be included in this definition.
  - ▶ **Domain Level Brand Metrics:** This factor includes search volume on the website's brand name, mentions, whether it has a presence in social media, and other brand-related metrics.
  - ▶ **Page Level Keyword Agnostic Features :** Factors included here are on-page elements such as the number of links on the page, number of internal links, number of followed links, number of NoFollowed links, and other similar factors.[Agnostic –અજ્ઞેયવાઈ , doubting, uncertain, doubtful]
  - ▶ **Page Level Traffic/Query Data:** Elements of this factor include the click-through rate (CTR) to the page in the search results, the bounce rate of visitors to the page, and other similar measurements.
  - ▶ **Domain Level Keyword Agnostic Features:** Major elements of this factor in the survey included the number of hyphens in the domain name, numeric characters in the domain name, and domain name length.

## **Negative Ranking Factors**

- ▶ The SEOmoz survey also identified a number of negative ranking factors. Some of the most significant ones included:

- ▶ **Malware being hosted on the site:** The search engines will act rapidly to penalize [ઇજા] sites that contain viruses or Trojans.
- ▶ **Cloaking:** Search engines want publishers to show the same content to the search engine as is shown to users.
- ▶ **Pages on the site that sell links:** Google has a strong policy against paid links, and sites that sell them may be penalized.
- ▶ **Content that advertises paid links on the site:** As an extension of the prior negative ranking factor, promoting the sale of paid links maybe a negative ranking factor.

### **Other Ranking Factors**

- ▶ The ranking factors we've discussed so far are really just the basics. Search engines potentially factor in many more signals. Some of these include:
  - ▶ **Rate of acquisition of links:** If over time your site has acquired an average of 5 links per day, and then the links suddenly start to come in at a rate of 10 per day, that could be seen as a positive ranking signal. On the other hand, if the rate of new links drops to two per day, that could be a signal that your site has become less relevant. If your site suddenly starts to get 300 new links per day, you have either abruptly [અચાનક] become a lot more relevant or started to acquire links in a spammy way. [acquisition – સંપ્રાદન, gaining, achievement]
  - ▶ **User data:** Another way a search engine can get some data on a user is if the user creates a profile with the search engine and voluntarily provides some information. A simple example would be a language preference. If the user indicates he prefers Portuguese, the search engine can tailor the results to that preference. Search engines can also look at the search history for a given user. Basically, the search engine maintains a log of all the searches you have performed when you are logged in. Based on this, it can see that you have been checking out luxury cars recently, and can use that knowledge to tweak [અટકો, pinch, twist, pull] the results you see after you search on jaguar. This is sometimes referred to as 'adaptive search'.

### **Using Advanced Search Techniques**

- ▶ One of the basic tools of the trade for an SEO practitioner is the search engines themselves. They provide a rich array of commands that can be used to perform advanced research, diagnosis, and competitive analysis. Some of the more basic operators are:
- ▶ **-keyword:** Excludes the keyword from the search results. For example, loans - student shows results for all types of loans except student loans.

- ➡ **+keyword:** Allows for forcing the inclusion of a keyword. This is particularly useful for including stopwords (keywords that are normally stripped from a search query because they usually do not add value, such as the word the) in a query, or if your keyword is getting converted into multiple keywords through automatic stemming.
- ➡ **"Key phrase":** Shows search results for the exact phrase—for example, "Seo Company".
- ➡ **Keyword1 OR keyword2:** Shows results for at least one of the keywords—for example, Google OR Yahoo!

### Google Advanced Search Operators

Search for an exact word or phrase  "search"	Use quotes to search for an exact word or set of words on a web page. This is helpful when searching for song lyrics or a line from a book. But only use this if you're looking for an exact word or phrase, otherwise you'll exclude many helpful results by mistake.  "imagine all the people"
Exclude a word  -search	Add a dash (-) before a word or site to exclude all results that include that word. This is especially useful for words with multiple meanings, like Jaguar the car brand and jaguar the animal.  jaguar speed -car  pandas -site:wikipedia.org
Search within a site or domain  site:	Get results only from certain sites or domains. For example, you can find all mentions of "olympics" on the NBC website, or any .gov websites.  olympics site:nbc.com  olympics site:.gov
Search for pages that link to a URL  link:	Find pages that link to a certain page. For example, you can find all the pages that link to google.com.  link:google.com
Search for pages that are similar to a URL	Find sites that are similar to a URL you already know. If you search for related sites to the Time.com, you'll find other news publication sites you may be interested in.

related:	related:time.com
Fill in the blank *  OR	Add an asterisk within a search as a placeholder for any unknown or wildcard terms. Use with quotation marks to find variations of that exact phrase or to remember words in the middle of a phrase.  "a * saved is a * earned"  If you want to search for pages that may have just one of several words, include OR (capitalized) between the words. Without the OR, your results would typically show only pages that match both terms.  world cup location 2014 OR 2018
Search for a number range ..  info:  cache:	Separate numbers by two periods without spaces (...) to see results that contain numbers in a given range of things like dates, prices, and measurements.  camera \$50..\$100  Get information about a URL, including the cached version of the page, similar pages, and pages that link to the site.  info:google.com  See what a page looks like the last time Google crawled the site.  cache:washington.edu

## Vertical Search Engines

- ▶ Vertical search is the term people sometimes use for specialty or niche [நிசை] search engines that focus on a limited data set.
- ▶ Examples of vertical search solutions provided by the major search engines are image, video, news, and blog searches.
- ▶ These may be standard offerings from these vendors, but they are distinct from the engines' general web search functions.

## **Image search**

- ▶ All three of the big search engines offer image search capability. Basically, image search engines limit the data that they crawl, search, and return in results to images. This means files that are in GIF, TIF, JPG, and other similar formats.
- ▶ Historically, to determine an image's content, search engines have had to rely on text surrounding the image, the alt attribute within the imgtag, and the image filename.
- ▶ However, Google now offers a search by image feature you can drag an image file into the Google Image Search box and it will attempt to identify the subject matter of the image and show relevant results.
- ▶ Optimizing for image search is its own science.

### **Video search**

- ▶ As with image search, video search engines focus on searching specific types of files on the Web—in this case, video files in formats such as MPEG, AVI, and others.
- ▶ A very large number of searches are also performed in video search engines. YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>) is the dominant [պահ] video search engine, with over 3.8 billion searches performed in June 2011.
- ▶ There is significant traffic to be gained by optimizing for video search engines and participating in them.
- ▶ Once again, these are binary files and the search engine cannot easily tell what is inside them.
- ▶ This means optimization is constrained to data in the header of the video and on the surrounding web page.
- ▶ However, each search engine is investing in technology to analyze images and videos to extract much information as possible. For example, the search engines are experimenting with OCR technology to look for text within images, and other advanced technologies are being used to analyze video content.

### **News search**

- ▶ News search is also unique. News search results operate on a different time schedule, as they must be very, very timely.
- ▶ Few people want to read the baseball scores from a week ago when several other games have been played since then.
- ▶ News search engines must be able to retrieve information in real time and provide nearly instantaneous [դրական] responses.

### **Blog search**

- ▶ Google has implemented a search engine focused just on blog search called Google Blog Search (misnamed because it is an RSS feed engine and not a blog engine). This search engine will respond to queries, but only search blogs (more accurately, feeds) to determine the results.

### **Book search**

- ▶ The major search engines also offer a number of specialized offerings. One highly vertical search engine is Google Book Search, which specifically searches only content found within books

### **Shopping search**

- ▶ Microsoft also has some unique vertical search properties. One of the more interesting ones is its vertical shopping search solution.

### **Universal Search/Blended Search**

- ▶ Google made a big splash in 2007 when it announced Universal Search. This was the notion of integrating images, videos, and results from other vertical search properties directly into the main web search results.
- ▶ The other search engines quickly followed suit and began offering vertical search integration before the end of 2007.
- ▶ People now refer to this general concept as Blended Search (since Universal Search is specifically associated with Google).
- ▶ A wide range of vertical data sets have been integrated into Google's Universal Search, as well as into the Blended Search results of the other search engines.
- ▶ The advent [આગમન] of Blended Search has significantly increased the opportunity for publishers with matching vertical data sets (such as a rich music library) to gain significant additional traffic to their sites by optimizing these data sets for the appropriate vertical search.

### **Meta search**

- ▶ Meta search engines are search engines that aggregate results from multiple search engines and present them to the user. The two best-known ones are MetaCrawler.com and Dogpile.com.

# Determining SEO Objective and Defining Site Audience

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## **Introduction**

- ▶ Before you can even begin to optimize your web site for search engines, you need to have a search engine optimization plan in place.
- ▶ This will help you create SEO goals and keep those goals in focus as the purpose of your site changes, and as the methods for search engine optimization change — and they will change.
- ▶ Your SEO plan will help you see where you need to concentrate your efforts at any given time. This need will change. In the beginning, you're most likely to be focusing on getting started with SEO, which means you'll be wrestling keyword issues, adding metadata tags, and building content.
- ▶ However, after you've put all of your SEO strategies into place, the focus of your SEO activities should become more focused on maintaining and updating the elements of SEO that help you rank well. Note that I said your efforts will change, not that they will end.
- ▶ Once you've started SEO, if you plan to continue using it, you'll need to constantly monitor and update your SEO plan, strategies, and activities. There was a time when the only thing you had to worry about was which keywords or links would be most effective for getting your site ranked high in relevant search results.
- ▶ Today, very few search engines focus on a single aspect of search engine optimization. This means that over time, those who focused only on keywords or only on links have found themselves with diminished [əð] SEO effectiveness.
- ▶ Web sites today are — or should be — living organisms. A successful website grows and changes constantly. From simply adding new content to something as drastic as complete site redesign, a good web site will look different from one year to the next and sometimes from one month to the next.

## **Understanding why you need SEO**

- ▶ Before you can understand the reasons for using SEO, it might be good to have a definition of what SEO — search engine optimization — is.
- ▶ SEO is the science of customizing elements of your web site to achieve the best possible search engine ranking.
- ▶ That's really all there is to search engine optimization, but as simple as it sounds, don't let it fool you. Both internal and external elements of the site affect the way it's ranked in any given search engine, so all of these elements should be taken into consideration. Good SEO can be very difficult to achieve, and great SEO seems pretty well impossible at times.

- ▶ Why is search engine optimization so important? Think of it this way: If you're standing in a crowd of a few thousand people and someone is looking for you, how will they find you? In a crowd that size, everyone blends together. Now suppose there is a system that separates groups of people.
- ▶ Maybe if you're a woman you're wearing red and if you're a man you're wearing blue. Now anyone looking for you will have to look through only half the people in the crowd. You can further narrow the group of people to be searched by adding additional differentiators until you have a small enough group that a *search query* can be executed and the desired person can be easily found.
- ▶ Your web site is much like that one person in the huge crowd [નીચ]. In the larger picture your site is nearly invisible, even to the search engines that send crawlers out to catalog the Web.
- ▶ To get your site noticed, both by crawlers and visitors, certain elements must stand out. That's why you need search engine optimization — to help you focus on the *right* elements.
- ▶ By accident, your site will surely land in a search engine; and it's likely to rank within the first few thousand results without any effort from you. A crawler will eventually [શક્તિ] find the site and bury [દર્ખાવી] it somewhere in the results with every other web site on the same topic.
- ▶ Clearly, that's not good enough. Being ranked on the ninth or tenth page of search results is tantamount [સમાન] to being invisible. To be noticed, your site should be ranked much higher.
- ▶ Ideally, you want your site to be displayed somewhere on the first two to three pages of results. Most people won't look beyond the third page, if they get even that far.
- ▶ Indeed, it's the sites that land on the first page of results that get the most traffic, and traffic is translated into revenue [આપક], which is the ultimate goal of search engine optimization.

### **Setting SEO Goals and Objective's**

- ▶ You understand how important it is to put time into SEO. How exactly do you go about it? One thing you *don't* do is begin trying to implement SEO strategies without defining some sort of goal you want to accomplish.
- ▶ One of the greatest failings of many SEO plans, like all technology plans, is the lack of a clearly defined goal. The goal for your SEO plan should be built around your business needs, and it's not something every business requires at the same level.
- ▶ For example, if you run a simple blog, in-depth SEO might be more expense than it's worth; but if your plans for that blog are to turn it into a brand, then

something a little more than the simplest of SEO strategies might be just what you need to build the traffic that begins to establish your brand.

- ▶ If you have a larger business, say a web site that sells custom-made silk-flower arrangements, one way to increase your business (some estimate by more than 50 percent) is to invest time, money, and considerable effort into optimizing your site for search.
- ▶ Just don't do it without a goal in mind. In the case of a silk-flower web site, one goal might be to increase the amount of traffic your web site receives. Another might be to increase your exposure to potential customers outside your geographic region.
- ▶ Those are both good reasons to implement an SEO plan. Another reason you might consider investing in SEO is to increase your revenues, which you can do by funneling [ପ୍ରାଣୀ] site visitors through a sales transaction while they are visiting your web site.
- ▶ SEO can help with that, too. In other words, before you even begin to put together an SEO plan, the first thing you need to do is determine what goal you want to achieve with that plan. Be sure it is a well-articulated [କଲ୍ପନା] and specifically defined goal, too.
- ▶ The more specific it is, the closer you will come to hitting it. For example, a goal to "increase web-site traffic" is far too broad. Of course you want to increase your web-site traffic.
- ▶ That's the overarching [କମ୍ପାନୀ] goal of any SEO plan. However, if you change that goal to "increase the number of visitors who complete a transaction of at least \$25," you are much more likely to implement the SEO that will indeed help you reach that goal. Make sure the goal is specific and attainable [ପ୍ରାଣୀ].
- ▶ Otherwise, it's very easy to become unfocused with your SEO efforts. In some cases, you can spend all your time chasing SEO and never accomplish [ପରିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ] anything. As mentioned previously, search engines regularly change the criteria [ମାପଣ] for ranking sites.
- ▶ They started doing this when internal, incoming, and external links became a factor in SEO. Suddenly, every webmaster was rushing to add as many additional links as possible, and often those links were completely unrelated to the site.
- ▶ That led [ଦେଖି] to a sudden and often meaningless rise in page links. It wasn't long before the linking criteria had to be qualified with additional requirements. Today, link strategies are quite complex and must abide [ପାଇନ୍] by a set of rules or your web site could be banned from some search engines for what's called *SEO spam*, or the practice of targeting specific element or criteria of search engine ranking with the intention of becoming one of the highest-ranked sites on the Web.

- ➡ If you establish an SEO goal, however, you're more likely to have a balanced traffic flow, which will improve your search engine ranking naturally. In addition to well-focused goals, you should also consider how your SEO goals align with your business goals.
- ➡ Business goals should be the overall theme for everything you do with your website, and if your SEO goals are not created with the intent of furthering those business goals, you'll find that the SEO goals ultimately fail.
- ➡ Make sure that any goal you set for optimizing your site for search is a goal that works well within the parameters that are set by your overall business goals.
- ➡ Finally, remain flexible at all times. It's fine to set a goal, or even a set of goals, and hold tightly to them. Just don't hold so tightly that the goals get in the way of performing great SEO activities.
- ➡ SEO goals and plans, like any others, must be flexible and grow with your organization. For this reason, it's always a good idea to review your SEO goals and plans periodically — at least every six months and quarterly is better.

### **Strategic Goals SEO Practitioners Can Fulfill**

- ➡ Although SEO is not a cure [ઉપયાર]-all for businesses, it can fit into a company's overall business strategy in several critical ways.

### **Visibility (Branding)**

- ➡ Most consumers assume that top placement in the search engines is like a stamp of approval on a business. Surely a company could not rank highly in the search results if it were not one of the best in its field, right?
- ➡ If you are an experienced search engine user, you probably recognize that the preceding statement is not true. However, the fact is that many consumers, and even business searchers, interpret high search rankings as an implicit endorsement.
- ➡ Therefore, for critical brand terms, the SEO practitioner should work toward improving the search engine rankings for the website he is working on. There is a subtlety [સૂક્ષ્મતાના, refinement] here, though.
- ➡ Few businesses will need help for ranking on their company name; that is, if your company name is Acme Widget Co., you will most likely rank #1 for that search term even with little SEO effort.
- ➡ There are a few reasons for this, one of the most important being that many of the inbound links to your site will use your company name as the anchor text, and very few links will be given to other websites using your company name as the anchor text.
- ➡ However, if you sell solar panels, you will want to rank well for the search term solar panels. When users see you ranking highly on that search term, they will assume you are one of the best places to buy solar panels.

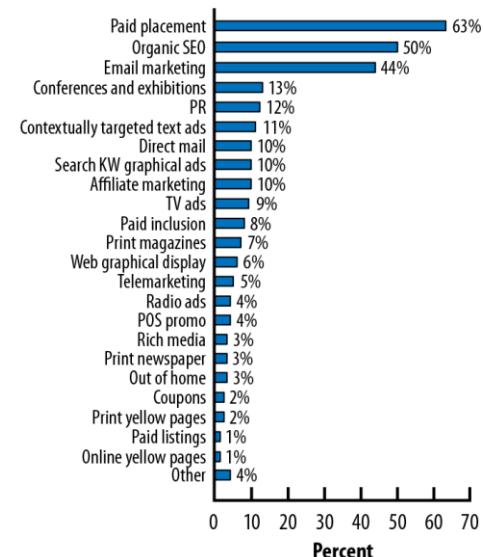
## Website Traffic

- ▶ Long gone are the days of a “build it and they will come” paradigm on the Web. Today’s environment is highly competitive, and you need great SEO to ensure targeted, high-quality traffic to your site.
- ▶ Experienced SEO practitioners know that users search for products, services, and information using an extraordinarily wide variety of search queries and query types. An SEO professional performs keyword research to determine which search queries people actually use. For example, when searching for a set of golf clubs, some users may type in left handed golf clubs as a search query.
- ▶ Such users may not even know that a company specializing in this product exists until they perform that search. Or, if they have at one time learned about such a company, they might not remember enough about it to seek out the company’s website directly.
- ▶ Capturing that traffic would provide the company with incremental sales of its golf clubs that it probably [કણાય] would not have gotten otherwise. Knowing that, the SEO process works on a site architecture strategy and a link-building strategy to help the site’s pages achieve competitive search engine rankings for these types of terms.

## High ROI

- ▶ Improving visibility and driving traffic are nice, but the most important goal is to achieve the goals of your organization. For most organizations, that means generating sales, leads, or advertising revenue. For others, it may mean the promotion of a particular message.
- ▶ An important component of SEO is to deliver not just traffic, but relevant traffic that has the possibility of converting. The great thing about SEO is that it can result in dramatically improved website ROI.
- ▶ Whether you are selling products and services, advertising and looking for branding value, or trying to promote a specific viewpoint [દ્રષ્ટિભિંદુ, વિચાર] to the world, a well-designed SEO strategy can result in a very high return on investment when contrasted with other methods of marketing.
- ▶ For many organizations, SEO brings a higher ROI when compared to TV, print, and radio campaigns. Traditional media is not in danger of being replaced by

## Search still rules ROI



SEO, but SEO can provide some high-margin returns that complement and enhance the use of offline media.

- ▶ Data released by SEMPO.org in early 2009 shows that organic SEO is considered one of the very highest ROI activities for businesses (see Figure).

### **Every SEO Plan Is Custom**

- ▶ There is no such thing as a cookie-cutter SEO plan, and for this, all parties on the SEO bandwagon[વધુને વધુ લોકો સંકળાય તેવી પ્રવૃત્તિ] should rejoice [આનંદ]. The ever-changing, dynamic nature of the search marketing industry requires constant diligence [ખાત, carefulness].
- ▶ SEO professionals must maintain a research process for analyzing how the search landscape is changing, because search engines strive to continuously evolve [બદલાય] to improve their services and monetization.
- ▶ This environment provides search engine marketers with a niche [વિશિષ્ટ] within which the demand for their services is all but guaranteed for an indefinite [અનિશ્ચિયત] period of time, and it provides advertisers with the continuous opportunity, either independently or through outside consulting, to achieve top rankings for competitive target searches for their businesses.
- ▶ Organizations should take many factors into account when pursuing an SEO strategy, including:
  - ▶ What the organization is trying to promote
  - ▶ Target market
  - ▶ Brand
  - ▶ Website structure
  - ▶ Current site content
  - ▶ Ease with which the content and site structure can be modified
  - ▶ Any immediately available content
  - ▶ Available resources for developing new content
  - ▶ Competitive landscape
  - ▶ And so on...

### **Developing an SEO Plan Prior to Site Development**

- ▶ It is widely understood in the industry that search engine optimization should be built in, as early as possible, to the entire site development strategy, from choosing a content management system (CMS) and planning site architecture to developing on-page content.

- ▶ SEO practitioners have significant input in both of these areas. Of course, many businesses learn about the need for SEO only after they have built their sites, in which case the time to start is now.
- ▶ SEO plans have many moving parts, and SEO decisions can have a significant impact on other departments, such as development, other marketing groups, and sales.
- ▶ Getting that input as soon as possible will bring the best results for a business at the least possible cost (imagine that you develop your whole site and then learn you need to replace the CMS—that would be very, very painful!).

### **Business Factors That Affect the SEO Plan**

- ▶ Here are some examples of business issues that can impact SEO:
- ▶ **Revenue/business model:** It makes a difference to the SEO practitioner if the purpose of the site is to sell products, sell advertising, or obtain leads.
- ▶ **Target customers:** Who are you trying to reach? This could be an age group, a gender group, or as specific as people looking to buy a house within a 25-mile radius of Orlando, FL.
- ▶ **Competitor strategies:** The competitive landscape [scenery, site, view] is another big factor in your SEO plan. Competition may be strongly entrenched [પોતાઓતાની જરૂર] in one portion of the market online, and it may make sense to focus on a different segment. Or you may be the big dog in your market but you have specific competitors you want to fend off [આકાશીએ].
- ▶ **Branding goals:** There may be terms that it is critical for you to own, for branding reasons.
- ▶ **Budget for content development:** An important part of link building is ensuring the quality of your content, as well as your capacity to commit to the ongoing development of high-quality on-page site content.
- ▶ **How your potential customers search for products like yours:** Understanding what customers do when they are searching for products or services like yours is one of the most basic functions of SEO. This involves mapping the actual search queries your target customers use when they go to a search engine to solve their current problem.

### **Understanding Your Audience and Finding Your Niche**

- ▶ A nontrivial [દુષ્ટ ભાગ] part of an SEO plan is figuring out who you are targeting with your website. This is not always that easy to determine [નક્કી]. As you will see in this section, many factors enter into this, including the competition, the particular strengths or weaknesses of your own company, and more.

## Mapping Your Products and Services

- Successful SEO requires a thorough understanding of the business itself. What products, services, and types of information and resources does your organization have to offer?

## Content Is King

- One aspect [પાસુ] of determining the desired [જરૂરી] audience for your website is determining who you want to reach, which requires an understanding of what you have to offer visitors to your site, both now and in the future.
- You may have a deep library of “how to” content, great videos, a unique photo gallery, or an awesome tool that people are interested in using. Each of these can be valuable in building a world-class website that does well in the search engines.
- The content you have available to you will affect your keyword research and site architecture, as your site content is the major source of information that search engines use to determine what your site is about.

## Segmenting Your Site’s Audience

- Let’s not forget the audience itself! It is important for the SEO practitioner to understand the target audience.
- For example, Site A may be a website that sells gadgets. As a result, the site’s developers go out and implement a brilliant campaign to rank for the terms they consider relevant. Being young and energetic[મહેનતુ], they focus on the way their peers search for gadgets—but what if the target audience for the gadgets Site A sells are age 50 or older?
  - womens shoes
  - womens wide shoes
  - womens dress shoes
  - womens wide width shoes
  - womens running shoes
  - large size womens shoes
  - buy womens designer shoes online
  - womens golf shoes
  - womens designer shoes
  - extra wide womens shoes
  - womens dc shoes
  - womens high heel shoes
  - discount womens shoes
  - womens size 12 shoes
- Uh-oh, Site A is in trouble again. Why? The target audience for Site A (the over-50 crowd) may use different search terms than the younger generation to search for gadgets, which means Site A may well be bringing in search traffic from people who are not interested in its products, and not bringing in traffic from those who might be!
  - mens shoes
  - mens dress shoes
  - mens golf shoes
  - dolce and gabbana mens shoes
  - dr scholls mens shoes
  - mens casual shoes
  - mens shoes wide widths
  - get new balance mens shoes
  - gucci mens shoes
  - mens dress shoes in chicago
  - mens water shoes
  - mens gucci shoes
  - mens work shoes
  - mens sperry shoes
- Similar things can happen with gender. For example, women and men may not search for their shoes the same way, as shown in Figure, which lists the top shoe-related search terms from Wordtracker.com.

## SEO for Raw Traffic

- ▶ Optimizing for search engines and creating keyword-targeted content helps a site rank for key search terms, which typically leads to direct traffic and referring links as more and more people find, use, and enjoy what you've produced.
- ▶ Thousands of sites on the Web leverage [વાળ] this traffic to serve advertising, directly monetizing the traffic sent from the engines. From banner ads to contextual services [સંદર્ભ સેવાઓ] such as Google's AdSense to affiliate [સહલગન, associate, partner, member] programs and beyond, online advertising spending has become a massive industry.
- ▶ Its value is projected to reach \$35.4 billion in the US alone in 2012, with local online advertising comprising \$8.9 billion of that total.
- ▶ Here are some factors to think about when considering SEO for raw traffic:
- ▶ **When to employ SEO for raw traffic:** Use it when you can monetize traffic without actions or financial transactions taking place on your site (usually through advertising).
- ▶ **Keyword targeting:** Keyword targeting in this scenario can be very broad [ખૂબ જ વાપદ]. The goal here isn't typically to select specific keywords, but rather to create lots of high-quality content that naturally targets interesting/searched-for terms.
- ▶ **Page and content creation/optimization:** A shallow [છીછરા], highly crawlable link structure is critical to getting all of your content indexed—follow good information architecture practices and use intelligent, detailed category and subcategory structures to get the most benefit out of your work. You'll also need to employ good on-page optimization (titles, headlines, internal linking, etc.) and make your articles easy to share and optimized for viral spreading

### SEO for Ecommerce Sales

- ▶ One of the most direct monetization strategies for SEO is driving relevant traffic to an ecommerce shop to boost [ઓચકી બેચુણ] sales. Search traffic is among the best quality available on the Web, primarily because a search user has expressed a specific goal through her query, and when this matches a product or brand the web store carries, conversion rates are often extremely high.
- ▶ **When to employ SEO for ecommerce sales:** Use it when you have products/services that are directly for sale on your website.
- ▶ **Keyword targeting:** Paid search advertising is an excellent way to test the efficacy [અસરકારકતા] and potential ROI of keyword targets. Find those that have reasonable traffic and convert well, and pursue [પીછે]them further. You'll often find that the more specific the query is—brand-inclusive, product-inclusive, and so on—the more likely the visitors are to make the purchase.

- ▶ **Page and content creation/optimization:** You'll typically need to do some serious link building, along with internal optimization, to achieve high rankings for competitive, high-value keywords that bring in conversion-focused traffic.

## **SEO for Mindshare/Branding**

- ▶ A less popular but equally powerful application of SEO is its use for branding purposes. Bloggers, social media/community websites, content producers, news outlets, and dozens of other web publishing archetypes [પ્રાચીન બાબતોને પૌરાણિક કથામાં, prototypes, standards, and models] have found tremendous [જબરદસ્ત] value in appearing atop the SERPs and using the resulting exposure [નુદ્વું કરવું, contact, experience] to bolster [ચડાવવા] their brand recognition and authority.
  - ▶ **When to employ SEO for mindshare/branding:** Using it when branding or communicating a message is your goal. If you do not have direct monetization goals for the moment or for the foreseeable [હજીબના] future, this is the approach for you.
  - ▶ **Keyword targeting:** A keyword focus is less critical [જટિલ, જોખમી કે વિનાકરક serious, dangerous] here—you'll likely have a few broad terms that receive the high traffic you want, but the long tail may be far more achievable and the better target. Focus on keywords that are going to bring you visitors who are likely to be interested in and remember your brand.
  - ▶ **Page and content creation/optimization:** Make an accessible site, use good link structure, apply best practices, and focus on links for domain authority rather than chasing after specific keywords.

# SEO for Lead Generation and Direct Marketing

- ▶ Millions of search queries have commercial intents that can't be (or currently aren't) fulfilled directly online. These can include searches for services such as legal consulting, contract construction, commercial loan requests, alternative energy providers, or virtually any service or product people source via the Web.
  - ▶ **When to employ SEO for lead generation and direct marketing:** Use it when you have a non-e-commerce product/service/goal that you want users to accomplish on your site or for which you are hoping to attract inquiries/direct contact over the Web.
  - ▶ **Keyword targeting:** As with ecommerce, choose phrases [શબ્દસમૂહો] that convert well, have reasonable traffic, and have previously performed in PPC campaigns.
  - ▶ **Page and content creation/optimization:** Although you might think it would be easier to rank high in the SERPs for lead-generation programs than for ecommerce, it is often equally challenging. You'll need a solid combination of on-site optimization and external link building to many different pages on the site

(with good anchor text) to be competitive in the more challenging arenas [સ્ટેડિયમ, stadium, fields, rings].

## **SEO for Reputation Management**

- ➡ Since one's own name—whether personal or corporate—is one's identity, establishing and maintaining the reputation associated with that identity is generally of great interest.
- ➡ Imagine that you search for your brand name in a search engine and high up in the search results is a web page that is highly critical of your organization.
- ➡ SEO for reputation management is a process for neutralizing [નિષ્કાય, deactivating] negative mentions of your name in the SERPs. In this type of SEO project, you would strive [કરું] to occupy additional spots [સ્પોટ્સ] in the top 10 results to push the critical listing lower, and hopefully off the first page. You may accomplish this using social media, major media, bloggers, your own sites and subdomains, and various other tactics [યુચિતાઓ, strategies, policies].
- ➡ **When to employ SEO for reputation management:** If you're trying to either protect your brand from negative results appearing on page 1 or push down already existing negative content, reputation management SEO is the only path to success.
- ➡ **Keyword targeting:** Chances are this is very easy—the keyword you are targeting is your personal name, your brand name, or some common variant (and you already know what it is). You might want to use keyword research tools just to see whether there are popular variants [અલો, alternatives, options] you're missing.
- ➡ **Page and content creation/optimization:** Unlike the other SEO tactics, reputation management involves optimizing pages on many different domains to demote negative listings. This involves using social media profiles, public relations, press releases, and links from networks of sites you might own or control, along with classic optimization of internal links and on-page elements. It is certainly among the most challenging of SEO practices, especially in Google, where the use of the query deserves diversity [વિવિધતા] (QDD) algorithm can mean you have to work much harder to pushdown negatives because of how it favors diverse content.

## **SEO for Ideological Influence**

- ➡ For those seeking to sway [પ્રભાવ, influence, control, and grip] public (or private) opinion about a particular topic, SEO can be powerful tool. By promoting ideas and content within the search results for queries likely to be made by those seeking information about a topic, you can influence the perception [દ્રષ્ટિ, સમજ] of

even very large groups. Politicians and political groups and individuals are the most likely employers of this tactic, but it can certainly be applied to any subject, from the theological [જ્ઞાનવિદ્યા સંબંધી, religious, spiritual] to the technical or civic [નાગરિક].

- ➡ **When to employ SEO for ideological influence:** Use it when you need to change minds or influence decisions/thinking around subject—for example, a group of theoretical physicists[જ્ઞાનવિદ્યારૂપી] attempting to get more of their peers[સાથીદારોએ] to consider the possibility of alternative universes as a dark matter source.
- ➡ **Keyword targeting:** It's tough to say for certain, but if you're engaging [આકર્ષક] in these types of campaigns, you probably know the primary keywords you're chasing and can use keyword research query expansion to find others.
- ➡ **Page and content creation/optimization:** This is classic SEO, but with a twist. Since you're engaging in ideological [વિચારિક] warfare [યુદ્ધ] in theSERPs, chances are you've got allies you can rally to the cause. Leverage your combined links and content to espouse [આપનાવવું] your philosophical [logical, theoretical] preferences.

### **Advanced Methods for Planning and Evaluation**

- ➡ There are many methodologies for business planning. One of the better-known ones is theSWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. There are also methodologies [પદ્ધતિઓ] for ensuring that the plan objectives are the right type of objectives, such as the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, TimeLine) plan.
- ➡ We will take a look at both of these in the context [સંદર્ભ] of SEO.The point of a SWOT analysis is to help you develop a strong business strategy by making sure you've considered all of your business's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats it faces in the marketplace.
- ➡ As you might have guessed from that last sentence, S.W.O.T. is an acronym [અક્રોમિન] that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A SWOT analysis is an organized list of your business's greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the company (think: reputation, patents, location).
- ➡ You can change them over time but not without some work. Opportunities and threats are external (think: suppliers, competitors, prices)—they are out there in the market, happening whether you like it or not. You can't change them.
- ➡ Existing businesses can use a SWOT analysis, at any time, to assess a changing environment and respond proactively [સંકટિશ]. In fact, I recommend conducting a strategy review meeting at least once a year that begins with a SWOT analysis.

- ▶ New businesses should use a SWOT analysis as a part of their planning process. There is no “one size fits all” plan for your business, and thinking about your new business in terms of its unique “SWOTs” will put you on the right track right away, and save you from a lot of headaches [માથાનો દુઃખાવો] later on.

## **How to Conduct a SWOT Analysis**

- ▶ To get the most complete, objective results, a SWOT analysis is best conducted by a group of people with different perspectives [દ્વિતીય, viewpoint, standpoints, and sides] and stakes in your company. Management, sales, customer service, and even customers can all contribute valid insight [ચૂઝુણ, vision, and understanding].
- ▶ Moreover, the SWOT analysis process is an opportunity to bring your team together and encourage their participation in and adherence [પાણ] to your company’s resulting strategy.
- ▶ A SWOT analysis is typically conducted using a four-square SWOT analysis template, but you could also just make lists for each category. Use the method that makes it easiest for you to organize and understand the results.

## **Questions to Ask During a SWOT Analysis**

- ▶ Questions below to help you develop each section of your SWOT analysis. There are certainly other questions you could ask; these are just meant to get you started.

### ***Strengths (internal, positive factors)***

- ▶ Strengths describe the positive attributes, tangible [ખૂલ્દ, touchable, physical] and intangible, internal to your organization. They are within your control.
  - ▶ What do you do well?
  - ▶ What internal resources do you have? Think about the following:
    - ▶ Positive attributes of people, such as knowledge, background, education, credentials, network, reputation, or skills.
    - ▶ Tangible assets of the company, such as capital, credit, existing customers or distribution channels, patents, or technology.
  - ▶ What advantages do you have over your competition?
  - ▶ Do you have strong research and development capabilities? Manufacturing facilities?
  - ▶ What other positive aspects, internal to your business, add value or offer you a competitive advantage?

### ***Weaknesses (internal, negative factors)***

- ▶ Weaknesses are aspects of your business that detract [ઘટાડ્ય] from the value you offer or place you at a competitive disadvantage. You need to enhance these areas in order to compete with your best competitor.
  - ▶ What factors that are within your control detract from your ability to obtain or maintain a competitive edge?

- ▶ What areas need improvement to accomplish your objectives or compete with your strongest competitor?
- ▶ What does your business lack (for example, expertise or access to skills or technology)?
- ▶ Does your business have limited resources?
- ▶ Is your business in a poor location?

### ***Opportunities (external, positive factors)***

- ➔ Opportunities are external attractive factors that represent reasons your business is likely to prosper.
- ▶ What opportunities exist in your market or the environment that you can benefit from?
  - ▶ Is the perception of your business positive?
  - ▶ Has there been recent market growth or have there been other changes in the market create an opportunity?
  - ▶ Is the opportunity ongoing, or is there just a window for it? In other words, how critical is your timing?

### ***Threats (external, negative factors)***

- ➔ Threats include external factors beyond your control that could place your strategy, or the business itself, at risk. You have no control over these, but you may benefit by having contingency [આકાશીક, eventuality, possibility] plans to address them if they should occur.
- ▶ Who are your existing or potential competitors?
  - ▶ What factors beyond your control could place your business at risk?
  - ▶ Are there challenges created by an unfavorable trend or development that may lead to deteriorating [સતત કાળી, failing, weakening] revenues or profits?
  - ▶ What situations might threaten [બાધા, pressure, frighten] your marketing efforts?
  - ▶ Has there been a significant change in supplier prices or the availability of raw materials?
  - ▶ What about shifts in consumer behavior, the economy, or government regulations that could reduce your sales?
  - ▶ Has a new product or technology been introduced that makes your products, equipment, or services obsolete

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Knowledge:</b> Our competitors are pushing boxes. But we know systems, networks, programming, and data management.</li> <li>● <b>Relationship selling:</b> We get to know our customers, one by one.</li> <li>● <b>History:</b> We've been in our town forever. We have the loyalty of customers and vendors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Price and volume:</b> The major stores pushing boxes can afford to sell for less.</li> <li>● <b>Brand power:</b> We can't match the competitor's full-page advertising in the Sunday paper. We don't have the national brand name.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Training:</b> The major stores don't provide training, but as systems become more complex, training is in greater demand.</li> <li>● <b>Service:</b> As our target market needs more service, our competitors are less likely than ever to provide it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>The larger price-oriented store:</b> When they advertise low prices in the newspaper, our customers think we are not giving them good value.</li> <li>● <b>The computer as appliance.</b> Volume buying of computers as products in boxes. People think they need our services less.</li> </ul>

[અપદાર્થ, outdated, out fashioned]?

### Example of a SWOT Analysis

- ➡ For illustration, here's a brief SWOT example from a hypothetical, medium-sized computer store in the United States:

### Developing Strategies from Your SWOT

- ➡ Once you have identified and prioritized your SWOT results, you can use them to develop short-term and long-term strategies for your business. After all, the true value of this exercise is in using the results to maximize the positive influences on your business and minimize the negative ones.
- ➡ But how do you turn your SWOT results into strategies? One way to do this is to consider how your company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats overlap with each other. This is sometimes called a TOWS analysis.
- ➡ For example, look at the strengths you identified, and then come up with ways to use those strengths to maximize the opportunities (these are strength-opportunity strategies).
- ➡ Then, look at how those same strengths can be used to minimize the threats you identified (these are strength-threats strategies).
- ➡ Continuing this process, use the opportunities you identified to develop strategies that will minimize the weaknesses (weakness-opportunity strategies) or avoid the threats (weakness-threats strategies).
- ➡ The following table might help you organize the strategies in each area:

	<b>Opportunities</b> (external, positive)	<b>Threats</b> (external, negative)
<b>Strengths</b> (internal, positive)	<b>Strength-Opportunity strategies</b>  Which of the company's strengths can be used to maximize the opportunities you identified?	<b>Strength-Threats strategies</b>  How can you use the company's strengths to minimize the threats you identified?
<b>Weaknesses</b> (internal, negative)	<b>Weakness-Opportunity strategies</b>  What action(s) can you take to minimize the company's weaknesses using the opportunities you identified?	<b>Weakness-Threats strategies</b>  How can you minimize the company's weaknesses to avoid the threats you identified?

- ➡ Once you've developed strategies and included them in your strategic plan, be sure to schedule regular review meetings. Use these meetings to talk about why

the results of your strategies are different from what you'd planned (because they always will be) and decide what your team will do going forward.

# First Stages of SEO

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## **The Major Elements of Planning**

- ▶ As any experienced SEO consultant will tell you, you should incorporate your SEO strategy into the site planning process long before your site goes live.
- ▶ Your strategy should be well outlined before you make even the most basic technology choices, such as the hosting platform and your CMS.

## **Technology Choices**

- ▶ SEO is a technical process, and as such, it impacts major technology choices.
- ▶ For example, a CMS can facilitate—or, possibly, undermine—your SEO strategy.
- ▶ Some platforms do not allow you to have titles and Meta descriptions that vary from one web page to the next, create hundreds (or thousands) of pages of duplicate content, or make a 302 (temporary) redirect the default redirect.

## **Market Segmentation**

- ▶ Another critical factor to understand is the nature of the market in which you are competing.
- ▶ This tells you how competitive the environment is in general, and augmented [જ્ઞાન] with additional research, you can use this information to tell how competitive the SEO environment is.

