Web Developer

HTML, CSS e Strumenti di Digital Marketing (SEO, SEM, SEA)

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Sitemaps

Technical seo

Shadi Lahham - Web development

Sitemaps

a sitemap is an XML file that provides information about the pages and structure of a website to search engines, serving as a roadmap to help search engines efficiently crawl and index all the content on a site in order to improve the chances of appearing in search results and boost overall SEO performance

benefits
- improved crawling efficiency for search engines
- better indexing of website content
- potential improvement in search rankings

Sitemaps

sitemaps, typically structured in XML format but sometimes also HTML, TXT, or RSS, have a structure that includes:

\<urlset\> - the root element that encloses all url entries in the sitemap

\<url\> - represents a single url on the website

\<loc\> - specifies the url of the page

\<lastmod\> - indicates the last modification date of the page

\<changefreq\> - how often the content changes such as daily, weekly, monthly

\<priority\> - assigns a relative priority to the page from 0.0 to 1.0

Sitemap example

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">
  <url>
    <loc>https://www.example.com/</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-09-01T12:34:56+00:00</lastmod>
    <changefreq>daily</changefreq>
    <priority>1.0</priority>
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>https://www.example.com/about-us</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-08-15T10:30:00+00:00</lastmod>
    <changefreq>monthly</changefreq>
    <priority>0.8</priority>
  </url>
</urlset>
```

Creating sitemaps

there are several methods to create sitemaps, ranging from manual creation to using automated tools
but the best method depends on the website's size, complexity, and the technical expertise available

manual creation
- create an xml file using a text editor
- add the necessary xml structure and tags
- list each url to include, along with relevant information like lastmod, changefreq, priority
- save the file as sitemap.xml

online generators
online tools remain a popular choice for small to medium websites due to their ease of use and
accessibility, working directly in the browser without needing any installation
- XML sitemaps generator
- Pro sitemaps

Creating sitemaps

desktop applications
for advanced needs of SEO professionals and developers with more control over the sitemap generation
- Screaming frog seo spider website crawler
- Inspyder sitemap creator

programming libraries and command-line tools
for developers who want to integrate sitemap generation into their workflows
- python: sitemapgen, beautiful soup
- node.js: sitemap-generator, sitemap, gulp-sitemap
- command-line: sitemap

CMS plugins
many CMS platforms offer built-in features or plugins to generate sitemaps automatically
- wordpress: yoast seo, rank math
- joomla: osmap
- drupal: xml sitemap module

Submitting sitemaps

once a sitemap is created, it's important to submit it to search engines to ensure they can find and use it

Google Search Console
select the website property, navigate to the "sitemaps" section in the left sidebar, under "add a new sitemap" and enter the URL such as https://www.example.com/sitemap.xml and "submit"

once submitted, it is possible to see details about the sitemap and discovered page by clicking it

Bing webmaster tools
log in to bing webmaster tools, select the website, go to the "sitemaps" section, add the sitemap URL, and submit

Robots.txt
in addition to submitting the sitemap directly to search engines, it's recommended to add the sitemap location to the website's robots.txt file to help search engines find the sitemap when they crawl the site

Best practices

- keep the sitemap updated to reflect changes in website structure
- for large sites, split into multiple sitemaps and use a [sitemap index](#)
- include only canonical URLs to avoid duplicate content
- use realistic changefreq and priority values
  - based on content changes and importance
- regularly monitor webmaster tools for sitemap submission errors or issues

Try

use one of these tools, or an equivalent online tool, to create a sitemap for a small website that you know

choose a site that is not very big, since most tools have a limit on the number of pages

XML sitemaps generator
Pro sitemaps

References

[Best sitemap generator tools](#)