Introduction to SEO

As you work to build your website and online business, you need to understand just how important search engines are in the information age. The Internet is a wonderful tool, but without search engines, it would be nothing more than a chaotic web of random bits of information stored on millions of unorganized hard drives and servers around the world. Search engines tame this mass of information and bring everything you need right to your fingertips. In this section, we will cover the basics of how search engines work and how you can put them to work for you using appropriate search engine optimization (SEO) strategies.

To make things simpler, we are going to look at the Internet through the eyes of Google – since it is the dominant player in the search engine universe and most other search engines take their lead from Google in one way or another. After all, if you can get your site listed at the top of page 1 in Google's search results, you have access to arguably the most valuable piece of real estate on the Internet.

What is SEO?

Search Engine Optimization is the process of conditioning a webpage so that it becomes highly relevant to particular keyword phrases. SEO improves the chance that a page will show up high in natural search engine results.

Google's PageRank and Search Results

Search engines, like Google, read, categorize and index an incredible amount of information so that when you enter a search request, they are able to tell you which webpages you should visit to find what you are looking for.

To determine which pages to return in its search results, Google assigns each page a **PageRank**. The term PageRank was coined by and named after one of the co-founders of Google, Larry Page. Google measures PageRank on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 carrying the least amount of weight and 10 carrying the most. Only a handful of sites on the Internet have a PageRank of 10. The majority of sites have a PageRank of 0. When you first publish your site, it will have a PageRank of 0 or N/A. Naturally, you want to gain PageRank as quickly as possible so your site will begin to show up in search results.

To calculate PageRank, Google looks at a variety of factors. You can group the majority of those factors into two broad categories – on-page SEO and off-page SEO.

On-page SEO includes everything you can do on your website to improve your site's chances of showing up at the top of Google's search results. How you structure your site, how you use your meta data, and what content you include on each page of your site are all examples of on-page SEO.

Off-page SEO includes everything you can do, or try to do, on pages and sites other than your own to improve your site's chances of showing up at the top of Google's search results. Link building, submitting your products to comparison shopping engines, and listing your business in local search engines are all examples of off-page SEO.

We will cover various on-page SEO techniques in Part 1 of this appendix, and we will cover the most effective off-page SEO techniques in Part 2.

Two Important Things to Remember

1. Having a good SEO strategy from the beginning will put you much further ahead of your competitors, many of whom build a website and then wonder why they have no traffic or PageRank. Use the on-page SEO techniques we discuss in Part 1 as you build your website, then try your hand at the off-page SEO techniques covered in Part 2 after you publish your site.

2. While on-page optimization is important, don't get caught in the trap of feeling like you need to have a perfectly optimized site before you can publish it. As strange as this may sound, when you are launching a new website, the off-page SEO activities, like link building, are actually more important in the early stages than the on-page SEO activities are, because it is only through these off-page SEO techniques that you can establish PageRank for your site.

Search Engine Optimization Strategy at a Glance

Search engines today use a method called Deep Indexing, meaning they crawl and index each page of your website separately. This means you need to optimize each page of your site for different keyword phrases. Doing this ensures that you have a broad approach, optimizing for hundreds of search phrases, as opposed to just a few on the home page. Follow this SEO strategy for each page of your website.

1. **Research keywords.** Use the tips and tools in the Keyword Research section of Part 1 to find the best keywords, determine how competitive they are, and decide which pages to use them on.

2. **Write the page's meta data.** This includes the title tag, description tag, and keyword tag. Make sure these tags use the most important keywords for the page.

3. **Write the page's heading and subheadings.** Each heading should use at least one of the target keywords for the page.

4. **Write the page copy.** Use your target keywords throughout the copy. Follow the Guidelines for Writing Copy for the Web section of Part 1 to make your copy appealing to both search engines and visitors.

5. **Write Image Alt Tags for any images on the page.** Each alt tag should include at least one of the target keywords for the page.

6. **Build links to the webpage you're optimizing.** Part 2 covers some of the most effective off-page SEO techniques.

7. **Wait and watch.** It usually takes at least two weeks for search engines to index the webpage you optimized, often longer for new sites. Depending on your PageRank, it will take a few weeks for your optimization efforts to translate to improved ranking in the search engine results.

8. **Optimize another page in your site.** Repeat this process until you have completed on-page optimization for every page of your site.

Part 1: On-Page SEO

Keyword Research

Like product research, keyword research is one of keys to being successful online. Most website visitors come by way of search engines, so it's very important that you choose the right keywords to help your website do better in search rankings and get more traffic.

You use keywords in the content on your website, meta data, headings, image captions, and other places to tell search engines what each page on your site is all about. When your site incorporates all the right keywords in all the right places, it begins to rank better and better for those keywords in search results.

Choosing keywords doesn't have to be hard. In fact, you're halfway there once you start choosing products. The trick is to find keywords that people actually search for but that aren't highly competitive. That way, you start getting traffic and building up your PageRank without directly competing with other websites.

After you get good PageRank, you can tweak your keyword strategy to include more competitive keywords. Use the following tips and tools to help you choose the best keywords.

Keyword Research Tools

Reverse Search Tool	This tool returns information about search volume, search engines, and related keywords when you search for a potential keyword phrase. Also very useful for product research. Click here to access, or copy and paste this link in your browser: http://www.storesonlinepro.com/reversesearch .
Google Adwords Keyword Tool	Google's version of the Reverse Search Tool. This keyword tool draws information from different databases and larger search results than the Reverse Search Tool, so it's good to use them both and compare. Click here to access, or copy and paste this link in your browser: https://adwords.google.com/o/Targeting/Explorer?__u=1000000000&__c=1000000000&ideaRequestType=KEYWORD_IDEAS#search.none.
Keyword Analysis Tool	The Keyword Analysis Tool in the Builder can return information about keyword density, how a webpage ranks for certain keywords, and your major competitors.
SEM Rush	SEMRush.com returns lots of useful information for keywords and domain names. Enter a keyword to find out cost-per-click estimates, average search volume, keyword trends, related keywords, and the top ranking organic results and paid ads. Enter a domain name to discover what keywords that website ranks for and major competitors. This is a very useful tool to evaluate your competitors and your own site when you're ready to amp up your keyword strategy.

General Tips on Finding Keywords

Start with product-related keywords. People at the end of the buying cycle who are ready to purchase often search for the exact product name, so product names and variations of them should be your first keywords. These types of keywords work best on product and category pages, but a very popular product could be a good keyword for your home page, as well. Figure 1 shows an example brainstorm.

Figure 1: Example Brainstorm

Next, brainstorm more potential keywords. If you were looking for the kind of products you sell online, what would you search for? Make a list of all the variations you can think of, including both broad and specific keywords. It is important to come up with as many keyword phrases as possible before using the reverse search engine to extrapolate them into additional phrases. Use the following questions and considerations to help you brainstorm initial phrases:

- Write down the obvious phrases that people might search for when looking for what you sell.
- Come up with three- and four-word phrases that people might search.
- Consider location-based or regional keywords.
- Consider using a thesaurus to look for common alternate words and adjectives.
- Ask several friends or associates how they might search.
- Visit competitor's websites and find their Keyword Tag. Once there, view the Page Source (Menu > View > Source, or right-click > View Source). This will pull up a text file. Do a search (Menu > Edit > Find, or CTRL-F) for "keywords." The beginning should appear like this: <meta name="keywords" content=". After the final quotation mark, there should be a list of keyword phrases. These are the phrases your competitor is most concerned with. Use these to add to your list. Note that not all websites you visit will have this tag, so don't worry.
- View competitors' websites and read the text on the home page. Words that appear multiple times in headings or bold text are probably their keywords.
- Consider different groups of keywords for major product categories, if you sell several products on the site.
- Consider ways people might search, if they searched not for the product specifically, but for a problem the product or service solves. For example, if you sold a back brace, many people would search for "back brace." You should also consider a much wider view of the problem it solves. Phrases like "back injury," "back injury prevention," "backache," and "workplace safety," are all problems a back brace solves.

- Consider how people would search for information on the subject. For example, if you sell diabetes supplies, phrases like "diabetes info" and "diabetes information" would be relevant and should be added to your list.

The goal is to brainstorm at least 50 potential keywords before you even use a reverse search tool. This brainstorming session is important and should not be skipped. Work as hard as you can to come up with well over 50 relevant, but diverse, phrases.

Lastly, research your brainstormed keywords with a reverse search tool. Plug your list of product-related and potential keywords into the reverse search tool, the Google Adwords Keyword Tool, or other keyword tools to check the search volume and find other related keywords. Figure 2 shows how the Google Adwords Keyword Tool works.

Figure 2: Google Adwords Keyword Tool

Determine the Competition Level for Each Keyword

Now that you have a list of potential keywords you can use for your on-page search engine optimization, it's time to determine how competitive they are. When you first publish your site, your SEO strategy

should be based on keywords with low competition so you can start ranking for them faster. As your site gains PageRank and authority, you can incorporate more competitive keywords.

The strategy to determine the competition level of a given keyword is fairly straightforward. The following list outlines the basic steps. We'll then discuss each step in more detail.

1. Download the Google Chrome browser and either the SeoQuake plug-in or the SEO Status add-on for Chrome.
2. Search each keyword and use the plug-in or add-on to check the PageRank of each of your top 10 competitors for that keyword.
3. Record each keyword, its global monthly search volume, and the PageRank of the top 10 competitors in the SEO Keyword Research Document.
4. Delete the highest and the lowest PageRanks to calculate a true average.
5. Color-code keywords by Average PageRank according to the Competition Legend in the SEO Keyword Research Document.

