

# How to Improve Search Engine Rankings

By Herman Drost

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You finally got your web site listed in the major search engines, however it is buried amongst millions of others and you still have not seen an increase in traffic to your web site. Why not? You need to improve your search engine rankings.

Here are the steps to increase your search engine rankings:

## 1. Check your listings

If you are going to see an increase in traffic to your web site, you need to be listed in the top 20-30 sites.

Go to <http://www.marketleap.com> to see if you are listed in the top 30 sites on the major search engines. If you are not listed in them, you should at least submit your site to the major search engines (read "How to get listed in the major search engines". <http://www.isitebuild.com/majorsearchengines> ).

If you are already in the top 10, then keep monitoring your site's rankings to maintain your position. If you are not in the top 30, continue with the next step.

## 2. Select the right keywords and phrases

Go to [www.wordtracker.com](http://www.wordtracker.com) or the overture suggestion tool (<http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion>) to find the most popular words and phrases that suit the theme of your web site.

Weave these words and phrases into your meta tags (title, description and keyword tags), web copy (particularly the first 200 words of your web page) and links (i.e. if your site is called camping.com and you have a page for camping tools, name the link [www.camping.com/campingtools.htm](http://www.camping.com/campingtools.htm) , instead of [www.camping.com/generic.htm](http://www.camping.com/generic.htm) ).

Optimize each web page with different keywords. Visitors can then enter your site from different pages, depending on what keyword they entered in the search engines.

### 3. Exchange reciprocal links

Search for other sites that compliment your own site and ask for a link back to your site. Ideally the site should have the same keyword phrase as yours and already have a high search engine ranking. These are quality links.

Having many sites linked to yours, will increase the popularity of your site in the search engines, resulting in a higher ranking.

### 4. Write articles

Choose your best keywords and weave them into the theme of your articles. Include a link to your web site in the resource box at the end of your articles. Submit your articles to ezine publishers and article announcement lists. This gives your article the potential to be read by thousands of ezine subscribers. Your article will become linked to many web sites, resulting in higher rankings.

### 5. Participate in forums

Find a forum that is related to the theme of your web site. People visit these forums to look for content that answers their questions. Once you have provided helpful information, you can leave a link to your site in your signature file. If this is a highly trafficked forum, leaving your link there, will increase your site's popularity.

### 6. Monitor your rankings

The best way to check how your site is doing in the search engines is to check your web site statistics.

A high quality web hosting service will show you which pages receive the most traffic (hits and visits) and where it is coming from (which search engines).

### 7. Exercise patience

Search engines typically take one to three months to spider your web site, so your changes will not be seen immediately. Think of the steps outlined above, as a long-term marketing strategy for your web site.

### Tip

Generating a massive amount of traffic to your web site, doesn't guarantee sales. Here is a short list of factors that will also help convert your visitors into sales:

Professional site design

Well-written web copy

Fast loading times

Simple navigation

No broken links

Optimizing for different screen resolutions

Optimizing for the main browsers

As you can see, improving search engine rankings that result in sales means the continuous monitoring and refinement of your web site. Since 85% of your sites traffic (this is very targeted traffic) comes from the search engines, it is well worth the investment.

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Herman Drost is a Certified Web Site Designer, owner and author of iSiteBuild.com

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