

## SEO Friendly Website Design Guidelines

Below are a few Google SEO tips and search engine optimization strategies to improve Google ranking of a new website in the organic search results. When determining the best Google SEO strategies for a website, start by checking whether it is search engine friendly. This is a measure of how well internal website content is designed and targeted and how easy it is for search engine spiders to crawl and index individual web pages. When checking your own website, pay particular attention to internal links and the design of your website navigation system. Here are some useful tips to help in developing a search engine friendly website:-

**Check Website Navigation** to ensure that all pages of your web site can be found and indexed by Google. Problems with website navigation and internal linking can adversely effect SEO and lead to much reduced website traffic.

**Avoid JavaScript Web Navigation Systems** - The use of JavaScript navigation systems can cause problems by preventing search engine spiders from fully indexing (crawling) the content of your website. If your website uses JavaScript DHTML navigation system, ensure that you implement a static text link sitemap to allow full website access to search engine spiders, allowing them to find and index all your content.

**Avoid Frames** - As SEO experts, we continually advise clients to avoid using Frames based web design. There's no doubt that Frames make for bad SEO by causing website accessibility and usability problems. Even a well optimized web site design will struggle to achieve a high search engine ranking, compared to a non Frames web site design, even with proper use of the <NOFRAMES> tag for alternative content. Consider an example of where the navigation system of a website is in Frame A and the page content is in Frame B.

In the example (above) the Page Content Frame (B) is now search engine indexed as a totally different page to the Navigation Frame (A). Hence when visitor's reach the content Frame from organic search results they are left without any website navigation as the Frameset is not constructed properly. This is a website accessibility disaster and Frames prove little better for SEO either.

**Avoid Dynamically Generated Content** - Dynamically generated page URL's (URL's including ?, =, &, %) are much harder for some search engines to index. When choosing a Content Management System (CMS) try to pick one which creates static HTML pages like content.htm, content.html, content.asp, content.php or similar, rather than dynamic URLs like the one below:

<http://mysite.com/servlets/sfs;jsessionid=5C95?s=tSMChYU&i=11&b=11&t=/Default/gateway>

**Importance of Valid HTML Code** - Implementing valid HTML code will improve search engine friendliness, reducing the likelihood of website crawling and indexing problems. It's always worth validating HTML code on the most influential pages of your website. Whilst some HTML errors may not affect the ability of search engine spiders to crawl and index your website; some errors can stop Googlebot in its tracks and cause serious problems including partial website indexing.



**Avoid Search Engine Spam Penalties** - to combat keyword stuffing many search engines have implemented spam penalties and filters. Excessive repetition of exact keyword terms, can trigger a keyword stuffing spam penalty. In reality, this is likely to result in the webpage not ranking for the target keyword term, but it can also reduce the Google trust of the website as a whole. Keyword density, as a rule should be kept below 6%. Even 2 - 3% works well in Google if the website concerned has built up sufficient trust through acquiring quality links.

**Targeting Website Content** - It is always essential that each website page has a well written **HTML title** (80 characters maximum including spaces) and **Meta description** (maximum length of 250 characters). The Meta description should read well and be designed to attract visitors, not just a list of keywords or spam! The Meta description should depict what the page is about and use the main target keywords in a grammatically correct sentence.

**Quality Website Copywriting** - The more original and useful the content of a webpage, the higher it will likely rank in Google. Search engines assess the quality of website copywriting in a number of ways, including the time spent by visitors on a webpage after it has been selected from the SERPS results. In addition, quality original content attracts natural links from other websites to your website which can significantly boost search engine visibility and traffic.

**Text Link Sitemap** - Implement a sitemap using static text links (hyperlinks) and link to it using a static hyperlink from your homepage. The sitemap should contain a categorized list of all pages contained in your web site using static text links. The anchor text used for each link should accurately reflect the content of the page concerned using one or two relevant keywords. 10)

**Create a Google Sitemap** - We recommend implementing a Google sitemap to inform Google about the relative importance of your content on a page by page basis and how often your website is updated, with a view to encouraging Googlebot to visit your website more often and in a more predictable manner. Submitting a Google sitemap will assist with the Google indexing of your web site. A Google sitemap lets you inform Google which of your web pages are most important and how often your content is updated. This helps to facilitate a smarter Googlebot crawl of your domain and to achieve a fresher Google cache of your URLs.

**Avoid automatic redirects** - Avoid a Google penalty by using a 301 re-direct if you intend redirecting visitors to another web site domain. Never use automated Meta Refresh redirects or JavaScript to redirect traffic as Google may incorrectly determine that you are using doorway pages and ban your domain.

**Avoid Website duplicate content** - Wherever possible, try to avoid duplicate content on other website domains, duplicate pages (including multiple pages on the same domain with extremely similar content) or mirror sites as these can cause problems with Supplemental Results in Google.