Step 1: Download and Install the Right Tools

We recommend using the Google Chrome browser because it is one of the most up-to-date Internet browsers. It loads pages and images faster, and experiences fewer problems less often than other browsers. The Builder also tends to work better when you use Google Chrome.

The additional tools we recommend you install, either the SeoQuake plug-in or the SEO Status add-on, allow you to see the information you want to find out about your competitors, most notably their PageRank. Both tools also provide an Alexa traffic score (the lower the number, the more traffic the site gets). The SEO Status add-on is light and fast, but requires you to actually visit each competitor's website, making it better for occasional keyword research. It's also useful when you visit a website and want to know the PageRank immediately. The SeoQuake plug-in shows data on the search results page, so you don't have to visit each website; however, it can slow down the search and does not always work when you're logged into Chrome or your Gmail account.

How to Download and Install Google Chrome

To download and install Google Chrome, open any Internet browser and go to www.google.com. There may be an "Install Google Chrome" button on the search engine's homepage; if so, click that button. If not, type "Google Chrome" in the search bar and hit the Enter key or click "Google Search." Click on the first listing in the search results.

You will be redirected to a page all about Google Chrome. Click the large blue "Download Google Chrome" button in the top right corner. Figure 3 shows the "Download Google Chrome" page.
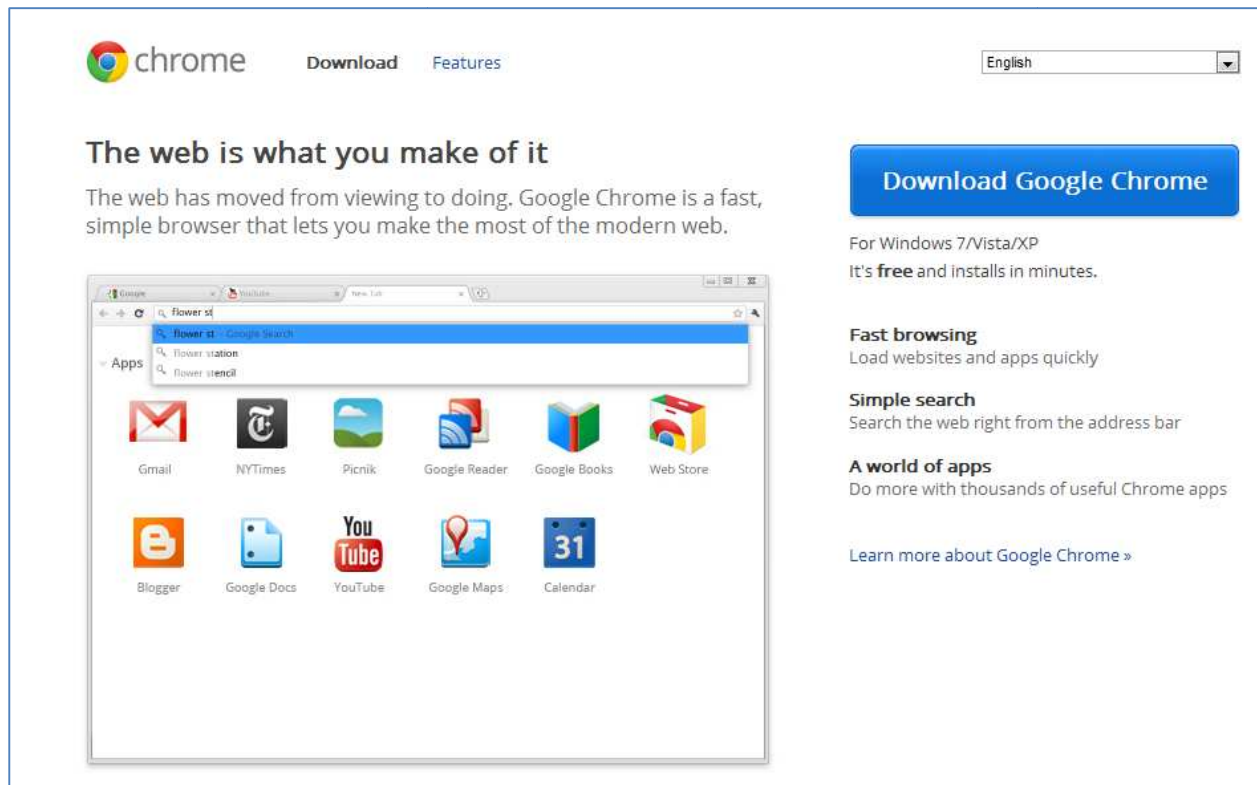
Figure 3: Download Google Chrome

The next screen displays Google Chrome's Terms of Service. To read it before installing the browser, click inside the box and scroll down, or click the up and down arrows on the right side of the box. Below the Terms of Service are two checkboxes. The first, "Set Google Chrome as my default browser," will already be checked for you. Click the checkbox once to remove the checkmark if you do not want Google Chrome to be the default browser. The second checkbox asks if you want the browser to automatically send statistics and crash reports to Google; click the checkbox once if you want to turn this option on. Next, click the blue "Accept and Install" button.

The Google Chrome Installer pop-up window will appear showing a green progress bar.

When the installation is complete, the Google Chrome Installer window will disappear. At the same time, the webpage will redirect to a thank you page. Your new browser should start automatically.

How to Download and Install the SeoQuake Plug-in for Google Chrome

To download and install the SeoQuake plug-in, open Google Chrome and go to www.seoquake.com. Click the large "Install SEOquake" button in the top half of the page. Figure 4 shows this button.

Figure 4: Install SeoQuake Button

You may see a pop-up or other notification asking if you want to continue. Click "Yes" or "Continue." You may also see another pop-up asking you to confirm the new extension. Click "Add."

The SeoQuake icon (see Figure 5) will be added in the top right corner of Google Chrome. Click the icon to manage the information the plug-in will display on your next search. Figure 6 shows the information the SeoQuake plug-in will return on your next search.

 Figure 5: SeoQuake Icon

Figure 6: Example Keyword Search with SeoQuake Information

How to Install the SEO Status Add-on for Google Chrome

To install the SEO Status add-on, open Google Chrome and go to chrome.google.com/webstore. On the Chrome Web Store home page, type "seo status" in the search bar and hit the Enter key.

Next you will see the search results for related applications in the Chrome Web Store. Click on the "SEO Status Pagerank/Alexa Toolbar" entry in the search results. On the SEO Status Add-on page, click the "Install" button. Figure 7 shows the SEO Status Add-on page.
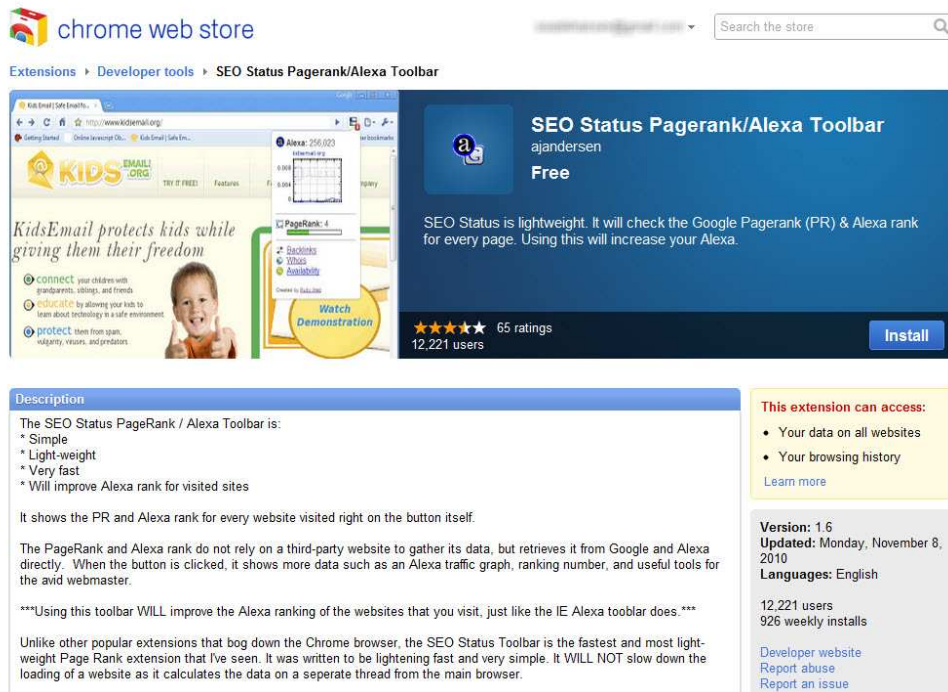
Figure 7: SEO Status Add-on Page

You will see a small bubble message at the top of the browser saying the SEO Status Add-on has been installed. The add-on will automatically appear as a button to the right of the address bar.

In addition to the message, the SEO Status Add-on page will also show that the add-on has been successfully installed, with a checkmark in place of the "Install" button.

To see how the SEO Status Add-on works, go to www.google.com. When you see the Google home page, look at the SEO Status Add-on button; it will show a blue bar completely filled in above a green bar mostly filled in with a number 9 (see Figure 8). The blue bar represents the website's Alexa traffic rank, while the green bar and the number represent its Google PageRank. For more information about the site, you can click on the SEO Status Add-on button.

 Figure 8: SEO Status Icon for Google Homepage

Step 2: Search Each Keyword

Once you have installed Google Chrome and one of the above SEO tools, go to www.google.com and search each keyword on your list. Make sure you are not logged into Google Chrome or your Gmail account when you search, as Google will show you skewed results based on the data it has collected about you.

