

The myths of search engine placement

By Sage Lewis

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Businesses commonly believe in several search engine myths, which can limit a site's potential to rank well on the engines.

According to a study done by the Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI), Westfield, New Jersey, 57% of Internet users search the web each day, making the use of search engines the second most popular Internet activity behind emailing.

Statistics like this have convinced businesses to not only get online, but to also get listed on the search engines. Getting listed on the engines, however, is often a more complicated process than many businesses realize, and there are five popular search engine myths that keep companies in the dark.

Myth 1 -- There are too many sites on the Internet now to get a good position on the search engines.

There are billions of web pages on the Internet. But it is estimated that less than 1% of sites are optimized correctly for the search engines. Businesses can design a site to be search-engine friendly, and if they do, they will stand apart from competition and rank well on targeted key phrases.

Myth 2 -- Search engines don't bring targeted business traffic.

SRI research indicates that 46% of users are online looking for product information. Since search engines are the second most popular Internet activity, many surfers looking for businesses and products are using search engines. By understanding what customers are searching for, a business can develop a highly targeted plan to pull pre-qualified traffic directly to a site. Through research, analysis, and methodology, sites can have great impact on the search engines and get the right kind of traffic.

Myth 3 -- The developer has already listed the site on all the search engines.

They might have. But what does that mean exactly? Many businesses assume that 'being listed' automatically means that they will appear when an Internet user types in relevant keywords that relate to the site. Unfortunately, most listed sites come up only when their business name or url is typed into the engines as a search. Or if they do list under specific key phrases, they place after the

first 30 listings and remain unseen to users. Businesses need to find out not just 'if' they are listed on the search engines, but also 'where' they are listed.

Myth 4 - The designer optimized the keyword meta tags within the site, so the site will be listed under those keywords on the search engines.

Keyword meta tags do very little to help a site's placement on search engines. Search engines look at many things when determining placement, the least of which is the keyword meta tag (because too many sites have abused this tag with repeated words). Title, page text, heading tags, links to and from the site, and a site's popularity are just some of the criteria search engines use when listing a site under specific keywords. And search engine's are always changing their criteria for listing a site, so a businesses needs to stay on top of trends and take the time to optimize their site's or hire someone who can.

Myth 5 -- Choose keywords for the meta tags that generally describe a site and its products, and that site will get targeted traffic.

Researching keywords is one of the most important tasks when optimizing a site for search engines. Understanding what people search for when looking for a particular type of businesses is crucial. A business selling metal, for example, would waste its time trying to get listed under the word 'metal' because people searching that word are looking for heavy metal rock bands. Businesses have to take the time to analyze keyword popularity and competitiveness, so that they can target their search engine placement and traffic.

BIO:

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