## **Where You Can Find Great Links**

- ▶ Getting third parties to link their websites to yours is a critical part of SEO.
- ▶ Without inbound links, there is little to no chance of ranking for competitive terms in search engines such as Google, whose algorithm relies heavily on link measuring and weighting criteria.
- ▶ An early part of the SEO brainstorming [વિચારણા-પી] process is identifying the great places to get links, as well as the types of content you might want to develop to encourage linking from other quality websites.

## **Content Resources**

- ▶ If your content is of average quality and covers the same information dozens of other sites have covered, it will not attract many links.
- ▶ If, however, you are putting out quality content, or you have a novel tool that many will want to use, you are more likely to receive external links.
- ▶ At the beginning of any SEO campaign, you should look at the content on the site and the available resources for developing new content. You can then match this up with your target keywords and your link-building plans to provide the best results.

## **Branding Considerations**

- ▶ Of course, most companies have branding concerns as well. The list of situations where the brand can limit the strategy is quite long, and the opposite can happen too, where the nature of the brand makes a particular SEO strategy

pretty compelling. Ultimately, your goal is to dovetail [સાલસાંધો, બંધભેસન્કરવું] SEO efforts with branding as seamlessly [એકીકૃત] as possible.

## Competition

- ▶ Your SEO strategy can also be influenced by your competitors' strategies, so understanding what they are doing is a critical part of the process for both SEO and business intelligence objectives. There are several scenarios you might encounter:
  - ▶ The competitor discovers a unique, highly converting set of keywords.
  - ▶ The competitor discovers a targeted, high-value link.
  - ▶ The competitor saturates a market segment, justifying your focus elsewhere.
  - ▶ Weaknesses appear in the competitor's strategy, which provide opportunities for exploitation.

## Identifying the Site Development Process and Players

- ▶ Before you start the SEO process, it is imperative [હિતાવફ] to identify that your target audience is, what your message is, and how your message is relevant.
- ▶ There are no web design tools or programming languages that tell you these things.
- ▶ Your SEO team should be cross-functional and multidisciplinary, consisting of the team manager, the technical team, the creative team, the data and analytics team (if you have one), and the major stakeholders from marketing, advertising, and PR.
- ▶ In a smaller organization, you may have to wear all of those hats yourself.
- ▶ Advertising messages need to be well thought out and prepared.
- ▶ The PR team has to take your story to the media and entice [ખલચાડી] them into writing and talking about it.
- ▶ The technical and creative team is responsible for delivering the project.
- ▶ Ongoing feedback is essential because the success of your project is determined solely by whether you're meeting your goals.
- ▶ Establishing good communication among team members is essential.
- ▶ Even if you are a team of one, you need to understand all of these steps. Addressing all aspects of the marketing problem (as relates to SEO) is a requirement for success.

## Defining Your Site's Information Architecture

- ▶ Whether you're working with an established website or not, you should plan to research the desired site architecture (from an SEO perspective) at the start of your SEO project.
- ▶ This task can be divided into two major components: *technology decisions* and *structural decisions*.

### **Technology Decision is as under**

- ▶ **Dynamic URLs:** Although Google now states that dynamic URLs are not a problem for the company, this is not entirely true, nor is it the case for the other search engines. Make sure your CMS does not end up rendering your pages on URLs with many convoluted [ગુણવાળી] parameters in them.
- ▶ **Session IDs or user IDs in the URL:** It used to be very common for CMSs to track individual users surfing a site by adding a tracking code to the end of the URL. Although this worked well for this purpose, it was not good for search engines, because they saw each URL as a different page rather than variants [alternatives, modifications] of the same page. Make sure your CMS does not ever serve up session IDs. If you are not able to do this, make sure you use rel="canonical" [canonical= પ્રમાણેભૂતofficial, recognized, acknowledged] on your URLs
- ▶ **Superfluous flags in the URL:** Related to the preceding two items is the notion of extra junk being present in the URL. This probably does not bother Google, but it may bother the other search engines, and it interferes with the user experience for your site. [superfluous = અનાવશ્યક, extra, surplus, unnecessary]
- ▶ **Links or content based in JavaScript, Java, or Flash:** Search engines often cannot see links and content implemented using these technologies. Make sure the plan is to expose your links and content in simple HTML text.
- ▶ **Content behind forms (including pull-down lists):** Making content accessible only after the user has completed a form (such as a login) or made a selection from an improperly implemented pull-down list is a great way to hide content from the search engines. Do not use these techniques unless you want to hide your content!
- ▶ **Temporary (302) redirects:** This is also a common problem in web server platforms and CMSs. The 302 redirect blocks a search engine from recognizing that you have permanently moved the content and it can be very problematic for SEO as 302 redirects block the passing of Page Rank. You need to make sure the default redirect your systems use is a 301, or understand how to configure it so that it becomes the default.
- ▶ All of these are examples of basic technology choices that can adversely affect your chances for a successful SEO project.

➔ *Do not be fooled into thinking that SEO issues are understood.*

## Structural Decisions

- ➔ One of the most basic decisions to make about a website concerns internal linking and navigational structures, which are generally mapped out in a site architecture document.
  - ▶ What pages are linked to from the home page?
  - ▶ What pages are used as top-level categories that then lead site visitors to other related pages?
  - ▶ Do pages that are relevant to each other link to each other?
- ➔ There are many, many aspects to determining a linking structure for a site, and it is a major usability issue because visitors make use of the links to surf around your website.
- ➔ For search engines, the navigation structure helps their crawlers determine what pages you consider the most important on your site, and it helps them establish the relevance of the pages on your site to specific topics.
  - ▶ **Target keywords:** keyword research is a critical component of SEO. What search terms do people use when searching for products or services similar to yours? How do those terms match up with your site hierarchy? Ultimately, the logical structure of your pages should match up with the way users think about products and services like yours.
  - ▶ **Cross-link relevant content:** Linking between articles that cover related material can be very powerful. It helps the search engine ascertain [નાતરી] with greater confidence how relevant a web page is to a particular topic.
  - ▶ **Use anchor text:** Anchor text is one of the golden opportunities of internal linking. As an SEO practitioner, you need to have in your plan from the very beginning a way to use keyword-rich anchor text in your internal links. Avoid using text such as “More” or “Click here,” and make sure the technical and creative teams understand this. You also need to invest time in preparing an anchor text strategy for the site.
  - ▶ **Use breadcrumb navigation:** Breadcrumb navigation is a way to show the user where he is in the navigation hierarchy. Note how the anchor text in the breadcrumb is keyword-rich, as is the menu navigation on the left. This is helpful to both users and search engines.
  - ▶ **Minimize link depth:** Search engines (and users) look to the site architecture for clues as to what pages are most important. A key factor is how many clicks from the home page it takes to reach a page. A page that is only one click from the home page is clearly important. A page that is five clicks away is not nearly as influential [અભાવથાળી]. Standard SEO advice is to keep the site architecture as flat as possible, to minimize clicks from the home page to important content. Do not go off the deep end, though; too many links on a page are not good for search engines. The bottom

line is that you need to plan out a site structure that is as flat as you can reasonably make it without compromising the user experience

### **Auditing an Existing Site to Identify SEO Problems**

- ▶ Auditing an existing site is one of the most important tasks that SEO professionals encounter. Many web developers, unfortunately, are not well versed in SEO. Even more unfortunately, some stubbornly refuse to learn, or, worse still, have learned the wrong things about SEO.
- ▶ **Usability:** Although this may not be seen as a direct SEO issue, it is a very good place to start. Usability affects many factors, including conversion rate as well as the propensity [tendency = ആവശ്യം] of people to link to a site.
- ▶ **Accessibility/Spider ability:** Make sure the site is friendly to search engine spiders.
- ▶ **Search engine health check:** Here are some quick health checks:
  - ▶ Perform a site: *yourdomain.com* search in the search engines to check how many of your pages appear to be in the index. Compare this to the number of unique pages you believe you have on your site.
  - ▶ Test a search on your brand terms to make sure you are ranking for them (if not, you may be suffering from a penalty).
  - ▶ Check the Google cache to make sure the cached versions of your pages look the same as the live versions of your pages.
  - ▶ Check to ensure major search engine “tools” have been verified for the domain (Google and Bing currently offer site owner validation to “peek” [look, glance] under the hood [cover] of how the engines view your site).
- ▶ **Keyword health checks:** Are the right keywords being targeted? Does the site architecture logically flow from the way users search on related keywords? Does more than one page target the same exact keyword?
- ▶ **Duplicate content checks:** The first thing you should do is to make sure the non-www versions of your pages (i.e., *http://yourdomain.com*) 301-redirect to the www versions of your pages (i.e., *http://www.yourdomain.com*), or vice versa (this is often called the *canonical redirect*). The easiest way to do this is to take unique strings from each of the major content pages on the site and search on them in Google. Make sure you enclose the string inside double quotes (e.g., “*a phrase from your website that you are using to check for duplicate content*”) so that Google will search for that exact string.
- ▶ **URL check:** Make sure you have clean, short, descriptive URLs. *Descriptive* means keyword-rich but not keyword-stuffed. You don’t want parameters

appended (have a minimal number if you must have any), and you want them to be simple and easy for users (and spiders) to understand.

- ▶ **Title tag review:** Make sure the title tag on each page of the site is unique and descriptive. If you want to include your company brand name in the title, consider putting it at the end of the title tag, not at the beginning, as placement of keywords at the front of a URL brings ranking benefits. Also check to make sure the title tag is fewer than 70 characters long.
- ▶ **Content review:** Do the main pages of the site have enough content? Do these pages all make use of header tags? A subtler variation of this is making sure the number of pages on the site with little content is not too high compared to the total number of pages on the site.
- ▶ **Meta tag review:** Make sure every page has a unique Meta description. If for some reason that is not possible, consider removing the Meta description altogether. Although the meta description tags are generally not a significant factor in ranking, they may well be used in duplicate content calculations, and the search engines frequently use them as the description for your web page in the SERPs; therefore, they affect click-through rate
- ▶ **Sitemaps file and robots.txt file verification:** Use the Google Webmaster Tools “Test robots.txt” verification tool to check your *robots.txt* file. Also verify that your *Sitemaps* file is identifying all of your (canonical) pages.
- ▶ **Internal linking checks:** Look for pages that have excessive links. Google advises 100 per page as a maximum, although it is OK to increase that on more important and heavily linked-to pages. Make sure the site makes good use of anchor text in its internal links. This is a free opportunity to inform users and search engines what the various pages of your site are about. Don’t abuse it, though. For example, if you have a link to your home page in your global navigation (which you should), call it “Home” instead of picking your juiciest keyword. The search engines view that particular practice as spammy, and it does not engender a good user experience.
- ▶ **Geo Location:** If the domain is targeting a specific country, make sure the guidelines for country geo targeting outlined. If your concern is primarily about ranking for *Chicago pizza* because you own a pizza parlor in Chicago, IL, make sure your address is on every page of your site. You should also check your results in Google Local to see whether you have a problem there.
- ▶ **External linking:** Check the inbound links to the site. Use a back linking tool such as Open Site Explorer (<http://www.opensiteexplorer.org>) or Majestic

SEO (<http://www.majesticseo.com>) to collect data about your links. Look for bad patterns in the anchor text, such as 87% of the links having the critical keyword for the site in them. Make sure the site's critical keyword is showing up a fair number of times

- ▶ **Page load time:** Is the page load time excessive? Too long a load time may slow down crawling and indexing of the site. However, to be a factor, this really does need to be excessive—certainly longer than five seconds, and perhaps even longer than that.
- ▶ **Image alt tags:** Do all the images have relevant, keyword-rich image `alt` attribute text and filenames? Search engines can't easily tell what is inside an image, and the best way to provide them with some clues is with the `alt` attribute and the filename of the image. These can also reinforce the overall context of the page itself.
- ▶ **Code quality:** Although W3C validation is not something the search engines require; checking the code itself is a good idea. Poor coding can have some undesirable impacts. You can use a tool such as SEO Browser (<http://www.seo-browser.com>) to see how the search engines see the page.

### **Google and Bing Webmaster Tools**

- ▶ Other valuable sources of data include Google Webmaster Tools and Bing Webmaster Tools. From a planning perspective [યરીમેળું, view, angle, side], you will want to get these tools in place as soon as possible. Both tools provide valuable insight into how the search engines see your site. This includes things such as external link data, internal link data, crawl errors, high-volume search terms, and much, much more.

### **Search Analytics**

- ▶ Search analytics is a new and emerging category of tools. Search analytics tools specifically monitor how your website interacts with the search engines. Compete (<http://www.compete.com>) offers search-specific analytic tools, as do many smaller vendors.

### **Determining Top Competitors**

- ▶ Understanding the competition should be a key component of planning your SEO strategy. The first step is to understand who your competitors in the search results really are. It can often be small players who give you a run for your money.

### **Two Spam Examples**

- ▶ Affiliates that cheat tend to come and go out of the top search results, as only sites that implement ethical tactics are likely to maintain their positions over time. You can help expedite [પ્રકાશાયથી] the cheaters' fall from grace [કૃપા, જમા] by reporting them to Google at <http://www.google.com/contact/spamreport.html>, or better yet, via the dashboard in your Google Webmaster Tools account (where your report will carry more weight).
  - ▶ GiftCertificates.com's short-lived nemesis was FindGiftCards.com.
  - ▶ CraigPadoa.com was a thorn in the side of SharperImage.com.

## Seeking the Best

- ▶ Look for competitors whose efforts you would like to emulate [અનુકૂળ, સ્પર્ધાકરવી] (or "embrace and extend," as Bill Gates would put it)—usually a website that consistently dominates the upper half of the first page of search results in the search engines for a range of important keywords that are popular and relevant to your target audience.
- ▶ To assess competitors' competence at SEO, you need to answer the following questions:
  - ▶ Are their websites fully indexed by Google and Yahoo!?
  - ▶ Do their product and category pages have keyword-rich page titles (title tags) that are unique to each page? You can easily review an entire site's page titles within Google or Yahoo! by searching for site: [www.yourcompetitor.com](http://www.yourcompetitor.com).
  - ▶ Do their product and category pages have reasonably high PageRank scores?
  - ▶ Is anchor text across the site, particularly in the navigation, keyword-rich?
  - ▶ Are the websites getting penalized? You can overdo SEO. Too much keyword repetition or too many suspiciously [શંકાનીનજારે] well-optimized text links can yield a penalty for over-optimization.
  - ▶ Are they spamming the search engines with "doorway pages"? According to Google: "Doorway pages are typically large sets of poor-quality pages where each page is optimized for a specific keyword or phrase."

## Uncovering Their Secrets

- ▶ Your investigation has led you to identify several competitors who are gaining excellent search placement using legitimate [કાયદેસર], intelligent tactics. Now it is time to uncover their secrets:
- ▶ What keywords are they targeting? You can determine this by looking at the page titles (up in the bar above the address bar at the top of your web browser, which also appears in the search results listings) of each competitor's home page

and product category pages, then by looking at their meta keywords tag (right-click, select View Source, and then scour the HTML source for the list of keywords that follow the bit of HTML that looks something like the following:

```
<meta name="keywords" content="keyword1, keyword2, ...">
```

- ▶ Who's linking to their home page, or to their top-selling product pages and category pages?
- ▶ If it is a database-driven site, what technology tricks are they using to get search engine spiders such as Googlebot to cope with the site being dynamic?
- ▶ What effect will their future SEO initiatives have on their site traffic? Assess the success of their SEO not just by the lift in rankings. Periodically record key SEO metrics over time—the number of pages indexed, the PageRank score, the number of links—and watch the resulting effect on their site traffic.
- ▶ You do not need access to competitors' analytics data or server logs to get an idea of how much traffic they are getting. Simply go to Compete.com, Quantcast.com, or Alexa.com and search on the competitor's domain. If you have the budget for higher-end competitive intelligence tools, you can use comScore.com or Hitwise.com.
- ▶ How does the current state of their sites' SEO compare with those of years past? You can reach back into history and access previous versions of your competitors' home pages and view the HTML source to see which optimization tactics they were employing back then. The Wayback Machine (<http://www.archive.org>) provides an amazingly extensive archive of web pages.

### **Assessing Historical Progress**

- ▶ Keeping a log of changes to your site is absolutely recommended. If you're not keeping a timeline (which could be as simple as an online spreadsheet or as complex as a professional project management visual flowchart), you will have a harder time executing your SEO plan and managing the overall SEO process.
- ▶ There are many scenarios in which you will want to try to establish cause and effect, such as:
  - ▶ *If search traffic spikes or plummets:* Sudden changes in organic traffic are obviously notable events. If traffic plummets [drops, falls], you will be facing lots of questions about why, and having a log of site changes will put you in a better position to assess whether any changes you recommended could have been the cause. Of course, if traffic spikes you will want to be able to see whether an SEO-related change was responsible as well.
  - ▶ *When gradual traffic changes begin:* Changes do not always come as sudden spikes or drop-offs. If you see the traffic beginning a gradual climb (or descent), you will want to be able to assess the likely reasons.
  - ▶ *To track and report SEO progress:* Accountability is a key component of SEO. Budget managers will want to know what return they are getting on their SEO

investment. This will inevitably [unavoidably, certainly, unsurprisingly] fall into two buckets: itemizing specific work items worked on, and analyzing benefits to the business. Keeping an ongoing change log makes tracking and reporting SEO progress much easier to accomplish.

### **Types of Site Changes That Can Affect SEO**

- ▶ Your log should track all changes to the website, not just those that were made with SEO in mind. Organizations make many changes that they do not think will affect SEO, but that have a big impact on it. Here are some examples:
  - ▶ Adding content areas/features/options to the site (this could be anything from a new blog to a new categorization system).
  - ▶ Changing the domain of the site. This can have a significant impact, and you should document when the switchover was made.
  - ▶ Modifying URL structures. Changes to URLs on your site will likely impact your rankings, so record any and all changes.
  - ▶ Implementing a new CMS. This is a big one, with a very big impact. If you must change your CMS, make sure you do a thorough analysis of the SEO shortcomings of the new CMS versus the old one, and make sure you track the timing and the impact.
  - ▶ Establishing new partnerships that either send links or require them (meaning your site is earning new links or linking out to new places).
  - ▶ Acquiring new links to pages on the site other than the home page (referred to as “deep links”).
  - ▶ Making changes to navigation/menu systems (moving links around on pages, creating new link systems, etc.).
  - ▶ Implementing redirects either to or from the site.
  - ▶ Marketing activities that may drive upticks in usage/traffic and the source (e.g., if you get mentioned in the press and receive an influx of traffic from it).

### **Previous SEO Work**

- ▶ When you are brought on to handle the SEO for a particular website, one of the first things you need to find out is which SEO activities have previously been attempted. There may be valuable data there, such as a log of changes that you can match up with analytics data to gauge [scale, measure] impact. If no such log exists, you can always check the Wayback Machine (<http://www.archive.org>) to see whether it has historical logs for your website. This offers snapshots of what the site looked like at various points in time.

### **Benchmarking Current Indexing Status**

- ▶ The search engines have an enormous [艰巨] task: that of indexing the world’s online content—well, more or less.

- ▶ The reality is that they try hard to discover all of it, but they do not choose to include all of it in their indexes.
- ▶ There can be a variety of reasons for this, such as the page being inaccessible to the spider, being penalized, or not having enough link juice to merit inclusion.
- ▶ When you launch a new site or add new sections to an existing site, or if you are dealing with a very large site, not every page will necessarily make it into the index.
- ▶ Getting basic indexation data from search engines is pretty easy. All three major search engines support the same basic syntax for that: site: *yourdomain.com*.
- ▶ Keeping a log of the level of indexation over time can help you understand how things are progressing.
- ▶ For the other search engines, the crawl-related data can then be revealed using log file analyzers and then a similar timeline can be created and monitored.

### **Benchmarking Current Rankings**

- ▶ People really love to check their search rankings. Many companies want to use this as a measurement of SEO progress over time, but it is a bit problematic, for a variety of reasons.
- ▶ Here is a summary of the major problems with rank checking:
  - ▶ Google results are not consistent:
    - ▶ Different geographies (even in different cities within the United States) often give different results. Different data centers give different results (and you can hit multiple data centers from a single location at different times).
    - ▶ Results are personalized for logged-in users based on their search histories.
    - ▶ No rank checker can monitor and report all of these inconsistencies [conflicts, irregularities] (at least, not without scraping Google hundreds of times from all over the world with every possible setting).
  - ▶ The Google API rarely matches up to what anyone sees in the search results:
    - ▶ It appears to match up only on very heavily trafficked, consistent search results; anything mid-tail or long tail is invariably [અનુક્રમ] inaccurate.
    - ▶ It is extremely slow to update, so even though news results or geographic results might be mixed in (or even new sites or pages that have a large amount of recent link growth), the API won't update for days or sometimes weeks.
  - ▶ Obsessing [preoccupying, consuming] over rankings (rather than traffic) can result in poor strategic decisions:

- When sites obsess over rankings for particular keywords, the time and energy they expend on those few key phrases often produces far less value than would have been produced if they had spent those resources on the site as a whole.
- Long-tail traffic very often accounts for 70% to 80% of the demand curve, and it is much easier to rank in the long tail and get valuable traffic from there than it is to concentrate on the few rankings at the top of the demand curve.

### **Benchmarking Current Traffic Sources and Volume**

- The most fundamental objective of any SEO project should be to drive the bottom line.
- Today's web analytics tools make the gathering of such data incredibly easy. Two high-quality solutions are available that are completely free: Google Analytics and Yahoo! Web Analytics.
- These tools are sufficient for many smaller sites, though larger sites will probably need to consider a paid solution such as Omniture.com, IBM UnicaNetInsight, or Webtrends.com.
- If you dig a little deeper you can see the sources of the traffic as well.
- As an SEO practitioner, it will be natural to want to delve [investigate, research, analyze] into more detail—specifically, to break down the search engine traffic and understand that better as well.
- This type of data allows you to see which search engines are delivering the majority of the traffic to your site, and perhaps flag potential problems.
- The site owner may want to investigate this in more detail to find out whether the visitors to the site are getting what they are looking for.
- The next step would be to drill down into the bounce rate metric at the page level and see if there are specific pages that have problems that can be resolved.
- The number of things you can look at in analytics is nearly endless. It is fair to say that there is too much data, and one of the key things that an SEO expert needs to learn is what data is worth looking at and what data is not.

### **Leveraging Business Assets for SEO**

- Chances are your company/organization has a lot of valuable commodities beyond the website that can be put to good use to improve the quality and quantity of traffic you receive through search engine optimization efforts.

### **Other Domains You Own/Control**

- If you have multiple domains, the major items to think about are:
  - Can you 301-redirect some of those domains back to your main domain or to a subfolder on the site for additional benefit?

- ▶ Do you own exact keyword match domain names that would make for effective micro sites?
- ▶ If you're maintaining those domains as separate sites, are you linking between them intelligently?
- ▶ If any of those avenues produce valuable strategies, pursue them—remember that it is often far easier to optimize what you're already doing than to develop entirely new strategies, content, and processes.

### **Partnerships On and Off the Web**

- ▶ Partnerships can be leveraged in similar ways, particularly on the link-building front.
- ▶ If you have business partners that you supply or otherwise work with—or from whom you receive service—chances are good that you can implement link strategies between their sites and yours.
- ▶ Although reciprocal [પાર્ટિકિલ, joint, share, equal] linking carries a bit of a bad reputation, there is nothing wrong with building a “partners,” “clients,” “suppliers,” or “recommended” list on your site, or with requesting that your organizational brethren[આઈઓ] do likewise for you.

### **Content or Data You've Never Put Online**

- ▶ Chances are that you have content that you have never published on your website.
- ▶ Hundreds of lengthy articles you published when you were shipping a print publication via the mail are a great fit for your website archives.
- ▶ You should take all of your email newsletters and make them accessible on your site. If you have unique data sets or written material, you should apply it to relevant pages on your site (or consider building out if nothing yet exists).
- ▶ If you do this, though, make sure you are doing it in a manner that adds to the user experience. You don't ever want to throw up content simply to pull in traffic.

### **Customers Who Have Had a Positive Experience**

- ▶ Customers are a terrific resource for earning links, but did you also know they can write?
- ▶ Customers and website visitors can contribute all kinds of content.
- ▶ If you have user-generated content (UGC) options available to you and you see value in the content your users produce, by all means reach out to customers, visitors, and email list subscribers for both links and content opportunities.

### **You're Fans**

- ▶ This principle applies equally to generic enthusiasts [ઉત્સાહીઓ] of your work. For many businesses that operate offline or work in entertainment, hard goods, or any consumer services, there are people out there who've used your products or services and would love to share their experiences.

- Like customers, fans are terrific resources for link acquisition [સંપ્રાદન, gaining, achievement, purchase], content creation, positive testimonials, and social media marketing (to help spread the word).

## Combining Business Assets and Historical Data to Conduct SEO/ Website SWOT Analysis

<b>S</b>	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things you are good at</li> <li>• Experience, knowledge</li> <li>• Unique characteristics</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Geographical location</li> <li>• Competence, capabilities</li> <li>• Quality, reputation</li> <li>• Flexibility on Product, Pricing, Distribution</li> </ul>	<b>W</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things you need to improve</li> <li>• Gap in skills, knowledge</li> <li>• Financial issues</li> <li>• Market awareness and reputation</li> <li>• Right people doing the right job</li> <li>• Poor location</li> <li>• Leadership and Management issues</li> <li>• Staff motivation and involvement</li> </ul>
<b>O</b>	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic alliances, acquisitions</li> <li>• Diversify the business</li> <li>• Take advantage of new trends (PESTLE)</li> <li>• New Product Development</li> <li>• Enter new markets</li> <li>• Reduce costs</li> <li>• Be faster, better, easier, more stylish,</li> <li>• Innovation and technology development</li> </ul>	<b>T</b>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in the environment (PESTLE).</li> <li>• Loss of major customers.</li> <li>• Raw material, energy and transport costs</li> <li>• Strong competition</li> <li>• Competitors new products and innovation</li> <li>• Change in technology</li> <li>• Fashion</li> <li>• Seasonality</li> </ul>

- A classic staple [મૂળી] of business school is the SWOT analysis—identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by a business or project.
- Identifying *strengths* is typically one of the easier objectives:
  - ▶ What sources of traffic are working well for your site/business?
  - ▶ Which projects/properties/partnerships are driving positive momentum toward traffic/revenue goals?
  - ▶ Which of your content sections/types produces high traffic and ROI?
  - ▶ What changes have you made historically that produced significant value?
- Determining the *weaknesses* can be tougher (and takes more intellectual honesty and courage):
  - ▶ What content is currently driving low levels of search/visitor traffic?
  - ▶ Which changes that were intended to produce positive results have shown little/no value?
  - ▶ Which traffic sources are underperforming or under delivering?
  - ▶ What projects/properties/partnerships are being leveraged [લાભ] poorly?
- Parsing *opportunities* requires a combination of strength and weakness analysis. You want to find areas that are doing well but have room to expand, as well as those that have yet to be explored:
  - ▶ What brainstormed [વિચારવિમર્શ, thought, suggested] but undeveloped or untested projects/ideas can have a significant, positive impact?

- ▶ What traffic sources currently sending good-quality traffic could be expanded to provide more value?
- ▶ What areas of weakness have direct paths to recovery?
- ▶ Which website changes have had positive results? Can these be applied more rigorously [જરાં, thoroughly, strictly, carefully] or to other areas for increased benefit?
- ▶ What new markets or new content areas are potentially [સંભવિત] viable [સંધર] /valuable for expansion?
- ▶ What sources of new content/new links have yet to be tapped?
- ➡ Determining *threats* can be the most challenging of the tasks. You'll need to combine creative thinking with an honest assessment[મૂલ્ય-આક્ષ્ણી, valuation, taxation] of your weaknesses and your competitors' strengths, and consider the possibilities of macro-events that could shape your website/company's future:
  - ▶ In your areas of weakness, which players in your market (or other, similar markets) are strong? How have they accomplished this?
  - ▶ What shifts in human behavior, web usage, or market conditions could dramatically impact your business/site? (For example, consider the “what if people stopped searching and instead navigated the Web in different ways” perspective. It is a bit “pie in the sky,” but we have already seen Expedia partially destroy the travel agency business, Craigslist make classifieds obsolete, and Facebook start to take advertising market share from the search engines.)
  - ▶ Which competitors have had the most success in your arena? How have they accomplished this? Where do they intersect with your business/customers?
  - ▶ Are there any strategies implemented by start-ups in similar businesses that have had massive success in a particular arena that could be dangerous to your business if they were replicated in your market?

## Keyword Research

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- ▶ Keyword research is one of the most important, valuable, and high-return activities in the search engine marketing field.
- ▶ Keyword research enables you to predict shifts in demand, respond to changing market conditions, and ensure that you are producing the products, services, and content that web searchers are already actively seeking.
- ▶ Every search phrase that's typed into an engine is recorded in one way or another, and keyword research tools allow you to retrieve this information.
- ▶ Those tools cannot show you (directly) how valuable or important it might be to rank for and receive traffic from those searches.
- ▶ To understand the value of a keyword, you need to research further, make some hypotheses [પૂર્વધારણાઓ], test, and iterate [repeat, redo]—the classic web marketing formula.
- ▶ Keyword research tools provide valuable insight into the thinking of your potential [સંભવિત] customers. When users go to search engines and type out their search queries, they may use language that is entirely different from what you expect.
- ▶ The keyword research tools will provide you with methods to investigate all these factors.
- ▶ Take the time to go beyond the surface and use the tools to learn how your customers think, get your thinking in alignment with theirs, and then build your website strategy (and perhaps even your product strategy) around that.

### Traditional Approaches: Domain Expertise, Site Content Analysis

- ▶ One of the smartest things you can do when initially conducting keyword research is brainstorm original ideas [મુજા વિચારો] with business participants before getting keyword tools involved.
- ▶ Start by generating a list of terms and phrases that are relevant to your industry and pertain to what your site or business offers.
- ▶ The brainstorming phase should ideally result in a list of several dozen to several hundred or more keyword searches that will bring relevant visitors to your site.
- ▶ One easy way to begin this process is to gather your team in a conference room and then follow these steps:
  - ▶ Produce a list of key one- to three-word phrases that describe your products/services.
  - ▶ Spend some time coming up with synonyms [સમાનાર્�ી] that your potential customers might use for those products and services. Use a thesaurus [સમાનાર્થક શાબ્�ોનો કોશ] to help you with this process.

- ▶ Create taxonomy [ગોક્ષરણ, classification, organization, and categorization] of all the areas of focus in your industry. You can also look at sites that are leaders in the industry and study their site hierarchies as a way to start your thinking about taxonomy.
  - ▶ Review your existing site, and extract what appear to be key phrases from your site.
  - ▶ Review industry association and/or media sites to see what phrases they use to discuss your topic area.
  - ▶ List all your various brand terms.
  - ▶ List all your products. If your site has a massive number of products, consider stepping back a level (or two) and listing the categories and subcategories.
  - ▶ Have your team imagine they are potential customers, and ask them what they would type into a search engine if they were looking for something similar to your product or service.
  - ▶ Supplement this by asking some people outside your business what they would search for—preferably, people who are not directly associated with the company.
  - ▶ Use your web analytics tool to see what terms people are already using to come to your site, or what terms they are using within your site search tool if you have one.
  - ▶ Review your competitors' websites and see what key phrases they use for their products and services that compete with yours.
  - ▶ Record what non branded terms they use for their business.
  - ▶ Read any articles they have written that are published on sites other than their own.
  - ▶ Observe what the media may have had to say about them.
- ➡ Once you have completed these steps you will have in hand a rich set of terms of interest. The next step is to expand those terms of interest using keyword research tools.

### **Keyword Research Tools**

- ➡ A wide variety of options are available for performing keyword research, including tools provided by the search engines, tools developed by third parties, and tools for complex keyword analysis of terms culled during research.
- ➡ It is important to keep in mind when you are using the various keyword research tools to brainstorm keywords that they are all based on relatively limited data.
- ➡ In addition, each tool will provide different search counts than the others. Rather than focusing on the exact search counts of various terms, you should think of each tool as a good way to get a general comparison of two search terms.

- ▶ If you are just starting out with keyword research, consider starting with the Google Keyword Tool and either Wordtracker or KeywordDiscovery. This will give you a rich data set with which to begin your keyword research.
- ▶ The search engines provide a number of tools that can help you with keyword research. Many of these are not designed specifically for that purpose, but if used in the right manner they can provide interesting keyword research information.
- ▶ The data in these tools reveals [દ્રષ્ટિક છે] the number of pages that are related to a search phrase, not the number of searches on that phrase. It is great to get this data from search engine queries, and it can certainly help you get a sense of the importance of a given keyword.

### **Google's AdWords Keyword Tool and Traffic Estimator**

- ▶ Google provides a couple of tools specifically designed for use in keyword research. Although they are primarily meant to help Google's paid search customers, they can also be used to obtain information for organic search.

#### **What the Keyword Tool provides.**

- ▶ Google's AdWords Keyword Tool provides related terms, search volume estimates, search trends, and ad cost estimates for any keyword or URL that you enter.
- ▶ The AdWords Keyword Tool provides two ways to search: based on words/phrase or based on websites.
- ▶ If you enter a keyword in the “Word or phrase” box, the AdWords Keyword Tool will return keywords related to the term you entered and the match type. The output of search will show you:
  - ▶ *Keyword:* Displays a list of related keywords, including the phrase or phrases you entered.
  - ▶ *Competition:* Displays the relative competitiveness [રૂપાત્મકાના] of the keyword (in paid search).
  - ▶ *Global Monthly Searches:* Shows the search volume for the keyword worldwide.
  - ▶ *Local Monthly Searches:* Displays the keyword search volume for the country you specify (this defaults to the country you are in).
- ▶ There are a number of settings you can use to tune your search.
  - ▶ *Include terms:* Provides a way to specify additional terms. The Keyword Tool will only show you suggestions that included these terms.
  - ▶ *Exclude terms:* Allows you to add a negative keyword for any keyword phrase that does not pertain to your business. This feature is not necessarily useful for researching keywords for organic search; it is more valuable when planning your AdWords account bids.

- ▶ *Match Types:* The options are Broad, [Exact], and “Phrase.” These correspond to the way these terms are defined by Google AdWords. [Exact] means that the returned words will show only volumes related to the exact keyword phrase shown. “Phrase” means that the volumes will be returned for all uses of the keyword that include the keywords exactly as shown. For example, if the keyword shown is “popular search phrase,” the result will include volumes for “this is a popular search phrase” but not “which search phrase is popular.” Broad match, which is the default setting, will include the search volumes for all phrases that the Google AdWords solution considers to be related to the keyword phrase shown. In the previous example, the phrase “which search phrase is popular” would probably be included. We recommend you set this to [Exact] when you use this tool.
- ▶ *Locations:* Allows you to set the country used for the “Local Monthly Searches” part of the results.
- ▶ *Language:* Sets the default language to use.
- ▶ *Devices:* Allows you to specify the type of searching device. For example, if you want only mobile search volumes, pick “All mobile devices.”

### ***What the Traffic Estimator provides.***

- ▶ Within Google AdWords is a tool called the Traffic Estimator that allows you to get estimates of traffic on different keywords?
- ▶ When you enter one or more keywords in the Traffic Estimator, the tool will return estimates of the search volume for each term, their average cost per click, their ad positions, the number of clicks per day, and the cost per day.
- ▶ The cost information can provide you with additional insight into how competitive a keyword is in organic search as well. You can enter your keyword in the following ways:
- ▶ ***Broad match:*** Entering your keyword without any parameters means it will be broadly matched; this means if you buy an ad for this keyword, it will appear in the search results when the search query is interpreted by the search engines as being related to your phrase. This can sometimes yield [34%] strange results. For example, your ad for *search engine optimization* will appear in the results for a search on *search for train engine optimization*.
- ▶ ***Exact match:*** Putting brackets around your keyword (e.g., *[search engine optimization]*) means your ad will show only when a user types in the exact keyword phrase you are targeting.
- ▶ ***Phrase match:*** Adding quotation marks around your keyword (e.g., “*search engine optimization*”) means your ad will show when a user types in a phrase that contains your exact keyword phrase, but it can also contain other words. For example, your ad will show on a search for “*how to do search engine optimization*.”

- ➡ **Negative match:** Using the minus sign/dash in front of an undesired keyword (e.g., *-spam*) before your keyword (e.g., “*search engine optimization*” for a phrase match) indicates that that term does not apply to you and that you don’t want your ad to show for searches that contain the undesired keyword. For example, your ad won’t show for “*search engine optimization spam*.”

### **Where the tools get their data.**

- ➡ Google’s AdWords Keyword Tool and Traffic Estimator get their data from Google’s search query database.

### **How the tools are useful**

- ➡ The AdWords Keyword Tool offers some useful information about your keyword campaigns, such as suggestions for similar keywords, an estimate of the keyword’s popularity, ad costs and positions, general search volume trend information, and keyword campaign suggestions for your site or a competitor’s site. The tool is great for compiling a lot of general information about a keyword.

### **Cost.**

- ➡ The Keyword Tool and Traffic Estimator are both free to use.

### **Microsoft’s adCenter Keyword Generation Tool**

- ➡ Microsoft’s adCenter Keyword Generation Tool generates keyword suggestions based on a search term or website you enter.
- ➡ Entering a keyword in the search box will return data that includes search phrases that contain the keyword you provided, along with how many searches they received in the preceding month, typical click-through rate (CTR) percentages, and average cost per click (CPC).
- ➡ The adCenter keyword tool will also allow you to research keywords by looking at your website, or your competitor’s website. To use it in this mode, enter a URL into the search bar, and the tool will return keywords related to the website selected.

### **Where it gets its data.**

- ➡ The adCenter Keyword Generation Tool obtains its data from Microsoft’s Bing search query database.

### **How it is useful.**

- ➡ This tool is useful in generating keyword suggestions based on a keyword you are targeting or on your site’s URL. You can also enter your competitor’s URL and see what the keyword suggestions are for its site.

### **Cost.**

- ➡ The adCenter Keyword Generation Tool is free, although you do have to create an account with Microsoft adCenter and provide credit card information in the event that you advertise on the Microsoft network.

### **Wordtracker**

- ▶ Wordtracker is one of the better-known keyword tools available that is not provided by the search engines themselves. Wordtracker offers the following features:
  - ▶ *Keyword research tool:* When you enter a keyword or phrase in the search box under the Research section, Wordtracker displays the most popular search terms that include the keyword or phrase you provided, and the number of searches performed on Wordtracker's partner search engines over the past 365 days (which represents about 0.04% of all search volume).
  - ▶ *Related keywords:* The related keywords feature returns a list of keywords that are closely related to the keyword you enter. This tool is a great way to find related keywords that may be of interest that are not derived directly from the search term.
  - ▶ *Keyword projects:* The keyword projects section stores your keyword research projects. At any given time, you are allowed one active project and four stored projects.
  - ▶ *Free keyword suggestion tool:* Wordtracker also has a free keyword suggestion tool (<https://freekeywords.wordtracker.com>). When you enter a keyword/phrase, you'll see Wordtracker's count of the total number of searches on that term performed across the Web in the preceding 90 days. You will also see a list containing both the keyword you searched for and similar keywords, along with their predicted [આપાણી] daily search counts.

### **Where it gets its data.**

- ▶ Wordtracker compiles a database of 330+ million search terms from Dogpile.com and MetaCrawler.com. This database is updated every week. Dogpile and MetaCrawler are Meta search engines that each have less than 0.5% market share.
- ▶ Wordtracker also provides an option to pull data from the Google AdWords Keyword Tool. There is a lot of value in comparing the results from each as they often show keyword trends in different ways, both of which have value.

### **How it is useful.**

- ▶ Wordtracker is great for finding out how many searches are being performed on various keywords. Because its data sources are limited, you should not rely on the tool for precise data figures; however, it is a good tool to use to get a general idea of which keywords are searched for more often than others.

### **Cost.**

- ▶ Wordtracker provides different subscription offerings that range from a one-month membership for \$69.00 to a one-year membership for \$379.00 (pricing as of December 2011). The free tool with limited features is also available. We

recommend checking out the different options and choosing a package that will work best for your company.