Searching potential keywords shows who your top competitors are for each keyword. Only look at the ten natural results, not paid listings. Also disregard Google Places, Images, and Videos results.

Steps 3 & 4: Record Search Volume and Calculate Average PageRank

Use the SEO Keyword Research Document to record each keyword and its global monthly search volume as you plug each potential keyword in a reverse search engine. Then record the PageRank of each competing website for each keyword you search. The "Average" column will calculate the average PageRank for the keyword, and you can use the Competition Legend to determine how competitive the term is. When you have entered all ten PageRanks, delete the highest and the lowest number (if there are multiples of the highest or lowest number, then only delete one of them). Removing these outliers will help you find the true average PageRank. Figure 9 shows example keyword data in the SEO Keyword Research Document.

Keyword	Global Monthly Searches	Page Ranks										Average
watch	226,000,000	5	7	5	6	6	5	5	5	5	6	5.375
												0.000
												0.000

Figure 9: Example Keyword Data in SEO Keyword Research Document

The average PageRank and global monthly search volume for the keyword will help you decide if the term is a) non-competitive enough that you can rank for it and b) searched enough that it's worth your time to optimize for it. A good minimum monthly search volume to aim for is 1000 searches.

Step 5: Color-code the Keywords by Competition Level

The Competition Legend in the SEO Keyword Research Document assigns a color to an average PageRank range to help you quickly see the keywords you are likely to rank well for. Keywords with an average PageRank of 2.5 or less are considered low competition and are the easiest to rank for. Keywords with an average PageRank between 2.51 and 3.5 are medium competition, while average PageRanks higher than 3.51 make a keyword difficult to rank for. Figure 10 shows the Competition Legend in the SEO Keyword Research Document.

Competition Legend		
Green	0-2.5	Low Competition
Yellow	2.51-3.5	Medium Competition
Red	3.51+	High Competition

Figure 10: Competition Legend to Color-Code Keywords

Select all the low-competition keywords and highlight them in green. Then apply yellow highlighting to medium-competition keywords and red highlighting to high-competition keywords. Color-coding your keywords can help you quickly find the best keywords to utilize in your on-page SEO techniques.

What's Next

Now that you've brainstormed keywords and discovered their competition level, you're ready to put them in an SEO Plan for each page of your website.

Create an SEO Plan

While keyword research can take a lot of time, it is only a small part of your on-page optimization. Establishing a plan of action for utilizing your keyword research is important for organizing all the research you've done and helps you follow an overall SEO strategy.

An SEO plan outlines exactly which low-competition keywords you plan to use on which page and in which section. Creating an SEO plan for each page of your website ensures that you use all the right keywords in all the right places instead of haphazardly using key phrases at random.

To write your on-page optimization plan, use the SEO Plan with Keyword Map document. Designed to help you organize the most important on-page SEO components, this document provides the structure you need to track the keywords you'll use on a specific page of your site, measure the density of the keywords in the content, and make sure the keywords you choose are used in all the right places.

Start by creating an SEO plan for your home page and each product page, using separate SEO Plans for each page. Later, you can use the SEO Plan with Keyword Map document to help you optimize other pages in your site.

How to Use the SEO Plan Document

URL

The first part of the SEO Plan, and the first part of each webpage that you can optimize, is the URL. While the URL to each page needs to accurately reflect the destination, it should also contain keywords if you can fit them in. The URL should follow this format: www.mydomainname.com/keyworddestination. When you're optimizing your home page, the recommended URL ending is /home, but on other pages you can add keywords, especially individual product pages. Enter the URL of the page this SEO plan is for. Figure 1 shows an example URL in the SEO Plan document.

Figure 1: Example URL in SEO Plan Document

Keywords

Before you can add keywords to the other parts of a webpage that can be optimized, you have to know what keywords each page should be optimized for. The Keyword Map and Focus Keywords tables help you organize your keywords.

Keyword Map: To avoid stuffing the content of the page with keywords, you should use several related key phrases and decide which phrases are the most important. Copy and paste the 2 most important keywords from the SEO Keyword Research Document into the "Primary Keyword Phrases" column, 2 less important terms in the "Secondary" column, and 2 least important terms in the "Tertiary" column. Secondary and tertiary keyword phrases are often synonyms for the primary keywords or topical words

you would probably use to describe your product anyway. These 3 columns represent the keywords you want to use throughout the whole page. Figure 2 shows the Keyword Map portion of the SEO Plan document.

Primary Keyword Phrases	Secondary Keyword Phrases	Tertiary Keyword Phrases
Men's designer watch	Men's wrist watch	Men's gold watch
Men's dress watch	Best men's watches	Men's chronograph watches

Figure 2: Keyword Map in the SEO Plan Document

Focus Keywords: This table allows you to list how many times you want each keyword to occur in the page copy and what the density will be if each keyword occurs that many times. Density for individual keywords should be from 1% to 2%; keywords that are very similar, such as "men" and "mens", should have a combined keyword density of 1% to 2%. After writing your copy, track the density of your keywords and record the densities in this table. Figure 3 shows the Focus Keywords portion of the SEO Plan document.

Keyword	Occurrences in Copy	Density
Men's designer watch	10	2%
Men's dress watch	7	1.4%
Men's wrist watch	5	1%
Best men's watches	4	0.8%
Men's gold watch	3	.06%
Men's chronograph watches	3	.06%

Figure 3: Focus Keywords in the SEO Plan Document

Meta Tags

After specifying which keywords you want to use and the density you want to aim for, write the meta tags, also called meta data, for this page using those keywords. Meta tags are part of the code of your website, meaning they are seen only by search engines and anyone who views the HTML or source of the page. However, the title and description you write also appear in search results, which means meta tags have 2 purposes:

1. tell search engines what the page is about
2. convince searchers to come to your site

There are three types of meta tags for each page.

- **Title:** This tag appears in the bar at the top of your Internet browser and as the title of a search result. Use your primary keywords and 1 or 2 of your secondary and tertiary keywords if you can fit them in and still sound natural. Include the name of the page and separate sections with pipes, which you can find on the key above Enter. Limit the Title tag to 60 characters.
- **Keywords:** This tag tells the search engines what this webpage is about, and does not appear in search results. Include up to 7 keywords and phrases for each page.

- **Description:** This tag is what searchers see under the title in the search results. Using complete sentences, enter a description that uses your primary keywords for this page while convincing readers to visit your site and perform a specific action.

Figure 4 below shows an example of each meta tag.

Meta Tags

Title: (make sure keyword phrases are included | use pipes between | no commas)

Quality Watches: The best men's watches online | Men's designer watches, dress watches, and more

Keywords: (5-6 of the focus phrases using all of the keywords separated by commas)

men's designer watch, men's dress watch, men's wrist watch, best men's watches, men's gold watch, men's chronograph watches

Description: (sentence format including all keywords, approx. 2 sentences, give a call to action)

Quality Watches specializes in men's designer watches and dress watches at lower than retail prices. Check out our selection to find the perfect men's wrist watch for work and parties!

Figure 4: Example Meta Tags in the SEO Plan Document

Headings

Heading tags are another place to use the keywords listed in the Keyword Map. Using headings in your copy makes the page easy to skim, which readers like, and search engines consider them more heavily than regular text. The SEO Plan with Keyword Map document includes 1 top-level heading (H1) and 1 sub-heading (H2). You can copy and paste these to add more headings, or increase the numbers to create smaller sub-headings. Figure 5 shows example heading tags.

Heading Tags
(use keyword phrases)

H1: Welcome to Quality Watches

H2: Discounts on Men's Designer Watches

Figure 5: Example Heading Tags in the SEO Plan Document

To apply heading tags to the headings in your copy, enter the H1 text in the "Heading" field of an element in the Builder, or select text and assign it a heading style from the Format drop-down menu of a Text element.

Alt Image Tags

Alt image tags, short for alternate image tags, describe the photos and images on your webpage and are only visible to search engines and users who can't or choose not to see photos. Search engines can't "read" images like they can read text, so an alt tag gives the search engine the text it needs to understand the image. Alt tags also appear when images are broken or hidden. Each photo or image on your page should have an alt tag. Each alt image tag should use the same keyword phrases you used in the meta title. Figure 6 shows example alt image tags.
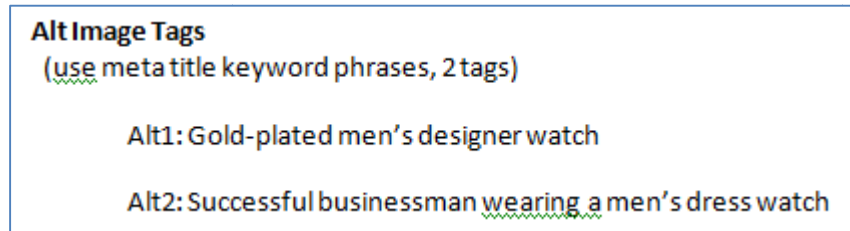
Figure 6: Example Alt Image Tags in the SEO Plan Document

The SEO Plan with Keyword Map document includes 2 spaces for alternate image text. To create alt image tags in the Builder, enter the Alt1 or Alt2 text in the "Alternate" field for an image or icon.

Copy

The last part of the SEO Plan with Keyword Map document gives you space to write the page copy. Copy refers to the main text of the page that visitors read, and it should use all the keywords you listed in the Keyword Map portion of the document. Aim for the density you listed for each keyword in the Focus Keywords table, and remember that you can change your copy anytime.

