

What Your Web Designer Isn't Telling You

By Kalena Jordan

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If I was to ask you right now "Are you absolutely certain that your web site is optimized for high search engine rankings?", what would you say?

What if I was to ask "How many search engines has your site been registered with?" Or how about "Does your site have tailored title and META Tags?"

If you would answer "No" or "I don't know" to any of these questions, you would be amongst the 70% of web site owners whose web sites are missing out on search engine traffic because they are not designed for high rankings. Has your web designer optimized YOUR site? Have they submitted it to the top ten search engines and directories? More than likely, you don't know because they haven't told you. Ask them TODAY!

But what exactly is search engine optimization? Simply explained, it is the technique of attaining a high ranking in search engines and directories via changes to your site code to make it more search engine compatible.

Did you know that key search words and phrases in your "title tag" and "META tags" (in the HTML script of your site) and body text are often very important references that search engines use when ranking web sites for search relevancy? Optimizing your site meta tags and your body text for search engines ensures that it ranks highly for particular words or phrases that you would expect potential visitors to type in to search engines to find your site.

For example, if you are a Miami florist, you should have logical search phrases such as "flowers", "Miami florists", "bouquets Miami" and even target search terms such as "Miami weddings", "Valentine's Day gifts" etc integrated in your title and meta tags, as well as in the visible text of your site. That way, if anyone types in those phrases in a search engine, your site is more likely to appear higher in the search results.

So why wasn't your site optimised for search engines when it was built? Depending on who developed your site and how it was built, you'll find a million different reasons for this. Many web developers believe it is the site marketer's job to ensure the site is found in search engines and vice versa. Most don't bother submitting your site to the important search engines, assuming you or your marketing department will do it. Or perhaps it wasn't in your original development budget.

Not many web design firms know how or have time to optimize a site successfully, no matter what they tell you. They might feel it is outside their core business, or they might believe it is not part of the "design process". Consequently, your site can be launched for many months without the search engines having any idea it exists. Some web development firms don't include even the most basic META tags in your site code when building it. Or those that do include META tags without close consultation with you, resulting in the wrong search terms used and poor performance. This is quite typical! Remember that search engine optimization is a relatively new science and requires both client interaction and constant monitoring to be successful.

The bottom line? If your designer can't show you the high rankings they've achieved for other clients, they won't be able to optimize your site properly. Search engine optimization (SEO) specialists have sprung up to fill the need for these services. Many SEO's will work either directly with you or with your web site designer to ensure your site gets the exposure it deserves in the most popular search engines and directories. Find a specialist with a good track record and reap the results.

Remember, search engine users generally only explore the first 10 or 20 sites in the search results. If you site isn't in the top 20, you won't be found, it's as simple as that. Always include search engine optimization into your marketing budget or your site could be as effective as a billboard at the end of a dead end street.

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Article by Kalena Jordan, CEO of Web Rank.
Kalena was one of the first search engine optimization experts in Australasia and is well known and respected in her field.
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