### **KeywordDiscovery**

- ▶ Another popular third-party tool for keyword research is Trellian's KeywordDiscovery.
- ▶ KeywordDiscovery offers the following features:
  - ▶ *Keyword research:* When you enter a keyword or phrase in the search bar under the Research section, KeywordDiscovery displays the most popular search terms that include the keywords you.
  - ▶ *Seasonal search trends:* If you click on the little bar graph icon next to the number of searches for a query, you'll see a graph of the search trends for that keyword over the past 12 months. You can mouse over each bar and see the number of searches for that time period, and you can sort the chart by historical data (number of searches in the past year), monthly data (number of searches broken down by month), trends (a graph of the search trends over the past year), combination
  - ▶ *Spelling mistake research:* Typing the query spell:*keyword* as the Search Term will return spelling variations for that keyword (Word), the number of times the keyword has been searched for (Searches), and the keyword results for your search (Queries). For example, spell:*optimization* returns results such as *optimization*, *optimazation*, and *optimisation*.
  - ▶ *Related keywords:* Typing either related: *keyword* or crawl: *keyword* in the Search Term box will return keywords that are related to the term you provided. For example, typing in related:seo returns results such as *internet marketing*, *video*, and *internet consulting*.
  - ▶ *Keyword density analysis:* This feature checks how often keywords are found on the URL you provide, assigns a keyword density percentage to those keywords, and lists the number of searches performed for each term.
  - ▶ *Domain Researcher Tool:* This tool requires an Enterprise subscription. It allows you to search for available domains that are based on popular keyword search terms. These domains have high traffic potential, as the tool shows how many users have searched for that URL. The tool is great if you want to register other domains in your industry and want these domains to be keyword-rich.
  - ▶ *Competitive Intelligence reports:* Trellian, which powers KeywordDiscovery, also offers various Competitive Intelligence reports (which require a separate subscription). These reports include:
    - ▶ *Link Intelligence:* Identifies which links are sending traffic to your competitors.
    - ▶ *Search Term Intelligence:* Identifies which search terms/phrases are driving traffic to your competitors.

- ▶ *Search Engine Intelligence*: Identifies which specific search engines send traffic to your competitors.
- ▶ *PPC Campaign Intelligence*: Identifies which search terms your competitors are bidding on.
- ▶ *Referrer Intelligence*: Provides information about specific sites that are referring traffic to your competitors.
- ▶ *Popularity Index Report*: Monitors the Popularity Index (which is based on the number of unique sessions a domain receives) of your competitors.
- ▶ *Ranking Report*: Provides a view of which terms your competitors are ranking for, the rank of these terms, and any changes in ranking over the past 30 days.
- ▶ *Meta Keywords*: Provides a report that analyzes your competitors' meta keywords
- ▶ *Competitive Intelligence Executive Report*: Provides information about every Competitive Intelligence Report available, as well as several sub reports
- ▶ *Free Search Term Suggestion Tool*: KeywordDiscovery offers a free keyword research tool that is similar to Word tracker's free Keyword Suggestion Tool. When you enter a keyword/phrase, you'll see a list containing both the keyword you searched for and similar keywords, along with their estimated search count over the past 12 months.

### **Where it gets its data.**

- ▶ Trellian derives its keyword data primarily from aggregated [संकलित, combined, gathered] Historical Global data purchased from ISPs. Trellian also uses a panel of 4.4 million users to collect its Global Premium data.
- ▶ The company touts [seller, vendors] that the Global Premium data removes the bias [पूर्वावलोकन] that various spiders introduce into data from other sources.

### **How it is useful.**

- ▶ As we mentioned earlier, KeywordDiscovery offers a multitude of tools that are great for keyword research. Trellian also offers various tools that are useful for competitive research.
- ▶ You can almost think of KeywordDiscovery as a one-stop shop for research since it offers such a diverse[विविध] set of tools, but as with many of the other keyword research tools we've discussed here, its data sources are limited, and you need to take this into account when interpreting your findings.

### **Cost.**

- ▶ KeywordDiscovery offers different subscription options that range from a standard monthly subscription for \$69.95 to a yearly Enterprise subscription for \$4,752 (pricing as of December 2011).

- Competitive Intelligence Reports range from \$99.95 per month per domain (plus a \$150 setup fee) to \$995 per year per domain. The free tool with limited features is also available.
- Recommend reviewing the options and choosing the package that will work best for your company. (Plus a \$150 setup fee) to \$995 per year per domain. The free tool with limited features is also available. We recommend reviewing the options and choosing the package that will work best for your company.

## **Other Tools of Interest**

### ***Google Trends***

- Google Trends allows you to compare two or more search terms to see their relative[સંબંધિત] popularity and seasonality/trending over time.
- If you enter the terms into the search bar and separate them with commas, you'll see the requested terms' trend history depicted[દર્શાવામાં] in different colors on a graph spread over a certain time period.
- You can modify the results by changing the time period and/or region

### ***Quintura***

- Quintura (<http://www.quintura.com>) provides a fun, interactive tag cloud interface, which makes it an excellent place to start. Alongside[સાથે સાથે] the tag cloud sits a traditional search results page. You can use this visual tag cloud to see word relationships that you may otherwise have overlooked [અવગાજુના, ignored, unnoticed].
- You can also negate words or phrases from your search query. During this process, just let the tag clouds continue to reshape and reveal word connections. You may want to open up spreadsheet or notepad and continue to add terms to build your seed list.

### ***Google (Suggest)***

- Start with the basic search input box, but look for what Google reveals as you type. This was formerly known as "Google Suggest" and was a somewhat hidden tool that, thankfully, Google decided to bring front-and-center to the default Google search.
- Google won't tell you how many times *digital cameras* has been searched for, but because it appears at the top of the suggested terms list, you can infer[અટકળ જાંખવી] that it is probably searched for more often than those phrases that appear below it.

### ***Soovle***

- Soovle shows you real-time search terms as you type them, ordered by popularity, just like Google Suggest. In fact, it's a one-stop-shop that taps into those features of those top search engines, and much more.

- ▶ It also polls YouTube, Amazon.com, Bing, Wikipedia, and Answers.com for top related search terms, refreshing dynamically each time you pause during your typing. This tool allows you to tap into seven top resources at once.

### ***YouTube Suggest***

- ▶ Currently there are no tools that provide direct information on search query volumes on YouTube. However, if you begin to type in a search query on YouTube, it offers search suggestion. The suggestions are the most popular variants [alternatives, variations] of the search query you have typed so far.

### ***Ubersuggest***

- ▶ Ubersuggest (<http://suggest.thinkpragmatic.net>) is based on Google Suggest. It runs a bunch of variants based on the base term that you have entered. For example, if you enter the query *golf*, Ubersuggest will automatically pull the suggestions for *golf a*, *golf b*, etc., all the way thoughto *golf z*.

## **Determining Keyword Value/Potential ROI**

- ▶ Once you have obtained the raw keyword data by doing research with your favorite tools, you need to analyze which keywords have the highest value and the highest ROI.

### ***Estimating Value, Relevance, and Conversion Rates***

- ▶ When researching keywords for your site, it is important to judge each keyword's *value, relevance*, and potential *conversion rate*. If a keyword is strong in all three criteria, it is almost certainly a keyword you want to plan to optimize for within your site.

### ***Determining keyword value***

- ▶ When judging the value of a keyword, you should contemplate [ચેતન મન્ત્ર, expect, plan, consider] how useful the term is for your site. How will your site benefit from targeting different keywords?

### ***Identifying relevant keywords***

- ▶ To identify relevant, high-quality keywords, ask yourself the following questions:
  - ▶ How relevant is the term/phrase to the content, services, products, or information on your site?
  - ▶ Assuming a visitor who searches for that term clicks on your result in the SERPs, what is the likelihood [અખ્યતા]that she'll perform a desired action on your site (make a purchase, subscribe to a newsletter, etc.), create a link to your site, or influence others to visit?
  - ▶ How many people who search for this term will come to your site and leave dissatisfied?

- It is important to categorize your keywords into terms with high and low relevance. Generally, keywords of higher relevance will be more beneficial to your site in that they more closely represent your site as a whole.
- Keywords with lower relevance than those that lead to conversions can still be great terms to target. A keyword might be relevant to your site's content but have a low relevance to your business model. In this case, if you target that keyword, when a user clicks on your site and finds the content to be valuable she is more likely to return to the site, remember your brand, and potentially [संभवित] link to your site or suggest it to a friend.

### **Determining conversion rates**

- A common misconception [બેસમજ] is that a conversion refers only to the purchase of an item on your site. However, many different types of actions users perform can be defined as conversions, and they are worth tracking and segmenting.
- The many different types of conversions create distinct opportunities for targeting various keywords. Although one keyword may work well for purchase conversions, another may be well suited to getting users to subscribe to something on your site.
- Regardless [આનુલક્ષીનિ] of what type of conversion you are optimizing for, you should strive[લડ્યું] to have each keyword that you intentionally[દીરાધાર્યું] target convert well, meaning it should be relatively successful at getting searchers to click through to your site and, consequently[પણામે], perform a specific action.

### **Leveraging the Long Tail of Keyword Demand**

- The long tail of search is where 70% of search queries occur. Only 30% of those precious queries happen in the more obvious terms that people use, the so-called “head terms.”
- Google Vice President UdiManber indicated that 20% to 25% of all search queries that Google receives on a given day are queries that Google is seeing for the first time. You can think of this as the “ultra-long tail.”

### **Extracting Terms from Relevant Web Pages**

- One source for long-tail terms is web pages that do well for searches that are relevant to your target market. Here is a basic process for finding those pages and extracting that information from them:
  - ▶ Extract the top 10 to 50 most common search phrases at the head of the distribution graph from your existing keyword research in the industry.
  - ▶ Search Google and Bing for each term.
  - ▶ For each page in the top 10 to 30 results, extract the unique usable text on the page.

- ▶ Remove stop words and filter by phrase size.
- ▶ Remove instances of terms/phrases already in your keyword research database.
- ▶ Sort through the most common remnants first, and comb as far down as you feel is valuable.
- ➡ Through this process, you are basically text-mining documents relevant to the subject of your industry/service/product for terms that, although lower in search volume, have a reasonable degree of relation.
- ➡ When using this process, it is imperative [ନୀତ୍ୟାବ୍ଦ, domineering, authoritative] to have human eyes reviewing the extracted data to make sure it passes the “common sense” test. You may even find previously unidentified terms at the head of the keyword distribution graph.
- ➡ You can expand on this method in the following ways:
  - ▶ Text-mine Technorati or Delicious for relevant results.
  - ▶ Use documents purely from specific types of results—local, academic, etc.—to focus your keyword mining efforts.
  - ▶ Mine forum threads on your subject matter. You could even use inurl: forumin the searches to grab conversational keywords.

## Mining Keyword Research Tools

- ➡ Although using keyword research tools to extract long-tail data has significant [ନୀତ୍ୟାବ୍ଦ] limitations, there are still ways to do it.
- ➡ For example, if you own a chain of pizza restaurants in 50 cities across the country and you want to discover long-tail terms that might be of use to you, you can.

37 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> goodfellas pizza orlando fl. <a href="#">(search)</a>	4	16	5.33	0.250
38 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> incredible pizza orlando <a href="#">(search)</a>	4	0	—	—
39 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> best san diego pizza <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	1	1.00	3.00
40 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cici's pizza san diego <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	6	1.50	0.500
41 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pizza san diego washington street <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	0	—	—
42 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> san diego pizza delivery <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	122	0.122	0.025
43 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> san diego pizza glendale <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	0	—	—
44 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> san diego pizza glendale oscar <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	0	—	—
45 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> broadway pizza san diego <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	63	0.281	0.048
46 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> chicago brothers pizza san diego <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	6	9.00	0.500
47 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domino's pizza in san diego <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	118	0.375	0.025
48 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> god father pizza san diego <a href="#">(search)</a>	3	0	—	—

- ➡ Look at the tail end of Wordtracker’s output for a combined search on *Orlando Pizza, San Diego Pizza, and San Jose Pizza*
- ➡ Line 42, *san diego pizza delivery*, is an example of a valid long-tail term. If some people search for *san diego pizza delivery*, it is quite likely that others may search

for *orlando pizza delivery*, even though this does not show up in this data because the volume of queries available to the keyword research tool is limited.

- ▶ The takeaway remains valid: apply these logical long-tail extensions across all of your cities, even though the keyword tool shows it for only one, and you're likely to attract search queries for those keywords.

## Identifying Long-Tail Patterns

- ▶ You can also take another stab [બણો પ્રયાસ કરો] at determining long-tail information.

As a hypothetical [અનુમાનિત, theoretical or imaginary] example using *digital camera*, here are 40 searches for two different brands and models of digital cameras that have been pulled (for this demonstration) from the KeywordDiscovery database.

- ▶ Each of these received only one search:

1. consumer comments on nikon 5.1
2. new nikoncoolpix p3 8 1 mp digital camera memory
3. nikon 3 2 mpcoolpix digital camera
4. nikon 51 mpcoolpix s1 digital camera and cradle
5. nikon 6 mpcoolpix digital camera
6. nikon 7 1 mpcoolpix 7900 digital camera
7. nikon 81 mpcoolpix 8800 digital camera
8. nikoncoolpix 4800 4 mp digital camera
9. nikoncoolpix 5200 51 mp digital camera
10. nikoncoolpix 5400 51 mp digital camera
11. nikoncoolpix 6.0 mp digital camera
12. nikoncoolpix 8700 8mp 8x zoom digital camera 8 mp
13. nikoncoolpix l3 6.0 mp digital camera
14. nikoncoolpix l3 6 mp digital camera usa warranty
15. nikoncoolpix p2 51 mp digital camera
16. best buy sonycybershotdsc t7 51 mp digital camera
17. brand new sonycybershotdsc h1 51 mp digital camera
18. camera digital sonycybershot 51 mp
19. sony - cybershot 10.1 mp digital camera
20. sony - cybershot 6.0 mp digital camera
21. sony 5 mpcybershotdsc t9 digital camera
22. sony 72 mpcybershotdsc p200 digital camera information
23. sony 72 mpcybershotdsc w7 digital camera
24. sony 72 mp digital still camera cybershot rebate
25. sonycybershot 10.1 mp digital camera
26. sonycybershot 7 2mp digital camera 7 2 mp
27. sonycybershot 72mp dsc w7 digital camera 72 mp
28. sonycybershot 81 mp digital camera
29. sonycybershot digital camera 5.1 mp
30. sonycybershot digital camera 5.1 mp
31. sonycybershot digital camera 6 mp
32. sonycybershotdsc 1 81 mp digital camera review
33. sonycybershotdsc h1 51 mp digital camera
34. sonycybershotdsc w30 6 mp digital camera
35. sonycybershot dscs40 41 mp digital camera 3x opt zoom
36. sonydsc p73 cybershot digital camera 41 mp p 73

37. *sony**dsc p8 cybershot 32 mp digital camera*    38. *sony**dsc s60 cybershot digital camera 4 1 mp*  
 39. *sony**dsc s85 cybershot 41 mp digital still*    40. *sony**dsc t1 cybershot digital camera 5 0 mp camera*

- ▶ Our goal is to determine whether there are any universal patterns that searchers tend [lean towards - તરફ દુર્ભાગી] to use when searching. Within this subset of searches, a number of patterns stand out:
  - ▶ Approximately 48% begin with the brand name and end with *digital camera*.
  - ▶ Approximately 35% are ordered brand, model name, model number, megapixel, *digital camera*.
  - ▶ Approximately 22.5% are ordered brand, megapixel, model name, *digital camera*.
  - ▶ A whopping 60% follow the overall pattern of brand, model name, *and digital camera*.
- ▶ You might also notice that, at least in this example, qualifiers such as *new*, a specific store name, and a reference to consumer comments tend to precede [પહેલી] the search phrases, whereas features and product-related qualifiers such as *memory*, *3x opt zoom*, *warranty*, *cradle*, *information*, and even a repeat of the megapixels or model number tend to be appended to the search phrases.

### Editorial Content Strategies for Long-Tail Targeting

- ▶ One of the most difficult aspects [પાસાઓ, sides, portions or phases] of capturing traffic from the long tail of search is creating relevant, targeted content.
- ▶ Search engines rely on lexical [philological or verbal] analysis to determine what a web page is about. As a result, your chances of showing up for a long-tail phrase are greatly increased if you have that long-tail phrase, or at least all of its component words, on your page.
- ▶ Look at why this may be challenging by checking out what phrases Wordtracker returns when we enter *canon digital camera*.
- ▶ Already, with the eighth key phrase returned (*canon digital camera windows 7 screen fix*), you can see the challenge.
- ▶ If you are trying to sell Canon digital cameras, you are probably not going to work that key phrase into your page copy.

The best approach is to use the long-tail research techniques we discussed earlier in this section and identify the

1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera ( <a href="#">search</a> )	2,582	698,000	39.8	0.004
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital cameras ( <a href="#">search</a> )	564	1,350,000	2.39	0.000
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera reviews ( <a href="#">search</a> )	392	21,000	88.0	0.019
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera in vietnam ( <a href="#">search</a> )	288	10	27,600	28.8
5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> compare canon digital cameras ( <a href="#">search</a> )	244	1,220	180	0.201
6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera accessories ( <a href="#">search</a> )	117	8,950	6.42	0.013
7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera software ( <a href="#">search</a> )	115	2,800	8.45	0.041
8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera windows 7 screen fix ( <a href="#">search</a> )	105	0	-	-
9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> canon digital camera lens ( <a href="#">search</a> )	100	4,820	3.59	0.021
0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cheap canon digital cameras ( <a href="#">search</a> )	95	6,390	10.4	0.015

major patterns, or the major words that appear across different long-tail scenarios, and then work those words into your copy.

- ▶ Don't force it, or your pages will appear foolish to a user.
- ▶ Make sure the writers remain focused on producing quality content. From a long-tail perspective [viewpoint, side or angle], more text is better because it creates more possible long-tail matches, but there are limits to that too.
- ▶ Don't put a 1,000-word article on your site unless it makes sense to your users for you to do so.

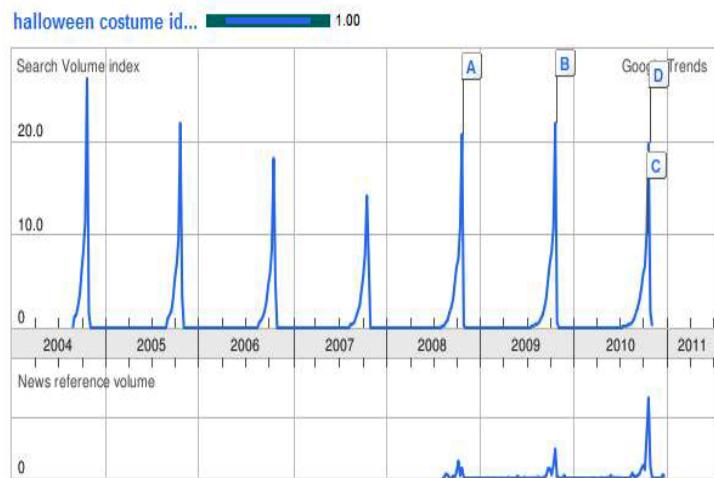
### **User-Generated Content Strategies for Long-Tail Targeting**

- ▶ User-generated content (UGC) can be a great way to obtain lots of content that will help attract long-tail traffic.
- ▶ Popular ways of doing that include providing users with forums, a place to post reviews or blog comments, or a way to upload videos or images, among others.
- ▶ As users submit content, they do the hard work of writing the text you need to capitalize on the long tail.
- ▶ There are some downsides to UGC, though. Generally speaking, you need to moderate it to make sure people are not contributing objectionable [વાંકાજનક] material you don't want on your site.
- ▶ Even if you get community members to participate, you will still need to manage them.
- ▶ In addition, you need to have a strategy for getting the process started. In the case of a forum, you need to develop a critical mass [જટિલસમૂહ] of users to establish a real community.
- ▶ If you don't establish this critical mass, a high percentage of the posts you receive will be one form of spam or another.
- ▶ To make UGC work, you need one or more of the following:
  - ▶ Significant existing daily site traffic. How much depends on how vertically oriented your community is intended to be. Narrowly [નુકલીથી] focused topics can get going with a smaller number of users.
  - ▶ A way to generate a lot of buzz to generate site traffic.
  - ▶ Compelling supporting content.
- ▶ If you can succeed at this, you'll give life to a machine that produces long-tail content on an ongoing basis with comparatively low effort.

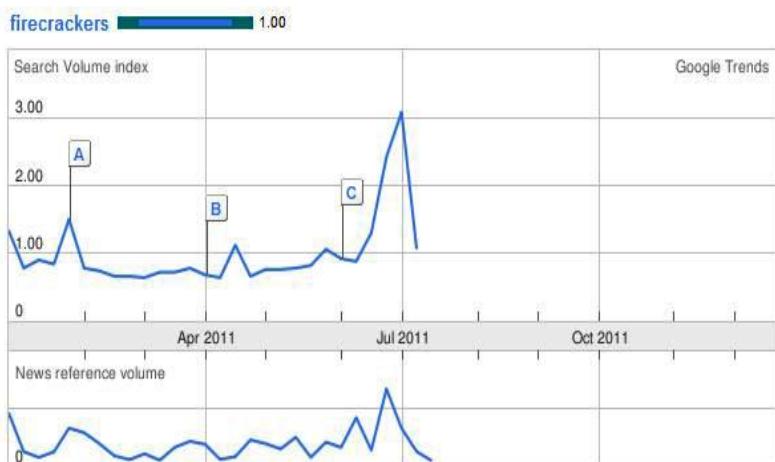
### **Trending, Seasonality, and Seasonal Fluctuations in Keyword Demand**

- ▶ One of the subtleties [intricacies, refinement] of keyword research, and of any fully developed SEO strategy, is that the use of keywords varies significantly over time.

- ▶ For instance, major holidays inevitably [ખીત, unavoidably or unescapably] lead to bursts of keyword volume related to those holidays. Examples could be searches such as *Halloween costumes*, *gift ideas for Christmas*, or *Valentine's candy*.
- ▶ If you want to write holiday-related content, it will be important to have your site visible in the SERPs for those search queries prior to that holiday's buying season so that you'll get optimum traffic for those terms.
- ▶ And since it takes the search engines a long time to discover and rank new pages or changes in existing ones, advance preparation is required.
- ▶ To investigate this further, let's examine the Google Trends data for a period of 12 months for the search term *Halloween costume idea*.
- ▶ Searches begin gaining traction toward the end of August and heading into autumn; thus, if you are doing SEO for Halloween-related terms, you would want to have the related content and links in place by the beginning of the summer so that search engines can find and index your content, ensuring that you're more visible to searchers when they start doing research.
- ▶ A long-term SEO approach would take this into consideration as part of the overall strategy for the site. Halloween-related searches start consistently [સતત] increasing toward the end of September.
- ▶ A similar pattern also emerges [ઓર્જિનલ, arises or occurs] for searches related to holidays such as Christmas and the Fourth of July. Below figure shows an example for *firecrackers*: searches start consistently increasing in early June.



- ▶ Likewise, with Valentine's Day, the searches start in mid-December.
- ▶ In most cases searches start increasing about two to three months before the



holiday, so it is important to acknowledge [સ્વીકારો] that and start crafting your content and targeting those keywords in ample time [પૂર્તી સમય] for them to be indexed before the searches start gaining traction.

- ➡ KeywordDiscovery also graphs search trends. If you have an account, you can analyze these graphs to craft a holiday campaign [અભિયાન].
- ➡ You can see when people begin to search for Halloween costumes and when the activity drops off.
- ➡ Don't take your cue from when the stores start stocking Halloween candy—do the research and find out what last year's trends were so that you're prepared this year.

If you prepare early enough, you'll be ready, while your competitors are scrambling [મુંજાયેલું] with last-minute link-building campaigns three weeks before the holiday.

- ➡ Also, don't remove your Halloween (or other seasonal) page as soon as the key time frame has passed. If you have fought hard to get rankings for your seasonal trophy term, you want to make sure you get the benefit of that hard work next year too.
- ➡ Too many sites delete or archive these seasonal pages after the season is over, and then have to start all over again the next year.
- ➡ A better strategy is to leave the page in place until a new version is created, reuse the same URL, and archive the old content to a different URL.
- ➡ Leaving the page in place will give you a jump start when it is time to begin ramping up the following year.

# Developing SEO Friendly Website

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## **Making Your Site Accessible to Search Engines**

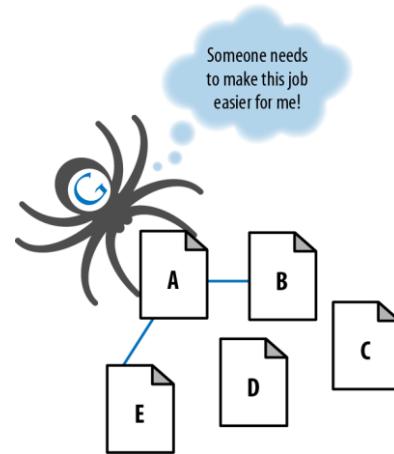
- ▶ The first step in the SEO design process is to ensure that your site can be found and crawled by the search engines.
- ▶ This is not as simple as it sounds, as there are many popular web designs and implementation constructs that the crawlers may not understand.

## **Indexable Content**

- ▶ To rank well in the search engines, your site's content—that is, the material available to visitors of your site—should be in HTML text while the search engines do crawl images and Flash files, these are content types that are difficult for search engines to analyze, and therefore they do not help them determine the topical [સ્થાનિક] relevance of your pages.
- ▶ With Flash, for example, while specific .swf files (the most common file extension for Flash) can be crawled and indexed—and are often found when the user searches for specific words or phrases that appear in their filenames and indicates that he is searching only for .swf files—it is rare that generic [સામાન્ય] query returns a Flash file or a website generated entirely in Flash as a highly relevant result, due to the lack of “readable” content.
- ▶ This is not to say that websites developed using Flash are inherently irrelevant [સ્વાભાવિક રીતે અપ્રસ્તુત], or that it is impossible to successfully optimize a website that uses Flash for search; however, in our experience the preference is almost always given to HTML-based files.
- ▶ The search engines also face challenges with “identifying” images from a relevance perspective, as there are minimal text-input fields for image files in GIF, JPEG, or PNG format (namely the filename, title, and alt attribute).
- ▶ While we do strongly recommend accurate labeling of images in these fields, images alone are usually not enough to earn web page top rankings for relevant queries.
- ▶ In June 2011, Google announced improvements to its image search functionality, By uploading an image, dragging and dropping an image from the desktop, entering an image URL, or right-clicking on an image within a browser (Firefox and Chrome with installed extensions), users can often find other locations of that image on the Web for reference and research, as well as images that “appear” similar in tone and composition [રંગનામાં].

## **Spider able link structures**

- ▶ Search engines use links on web pages to help them discover other web pages and websites. For this reason, we strongly recommend taking the time to build an internal linking structure that spiders can crawl easily.
- ▶ Many sites make the critical mistake of hiding or obfuscating [અંધારું કરવું] their navigation in ways that limit spider accessibility, thus impacting [અસર] their ability to get pages listed in the search engines' indexes.
- ▶ Google's spider has reached Page A and sees links to pages B and E. However, even though pages C and D might be important pages on the site, the spider has no way to reach them (or even to know they exist), because no direct, crawlable links point to those pages.
- ▶ To refresh your memory here are some common reasons why pages may not be reachable:
  - ▶ **Links in submission-required forms:** Search spiders will not attempt to "submit" forms, and thus any content or links that are accessible only via a form are invisible to the engines. This even applies to simple forms such as user logins, search boxes, or some types of pull-down lists.
  - ▶ **Links in hard-to-parse JavaScript:** If you use JavaScript for links, you may find that search engines either do not crawl or give very little weight to the embedded links.
  - ▶ **Links in Flash, Java, or other plug-ins:** Links embedded inside Java and plug-ins are invisible to the engines. In theory, the search engines are making progress in detecting links within Flash, but don't rely too heavily on this.
  - ▶ **Links in PowerPoint and PDF files:** PowerPoint and PDF files are no different from Flash, Java, and plug-ins. Search engines sometimes report links seen in PowerPoint files or PDFs, but how much they count for is not easily known.
  - ▶ **Links pointing to pages blocked by the meta robots tag, rel="NoFollow", or robots.txt:** The robots.txt file provides a very simple means for preventing web spiders from crawling pages on your site. Use of the NoFollow attribute on a link, or placement of the metarobots tag on the page containing the link, is an instruction to the search engine to not pass link juice via that link.
  - ▶ **Links on pages with many hundreds or thousands of links:** Google has a suggested guideline of 100 links per page before it may stop spidering additional links from that page. This "limit" is somewhat flexible,



and particularly important pages may have upward of 150 or even 200 links followed. In general, however, it is wise to limit the number of links on any given page to 100 or risk losing the ability to have additional pages crawled.

- ▶ **Links in frames or iframes:** Technically, links in both frames and iframes can be crawled, but both present structural issues for the engines in terms of organization and following. Unless you're an advanced user with a good technical understanding of how search engines index and follow links in frames, it is best to stay away from them as a place to offer links for crawling purposes.

## XML Sitemaps

- ▶ Google, Yahoo!, and Bing (from Microsoft, formerly MSN Search, and then Live Search) all support a protocol known as XML Sitemaps.
- ▶ Google first announced it in 2005, and then Yahoo! and MSN Search agreed to support the protocol in 2006. Using the Sitemaps protocol you can supply the search engines with a list of all the pages you would like them to crawl and index.
- ▶ Adding a URL to a Sitemap file does not guarantee that it will be crawled or indexed.
- ▶ However, it can result in pages that are not otherwise discovered or indexed by the search engines getting crawled and indexed.
- ▶ This program is a complement to, not a replacement for, the search engines' normal, link-based crawl. The benefits of Sitemaps include the following:
  - ▶ For the pages the search engines already know about through their regular spidering, they use the metadata you supply, such as the date when the content was last modified (lastmoddate) and the frequency at which the page is changed (changefreq), to improve how they crawl your site.
  - ▶ For the pages they don't know about, they use the additional URLs you supply to increase their crawl coverage.
  - ▶ For URLs that may have duplicates, the engines can use the XML Sitemaps data to help choose a canonical version.
  - ▶ Verification/registration of XML Sitemaps may indicate positive trust/authority signals.
  - ▶ The crawling/inclusion benefits of Sitemaps may have second-order positive effects, such as improved rankings or greater internal link popularity.
- ▶ Matt Cutts, the head of Google's web spam team, has explained Google Sitemaps in the following way:
  - ▶ Imagine if you have pages A, B, and C on your site. We find pages A and B through our normal web crawl of your links. Then you build a Sitemap and list the pages B and C. Now there's a chance (but not a promise) that we'll crawl

page C. We won't drop page A just because you didn't list it in your Sitemap. And just because you listed a page that we didn't know about doesn't guarantee that we'll crawl it. But if for some reason we didn't see any links to C, or maybe we knew about page C but the URL was rejected for having too many parameters or some other reason, now there's a chance that we'll crawl that page C.

### ***Layout of an XML Sitemap***

- ▶ The first step in the process of creating an XML Sitemap is to create an .xml Sitemap file in a suitable format. Since creating an XML Sitemap requires a certain level of technical know-how, it would be wise to involve your development team in the XML Sitemap generation process from the beginning.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8" ?>
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/sitemap/0.9">
    <url>
        <loc>http://www.example.com/</loc>
        <lastmod>2005-01-01</lastmod>
        <changefreq>monthly</changefreq>
        <priority>0.8</priority>
    </url>
</urlset>
```

- ▶ To create your XML Sitemap, you can use any of the following:
- ▶ **An XML Sitemap generator:** This is a simple script that you can configure to automatically create Sitemaps, and sometimes submit them as well. Sitemap generators can create these Sitemaps from a URLlist, access logs, or a directory path hosting static files corresponding to URLs. Here are some examples of XML Sitemap generators:
  - ▶ SourceForge.net's google-sitemap\_gen
  - ▶ XML-Sitemaps.com's Sitemap Generator
  - ▶ Sitemaps Pal
  - ▶ GSite Crawler
- ▶ **Simple text:** You can provide Google with a simple text file that contains one URL per line. However, Google recommends that once you have a text Sitemap file for your site, you use the Sitemap Generator to create a Sitemap from this text file using the Sitemaps protocol.
- ▶ **Syndication feed:** Google accepts Really Simple Syndication (RSS) 2.0 and Atom 1.0 feeds. Note that the feeds may provide information on recent URLs only.

### ***What to include in a Sitemap file***

- ▶ When you create a Sitemap file, you need to take care in situations where your site has multiple URLs that refer to one piece of content.
- ▶ Include only the preferred (canonical) version of the URL, as the search engines may assume that the URL specified in a Sitemap file is the preferred form of the URL for the content.

- ▶ In addition, be careful about what not to include. For example, do not include multiple URLs that point to identical content, and leave out pages that are simply pagination pages or alternate sort orders for the same content, and/or any low-value pages on your site.

### ***Where to upload your Sitemap file***

- ▶ When your Sitemap file is complete, upload the file to your site in the highest-level directory you want search engines to crawl (generally, the root directory), such as [www.yoursite.com/sitemap.xml](http://www.yoursite.com/sitemap.xml).
- ▶ You can include more than one subdomain in your Sitemap, provided that you verify the Sitemap for each subdomain in Google Webmaster Tools.

### ***Managing and updating XML Sitemaps***

- ▶ Once your XML Sitemap has been accepted and your site has been crawled, monitor the results and update your Sitemap if there are issues.
- ▶ With Google, you can return to your GoogleWebmaster Tools account to view the statistics and diagnostics related to your Google Sitemaps; just click the site you want to monitor.
- ▶ Update your XML Sitemap with Google and Bing when you add URLs to your site. You'll also want to keep your Sitemap file up-to-date when you add a large volume of pages or a group of pages that are strategic.
- ▶ There is no need to update the XML Sitemap when simply updating content on existing pages.
- ▶ Further, if development resources are not available to update your Sitemap, it is not strictly necessary to immediately update it when pages are deleted, as the search engines will simply not be able to crawl those URLs; however, don't let a significant number of deleted pages remain in your Sitemap for long.
- ▶ You should update your Sitemap file whenever you add any new content, and you can remove any deleted pages at that time.

### **Creating an Optimal Information Architecture (IA)**

- ▶ Making your site friendly to search engine crawlers also requires that you put some thought into your site information architecture. A well-designed architecture can bring many benefits for both users and search engines.

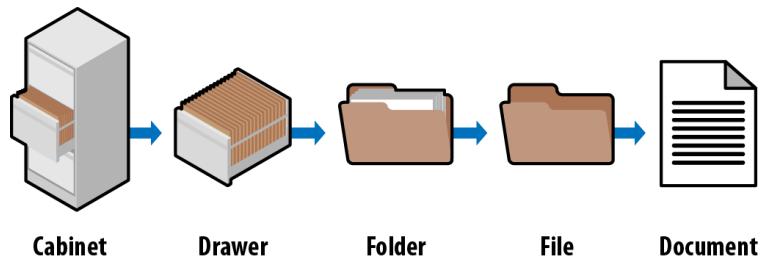
### **The Importance of a Logical, Category-Based Flow**

- ▶ The search engines face myriad [असंभव] technical challenges in understanding your site. Crawlers are not able to perceive web pages in the way that humans do, and thus significant limitations for both accessibility and indexing exist.

- Logical and properly constructed website architecture can help overcome these issues and bring great benefits in search traffic and usability.
- At the core of website information architecture are two critical principles: usability, or making a site easy to use; and information architecture, or crafting a logical, hierarchical structure for content.

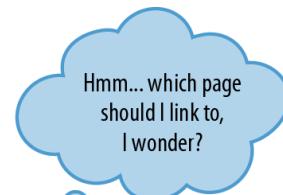
### **Usability and search friendliness**

- Search engines are trying to reproduce the human process of sorting relevant web pages by quality.
- If a real human were to do this job, usability and the user experience would surely play a large role in determining the rankings.
- Given that search engines are machines and they don't have the ability to segregate [અલગ તારફામાં] by this metric quite so easily, they are forced to employ a variety of alternative, secondary metrics to assist in the process. The most well-known and well publicized among these is link measurement.



### **An analogy**

- Look at how a standard filing cabinet is organized. You have the individual cabinet, drawers in the cabinet, folders within the drawers, files within the folders, and documents within the files.
- There is only one copy of any individual document, and it is located in a particular spot.
- There is a very clear navigation path to get to it. If you wanted to find the January 2011 invoice for a client called Amalgamated Glove & Spat, you would go to the cabinet, open the drawer marked Client Accounts, find the AmalgamatedGlove & Spat folder, look for the Invoices file, and then flip through the documents until you come to the



Clean layout  
Good content  
Highly usable



Poor design  
Crummy content  
Hard to navigate

### **Filing Category      Site Analogue**

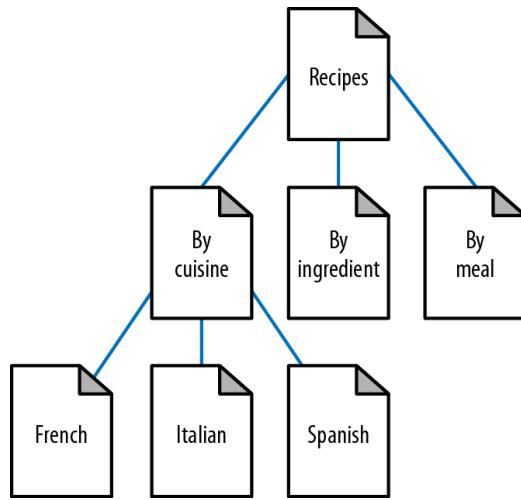
Cabinet	→	Fully Qualified Domain (e.g., seattle.craigslist.org)
Drawer	→	Primary Site Category (e.g., Housing)
Folder	→	Secondary Site Category (e.g., Apartments for Rent)
File	→	Tertiary Site Category (e.g., 2 Bedroom Apartments)
Document	→	Individual Page/Item (e.g., 2 Bedroom Capitol Hill Loft Apartment)

January 2011 invoice (again, there is only one copy of this; you won't find it anywhere else).

- ▶ To get to that final listing, you'd navigate to the Craigslist Seattle site, choose Apts/Housing, narrow your search down to two-bedroom apartments, and pick the two-bedroom loft from the list of available postings. Craigslist's simple, logical information architecture makes it easy to reach the desired post in four clicks, without having to think too hard at any step about where to go. This principle applies perfectly to the process of SEO, where good information architecture dictates:
  - ▶ As few clicks as possible to get to any given page.
  - ▶ One hundred or fewer links per page (so as not to overwhelm either crawlers or visitors).
  - ▶ A logical, semantic flow of links from home page to categories to detail pages

### Site Architecture Design Principles

- ▶ When planning your website, remember that nearly every user will initially be confused about where to go, what to do, and how to find what he wants.
- ▶ An architecture that recognizes this difficulty and leverages familiar standards of usability with an intuitive link structure will have the best chance of making a visit to the site a positive experience.
- ▶ Well-organized site architecture helps solve these problems and provides semantic and usability benefits to both users and search engines.
- ▶ As Figure demonstrates, a recipes website can use intelligent architecture to fulfill visitors' expectations about content and create a positive browsing experience. This structure not only helps humans navigate a site more easily, but also helps the search engines to see that your content fits into logical concept groups.
- ▶ You can use this approach to help you rank for applications of your product in addition to attributes of your product.



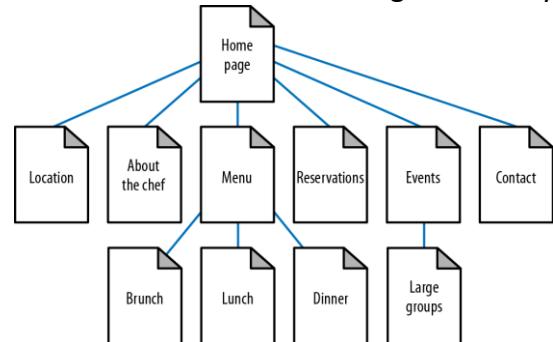
### Designing site architecture

- ▶ Although site architecture—the creation of structure and flow in a website's topical hierarchy—is typically the territory [territory, area, zone, place or region] of information architects and is created without assistance from a company's internal content team, its impact on search engine rankings, particularly in the

long run, is substantial, thus making it wise to follow basic guidelines of search friendliness.

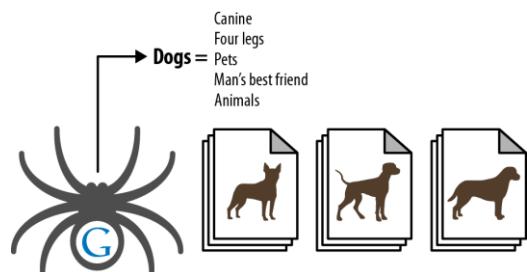
- ➡ The process itself should not be overly [અન્યાંત, વધારે પડતું] arduous[કદળું], if you follow this simple protocol:

- ▶ List all of the requisite content pages (blog posts, articles, product detail pages, etc.).
- ▶ Create top-level navigation that can comfortably hold all of the unique types of detailed content on the site.
- ▶ Reverse the traditional top-down process by starting with the detailed content and working your way up to an organizational structure capable of holding each page.
- ▶ Once you understand the bottom, fill in the middle. Build out a structure for sub navigation to sensibly [સંવેદનશીલ] connect top-level pages with detailed content. In small sites, there may be no need for this level, whereas in larger sites, two or even three levels of subnavigation may be required.
- ▶ Include secondary pages such as copyright, contact information, and other nonessentials. Build a visual hierarchy that shows (to at least the last level of sub navigation) each page on the site.



### **Category structuring**

- ➡ As search engines crawl the Web, they collect an incredible amount of data (millions of gigabytes) on the structure of language, subject matter, and relationships between content.
- ➡ Though not technically an attempt at artificial intelligence, the engines have built a repository capable of making sophisticated determinations based on common patterns.
- ➡ As shown in Figure, search engine spiders can learn semantic relationships as they crawl thousands of pages that cover a related topic (in this case, dogs).
- ➡ Although content need not always be structured along the most predictable patterns, particularly when a different method of sorting can provide value or interest to a visitor, organizing subjects logically assists both humans (who will find your site easier to use) and engines (which will award you greater rankings based on increased subject relevance).

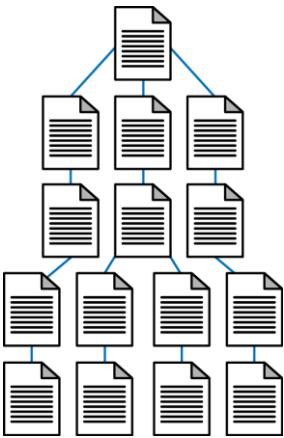


## **Topical Relevance**

- ▶ Naturally, this pattern of relevance-based scoring extends from single relationships between documents to the entire category structure of a website. Site creators can best take advantage of this by building hierarchies that flow from broad, encompassing [જેમાં સમાઈ] subject matter down to more detailed, specific content. Obviously, in any categorization system, there is a natural level of subjectivity [અક્ષતગતતાને, partiality bias or prejudice]. Don't get too hung up on perfecting what the engines want here—instead, think first of your visitors and use these guidelines to ensure that your creativity doesn't overwhelm the project.

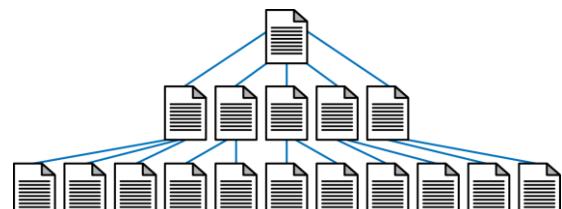
## **Taxonomy and Ontology**

- ▶ In designing a website, you should also consider its taxonomy [વર્ગીકરણ, classification, arrangement or categorization] and ontology [યંત્રીકરણવિદ્યા]. The taxonomy is essentially a two-dimensional hierarchical model of the architecture of the site. You can think of ontology as mapping the way the human mind thinks about a topic area. It can be much more complex than taxonomy, because a larger number of relationship types can be involved.

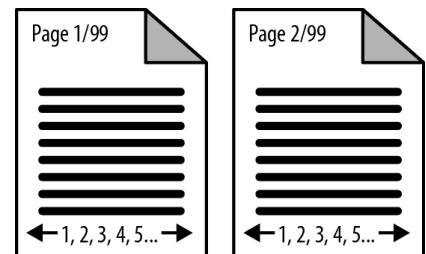


## **Flat versus Deep Architecture**

- ▶ One very strict rule for search friendliness is the creation of flat site architecture. Flat sites require a minimal number of clicks to access any given page, whereas deep sites create long paths of links required to access detailed content. For nearly every site with fewer than 10,000 pages, all content should be accessible through a maximum of three clicks from the home page and/or sitemap page. At 100 links per page, even sites with millions of pages can have every page accessible in five to six clicks if proper link and navigation structures are employed. If site is not built to be flat, it can take too many clicks to reach the desired content, as shown in above figure. In contrast, a flat site allows users and search engines to reach most content in just a few clicks.
- ▶ Flat sites aren't just easier for search engines to crawl; they are also simpler for users, as they limit the number of page visits the user requires to reach her destination.
- ▶ This reduces the abandonment [ઝાગ, leaving, rejection or neglect] rate and encourages repeat visits. When creating flat sites, be aware that the engines are known to limit the number of links they crawl from a given page.



- As mentioned earlier, representatives from several of the major engines have said in the past that if a page contains more than 100 individual links, unless that page is of particular importance (i.e., many external sites link to it) it is likely that not all of those links will be followed.
  - This is not as big a problem today as it once was, as the search engines are able to handle bigger page sizes and larger numbers of links per page.
  - Pagination, the practice of creating a sequence of pages to break up long lists of elements or long articles (e.g., some ecommerce sites use pagination for product catalogs that have more products than they wish to show on a single page), is problematic for many reasons.
  - First, pagination provides virtually no topical relevance. Second, pagination can potentially [સંભવિત] create duplicate content problems or be seen as indicative [સૂચક] of poor-quality content.
  - Last, pagination can create spider traps, and having hundreds or thousands of extraneous [અપ્રાર્થિક], low-quality pages can be detrimental [હાનિકારક] to search visibility.
  - Solutions to pagination problems vary based on the content of the website. Here are a few possibilities, with examples of when they may be useful:
  - Create a View-All page and use rel="canonical". You may have lengthy articles that you choose to break into multiple pages. However, this results in links to the pages whose anchor text is something like "1", "2", and so forth.
  - The titles of the various pages may not vary in any significant way, so they tend to compete with each other for search traffic.
  - Finally, if someone links to the article but does not link to the first page, the link juice from that link will largely be wasted. Use rel="next" and rel="prev".
  - At SMX East in September 2011, Google announced Google's support for new link elements called rel="next" and rel="prev".
  - The benefit of using these link elements is that it lets Google know when it has encountered a sequence of paginated pages.
  - Once Google recognizes these tags, links to any of the pages will be treated as links to the series of pages as a whole.
  - While at the time of this writing Bing had not yet announced support for these tags, it is likely that it will do so in the near future. In the <head> section of the first page of your paginated content, implement a rel="next" tag pointing to the second page of the content. The tag should look something like this:
- ```
<link rel="next"
      href="http://www.yoursite.com/products?prod=qwert&p=2" />
```



- ▶ In the <head> section of the last page of your paginated content, implement a rel="prev" tag pointing to the second-to-last page of the content. The tag should look something like this:

