

The Importance of a Good Web Page Title

By Mario Sanchez

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Many web designers focus just on the actual look and feel of a page and dismiss seemingly minor details like the page title. However, a good title can, in just a few words, tell your visitors what they can expect by reading your page. More importantly, the page title is the only way that many visitors will be able to identify and find your page. A good title can therefore increase the traffic to your site.

More and more Internet users rely on search engines every day, and search engines use page titles to generate the links displayed after a search. Let's suppose that you own a company called The Attic, that specializes in vintage clothing and you have just submitted your website to a search engine. If the title of your page is: "The Attic. Specializing in Vintage Clothing", it is OK. Certainly, it is better than just "Welcome to the Attic".

However, a better option would be: "Vintage Clothing by The Attic". The reason is that, most likely, a visitor that comes to your site from a search engine will not conduct a search for "The Attic", but probably will do it for "Vintage Clothing". If you put those two words at the beginning of your title, your visitor will notice the link faster and he will find it more relevant to his needs. He will then be more inclined to click on it, increasing traffic to your site.

An exception are large companies with superb name brand recognition. They may be better off by starting the page title with the company or the brand name, since they will be well known to most users and their purpose will be evident. For all that matters, they may even not need to rely on search engines for traffic at all.

Another reason to pay close attention to the page title is that it is used by web browsers to name the page when it is bookmarked. If a user goes through her favorite files and doesn't recognize your page due to a lousy page title, she may by-pass it, and, as a result, you will waste a precious opportunity to get easy traffic to your site.

In summary, you want to use a page title that clearly states the purpose of the page, that will catch the user's eye when it is displayed by a search engine, and that will be easily identifiable by the user when he browses through his files in the Favorites folders.

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