What's Next

Your SEO Plan outlines where and how often you use the keywords from your research. The next step is to actually write the copy for each webpage, using the elements of good web writing discussed in the next section.

Guidelines for Writing Copy for the Web

Writing effective advertising copy for your website is a delicate balance between writing a message that is pleasing to the reader and also pleasing to the search engines. The instructions below are rough guidelines for how to write copy around a small handful of keyword phrases assigned for the page.

What Search Engines Want

More than anything, search engines want a page to be about something, and to be about that something consistently from the top of the page to the bottom. Search engines look for congruity of relevance throughout the webpage. If a search engine examines a page for the relevance of the phrase "herb garden," and sees the phrase "herb garden" in the title, description, and keyword tags, they know the page claims to be about the concept of "herb garden."

Then the search engine will look at the actual page to see if it really is about the concept of "herb garden." If the headline on the page talks about "herb garden" and the opening paragraph, main body paragraphs, and concluding paragraph all talk about the concept of "herb garden", and even the images are about "herb garden" (per the image alt tags), then the search engines must conclude that the page is indeed relevant to "herb garden." Coupled with a reasonable PageRank, it is almost irresistible for search engines to decide to rank that page high for the phrase "herb garden."

To that end, search engines want:

1. **Keyword Positioning & Distribution** – The focus keywords should appear evenly distributed from top to bottom on the page, ideally in phrase combinations as often as possible. A page that talks about a particular keyword at the top half of a page, but not the bottom half, isn't about that keyword.

2. **Keyword Density** – Each individual keyword should appear on the page with an overall density of between **1% and 2%**. This means if your text is 400 words long, each individual keyword should appear on the page between 4 and 8 times. The exception to this is regional keywords. If any regional keywords are assigned, they can appear with less density, but should never drop below 1% of the total word count.

3. **Word Count** – In order to perform well in search results, a page should have no less than 300 total words, and the more words, the better. We recommend every page have at least 500 to 750 words. That much copy on the page has two important benefits: first, it gives you more room to use target keywords and related phrases; and second, it improves visitor experience by providing useful information. Since search engines exist to direct users to great sites with the information they want, more copy never hurts.

What Visitors Want

Simply stated, visitors want a website that gives them exactly what they're looking for quickly and easily. They want to a read a message that sounds like a person fluent in the language wrote it. Visitors need to feel that their desires and problems are important, that the website they're visiting is trustworthy, and that you can help them find what they want or solve their problem.

To give your visitors what they want and create a message that is truly effective, your copy must satisfy two separate aspects of good messaging for the web: what the words say & how the words are formatted.

What the Words Say

Below are some guidelines for writing strong messaging:

Be direct – Use straightforward, simple and direct language. The web is much more a direct response tool than it is a branding tool. Write clearly and to the point. Avoid jargon and industry insider lingo.

Focus on value proposition – Value answers the visitors' question "Why?" Why should the reader conclude that your offering is worth their time to investigate further? What makes your company, offering, service, or solution different or better than the competition?

Write in the active voice – "Our clients experience improved sound quality" is more powerful than "Improved sound quality is experienced by our clients." The active voice is punchy, direct, powerful and communicates a stronger message with fewer words.

Don't overuse adjectives & adverbs – Lazy writing often relies on adjectives and adverbs to strengthen the message. In fact, in many cases stronger verbs and nouns would do a better job and do it with fewer words. Which is stronger: Clean, or Very Clean? If you think about it, the word 'very' actually weakens the concept of clean. Adjectives and adverbs can be useful in your copy, but always try to use the best verb or noun for the job.

Highlight benefits – Strong ad copy on the web doesn't just discuss features, it also discusses benefits. What's in it for your clients? How does your product or solution change their lives or solve a problem? A feature might be the trendy nature of the product; the benefit of the feature might be the increased dates or job offers the customer gets because of the trendy product. Customers buy because of benefits, not just features.

Appeal to emotion – Aristotle taught that a great message has three elements: ethos, logos and pathos. In English those are: **credibility, logic and emotion**. Emotion is most often overlooked, and is occasionally difficult to weave into a message. Good emotions to appeal to might be a sense of frustration, impatience, fear, envy, greed, annoyance, or jealousy, with the idea that your product or service solves these problems or helps customers get what they want. Buyers respond better if they feel their problem acutely, and writing to highlight a negative emotion helps present your offering as a positive solution to their pain. "Shave 3 strokes off your golf score" is not nearly as powerful as "Never be the butt of golf jokes again." The latter message is more powerful because it is an emotional appeal. Also consider that the former is really much more of a feature, and the latter actually a powerful benefit. Benefits and emotion often go hand in hand.

Include a Call to Action – Be sure to tell the reader what you want them to do next: register for a webinar, fill out a form to request more info, request a free quote, call, download a report, etc. Make sure the call to action stands out and is clear.

Include testimonials – If possible, include a strong testimonial or two, maybe in a sidebar. Testimonials can add power and credibility to your message.

How the Words are Formatted

Good web copy is not only powerful messaging. It's also inviting, visually appealing, and easy to skim. Long messaging is completely fine as long as it is easily skimmed. Below are some tools you can use to help format your webpage copy:

Headings & Sub-headings – Headings and Sub-headings naturally add skimmability and break up the message into digestible chunks. They also allow visitors to find exactly the information they're looking for.

Bold, Italic, Underline & Color – Judicious use of these tools to highlight key concepts in the text add variety, make the messaging more interesting, and draw the eye to the most important concepts on the page.

Bulleted or Numbered Lists – Bullet points draw the eye like no other formatting tool in your arsenal. If you want a concept to get skimmed, then set it apart in a bullet point list. Benefits and features make great candidates for bullet points.

Tables – If you need to convey complex information or define and explain bullet points, a table is an organized way to offer that information in a small, easy-to-read space.

Sidebars – Sidebars might include a glossary, key points summary, testimonials, call to action, tips, and more. Sidebars draw the eye and tend to get skimmed. They also add variety and make the page more inviting.

Images & Captions – Including images interspersed in the text breaks up the message and makes the page more appealing and inviting. Including a relevant image or two can do wonders. Use captions for your images, as they have a high probability of getting read.

Links – Where appropriate, a colored link to another relevant page within your site also breaks up the page and improves site navigation. As an added bonus, search engines love to see websites with lots of internal links within the text of the site. Judicious links to external resources also improve user experience.

Figure 1 is an excellent example of easy-to-read web writing. Notice the multiple colors, links, headings, bold and italic text, and bullet points.

Make Your Modern Metal Wall Display Reflect *YOUR* Personality!

*Any wall art work or modern decor at Modern Abstract Decor can be recreated to meet **size and color** specifications upon request. Visit our **Custom Metal Art** page and fill out the form with the details of your custom artwork request and we will promptly respond with an estimate. Whether you would like to tweak one of the artist's existing pieces or you have an idea for your own modern metal wall art or sculpture design, we are happy to work with you. We work frequently with both businesses and individuals in their metallic artwork needs, so please do not hesitate to contact us with requests for custom wall panels, floor sculptures, clocks, vases, random home decor, and even metallic signs and company logo displays.*

Note: All of our metalwork is signed & dated by the artist for authenticity

Why Buy Your Modern Metal Wall Art from *ModernAbstractDecor.com*?

- **Hand-Crafted:** All of our metallic wall panels, sculptures, and home/office decor is hand-crafted in the USA by modern artist and sculptor **Nicholas Yust**.

- **Experience:** The artist has over a decade of experience as a metal artist, creating breath-taking modern metal wall art and metallic decor; specializing in Aluminum Art, Stainless Steel Art and Copper Art - while also working with Brass, Bronze and various coloring techniques as well.

- **Design & Quality:** His metalwork emphasizes a unique modern design, signature metal grind patterns, and exceptional quality.

- **Free Samples:** We offer Sample Art Pieces for our clients to view how the actual finished metal art panel will appear, before committing to a purchase. This allows the customer to handle the art work and view the exceptional quality of the artist's work.

- **International Prestige:** Nicholas Yust's metal wall art, modern decor and free-standing metal work has been sold worldwide, including Britain, Germany, Singapore, Canada, Australia, Denmark, Austria, Bulgaria, Netherlands, Japan, China, Puerto Rico, the United States, and even the Middle East. Modern artwork connoisseur's from around the globe appreciate the precision and emotion that goes into every piece of metallic artwork and modern art decor that the artist creates.

- **Customizable:** Our modern metalwork can be built large or small, depending upon your needs. We can comfortably create metal wall pieces 10 feet wide (and wider in most cases) and free-standing metal works up to 6 or 7 feet tall. In some cases we can enlarge the pieces even more, depending on the artwork selected and the metal used to create it.

With EVERY ORDER of our Modern Metal Artwork We Offer:

- Outstanding customer service with an account manager to answer all questions about your new handmade metalwork. Put us to the test!

- Packaging and Shipping of your metallic wall decor or sculpture with extreme care by our professional art gallery staff. If it is wall art, each panel is wrapped and padded individually, and all metallic sculptures and decor is wrapped securely. In addition, all of our metalwork is shipped 100% insured.

- FREE SHIPPING on all standard-sized metal art work, and free or reduced shipping on most pieces for international orders. We work hard to keep our clients happy, and offering free shipping on our metal artwork is just one way we say 'Thank You.'

- 100% Secure Online Payment Processing - All credit card transactions are processed via 128-bit Encryption Key over a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) providing the highest level of Security. Purchase your metal decor with confidence, knowing that your personal information is safe. We also accept checks and money orders upon request.

