

# If You Build It, Will They Come?

**M**any Presidents and CEO's remember the movie, "Field of Dreams," in which Kevin Costner's character was drawn to walk outside of his Midwest farm house and listen to an unusual task by a voice whispering, "If you build it, they will come." Costner's character built that great baseball field and they did come.

However, as a CEO you may hear the same voice by your technology or sales team, "Build us a great web site and customers will come." The voice you should be listening to is, "If you build it, they won't come unless you have gone through the process of Search Engine Optimization." Nine out of ten for-profit businesses with web sites are not optimized properly and therefore don't have prayer of attracting Internet buyers and sellers, whether they are consumer-driven sites or business-to-business sites.

Search Engine Optimization is the process of modifying your web site so that your site appears in the results returned by a search engine such as Google, Yahoo, or MSN, for the search phrases that will drive good quality, targeted buying traffic to your site. These results are referred to as "organic," meaning they naturally appear in the listings as opposed to a pay-per-inclusion listing.

Optimizing your corporate site properly ensures that you have the ability to attract a hidden market of buyers and sellers from the Internet. If you follow these guidelines, "they will come!"

## **Content, Content, Content**

If you are creating a business website or working on a business site you've already created, the content of the site is one of the most important factors for successful search engine marketing. The pages you create should provide valuable information that reference very specific terms and concepts that are unique to your website.

## **Titles and Meta Tags**

In the early days of search engine optimization, marketers focused on meta-tags as the primary way to attract search engine traffic. Meta-tags are HTML tags that help describe the document they are located within. Today we know that search engines not only look at meta-tags, but a site's content, internal link structure and link popularity.

## **Keyword Market Analysis**

What is a Keyword Market? In short, a Keyword Market is the total number of unique searches on the Internet that are relevant to your website. A Keyword Market is defined by the top-level or root keyword that is generally most relevant to your business.

*Editor's Note: Noceti conducts a complementary Search Engine Optimization Report for Companies desiring to increase Internet market share.*

Top-level keywords may contain thousands of vertical keyword markets. Keywords used in your site should be the most popular and have the least competition. A Keyword Market Analysis is imperative for a successful business web site.

## **Everything You Need to Know About Link Popularity**

The number of relevant websites that link to your website is one of the factors that help search engines determine your relevancy for a search term. Link popularity and gaining new links from outside relevant websites to your website have proven to be a popular concept for people seeking to improve their search engine rankings.

## **Link Architecture**

As the Internet has become more popular, websites have turned to new technologies like dynamic HTML and Flash or well designed graphics to improve the user experience. Good navigation through your website isn't just important to your users. Search engines use the links within your website to crawl and index the pages those links point to. An over use of flash or graphics may not be helping your architecture for search engine friendliness.

## **Dynamic Sites and URL's**

As websites have grown larger and more complex, companies have begun using dynamic publishing systems to help them manage sites that contain hundreds or thousands of web pages. Popular programs by companies like Vignette, Microsoft, and Broadvision turn a website into a database-driven application capable of publishing and managing large amounts of content.

When websites use dynamic publishing, a web page isn't built until it is requested from a user, guaranteeing that the content is up to date.

## **Google Search Engine Placement**

A Google Answers researcher provides some information that will greatly improve your chances of listing with Google.

## **Search Engine And Directory Submission**

Is your website indexed in the 160 USA search engines and the 90 USA Directories? If not "they can't come". Submitting your website to the search engines is important for you to be found. Generally you should submit your web site once a month until you are indexed. Once indexed you should submit other important pages of your site that have been optimized properly.

## **Beating the Competition**

Since nine out of ten of your competitor's site's are not optimized properly, you as a CEO now have the opportunity to beat the competition and increase market share, even by following a few of the steps mentioned above.

"If you build it and optimize your site properly, they will come."



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