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Search Engine Optimization: Art and Science

One of the basic components of the Internet is the search engine. A search engine, as its name implies, helps people look for pertinent websites and web pages which contain information based on the keywords that the surfers have encoded. A survey revealed that around 90% of Internet users utilize search engines in doing their Internet-related activities.

Websites are developed for the main reason of being viewed. They are portals which provide information that are intended to reach their target audience. This is the main context which explains the importance of search engines.

Being listed in search engines is one thing and being listed on the top lists of the search engines is another thing. When someone searches for a certain keyword through the search engine, the most popular websites appear first and are usually the most visited websites. There are factors that search engines consider when they rank websites according to keywords. This is the main task of search engine optimization (SEO).

SEO?

Search engine optimization consists of methods which aim at improving a website's ranking in search engines' listings. SEO has become one of the sunshine industries that are related to the Internet. There are multiple ways on how to do search engine optimization and many companies have dealt into this business.

How do Search Engines Operate?

To be able to appreciate the beauty of the art and science of search engine optimization, one must be able to understand how search engines work. One may not be able to fully grasp the nitty-gritty details of search engine optimization operations, but he can appreciate it to a level that he realizes the importance that it plays in effectively marketing his website.

Search engines rank websites in different ways. A website can primarily be listed by a search engine as a sponsored link or a pay-per-click advertisement or as a result of organic search.

With the continuous development of search engines, many search engines have introduced paid advertising. Website owners can actually bid to be displayed on top of the website listings of search engines. The most popular example of this system is the Google Adwords system, which is displayed at the right-hand side

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corner of the browser when one uses the Google search engine.

A website can also be listed through organic search. Search engines use "spiders" and "robots" to be able to assess the contents of a website and they then relay the information to the main search engine system so that when a surfer searches for a certain topic, the websites which are organized to contain that topic appear first. Search engine optimization is aimed primarily to be able to do certain things to a website so as to achieve optimal organization to reflect a certain keyword or topic.

History of SEO

Search engine optimization can be traced back to the mid-1900s. During those times, the search engines initiated the cataloging of the contents of the Internet. Webmasters needed to submit their websites to different search engines to be able to get the attention of the engines' spiders. The spiders collected, collated and reported the information to the search engines. The engines would then arrange the websites according to topic and displayed the websites when the keyword or topic is searched by surfers.

Meta tags were used by webmasters to be recognized by the search engines. Then, abuse of meta tags became rampant, causing websites to dominate searches that are irrelevant to them. Search engines began to fight back by using more complex algorithms which took into consideration other factors such as the text that is contained within the tile, the domain name, the file names, the keyword density, the keyword proximity, and other such factors.

Today

Today, the newly developed websites don't need to submit to the search engines to be noticed. Spiders today are capable of tracking down websites even through links that are in the website. The use of a site map or hypertext links can help the spiders to navigate the site.

The industry of search engine optimization is a booming one. As the Internet takes people's lives into more advanced stages, it has become more and more important terms of information dissemination, business development and communications. Having one's website noticed by search engines is a good way to start the whole Internet journey.