Upgrade Your Image: Modern Art to Last a Lifetime
Custom Colors to Match Your Taste
Hand-mixed custom paint on every sculpture
Improve Your Home/Office Style
Artist patented, signature grind patterns

Why Choose Us?
(click to learn)

Hand-crafted, Not Imported!
Signed & dated by artist for authenticity
Impress the Neighbors, Inside & Out
Protective clear coat for indoor & outdoor placement
Don't Risk Buying 'Pop Can' Quality Art
Only environmentally friendly, space-grade metal alloys are used.

Figure 1: Good Web Writing Example

What's Next

With keyword research, an SEO plan for each page of your site, and effective web copy that pleases both search engines and readers, you have completed the on-page half of search engine optimization. The next step is to build links and improve your PageRank using the off-page optimization techniques discussed in Part 2.

Part 2: Off-Page SEO

Live Directories

Live web directories are large, topical, searchable directories whose content is maintained by actual humans instead of robots. You submit your website and a brief description of it to the directory, and the directory personnel review your site and decide whether to include it in their index. Sites in the index are located by browsing, by category, or by searching using simple keyword matching.

Submitting your site to live web directories is an important part of your off-page SEO because they provide valuable links from reputable sources. Many of the best web directories power the indexes of smaller directories, so a link from the Yahoo Directory might lead to several more links from other directories as their indexes are updated.

There are hundreds of web directories on the Internet, each of varying importance. You only need to submit your site to a few of the most important directories, which include:
- ODP
- Yahoo
- About.com

Top Live Directories to Submit To

Open Directory Project (ODP)

(www.dmoz.org)
The ODP, also known as DMOZ, accepts submissions for free but takes several weeks to add sites to the index. ODP is the highest quality live directory on the web and uses hundreds of sub-categories to organize its index. ODP also provides search listings to other portals. For example, Google's live directory (directory.google.com) is a mirror of the ODP, and Google values a link from ODP more than almost any other on the Internet.

How to Submit Your Website to ODP

Open your Internet browser and go to www.dmoz.org. Once you see the home page for ODP, enter the primary keyword phrase for your website in the "Search" field at the top of the page and click the "Search" button. Figure 1 shows the ODP home page.

dmoz open directory project

In partnership with
AoI Search.

about dmoz | dmoz blog | suggest URL | help | link | editor login

Search *advanced*

Arts
Movies, Television, Music...

Business
Jobs, Real Estate, Investing...

Computers
Internet, Software, Hardware...

Games
Video Games, RPGs, Gambling...

Health
Fitness, Medicine, Alternative...

Home
Family, Consumers, Cooking...

Kids and Teens
Arts, School Time, Teen Life...

News
Media, Newspapers, Weather...

Recreation
Travel, Food, Outdoors, Humor...

Reference
Maps, Education, Libraries...

Regional
US, Canada, UK, Europe...

Science
Biology, Psychology, Physics...

Shopping
Clothing, Food, Gifts...

Society
People, Religion, Issues...

Sports
Baseball, Soccer, Basketball...

World
Català, Dansk, Deutsch, Español, Français, Italiano, 日本語, Nederlands, Polski, Русский, Svenska...

Become an Editor Help build the largest human-edited directory of the web

Copyright © 2011 Netscape

4,897,671 sites - 91,874 editors - over 1,007,233 categories

Figure 1: ODP Home Page

The search will give you a list of potential categories and sub-categories that your website might fit in to. If you see one that looks like it would be a good fit, click on that link. If you don't see a category that fits, click on the "more…" link in the middle of the page.

If you still don't see a category that fits, try entering a new keyword phrase into the "search" field at the bottom of the page and clicking the "New Search" button to see if you can find a category that better fits your website.

Once you have found the right category, click the "Suggest URL" link at the top of the page. This will open a page with instructions for submitting your site to the Open Directory.

Scroll down to the "Site URL" field and enter the URL for your home page. Just below the URL field is the question, "What type of link is this?" Make sure you select "Regular."

Next, enter the title or name of your site. Don't stuff your title full of keywords and do not use all capital letters or promotional language. Doing so could get your submission rejected by the editors.

Then enter a description of your site to help directory users decide if your link is worth following. The description should be 25 to 30 words long and written in complete sentences with proper English. Make the description objective, as if you were a reader looking for the best information on your subject.

Enter your email address in the "Your E-mail Address" field and enter the text from the image in the "User Verification" field. If you cannot read the text, click the "Get New Text" button.

Lastly, you must agree to the Terms of Use and grant the directory editors the rights to change the title, description and category of your link. To do so, click the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page.

Yahoo! Directory

(dir.yahoo.com)
The Yahoo Directory is one of the most trafficked on the entire web, despite the fact that Yahoo no longer gives priority to their live directory listings. This directory uses both free and paid submission options. The paid submission costs $299 per year and ensures that directory editors will review your submission within seven days. Commercial sites are generally not listed unless they use the paid submission option. Figure 2 shows the Yahoo Directory home page.
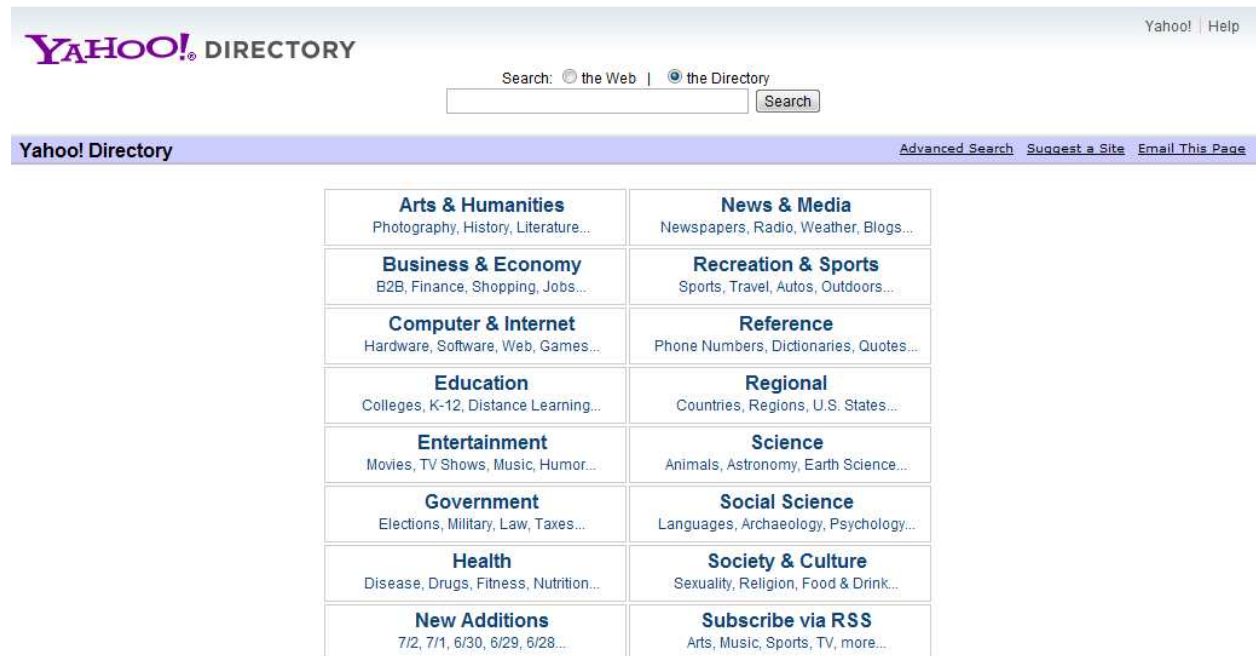
Figure 2: Yahoo Directory Home Page

About.com

(www.about.com)

About.com has a web directory, but it is extremely picky. You must submit to the most relevant category in the directory. It is quite difficult to qualify for a review, but it is worth the time to make the submission anyway. Figure 3 shows the categories available in the About.com directory.
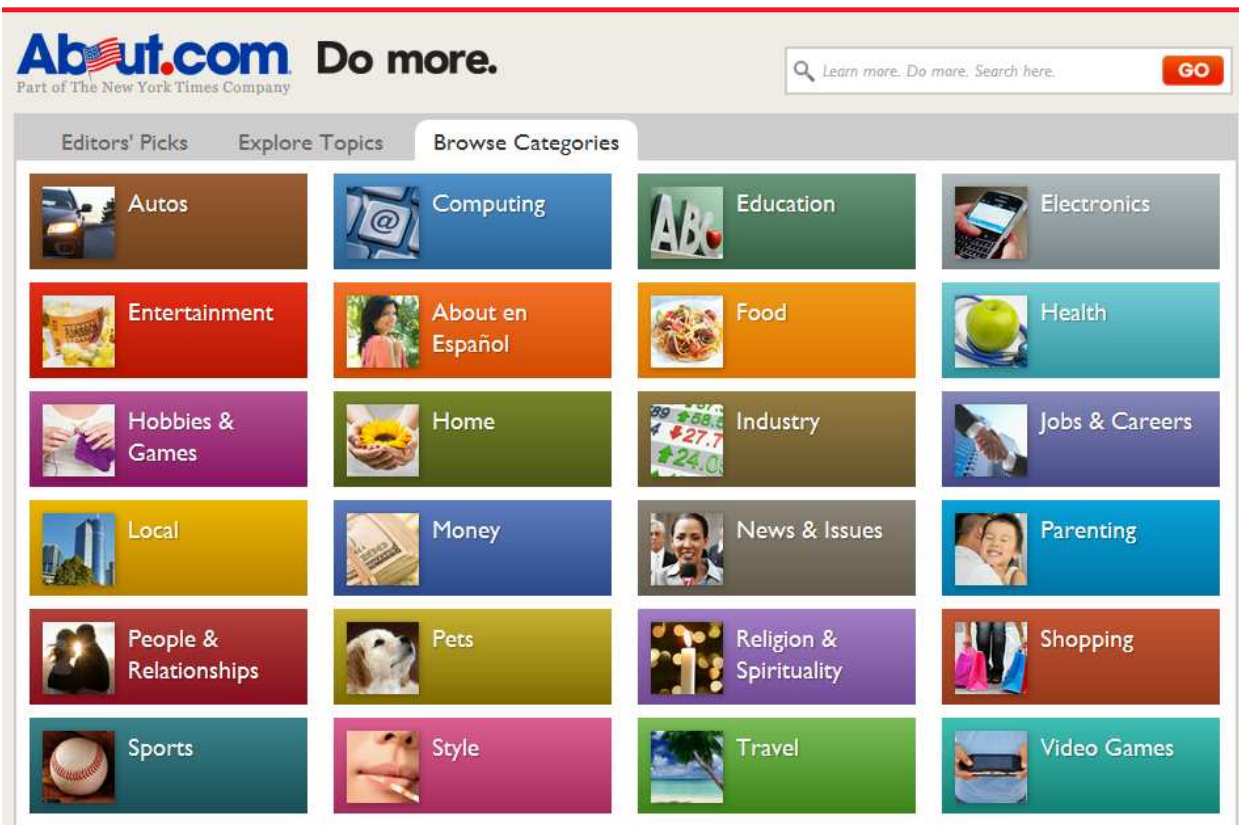
Figure 3: About.com Directory Categories

