



Tips and Tools: Search Engine Optimization

TIPS ON DISTRIBUTION

If search engine optimization is one of your primary objectives for issuing a press release, look for the following in a distribution service:

- Tools to help optimize your release
- High number of internet postings
- Distribution to top-tier websites – Yahoo! has a list of sources that post directly
- Keyword-rich hyperlinks posted on downstream websites
- Reporting that helps you in the future
- Ability to include Meta Tags in your releases
- Archival of your release on a dedicated, search engine-friendly website

TIPS ON CONTENT / BEST PRACTICES

- Find one target keyword phrase that is most relevant to your release and your target audience and put it in the first 60-70 characters of your release (headline) and first 150 characters of the body. Put this phrase in the first hyperlink. Put secondary phrases in subsequent hyperlinks.
- Maintain an optimal keyword density of 2-3% (8-12 times) in a 400-word release.
- Ignore pronouns, words shorter than two letters, and words such as “and,” “that” and “where.” Remember to still sound organic!
- Avoid using Flash for your primary content.
- Point your external links to keyword-rich landing sites rather than to your home page – this increases the time a visitor will spend on your page and it improves your search engine rankings.
- Use keyword research tools to decipher what key terms are most popular.
- Look for creative ways to gather links from higher-ranked websites, with keyword hyperlinks pointing to their appropriate landing pages. Press releases offer a unique opportunity to push fresh content to top-tier sites and create backward links from keywords of your choosing.
- Research blogs and social sites for terms describing your product/service.
- Hyperlink key terms to web pages specific to those terms.
- Write for both search and people – SEO enhances good communication.
- Track and learn from the keywords and terms people use to find you.
- Make press releases and regularly updated content on your site available via RSS

SEO TOOLS

Following are resources that can help you improve your SEO results.:

Keyword Research

- Google AdWords: <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> Yahoo! Search
- Google Insights for Search: <http://www.google.com/insights/search>
- Google Search-based Keyword Tool: <http://www.google.com/sktool>
- WordTracker: <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com>
- Apogee Meta Tags: http://www.apogee-web-consulting.com/tools/keyword_tool.php
- Spacky: <http://www.spacky.com>
- Marketwire's Keyword Analyzer: Accessible during your press release submission process

RSS Feeds / Content Syndication

- Feedburner: <http://www.feedburner.com>
- FeedBlitz: <http://www.feedblitz.com>

COMMON SEO TERMS

- **Anchor Text** refers to the hyperlinked words you click on that tell search engines what the page is about. Used wisely, anchor text boosts your search engine rankings and helps search engines discover new content on your website.
- **Backlink** is a hyperlink from another website or webpage to yours. The number of backlinks is an indication of the popularity or importance of your website.
- **Hyperlink** is an element in an electronic document that links to another place in the same document or to an entirely different document.
- **Keyword/Key Term** is a word or phrase submitted to a search engine that is also contained in HTML coding, matching results when returning a SERP in response to a user query.
- **Keyword Density** is the ratio (percentage) that a keyword appears within the total number of indexable words within a web page. Suggested density is between 2-3%.
- **Keyword Prominence** refers to how prominent keywords are within a release. Place important keywords at, or near, the start of the document, sentence, title or meta tag.
- **Landing Page** is the page on a website where someone arrives after clicking on a hyperlink.
- **Long Tail** generally refers to longer, less frequently used search terms used to find your web pages. These terms make up the bulk of the searches.
- **Meta Tag** is the code placed in the HTML head of a web page not visible to browsers that describes/summarizes the contents of a web page. Some search engines use information provided in meta tags to index pages by subject and on search engine results pages.
- **SEO**, or search engine optimization, is the process of optimizing a website, web page or press release to increase its visibility within search engine results.
- **SERP**, or a search engine results page, is the listing of web pages returned by a search engine such as Google or Yahoo! in response to a keyword query.
- **Title Tag** is an important HTML tag displayed at the top of the browser window that search engines use to determine the subject of an HTML page.