

# FACTSHEET

## No 4: SEO

### What is A Search Engine?

A Search Engine is like a giant business directory on your computer. Every day, millions of people use the Internet to look for products, services and information. It's very likely that you've used a search engine if you use the Internet, but you might not have heard that term before. Google is currently the most popular search engine and it's very simple to use. It allows you to type in what you are looking for, click the 'search' button, and then shows you a list of links to web pages that it thinks are relevant. It might also show you places where you can buy related products online.



### What is Search Engine Optimisation?

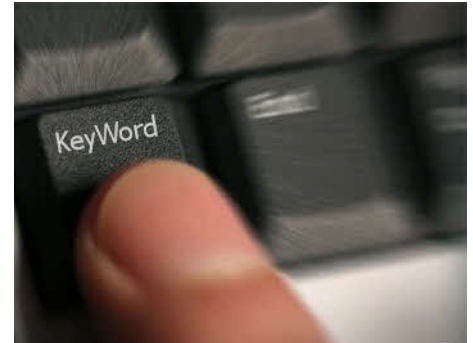
Search Engine Optimisation involves a number of factors which you and your web designer can exploit to maximise your Search Engine Ranking. For example, discovering the right keywords for your website (words that people might use to look for your products and services) and using

them in the right places, to be read effectively by search engines. If you are familiar with directory listings like The Yellow Pages, keywords could be thought of as the category in which you choose to display your advert, for example mechanic, electrical repairs or restaurant. You can also add links to your web pages that make it a There are hundreds of little tips and tricks that can be used when optimising your website.

Read on to discover exactly what you can do to give yourself the best shot!

### 1. Keywords and Keyphrases

When a search engine visits your website it "reads" the words within it, and keeps a record of the words that have been used. When a person uses a word or phrase to search for something, the search engine looks at it's record of websites, and shows on screen those that engine optimisation is deciding which words people might use when searching for the products and services you offer; these are called keywords and keyphrases. An example of a keyword The key to optimising your website is choosing the right keyphrases and using them effectively. Over the next



few pages we will take a little time to explain how to choose the best words for your website, and also the most effective places to use them. Start by making a list of all the words and phrases you think people might use to look for the products and services you offer. We will refer to these as keywords and keyphrases throughout this document. It is important to think of these words when writing content for your website, as search engines will count them and see your website as being more relevant when people search using these words and phrases.

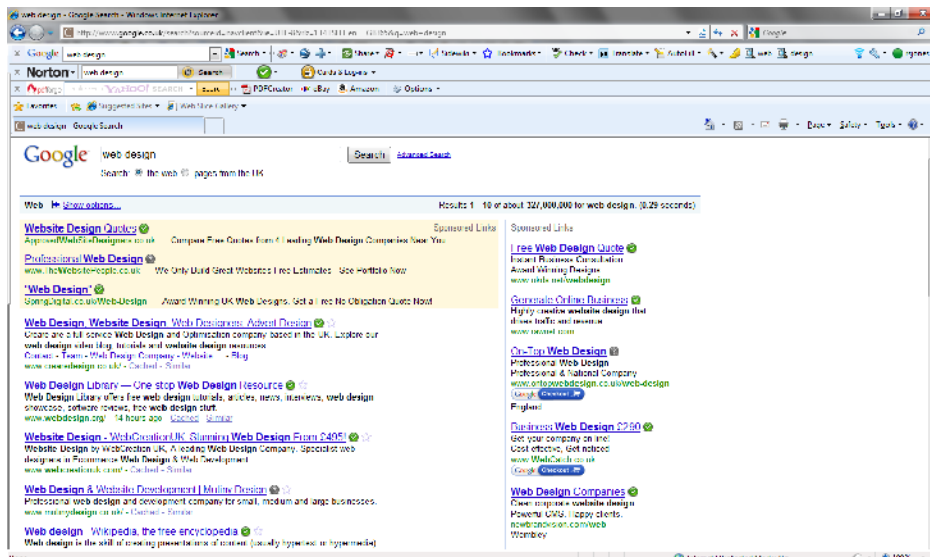
### 2. Website Copy

It's really important to make sure your website is written in a way that the reader likes. It needs to be easy to read, with good grammar, and spelling! You know I mean spelling, but it just shows how annoying mis-spelled words can be.