Find the most appropriate topic and submit via a friendly email to that topic's guide. Include your domain name and a brief, simple description (25 words or less). Do not include any marketing in this message, but rather information to help the guide understand what your website offers. The guide will decide if they wish to include the link on their topic site. All descriptions are subject to the guide's editorial discretion.

Tips for Web Directory Submission

The following list provides several general ideas that will improve your efforts in submitting to web directories:

- Most web directories use an alphabetical index. This means that in the bottom-level category pages, the listings appear in alphabetical order based on the content of the title. Having an alphabetically friendly title can be worth more traffic. However, falsely alphabetized titles can get your submission rejected. "AAAAA Zodiac Readings and More" is an example of a falsely alphabetized title.

- Carefully read and comply with all the terms and listing guidelines. Many web directories take these guidelines very seriously and are watchful for the slightest non-compliance. Irrelevant keywords, marketing hype, forced alphabetization, incomplete websites, and other non-compliances may result in your listing being rejected.

- Avoid any marketing hype. Most editors like sterile, boring, accurate descriptions. Avoid hyperbole and exclamation points. Editors may modify your title and description, so it pays to fully comply to avoid loss of your editorial control.

Other Web Directories

We've outlined the most important web directories to submit to, but there are hundreds of live directories you can use. Some of the best additional directories include:
- jayde.com
- bizweb.com
- rdirectory.com

What's Next

Submitting your website to these important live directories is the foundation of good website promotion. The next step is to use social bookmarks to get varied links and traffic to your site.

Social Bookmarks

Social bookmarks are exactly like the bookmarks stored by your Internet browser, except that you can access them anywhere and other users can see them, too. Upon creating an account for the social bookmarking site, you add a link by entering the URL of the page you want to bookmark. Most social bookmarks also ask for a description of the page and tags, or keywords, so other users can find your bookmarks when they search the site.

Bookmarking your website on social bookmark sites is important to your off-page SEO efforts because they provide varied links from high PageRank, high traffic sources, and they bring some of the power of social media to your link building. As more and more people use social media, Google counts links and shares on social platforms more heavily than non-social links.

There are hundreds of social bookmarking sites on the web, each with varying features, audiences, and SEO value. The most important social bookmarks to use in your off-page SEO efforts are:
- Delicious
- StumbleUpon
- Digg

How to Bookmark Websites with Delicious

Delicious is an attractive site to get links from because it has strong traffic and high PageRank, and you have complete control over the link and its anchor text. To bookmark your website, open an Internet browser and go to delicious.com. Log in to your account and click the "Save a New Bookmark" or "Add Link" button.

On the following page, enter the URL of your website's home page, and click the "Next" button. You will see an expanded listing for your bookmark with room for the title of the webpage, notes, and tags. In most cases, Delicious automatically pulls the title of the page for the URL you entered. Figure 4 shows this step of creating a bookmark.

Figure 4: Save a New Bookmark on Delicious

If the title does not contain the most important keywords you want to rank for, edit the title of your bookmark to contain those keywords.

Next, enter the keywords you want to rank for in the "Tags" field. Other Delicious users may find your bookmark if the tags you use match their search terms, so you can be more liberal with the keywords you use here.

Lastly, click the "Save" button to save your bookmark. This will redirect you to your Bookmarks page where you can see all the bookmarks you've created and add more.

How to Bookmark Websites with StumbleUpon

StumbleUpon is an attractive site to get links from because it has strong traffic and high PageRank. To get started, open an Internet browser and go to stumbleupon.com. Log in to your account and navigate to your Profile. At the bottom of the left column, you can click on the "Add a new page" link to open an entry form where you can type in your site's URL and a review of your site.

First, enter your site's URL – complete with the www -- in the "Web page address" field. Next, select whether the site you are recommending is safe for work. Tell StumbleUpon what the page is about by selecting a topic from the drop-down menu. Then enter important keywords in the "Add Tags" field and enter a description of your site in the "Write a comment" field.

Make sure the language drop-down menu is set to the language of your site. Lastly, click on the "Add This Page" button to complete the process. This will bring you back to your Profile page where you should now see a link to your site. Figure 5 shows the Add a New Page entry form.

Figure 5: Add a New Page on StumbleUpon

How to Bookmark Websites with Digg

Digg is a news-based social bookmark site where the community votes a link up or down, making it ideal for press releases and blog posts. In addition to strong traffic and high PageRank, Digg also gives you complete control over the link and its anchor text. To get started, open an Internet browser and go to digg.com. Log in to your account and click the green "Submit Link" button at the top of the screen.

A small pop-up window will appear asking you to enter the link to the webpage you want to submit. Enter the URL of your home page and click the "Submit" button.

Next, you will see an expanded listing for your link with fields for the title, description, and topic. In most cases, Digg automatically pulls the title of the page for the URL you entered. If the title does not contain the most important keywords you want to rank for, edit the title of your bookmark to contain those keywords. Then enter a keyword-rich description of your website. Make sure to use the same keywords you optimized your web page for.

Below the Description is a drop-down list of topics. Choose the most relevant topic for your website from this list. Finally, click the "Digg it" button at the bottom left of the window. Digg will then show you

a confirmation window to let you know that your story was submitted successfully. Figure 6 shows the expanded listing for the new link.
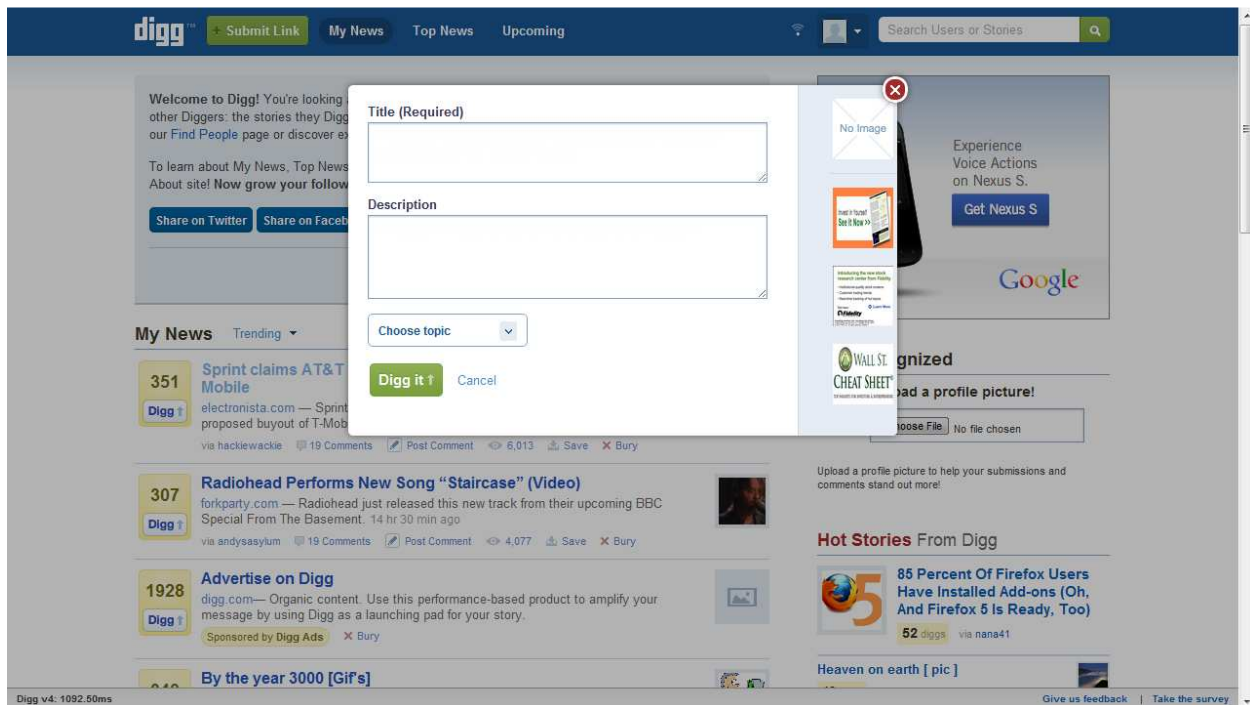
Figure 6: Submit Link to Digg

Other Social Bookmarks

We've covered the most important social bookmarks to use, but there are plenty of others. Some additional resources you might consider using include:
- pinterest.com
- reddit.com

What's Next

Links from live web directories and social bookmarks provide the foundation of your off-page SEO by strengthening your PageRank. The next level of link-building—article marketing—increases your expertise and authority, and can help drive more traffic.