```
<link rel="prev"
      href="http://www.yoursite.com/products?prod=qwert&p=11" />
```

- ▶ In the <head> section of pages 2 through 11, implement rel="next" and rel="prev" tags pointing to the following and preceding pages, respectively. The following example shows what the tags should look like on page six of the content:

```
<link rel="prev"
      href="http://www.yoursite.com/products?prod=qwert&p=5" />
<link rel="next"
      href="http://www.yoursite.com/products?prod=qwert&p=7" />
```

## **Search-Friendly Site Navigation**

- ▶ Website navigation is something that web designers have been putting considerable thought and effort into since websites came into existence. Even before search engines were significant, navigation played an important role in helping users find what they wanted. It plays an important role in helping search engines understand your site as well.

### ***Basics of search engine friendliness***

- ▶ The search engine spiders need to be able to read and interpret your website's code to properly spider and index the content on your web pages. Do not confuse this with the rules of organizations such as the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which issues guidelines on HTML construction.
- ▶ Although following the W3C guidelines can be a good idea, the great majority of sites do not follow these guidelines, so search engines generally overlook **violations** of these rules as long as their spiders can parse the code.

### ***Site elements that are problematic for spiders***

- ▶ While simple HTML is not a problem for the spiders, many other types of content may appear on a web page that work well for humans but not so well for search engines. Here are some of the most common problem areas.

### ***Search and web forms***

- ▶ Many sites **incorporate** search functionality. These "site search" elements are specialized search engines that index and provide access to one site's content. This is a popular method of helping users rapidly find their way around complex sites; for example, the PewInternet website (<http://www.pewinternet.org>) provides a site search box in the top-right corner.
- ▶ This is a great tool for users, but search engines will be stymied [blocked, obstructed or hindered] by it. Search engines operate by crawling the Web's link structure—they don't submit forms or attempt random queries into search

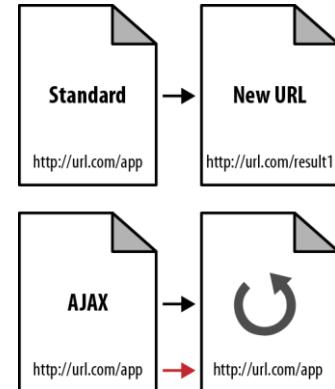
fields, and thus, any URLs or content solely [ફોર્મ] accessible via form will remain invisible to Google or Bing.

### ***Java, Images, Audio, and Video.***

- ➡ Adobe Shockwave files, Java embeds, audio, and video (in any format) present content that is largely uncrawlable by the major engines. With some notable exceptions, search engines can read text only when it is presented in HTML format.
- ➡ Embedding important keywords or entire paragraphs in an image or a Java console renders them invisible to the spiders. Likewise, the search engines cannot easily understand words spoken in an audio file or video.
- ➡ However, Google has begun to leverage [ઉચ્ચાવકનીકિયા, influence, power or force] tools such as Google Voice Search in order to “crawl” audio content and extract meaning (this was first confirmed in the book In the Plex by Steven Levy, published by Simon& Schuster).
- ➡ Baidu already has an MP3 search function, and the Shazam and Jaikozappplications show the ability to identify song hashes today as well.

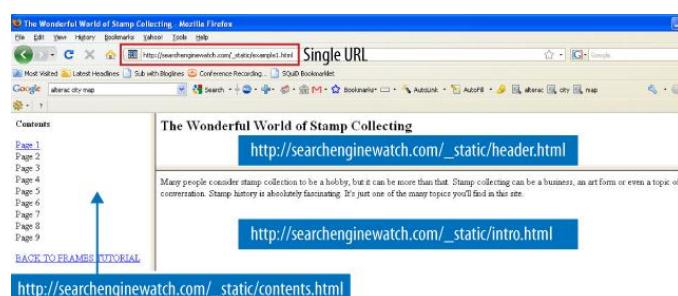
### ***AJAX and JavaScript.***

- ➡ JavaScript enables many dynamic functions inside a website, most of which **interfere** very minimally with the operations of a search engine spider. The exception comes when a page must use a JavaScript call to reach another page, or to pull content that the spiders can't see in the HTML.
- ➡ In some instances this content is not visible to search engine spiders. However, Google has confirmed that it will attempt to execute JavaScript to access this type of content. One example of this is Facebook Comments. Facebook Comments is a system offered by Facebook that allows publishers to collect comments from users on their site.
- ➡ If you examine the source code for this particular page you will not see any of the text strings for these comments in the HTML. This is because the comments are actually stored on Facebook and are dynamically retrieved by the web server when the page is rendered.
- ➡ Asynchronous JavaScript and XML (AJAX) present similar problems, most notably [જાણીતીરિને] in the delivery of content that search engines may not be able to spider. Since AJAX uses database calls to retrieve data without refreshing a page or changing URLs, the content contained behind these technologies may be completely hidden from the search engines.



### ***Frames***

- ▶ Frames emerged in the mid-1990s as a popular way to make easy navigation systems. Unfortunately, both their usability (in 99% of cases) and their search friendliness (in 99.99% of cases) were exceptionally [અસાધારણુશીલ] poor. Today, iframes and CSS can replace the need for frames, even when a site's demands call for similar functionality.
- ▶ For search engines, the biggest problem with frames and iframes is that they often hold the content from two or more URLs on a single page.
- ▶ For users, the issue is that search engines, which direct searchers to only a single URL, may get confused by frames and direct visitors to single pages (orphan pages) inside a site intended to show multiple URLs at once.



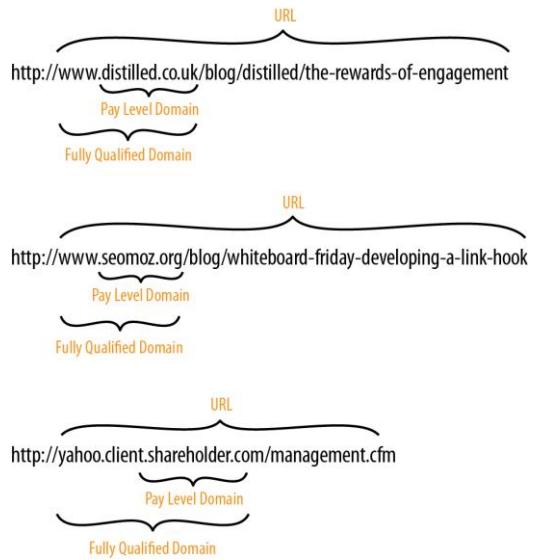
### **Search engine-friendly navigation guidelines**

- ▶ Although search engine spiders have become more advanced over the years, the basic premise [પ્રાર્થના] and goals remain the same: spiders find web pages by following links and record the content of the pages they find in the search engine's index (a giant repository [જાડાર, storehouse, source or mine] of data about websites and pages).
- ▶ In addition to avoiding the technique, there are some additional guidelines for developing search engine-friendly navigation:
- ▶ **Implement a text link-based navigational structure:** If you choose to create navigation in Flash, JavaScript, or some other technology the search engine may be unable to parse [વાક્યાનુષ્ઠાનકરણ], make sure to offer alternative text links in HTML for spiders to ensure that automated robots (and visitors who may not have the required browser plug-ins) can reach your pages.
- ▶ **Beware of “spider traps”:** Even intelligently coded search engine spiders can get lost in infinite loops of links that pass between pages on a site. Intelligent architecture that avoids looping 301 or 302 HTTP server codes (or other redirection protocols) should negate [રદ્દ કરું] this issue, but sometimes having online calendar links, infinite pagination that loops, or massive numbers of ways in which content is accessible or sorted can result in tens of thousands of pages for search engine spiders to crawl when you intended to have only a few dozen true pages of content.
- ▶ **Watch out for session IDs and cookies:** As we just discussed, if you limit the ability of a user to view pages or redirect based on cookie setting or session ID, search engines may be unable to crawl your content. The bots do not have cookies enabled, nor can they deal with session IDs properly (each visit by a crawler gets a URL with a different session ID, and the search engine sees these URLs with session IDs as different URLs). Although restricting form submissions is

fine (as search spiders can't submit forms anyway), limiting content access via cookies and session IDs is a bad idea.

## **Root Domains, Subdomains, and Microsites**

- ▶ Among the common questions that arise when structuring a website (or restructuring one) are whether to host content on a new domain, when to use subfolders, and when to employ micro sites.
- ▶ **Individual pages/URLs:** These are the most basic elements of the Web: filenames, much like those that have been found on computers for decades, which indicate unique documents. Search engines assign query-independent scores—most famously, Google's PageRank—to URLs and judge them in their ranking algorithms. A typical URL might look something like:  
<http://www.yourdomain.com/page.html>.
- ▶ **Subfolders:** The folder structures that websites use can also inherit or be assigned metrics by search engines (though there's very little information to suggest that they are used one way or another). Luckily, they are an easy structure to understand. In the URL <http://www.yourdomain.com/blog/post17.html>, /blog/ is the subfolder and post17.html is the name of the file in that subfolder.
- ▶ **Subdomains/fully qualified domains (FQDs)/third-level domains:** In the URL <http://blog.yourdomain.com/page.html>, three kinds of domain levels are present. The top-level domain (also called the TLD or domain extension) is .com, the second-level domain is your domain, and the third-level domain is blog. The third-level domain is sometimes referred to as a subdomain.
- ▶ **Complete root domains/host domains/pay-level domains (PLDs)/second-level domains:** The domain name you need to register and pay for, and the one you point DNS settings toward, is the second-level domain (though it is commonly improperly called the “top-level” domain). In the URL <http://www.yourdomain.com/page.html>, yourdomain.com is the second-level domain. Other naming conventions may refer to this as the “root” or “pay-level” domain.



## **When to Use a Subfolder**

- ▶ If a subfolder will work, it is the best choice 99.9% of the time. Keeping content on a single root domain and single subdomain (e.g., <http://www.yourdomain.com>) gives the maximum SEO benefits, as the engines

will maintain all of the positive metrics the site earns around links, authority, and trust and will apply these to every page on the site.

- ▶ Subfolders have all the flexibility of subdomains (the content can, if necessary, be hosted on a unique server or a completely unique IP address, through post-firewall load balancing) and none of the drawbacks.
- ▶ Subfolder content will contribute directly to how search engines (and users, for that matter) view the domain as a whole.

### **When to Use a Subdomain**

- ▶ If your marketing team decides to promote a URL that is completely unique in content or purpose and would like to use a catchy subdomain to do it, using a subdomain can be practical.
- ▶ Maps.google.com is an example of where the marketing considerations make a subdomain an acceptable choice.
- ▶ One good reason to use a subdomain is in a situation where doing so can look more authoritative to users, as a result of creating separation from the main domain.

### **When to Use a Separate Root Domain**

- ▶ If you have a single, primary site that has earned links, built content, and attracted brand attention and awareness, it is very rarely advisable to place any new content on a completely separate domain. There are rare occasions when this can make sense

### **Microsites**

- ▶ There is a lot of debate about microsites, and although we generally recommend that you do not saddle yourself with the hassle of dealing with multiple sites and their SEO risks and disadvantages, it is important to understand the arguments, even if there are only a few, in favor of doing so.

### ***Making the case for microsites***

- ▶ Optimized properly, a microsite may have dozens or even hundreds of pages. If your site is likely to gain more traction [બેચ્યુક્ટાળવું, grip or toehold] and interest with webmasters and bloggers by being at arm's length from your main site, this approach may be worth considering—for example, if you have a very commercial main site and you want to create some great content that does not fit on that site, perhaps in the form of articles, podcasts, and RSS feeds.

### ***When should you consider a microsite?***

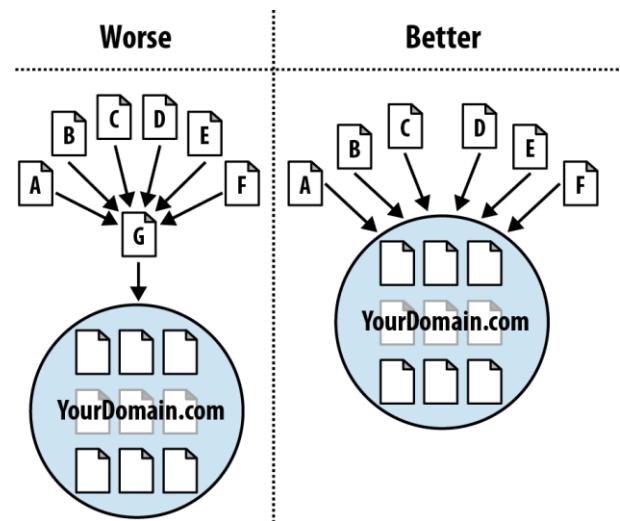
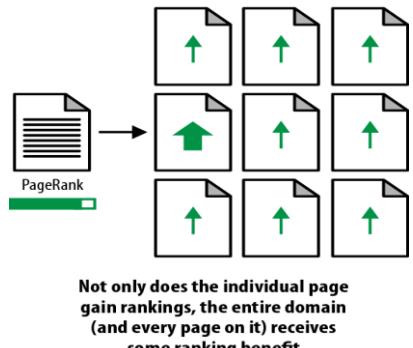
- ▶ When you own a specific keyword search query domain. For example, if you own usedtoyotatrucks.com, you might do very well to pull in search traffic for the specific term used Toyota trucks with a microsite.
- ▶ When you plan to sell the domains. It is very hard to sell a folder or even a subdomain, so this strategy is understandable if you're planning to churn [હવાવીનાળવું, અળમળવું, roll, shake or stir] the domains in the second-hand market.

- If you're a major brand building a "secret" or buzz-worthy microsite. In this case, it can be useful to use a separate domain. However, you really should 301 the pages of that domain back to your main site after the campaign is over so that the link juice continues to provide long-term benefit—just as the mindshare and branding do in the offline world.

#### **Reasons for not using a microsite:**

- **Search algorithms favor large, authoritative domains:** Take a piece of great content about a topic and toss it onto a small, mom-and-pop website, point some external links to it, optimize the page and the site for the target terms, and get it indexed. Now, take that exact same content and place it on Wikipedia or CNN.com. You're virtually guaranteed that the content on the large, authoritative domain will outrank the content on the small niche site. The engines' current algorithms favor sites that have built trust, authority, consistency, and history.
- **Multiple sites split the benefits of links:** As suggested in Figure, single good link pointing to a page on a domain positively influences the entire domain and every page on it. Because of this phenomenon [વस્તુઅથવાઘટના, fact, experience, incident or event], it is much more valuable to have any links you can possibly get pointing to the same domain to help boost the rank and value of the pages on it. Having content or keyword-targeted pages on other domains that don't benefit from the links you earn to your primary domain only creates more work.
- **100 links to Domain A ≠ 100 links to Domain B + 1 link to Domain A (from Domain B):** In Figure , you can see how earning lots of links to Page G on a separate domain is far less valuable than earning those same links to a page on the primary domain. Due to this phenomenon, even if you interlink all of the microsites or multiple domains that you build, the value you get still won't be close to the value you could get from those links if they were to point directly to the primary domain. A large, authoritative [અધિકાર્યકૃત, reliable, dependable, respected or convincing] domain can host a huge variety of content niche websites frequently limit the

**The rising tide (of a link)  
lifts all boats (on the domain)**



variety of their discourse [પ્રવચન, વ્યાખ્યાન, વિવરણ] and content matter, whereas broader sites can target a wider range of foci. This is valuable not just for targeting the long tail of search and increasing potential [થઈશકેઅન્દું, possible, probable or likely] branding and reach, but also for viral content, where broader focus is much less limiting than that of a niche focus.

- ➡ **Time and energy are better spent on a single property:** If you're going to pour [અતૂટાવાણેવણેવું] your heart and soul into web development, design, usability, user experience, site architecture, SEO, public relations, branding, and so on, you want the biggest bang for your buck. Splitting your attention, time, and resources amongst multiple domains dilutes [જોરાઓછુંકરવું] that value and doesn't let the natural order of building on your past successes on a single domain assist with that process. As shown in above figure, every page on a site receives benefit from inbound links to a site. The page receiving the link gets the most benefit, but other pages also benefit

### **When to Use a TLD Other than .com**

- ➡ There are only a few rare situations in which you should consider using a TLD other than .com:
- ➡ When you own the .com and want to redirect to an .org, .tv, .biz, etc., possibly for marketing/branding/geographic reasons. Do this only if you already own the .com and can redirect.
- ➡ When you can use a .gov, .mil, or .edu domain (.jobs, though technically restricted to HR and hiring organizations, is available to anyone who hires and doesn't have any special search benefits).
- ➡ When you are serving only a single geographic region and are willing to permanently forego growth outside that region (e.g., .co.uk, .de, .it, etc.).
- ➡ When you are a nonprofit and want to distance your organization from the commercial world. In this case, .org may be for you.

### **Optimization of Domain Names/URLs**

- ➡ Two of the most basic parts of any website are the domain name and the URLs for the pages of the website. This section will explore guidelines for optimizing these important elements.

### **Optimizing Domains**

- ➡ When a new site is being conceived [કણ્ણના] or designed, one of the critical items to consider is the naming of the domain, whether it is for a new blog, a company launch, or even just a friend's website. Here are tips that will be indispensable [અનિવાર્ય] in helping you select a great domain name:
- ➡ **Brainstorm five top keywords.** When you begin your domain name search, it helps to have five terms or phrases in mind that best describe the domain you're seeking. Once you have this list, you can start to pair them or add prefixes [પૂર્વં,

begins, starts] and suffixes to create good domain ideas. For example, if you're launching a mortgage-related domain, you might start with words such as mortgage[ગીરો, loan or debt], finance, home equity, interest rate, and house payment, and then play around until you can find a good match.

- ▶ **Make the domain unique.** Having your website confused with a popular site that someone else already owns is a recipe for disaster. Thus, never choose a domain that is simply the plural, hyphenated [જાણીતી], or misspelled version of an already established domain. For example, for years Flickr did not own Flicker.com, and probably lost traffic because of that. They recognized the problem and bought the domain, and as a result <http://flicker.com> now redirects to <http://flickr.com>.
- ▶ **Choose only .com-available domains or the ccTLD for your country.** If you're not concerned with type-in traffic, branding, or name recognition, you don't need to worry about this one. However, if you're at all serious about building a successful website over the long term, you should be worried about all of these elements, and although directing traffic to a .net or .org is fine, owning and 301'ing the .com, or the ccTLD for the country your website serves (e.g., .co.uk for the United Kingdom), is critical. With the exception of the very tech-savvy [ટેક-સમજશક્તિન], most people who use the Web still make the automatic assumption that .com or the ccTLD for their country is all that's out there, or that these domains are more trustworthy. Don't make the mistake of locking out or losing traffic from these folks.
- ▶ **Make it easy to type.** If a domain name requires considerable attention to type correctly due to spelling, length, or the use of unmemorable words or sounds, you've lost a good portion of your branding and marketing value. Usability folks even **tout** the value of having the words include easy-to-type letters (which we interpret as avoiding q, z, x, and p).
- ▶ **Make it easy to remember.** Remember that word-of-mouth marketing relies on the ease with which the domain can be called to mind. You don't want to be the company with the terrific website that no one can ever remember to tell their friends about because they can't remember the domain name.
- ▶ **Keep the name as short as possible.** Short names are easy to type and easy to remember. Short names also allow more of the URL to display in theSERPs and are a better fit on business cards and other offline media.
- ▶ **Create and fulfill expectations.** When someone hears about your domain name for the first time, he should be able to instantly and accurately guess what type of content he might find there. That's why we love domain names such as Hotmail.com, CareerBuilder.com, AutoTrader.com, and WebMD.com. Domains such as Monster.com, Amazon.com, and Zillow.com required far more branding because of their **non-intuitive** names.
- ▶ **Set yourself apart with a brand.** Using a unique moniker [name, mark or autograph]is a great way to build additional value with your domain name. A

“brand” is more than just a combination of words, which is why names such as Mortgageforyourhome.com and Shoesandboots.com aren’t as compelling as branded names such as Yelp.com and Gilt.com.

- ▶ **Reject hyphens and numbers.** Both hyphens and numbers make it hard to convey your domain name verbally [મૌખિક] and fall down on being easy to remember or type. Avoid Roman or spelled-out numerals [અંકડા] in domains, as both can be confusing and mistaken for the other.
- ▶ **Don’t follow the latest trends.** Website names that rely on odd misspellings (as do many Web 2.0-style sites), multiple hyphens (such as the SEO-optimized domains of the early 2000s), or uninspiring short adjectives (such as “top...x,” “best...x,” “hot...x”) aren’t always the best choice. This isn’t a hard and fast rule, but in the world of naming conventions in general, just because everyone else is doing it doesn’t mean it is a surefire strategy. Just look at all the people who named their businesses “AAA...x” over the past 50 years to be first in the phone book; how many Fortune 1,000s are named “AAACompany”?
- ▶ **Use an AJAX domain selection tool.** Websites such as Name boy and Domjax make it exceptionally easy to determine the availability of a domain name. Just remember that you don’t have to buy through these services. You can find an available name that you like, and then go to your registrar of choice.

### Picking the Right URLs

- ▶ Search engines place some weight on keywords in your URLs. Be careful, however, as the search engines can interpret long URLs with numerous hyphens in them (e.g., Buy-this-awesome-product-now.html) as a spam signal. What follows are some guidelines for selecting optimal URLs for the pages of your site(s).
- ▶ **Describe your content:** An obvious URL is a great URL. If a user can look at the address bar (or a pasted link) and make an accurate guess about the content of the page before ever reaching it, you’ve done your job. These URLs get pasted, shared, emailed, written down, and yes, even recognized by the engines.
- ▶ **Keep it short: Brevity is a virtue.** The shorter the URL, the easier it is to copy and paste, read over the phone, write on a business card, or use in a hundred other **unorthodox** fashions, all of which spell better usability and increased branding.
- ▶ **Static is the way:** The search engines treat static URLs differently than dynamic ones. Users also are not fond of URLs in which the big players are ?&, and =. They are just harder to read and understand.
- ▶ **Descriptive are better than numbers:** If you’re thinking of using 114/cat223/ you should go with /brand/adidas/ instead. Even if the descriptive isn’t a keyword or particularly informative to an uninitiated user, it is far better to use words when possible. If nothing else, your team members will thank you for making it that much easier to identify problems in development and testing.

- ➡ **Use fewer folders:** A URL should contain no unnecessary folders (or words or characters, for that matter). They do not add to the user experience of the site and can in fact confuse users.
- ➡ **Hyphens separate best:** When creating URLs with multiple words in the format of a phrase, hyphens are best to separate the terms (e.g., /brands/dolce-and-gabbana/), but you can also use plus signs (+).
- ➡ **Don't be case-sensitive:** Since URLs can accept both uppercase and lowercase characters, don't ever, ever allow any uppercase letters in your structure. Unix/Linux-based web servers are case-sensitive, so <http://www.domain.com/Products/widgets/> is technically a different URL from <http://www.domain.com/products/widgets/>. Note that this is not true in Microsoft IIS servers, but there are a lot of Apache web servers out there. In addition, this is confusing to users, and potentially to search engine spiders as well. If you have them now, 301-redirect them tall-lowercase versions to help avoid confusion. If you have a lot of type-in traffic, you might even consider a 301 rule that sends any incorrect capitalization permutation [ફોમ્યુલા, variation, change or version] to its rightful home.

### **Keyword Targeting**

- ➡ The search engines face a tough task: based on a few words in a query (or sometimes only one), they must return a list of relevant results, order them by measures of importance, and hope that the searcher finds what she is seeking.
- ➡ As website creators and web content publishers, you can make this process massively simpler for the search engines and, in turn, benefit from the enormous[કૃતિ, huge, vast or giant] traffic they send by employing the same terms users search for in prominent positions on your pages.
- ➡ The first step in the keyword targeting process is uncovering popular terms and phrases that searchers regularly use to find the content, products, or services your site offers. Once you have that list, you'll need to include these keywords in your pages. In the early days of SEO, the process involved stuffing keywords repetitively into every HTML tag possible.
- ➡ Now, keyword relevance is much more aligned with the usability of a page from a human perspective. Appropriate keyword usage includes creating titles, headlines, and content designed to appeal to searchers in the results (and entice clicks), as well as building relevance for search engines to improve your rankings.
- ➡ Building a search-friendly site requires prominently employing the keywords searchers use to find content. This section explores some of the more prominent places where a publisher can place those keywords.

### **Title Tags**

- ▶ For keyword placement, title tags are the most critical element for search engine relevance. The title tag is in the <head> section of an HTML document, and it is the only piece of “meta” information about a page that influences relevancy and ranking. The following rules represent best practices for title tag construction.
- ▶ **Place your keywords at the beginning of the title tag.** This provides the most search engine benefit. If you’re doing this and you also want to employ your brand name in the title tag, you should place that at the end. There is a tradeoff here between SEO benefit and branding benefit that you should think about and make an explicit decision on. Major brands may want to place their brand at the start of the title tag as it may increase click-through rates. To decide which way to go you need to consider which need is greater for your business.
- ▶ **Limit length to 65 characters (including spaces).** Content in title tags after 65 characters is probably given less weight by the search engines. At a minimum, the title tag shown in the SERPs gets cut off at 65 characters. Watch this number carefully, though, as Google in particular is now supporting up to 70 characters in some cases.
- ▶ **Target longer phrases if they are relevant.** When choosing what keywords to include in a title tag, use as many as are completely relevant to the page at hand while remaining accurate and descriptive. It can be much more valuable to have a title tag such as “SkiDudes| Downhill Skiing Equipment & Accessories” rather than simply “SkiDudes | SkiingEquipment”—including those additional terms that are both relevant to the page and receive significant search traffic can **bolster** your page’s value.
- ▶ **Use a divider.** When splitting up the brand from the descriptive, options include | (a.k.a.the pipe), >, -, and:, all of which work well. You can also combine these whereappropriate—for example, “Major Brand Name: Product Category - Product.” These characters do not bring an SEO benefit, but they can enhance the readability of your title.
- ▶ **Target searcher intent.** When writing titles for web pages, keep in mind the search terms your audience employed to reach your site. If the intent is browsing or research-based, a more descriptive title tag is appropriate. If you’re reasonably sure the intent is a purchase, download, or other action, make it clear in your title that this function can be performed at your site.
- ▶ Here is an example from <http://www.bestbuy.com/site/Cameras-Camcorders/Digital-Cameras/abcat0401000.c?id=abcat0401000>: “Digital Cameras: Buy Digital Cameras &Accessories - Best Buy.”
- ▶ **Be consistent.** Once you’ve determined a good formula for your pages in a given section or area of your site, stick to that regimen[ଓন্টেন্ডিং, routine, schedule or program]. You’ll find that as you become a trusted and successful “brand” in the SERPs, users will seek out your pages on a subject area and will have expectations that you’ll want to fulfill.

## Meta Description Tags

- ▶ Meta descriptions have three primary uses:
  - ▶ To describe the content of the page accurately and succinctly [સંક્ષિપ્તમાં, briefly, concisely or laconically].
  - ▶ To serve as a short text “advertisement” to click on your pages in the search results.
  - ▶ To display targeted keywords, not for ranking purposes, but to indicate the content to searchers.
- ▶ Great Meta descriptions, just like great ads, can be tough to write, but for keyword-targeted pages, particularly in competitive search results, they are a critical part of driving traffic from the engines through to your pages. Their importance is much greater for search terms where the intent of the searcher is unclear or where different searchers might have different motivations. Here are good rules for meta descriptions:
  - ▶ **Tell the truth.** Always describe your content honestly. If it is not as “sexy” as you’d like, spice up your content; don’t bait and switch on searchers, or they’ll have a poor brand association.
  - ▶ **Keep it succinct.** Be wary of character limits—currently Google displays up to 160 characters, Yahoo! up to 165, and Bing up to 200+ (they’ll go to three vertical lines in some cases). Stick with the smallest—Google—and keep those descriptions at 160 characters (including spaces) or less.
  - ▶ **Author ad-worthy copy.** Write with as much **sizzle** as you can while staying descriptive, as the perfect Meta description is like the perfect ad: compelling and informative.
  - ▶ **Test, refine, rinse, and repeat.** Just like an ad, you can test Metadescription performance in the search results, but it takes careful attention. You’ll need to buy the keyword through paid results (PPC ads) so that you know how many impressions critical keywords received over a given time frame. Then you can use analytics to see how many clicks you got on those keywords and calculate your click-through rate.
  - ▶ **Analyze psychology.** The motivation for a natural-search click is frequently very different from that of users clicking on paid results. Users clicking on PPC ads may be very directly focused on making a purchase, whereas people who click on a natural result maybe more interested in research or learning about the company or its products. Don’t assume that successful PPC ad text will make for a good Meta description (or the reverse).
  - ▶ **Include relevant keywords.** It is extremely important to have your keywords in the Meta description tag—the boldface that the engines apply can make big difference in visibility and click-through rate. In addition, if the user’s search term is not in the met description, chances are reduced that the Meta description will be used as the description in the SERPs.

## **Heading (H1, H2, H3) Tags**

- ▶ The Hx tags in HTML (<h1>, <h2>, <h3>, etc.) are designed to indicate a headline hierarchy in document. Thus, an <h1> tag might be considered the headline of the page as a whole, whereas <h2> tags would serve as subheadings, <h3>s as **tertiary**-level headlines, and so forth. The search engines have shown a slight preference for keywords appearing in heading tags, notably the <h1> tag (which is the most important of these to employ). In some cases, you can use the title tag of a page, containing the important keywords, as the <h1> tag.

## **Document Text**

- ▶ The HTML text on a page was once the center of keyword optimization activities. As far as the search engines are concerned, however, the text in document—and particularly the frequency with which a particular term or phrase is used—has very little impact on how happy a searcher will be with that page. The best way to ensure that you've achieved the greatest level of targeting in your text for particular term or phrase is to use it in the title tag, in one or more of the section headings (within reason), and in the copy on the web page. Equally important is to use other related phrases within the body copy to reinforce the context and the relevance of your main phrase to the page. Although it is possible that implementing more instances of the key phrase on the page may result in some increase in ranking, this is increasingly unlikely to happen as you add more instances of the phrase. In addition, it can ruin [બિનાશ] the readability of some documents, which could hurt your ability to garner [gather, save or store] links to your site. This doesn't mean keyword placement on pages is useless—you should always strive[કરું] to include the keyword you're targeting at least a few times, and perhaps more, depending on the document length—but it does mean that aiming for "perfect" optimization on every page forever term is not generally the best use of your SEO time.

## **Image Filenames and alt Attributes**

- ▶ Incorporation of images on web pages can substantively **enrich** the user experience. However, the search engines cannot read the images directly. There are two elements that you can control to give the engines context for images:
- ▶ **The filename:** Search engines look at the image filename to see whether it provides any clues to the content of the image. Don't name your image example.com/img4137a-b12.jpg, as this name tells the search engine nothing at all about the image, and you are passing up the opportunity to include keyword-rich text. If the image is a picture of Abe Lincoln, name the file abe-lincoln.jpg and/or have the src URL string contain it, as in example.com/abe-lincoln/portrait.jpg.
- ▶ **Image alt text:** Image tags in HTML permit you to specify an attribute known as alt. This is a place where you can provide more information about what is in the

image, and again where you can use your targeted keywords. Here is an example for the picture of Abe Lincoln:

```

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Use the quotes if you have spaces in the text string of the alt content! Sites that have invalid img tags frequently lump [ગાડ્ઢો, bump, knob] a few words without quotes into the img tag, intended for the alt content—but with no quotes, all terms after the first word will be lost.

### **Boldface Text**

- ▶ Some SEO professionals who engage in considerable on-page optimization testing have noticed that, all else being equal, a page that includes the targeted keyword(s) in **<b>** or **<strong>** tags (HTML elements that boldface text visually) outrank their counterparts [પ્રતિષ્ઠા, complements] that do not employ [નોકરી] boldface. Thus, although this is undoubtedly a very small factor in modern SEO, it may be worth leveraging, particularly for those looking to eke every last bit of optimization out of keyword usage.

### **Keyword Targeting in CMSs and Automatically Generated Content**

- ▶ Large-scale publishing systems, or those that produce automatically generated content, present some unique challenges. If hundreds of pages are being created every day, it is not feasible[થકાય] to do independent keyword research on each and every page, making page optimization an interesting challenge.

### **SEO Copywriting: Encouraging Effective Keyword Targeting by Content Creators**

- ▶ Very frequently, someone other than an SEO professional is responsible for content creation. Content creators often do not have an **innate** knowledge as to why keyword targeting is important—and therefore, training for effective keyword targeting is a critical activity. This is particularly important when dealing with large websites and large teams of writers. Here are the main components of SEO copywriting that your writers must understand:

- ▶ Search engines look to match up a user's search queries with the keyword phrases on your web pages. If a search phrase does not appear on your page, chances are good that the page will never achieve significant ranking for that search phrase.
- ▶ The search phrases users may choose to use when looking for something are infinite in variety, but certain phrases will be used much more frequently than others.
- ▶ Using the more popular phrases you wish to target on a web page in the content for that page is essential to SEO success for that page. The title tag is the most important element on the page. Next up is the first header (**<h1>**), and then the main body of the content.
- ▶ Tools exist that allow you to research and determine what the most interesting phrases are.

## **Long-Tail Keyword Targeting**

- ▶ For example, if you run a site targeting searches for new york pizza and new york pizza delivery, you might be surprised to find that the hundreds of single searches each day for terms such as pizza delivery on the corner of 57th & 7th, or Manhattan's tastiest Italian-style sausage pizza, when taken together, will actually provide considerably more traffic than the popular phrases you've researched.
- ▶ This concept is called the long tail of search. Targeting the long tail is another aspect of SEO that combines art and science. You may not want to implement entire web pages for a history of pizza dough, pizza with white anchovies [એક અતની સુગંધી માછવાળી], or Croatian pizza. You may get traffic on these terms, but they are not likely to convert into orders for pizza.
- ▶ Finding scalable ways to chase long-tail keywords is a complex topic. Perhaps you have a page for ordering pizza in New York City, and you have a good title and 

# header on the page (e.g., "New York City Pizza: Order Here"), as well as a phone number and a form for ordering the pizza, and no other content. If that is all you have, that page is not competing effectively for rankings on long-tail search terms. To fix this, you need to write additional content for the page. Ideally, this would be content that talks about the types of pizza that are popular in New York City, the ingredients used, and other things that might draw in long-tail search traffic.

