

Yahoo Submitting Guide

By David Callan

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Getting listed on Yahoo should be without doubt the most important mission on any Internet marketers mind.

Yahoo is the biggest of all the search engines, well actually that's not true, you see Yahoo is not technically a search ENGINE it is a human compiled directory of websites and does not have a spider bot going to sites and indexing them. But for the sake of this article when I say search engines I am referring to all 'search sites'.

Anyway as I was saying Yahoo is the biggest of all the search engines, did you know that recent estimates show that Yahoo is currently capturing an amazing 40% of all search engine traffic online? Do you know what this means? That means that almost 1 out of every 2 people that do searches on the Internet use Yahoo, everyone on the Internet has done searches some time or another.

Nothing in the world should be clearer to anyone with a website whose just after reading the above figures - you need your site listed in Yahoo. A.S.A.P.

RECAP

If your site is not listed in the YAHOO INDEX, (note - being listed under webpages does not mean you are listed in Yahoo, it in fact means you are listed with Google because Yahoo gets webpage results from google) you are losing lots of potential customers to competitors that are listed in Yahoo. And with the amount of visitors Yahoo can send you even with an average listing this could amount to hundreds, maybe thousands of dollars worth of lost profit.

Now you know how important it is, lets get on to the good stuff, how to submit to Yahoo.

Well first you have to determine the scope of your site. Is your site commercial or noncommercial? Commercial sites that want to be listed by Yahoo now must use "Business Express" when submitting. This used to cost \$199, however the price has risen to \$299 a year.

"Business Express" what is it? Good question and one that many people ask, well it's basically the same as free submit except that with business express your site is guaranteed to be reviewed within a weeks time. However please be aware that it does not guarantee that your site will be accepted and added to the Yahoo index. If your site is rejected Yahoo will allow you to appeal for free within a certain time scale (usually 30 days) of being informed of your rejection. Also Yahoo staff usually include in your rejection the reason you have been rejected, you should examine these reasons fix any problems and resubmit after a week or so.

If your site is a noncommercial site, you will still be able to submit for free, but a review could take as long as 8 weeks or might never happen at all.

Before you submit make sure your site is 100% ready, under construction pages need not apply to Yahoo because they are not going to get in. Your site should be aesthetically pleasing to the reviewer, be quick loading and of course should have lots of content.

OK let's get started. How does Yahoo return results? Well search results on Yahoo are determined by words that appear within these four areas:

- 1) category,
- 2) title,
- 3) description, and
- 4) URL.

These sites are then sorted by relevance using an automated algorithm.

I will now go through these four different factors and how to optimize your submittal for each one

First up category selection, many people don't realize this but when someone searches for a term(s) on Yahoo its algorithm searches through the category name also, for example visit www.yahoo.com and you will see the results for a search done on 'Internet marketing articles'. You will see under each listing that these words are highlighted if they are in the name of the category, the top listing has the most occurrences of these words between its title, description, URL and words in the category its in.

You should remember this when submitting to your category, when trying to establish what category you are going to submit to you should do a search for one or two of your keywords and see what categories come up. But which of these categories do you submit to?

Since most referrals to sites from Yahoo come from the search results and not from people visiting certain categories, it is wise and best (in most occasions (I'll tell you why in a bit)) to submit to a very specific category with lots of keywords in the category name. To see this strategy in practice revisit the results page for 'Internet marketing articles' on Yahoo.com notice that the top ranked site is in a category with lots of keywords, these are: Internet, Business, Advertising and Web, these combined with various keywords in the title, description and URL combine to give this site a pretty good chance at ranking well on a few good keywords and phrases. Therefore category names are just like having more titles and descriptions. Note - if you are a regional operation try to pick a category with the name of your state or province in it. This will help you get targeted visitors from Yahoo.

Remember I said in most occasions a little higher up the page, well here's why it's not the best policy in all occasions. Imagine if your business name or official website name began with an A or any other alphabetically high character and someone goes into a general high - level category and there you are listed in the top few, you could receive lots of traffic from your category listing like this.

Basically what I'm saying here is that if the title you are submitting (i.e.. Your official business or website name) is alphabetically very high. Then you'd want to compromise between a lower level very specific keyword rich category and an upper level more general category in the hope that you'd receive more visitors because you would be listed high on the page due to your alphabetically high title.

Personally I'd try to get into the most general category possible on all occasions and rely on the keywords in my title, URL, and description to get a good ranking in search results.

As for the title Yahoo insists that you use your official business or website name when applying to them, if you submit some keyword rich title they won't even look twice at your application. You should take this into account when choosing a domain name/official website name.

I did - AKA Marketing - 'A' is useful in getting listed high in general categories as discussed earlier, because AKA is an abbreviation I can 'get away' with having AKA all caps which again helps with the category strategy. Also it includes a good keyword - Marketing and they can't accuse me of applying to them with a keyword rich title, can they?.

Yahoo favors short titles, this stems from the fact that the shorter the title is the less likely they will be to edit it. Which means less work for them. However if you follow the above guidelines and indeed Yahoo's own onsite guidelines chances are you won't get edited down.

The description part I think is the tricky part. The Web site description posted with your URL is a big factor in how your site will rank once it's listed in the directory.

You have to submit a description which has your main keywords in it, and make it sound very appealing to potential visitors at the same time, however you can't have anything that resembles hype and bragging, for example - number 1 site on the net for The best on the web for

Again Yahoo will either edit it to something which doesn't benefit you at all or just move on to the next application (most likely). If they do edit it you can bet your keywords won't appear in the final listing, for these reasons it is important to get it right first time.

The description should be concise and based on facts, most importantly it should include your most important keywords whenever possible. Do not exaggerate what is located on your site. Remember your site gets reviewed by a real person and in the end, your site will not get listed, simple as that

The length of the description should be about 10 - 15 words. Note however on the Yahoo submittal form, they say 25 is the maximum, never go near this number, they are sure to edit it, a mess with your keywords. Refer to Yahoo's own words "Please be brief".

SIDENOTE

Sometimes people email me asking this question "does my title and description that I submit to Yahoo have to be the same as the meta description tag and title tag on my site". Simple answer, NO!

We have already discussed most of the issues regarding domain name choice and Yahoo above, however there are others, most notable the whole 63 character thing, this allows for very long keyword rich domain names, if you decide to pursue this strategy, don't go mad and use up nearly all 63 characters because Yahoo reviewers won't like it, however do use long domain names to your advantage. Get ones with your main keyphrase in it, and have these words separated by hyphens (-) because Yahoo's algorithm like hyphens it may give you a rankings boost. Also remember to try for alphabetically high domains, which are plausible and make sense. If you can that is.

Some experts question the merit of keyword rich domains as a way of gaining an advantage over other sites in Yahoo, however I have seen this strategy in action and it does give advantage, most of the time it's only a slight advantage but we're talking about Yahoo here, a small advantage can mean a lot more visitors. To see why I believe in keyword rich domains, go to Yahoo.com and enter in "linking strategies". WHAT SITE COMES UP! . That was a very good example wasn't it :-)

Other tips for Yahoo is to have an about us page on you main page - Yahoo likes to know who it's

dealing with. On this page describe what you do honestly and also post the physical address of your business/building your website is run from.

IMPORTANT

Don't under any circumstances spam Yahoo, if they notice your submitting your site more than every 2 or 3 months they will just forget about you and more on.

Well that's it - Good luck in your quest for Yahoo success

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