

How to get your site found

10 tips to push you up the rankings

Search engine optimisation is often mystifying and often there are many people offering different advice on the same subject. Usually it's better to leave things to the experts, though there are a few things that you can bear in mind that will help your search engine rankings.

1. Know your market. If you're targeting UK customers then you need to make sure that your website is hosted in the UK. That way you'll turn up in the UK results.
2. Research your keywords. Make sure you know what words people are typing into search engines to find your products or services. Google offer a useful tool for this - and it's free!
3. Make sure each of your pages has a unique page title and meta description that suits your page content. This will help the search engines understand what each of your pages is about.
4. Make sure your website is search engine friendly. Avoid using technologies such as flash and frames and using images where text will do the job. If you're using dynamic URLs avoid session IDs and long query strings.
5. Content - make your website useful for visitors. Offer things your competitors don't give advice and opinion, encourage debate and views. Your site should be a 'resource' and an authority on your subject rather than just a sales tool.
6. Avoid shady optimisation techniques such as using hidden text and links on the page or participating in questionable linking schemes.
7. Encourage links. Where possible encourage people to link to your website. Suppliers, distributors, clients, industry associations can all be sources of valuable links.
8. Avoid using multiple domains. Where possible include new products and services on existing domains. Double the number of websites and you'll have to double your marketing efforts.
9. Make sure you understand your robots.txt and .htaccess files. Ensure you've disallowed spiders from crawling directories you don't want to be indexed and make sure any duplicate content is redirected to a single page.
10. Signup to Google's Webmaster Tools and Analytics to give you a much better understanding of your sites status and visitor behaviour.