## **Content Optimization**

- ▶ Content optimization relates to how the presentation and architecture of the text, image, and multimedia content on a page can be optimized for search engines. Many of these recommendations are second-order effects.

## **Content Structure**

- ▶ Because SEO has become such a holistic [સાકલયવાદી, all inclusive, full or complete] part of website development and improvement, it is no surprise that content formatting—the presentation, style, and layout choices you select for your content—are a part of the process.
- ▶ Choosing browser-safe sans serif fonts such as Arial and Helvetica is a wise choice for the Web; Verdana in particular has received high praise [જાણાયું] from usability/readability experts, such as that WebAIM offered in an article posted at

possible source of confusion

Arial:  Illustration

Verdana:  Illustration  
the difference is clear

<http://webaim.org/techniques/fonts/>.Verdana> is one of the most popular of the fonts designed for on-screen viewing.

- ▶ It has a simple, straightforward design, and the characters (or glyphs [આકર્ષણે]) are not easily confused.
- ▶ For example, the uppercase I and the lowercase L have unique shapes, unlike in Arial, in which the two glyphs may be easily confused.
- ▶ Another advantage of Verdana is the amount of spacing between letters. Conversely, one consideration to take into account with Verdana is that it is a relatively large font. The words take up more space than words in Arial, even at the same point size. The larger size improves readability but also has the potential of **disrupting** carefully planned page layouts.

### **Content length and word count**

- ▶ Content length is another critical piece of the optimization puzzle that's mistakenly placed in the "keyword density" or "unique content" bucket of SEO. In fact, content length can have big role to play in terms of whether your material is easy to consume and easy to share.
- ▶ Lengthy pieces often don't fare particularly well on the Web (with the exception, perhaps, of the one-page sales letter), whereas short-form and easily digestible [સુપાચ્ય, edible, eatable]content often has more success.

### **Visual layout**

- ▶ Last but not least in content structure optimization is the display of the material. Beautiful, simplistic, easy-to-use, and consumable layouts instill [નાભવું] trust and garner [gather, save or store] far more readership and links than poorly designed content wedged [stuck, jammed] between ad blocks that threaten to overtake the page.

### **CSS and Semantic Markup**

- ▶ Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) is commonly mentioned as a best practice for general web design and development, but its principles provide some indirect SEO benefits as well.
- ▶ Google used to recommend keeping pages smaller than 101 KB, and it used to be a common belief that there were benefits to implementing pages that were small in size.
- ▶ Now, however, search engines deny that code size is a factor at all, unless it is really extreme. Still, keeping file size low means faster load times, lower abandonment [ચાલ] rates, and a higher probability of the page being fully read and more frequently linked to.
- ▶ CSS can also help with another hotly [ઉત્ત્રાથી, passionately, angrily, and emotionally] debated issue: code-to-text ratio. Some SEO professionals(even among the authors, opinions vary) swear [શપથ લેવા] that making the code-to-text ratio smaller (so there's less code and more text) can help considerably on large websites with many thousands of pages.

## **Content Uniqueness and Depth**

- ▶ Few can **debate** the value the engines place on robust [મજબૂત], unique, value-added content—Google in particular has had several rounds of kicking “low-quality-content” sites out of its indexes, and the other engines have followed suit.
  - ▶ At least 30 to 50 unique words, forming [રચના] unique, parable [કહેવત] sentences that other sites/pages do not have (for many pages much more is appropriate; consider this a minimum).
  - ▶ Unique HTML text content that differs from that of other pages on the site in more than just the replacement of key verbs and nouns (yes, this means all those sites that build the same page and just change the city and state names, thinking this makes them “unique,” are mistaken).
  - ▶ Unique titles and Meta description elements. If you can’t write unique Metadescriptions, just exclude them. The search engine algorithms may boot pages from the index simply for having near-duplicate Meta tags.
  - ▶ Unique video/audio/image content. The engines have started getting smarter about identifying and indexing for vertical search pages that wouldn’t normally meet the “uniqueness” criteria.
- ▶ This word of caution most frequently applies to affiliate [સલાના] sites who’s republishing of product descriptions, images, and so forth has come under search engine fire numerous [અનેક] times. In fact, it is best to anticipate [પૂર્વનુમાન, do in advance] manual evaluations [મૂલ્યાંકનના, assessments or estimations] here even if you’ve dodged[moved, cut or avoided] the algorithmic sweep. The basic tenets[સિદ્ધાંતોનો અભ્યાસ આપવો] are:
  - ▶ Don’t simply republish something that’s found elsewhere on the Web unless your site adds substantive [મૂળ] value to users, and don’t infringe [ઉલ્લંઘન] on others’ copyrights or trademarks.
  - ▶ If you’re hosting affiliate content, expect to be judged more harshly [કડોરણથી] than others, as affiliates in the SERPs are one of users’ top complaints about search engines.
  - ▶ Small changes such as a few comments, a clever sorting algorithm or automated tags, filtering, a line or two of text, simple mashups, or advertising do not constitute “substantive value.”

## **Duplicate Content Issues**

- ▶ Duplicate content can result from many causes, including licensing of content to or from your site, site architecture flaws [ભૂલો] due to non-SEO-friendly CMSs, or plagiarism [સાહિત્યચોરી].
- ▶ **Unique content:** This is content that is written by humans; is completely different from any other combination of letters, symbols, or words on the Web;

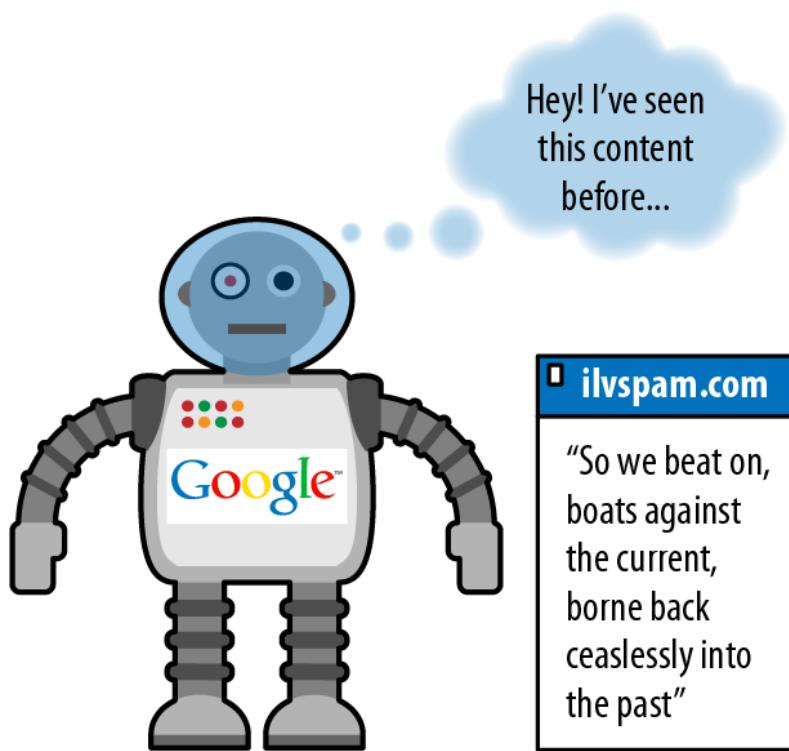
and has clearly not been manipulated [ચાલાકીથી] through computer text-processing algorithms (such as Markovchain—employing spam tools).

- ▶ **Snippets:** These are small chunks of content such as quotes that are copied and reused; these are almost never problematic for search engines, especially when included in a larger document with plenty of unique content.
- ▶ **Shingles:** Search engines look at relatively small phrase segments (e.g., five to six words), checking for the presence of the same segments on other pages on the Web. When there are too many “shingles” in common between two documents, the search engines may interpret them as duplicate content.
- ▶ **Duplicate content filter:** This is when the search engine removes substantially[નાખત્રમાં] similar content from a search result to provide a better overall user experience. This is by far the most common action taken by a search engine when it detects duplicate content. Search engines recognize that there are many reasons why duplicate content may occur that are not the result of malicious intent, and they simply look to filter out the copies.
- ▶ **Duplicate content penalty:** Penalties are applied rarely and only in egregious situations. Engines may devalue or another web pages on the site, too, or even the entire website.

### How Search Engines Identify Duplicate Content

- ▶ Some examples will illustrate the process for Google as it finds duplicate content on the Web. In the examples shown in Figures, three assumptions have been made:
  - ▶ The page with text is assumed to be a page containing duplicate content (not just a snippet, despite the illustration).
  - ▶ Each page of duplicate content is presumed to be on a separate domain.
  - ▶ The steps that follow have been simplified to make the process as easy and clear as possible. This is almost certainly not the exact way in which

## Phase I: Google finds duplicate content

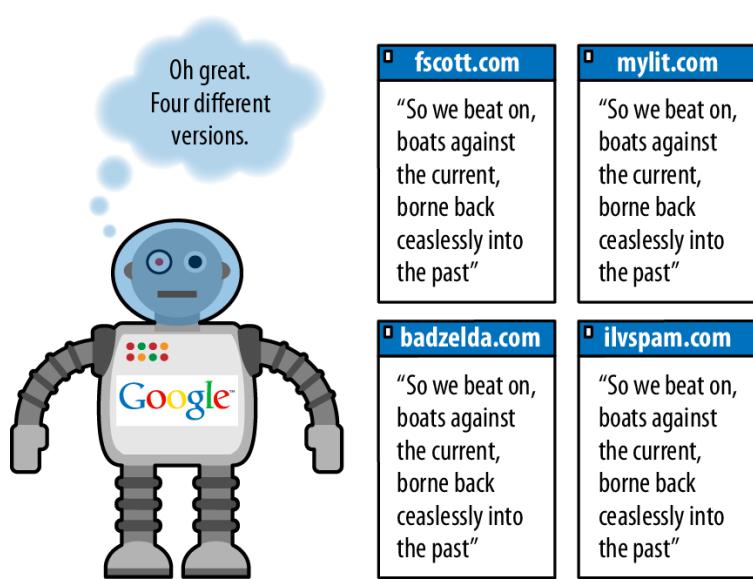


Google performs (but it **conveysthe** effect).

- ▶ **Location of the duplicate content:** Is it duplicated content if it is all on my site? Yes, in fact, duplicate content can occur within site or across different sites.

- ▶ **Percentage of duplicate content:**

What percentage of a page has to be duplicated before you run into duplicate content filtering? Unfortunately, the search engines would never reveal this information because it would compromise their ability to prevent the problem.

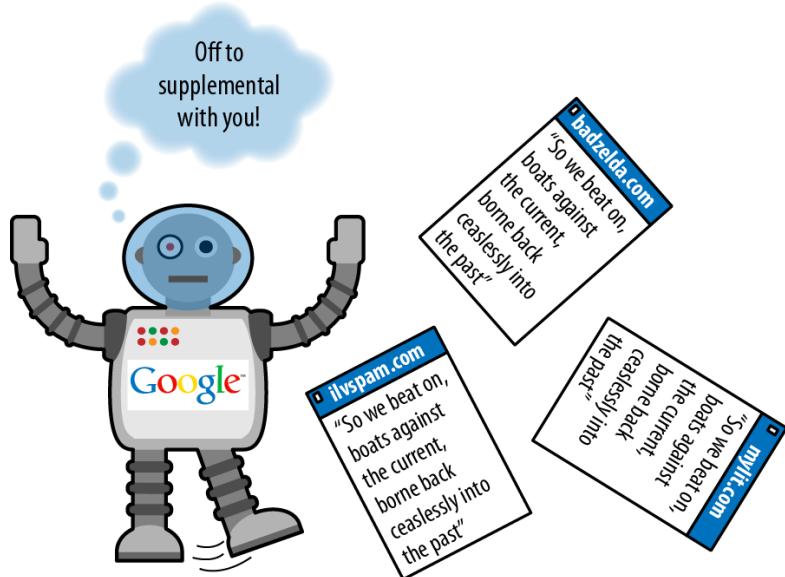


- ▶ **Ratio of code to text:** What if your code is huge and there are very few unique HTML elements on the page? Will Google think the pages are all duplicates of one another? No. The search engines do not really care about your code; they are interested in the content on your page. Code size becomes a problem only when it becomes extreme.

- ▶ **Ratio of navigation elements to unique content:** Every page on my site has a huge navigation bar, lots of header and footer items, but only little bit of content; will Google think these pages are duplicates? No. Google (and Yahoo! and Bing) factors out the common page elements such as navigation before evaluating whether a page is a duplicate. It is very familiar with the layout of websites and recognizes that permanent structures on all (or many) of a site's

## Phase II: Google checks comparable docs

## Phase III: Duplicates get tossed out

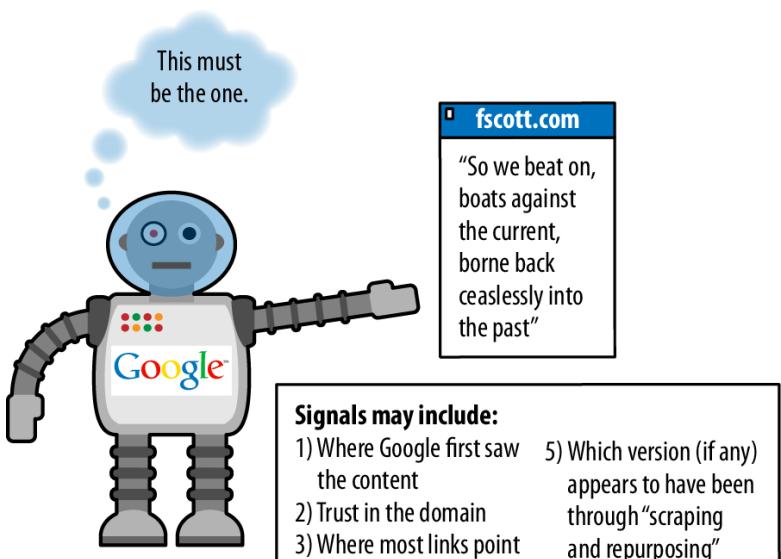


pages are quite normal. Instead, it pays attention to the “unique” portions of each page and often will largely ignore the rest.

► **Licensed content:**

What should I do if I want to avoid duplicate content problems, but I have licensed content from other web sources to show my visitors? Use Meta name = "robots" content="noindex, follow".

► Place this in your page's header and the search engines



**Signals may include:**

- |                                                      |                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Where Google first saw the content                | 5) Which version (if any) appears to have been through "scraping and repurposing" |
| 2) Trust in the domain                               |                                                                                   |
| 3) Where most links point                            |                                                                                   |
| 4) Whether links on copies point back to an original | 6) If it's close—PageRank                                                         |

- will know that the content isn't for them. This is a general best practice, because then humans can still visit the page and link to it, and the links on the page will still carry value.
- Another alternative is to make sure you have exclusive ownership and publication rights for that content.

### Identifying and Addressing Copyright Infringement

- One of the best ways to monitor whether your site's copy is being duplicated elsewhere is to use CopyScape.com, a site that enables you to instantly view pages on the Web that are using your content.
- If, on the other hand, you have a relatively new site or a site with few inbound links, and the scrapers are consistently ranking ahead of you (or if someone with a powerful site is stealing your work), you've got some recourse.
- One option is to file a Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) infringement[ଓର୍ଧେନ୍] request with Google, with Yahoo!, and with Bing (you should also file this request with the site's hosting company).
- The other option is to file a legal suit (or threaten such) against the website in question. If the site republishing your work has an owner in your country, this course of action is probably the wisest first step. You may want to try to start with a more informal communication asking them to remove the content before you send a letter from the attorneys [lawyers, counsels or solicitors], as the DMCA motions can take months to go into effect; but if they are nonresponsive; there is no reason to delay taking stronger action.

## **How to Avoid Duplicate Content on Your Own Site**

- ▶ Duplicate content can be created in many ways. Internal duplication of material requires specific tactics [મુજિનાંઓ, strategies] to achieve the best possible results from an SEO perspective. In many cases, the duplicate pages are pages that have no value to either users or search engines.
- ▶ If that is the case, try to eliminate the problem altogether by fixing the implementation so that all pages are referred to by only one URL. Also, 301-redirect the old URLs to the surviving URLs to help the search engines discover what you have done as rapidly as possible, and preserve any link juice the removed pages may have had.
- ▶ If that process proves to be impossible, there are many options. Here is a summary of the guidelines on the simplest solutions for dealing with a variety of scenarios:
  - ▶ Use the canonical tag. This is the next best solution to eliminating the duplicate pages.
  - ▶ Use robots.txt to block search engine spiders from crawling the duplicate versions of pages on your site.
  - ▶ Use the robots NoIndexMeta tag to tell the search engine not to index the duplicate pages.
- ▶ Be aware, however, that if you use robots.txt to prevent a page from being crawled, usingNoIndex or NoFollow on the page itself will not make sense: the spider can't read the page, so it will never see the NoIndex or NoFollow tag.

## **Controlling Content with Cookies and Session IDs**

### **What's a Cookie?**

- ▶ A cookie is a small text file that websites can leave on a visitor's hard disk, helping them to track that person over time. Cookies are the reason Amazon.com remembers your username between visits and the reason you don't necessarily need to log in to your Hotmail account every time you open your browser.
- ▶ Cookie data typically contains a short set of information regarding when you last accessed a site, an ID number, and, potentially, information about your visit.
- ▶ Website developers can create options to remember visitors using cookies for tracking purposes or to display different information to users based on their actions or preferences.
- ▶ Common uses include remembering a username, maintaining a shopping cart, and keeping track of previously viewed content. For example, if you've signed up for an account with SEOmoz, it will provide you with options on your My Account page about how you want to view the blog and will remember your settings the next time you visit.

## What Are Session IDs?

- ▶ Session IDs are virtually identical to cookies in functionality, with one big difference: when you close your browser (or restart), session ID information is (usually) no longer stored on your hard drive.
- ▶ The website you were interacting with may remember your data or actions, but it cannot retrieve session IDs from your machine that don't persist (and session IDs by default expire when the browser shuts down).
- ▶ In essence [આર], session IDs are like temporary cookies (although, as you'll see shortly, there are options to control this). Although technically speaking, session IDs are just a form of cookie without an expiration date, it is possible to set session IDs with expiration dates similar to cookies (going out decades).
- ▶ In this sense, they are virtually identical to cookies. Session IDs do come with an important caveat, though: they are frequently passed in the URL string, which can create serious problems for search engines (as every request produces a unique URL with duplicate content). A simple fix is to use the canonical tag to tell the search engines that you want them to ignore the session IDs.

## How Do Search Engines Interpret Cookies and Session IDs?

- ▶ Search engine spiders are not built to maintain or retain cookies or session IDs and act as browsers with this functionality shut off. However, unlike visitors whose browsers won't accept cookies, the crawlers can sometimes reach sequestered [નિરૂપ] content by virtue [ગુજરાતી શબ્દ] of webmasters who want to specifically let them through. Many sites have pages that require cookies or sessions to be enabled but have special rules for search engine bots, permitting them to access the content as well.

## Why Would You Want to Use Cookies or Session IDs to Control Search Engine Access?

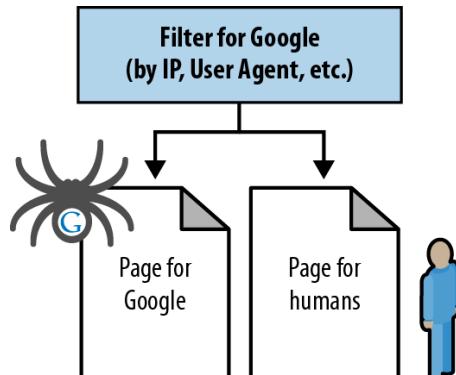
- ▶ There are numerous potential tactics[સંભવિત યુક્તિઓ] to leverage cookies and session IDs for search engine control. Here are some of the major strategies you can implement with these tools, but there are certainly limitless other possibilities:
- ▶ **Keeping limited pieces of a page's content out of the engines' indexes:** Many pages may contain some content that you'd like to show to search engines, and other pieces you'd prefer to appear only for human visitors. These could include ads, login-restricted information, links, or even rich media. Once again, showing noncookieusers the plain version and cookie-accepting visitors the extended information can be invaluable. Note that this approach is often used in conjunction [જોડાયામાં] with a login, so only registered users can access the full content (such as on sites like Facebook and LinkedIn).
- ▶ **Granting access to pages requiring a login:** As with snippets [wastes, scraps or oddments] of content, there are often entire pages or sections of a site to which you'd like to restrict search engine access. This can be easy to accomplish with

cookies/sessions, and it can even help to bring in search traffic that may convert to “registered-user” status. For example, if you had desirable content that you wished to restrict access to, you could create a page with a short snippet and an offer to continue reading upon registration, which would then allow full access to that work at the same URL.

- ▶ **Avoiding duplicate content issues:** One of the most promising areas for cookie/session use is to prohibit spiders from reaching multiple versions of the same content, while allowing visitors to get the version they prefer. As an example, at SEOmoz, logged-in users can see full blog entries on the blog home page, but search engines and nonregistered users will see only the snippets. This prevents the content from being listed on multiple pages (the blog home page and the specific post pages), and provides a positive user experience for members.

### **Content Delivery and Search Spider Control**

- ▶ On occasion, it can be valuable to show search engines one version of content and show humans a different version. This is technically called “cloaking,” and the search engines’ guidelines have near-universal policies restricting this behavior.
- ▶ In practice, many websites, large and small, appear to use some forms of cloaking without being penalized by the search engines. However, use great care if you implement these techniques, and know the risks that you are taking. The following are some examples of websites that perform some level of cloaking:
  - ▶ **Google.com:** Search for Google toolbar, Google translate, AdWords, or any number of other Google properties, and note how the URL you see in the search results and the one you land on almost never match. What’s more, on many of these pages, whether you’re logged in or not, you might see some content that is different from what’s in the cache.
  - ▶ **NYTimes.com:** The **interstitial** ads, the request to log in/create an account after five clicks, and the archive inclusion are all showing different content to engines versus humans.
  - ▶ **Wine.com:** In addition to some redirection based on your path, there’s a state overlay forcing you to select a shipping location prior to seeing any prices (or any pages). That’s a form the engines don’t have to fill out.
  - ▶ **Yelp.com:** Geotargeting through cookies based on location is a very popular form of local targeting that hundreds, if not thousands, of sites use.



- ➡ **Trulia.com:** Trulia was found to be doing some interesting redirects on partner pages and its own site (<http://www.bramblog.com/trulia-caught-cloaking-red-handed/>).
- ➡ The message should be clear. Cloaking won't always get you banned, and you can do some pretty smart things with it. The key to all of this is your intent. If you are doing it for reasons that are not deceptive [છત્રામણી, misleading, false or unreliable] and that provide a positive experience for users and search engines, you might not run into problems. However, there is no guarantee of this, so use these types of techniques with great care, and know that you may still get penalized for it.

### **When to Show Different Content to Engines and Visitors**

- ➡ There are a few common causes for displaying content differently to different visitors, including search engines. Here are some of the most common ones:
- ➡ **Multivariate and A/B split testing:** Testing landing pages for conversions requires that you show different content to different visitors to test performance. In these cases, it is best to display the content using JavaScript/cookies/sessions and give the search engines a single, canonical [ગમાણભૂત] version of the page that doesn't change with every new spidering (though this won't necessarily hurt you). Google offers software called Google Website Optimizer to perform this function.
- ➡ **Content requiring registration and First Click Free:** If you force registration (paid or free) on users to view specific content pieces, it is best to keep the URL the same for both logged-in and non-logged-in users and to show a snippet(one to two paragraphs is usually enough) to non-logged-in users and search engines. If you want to display the full content to search engines, you have the option to provide some rules for content delivery, such as showing the first one or two pages of content to new visitor without requiring registration, and then requesting registration after that grace period. This keeps your intent more honest, and you can use cookies or sessions to restrict human visitors while showing all the content to the engines.
- ➡ **Navigation un-spider able by search engines:** If your navigation is in Flash, JavaScript, a Java application, or another format that the search engines may not be able to parse, you should consider showing search engines aversion [અધ્રામો, dislike, hatred or disgust] of your site that has spiderable, crawlable content in HTML. Many sites do this simply with CSS layers, displaying a human-visible, search-invisible layer and a layer for the engines (and for less-capable browsers, such as mobile browsers). You can also employ the NoScript tag for this purpose, although it is generally riskier, as many spammers have applied NoScript as a way to hide content. Adobe recently launched a portal on SEO and Flash (<http://www.adobe.com/devnet/seo.html>) and provides best practices that have

been cleared by the engines to help make Flash content discoverable. Take care to make sure the content shown in the search-visible layer is substantially the same as it is in the human-visible layer.

- ▶ **Duplicate content:** If a significant portion of a page's content is duplicated, you might consider restricting spider access to it by placing it in an iframes that's restricted by robots.txt. This ensures that you can show the engines the unique portion of your pages, while protecting against duplicate content problems.
- ▶ **Different content for different users:** At times you might target content uniquely to users from different geographies (such as different product offerings that are more popular in their respective areas), with different screen resolutions (to make the content fit their screen size better), or who entered your site from different navigation points. In these instances, it is best to have a "default" version of content that's shown to users who don't exhibit [અદ્યતન] these traits [વાક્યો] that you can show to search engines as well.

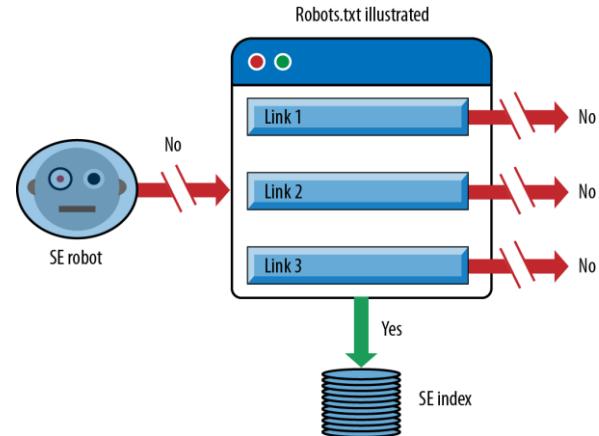
### How to Display Different Content to Search Engines and Visitors

- ▶ A variety of strategies exist to segment content delivery. The most basic is to serve content that is not meant for the engines in unspiderable formats (e.g., placing text in images, Flash files, plug-ins).
- ▶ You should not use these formats for the purpose of cloaking. You should use them only if they bring a substantial end user benefit (such as an improved user experience). In such cases, you may want to show the search engines the same content in a search spider-readable format.
- ▶ When you're trying to show the engines something you don't want visitors to see, you can use CSS formatting styles (preferably not display: none, as the engines may have filters to watch specifically for this), JavaScript, user-agent detection, cookies or session-based delivery, or perhaps IP delivery (showing content based on the visitor's IP address).

### *The robots.txt file*

- ▶ This file is located on the root level of your domain (e.g., <http://www.yourdomain.com/robots.txt>), and it is a highly versatile [સર્વતોમુજીબી] tool for controlling what the spiders are permitted to access on your site. You can use robots.txt to:
  - ▶ Prevent crawlers from accessing nonpublic parts of your website.
  - ▶ Block search engines from accessing index scripts, utilities, or other types of code.
  - ▶ Avoid the indexation of duplicate content on a website, such as "print" versions of HTML pages, or various sort orders for product catalogs.
  - ▶ Autodiscovers XML Sitemaps.

- The robots.txt file must reside in the root directory, and the filename must be entirely in lowercase (robots.txt, not Robots.txt or other variations including uppercase letters). Any other name or location will not be seen as valid by the search engines. The file must also be entirely in text format (not in HTML format).
- You can use the robots.txt file to instruct a search engine robot not to access certain pages on your site. Figure illustrates what happens when the search engine robot sees a direction in robots.txt telling it not to crawl a web page. Google, Yahoo!, Bing, Ask, and nearly all of the legitimate [કાર્યક્રમ] crawlers on the Web will follow the instructions you set out in the robots.txt file. Commands in robots.txt are primarily used to prevent spiders from accessing pages and subfolders on a site, though they have other options as well. Note that subdomains require their own robots.txt files, as do files that reside on anhttps: server.



### **Syntax of the robots.txt file.**

- The basic syntax of robots.txt is fairly [એકષણીય] simple. You specify a robot name, such as “Googlebot,” and then you specify an action. The robot is identified by user agent, and then the actions are specified on the lines that follow. Here are the major actions you can specify:
- **Disallow:** Use this for the pages you want to block the bot from accessing (you can include as many disallow lines as needed).
- **NoIndex:** Use this for the pages you want to block a search engine from including in its index (if previously indexed, this instruction tells the search engine to de-index the page).
- **Some other restrictions apply:**
  - ▶ Each User-agent/Disallow group should be separated by a blank line; however, no blank lines should exist within a group (between the User-agent line and the last Disallow).
  - ▶ The hash symbol (#) may be used for comments within a robots.txt file, where everything after the # on that line will be ignored. This may be used either for whole lines or for the end of a line.
  - ▶ Directories and filenames are case-sensitive: “private”, “Private”, and “PRIVATE” are all different to search engines.

### **Example of a robots.txt file:**

User-agent: Googlebot

```

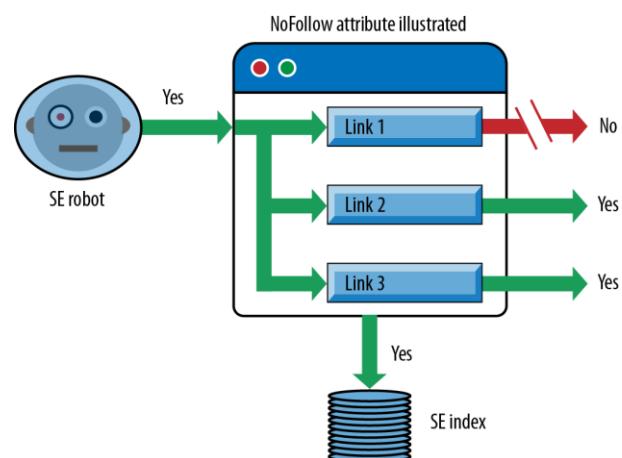
Disallow:
User-agent: msnbot
Disallow: /
# Block all robots from tmp and logs directories
User-agent: *
Disallow: /tmp/
Disallow: /logs # for directories and files called
logs

```

- ▶ The preceding example will do the following:
  - ▶ Allow “Googlebot” to go anywhere.
  - ▶ Prevent “msnbot” from crawling any part of the site.
  - ▶ Block all robots (other than Googlebot) from visiting the /tmp/ directory or any directories or files called /logs (e.g., /logs or logs.php).

### ***The rel="NoFollow" attribute***

- ▶ In 2005, the three major search engines (Yahoo!, Google, and Bing) all agreed to support an initiative[પહેલ] intended to reduce the effectiveness [અસરકારકતા] of automated spam. Unlike the metarobots version of NoFollow, the new directive could be employed as an attribute within an <a> or link tag to indicate that the linking site “does not editorially vouch [ખાતરી આપી] for the quality of the linked-to page.” You can implement NoFollow using the following format:  
<a href="http://www.google.com" rel="NoFollow">
- ▶ The specific link with the NoFollow attribute was, for a number of years, considered to be disabled from passing link juice, and the notion of sculpting [મૂર્તિકળા] PageRank using NoFollow was popular one. The belief was that when you NoFollowed a particular link, the link juice that would have been passed to that link was preserved and the search engines would reallocate it to the other links found on the page.
- ▶ As a result, many publishers implemented NoFollowlinks to lower-value pages on their sites (such as the About Us and Contact Us pages, or alternative sort order pages for product catalogs).



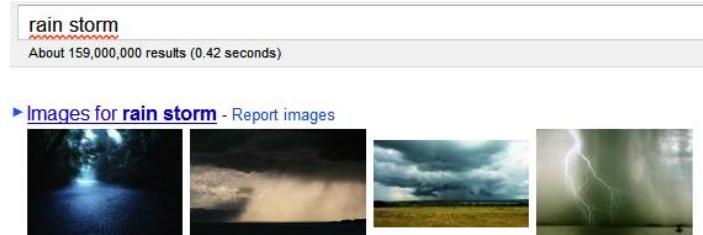
### ***The Meta robots tag***

- The Meta robots tag has three components: cache, index, and follow. The cache component instructs the engine about whether it can keep the page in the engine's public index, available via the "cached snapshot" link in the search results (see Figure).

The index component tells the engine whether the page is allowed to be crawled and stored in any capacity.

- A page marked NoIndex will be excluded entirely by the search engines. By default this value is index, telling the search engines, "Yes, please do crawl this page and include it in your index." Thus, it is unnecessary to place this directive on each page. Figure shows what a search engine robot does when it sees a NoIndex tag on a web page. The page will still be crawled, and the page can still accumulate [ईक्षण] and pass link juice to other pages, but it will not appear in search indexes. The final instruction available through the Meta robots tag is follow. This command, like index, defaults to: "Yes, crawl the links on this page and pass link juice through them." Applying NoFollow tells the engine that the links on that page should not pass link value or be crawled. By and large, it is unwise to use this directive

as a way to prevent links from being crawled.

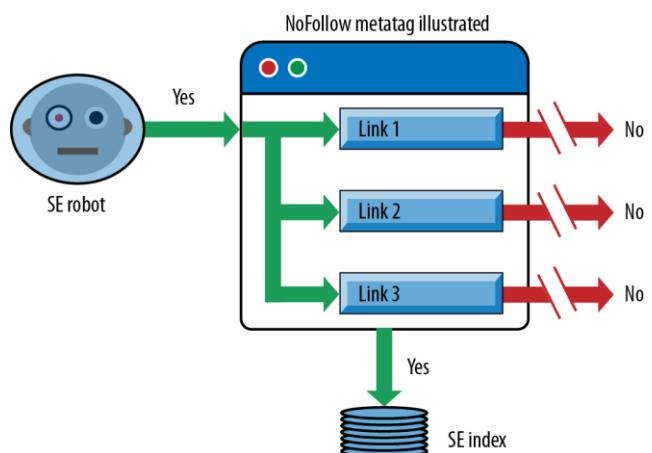
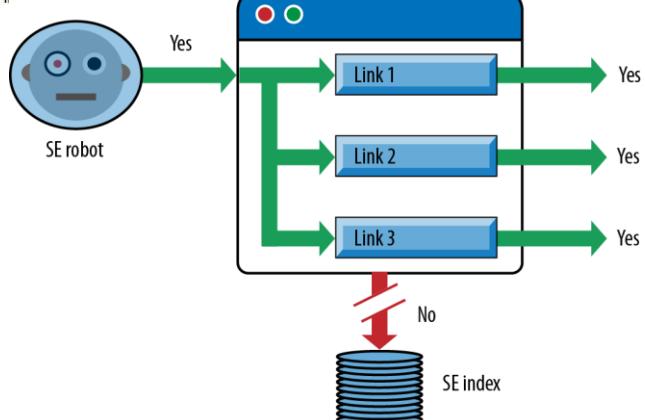


Touring Ride in Rural Indiana: RAINSTORM™ Ultra-Marathon ... [+1] [Search]

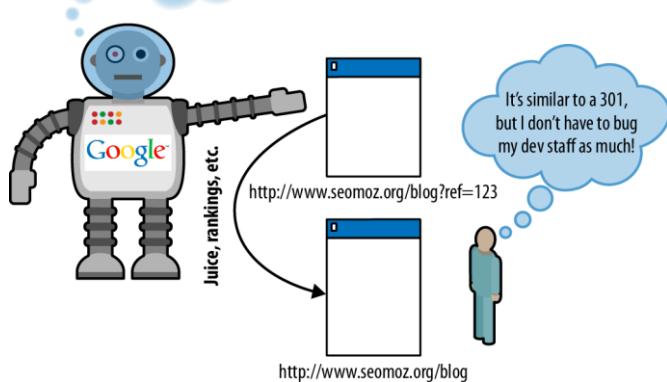
www.tri.org/storm.html Cached

The ultra

Central i



Gotcha!  
This URL is just  
a duplicate of the  
SEOMoz blog URL.



### The canonical tag

- In February 2009, Google, Yahoo!, and Microsoft announced a new tag known

as the canonical tag (sometimes referred to as rel="canonical"). This tag was a new construct designed explicitly for the purposes of identifying and dealing with duplicate content. Implementation is very simple and looks like this:<link rel="canonical" href="http://www.seomoz.org/blog" />This tag is meant to tell Yahoo!, Bing, and Google that the page in question should be treated as though it were a copy of the URL http://www.seomoz.org/blog and that all of the link and content metrics the engines apply should technically flow back to that URL (see Figure).

### **Blocking and cloaking by IP address range**

- ▶ You can block particular bots from crawling entire IP addresses or ranges through server-side restrictions on IPs. Most of the major engines crawl from a limited number of IP ranges, making it possible to identify them and restrict access.
- ▶ This technique is, ironically [અંગાત્મક રીતે, unluckily, fatefully or poignantly], popular with webmasters who mistakenly assume that search engine spiders are spammers attempting to steal their content, and thus block the IP ranges to restrict access and save bandwidth.
- ▶ Use caution when blocking bots, and make sure you're not restricting access to a spider that could bring benefits, either from search traffic or from link attribution.

### **Blocking and cloaking by user agent**

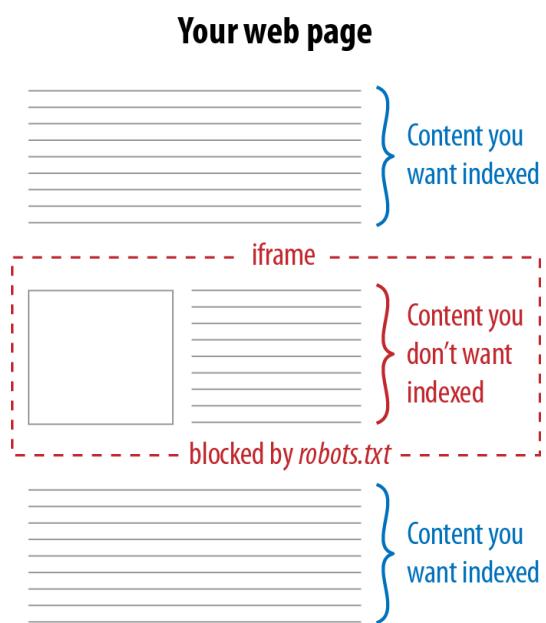
- ▶ At the server level, it is possible to detect user agents and restrict their access to pages or websites based on their declaration of identity.
- ▶ As an example, if a website detected a roguebot, you might double-check its identity before allowing access.
- ▶ The search engines all use similar protocol to verify their user agents via the Web: a reverse DNS lookup followed by a corresponding forward DNS IP lookup.

An example for Google would look like this:

```
> host 66.249.66.1
1.66.249.66.in-addr.arpa domain name pointer crawl-66-249-
66-1.googlebot.com.
> host crawl-66-249-66-1.googlebot.com
Crawl-66-249-66-1.googlebot.com has address 66.249.66.1
```

### **Using iframes**

- ▶ Sometimes there's a certain piece of content on a web page (or a persistent piece of content throughout a site) that you'd prefer search engines didn't see. Clever use of iframes can come in handy here, as Figure illustrates.



- The concept is simple: by using iframes, you can embed content from another URL onto any page of your choosing. By then blocking spider access to the iframe with robots.txt, you ensure that the search engines won't "see" this content on your page.
- Websites may do this for many reasons, including to avoid duplicate content problems, reduce the page size for search engines, or lower the number of crawlable links on a page (to help control the flow of link juice).

### ***Hiding text in images***

- The major search engines still have very limited capacity to read text in images (and the processing power required makes for a severe barrier). Hiding content inside images isn't generally advisable, though, as it can be impractical [अव्याप्तिक, unusable, impracticable, unrealizable or unrealistic] for alternative devices(mobile devices, in particular) and inaccessible to others (such as screen readers).

### ***Hiding text in Java applets***

- As with text in images, the search engines cannot easily parse content inside Java applets. Using them as a tool to hide text would certainly be a strange choice, though.