Articles and Web 2.0

While live directories and social bookmarks provide a varied foundation for your link building efforts, publishing content on article directories and web 2.0 platforms helps you build expertise and engage with your target customers as well as send links to your site. Because articles and web 2.0 resources focus more on the reader and less on the link itself, these links are much more valuable in terms of off-page SEO. These links are also capable of sending a lot more traffic your way.

There are hundreds of article directories and web 2.0 platforms on the Internet. You should only publish content on a few of the best to reap the most benefits from your effort. The most important article directories and web 2.0 resources to use are:
- EzineArticles
- Squidoo
- HubPages
- Tumblr

Some Tips on Writing Articles for Link Building

Writing articles for the purpose of building links back to your site can be tricky. You want to write them fairly quickly so you can get them published, but you also want to convince readers that you are a reputable, trustworthy resource and get them to interact with you by following your author profile, commenting on the article, or sharing it online. Use the following tips to help you create expertise-building, engagement-promoting articles and web 2.0 content.

1. **Keep articles between 400 and 600 words.** This length is short enough to be quick and easy to read (and write) but long enough to show readers that you know what you're writing about.

2. **Write about a very specific topic.** The more specific the article topic is, the easier it is to write. Narrowing down the topic also helps build expertise in a short article.

3. **Read and follow the publishing guidelines.** These guidelines stipulate the length of an article, disallowed topics, how many links you can include, and more. Not following the rules will get your content unpublished and may get your profile banned.

4. **Cite your sources.** Telling people where you got your information builds trust. It's also an easy way to link back to an article, blog post, or product on your site.

How to Publish an Article on EzineArticles

EzineArticles is the top directory for articles to build links and direct traffic back to your site. This article directory uses human editors to maintain their high standards, and requires articles of at least 400 words. To get started, open an Internet browser and go to ezinearticles.com. Log into your account and click on the "Write & Edit" tab at the top of your home page.

Next, you'll see the Submit New Article page, which outlines each part of an article (see Figure 1). When you hover the cursor over one of these components, it will be highlighted in yellow. Click anywhere in

the yellow highlighting to edit that component. A pop-up will appear with the appropriate text boxes; enter the text for that part of the article, then click the "Save" button in the pop-up.

Figure 1: Submit New Article to EzineArticles.com

Every component shown on the "Submit New Article" page is required except the Schedule option, which is only available to premium members. Below is a description of each required part:

- **Title:** Must be 100 characters or less and include your most important keyword. The title should also give an accurate idea of what the article is about.
- **Category:** Categories and sub-categories help EzineArticles organize their huge repository of articles and help readers find articles that interest them.
- **Summary:** Summaries appear only in search results, not in the actual article. They should use keywords and give an accurate idea of what the article is about.
- **Body:** The actual article goes in the Body section. Use keywords throughout and offer quality content.
- **Author:** Automatically filled in with your author name, which you determined when you created your account.
- **Resource Box:** The most important section of the section of the article for link building purposes, because the Resource Box is the only part of the article where you can include a link. You can create a new resource box that you use for multiple articles or a custom resource box specifically for this article.
- **Keywords:** Enter your top keywords to help search engines find your articles.

When you've finished editing each component of the article, you can see what it would look like by clicking the "Preview Article" button. When you're ready to publish it, click the "Submit This Article" button. Because EzineArticles uses human editors and reviewers, it may take several days for your article to appear on the site.

How to Create a Lens on Squidoo

Squidoo pages, called lenses, are useful website promotion tools because you are in complete control of the content on the page, the link and the anchor text. Lenses can also become hubs for interaction with good use of comments, polls, and other community components. To get started, open an Internet browser and go to squidoo.com. Click the "Sign Up" button to create your account.

Step 1: Build the Lens with the Lens Wizard

Upon creating and verifying your account, you will see your Dashboard, from which you can create and manage lenses. To create a new lens, click the "Create a Lens" button. This will take you through the lens wizard, a step-by-step guide that helps you build your first lens.

This first page of the wizard is called "Step 1: What's your page going to be about?" In the field following "My page is about," enter a highly specific word, term or phrase that describes the main subject of your lens. This should be related to the products or services you offer on your website and can be the title of your lens. Click the "Continue" button at the bottom right.

The next screen is called "Step 2: Title your page" (see Figure 2). There are four things you need to do on this page:

1. Choose a title for your lens that tells readers exactly what's on the page and entices them to read it.
2. Set your URL. This field will automatically fill in with the title you just entered, but you can change the ending that comes after the domain.
3. Choose the main topic most related to your lens to help Squidoo users find lenses of interest to them; do this by clicking the down arrow to the right of the "Pick your topic" field to show the drop-down menu of topics, then choose the one most related to your lens by clicking on it once. A subtopic drop-down menu may appear for some categories.
4. Choose a rating for your lens by clicking the arrow to show the drop-down menu of options: G rated if it's safe for general viewing or R rated if viewing should be restricted. Click the "Continue" button at the bottom.

The next screen, "Step 3: Tag your page," asks you to add tags to your page to help readers find your lens. Tags in Squidoo are like keywords for search engines, so choose the best keywords from your product research. Entering the best tag in the first field is required; additional tags are optional. Then enter the security code into the appropriate field and click the "Continue" button at the bottom.

Step 4 of the wizard tells you how you can earn money from your lens. All Squidoo pages generate income through affiliate relationships with partners, including Amazon, Google and eBay, so you must choose one of the three options for this step. You can donate the income your lens generates to the Squidoo Charity Fund, pick a specific charity to donate to, or have Squidoo pay you the income through your PayPal account. Select a payment option, then click the "Continue" button at the bottom.

Step 2: Complete the Lens in the Workshop

The next screen, called the Workshop, shows all the components, called modules, that you can add to this lens. At the top of the screen is the Workshop Menu Bar, which we will use in the next step. Under that is the title of the lens, which you can change by clicking the "Edit Title" button to the right. Below the title you will see sections of your lens, including an introduction and new text module. The introduction and highly popular modules, such as Text, Amazon and Guestbook, will always be present in the Workshop of every lens; you can add others using the "Add Modules" button on the Workshop Menu Bar at the top of the screen. Figure 3 shows the lens Workshop.

Figure 3: Lens Workshop on Squidoo

To learn more about modules, click the "Add Modules" button in the Workshop Menu Bar at the top of the page. A pop-up window will appear with a Module Tour, which will acquaint you with the way modules work and some of the most popular modules available.

After you've taken the Module Tour, you can click on the tabs on the left of the window to add more modules to the lens, or you can use the Introduction, Text, Amazon, and Guestbook (comments) modules already in the lens. The Introduction and at least one Text module are required. You'll probably want to delete the Amazon module. To do so, click the "X" button to the right of the module.

To add content to any module, click the "Edit" button to the right of the module. A new pop-up window will appear with empty fields for the title, subtitle and description for every module. You can also upload a photo or image to accompany the text, label the photo and link it to a URL. Think of text modules as text boxes and the titles as headings for the different sections of your lens. Figure 4 shows the pop-up window for editing a Text module.

Figure 4: Editing a Text Module in the Lens Workshop

To insert a link to your website in the description area of a module, you can simply type the URL or you can use basic HTML code to create clickable text. Here is an example:

clickable text

When you have finished editing, click "Save".

The pop-up window will disappear and you will see the new content you added in the module. Notice that the link is automatically blue, making it easier to see the link and click on it.

Step 3: Publish the Lens

When you have finished adding content to the lens, click the "Preview" button in the Workshop Menu Bar at the top of the page (see Figure 3). This will bring up a pop-up window showing you what your lens will look like after you publish it. If your content needs work, you can click "Save Draft" on the Workshop Menu Bar to work on it later; if it looks right, you can click "Publish" to put it online right now.

When you publish, a pop-up window will appear with options to see your lens live or share it on Facebook or Twitter. Keep in mind you can also share your lens with social bookmarks.

Photos and multiple modules make a lens more attractive, more likely to be shared, and more likely to be included in the Squidoo search results.

How to Create a Hub on HubPages

Like Squidoo, HubPages is an excellent link building resource thanks to its high PageRank, strong traffic, and community components that encourage engagement and interaction. To get started, open an Internet browser and go to hubpages.com. Log in to your account and click the "Start a New Hub button" under your profile picture.

Next, you'll see the Create a Hub page, where you can enter the basic information for the hub. As you click in each field, a box of tips and requirements may appear to the right. First, enter the title and URL of this hub. Then browse or search for a category to organize your hub. The default type of hub is an article, but you can change the type if you want to post a video or recipe. Lastly, add the two best keywords for this hub as tags and click the "Continue" button. Figure 5 shows the Create a Hub page.

