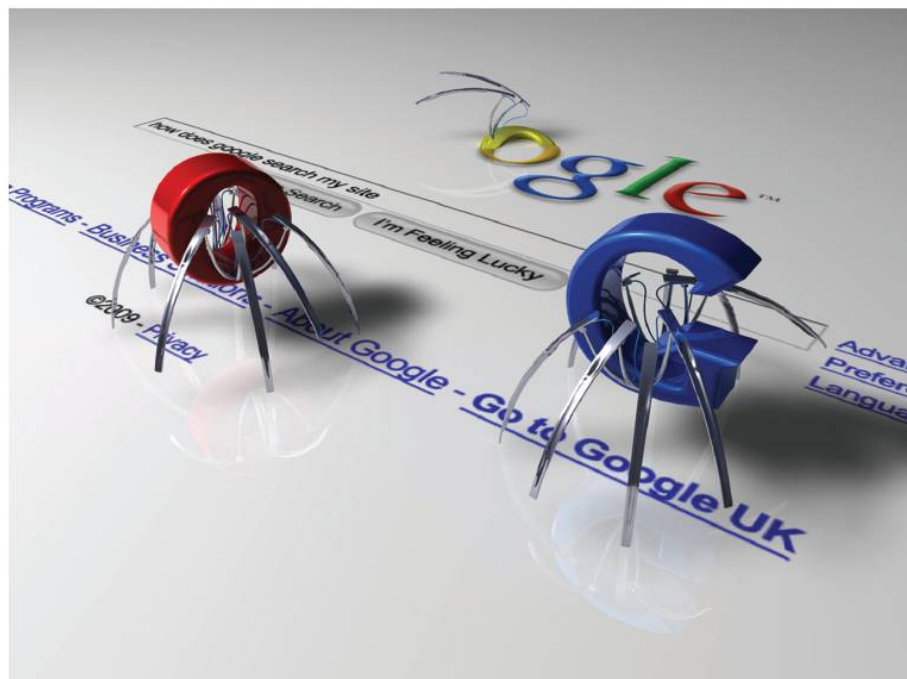


BUILDING YOUR WEB IDENTITY – Part 1

Sign World – John Hadfield, KiM (Knowledge and Information Management)



It's said that people search Google® 267,000 times a minute. Google® also claim that within two years around 50 percent of web searches are going to take place on a mobile device like a IOS phone or iPad like devices. I suggest these figures are a glimpse into the future way that - not just eCommerce is developing - but the way business is done. They are astounding figures; perhaps easily understood by the X and Y generation but for the baby boomers perhaps a wake up call?



ADD the comments above to the staggering growth of eCommerce and even more astounding user acceptance across all age demographics and it's not just the smell of smoke – it's a raging bushfire. Importantly, many of you already know that, the question is what are you doing about it? Sure, we build web sites and develop software to run sign and print business and it's a passion we have, however what is surprising us is the overwhelming misunderstanding of simple rules to best leverage you eBusiness or eCommerce web site.

In part one of a two-part article we will endeavor to offer a simple guide to what you can do yourself or, with the assistance of your web people, gain better results in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Content strategy.

Key fundamentals that Google does a great job covering in their Google SEO starter guide. It's a great informative document available on Google's site or on our download link for your convenience.

Here are a few important items we will cover:

Firstly, what are the key items that will build your web site results in SEO?

You may also like to download our full checklist and work sheets on www.controlzoneonline.com.au/downloads.

- URL Structure – understanding why this is so important.
- Page Titles – naming so you are found.
- Meta Tags – you are the expert, therefore what are the words I need to search to find the site?
- Navigation – make it easy.
- Quality Content – the site must have well written vital content if you wish to be ranked and found.
- Anchor Text – key words or phrases contained in text to link to core information.
- Images – ensure you name them and use alt tags.
- Video Files – add value and interest.
- Heading Tags – delivering value.
- Links – are they important and relevant?
- On Going commitment – don't leave your site to die on the vine.
- Promotion – people may not find you just because you have built it.
- Get Social- use Social Networking.
- e-Newsletters – will drive your business.

Getting nervous already? Don't be. Although the list seems lengthy, tedious and perhaps a bit overwhelming, we will break it down into little chunks to make it easy to understand. Furthermore, you may or may not be familiar with some of the terms, however stick with it and we will soon have you as a Search Engine Optimisation Guru!

URL Structure – understanding why this is so important

Using descriptive names for the files and content on your web site helps your visitors and importantly Google® in being friendly to both. Keeping spelling to a normal format like not using Kreative instead of Creative will help – don't get fancy. Keep the URL to easy to remember titles if possible. Getting too trendy or fancy with naming, symbols or numbers in your URL may have a high risk of no one finding or remembering your URL. Google and many users love finding via a site map on your web site. A site map is like a road map showing the way around the structure of your site to users and Google®. The quicker you're found, the better it is. It is typically made like a file folder structure or hierarchical list. If you ensure your URL is simple, clear and organised it will be a

win for you, a win for Google and, a win for your web site user.

Page Titles – naming so you are found

A simple and clear naming of your pages tells Google® and your users about the content of the page. Working with straightforward English titles in a concise and clear manner helps in a multiple method by the follow on effect. Keeping your name page tags unique and concise will identify that page from others in the site.

Meta Tags – you are the expert, therefore what are the words I need to search to find the site?

Meta Tags are "hidden" from view of the web site user but not search engines. Meta tags remain widely unused to the detriment on the web site. To view your own or other web sites meta tags, go to a page, right click, in the dialogue box find 'view source'. Displayed will be a whole lot of HTML or code, amongst that you will find towards the top of the page – Meta Tag – there should be several words identifying key information about the page. Don't be confused or concerned as they are just terms like you using trade terms in your business to describe your product or services.

Simply put, a Meta Tag is a description of that page and what it is about. The key to great Meta Tags are in the following points:

- The key to having great Meta Tags is understanding what other terms people will look for in Google® to find the goods or service.
- Have relevant descriptive word or tags on each page about that page. Keep those words closely allied to the page content.



- Making the words unique to that page you are you're assisting Google® and your web site user.
- Understand that Google® sees them like a summary. You do not want your Meta Tags to be too long, or too short.
- How many characters? Currently around 65 to 70 characters. Is that a fixed rule – well no. Fact is you can make it longer. However when Google® shows your website in it's search results it may display your Meta Tag. If it's too long it may be cut off and consider the three to five seconds that people may spend reading it.

The best guide is to keep your Meta Tag description short, concise and simple.

Summary:

Next month we deal with the next 11 key points to build your business identity on the web. So, stay tuned, go to the web site and get to work on downloading the work sheets on www.controlzoneonline.com.au/downloads. We also offer a free review of your Meta Tags , just email your Meta Tag to john@controlzone.com.au for a free written assessment, open to the first 25 readers. 