### ***Forcing form submission***

- Search engines will not submit HTML forms in an attempt to access the information retrieved from a search or submission. Thus, if you keep content behind a forced-form submission and never link to it externally, your content will remain out of the engines' indexes (as Figure demonstrates).



### ***Using login/password protection***

- Password protection of any kind will effectively prevent any search engines from accessing content, as will any form of human-verification requirements, such as CAPTCHAs (the boxes that request the copying of letter/number combinations to gain access). The major engines won't try to guess passwords or bypass these systems.

### ***Removing URLs from a search engine's index***

- A secondary, post-indexing tactic, URL removal is possible at most of the major search engines through verification of your site and the use of the engines' tools. For example, Google allows you to remove URLs through Webmaster Central

(<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/removals>). Microsoft's Bing search engine may soon carry support for this as well.

## **Redirects**

- ▶ A redirect is used to indicate when content has moved from one location to another. For example, suppose you have some content at <http://www.yourdomain.com/old.html>, and you decide to restructure your site. As a result of this restructuring, your content may move to <http://www.yourdomain.com/critical-keyword.html>. Once a redirect is implemented, users who go to the old versions of your pages (perhaps via bookmarks they have kept for the pages) will be sent to the new versions of those pages. Without the redirect, the user would get a Page Not Found (404) error. With the redirect, the web server tells the incoming user agent (whether a browser or a spider) to instead fetch the requested content from the new URL.

## **Why and When to Redirect**

- ▶ Redirects are important not only for users, but also for letting search engines know when you have moved content. After you move a page, the search engines will still have the old URL in their indexes and will continue to return it in their search results until they discover the page is no longer there and discover the new page.
- ▶ You can help speed up this process by implementing a redirect. Here are some scenarios in which you may end up needing to implement redirects:
  - ▶ You have old content that expires, so you remove it.
  - ▶ You find that you have broken URLs that have links and traffic.
  - ▶ You change your hosting company.
  - ▶ You change your CMS.
  - ▶ You want to implement a canonical redirect (redirect all pages on <http://yourdomain.com> to <http://www.yourdomain.com>).
  - ▶ You change the URLs where your existing content can be found for any reason.

## **Good and Bad Redirects**

- ▶ It turns out that there is more than one way to perform a redirect, and they are not all created equal. There are two major types of redirects that can be implemented, tied specifically to the HTTP status code returned by the web server to the browser. These are:
- ▶ **“301 moved permanently”**: This status code tells the browser (or search engine crawler) that the resource has been permanently moved to another location, and there is no intent to ever bring it back.
- ▶ **“302 moved temporarily”**: This status code tells the browser (or search engine crawler) that the resource has been temporarily moved to another location, and that the move should not be treated as permanent.

- ➡ The **preservation** of historical link juice is critical in the world of SEO. For example, imagine you had 1,000 links to <http://www.yourolddomain.com> and you decided to relocate everything to <http://www.yournewdomain.com>.
- ➡ If you used redirects that returned a 302 status code, you would be starting your link-building efforts from scratch again. In addition, the old version of the page might remain in the search engines' indexes and compete with the new version for search rankings.
- ➡ It should also be noted that there can be redirects that pass no status code, or the wrong status code, such as a 404 error (Page Not Found) or a 200 OK (page loaded successfully). These are also problematic, and should be avoided. You want to be sure to return a 301 HTTP status code when you have performed a redirect whenever you make a permanent change to a page's location.

### **Methods for URL Redirecting and Rewriting**

- ➡ There are many possible ways to implement redirects. On Apache web servers (normally present on machines running Unix or Linux as the operating system), it is possible to implement redirects quite simply in a standard file called .htaccess, using the Redirect andRedirect Match directives (you can learn more about this file format at <http://httpd.apache.org/docs/2.2/howto/htaccess.html>).
- ➡ On web servers running Microsoft IIS (<http://www.iis.net>), different methods are provided for implementing redirects. The basic method for doing redirects is through the IIS console.
- ➡ Many programmers use other techniques for implementing redirects. This can be done directly in programming languages such as Perl, PHP, ASP, and JavaScript. When implementing redirects in this fashion, the key thing that the programmer must do is to make sure the HTTPstatus code returned by the web server is a 301. You can check the header returned with the Firefox plug-in Live HTTP Headers (<http://livehttpheaders.mozdev.org>).
- ➡ Another method that you can use to implement a redirect occurs at the page level, via the metarefresh tag, which looks something like this:
 

```
<meta http-equiv="refresh" content="5;url=http://www.yourdomain.com/newlocation.htm" />
```
- ➡ The first parameter in the content section in the preceding statement, the number 5, indicates the number of seconds the web server should wait before redirecting the user to the indicated page. This gets used in scenarios where the publisher wants to display a page letting the user know that he is going to get redirected to a different page than the one he requested.

### **Redirecting a Home Page Index File without Looping**

- ➡ Many websites link to their own home page in a form similar to <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.html>. The problem with that is that most incoming links to the site's home page specify <http://www.yourdomain.com>, thus dividing the link juice into the site. Once publishers realize this, they will typically

want to fix their internal links and then 301-redirect <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.html> to <http://www.yourdomain.com/>. However, problems with recursive redirects can develop if this is not done correctly.

- ▶ When someone comes to your website by typing in <http://www.yourdomain.com>, the DNS system of the Internet helps the browser locate the web server for your website. How, then, does the web server decide what to send to the browser? It turns out that it does this by loading a file from the hard drive of the web server for your website.
- ▶ When no file is specified (i.e., if, as in the preceding example, only the domain name is specified), the web server loads a file that is known as the default file. This is often a file with name such as index.html, index.htm, index.shtml, index.php, or default.asp.
- ▶ The filename can actually be anything, but most web servers default to one specific filename or another. The problem is that many CMSs will expose both forms of your home page—that is, both <http://www.yourdomain.com> and <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php>.
- ▶ All the pages on your site may link only to <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php>, but given human nature, most of the links to your home page that third parties give you will probably point to <http://www.yourdomain.com/>. This can create a duplicate content problem if the search engine sees two versions of your home page and thinks they are separate, but duplicate, documents. Google is pretty smart at figuring out this particular issue, but it is best to not rely on that.
- ▶ Since you've learned how to do 301 redirects, you might conclude that the solution is to 301-redirect <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php> to <http://www.yourdomain.com/>. Sounds good, right? Unfortunately, there is a big problem with this.
- ▶ What happens is the server sees the request for <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php> and then sees that it is supposed to 301-redirect that to <http://www.yourdomain.com/>, which it dutifully does. But when it loads <http://www.yourdomain.com/>, it retrieves the default filename(index.php) and proceeds to load <http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php>. Then it sees that you want to redirect that to <http://www.yourdomain.com/>, and it creates an infinite loop. The default document redirects solution.
- ▶ The solution that follows is specific to the preceding index.php example. You will need to plug in the appropriate default filename for your own web server:
- ▶ Copy the contents of index.php to another file. For this example, we'll be using sitehome.php.

- ➡ Create an Apache DirectoryIndex directive for your document root. Set it to sitehome.php. Do not set the directive on a server-wide level; otherwise, it may cause problems with other folders that still need to use index.php as a directory index.
- ➡ Put this in an .htaccess file in your document root: DirectoryIndex sitehome.php. Or, if you aren't using per-directory context files, put this in your httpd.conf:
 

```
<Directory /your/document/root/examplesite.com/>
    DirectoryIndex sitehome.php
</Directory>
```
- ➡ Clear out the contents of your original index.php file and insert this line of code:
 

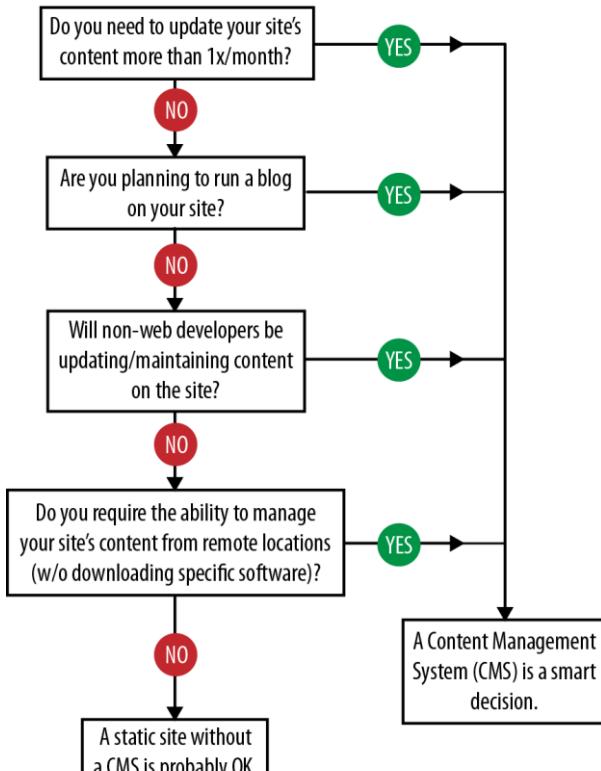
```
<? header("Location: http://www.example.com"); ?>
```
- ➡ This sets it up so that index.php is not a directory index file (i.e., the default filename). It forces sitehome.php to be read when someone types in the canonical URL (http://www.yourdomain.com). Any requests to index.php from old links can now be 301-redirected while avoiding an infinite loop.
- ➡ If you are using a CMS, you also need to make sure when you are done with this that all the internal links now go to the canonical URL, http://www.yourdomain.com. If for any reason the CMS started to point to http://www.yourdomain.com/sitehome.php, the loop problem would return, forcing you to go through this entire process again.

### **Content Management System (CMS) Issues**

- ➡ When looking to publish a new site, many publishers may wonder whether they need to use CMS, and, if so, how to ensure that it is SEO-friendly.
- ➡ Due to the inexpensiveness of customizable, free platforms such as Drupal, Joomla, WordPress, and Mambo, it is increasingly rare for a publisher to develop a static site, even when CMS isn't required.
- ➡ The next step involves understanding how to ensure that a CMS will be search engine-friendly. Here is a list of basic SEO issues that you should be aware of when dealing with CMSs (both prebuilt and custom-made). By dealing with these, you will ensure a relatively smooth platform for content delivery:
- ➡ **Title tag customization and rules:** A search engine-friendly CMS must not only allow for title tags to be customized on page-specific level, but also enable rules for particular sections of a website. For example, if your CMS requires that the title tag always has to start with your site name followed by colon followed by your article title, you're sunk—at least as far as your SEO is concerned. You should be able to revise the formulas used to generate the title tags across your site to make them more search-optimal.
- ➡ **Static, keyword-rich URLs:** URLs have historically been the most problematic SEO issue for CMS platforms. Nowadays, search-friendly CMSs should feature custom URL creation. In WordPress, a custom URL is referred to as a “post slug.”
- ➡ **Meta tag customization:** Being able to implement custom Meta descriptions and Meta robots tags is critical. Enabling editorial control is essential for a good CMS.

- ▶ **Enabling custom HTML tags:** A good CMS has to offer extra functionality on HTML tags for things such as NoFollowlinks, or <Hx> tags for headings and subheadings. These can be built-in features accessible through menu options, or the CMS can simply allow manual editing of HTML in the text editor window when required. Having no <h1> tags on a given page is not desirable, but neither is having too many <h1> tags. The best content to have wrapped in an <h1> is the article or page title; having low-value content (such as the publication date) marked up as an <h1> is not desirable.
- ▶ **Internal anchor text flexibility:** For a site to be “optimized” rather than simply search-friendly, customizing the anchor text on internal links is critical. Rather than simply using the page titles for all links in site’s architecture, a great CMS should be flexible enough to handle custom input from the administrators as to the anchor text of category-level or global navigation links.
- ▶ **Intelligent categorization structure:** Another problem is poor category structure. When designing information architecture for a website, you should not place limits on how pages are accessible due to the CMS’s inflexibility. CMSs that offer customizable navigation panels will be the most successful in this respect.
- ▶ **Pagination controls:** Pagination can be the bane of a website’s search rankings, so controlling it through inclusion of more items per page, more contextually relevant anchor text (e.g., not “next,” “prev,” and page numbers), and careful use of meta NoIndex tags will make your important content get more link juice and crawl attention.
- ▶ **301-redirect functionality:** Many CMSs sadly lack this critical feature, disallowing the proper redirection of content when necessary; 301s are valuable for expired content, for pages that have a newer version, and for dodging [elusion, fudging, evasion] keyword cannibalization issues similar to those we discussed earlier.
- ▶ **Image-handling and alt attributes:** alt attributes are a clear must-have from an SEO perspective, serving as the “anchor text” when an image is used as a link (note that text links are much better than images with alt attributes for links, but

## Do You Need A CMS For Your Site?



if you must use image links you do want to have the altattribute implemented) and providing relevant, index able content for the search engines. Images in a CMS's navigational elements should preferably use CSS image replacement rather than mere alt attributes.

- ▶ **CSS exceptions:** The application of CSS styles in a proper CMS should allow for manual exceptions so that user can modify how a strong headline or list element appears visually. If the CMS does not offer this, writers may opt [પસેદ] out of using proper semantic markup for presentation purposes, which would not be a good thing.
- ▶ **Static caching options:** Many CMSs currently offer caching options, which are a particular boon if a page is receiving a high level of traffic from social media portals or news sites. A bulky CMS often makes dozens of extraneous [અપ્રાસંગિક] database connections, which can overwhelm [જૂલાવી] a server if caching is not in place, killing potential inbound links and media attention.
- ▶ **URLs free of tracking parameters and session IDs:** Sticking session or tracking information such as the user's click path into the URL is deadly for SEO. It usually leads to incomplete indexation and duplicate content issues.
- ▶ **Customizable URL structure:** If the default URL structure of the CMS doesn't suit your needs, you should be able to change it. For example, if you don't want /archives/ in the URLs of all your archived articles, you should be able to remove it; if you want to reference the article name instead of the article's database ID in the URL, you should be able to do that too.
- ▶ **Static-looking URLs:** The most palatable URLs to spiders are the ones that look like they lead to static pages—so make sure that your CMS will place no query strings in the URL.
- ▶ **Keywords in URLs:** Keywords in your URLs can help your rankings. Check that your CMS allows you to do this, as some CMS platforms don't allow you to do this.
- ▶ **Breadcrumb navigation:** Verify that your CMS allows you to implement breadcrumb (drill-down) navigation. This is great for SEO because it reinforces your internal hierarchical linking structure with keyword-rich text links.
- ▶ **Meta NoIndex tags for low-value pages:** Even if you use NoFollow attributes in links to these pages, other people may still link to them, so there is a risk of those pages ranking above some of your more valuable content. Check if you're CMS allows you to NoIndex those pages instead, as that is a better way to handle low-value pages.
- ▶ **Customizable anchor text on navigational links:** "Contact," "About Us," "Read More," "Full Article," and so on make for **lousy** anchor text—at least from an SEO standpoint. Hopefully, your CMS allows you to improve such links to make the anchor text more keyword-rich.

- ▶ **XML Sitemap generator:** Having your CMS generate your XML Sitemap can save a lot of hassle [જોયા, bother, irritation, disturbance or trouble], as opposed [વિરોધ] to trying to generate one with a third-party tool. HTML4, HTML5, or XHTML validation Although HTML validation is not a ranking signal, it is desirable to have the CMS automatically check for malformed [હૂંપણ, misshapen, distorted, twisted] HTML, as search engines may end up seeing a page differently from how it renders on the screen and accidentally consider navigation to be part of the content, or vice versa.

### Selecting a CMS

- ▶ There are many factors to consider when choosing an existing CMS. Many CMSs are free, but some of them are proprietary, with a license cost per site. The majority of CMSs were not designed with security, stability, search friendliness, and scalability in mind, though in recent years a few vendors have developed excellent CMSs that have search friendliness as their primary focus.
- ▶ Popular CMS solutions that the authors have experience with include Joomla, Drupal, Pixelsilk, and WordPress. Each of these has strong support for SEO, but each of them requires some configuration for optimal results. Make sure you get that help up front to get the SEO for your site off to a strong start.

### Third-Party CMS Add-ons

- ▶ Many CMS platforms offer third-party plug-ins or add-ons that extend the core functionality of the CMS. In the WordPress plug-in directory alone there are over 15,000 plug-ins. Plug-ins provide a simple way to add new SEO features and functionality; making the CMS much more flexible and future-proof.
- ▶ It is particularly helpful when there is an active community developing plug-ins. An active community also comes in very handy in providing free technical support when things go wrong; when bugs and security vulnerabilities [નભગાઈઓ] crop up, it is important to have an active developer base to solve those issues quickly.

### Flash

- ▶ Flash is popular on the Web, but it presents challenges to the search engines in terms of indexing the related content. This creates a gap between the user experience with a site and what the search engines can find on that site. It used to be that search engines did not index Flash content at all. In June 2008, Google announced that it was offering improved indexing of this content (<http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/2008/06/improved-flash-indexing.html>). This announcement indicates that Google can index text content and find and follow links within Flash files. However, Google still cannot tell what is contained in images within a Flash file. Here are some reasons why Flash is still not fully SEO-friendly:
- ▶ **Different content is not on different URLs:** This is the same problem you encounter with AJAX-based pages. You could have unique frames, movies within

movies, and so on that appear to be completely unique portions of the Flash site, yet there's often no way to link to these individual elements.

- ▶ **The breakdown of text is not clean:** Google can index the output files in the .swf file to see words and phrases, but in Flash, a lot of your text is not inside clean <h1> or <p> tags; it is **jumbled** up into half-phrases for graphical effects and will often be output in the incorrect order. Worse still are text effects that often require “breaking” words apart into individual letters to animate them.
- ▶ **Flash gets embedded:** A lot of Flash content is only linked to by other Flash content wrapped inside shell Flash pages. This line of links, where no other internal or external URLs are referencing the interior content, leads to documents with very low PageRank/link juice. Even if they manage to stay in the main index, they probably won't rank for anything.
- ▶ **Flash doesn't earn external links like HTML:** An all-Flash site might get a large number of links to the home page, but interior pages almost always suffer. When people implement links to embeddable Flash they normally point to the HTML host page, rather than any of the interior pages within the Flash.
- ▶ **SEO basics are often missing:** Anchor text, headlines, bold/strong text, image alt attributes, and even title tags are not simple elements to properly include in Flash. Developing Flash with SEO in mind is just more difficult than doing it in HTML. In addition, it is not part of the cultural lexicon [ଶବ୍ଦକୋଣ୍ଠ] of the Flash development world.
- ▶ **A lot of Flash isn't even crawlable:** Google has indicated that it doesn't execute external JavaScript calls (which many Flash-based sites use) or index the content from external files called by Flash (which, again, a lot of Flash sites rely on). These limitations could severely impact what a visitor can see versus what Googlebot can index.

### **Flash Coding Best Practices**

- ▶ If Flash is a requirement for whatever reason, there are best practices you can implement to make your site more accessible to search engine spiders. The following are some guidelines on how to obtain the best possible results.

### **Flash Meta tags**

- ▶ Beginning with Adobe/Macromedia Flash version 8, there has been support for the addition of title and description Meta tags to any .swf file. Not all search engines are able to read these tags yet, but it is likely that they will soon. Get into the habit of adding accurate, keyword-rich title tags and Meta tags to files now so that as search engines begin accessing them, your existing .swf files will already have them in place.

### **Adobe Flash Search Engine SDK**

- ▶ Flash developers may find the SDK useful for server-based text and link extraction and conversion purposes, or for client-side testing of their Flash content against the basic Adobe (formerly Macromedia) Flash Search Engine SDK

code. Tests have shown that Google and other major search engines now extract some textual content from Flash .swf files. It is unknown whether Google and others have implemented Adobe's specific Search Engine SDK technology into their spiders, or whether they are using some other code to extract the textual content. Again, tests suggest that what Google is parsing from a given .swf file is very close to what can be extracted manually using the Search EngineSDK.

### ***Internal flash coding***

- ▶ There are several things to keep in mind when preparing Flash files for SEO:
  - ▶ Search engines currently do not read traced text (using the trace () function) or text that has been transformed into a shape in Flash (as opposed to actual characters). Only character-based text that is active in the Flash stage will be read.
  - ▶ Animated or affected text often creates duplicate content. Static text in Flash movies is not read as the duplicate instances that "tweening" and other effects can create. Use static text, especially with important content, so that search engines do not perceive the output as spam.
  - ▶ Search engine spiders do not see dynamically loaded content (text added from an external source, such as an XML file).
  - ▶ The font size of text does not affect search engines; they read any size font.
  - ▶ Special characters such as <, >, &, and " are converted to HTML character references(&lt;,&gt;,&amp;,&quot;) and should be avoided.
  - ▶ Search engines find and extract all URLs stored within the getURL() command.
  - ▶ Search engines have the ability to follow links in Flash, though it is an iffy proposition at best. They will not, however, follow links to other Flash .swf files. (This is different from loading child .swf files into a parent .swf file.) Therefore, links in Flash should always point to HTML pages, not other .swf files.

# Optimizing for Vertical Search

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- ▶ Vertical search engines focus on specific niches of web content, including images, videos, news, travel, and people. Such engines exist to provide value to their user bases in ways that go beyond what traditional web search engines provide.
- ▶ One area where vertical search engines can excel in comparison to their more general web search counterparts is in providing more relevant results in their specific category. They may accomplish this by any number of means, including making assumptions about user intent based on their vertical nature (an option that full web search engines do not normally have), doing specialized crawls, more human review, and the ability to leverage specialized databases of information (potentially including databases not available online).
- ▶ There is a lot of opportunity in vertical search, so SEO professionals should seriously consider what potential benefits vertical search areas can provide to their websites.

## **The Opportunities in Vertical Search**

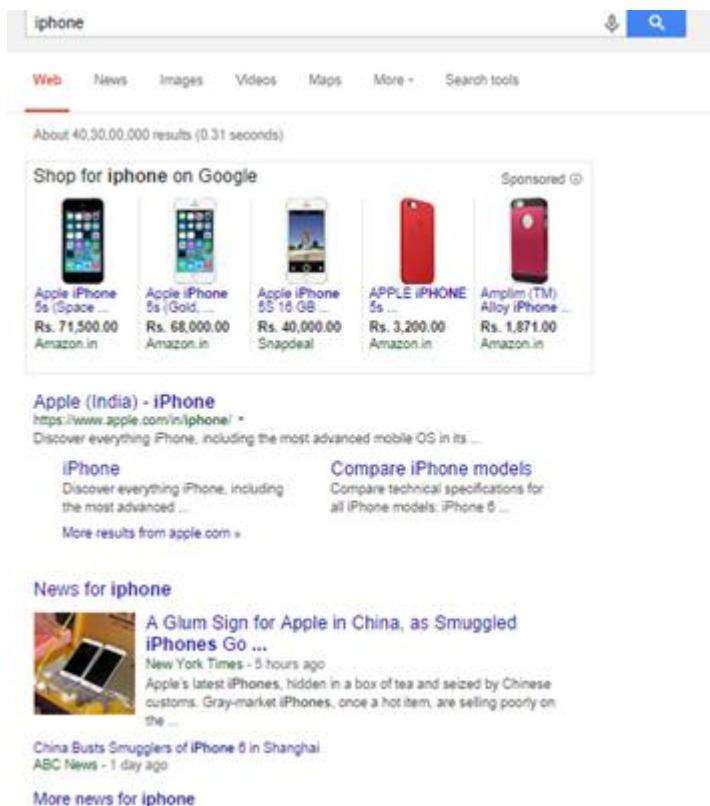
- ▶ Vertical search has been around for almost as long as the major search engines have been in existence. Some of the first vertical search engines were for image search, newsgroup search, and news search, but many other vertical search properties have emerged since then, both from the major search engines and from third parties. The data in Table comes from ExperianHitwise and shows the top 20 Google domains as of May 2006, one year before the advent of Universal Search.

Rank	Name	Share	Rank	Name	Share
1.	Google	79.98%	11.	Google Earth	0.22%
2.	Google Image Search	9.54%	12.	Google Desktop Search	0.18%
3.	Google Mail	5.51%	13.	Google Directory	0.10%
4.	Google News	1.49%	14.	Google Answers	0.09%
5.	Google Maps	0.82%	15.	Google AdWords	0.07%
6.	Froogle	0.46%	16.	Google Local	0.05%
7.	Google Video Search	0.46%	17.	Google Finance	0.03%
8.	Google Groups	0.43%	18.	Google Calendar	0.01%
9.	Google Scholar	0.27%	19.	Google Talk	0.01%
10.	Google Book Search	0.25%	20.	Google Labs	0.01%

- ▶ Of course, just getting the traffic is not enough. You also need to be able to use that traffic. If someone is coming to your site just to steal your image, for example, this traffic is likely not of value to you.
- ▶ So, although a lot of traffic may be available, you should not ignore the importance of determining how to engage users with your site.
- ▶ For instance, you could serve up some custom content for visitors from an image search engine to highlight other areas on your site that might be of interest, or embed logos/watermarks/references into your images so that they carry branding value as they get “stolen” and republished on and off the Web.

### Universal Search and Blended Search

- ▶ In May 2007, Google announced Universal Search, which integrated vertical search results into main web results.
- ▶ Thinking of it another way, Google’s web results search engine used to be a kind of vertical search engine itself: one focused specifically on web pages (and not images, videos, news, blogs, etc.). With the advent of Universal Search, Google changed the web page search engine into a search engine for any type of online content. Figure shows some examples of Universal Search results, starting with a Google search on iPhone.
- ▶ After Google introduced Universal Search, the other search engines (Yahoo!, Microsoft, and Ask) moved very quickly to follow suit. The industry now uses the generic [આમાન્ય] term Blended Search for this notion [કેવનું] of including vertical search data in web results.
- ▶ The opportunity in vertical search was significant before the advent of Universal Search and Blended Search. However, that opportunity was not fully realized because many (in fact, most) users were not even aware of the vertical search properties.



- With the expansion of Blended Search, the opportunities for vertical search have soared.
- The actual volume of searches performed directly on <http://images.google.com> as a percentage of the whole has dropped dramatically, as shown in Table, which lists data from Experian Hitwise for July 2011.
- This drop is largely due to the direct integration of images into web search results, causing a dramatic reduction of the need for searchers to go to Google Images itself.
- This drop is most likely driven by the fact that image results get returned within regular web search, and savvy searchers are entering specific queries that append leading words such as photos, images, and pictures to their search phrases when that is what they want.

Rank	Name	Number of searches	% of total
1	Google ( <a href="http://www.google.com">http://www.google.com</a> )	6,243,892,993	60.35%
2	YouTube ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com">http://www.youtube.com</a> )	2,672,070,772	25.83%
3	Gmail ( <a href="http://www.gmail.com">http://www.gmail.com</a> )	874,662,958	8.45%
4	Google Maps ( <a href="http://maps.google.com">http://maps.google.com</a> )	229,291,754	2.22%
5	Google News ( <a href="http://news.google.com">http://news.google.com</a> )	61,541,405	0.59%
6	Google Docs ( <a href="http://docs.google.com">http://docs.google.com</a> )	48,207,545	0.47%
7	Google Translate ( <a href="http://translate.google.com">http://translate.google.com</a> )	37,175,399	0.36%
8	Picnik.com	31,166,949	0.30%
9	Google Video ( <a href="http://video.google.com">http://video.google.com</a> )	26,162,413	0.25%
10	Google Chrome ( <a href="http://www.google.com/chrome">http://www.google.com/chrome</a> )	24,137,868	0.23%
11	Blogger ( <a href="http://www.blogger.com">http://www.blogger.com</a> )	19,787,485	0.19%
12	Google Images ( <a href="http://images.google.com">http://images.google.com</a> )	14,517,225	0.14%
13	Orkut ( <a href="http://www.orkut.com">http://www.orkut.com</a> )	10,666,820	0.10%
14	Google Books ( <a href="http://books.google.com">http://books.google.com</a> )	10,279,082	0.10%
15	Google Earth ( <a href="http://earth.google.com">http://earth.google.com</a> )	6,706,180	0.06%
16	Google+ ( <a href="http://plus.google.com">http://plus.google.com</a> )	6,006,650	0.06%
17	Google Groups ( <a href="http://groups.google.com">http://groups.google.com</a> )	4,606,855	0.04%
18	Google Finance ( <a href="http://www.google.com/finance">http://www.google.com/finance</a> )	3,805,910	0.04%
19	Google Buzz ( <a href="http://www.google.com/buzz">http://www.google.com/buzz</a> )	3,317,955	0.03%
20	Google Scholar ( <a href="http://scholar.google.com">http://scholar.google.com</a> )	2,809,831	0.03%

## Optimizing for Local Search

- In 2010, Bing released data showing that 53% of Bing's mobile search volume was local in nature. In 2011, Google published data indicating that 20% of its desktop search volume had local intent. Being that this is large and growing segment, search engines have sought to increase their advertiser bases by moving aggressively into providing local directory information.
- Applications such as Google Maps, Yahoo! Local, and Bing Maps have introduced disruptive technology to local directory information by mashing up maps with directory listings, reviews/ratings, satellite images, and 3-D modeling—all tied together with keyword search relevancy.
- This area of search is still in flux [આપણા], as evolutionary changes continue to come hard and fast. However, these innovations have excited users, and the mapping interfaces are growing in popularity as a result. Despite rapid innovation in search engine technology, the local information market is still extremely fractured. There is no single dominant [leading, main, foremost] provider of local business information on the Internet.

- ▶ According to industry metrics, online users typically go to multiple sources to locate, research, and select local businesses. Traditional search engines, local search engines, online yellow pages, newspaper websites, online classifieds, industry-specific “vertical” directories, and review sites are all sources of information for people trying to find businesses in their area.

### **Foundation: Check Your Local Listings**

- ▶ Today, literally thousands of online directories and websites offer up guides to local businesses.
- ▶ If you have a local business or a chain of shops, where do you start? The best place to start is by validating your data with the search engines themselves. Search engines will place great emphasis on data you validate directly with them, treating it as highly trusted.
- ▶ If the address you validate directly with the search engines is 39 Temple Street and the InfoUSA address is 41 Temple Street, they are probably going to use the 39Temple Street address (though this is not guaranteed!).
- ▶ One thing that may surprise you: if your business has been around for any length of time, Google probably already knows about you and has a listing in place. Google is very good at gathering and aggregating data from multiple sources to create a comprehensive [આપક, complete, full]representation of your business.
- ▶ If Google has generated such a default listing for you, you should claim this listing (rather than creating a new one). Do so by clicking on the “Business Owner?” link that appears on the Places page, and following the prompts (which may include creating a new Places account).
- ▶ Claiming the listing will allow you to take control of the profile information for your business(the business name, address, and phone numbers(s), as well as a vast set of other data elements, including the website to direct users to, the business categories you should be associated with, etc.).
- ▶ Claiming is relatively straightforward [સરળ]. Before granting you control, Google will use some method to have you prove you own the business being claimed. This may take the form of postcard being mailed to the business address, or a live phone call from a Google robot, in which a secret code is provided to you.
- ▶ You then enter this code into the portal, and Google grants you exclusive control of the listing. If your business is relatively new, you may have to create a new listing. Doing so is also straightforward in the Google Places management portal.
- ▶ Again, you will probably have to complete a phone or postcard verification step before your listing starts to appear in searchresults. Enhancing your Google Places profile is a matter of providing as much relevant data to Googleas you can.
- ▶ The most important elements to focus on are business name, address, phone number, website, description, and categories. These are the elements that you can influence that carry the most weight in the ranking algorithms.
- ▶ Here are the key guidelines for making choices for these data elements:

- ▶ **Business Name:** Make sure you use an accurate business name. Do not try to add keywords or locations—this is considered spam and may result in your listing being rejected. Be sure to use the exact same business name in Google that you use in any other online business profiles.
- ▶ **Address:** Like the business name, your address is part of the “key” that Google uses to identify your business. It is helpful to ensure that the address “maps accurately” in Google Maps.
- ▶ **Phone Number:** For the “main” phone number, be sure to use a unique local phone number. Avoid 800numbers, and especially avoid “tracking numbers.” As with your business name and address, your main phone number is part of the “key” that Google uses to cross-reference information about your business around the Web.
- ▶ **Website:** In many cases, for a business with a single location, this is simply your home page. For businesses with multiple locations, it is ideal to have a separate page representing each location. This case is described further in the main text below.
- ▶ **Description:** Google provides you with a 200-character description field. This is not a lot of room. You want to provide a short, unique, keyword-rich description of your business. This description is displayed to users on the Places page, so it must read well. It is also a primary source of keywords that the algorithm will use for finding your business, so be sure to include the most important keywords that customers typically use to search for your business in this description.
- ▶ **Categories:** Category selection provides a very strong clue for the search engine to decide what kinds of searches your business is relevant to. The best advice here is to simply study the available categories, and be sure that the first one you choose is the “best” category. While (at least) one category selection must be made from Google’s standard set of categories, you may also add up to four more categories of your own choosing (that is, you may type in your own free-form category text).

### **Directories and aggregators**

- ▶ Directories can be built from the local phone company’s database information, but no one phone company covers the entire country. Because of this, companies that host nationwide directories are primarily getting their content from data aggregators [ભાગ] to form the foundation of their guides.
- ▶ Data aggregators build their content from a variety of sources, such as local-area print yellow pages, to have information that is as comprehensive [complete or full] as possible.
- ▶ Three top aggregators exist for US business listings: InfoUSA, Acxiom, and Localeze.
- ▶ The first step in managing the online presence of a local company is to check and update the business’s listing information in each of these main aggregators.

Ensure that the business name, address information, phone numbers, fax numbers, and any other contact information are correct. If you have multiple locations, make sure they're all listed.

- ▶ It is also a good idea to check/update your listing information in the top Yellow Pages directory sites, vertical directories (directories that are apropos for your industry), and top local search engines. But how do you decide what the top local information sites are?

### **Additional local info guides**

- ▶ Search engines are not the only source for local business information. Some of the more notable alternatives include the following:
- ▶ **Additional local online Yellow Pages:** In addition to the online directories listed in the Local Search Guide, check to see that you've also updated your information in any local directory sites that are independent of the Local Search Guide lists. Other Yellow Pages guides may be dominant [ଯେଉ] for your area but may not be listed. Check the printed phone books delivered in the area where your business is located, and see whether they have URLs printed on their covers where you can audit/update your information.
- ▶ **Additional vertical directory sites:** The Local Search Guide lists only a handful of vertical directories, so if your industry isn't represented in that set, you might need to do some research to identify ones appropriate for you and check them to ensure that your business listings in those directories are optimal.
- ▶ **Newspapers:** Check the sites of the top newspapers in your area and see whether you have or can add listings in their business directories.
- ▶ **Chambers of Commerce:** Most US cities have a local Chamber of Commerce to help promote businesses in the area, and getting listed in its directory can be beneficial to you, particularly if the chamber's site is optimized for search engines; getting your Chamber of Commerce listing linked over to your website can help with your link weight.
- ▶ **Online classifieds and eBay:** These sorts of sites can be time-consuming to integrate with, but users sometimes conduct local-based searches through them for some types of products and services. Craigslist is the most-used online classifieds site, although there may be more specialized ones for particular cities or industries. eBay's advanced search features allow users to search for things offered by sellers in particular regions/localities. For some types of businesses, it could be helpful or worthwhile to list products on eBay. Listing items through online classified or auction sites might not be good for improving direct sales, but it could be worthwhile as another channel for advertising to local consumers.
- ▶ **Local guides:** Loads of local guides are devoted to information about local areas, so search on your city's name or zip code and see what sites appear on the first page of results in each of the main search engines: Google, Yahoo!, and Bing.

Review the top local guide sites for your area and assess [આકારણી, measure, evaluate, calculate] whether they're appropriate for your business's information.

► **Specialty Yellow Pages:** Many niche Yellow Pages directories are geared [ચાન્દાં રાખીને] toward particular demographic groups—for instance, special interest groups or non-English directories. Consider integrating with the ones that are right for you and your business. Association with these specialized guides may position you for more ready acceptance by the end users of those guides, because it sends them a clear message that you value their interests and are sympathetic to their needs and desires. Here are some examples:

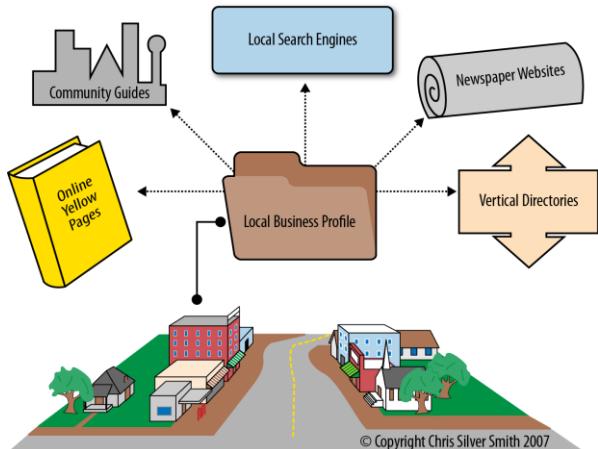
- ▶ Christian Yellow Pages
- ▶ Jewish Yellow Pages
- ▶ Black Business Planet
- ▶ National Green Pages
- ▶ Indian Yellow Pages
- ▶ Hispanic Yellow Pages
- ▶ Dog-friendly businesses

### Introduction to Local Business Profiles

► Increasingly, online directories and local search engines are adding more dimensions of information onto a business's basic listing. Providing as much detailed information about your company as possible through these profiles could be beneficial in terms of converting users of those sites into new customers for you.

► Such enhanced profile information can include things like hours/days of operation, products and manufacturers carried, special offers, years in business, photos, videos, slogans, business categories, keywords, certifications, menus, amenities, and accepted payment methods, among others.

► You'll notice that some directories and search engines are compiling all of this profile information from a variety of sources, so be aware that information supplied to one local information site could automatically begin appearing in many other places.



### Local Agency Management

► Some companies may be overwhelmed [ભરાઈ જાયાં, overcome, speechless] by the prospect of updating and monitoring information through the many avenues

[streets, paths, walks] we listed earlier. For a small business with just a few locations, the main work is in the initial integration and updates—thereafter, you just need to periodically check that your information is up-to-date and intervene as necessary.

- ▶ For a big business with information in dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of locations, it would not really be feasible to do this checking and updating by hand. In those cases, it would probably be sufficient to just focus on the top Yellow Pages, the business information aggregators, and the top search engines—from those information sources, your proper information will likely trickle [245g] down to all the rest.

### **Optimizing Your Website for Local Search Engines**

- ▶ If you have been around for a while, your business probably is already included in the local search engines, since they compile data from the aggregators and other online directories. Once your business's listing is loaded into the local engines, you must determine how to get your
- ▶ All of the basic SEO factors can come into play here and help to influence your rankings. These factors include having good, specific text in each page's title, 

# tags, Meta description, page content, image alt attributes, inbound links, and so forth. But some things are specific to local search, such as the following: - ▶ If your company has multiple locations, it is not necessary to have a standalone website or subdomain (e.g., loc1.example.com, loc2.example.com, loc3.example.com) for each outlet. In fact, it is probably better if you don't, since each business location would likely produce similar website content. - ▶ Have your page title, tags, and content included the business name, the type of business, and the location—for example, "Acme Café: French Restaurant in Boston, MA." - ▶ For multiple locations, make the title different on each location's page. Include the phone number, neighborhood, street address, area nicknames, and other location-distinguishing information. - ▶ The home page and/or Contact Us page should have the main location's basic listing information (street address, city, state, zip code, phone numbers, etc.) displayed somewhere in the HTML text. - ▶ Place differentiating information on each store's pages, including, for example, items such as a map, hours of operation, brand names of products carried, product photos, "in business since x" information, menus with prices (if it is a restaurant), ratings (if applicable),certifications, bonded status, etc. - ▶ Be aware of your proximity to your city's centroid (the location that the search engine defines as the center of the city). This is likely something that you cannot change at this point, but if you are considering moving

your company to a new location, take into account where your city's centroid is located and try to find a place close to that point.