Common faults with poorly written copy:

- Spelling & grammatical errors
- Too long
- Too technical
- Too formal
- Too informal

Whatever you do, get a friend, or several friends to look over your copy before it goes live.



## Writing Copy For Google

It not only needs to be written with the human reader in mind, but also the automatic search engine 'crawler' or 'spider'. These are programmes which have the never-ending task of trawling through your web pages, scanning the text, images & links, all of which can help or hinder your ranking. Google will recognise type which is in **bold**, or *italics*, and will also recognise greater importance of words with CAPITALS, and bullet points.

## Linking Keywords with Copy

Google's will punish you if all it sees are lists of keywords. A ratio of about 7% keywords within any text seems to be about the optimum. Spread them out. First & foremost, make the copy with the human reader in mind.

## 3. Links

Google loves links! More links = more love! Careful though. You can have too much love.

**External Links** from other sites give Google the impression of credibility. More links from frequently visited sites will help your ranking. Outgoing links won't help you, but might help you persuade others to link to you.

**Internal Links** provide the visitor with easy ways to navigate your site. Try and find opportunities to provide internal links within your text using your keywords.

A **Site Map** is an easy way to provide lots of internal links, and it helps Google index your pages.

**CMS** or Content Management Systems use hundreds of links. If you install one of these, it can give you up to 5 times the traffic you saw before. It can seem a heavy up-front investment, but it pays dividends in terms of your rankings.



## 4. Keep it Updated

Google takes a look at your site every now & then. If it comes back and sees that nothing has changed, it will come back a little less frequently, and will drop your ranking. Keep it fresh & lively for the reader, and Google will reward your efforts.

## 5. Install Analytics

Google Analytics provide a mine of information about your web visitors. You'll need a free gmail account to view any analytics which we have set up.

This can tell you how many visitors have come from Google searches, or from referral links. It can tell you which pages are most popular, how long people stay on them, and most importantly, whether they just 'bounce' back to Google after finding you - an indication of how well matched you are to your search keywords.

## 6. Social Media

Twitter & Facebook are the two you should be on if you think this will get you noticed. Consider a group or account to match your web presence. This can also get you visitors, which in itself helps your rankings.



## 7. Marketing Activities

More clicks = higher rankings. You need to make sure every piece of communication includes your website, and if possible a reason to visit the site. Competitions, brochure downloads, feedback forms, contact forms will all bring people to your site.

In addition, go through all the trade directories which mention you, and make sure they have your website linked & listed.

## 8. Google Business Listings

You can register your business or association with Google. This will require a free Google account, and you will get a phone call on the number you submit giving you a pin number to enter to authorise your listing.

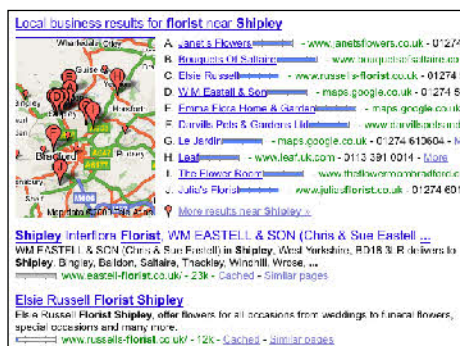
## 9. Metadata

Metadata is the hidden data which helps search engines index & tag your site.

This includes the page headings - make sure they contain the most important keywords for your site. They also include other words which you can provide to help Google find you. Here you can include words or phrases which you might not feel should go on your main page. Items such as competitor names, venues, towns covered as well as common mis-spellings of technical words or phrases.

## In Summary

1. Check out your **KEYWORDS**
2. Take a look at your **COPY**
3. Get yourself lots of **LINKS**
4. Keep it **UP TO DATE**
5. **ANALYSE**
6. Use **SOCIAL MEDIA**
7. **MARKETING** your site
8. Submit to **GOOGLE BUSINESS**
9. **METADATA**



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