

The Spider Is Waiting To Get You...But, Are You Ready?

By Roger Burke

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Roger Burke
webmaster@online-wealth.com

Online Wealth <http://online-wealth.com>

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As more and more businesses come online, the fight to get on page one of search results obviously gets more competitive.

In another article, I talked about the need for content with "themed relevance", if you want to have even half a chance of getting on page one. You can read that article here: http://online-wealth.com/articles/page_one_blues.htm .

But, getting the right content with the right theme and a good design is only half the battle. In fact, the construction of the actual web page(s) is **more** important!

Why is that?

Simply stated, if the website construction is **not** search engine friendly - and, by that, I mean "spider" friendly - then all efforts to get on page one are in vain. Totally.

To make things crystal clear, by "construction", I mean the actual HTML code that is used to show the web page(s) on your browser.

As you know, as you surf the web, you're presented with what appears to be an infinite variety of web pages. That's **not** true at all: while there is (maybe) an infinite variety of designs and colors, the actual HTML coding is common to all. Moreover, there are only a relatively few choices in the way that the coding is used and compiled.

That means if you develop and compile your HTML code in a way that prevents the search engine spiders from reading your pages, then you'll be lucky to have the site even included in the SE database. Even when it shows up to look your site over.

And you can forget about page one, for sure.

It won't matter if you have a visually appealing site, with great themed content that wins awards...if the spiders choke on it, you're history! And, whether you're a multi-national or a Mom & Pop corner store is quite irrelevant also.

So...question is, what stops the spiders?

There are five basic aspects:

1. From the overall design perspective, avoid pages with frames, splash pages that use Flash, and pages created with WYSIWYG editors.

Instead, concentrate on good text that supports a constant theme throughout. If you don't know how to use a good HTML editor, then you'll have to pay somebody who does.

2. Go easy on Keywords and too many JavaScript cookies. If you have an excessive number of keywords in your tags, your site could be banned. An excess of cookies can confuse spiders.

Better to ensure that the TITLE and Description tags are used properly to provide a true "picture" of the site.

3. Dynamic pages (ASP,PHP etc with a question mark) are a real nuisance for spiders - they can get caught forever, trying to follow the links. So...the spiders are programmed to ignore those pages.

Hence, if you must have them - say, for a database application - link to them from the main page(s) that is ASP or PHP free.

4. Keep the graphics, video and music to the bare minimum. Not only will the spiders love you, but your prospects will not have all their senses battered trying to find out what you're selling!

Much better to hone that textual content...make your words sing and dance, instead.

5. When submitting pages to search engines, do it manually. Not only does that ensure the job is actually done, you will also ensure that each submission is tailored for each SE. And remember, there are barely a dozen or so SEs that count; get indexed in those and you can worry about the rest later.

There are many automatic submission services, but I do not use them for my submissions to the majors. For submissions to lesser known search engines however, I've used the services of Selfpromotion.com with good results. Use this link if you're interested:<http://online-wealth.com/promo/> .

Don't forget: make sure that the first four points are fully covered *before* you make *any* submission to *any* SE.

So...if you follow the spider's rules *and* you have site with unique, themed content, you are very well positioned to get top ranking in all the majors, for your keywords.

Additionally, if you can generate relevant links with other sites, that will tend to improve your popularity and your overall ranking. But, in my opinion, that's a bonus.

And, finally, it's getting a lot tougher to get into the major SEs now. That being the case, get it right first time or you'll just keep losing more time and money. ;-(

Roger Burke has been involved with computers since 1967, and has managed to break quite a few, over the years. He, and his wife Sherry, are now actively engaged in online self-publishing and promoting specific affiliate programs at <http://online-wealth.com> . If you have any comments or questions about this article, please send emails to <mailto:webmaster@online-wealth.com> .

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