- ▶ Proximity works the same way for zip codes. If a user searches for businesses within specific zip code, the businesses closest to the zip code area centroid [માન્ય કેન્દ્ર] will likely be displayed first in the list. Note, though, that zip code searches are not commonly performed in the United States (you can verify this with your favorite keyword research tool).
- ▶ Do not attempt to set up multiple user accounts to rate yourself well or reduce your competition's ratings! Likewise, do not pay customers for beneficial reviews—if such practice were discovered, you could lose all of your beneficial ratings. Focus on working in ways that are allowed under all the search engines' rules: just ask people to rate you. By asking enough happy clients to rate you, you might be able to drive up the positive reviews, which can bring rankings benefits. It is worth the effort to identify your happy customers and ask them to write reviews for you at one or more of the major directory sites. Never offer to pay for or otherwise incentivize positive reviews, however!
- ▶ Consider doing post-sales surveys to find those happy customers, and then reach out to them to ask them to post reviews. You can offer to enter people, who write reviews into drawing to win a prize, but don't make their participation in the drawing contingent on a positive review and don't pay for each review.
- ▶ As part of good reputation management, you should monitor your online ratings in the various sites, and try to respond to complaints/issues as quickly as possible.
- ▶ Develop external links pointing to your website. The best links to support local search come from other locally and topically oriented sites with locally and topically [તાની] oriented [બાખી] anchor text. For example, "Atlanta rental cars" is better anchor text than "rental cars." Of course, all natural inbound links are beneficial.
- ▶ If your local business has its own blog, add a blog map or feed map (<http://www.feedmap.net>) to it. This will add a local signal to the blog, as well as bringing it to the attention of other bloggers in your area who are also participating in feed maps.
- ▶ For businesses such as restaurants, it may be beneficial to add photos of celebrities who have visited the establishment. People perform searches on celebrity names all the time, so if you are lucky enough to have celebrities frequent your restaurant, uploading photos of them can help attract celebrity watchers to your business. The main thing is that it could drive up inbound links and get users to linger longer on the site, perhaps bolstering the site's quality scores.

## **Optimizing for Image Search**

- ▶ Optimizing for image search can be a smart strategy for many search marketers. Even if you're working on a site that you don't feel truly lends itself to an image optimization strategy, you may be able to leverage images or photos on your website for SEO.
- ▶ We should note that for some sites, there may not be a lot to gain here. Some e-tailers report poor conversion on image search traffic and lots of the people coming in appears to be focused on stealing their images. You need to weigh [તોખવું] the benefit of image search capability against the costs and other opportunities for SEO on your site.
- ▶ Nonetheless, many sites do very well with image search, and image search optimization does not have to take much time.
- ▶ There are a few different ways that image search optimization can help to improve traffic and conversions for your site:
- ▶ **Subtle reputation management:** Images of your products/services/facility assist consumers during the research phase of their shopping, and lend an implicit message of openness [નિખાલેસના]/forthrightness [honesty] to your business. Providing generous [ઉદ્ધર] numbers of images says you don't have anything to hide, and it will improve consumer confidence in your company, increasing the chances that they'll decide to do business with you.
- ▶ **Shopping via image search results:** Increasingly, consumers are searching for products via image search engines because they can rapidly find what they are seeking without having to dig through promotion-laden [ફુકન] websites. If your products can be found in the image search engine, you have an improved chance of being found by those people. With no pictures, there's zero chance of being found in image search.
- ▶ **Increased chances of showing up in Universal/Blended Search results:** Performing image search optimization improves your chances of showing up in additional positions on the main search results pages, as Universal Search pulls image search content into the main SERPs for some keyword search terms.
- ▶ **Empowering others to promote you:** If you have a flexible enough organization and you hold the legal copyrights to your images, you can allow others to reuse the images in return for promotion of your site/business.

## **Image Optimization Tips**

- ▶ In comparison to indexing pages that are rich with text content, indexing images is much more difficult for search engines to perform. The image itself provides few clues to the content within it.
- ▶ Google is known to be experimenting with artificial intelligence algorithms to improve detection of image content. For example, you can drag the image of a well-known person or place onto the Google Image search box

(<http://images.google.com>), and Google will attempt to identify the contents and show you other similar images.

- ▶ Search engines are also experimenting with techniques such as optical character recognition (OCR) to read text content within images, but most images don't have any text to read.
- ▶ Search engines also make use of facial recognition software to be able to determine when an image is of a face versus body or something else entirely.
- ▶ You can do a number of things to further optimize your images. Here are the most important things you can do:
- ▶ Make sure the image filename or img src string contains your primary keyword. If it is a picture of Abe Lincoln, name the file abe-lincoln.jpg and/or have the src URL string contain that keyword, as in <http://example.com/abe-lincoln/portrait.jpg>.
- ▶ Always use the image alt attribute. The alt attribute helps the vision-impaired to understand your site, and search engines use it to better understand what your images are about.  
``
- ▶ Avoid query strings for img src tags, just as you should for page URLs. Or, if you must use URLs that include query strings, use only two or three parameters. Consider rewriting the query strings in the URLs so that they do not contain an excessive [અનિખા] number of parameters, which will cause spiders to refuse to crawl the links. Note that Google claims to no longer have problems with these types of situations, but it is better to be safe than sorry, and other search engines have been less clear as to whether this is still an issue for them.
- ▶ Use good-quality pictures, which will read well when shown in thumbnail format. Good contrast is typically the key here.
- ▶ Do not save images as graphics files with embedded thumbnails—turn this feature off in Photoshop and other image editing software. Search engines may copy your image, reduce it in size, save it in compressed format, and deliver up a thumbnail of it for their results pages.
- ▶ Don't store the image in a sidebar column with your ads or inside the header/footer navigation elements; otherwise, the search engine algorithms will ignore the image as irrelevant, just as they ignore page decor and navigation graphics.
- ▶ Have a proper copyright license! You need to have a proper license to display the images found on your site so that you don't get sued.
- ▶ If you are using images that may also be displayed on other websites, store/display them at different sizes from how they were provided to you. Don't change only their HTML img tag height/width parameters; reduce the size of the images or increase or decrease their compression and then resave them so that they have different file sizes.

- ▶ You need to ensure that your server configuration allows your site's images to be displayed when called from web pages on other domains. Some system administrators have disabled this to keep people from displaying their images on other sites, and this could cause problems if you want your images displayed in search engine image results pages.

## **Optimizing Through Flickr and Other Image Sharing Sites**

- ▶ Flickr is one of the strongest image sharing sites in terms of search optimization potential [સંભવિત]. No other image sharing site has the same level of domain authority, crawl ability, keyword-focusing signals, and cross-referencing potential (the ability to link to your website from photo pages).
- ▶ Other image sharing sites exist as well, even though they appear to have less potential. The following tips are specifically for Flickr, but most image sharing sites have similar features, so these tips could also work on many of them:
  - ▶ When you upload your photos, always add tags. The tags or keywords that you associate with your photo will make sure users can find it when they are searching and will lend keyword weight to the photo's page. Enter as many tags as possible that accurately describe your photo.
  - ▶ This should be obvious, but have your photos publicly viewable, not restricted to viewing by only your friends and family.
  - ▶ Create a descriptive title for the image. This adds yet more keyword weight to the photo's page within Flickr.
  - ▶ Enter a description under the photo, or write something about the picture.
  - ▶ Consider adding a note or two directly onto the photo, particularly if it is humorous. Flickr allows you to select a rectangular area and associate some text with it that will appear as a tool tip when users mouse over it.
  - ▶ If the photo is location-specific, geotag the picture.
  - ▶ Browse through Flickr's Groups for public "photo album" collections that are dedicated topictures that could be related to your photo. Sometimes it helps to search for photos using keywords you have used in your tags, and then see what groups other people's photos belong to.
  - ▶ Join those groups, and then add your photos apropos to each group's theme. The more links there are to your photo page, the more important your photo will be considered, so add it to a number of groups. Ideally, add it to groups that have a lot of members—the number of members indicates the popularity and traffic of the group.
  - ▶ Link each of your Flickr photo pages to your website, or a related page on your site. You can add hyperlinks to the Description field below the photo. Use anchor text that has call to action, or that tells the user what to expect if he clicks on the link (e.g., "We sell this product on our website"; "Enjoy this view from the tables at our restaurant"; "This room

is available at our bed & breakfast"). It is best to link to specific pages of related content as a richer indicator for link juice transfer.

- ▶ Post as many optimized pictures as possible. This is mostly a game of many small fractions adding up to large, cumulative results. The many pages of pictures linking back to your site will help build your overall authority. The more pages you have, the more likely it is that other Flickr users will find your content and link to it. This also increases your chances that a lucky picture or two might find its way onto a viral [રોગ પેદા કરનાર અતિસ્કૂલ જંતુવાળું] popularity wave that spurs [ટેકચર, branches, limbs or divisions]many users to send links of your picture to their friends, or that a reporter might find one of your pictures ideal for his news story.

### **Optimizing for Product Search**

- ▶ Google Product Search is less popular than some of the other Google-owned properties.
- ▶ The first step toward optimizing your website for Google Product Search is to put together feed for your products and submits them to the Google Merchant Center.
- ▶ Here, you can upload products in bulk and learn the specifics of the formatting of the feed. To be included in Google Product Search, you need to upload true physical/tangible products.
- ▶ The Google Merchant Center will accept other types of items, such as flights, hotels, car rentals, travel packages, and real estate, but such items will not get into Google Product Search. In your feed, populate as many fields as possible with data (Brand, Category, Color, Price, Condition, and more).
- ▶ These additional fields will help Google Product Search match you up with more potential customers.

### **Product search optimization**

- ▶ Basic things you can do to optimize your feed for Google Product Search:
  - ▶ The most important optimization step is to make sure that your feed is accurate. Pricing must match exactly, taking into account all factors, such as shipping and handling.
  - ▶ Change your feed whenever product availability or pricing changes (this is related to the prior bullet). If your product is out of stock, promptly remove it from the feed. It is OK to update your feed frequently, even if you need to do it multiple times per day.
  - ▶ Create descriptive, accurate item titles.
  - ▶ Use long-tail terms in your titles, particularly for highly competitive products. Picking the right terms can be difficult, because there may be hundreds of long-tail terms to choose from. Try to pick terms that are

likely to have higher search volumes, and that have potential for conversion.

- ▶ Seller ratings play a big role in rankings in Google. Manage your ratings at contributor sources such as DealTime, NexTag, PriceGrabber, ResellerRatings, and Shopzilla.
- ▶ Product ratings are also important. Get your products rated on sites such as Epinions.com.
- ▶ Always include product images. Google Product Search has a preference for products that display a product image (and in Bing, if you have no photo, your product simply will not be shown).

### **Performance reporting**

- ▶ As of July 2008, Google offers a Performance tab with reporting on how many of your items have received clicks, as well as how many items were uploaded and how many are active. You can download the data as a CSV file.

### **Optimizing for News, Blog, and Feed Search**

- ▶ News, blog, and feed search are another large potential area of opportunity for optimization. This has a bearing [manner, attitude] not only on obtaining traffic directly from the search engines, but also in promoting your business in whole new ways.
- ▶ Getting plugged in to news search, for example, can bring you plenty of quality traffic, but it can also result in your site being spotted by major media editors and writers, as well as bloggers who consume that media. This is the type of exposure that can lead to numerous links.

### **RSS Feed Optimization**

- ▶ Many people mistakenly lump blogs and RSS together, but RSS has infinitely more applications beyond just blogs. RSS feeds can also be used for reporting upon or announcing news alerts, your latest specials, clearance items, upcoming events, new stock arrivals, new articles, new tools and resources, search results, a book's revision history, top 10 best sellers (as Amazon.com does in many of its product categories), project management activities, forum/listserv posts, and recently added downloads.
- ▶ If practical, use the full text of your articles in your feeds, not summaries. A lot of users want to read the full article in the feed without having to click through to your site. This is a case where you need to focus more on the relationship with the user than on immediate financial goals.
- ▶ Consider multiple feeds. You can organize them by category, latest comments, and comments by post, and so on.
- ▶ An RSS feed that contains enclosures (i.e., podcasts) can get into additional RSS directories and engines, as there are many specialized directories just for podcasts or other types of media.

- ➡ Make it easy to subscribe. Ideally, users should have to click only once to subscribe via their favorite aggregator. You can do this through “Add to \_\_\_\_\_” (My Yahoo!, Blog lines, Google Reader, etc.) buttons on your site.

## **Blog Optimization**

- ➡ Blogs are great publishing platforms for those who want to write articles on a regular basis.
- ➡ First, they make it easy to publish the content. Authors only need to log in and use a relatively simple set of menu choices to input what they want to publish, preview it, and then proceed to publish it. It is far easier than coding your own HTML pages by hand.
- ➡ In fact, it is so easy that entire websites have been built using WordPress as the sole publishing platform. These sites are also typically easy to set up and configure. The world’s most popular blog platform is WordPress, but the blog platforms from Moveable Type and TypePad are also popular.
- ➡ Blogs are inherently [સ્વામીક રીતે] social in nature, and a host of social marketing benefits come from blogs.
- ➡ Enabling comments allows for interaction with your readers, and bloggers tend to have significant level of interaction. For example, one blogger may write a post that reacts to or comments on another blogger’s post. A lot of cross-linking takes place, with one blogger citing another.
- ➡ Although the various blog publishing platforms are great, they can sometimes also require tweaking [change, modification, alteration] to achieve optimal SEO results:
  - ▶ Blogs usually offer the ability to categorize each post. Make sure the tag name is used in the title of that tag page.
  - ▶ Override default title tags with custom ones. You can do this using plugins such as the All in One SEO Plugin. Along with many other SEO features, this plug-in allows you to supply a custom title tag, defined through a custom field in a post or a page.
  - ▶ Rewrite your URL to contain keywords, and to use hyphens (preferred over underscores) as word separators.
  - ▶ Make sure you 301-redirect from <http://yourblog.com> to <http://www.yourblog.com> (or vice versa).
  - ▶ If you change from one blog platform to another one, the URL structure of your blog will likely change.

## **Optimizing your anchor text**

- ➡ Anchor text is just as important in blogging as it is in general SEO. You need to leverage it as much as you can. Here are some specifics:
- ➡ Make the post’s title a link to the permalink page. You do not want your only link to the post to say “Permalink.”

- ➡ Use a tool such as Open Site Explorer (<http://www.opensiteexplorer.org>) or Majestic SEO(<http://www.majesticseo.com>) to see who is linking to your site. Using these tools or tools like them, you can see who is linking to you and what anchor text they have used. Look for opportunities to request revisions to anchor text on inbound links, but before making such request make sure you are comfortable that your relationship with the linker will not result in their simply removing your link instead of changing it.
- ➡ Internally link back to old, relevant posts within the body of a blog post. Don't use here or previously or similar words as the anchor text; use something keyword-rich instead.

### **Sticky posts**

- ➡ Sticky posts are a way to add content that always shows up first on a page of your blog. One way to use this is to write a post that is the introduction/overview for all the content on one of your category pages. Using this technique, you can add keyword-rich introductory copy to category page or tag page.

### **Author profile pages**

- ➡ If you have a multi-author blog, another smart tactic is to create author profile pages. This has a multitude of benefits. First, many of your readers will have a stronger interest in one of your writers than the others.

## **News Search Optimization**

- ➡ Most people are so conditioned to the fact that Google is the dominant provider of search that few of them realize that the king of news search engines is Yahoo! News.

### **Optimizing for news search**

- ➡ The news search engines are looking for content that is in the form of either a news story or feature story.
- ➡ They also are looking to see that you are creating news content in reasonable volume—a minimum of 10 articles per week. News sites are looking for news sources (i.e., sites), not individual news pieces.

### **Submission details**

- ➡ Google News has some more specific requirements than Yahoo! News, so a best practice is to make sure you meet

<b>Top Visited News and Media Sites – Month of July 2011</b>				
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Websites</b>	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Total Visits</b>	<b>Visits Share</b>
1	Yahoo! News	news.yahoo.com	429,109,585	9.94%
2	The Huffington Post	www.huffingtonpost.com	200,413,743	4.64%
3	MSNBC	www.msnbc.msn.com	192,081,515	4.45%
4	The Weather Channel - US	www.weather.com	173,960,021	4.03%
5	CNN.com	www.cnn.com	101,259,853	2.34%
6	Fox News	www.foxnews.com	68,789,823	1.59%
7	Google News	news.google.com	61,541,405	1.42%
8	Yahoo! Weather	weather.yahoo.com	57,503,433	1.33%
9	MSN City Guides	cityguides.msn.com	48,895,082	1.13%
10	Yahoo! Local	local.yahoo.com	47,753,077	1.11%
11	Weather Underground	www.weatherunderground.com	46,200,247	1.07%
12	The New York Times	www.nytimes.com	45,722,547	1.06%
13	The Today Show	today.msnbc.msn.com	39,839,248	0.92%
14	Drudge Report	www.drudgereport.com	38,642,256	0.89%
15	AccuWeather.com	www.accuweather.com	38,509,698	0.89%
16	People Magazine	www.people.com	34,377,091	0.80%
17	USA Today	www.usatoday.com	30,176,231	0.70%
18	www.myqwest.com	www.myqwest.com	29,617,012	0.69%
19	topix	www.topix.com	28,911,873	0.67%
20	ABCnews.com	abcnews.go.com	27,375,363	0.63%

*Source: Experian Hitwise, a unit of Experian Marketing Services*

Google's minimum bar. Here are some of the things you will need to get into Google News:

- ▶ All news stories should appear at a static URL. The URL and the content on it should not change over time. The URL also needs to be accessible through a standard HTML text link.
- ▶ Create a Google News Sitemap and submit it to Google through Google Webmaster Tools.
- ▶ Keep all content in standard HTML (no PDFs, multimedia, or frames). Make sure the articles are UTF-8-encoded.
- ▶ Create a page for your editors and writers and list them by name. Have at least three people engaged in the feed, and provide a way to contact them. Link to this page from all of the pages of the news section of your site.
- ▶ Publish content on a regular basis. Twice per business day is a great place to start, but do more if you can.
- ▶ Make sure you have at least 30 days of history before you submit your site.
- ▶ Create great, original content. Don't simply summarize the news of the day. Add plenty of value.
- ▶ When dealing with the form itself, here are some things you should plan to provide:
  - ▶ A history of the site, including traffic statistics. Sell a little bit, so if your site has won awards or gotten recognition of any kind, include that information. This includes mentioning major sites that link to you.
  - ▶ A two- to three-sentence background on your editors and authors. You will need at least three of these to be considered.

### **Others: Mobile, Video/Multimedia Search**

- ▶ Mobile and video search are two areas experiencing rapid growth. Each has its own challenges and requires a unique approach.

#### **Mobile Search**

- ▶ Mobile search is a dynamic and growing market. In June 24, 2011, group product manager for mobile ads at Google, Paul Feng, told Mashable, "Google has seen mobile search grow at an exponential rate; it's increased five-fold worldwide in the past two years. That rate of growth is comparable to the early days of Google's desktop search". Rapid growth is expected to continue.
- ▶ On September 1, 2011, Nielsen indicated that 40% of US mobile users are on smartphones
- ▶ The improved mobile web user interfaces and larger screen sizes on smartphones have been a big factor in the growth of mobile search. Having a

specific mobile site experience for users is important, as mobile searchers are even more impatient than your typical desktop searcher.

- ▶ If you offer a desktop experience to a mobile user and she finds a competitor that offers a tailored mobile experience, you may have just lost the attention of a potential customer.
- ▶ Mobile searchers tend to be more focused on shopping and price comparisons, as many searchers already know what they want and are committed to the brand. Focus on getting them the info that they need to finalize a purchase decision.
- ▶ If you don't offer a specific mobile site experience, and the user is on a web-enabled feature phone, the mobile search engines may attempt to transcode your content so it renders in an acceptable fashion on a mobile device. This will be something the search engines do if they perceive your page as being too big or complex for the device.
- ▶ Adding to the complexity of setting up a mobile site is the fact that Google employs a different spider for the mobile web, "Googlebot-Mobile," but Bing uses the same crawler to crawl mobile content as it does desktop content (Bingbot).
- ▶ Both search engines use user-agent detection to determine if a searcher is on a mobile browser or a traditional desktop browser, and will show feature phone users a mobile experience.

### User-agent detection

- ▶ At the beginning of each browsing session, the user's hardware and browser combination will communicate a unique identifier to the website's web server, known as the user agent. This string identifies the nature of the hardware and software making the request.
- ▶ The best practice for mobile site design, and hence for mobile SEO, is to detect the incoming user agent and show the user the appropriate version of your site. If you are using the same URLs for your mobile site, you simply show them the alternative version of your content.
- ▶ If you are using a mobile subdomain you will want to redirect mobile users to that subdomain. When a user comes to your site, you check to see if that user's browser has a mobile user agent.
- ▶ If so, you give him the mobile version of the page. If not, you give him the desktop version. There is also a tag you can use to inform Googlebot (the desktop version) about your Google content. This allows Googlebot to be aware of your mobile pages even prior to Googlebot-Mobile learning about them. The syntax for the tag is as follows:

```
<link rel="alternate" media="handheld" href="alternate_page.html" />
```

### Using the same URLs for your mobile site

- ➡ The big advantage offered by using the same URLs for your mobile and desktop sites is that the mobile site effectively inherits the SEO of the desktop site. That is, the link profile and social signals are automatically associated with the mobile version of the site (which is not the case with a mobile subdomain).

### Common considerations for a mobile site

- ➡ There are some recommendations that hold true regardless of whether you choose a same-URL approach or a mobile-subdomain approach. These are:
  - ▶ Create a small, lightweight, fast-loading site (<20 KB per page). Mobile devices have limited bandwidth for communication.
  - ▶ Use the XHTML Basic 1.1 DOCTYPE (with XHTML MP 1.2, cHTML, or WML 1.3). This is important to make sure your site renders properly on the majority of mobile devices that may be used to access your site.
  - ▶ Use UTF-8 character encoding.
  - ▶ Perform on-site key phrase optimization as usual (with a focus on short titles and small amounts of body copy), and include the word mobile in the title or the heading tag (or both). Focus keywords on location and immediacy searches that enable users to take action.
  - ▶ Avoid use of Flash media interfaces/content because these do not render on most phones.
  - ▶ Use only JPEG or GIF images.
  - ▶ Check that your mobile-friendly URLs' DTD declarations are in an appropriate mobile format, such as XHTML Mobile or Compact HTML.
  - ▶ Set a reasonable Cache-Control value, such as 600 (10 minutes), to tell your browser to keep local copy instead of requesting a new copy from the server if the local copy hasn't expired. This saves on download time.
  - ▶ Speed up your page load times by reducing DNS lookups. This can be done by combining files (such as script files) or removing unnecessary images.

### Mobile SEO tools for creating mobile-ready sites

- ➡ There are a growing number of tools that can help you render a mobile-ready version of your existing site. Here are some of the best ones:
  - ▶ MoFuse: Costs \$7.95 per month
  - ▶ Mippin: Free tool for mobile site creation
  - ▶ Mobilize by Mippin WordPress Plugin: Free WordPress plug-in for creating a mobile version of your blog
  - ▶ mobiSiteGalore: Offers mobile site conversion for unlimited pages for \$225 per year

### Other mobile SEO tools

- ➡ In addition to creating your mobile site, it is useful to check other aspects of mobile SEO. Here are some tools that let you do that:

- ▶ W3C mobile Checker: Mobile code validator that tests the mobile readiness [ମୋబିଲ] of your mobile site.
- ▶ MobileMoxie Phone Emulator: Lets you test your site to see how it will look across a series of phone environments
- ▶ MobileMoxie Search Simulator: Lets you test mobile SEO rankings across multiple phone devices

## **Video Search Optimization**

- ▶ Video search optimization is in its infancy, but it is growing rapidly. The increasing penetration of high-bandwidth Internet connections is going to drive more and more demand for online video content. So, creating video content and optimizing it is something you should consider.
- ▶ The problem is that video search engines have not yet been able to look inside the videos to tell what their content is from a human “eye” perspective. For that reason, they rely on other on-page factors, the metadata within the video file itself, and inbound links and anchor text to determine what a video is about.
- ▶ There are three different scenarios for video optimization. It is worthwhile to do all three. Here are some factors relating to each scenario:
- ▶ **Video search engines that crawl your site:** This is the scenario where you host the video on your own site. An example of a video search engine that will crawl your site to find videos is Trove (<http://www.truveo.com>). Although this type of search engine represents a small percentage of your total market opportunity, it can still be worth pursuing. It provides a variety of optimization opportunities, including the following:
  - ▶ You can customize the content on the web page where the user can access or read about the video. Pay particular attention to the on-page text, as you can write a nice, keyword-rich, compelling description of the video.
  - ▶ You can keep your video files in one directory. This makes it easier for the crawler to find them all.
  - ▶ If you embed a Flash video player into a web page, you can include a link to the raw video file (in .avi, .wmv, QuickTime, or some other format), to maximize exposure to all the different video search engines.
  - ▶ You can use a video Sitemap, which will make it easier for the crawlers to find your videos.
- ▶ **Video sites that accept RSS or mRSS feeds:** In this scenario, you submit an RSS or Media RSS (mRSS) feed to a third-party site. Examples of sites that accept such feeds are Yahoo! Video (<http://video.search.yahoo.com>) and Blinkx (<http://www.blinkx.com>). The basic approach to optimizing for this type of site is

to enter a title, description, keywords, thumbnails, a category, and a full transcript. A full transcript is a good way to provide good fodder for a video search site to chew on, as it will provide more keywords that the search engine can find and choose to rank you for.

- ▶ **Video upload sites:**These are video search engines that require or allow you to upload your videos to them. Examples include: YouTube, AOL Video, MySpace, Revver, Metacafe, Vimeo, Flickr, Dailymotion, Yahoo! Video
- ▶ You can also use a site such as TubeMogul, upload the data just once, and get some analytics data back as well. Also, make sure you keep your videos from getting too large. Videos smaller than 100 MB will work on most video sharing sites, and YouTube will accommodate videos of up to 20 GB.
- ▶ Flickr limits the length of the videos it will support to 90 seconds.

### Other video optimization tips

- ▶ There are other things to consider in optimizing videos:
- ▶ Create compelling content. If the content is not compelling, users will not benefit from it, and neither will your business. Note that even an instruction manual on how to use your left-handed bottle washer will be compelling to someone who needs that information, if you put it together correctly.
- ▶ Develop videos that reinforce the message of your brand. It is great to have a video go viral or be a success, but will it actually help you if it does?
- ▶ Make sure you include the word video on a regular basis throughout any metadata, as many user searches include this word and it will increase your chances of showing up in those queries. Don't go hog-wild with it, though. Also, note that YouTube has a title tag display limit of 62 characters, so don't go beyond that.
- ▶ Pick a preferred format, such as .mov, .avi, or .wmv. There is no real win in offering the file in multiple formats from a video SEO perspective, but it will be useful to users who want to pick a preferred format. Make just one of the versions visible to the search engines, but offer them all to users.
- ▶ Keep the length reasonable (five minutes or less). If the video is too long, you will run the risk of boring the viewer. There are exceptions to this rule, of course, but if you exceed five minutes be very certain that most viewers will be able to remain engaged.
- ▶ Give your video a keyword-rich but catchy title. The title is the biggest factor in convincing user to view the video.
- ▶ Make good use of thumbnails to help users decide which videos to watch. Users like to watch a quick snapshot so that they can decide whether they want to invest their time in the full video. Unfortunately, the way you generate thumbnails differs from site to site, but it is an important enough factor in

getting people to view your video that it is worth going through the process for each site you upload to.

- ▶ Allow users to rate your video. Search engines will pay attention to this when ranking these videos. This is also a crucial part of going viral, as potential viewers are very attracted to highly ranked videos.
- ▶ Commercial content should include a watermark to indicate its origin. This will help if your video goes viral and is copied to multiple sites, because it will still carry your branding message and/or site information.
- ▶ Use keywords in the filename and URL. Video search engines place a fair amount of weight on these in the world of video. Avoid using stop words, such as the and, in the filename.
- ▶ Use appropriate keywords in the link text for the file. Keyword-rich anchor text carries a lot of weight.
- ▶ In preparation for voice recognition-based indexing of video and audio content, develop video content “scripts” that are keyword-rich and relevant to your video’s topic.
- ▶ In this regard, digital media SEO will be a very new and dynamic area of optimizing content for search engines.

## Tracking Results and Measuring Success

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- ▶ Since the nature of what SEO practitioners do is not clear to many people, the expertpractitioner knows how important it is to establish quantifiable [પરિમાણમાં] goals and demonstrate results.
- ▶ Expectation management is key, and effective communication of timetables for deliverablesand improvements is crucial to the success of any SEO project.
- ▶ Thousands of tools are available, and it can be difficult to figure out which ones you need to use, which ones are merely nice to have, and which ones are not worth the time.
- ▶ It is a good idea to start simple and focus on establishing a baseline measurement of where you are before you begin your SEO efforts, as otherwise you won't know whether or not you have made progress.
- ▶ In other words, you need to measure whether you have been successful, and then get a sense as to how successful.

### **Why Measuring Success Is Essential to the SEO Process**

- ▶ Although quantifying deliverables and measuring progress are important for external reportingpurposes, it is just as important for SEO practitioners to measure the efficacy of their own effortsso they can make timely adjustments as necessary. As you will see in this chapter, numerous [અનેક] tools are available to aid in this process.
- ▶ At the beginning of any SEO project, it is wise to establish baseline data points for the website.This includes the following:
  - ▶ Quantifying organic search traffic by search engine and keyword.
  - ▶ Quantifying a baseline of the major keywords that are driving traffic by search engine.
  - ▶ Quantifying a breakout of what sections are getting the current organic search traffic bysearch engine and keyword.
  - ▶ Quantifying data on conversions broken down by search engine and keyword.
  - ▶ Identifying poorly performing pages.
  - ▶ Identifying the best-performing pages (in terms of traffic and conversions).
  - ▶ Tracking search engine crawler activity on the site.
  - ▶ Determining the number of indexed pages.
  - ▶ Determining whether the indexed pages are getting search traffic.
  - ▶ Determining whether best-selling product pages are indexed and getting search traffic.
  - ▶ Identifying 404 error pages and external sites linking to these pages, if any.

## The Tracking Cycle: Produce, Launch, Measure, Refine

- ▶ Define an SEO campaign and set goals. What are you going to accomplish, and what is the strategy for accomplishing it? How will you measure progress?
- ▶ Discuss your strategy. The marketing and business development teams are your allies here—you want to ensure that your SEO objectives are based on the overall business and site objectives, both long- and short-term.
- ▶ Establish a baseline. Now that you are about to start and you have decided how you are going to measure progress, establish a baseline by recording the current stats prior to beginning work. Make sure you don't get a false baseline due to seasonal factors or some other unusual event. Comparing year-over-year data will usually help you eliminate fluctuation due to seasonality.
- ▶ Proceed with your project. Implement the new pages, the site changes, the link-building campaign, or whatever else you may have planned. Put it in place and execute it.
- ▶ Collect data. Collect the newest data for each metric you decided to focus on. Since SEO can take days to show results, make sure you wait long enough for your efforts to have an impact. Many factors could influence the length of time you should wait. Here are some of them:
  - ▶ If your site is brand new, it may take longer for your changes to take effect.
  - ▶ If the scope of the change is drastic [સાધુન] (such as a complete redesign), the time it takes to see results will probably be longer.
  - ▶ Sites that get crawled at great depth and frequently will probably yield results faster.
  - ▶ Sites seen as authoritative may also show faster results.
- ▶ Compare the baseline data to the new data. The new data has little meaning unless it is compared to your baseline. This is the time when you can really assess your progress.
- ▶ Refine your campaign. Now that you have compared your old data with your new data, you can make some decisions. Is the campaign a bust? If so, abandon [છોડી] it and move on to the next one. The old business axiom “fail quickly” applies here. The faster you diagnose [નિયાન] a failure and move on to the next thing, the better.

## Using Analytics as a Business Case for SEO

- ▶ You can use a properly structured plan as the business case for an SEO project. The way to do this is to express the target results of an SEO project in terms of financial impact. You could include a variety of metrics in a business case, such as: Revenue, Lead generation, Margin, Branding value, Reach, Other action triggers (newsletter sign-ups, contact requests, demo requests, accepting free trial, viewing a specific piece of content, etc.)

- ➔ Measuring such things requires that you tie organic search engine visits to the revenue and other conversions that result.

## **Measuring Search Traffic**

- ➔ Classic web analytics data is an incredible asset to SEO. Here are some examples of ways to utilize this data for SEO purposes:
  - ▶ Look at your daily referral reports to detect newly received inbound links (the great majority of webmasters click on a link after implementing it, to make sure it works).
  - ▶ Look at the search terms people use to come to your site to spot long-tail search opportunities.
  - ▶ Measure the results of your campaigns by tracking the increase in conversions you are driving over time.
  - ▶ Try to find missed opportunities—that is, search terms and phrases that people used to come to your site that did not result in a conversion.

## **Basic Overview**

- ➔ Your hosting company most likely provides a free web analytics solution, such as AWStats, Webalizer, or something similar. Although these tools provide valuable data, they are very limited in scope, and other tools out there provide significantly more data. Here are some of the best-known options: Google Analytics, Woopra, Clicky, Piwik, and Yahoo! Web Analytics.
- ➔ Web analytics platforms track your site's traffic in two major ways. The older of the two methodologies [યુદ્ધનિયો] is to use software that analyzes your web server log files, which contain detailed information of all the traffic on your website.
- ➔ Setting up this type of solution generally involves installing the software on an internal server that is able to gain access to the log files.
- ➔ The newer methodology involves implementing JavaScript tags on all of the pages of your website. Provided that you have a basic template for your pages, this is generally a fairly straightforward process. JavaScript then tracks the activity on your web pages as it happens and builds a data profile reflecting that activity.

## **Selecting the Right Analytics Package**

- ➔ Log file tracking and JavaScript tracking are equally valid methods, and each has its own strengths and weaknesses. The biggest advantage of the log file method is that it allows you to track search engine crawler activity on your site.
- ➔ This is something you cannot do in JavaScript implementations, because search engine crawlers do not execute the JavaScript.
- ➔ Another major advantage of a log file-based solution is that you run the software in-house, so no third party has a copy of a log file with your proprietary traffic data on it. This distinction can be a big win in terms of security for some organizations.

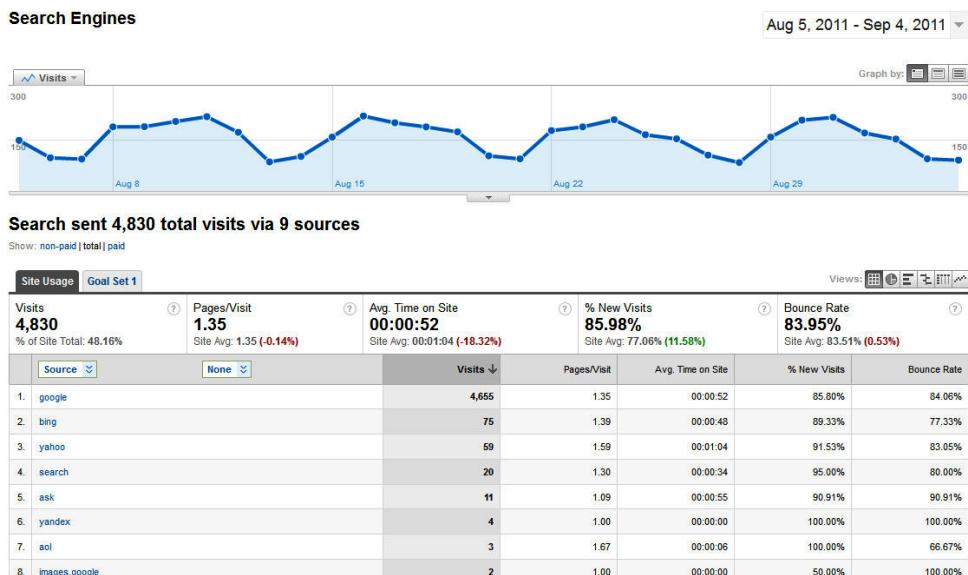
- ▶ For many companies, one of the best solutions is to start with a free analytics package such as Google Analytics, then look to buy a higher-end solution once they have pushed these packages to their limits.
- ▶ By pushing the limits of these free analytics products first, you will end up developing a set of requirements you can use in deciding where to go next.
- ▶ Based on the requirements you establish in your initial brainstorming, you may find that you require a set of features that the free packages do not provide. Keeping this in mind can help you select the right package.

### Valuable SEO Data in Web Analytics

- ▶ You can extract all kinds of data from web analytics. Let's take a look at a few of the more interesting types of information you may want to extract.

#### Traffic by search engine

- ▶ One of the first things you may want to know is the breakout of traffic by search engine. Figure provides an example of such a report in Google Analytics.



- ▶ Notice how small the amount of traffic from Bing and Yahoo! is compared to Google. This may be indicative [সূচক, suggestive, symbolic] of a problem with how Bing (which supplies the search results to Yahoo!) indexes your site; the webmaster, designer, or developer might want to explore why the traffic from Bing and Yahoo! collectively is so low.

#### Branded versus non-branded traffic

- ▶ Branded search traffic refers to traffic that comes to your site through queries that involve your company name or product brand name. Non-branded search traffic is much more valuable because it represents organic long-tail search traffic to your site.
- ▶ Branded traffic will typically convert at a higher rate on average, but non-branded search traffic represents the greater opportunity for expansion, as it represents researchers who did not previously know your brand, or at least were not yet committed to it.

### **Traffic by keyword**

- ▶ One of the basic data points of interest for an SEO practitioner is what search terms are bringing traffic to the website. This provides a quick way to see where the SEO campaign is going well, and where it is not going so well.

### **Segmenting Search Traffic**

- ▶ Next, you can consider putting these things together. Even the free tools provide substantial capability for building out custom reports. This is a key improvement to your SEO research for two reasons:
- ▶ If you are looking into what terms can bring fast traffic benefits as a result of some additional optimization, you are going to want to know which search engines you are ranking in.
- ▶ If you are going to optimize a page to rank higher, you will need to make sure you are optimizing the right page!

### **Referring Sites**

- ▶ Referring site reports are useful for a number of reasons, but one of the more interesting SEO reasons to look at these reports is to spot when you receive new links. You can often see those new links in these reports first, even before the search engines report them.

### **Using Analytics Dashboards**

- ▶ In analytics terms, a dashboard is a single-page view that contains your most critical metrics all in one place. Of course, your most critical metrics are likely to differ from those of the next publisher, because the needs of different sites vary greatly.
- ▶ In addition, multiple dashboards may be required in any given organization. For example, the CEO of a large public company probably wants to see different data (and a lot less of it) than senior business analyst.
- ▶ What is most important, though, is that it provides the data that is most important to the person for whom the dashboard was designed. As an SEO practitioner, you can implement a dashboard to show progress against the goals you set for your SEO campaign. Providing this type of visibility has two important benefits:
- ▶ The person viewing the report will appreciate the fact that she does not have to work hard to do a quick health check on the progress of the SEO efforts. As we suggested at the beginning of this chapter, the fact that you agree to measurable goals will be a great comfort to management.
- ▶ You will know what data your managers are looking at. When something goes wrong (or right), or when management wants to discuss some aspect of the business, they will have started from the dashboard you set up for them.

### **A Deeper Look at Action Tracking**

- ▶ Action tracking is one step deeper than basic analytics. Rather than simply observing what pages are visited and how many unique sessions are logged,

action tracking allows you to narrow down groups of visitors based on the actions they take on your site.

#### **For ecommerce sites:**

- ▶ **Add to Cart button:** Studies have shown us that users who “add to cart,” even if they do not complete the checkout process, are more likely to return to make a purchase. This is also a good way to calculate shopping cart abandonment rates and figure out where you can make changes to refine and improve the process.
- ▶ **Complete checkout:** An obvious one, this action will show you what percentage of each user group is converting into sales. It is also of interest to measure what percentage of people start the checkout process but do not complete it.
- ▶ **Save to wish list:** Ecommerce sites offering wish lists are still in the minority, but wish lists are a great way to track interest of those who are not yet ready to purchase.
- ▶ **Send this to a friend:** Many sites offer a “share this page” function and it is a great action to be aware of. If folks are sending out your link, you know you have a hit.

#### **For B2B sites**

- ▶ **Subscribe to newsletter:** A subscription is a tacit endorsement of your brand and an indication of a desire to stay in contact. It may not be a conversion, but for B2B, it may be the next best thing.
- ▶ **Contact form submission:** Filling out a contact form can be even more valuable than a newsletter subscription, in some cases. Though some of these forms will report support issues, many may contain questions about your products/services and indicate a desire to open a sales conversation.
- ▶ **Email link:** As with contact forms, direct email links have the possibility of becoming sales contacts. The best thing you can do is clearly label sales-related emails and track them separately from those raising support or business issues.

