

How to submit your site to the major search directories?

By Pia Sengupta

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Submitting your site to search directories is entirely different than submitting to the search engines. The most popular search directories are undoubtedly Yahoo and Open Directory. Others are Looksmart and NBCi.

Unlike the search engines, the directories are human edited. When you submit your web site to a search directory, a real human being visits your site, reviews it and ranks it according to the title and description that you submit.

To submit your site to a directory, you have to choose the appropriate category to which your site belongs. In the submission form of the directory you have to type in the homepage url of your web site. The form will also ask you to suggest a title and description for the site.

While submitting your site to any directory, read the submission guide lines carefully. Remember they mean every word they say.

The three most important factors while submitting a site to a directory are:

- *Choosing an appropriate category for the web site.
- *Creating a title suitable for the site.
- *Creating a description which best describes the site.

Choosing a category which is appropriate for your site must be done very judiciously. The best and the easiest way is to search the directory with the most relevant keywords for your site. Note down the name of the categories which is displayed in the results. Analyze your site as an outside observer would. Choose the category in which your site truly belongs.

The title you choose for your web site should always be the official name of the site. It should be written exactly the way it is mentioned in the web site.

The description you choose is a big factor in how your site will rank in the directory. Here are some guidelines in writing a description:

- *Make clear what makes a site different from the rest
- *Do not include any promotional language
- *Do not consist of opinions or subjective reviews

- *Do not use acronyms or abbreviations unless they are commonly understood Do not make reference to illegally obtained content (e.g., pirated versions of software and music)
 - *Concisely summarize the contents of a site in one or two lines
 - *Do not repeat the title of the site or the category
 - *Do not repeat the city, state, country or other geographic region in the description if it appears as part of the title or the category path name.
 - *Do not contain sentences starting with: "This site is..." Do not use emphatic punctuation (e.g., "!!!"), all caps to denote emphasis, ampersands ("&") or ellipses ("...")
 - *Do not include: street/mailling and e-mail addresses, nearest intersection/highway exit, telephone/fax numbers, instructions for use of answering systems, hours of operation, prices, or other URLs.
 - *Use logical sentence or phrase structure and proper punctuation, starting with a capital letter and ending with a period. If the editor has to place a period at the end, then he/she may end up editing your description. Then the description may not remain the way you wanted it to be.
 - *Are in the third person and do not include pronouns such as "we," "us," "our," "I," "me," and the like
- *May include limited quotations from a site (such as a brief quotation from a site's about page or similar informational areas) if paraphrasing proves too difficult.
- *Do not include any spelling errors (a spell check tool is readily available to help prevent spelling errors). End the description with a period.

Each directory has its unique procedure of submission, but the basics of choosing the most appropriate category and creating the best description apply for all the search directories.

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Pia Sengupta is a recognized industry expert in search engine optimization and directory submission.

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