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Search Engine Optimization Tips

There are two aspects to search engine optimization. The first is incorporating popular search phrases into each web page. The second, which is addressed in this article, involves increasing your site's popularity with the search engines. Both are necessary for getting top listings with search engines. Here are some suggestions for gaining popularity with the search engines (and increasing avenues for your visitors to find you):

- 1) Right away, manually submit your site to the following four main search engines and two local search engines. Most of the other search engines on the internet get their website listings from one of these four main search engines so there is no longer a need to submit your site to all search engines. I don't recommend using a program to automatically submit your site to a large number of search engines – you can be penalized by the search engines for using the automated submission programs:
 - <http://www.google.com/addurl.html>
 - <http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>
 - <http://search.msn.com/docs/submit.aspx>
 - http://about.ask.com/en/docs/about/askcity_help.shtml#16
 - <http://www.google.com/local/add/lookup?hl=en-US&gl=US>
 - <http://listings.local.yahoo.com/>
- 2) Add your company listing and website address* to the following free directories (the first, dmoz, is the most important). The directories with yellow highlighting ask you to add a reciprocal link from your site:
 - <http://www.dmoz.org>
 - <http://localwin.com/>
 - <http://www.insiderpages.com/>
 - <http://www.local.com/>
 - <http://www.merchantcircle.com/>
 - <http://www.superpages.com/>
 - <http://www.resourcelinks.net/>
 - <http://www.uscity.net/>

In addition, search on the internet for additional directories specific to your county or region.

* There is a great tool called *ShortKeys Lite* to help with re-entering the same company information repeatedly. You can download it at: www.shortkeys.com/lite.htm.

- 3) Add your company listing and website address to industry specific directories including directories of industry specific associations.
- 4) Include your website address within your automatic email signature.
- 5) Ask vendors, family, friends, and employees who have websites to link to your site. When they add a link to your site, ask them to include your keyword phrases – including location information - within the link text. For example: [Flamingos-R-Us: Flamingo Dancing Teachers of the Bay Area, California](#). Try to use different keyword phrases for each link (search engines don't like it when you always use the same wording in links to your site). Getting

keyword phrases added to link text is one of the best ways to increase search engine popularity for those keyword phrases. Also, where appropriate ask people to link to a page on your website other than the home page. This is called “deep linking” and search engines see it as an indicator that your web site is useful and, as a result, will give it a higher ranking.

- 6) Search online for related resource websites (e.g., a local website focused on providing information about your industry) and ask them to link to your site. Where possible, ask them to include various keyword phrases in their link text and, where appropriate, to link to a page other than your home page. Try to find websites that get a lot of visitors. The more popular a website is that links to yours, the more popular you will become with the search engines. Google has a “Page Ranking” system that calculates a PageRank for each website. If you have installed the Google Toolbar, you can set PageRank to display. Look for websites with a good PageRank (4 or higher out of 10).
- 7) Do a Google search on competitor companies to see which websites link to them. It may give you some ideas for finding additional websites to request links from. You can also type into Google search: link:http://www.*websitename.com*/ to see some (but not all) of the sites that link to your competitors’ sites.
- 8) If you write online press releases, articles, newsletter announcements, discussion group entries, or blog entries – all great ways to increase exposure for your organization online – include a link to your website. Add press releases at www.pr.com with a (keyword rich) link back to your site. Find other suggestions about submitting press releases at: www.susansweeney.com/press.html. You can write and submit articles to www.ezinearticles.com with a link back to your site. You can also find additional e-zine sites to submit articles to at www.susansweeney.com/onlinepublications.html (search especially for online magazine/newsletters that are specific to your targeted market).