Figure 5: Create a Hub Page

In the hub editing tool, the category and title you entered will appear at the top followed by an introduction area, which includes a Text Capsule and a Photo Capsule side by side. On the right you will see the "Add More Capsules" area. Clicking on one of the available capsules in this area will add a new section to the bottom of the hub. Use the Reorder tab of the box below the "Add More Capsules" area or the arrows at the top of each capsule to move these sections wherever you want them. Figure 6 shows the Hub Editing Tool.

Figure 6: Hub Editing Tool

To edit a capsule, click the Edit button to the right of the capsule. A pop-up window will appear where you can enter a title and the type of content the capsule is designed for. When you're done editing the content, click the "Save" button at the top of the pop-up window.

To create a link to your website, edit a Text Capsule and enter your text. Select the word or phrase you want to be the clickable link and click the Add/Edit Link button, which looks like a chain. This will open another pop-up window; enter the URL (including the http://) and click the "Insert" button. The pop-up will disappear and the text you selected will be blue. Figure 7 shows the pop-up window for editing a Text Capsule and inserting a link.
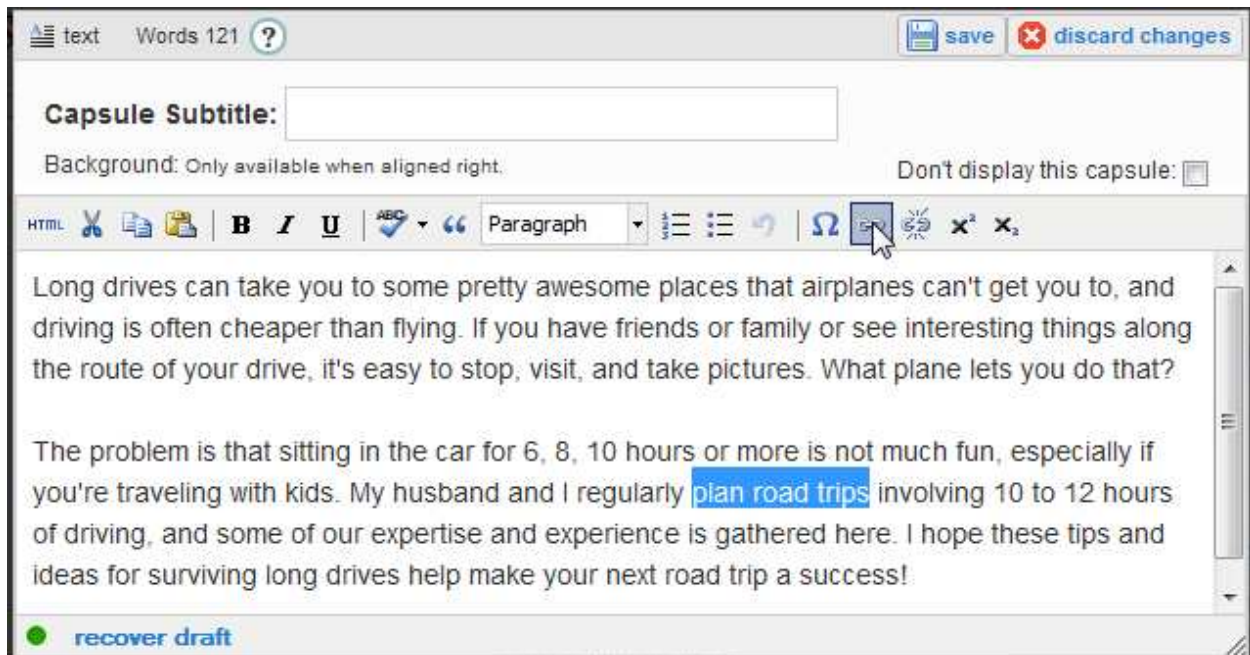
Figure 7: Editing a Text Capsule and Creating a Link

When you've completed the hub, click the "Preview" button at the top of the hub editing tool to see what your hub will look like when it's published. Then click the "Publish" button to publish the hub.

How to Create a Blog on Tumblr

Tumblr is a unique blogging tool that lets you quickly and easily publish several types of posts. It also has high PageRank and good traffic. To get started, open an Internet browser and go to tumblr.com. Log in to your account and click the "Link" post option at the top of your Dashboard. Figure 8 shows your Dashboard.
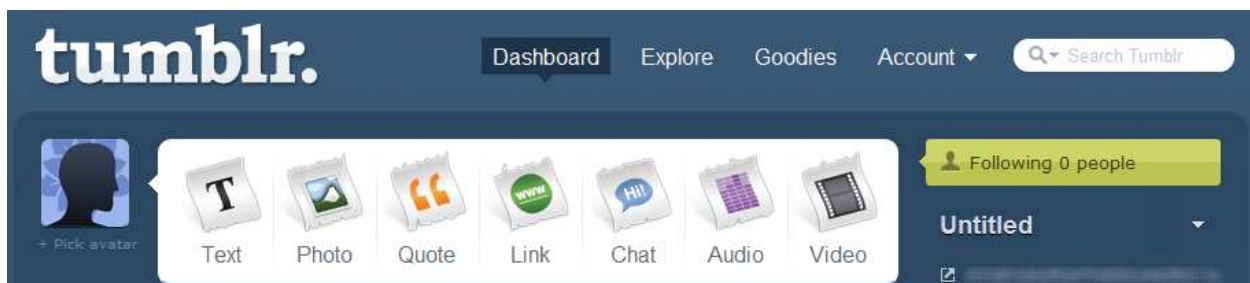

Figure 8: Tumblr Dashboard

Next you will see an "Add a Link" page, as shown in Figure 9. Enter a title for the post and the URL for your website. You can click the "Add a Description" link to open a text box where you can tell other Tumblr users why you linked to this website and why they should visit it. Although the title and description are both optional, they are both great for your post. The title of the post will be the anchor text linking to your website, while the description is an opportunity for you to advertise your site and convince readers to visit.
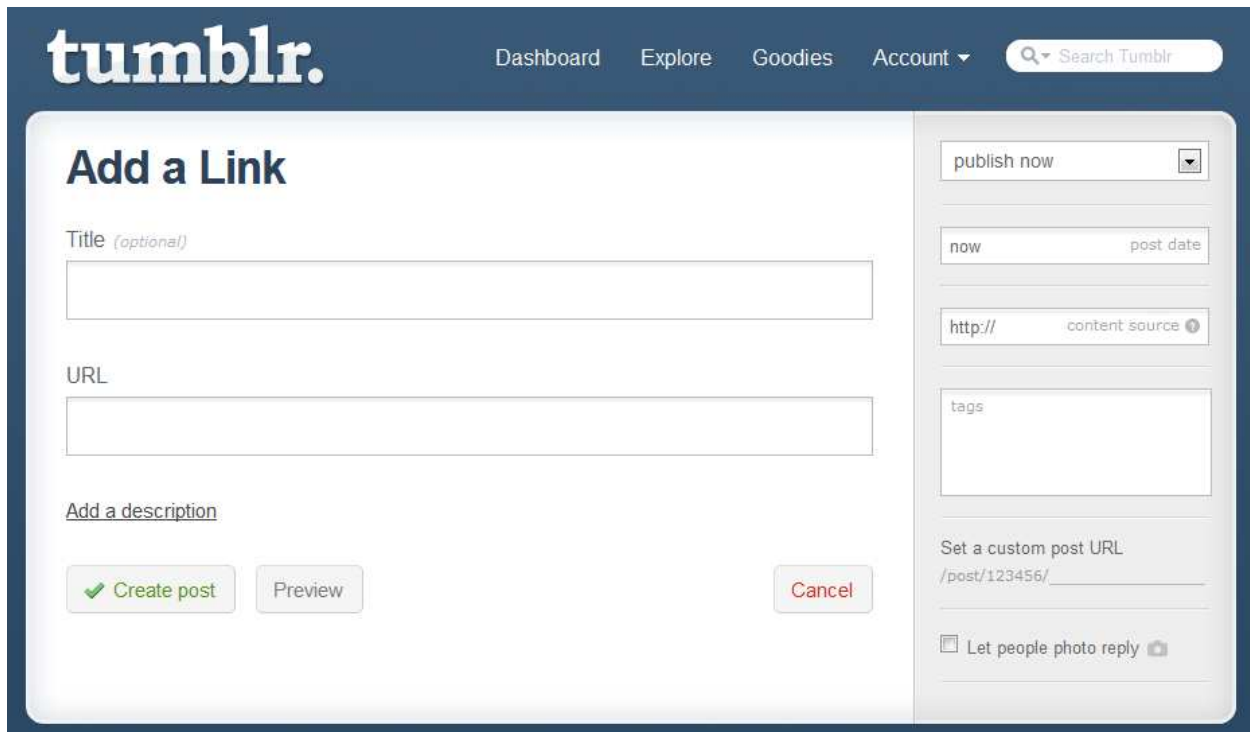
Figure 9: Add a Link Post on Tumblr

In the bar to the right, you will see several options for this post. Halfway down the list of options is a text box where you can enter tags for this post to help Tumblr users find it when they search Tumblr; enter about 7 of your best keywords as tags. For your link-building strategy, you don't need to worry about the other options. When you're ready, click "Create Post" at the bottom.

Other Article and Web 2.0 Resources

We've outlined the best resources to use, but you can also use these free resources as part of your off-page SEO efforts.
- wordpress.org
- blogger.com
- livejournal.com
- wikispaces.com

What's Next

Live directories, social bookmarks, and web 2.0 content are the basis of all good off-page optimization plans. Building links and promoting your site takes time and effort, and you may not see the results of all that work until several weeks later. The important thing is to keep optimizing your site and build these links consistently, so the effort begins to compound over time.