#### **For blogs**

- ▶ **Subscribe to RSS feed:** An RSS feed subscriber is a blog’s equivalent of a conversion; tracking these is imperative.
- ▶ **Add comment:** Anyone who is contributing content to the blog or posting comments should be paid attention to (as should those channels that send you people who participate).
- ▶ **Social bookmark/share:** All those folks who are submitting your content to Digg, Reddit, and other social media and news aggregation/discussion sites deserve to be recognized (and sought after).

#### **For forums or other sites based on user-generated content (UGC)**

- ▶ **Sign up for an account:** These users are active contributors; you need to know where they come from.
- ▶ **Contribute content:** When a user publishes, discovering his path is important (especially if it is not from a bookmark/type-in).

- ➡ **Add comment:** Comments are a great predictor of engagement; you will also want to track these participants.
- ➡ **Vote/rate:** Even low levels of participation, such as a rating or a vote, are worth tracking when every piece of participation counts.
- ➡ **Social shares:** Facebook friends and Likes, Google +1's, and Twitter followers are all worth tracking.

### ***Separating the Analytics Wheat from the Chaff***

- ➡ One of the big problems with web analytics is that there is so much data. There is seemingly an endless supply of the stuff—so much that you can get lost in the weeds and waste a lot of time.

### ***Common analytics mistakes***

- ➡ Because of the complexity of web analytics, there are plenty of opportunities to make mistakes. Even if you are laser-focused on actionable KPIs, you can still draw wrong conclusions from the data. Here are a couple of examples:
- ➡ **Making a decision based on too small a sample size:** A simplistic example would be if you had a keyword that brought you two visitors, and both of them bought something. What does that mean? Your conversion rate will always be 100%? Of course not. You need to have a test run long enough to ensure that you get a statistically significant sample.
- ➡ According to Jonathan Mendez (<http://www.optimizeandprophesize.com>), long-time evangelist for Offermatica (which is now part of Omniture's Test & Target product), the “golden rule” for test length is 100 conversions per branch (or tested element).
- ➡ So, for anA/B test, ideally you would have 200 conversions before you looked at the results. If after50 conversions you see that you have 40 on one branch and 10 on the other, it's probably safe to stop your test. If the variance in your results is lower, though, you need more data to make sure the data you are seeing is accurate.
- ➡ **Not recognizing when you have enough data:** You can make the previous mistake in the opposite direction, too. When you have enough data, you need to be willing to act on it.
- ➡ **Working with biased data:** You can easily collect biased data and make the wrong decision. For example, an ecommerce site basing its SEO plans on December's traffic numbers is probably being misled. And temporal factors aren't the only problem—visitor locations, referral sources, and in-house campaigns to existing lists can all skew your information.

### **Tying SEO to Conversion and ROI**

- ➡ It is important to tie your SEO campaign to the results it brings to the business. Key to that is measuring the conversions driven by organicSEO traffic. Here are some of the most common types of conversions:

- ▶ **Sales/sales revenue:** This is the one most people think of when they think of conversions. Sales and salesrevenue (or better still, margin) conversions can be the simplest things to track, providedyou are not selling many different products at different price points and in differentquantities. In that case, the process needs to be a bit more sophisticated.
- ▶ If your site is advertising-driven, you need to look at the impact of organic search trafficon advertising revenue. If you have no financial goals for your site, you need to look atsome of the other types of conversions and determine their value or worth.
- ▶ **Email/blog/newsletter subscriptions:** Any time a user signs up to receive regular communications from you, it is a win. Eventhough this action does not have direct financial consequences, it is still a conversion.Someone who has subscribed to something you offer is more likely to become a customerthan a first-time visitor to your site, so you need to credit this type of conversion.
- ▶ **Sign-ups:** Closely related to subscriptions are other types of sign-ups. Perhaps you offer a servicesuch as a tool that people need to sign up to use. Even if the tool is free, you should trackthis as a conversion.
- ▶ You most likely received the person's email address in the process, and even if she indicatesthat she does not want to receive commercial communications from you, you should bebuilding loyalty with the tool you provided her access to (or whatever it is that she signedup for); otherwise, why would you be providing her with that product or service?
- ▶ **Downloads:** Many sites offer free downloads, such as white papers, or free downloadable tools. Evenif you do not require a sign-up of any type, you should still count a download as aconversion. You are getting your message out there with downloads you offer.
- ▶ **Contact forms and phone calls:** When someone contacts you, or requests that you contact him, it may count as aconversion. This contact can take the form of filling out a "contact me" request form, ora phone call. Phone calls can be tracked through unique numbers per type of action orlanding page.
- ▶ **Visitors who share:** This kind of conversion happens when a visitor shares the information she found on yoursite with someone else. This includes Facebook Shares, Google+ Shares, and links onTwitter. In addition, if your site has a "share with a friend" or "email to friend" feature,you could keep track of conversions by noting each time a user uses that feature.
- ▶ **Visitors who link:** Users who visit your site and find its content useful, entertaining, or otherwise compellingmay link to it from their own sites. Linking counts as a conversion.
- ▶ **Visitors who publicize:** Visitors can publicize your site by mentioning it in forums or blog comments, on socialmedia sites such as Google+, Twitter, and Facebook, or by writing about it on their ownsites. These actions also count as conversions.

## **Attribution**

- ▶ Another issue to be aware of is that of attribution. The issue is that there is a tremendous amount of interaction between types of media. Here are some examples:
  - ▶ A user does a search, clicks on an organic search result, reads a few things on the page, and leaves. The next day, she remembers what she read, does another search, and this time clicks on a paid search ad for the site and buys a product. Organic search should receive some credit for this sale.
  - ▶ A user does a search, clicks on an organic search result, has a look around your site, and leaves. A few days later, because of what he learned, he goes into a store and buys one of your products. Organic search should also receive some credit for this offline sale.
  - ▶ It goes in the other direction, too. For example, if a user sees a TV ad, then does an organic search to find your website, and buys your product, the TV ad should get some credit for the sale.
- ▶ Such cross-channel interactions are becoming increasingly common. Data published on Search Engine Watch supports this. For example, Health Price reported that about 6.5% of its transactions took place at least one day later than the customer's original visit to its site.
- ▶ Similarly, a ScanAlert study of a large number of ecommerce sites showed that 30% of transactions took place one to three days after the customer's initial visit. So, the problem of attribution management is a significant issue!
- ▶ So, attribution is something you should think about, and ideally you should attempt to track visitor interactions across multiple site visits. However, the methods for attributing sales across multiple site visits are imperfect. One thing you can do to improve tracking is to count different types of conversions, such as filling out contact forms, downloading white papers, visiting key product pages, and so on. Tracking a larger number of events that indicate progress toward sale (or whatever your end goal may be) can help you identify important helper keywords that are playing a key role in generating results further down the line.

## **Setting Up Analytics Software to Track Conversions**

- ▶ One of the great things about tracking conversions is that you can use the resulting data to focus your efforts. If certain keywords, pages, or referrers are showing much higher conversion rates than other sources, you may want to focus more of your SEO efforts on those rather than on something else that does not convert as well.
- ▶ Capturing conversion data takes a little setting up. Your analytics software does not know what you consider a conversion unless you define it. For example, in Google Analytics, you need to go into your Profile Settings to configure conversion goals and funnels.

- ▶ Form submissions are another thing you may want to track. This could include when someone has completed a request to sign up for a newsletter, requested or started a whitepaper download, or simply used a form to request that you contact her.
- ▶ In addition, you will need to have your web application populate certain data in the JavaScript before executing it, such as the total amount spent. Oftentimes, publishers choose to include lot more data, such as listing all the products sold, the price per product, the number of units, shipping costs, and so on.

### **Conversion tracking strategy**

- ▶ An important step in conversion tracking is deciding what you want to call a conversion. It is important to consider all types of conversions, such assign-ups, contact requests, downloads, and so forth. There is one other decision you need to make, though: how to value each conversion.

### **Segmenting Campaigns and SEO Efforts by Conversion Rate**

- ▶ Now that you have conversion tracking set up, how do you use it to focus your SEO efforts? One of the things you will want to do is to track conversion data in different ways. Here are some examples of the things you may want to look at:
  - ▶ Conversions by keyword—what keywords are bringing the best results?
  - ▶ Conversions by referrer—which traffic source is offering the best conversion?
  - ▶ Conversions by web page—which pages on your site result in the highest conversion?
  - ▶ Conversions by initial entry page—which initial entry pages drive the most conversions?
  - ▶ Conversions by keyword and landing page—taking into account the highest-converting landing pages on your site, what keywords are the big hitters for those pages?
- ▶ As an example, SEOMoz actively tracks its conversions using Yahoo! Web Analytics. Tracking by keyword can be a useful way to do this, as shown in Figure

You can see that the conversion rate on the search phrase free seo tools is high. The fact that the analytics also shows 172 first-time visitors are

Search Phrases (Direct)	First Time	Returning	Visits	Action	Revenue	Conversion
seomoz	2,687	2,438	5,125	134	\$0.00	2.61%
seo tools	704	178	882	58	\$0.00	6.58%
free seo tools	172	39	211	28	\$0.00	13.27%
seo moz	611	607	1,218	25	\$0.00	2.05%
seo	1,291	312	1,603	21	\$0.00	1.31%
seomoz.org	301	134	435	21	\$0.00	4.83%
seo test	188	35	223	18	\$0.00	8.07%
seo blog	513	191	704	9	\$0.00	1.28%
seo tool	80	15	95	7	\$0.00	7.37%
trifecta	35	17	52	7	\$0.00	13.46%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6,582</b>	<b>3,966</b>	<b>10,548</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>3.11%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>79,660</b>	<b>27,283</b>	<b>106,943</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.78%</b>

« PREVIOUS 10

NEXT 10 »

Tip: To add an alert, right-click the metric figure you wish to monitor.

also important, because it suggests that there is the potential for significant traffic on this phrase. Perhaps an SEO campaign to improve the ranking of SEOmoz on these keywords is in order—doubling traffic on this search phrase could bring a material benefit to the business.

## Determining Project ROI

- ▶ An effective SEO process is one that continuously works toward a positive return on investment. A basic SEO ROI business case would include these elements:
- ▶ **Number of people searching for your keywords:** This can be hard to estimate, because you cannot completely map out the long tail. One rough estimation strategy is to multiply the search volume for the top terms for your business by 3.3 (i.e., assume that the head terms account for about 30% of the available volume).
- ▶ **Expected click-through rate from organic search:** This relates to the position you think you can achieve. The #1 position can net you approximately 40% of the available clicks.
- ▶ **Average conversion rate:** Once you have captured the visitor, how successful are you at completing a conversion? Typical conversion rates for a website might be between 2% and 5%. It should be easy to get this data from your analytics. You should already know what your conversion rate is!
- ▶ **Average transaction amount:** Last but not least, factor in the average transaction value. Again, this is data you should already have.
- ▶ **Ultimately, the formulas look like this:** SEO revenue = people searching for your keywords \* click-through rate \* average conversion rate \* average transaction amount. For example: 10,000 per day \* 10% \* 5% \* \$100 = \$3,000 per day. SEO ROI = SEO revenue / SEO cost (use total \$ spent for salaries and consulting, or number of hours spent). For example: \$3,000 per day / \$500 per day = an ROI of 6x.

## An alternate theory and calculation:

- ▶ Predicting an SEO project's ROI based on rankings and click-through rate can, in some cases, be problematic because you have very little control over the variables. You end up relying on numbers that you have a limited ability to influence.
- ▶ As an alternative approach, you can measure and track SEO ROI based on an increase in search visibility. To do this, begin by determining two things:
  - ▶ How many pages are getting search clicks for the month
  - ▶ How many clicks per page your site is getting.
- ▶ Next, record these supporting metrics:
  - ▶ Average ranking across the whole keyword spectrum.
  - ▶ Average click-through rate.
- ▶ Now, by making it easier for search bots to find more pages, consolidating duplicate content, and improving page metadata (titles, descriptions, etc.), you

should see an increase in the number of pages getting search clicks and/or the number of clicks per page on your site. The combination should result in more traffic when compared year-over-year.

- ▶ We can modify the formula above to account for this alternate approach as follows: SEO revenue = increase in (pages getting search clicks \* search clicks per page) \* average conversion rate \* average transaction value.

## **Competitive and Diagnostic Search Metrics**

### **Search Engine and Competitive Metrics**

- ▶ Numerous tools allow you to monitor your site and those of your competitors, providing insight into your SEO progress. You can also use these tools to figure out what your competitors are doing from an SEO perspective.
- ▶ This type of intelligence can provide you with new ideas on how to adapt your strategy to get better results.
- ▶ As with all such tools, it is important to understand the context of the tools and to have an idea as to what you are looking for. Better knowledge of your competitors' strategy is certainly one valuable goal. Detecting a problem in how your website is crawled is another.
- ▶ By selecting specific and actionable goals, you can set yourself up for the highest possible return.

### **Site Indexing Data**

- ▶ It is valuable to know how many pages in your site are in a search engine's index. This is interesting for two reasons:
- ▶ To determine whether important parts of your site are not in the index (if key parts of the site are not in the index, you can embark on an effort to determine why)
- ▶ To learn about your competitors' sites and strategies.
- ▶ You can get basic information on the number of indexed pages for a site using the site: yourdomain.com command in Google, Yahoo!, or Bing.

### **Link Building, Link Tracking, and Link-Based Metrics (Including Anchor Text Analysis)**

- ▶ Measurement of link-building campaigns is another must for the expert SEO practitioner. This can help you refine your campaigns to bring better results, compare link growth to your search rankings, and perform analysis to see how your campaigns are faring compared to the efforts of your competitors.

### ***Search engine-supplied tools***

- ▶ There are three basic tools for checking backlinks:
- ▶ Google Webmaster Tools is a powerful start. With Google WMT, a website publisher can easily download a spreadsheet of all the links Google has in its

database to that site (note that Google might not include some links that it does not consider significant). Publishers can see only the links to their own sites.

- ▶ Bing Webmaster Tools is also a great asset. It offers a similar capability for downloading spreadsheet of the links that Bing has in its database for a site. Once again, publishers can use this tool only to see the links to their own site.
- ▶ For quick and dirty link totals, you can use a Firefox plug-in known as SearchStatus. This plug-in provides basic link data on the fly with just a couple of mouse clicks.

### ***Third-party link-measuring tools***

- ▶ Here is a look at some of the better-known advanced third-party tools for gathering link data. Open Site Explorer. MajesticSEO. Link Research Tools. RavenTools. Link Builder and Link Galaxy.

### ***Third-party link-building tools***

- ▶ A variety of third-party link-building tools are also available. LinkMaps, Conductor, Searchlight, Stone Temple Consulting, LinkFocus, Google Blog Search, Exalead.

### ***Measuring the value of a link***

- ▶ One of the big questions that people ask is what the value of a particular inbound link is. There is no simple way to answer that question, but there are some metrics you can look at that can give you a feeling for how important a link might be. Here are some of the most important elements in determining a link's value:
  - ▶ Where does the linking page rank for the term/phrase you want to rank for?
  - ▶ Where does the linking page rank for one to two important, competitive terms in its title tag?
  - ▶ Where does content on the linking domain generally rank for competitive terms in its pages' respective title tags?
  - ▶ How many keyword phrases do the linking domain and page rank in the top 20 results for?
  - ▶ Does the linking site carry any brokered sets of links?
  - ▶ What is the relevance of the linking page/site to your target page?
  - ▶ When was the last time Google crawled the page?
  - ▶ Pages that link to high-ranking competitors
  - ▶ PageRank of the domain
  - ▶ PageRank of the page
  - ▶ Inlinks to the page
  - ▶ Total inlinks to the domain
  - ▶ Number of external links on the page

### ***Ranking***

- ▶ Many people get obsessed with checking their rankings. Rankings do have some correlation with traffic. However, do not spend too much time on this activity. For one thing, many tools that are available today for checking rankings scrape

Google results, which is against Google's Webmaster Guidelines. Google results vary by user, and the scraped results do not represent what everyone is seeing.

- ➡ Therefore, rankings data is not as useful an indicator as many of the other metrics we have discussed. Rankings data can be helpful in a few scenarios, however:
  - ➡ Where a #1 (or a very high) ranking for a trophy search term provides brand value
  - ➡ When there is a sudden significant change (such as a move from position #5 to #50, or similar change in the other direction)Where a long-term trend can be established, such as a steady improvement in position, or steady decline
  - ➡ In aggregate, where you can measure a site's overall activity and popularity.
  - ➡ While evaluating this data, bear in mind that the search engines are constantly being tweaked.
  - ➡ Google is believed to tweak and test its algorithms every day. This can result in a lot of movement in rankings on a regular basis, and this type of movement is usually meaningless from an SEO perspective.

### Crawl Errors

- ➡ Complex websites will eventually develop errors. For example, the publisher may move pages and forget to redirect the old pages to the new ones, or make a mistake in the robots.txt file that prevents the crawling of key parts of the site.
- ➡ It can also happen that outsiders who link to the publisher's site implement those links incorrectly and link to a page that does not exist (perhaps as a result of a typo).
- ➡ Tools such as these that provide a crawler's-eye view of your web page or website can be effective in helping you to rapidly diagnose problems with your site. Other companies that offer proprietary crawl analysis tools are: Covario, Stone Temple Consulting, and Sycara.
- ➡ There are free tools that offer a lot of functionality as well. These include: Xenu Link Sleuth, GSite Crawler

## An Evolving Art Form: The Future of SEO

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- ▶ As we have noted throughout this book, SEO is about obtaining new customers. Therefore, the role of the SEO professional is to bring more targeted traffic to an organization's website.
- ▶ This underlying role will not change as technology evolves, but the mechanics of how it is done will continue to evolve as technology improves and adapts to users, and vice versa.
- ▶ Driving this is the fact that the complexity of search will continue to grow, as all search engines (not simply Google!) seek to locate and index all of the world's digital information.
- ▶ It is reasonable, then, to expect various levels of expansion and evolution in the following areas:
  - ▶ Mobile search, and with it voice search, as the world continues to increase its demand for this capability.
  - ▶ Social search, as users begin to leverage social networks to discover new and interesting content and solutions to problems from their friends.
  - ▶ Indexation of multimedia content, such as images, video, and audio, including a better understanding of the content of these types of files.
  - ▶ Indexing of data behind forms (something that Google already does in some cases)
  - ▶ Extraction and analysis of Flash, JavaScript, and AJAX-based content
  - ▶ Localization of search
  - ▶ Personalization capabilities
- ▶ Mobile search is already driving an increasing demand for linguistic user interfaces, including voice recognition-based search. In October 2011, Apple released the iPhone 4S with Siri, an "intelligent personal assistant" that lets users send messages, make calls, and more with voice commands.
- ▶ While most of its capabilities were already present in Google Voice Actions, Siri introduced a more conversational interface, and also shows some personality.
- ▶ Voice search greatly improves the ease of use and accessibility of search on mobile devices, and this technology will continue to evolve and improve.
- ▶ Business deals also regularly change the landscape. For example, on July 29, 2009, Microsoft and Yahoo! signed a far-reaching deal that resulted in Yahoo! retiring the search technology that powers Yahoo! Search and replacing it with Microsoft's Bing technology.
- ▶ Bing also came to an agreement with Baidu to provide the English-language results for the Chinese search engine. The bigger shift may come from the continuing growth of Facebook, which reportshaving more than 800 million users worldwide as of December 2011, including about half the population of US and Canada. Bing's Stefan Weitz suggests that 90% of people use their friends to help

them make one or more decisions every day, and 80% of people use their friends to help them make purchasing decisions.

- ▶ The January 10, 2012, Google announcement of Search, plus Your World may have a bigger impact. As we showed in Chapter 8, this already has a dramatic effect on the Google search results. If Google can succeed in growing Google+, the scope of this impact could grow significantly over the next few years. These developments and many more, will impact the role SEO plays within an organization.

### **The Ongoing Evolution of Search**

- ▶ Search has come a long way, and will continue to progress at a faster and faster pace. Keeping up with these changes, the competitive environment, and new and emerging technologies provides both a challenge and an opportunity.

### **The Growth of Search Complexity**

- ▶ Search has been evolving rapidly over the past decade and a half. At the WSDM conference(<http://www.wsdm2009.org>) in February 2009, Google Fellow Jeff Dean provided some interesting metrics that tell part of the story:
  - ▶ Google search volume had grown 1,000 times since 1999.
  - ▶ Google has more than 1,000 times the machines it had in 1999.
  - ▶ Latency dropped from less than 1,000 ms in 1999 to less than 200 ms in 2009.
  - ▶ Index updates latency improved by about 10,000 times over this period. Whereas updates took Google months in 1999, in 2009 Google was detecting and indexing changes on webpages in just a few minutes.
- ▶ These are staggering changes in Google's performance power, but this is just part of the changing search environment. Some of the early commercial search engines, such as WebCrawler, InfoSeek, and AltaVista, launched in the mid-1990s. At that time, web search engines 'relevancy' and ranking algorithms were largely based on keyword analysis.
- ▶ This was a simple model to execute and initially provided pretty decent results.
- ▶ By 1999, Google had launched, and the next generation of search was born. Google was the search engine that most effectively implemented the concept of citation analysis (or link analysis).
- ▶ Link analysis counts a link to a website as a vote for its value. More votes represent more value, with some votes being worth more than others (pages with greater overall link juice have more juice to vote).
- ▶ This created a situation that initially made the job of the spammer more difficult, but the spammers began to catch up with this advance by purchasing links. With millions of websites out there, many of them generating little or no revenue, it was relatively easy for the spammer to approach a site and offer it a nominal amount of money to get a link.

- ➡ Additionally, spammers could implement bots that surfed the Web, finding guest books, blogs, and forums, and leaving behind comments with links in them back to the bot owner's site.
- ➡ The major search engines responded to this challenge as well. They took two major steps, one of which was to build teams of people who worked on ways to detect spamming and either discount it or punish it.
- ➡ The other was to implement an analysis of the quality of the links that goes deeper than just the notion of PageRank. Factors such as anchor text, relevance, and trust became important as well. These factors also helped the search engines in their war against spam.
- ➡ In May 2007, Google made a big splash with the announcement of Universal Search. This was the beginning of the integration of all types of web-based data into a single set of search results, with data from video, images, news, blogs, and shopping search engines all being integrated into a single search experience.
- ➡ This was only the very beginning of improved indexing for multimedia content. Google already has the ability to recognize the content of images in many cases.
- ➡ Google Image Search (<http://images.google.com>) already allows you to drag an image into the search box and it will try to recognize its content. Search engines also can make use of other data sources, such as registry data to see who owns a particular website.
- ➡ In addition, they have access to analytics data, data from their browsers, data from their ad networks, data from their web search toolbars, and data from free Wi-Fi and Internet access distribution to track actual web usage on various websites. Although no one knows exactly how, or how much, the search engines use this type of data, these are additional information sources at their disposal.
- ➡ Search engines continue to look for more ways to improve search quality. Google has launched efforts toward personalization, where it can look at a user's search history to get a better idea of what results will best satisfy that particular user.
- ➡ In 2008, Danny Sullivan summarized this entire evolution into four phases:
  - ▶ Search 1.0: keywords and text
  - ▶ Search 2.0: link analysis
  - ▶ Search 3.0: integration of vertical results
  - ▶ Search 4.0: personalization
- ➡ So, what makes up Search 5.0? Increased use of social media data appears to be one major possibility. The "wisdom of the crowds" is becoming a factor in rankings.
- ➡ Universal Search was a step that acknowledged part of this problem by making all types of data available through web search. But many of these data types do not provide the traditional text-based signals that search engines rely on.
- ➡ More data collection means more opportunity to win, even if your site doesn't conform flawlessly to these signals, and a better chance that if there is only one

indicator you're winning on, you could be in big trouble. Keywords and links will likely remain the primary ranking factors for the next few years, but the evolution of search engines in the direction of using the new signals is steadily gaining momentum and strength.

- ▶ Following these advances, what will be next? Artificial intelligence (AI) already plays a huge role in search. As Peter Norvig indicated to Eric Enge in an October 2011 interview, "If you define AI as providing a course of action in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity, based on learning from examples, that's what our search algorithm is all about."
- ▶ One example of this is how Google Translate works. It examines and analyzes millions of real-world translations to learn how one language translates into another.
- ▶ It learns by example, rather than trying to learn an artificial set of rules. Learning a language based on grammar doesn't work, as it turns out that language is far too dynamic and changing. However, learning from real-world usage does. Using this technology, Google can offer instant translation across 58 languages.
- ▶ Voice search works much the same way. Historically, speech recognition solutions did not work very well and required the user to train the system to her voice. Google Voice uses a different approach, as noted by Peter Norvig in that same interview: "[For] Voice Search, where you speak your search to Google, we train this model on around 230 billion words from real-world search queries."

### **Google's Dominance**

- ▶ Thousands of posts, news articles, and analysis pieces have covered the central topic of battling Google's dominance in web search, but few have discussed the most telling example of the search giant's superiority.
- ▶ Many believe that the key to Google's success, and more importantly, a key component in its corporate culture, is its willingness and desire to answer a searcher's question as soon as possible.
- ▶ Some also believe that Google's biggest impact in the search engine market is its advertising platform, which is the world's largest. Because of its size, it is able to create a more enticing advertising platform through AdWords, AdSense, and its embeddable Google Search box.
- ▶ However, it goes a bit deeper than that. In late 2008, tests were performed in which users were asked which search engine's results they preferred for a wide variety of queries—long-tail searches, top-of-mind searches, topics about which their emotions ranged from great passion to total agnosticism. They were shown two sets of search results and were asked which they preferred.
- ▶ Lots of tests such as this have been run with all sorts of differentiations. In some, the brands are removed so that users see only the links. Testers do this to get an idea of whether they can win from a pure "quality" standpoint. In others, the brands remain to get an unvarnished and more "real-world" view.

- And in one particular experiment—performed many times by many different organizations—the results are swapped across the brands to test whether brand loyalty and brand preference are stronger than qualitative analysis in consumers.
- It is this last test that has the most potentially intriguing results, because in virtually every instance where qualitative differences weren't glaringly obvious, Google was picked as the best search engine without regard for the results themselves.
- Fundamentally, testers find (again and again) that the brand preference for Google outweighs the logical consideration of the quality of the search results.
- Search engines that plan to take market share from Google are going to have to think differently.
- If Microsoft or a start-up search engine wants to capture market share, it's going to have to think less like a technology company trying to build a better mousetrap and more like a brand trying to win mindshare from a beloved competitor. How did Pepsi take share away from Coke? Or Toyota from Ford?
- One strategy that Bing has embarked on is to get close to Facebook and leverage Facebook data in its search results. On October 13, 2010, the two companies signed a deal that provides Bing with substantial access to Facebook's data on Shares, Likes, and more.
- This integration continues (for more on this, see Chapter 8) with Bing showing personalized results based on the recommendations of your Friends, and even letting the “wisdom of the crowd” impact the results as well. As of fall 2011, this has resulted in many interesting changes in the Bing search results, but no major movement in search market share.
- Google's social media network, Google+, is popular and growing fast. On July 14, 2011, Google announced that Google+ membership had reached 10 million users just two weeks after it was launched in an invitation-only phase. Four weeks after launch, it had reached 25 million unique users, and by January 2012, Google announced it had passed 90 million users. In under a day, the Google+ iPhone app became the most popular free application in the Apple App Store.



## **More Searchable Content and Content Types**

- ▶ The emphasis throughout this book has been on providing the crawlers with textual content semantically marked up using HTML. However, the less accessible document types—such as multimedia, content behind forms, and scanned historical documents—are being integrated into the search engine results pages (SERPs) more and more, as search algorithms evolve in the ways that the data is collected, parsed, and interpreted. Greater demand, availability, and usage also fuel the trend.

## **Engines Will Make Crawling Improvements**

- ▶ The search engines are breaking down some of the traditional limitations on crawling. Content types that search engines could not previously crawl or interpret are being addressed.
- ▶ For example, in November 2011, Google announced that it had increased its capability to execute JavaScript, discover content embedded in AJAX, and process forms.
- ▶ In June 2009, Google announced that it had improved the crawling and indexing of Flash Content. In particular, this announcement indicated that Google was now able to load content within Flash that was accessed by external JavaScript calls, which is an implementation method that many Flash-based systems use.
- ▶ Another major historical limitation of search engines is dealing with forms. The classic example is a search query box on a publisher's website.

## **Engines Are Getting New Content Sources**

- ▶ As we noted earlier, Google's stated mission is "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." This is a powerful statement, particularly in light of the fact that so much information has not yet made its way online.
- ▶ As part of its efforts to move more data to the Web, in 2004 Google launched an initiative to scan in books so that they could be incorporated into a Book Search (<http://books.google.com>) search engine.
- ▶ Similarly, content owners retain lots of other proprietary information that is not generally available to the public. Some of this information is locked up behind logins for subscription-based content. To provide such content owners an incentive to make that content searchable, Google came up with its First Click Free concept (discussed earlier in this book), which is a program allowing Google to crawl subscription-based content.

## **Multimedia Is Becoming Indexable**

- ▶ Content in images, audio, and video is currently not easily indexed by the search engines, but its metadata (tags, captioning, and descriptions) and the anchor text of inbound links and surrounding content make it visible in search results. Google has made some great strides in this area.

- ▶ Google allows searchers to drag an image from their desktop into the Google Image Search (<http://images.google.com>) search box, and Google attempts to recognize the content of the image.
- ▶ Consider also <http://www.google.com/recaptcha>. This site is being used by Google to complete the digitization of books from the Internet Archive and old editions of the New York Times.
- ▶ These have been partially digitized using scanning and OCR software. OCR is not a perfect technology, and there are many cases where the software cannot determine a word with 100% confidence.
- ▶ However, reCAPTCHA is assisting by using humans to figure out what these words are and feeding them back into the database of digitized documents.
- ▶ First, reCAPTCHA takes the unresolved words and puts them into a database. These words are then fed to blogs that use the site's CAPTCHA solution for security purposes. These are the boxes you see on blogs and account sign-up screens where you need to enter the characters you see, such as the one shown in Figure.
- ▶ In this example, the user is expected to type in morning and upon. However, in this case, recaptcha.net is using the human input in these CAPTCHA screens to translate text that wasn't recognized by OCR. It makes use of this CAPTCHA information to improve the quality of digitized book.
- ▶ Similarly, speech-to-text solutions can be applied to audio and video files to extract more data from them. This is a relatively computer-intensive technology, and it has historically had trouble with many accents and dialects, so it has not yet been universally applied in search.
- ▶ Siri on the iPhone 4S and Google Voice are leading the charge in addressing this issue. Interactive content is also growing on the Web, with technologies such as Flash and AJAX leading the way. In spite of the indexing challenges these technologies bring to search engines, their use is continuing because of the experience they offer for users who have broadband connectivity.
- ▶ The search engines are hard at work on solutions to better understand the content wrapped up in these technologies as well.



### **Personalization, Localization, and User Influence on Search**

- ▶ Personalization efforts have been underway at the search engines for some time. As we discussed earlier in this book, the most basic form of personalization is to perform an IP location lookup to determine where the searcher is located, and tweak the results based on that location.

- ➡ However, the search engines continue to explore additional ways to expand on this simple concept to deliver better results for each user. It is not yet clear whether personalization has given the engines that have invested heavily in it better results overall or greater levels of user satisfaction, but their continued use of the technology suggests that, at the least, their internal user satisfaction tests have been positive.

### **Determining User Intent**

- ➡ The success of Internet search has always relied (and will continue to rely) on search engines ‘abilities to identify searcher intent. Microsoft has branded Bing as a “decision” engine, not search engine. It chose this label because of what it found in its research and analysis of search sessions.
- ➡ Microsoft engineers have determined that about two-thirds of searchers frequently use search to make decisions. Microsoft also saw that making these decisions was proving to be hard, based on the average length of a search session.
- ➡ What makes this complex is that there are so many different modes that a searcher may be in. Are searchers looking to buy, to research, or just to be entertained? Each of these modes may dictate very different results for the same search.
- ➡ Google personalization and Universal Search are already tapping into that intent as well, taking previous search history into account and serving up a mix of content types, including maps, blog posts, videos, and traditional textual results.
- ➡ The major search engines already provide maps for appropriate location searches and the ability to list blog results based on recency [ન્યૂ શરૂ કરેલા] as well as relevancy. It is not just about presenting the results, but about presenting them in the format that matches the searcher’s intent.

### **User Interactions**

- ➡ One area that will see great exploration will be how users interact with search engines. As RSS adoption continues to grow and the sheer amount of information available in its many formats expands, users will continue to look to search engines to be not just search destinations, but also sources of information aggregation: the search engine as portal, pulling and updating news and other content based on the user’s preferences.

### **New Search Patterns**

- ➡ This is all part of increasing the focus on the users, tying into their intent and interests at the time of search. Personalization will make site stickiness ever more important.
- ➡ Securing a position in users’ search history, becoming an authoritative go-to source for information, will be more critical than ever. Winning in the SERPs will require much more than just position.

- ▶ Over time, smart marketers will recognize that the attention of a potential customer is a scarce and limited quantity. As the quantity of information available to us grows, the amount of time we have available for each piece of information declines, creating an attention deficit.
- ▶ How people search, and how advertisers interact with them, may change dramatically as a result.

### **Growing Reliance on the Cloud**

- ▶ Cloud computing is transforming how the Internet-connected population uses computers.
- ▶ Google is actively advancing the mass migration of desktop computing to the cloud, with initiatives such as Google Docs & Spreadsheets, Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Reader, Google App Engine, and Google Cloud Connect.
- ▶ These types of services encourage users to entrust their valuable data to the Google cloud. This brings them many benefits, but also raises concerns around privacy, security, uptime, and data integrity.
- ▶ In May 2011, Apple also made move in this direction when it announced iCloud, which is seamlessly integrated into Apple devices.
- ▶ One simple example of a basic application for cloud computing is for backing up all your data. Most users don't do a good job of backing up their data, making them susceptible to data loss from hard drive crashes and virus infections. Companies investing in cloud computing will seek to get you to store the master copy of your data in the cloud, and keep backup copies locally on your devices (or not all). With this approach, you can more easily access that information from multiple computers (e.g., your work and home computers).
- ▶ The inevitable advance of cloud computing will offer more and more services with unrivaled convenience and cost benefits, compelling users to turn to the cloud for their data and their apps.

### **The Increasing Importance of Local, Mobile, and Voice Recognition Search**

- ▶ New forms of vertical search are becoming increasingly important. Areas that the search engines have already embraced include local search and mobile search. In addition, voice recognition-based search is an area in which all the major engines are actively investing.

#### **Local Search**

- ▶ Local search was an active business before the advent of the Internet, when the Yellow Pages as supplied by your phone company were the tool of choice. As the World Wide Web gained prominence in our lives, the Yellow Pages began migrating online.

- ➡ As the major search engines developed, they integrated sophisticated mapping technology into their systems, and then began to map in local business data as well. Some of that data came from the same types of data sources that drive the Yellow Pages websites, such as Acxiom, InfoUSA, and Localeze. You can find these local search engines at <http://maps.google.com>, <http://local.yahoo.com>, and <http://www.bing.com/maps>.

### **Mobile Search**

- ➡ With over 1 billion mobile phones in use worldwide, the opportunity for mobile search has begun to grow rapidly.
- ➡ An April 2011 Google study showed that search engines were the most visited sites on mobile devices, with 77% of those surveyed reporting their use.
- ➡ The same study showed that 9 out of 10 searchers took action as a result of conducting a search. This provides a strong incentive to have a mobile search strategy in place

### **Voice-Recognition Search**

- ➡ When users are mobile they must deal with the limitations of their mobile devices, specifically the small screen and small keyboard. These make web surfing and mobile searching more challenging than they are in the PC environment.
- ➡ Voice search could be a great way to improve the mobile search experience. It eliminates the need for the keyboard, and provides users with a simple and elegant interface.
- ➡ Speech recognition technology has been around for a long time, and the main challenge has always been that it requires a lot of computing power. Processing power continues to increase, though, even on mobile devices, and the feasibility of this type of technology is growing.

### **Increased Market Saturation and Competition**

- ➡ One thing you can count on with the Web is continued growth. Despite its constantly growing index, a lot of the pages in Google may be low-quality or duplicate-content-type pages that will never see the light of day. The Web is a big place, but one where the signal-to-noise ratio is very low.
- ➡ Asia, which already had by far the most Internet users (922 million), had penetration rate of only 23.8%. Other regions where there is a great deal of opportunity for growth include Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.
- ➡ This data is telling us that in terms of the number of users, North America is already approaching saturation. There is some room for growth in Europe and Oceania/Australia, where penetration rates hover at around 60%, but not that much. However, in Asia we could still see massive growth, to 2 to 3 billion users!
- ➡ **The Web outperforms other sales channels:** When organizations look at the paths leading to sales and income—a critical analysis whenever budgets are under scrutiny—the Web almost always comes out with one of two assessments:

either it is a leading sales channel (especially from an ROI perspective), or its deemed to be the area with the greatest opportunity for growth. In both scenarios, web marketing (and, in correlation, SEO) takes center stage.

- ▶ **It is the right time to retool:** Established companies frequently use down cycles as a chance to focus attention inward and analyze themselves. Consequently, there's a spike in website redesigns and, along with it, SEO.
- ▶ **Paid search drives interest in SEO:** Paid search spending is still reaching all-time highs, and when companies evaluate the cost and value, there's a nagging little voice saying "75%+ of the clicks do not even happen in the ads; use SEO."
- ▶ **SEO is losing its stigma:** Google is releasing SEO guides, Microsoft and Yahoo! have in-house SEO departments, and the "SEO is BS" crowd has lost a little of their swagger and a lot of their arguments. No surprise—solid evidence trumps wishful thinking, especially when times are tough.
- ▶ **Marketing departments are in a brainstorming cycle:** A high percentage of companies are asking the big questions: "how do we get new customers?" and "what avenues still offer opportunity?" Whenever that happens, SEO is bound to show up near the top of the "to be investigated" pile.
- ▶ **Search traffic will be relatively unscathed by the market:** Sales might drop, conversion rates might falter a bit, but raw search traffic isn't going anywhere. A recession doesn't mean people stop searching the Web, and with the rates of broadband adoption, Internet penetration, and searches per user consistently rising, search is no fad. It is here for the long haul.
- ▶ **Web budgets are being reassessed:** We've all seen the news about display advertising falling considerably; that can happen only when managers meet to discuss how to address budget concerns. Get 10 Internet marketing managers into rooms with their teams, and at least 4 or 5 of them are bound to discuss SEO and how they can grab that "free" traffic.
- ▶ **Someone finally looked at the web analytics:** It's sad, but true. When a downturn arrives or panic sets in, someone, maybe the first someone in a long time, inevitably checks the web analytics to see where revenue is still coming in. Not surprisingly, search engine referrals with their exceptional targeting and intent matching tend to rank high on the list.

### **SEO as an Enduring Art Form**

- ▶ Today, SEO can be fairly easily categorized as having five major objectives:
  - ▶ Make content accessible to search engine crawlers.
  - ▶ Find the keywords that searchers employ (i.e., understand your target audience) and make your site speak their language.
  - ▶ Build content that users will find useful, valuable, and worthy of sharing. Ensure that they'll have a good experience on your site to improve the likelihood that you'll earn links and references.

- ▶ Earn votes for your content in the form of editorial links and social media mentions from good sources by building inviting, shareable content and applying classic marketing techniques to the online world.
- ▶ Create web pages that allow users to find what they want extremely quickly, ideally in the blink of an eye.
- ▶ Note, though, that the tactics an SEO practitioner might use to get links from editorial sources have been subject to rapid evolution, and will continue to be in the future. In addition, mastery of social media environments is now required of most SEO professionals.
- ▶ One thing that you can be sure about in the world of search is change, as forces from all over the Web are impacting search in a dramatic way.
- ▶ To be an artist, the SEO practitioner needs to see the landscape of possibilities for her website, and pick the best possible path to success. The requirements currently include social media optimization expertise, local search expertise, video optimization expertise, an understanding of what is coming in mobile search, and more. Such a well-rounded individual is a far cry from the backroom geek of the late 1990s.
- ▶ No one can really predict what the future will bring and what will be needed to successfully market businesses and other organizations on the Web in 2 years, let alone 5 or 10. However, you can be certain that websites are here to stay, and also that websites are never finished and, just like any other direct marketing channel, need continuous optimization. SEO expertise will be needed for a long time to come—and no existing person is better suited to map the changing environment and lead companies to success in this new, ever-evolving landscape than today's practitioner.