SEO Tips

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1. Keywords
   a. Definition
      i. 1 to X word phrases users type into a search box to research a topic
   b. Length
      i. 22% of all searches are 3 word searches – searchers have become more targeted
      ii. The “long tail”
   c. “Money” Keywords
      i. Phrases most likely to result in your desired conversion
         1. Sell a program, download white paper, contact person, increase brand exposure
      ii. Not necessarily phrases with a lot of search volume
   d. Questions to ask:
      i. Have you identified 3-5 target keyword phrases for your web page?
      ii. Are the keyword phrases synergistic or closely related (Hint: “think like a spider”)?
      iii. Have you identified your #1 priority keyword phrase – the one that will be the content focus for the page?

2. Creating Page Content
   a. Use the target keywords and work them into the text
      i. Shoot for 250+ words on a page
      ii. That’s actually more than you think...
   b. Consider “keyword density”, but don’t get too hung up on it
      i. Be comparable to top ranking competitor
      ii. Remember to write for the user first, the spider second
   c. Incorporate keywords into headings and subheadings
      i. Spiders place a little more emphasis on words in headings
      ii. Good for “secondary readership path”; people skim & scan
   d. Make images search friendly
      i. Name the image files with keywords
      ii. Use the image alt tags & include keywords
   e. American Disabilities Act; for those who use a text reader
      i. Write keyword rich captions
   f. Tip!
      i. Examine the page that ranks first for your keyword phrase; there’s a reason it ranks first.

3. Text/Content & Headings Checklist
   a. Subject matter of your text must be highly focused to your 3-5 target keywords
   b. Review the top 1 or 2 ranking results for your priority keywords. These are the pages to emulate in order to outrank them.
   c. Run a keyword density analyzer on these competing pages to get an idea as to keyword density percentages (remember, don’t get too hung up on the exact % -- this is a gauge).
   d. Aim for a minimum of 250 words of text
e. Include headings and subheadings (remember the importance of “secondary readership path”)
   i. Work keywords into headings and subheadings

4. Title tags
   a. Displays in the upper left hand corner of browser window
   b. Also appears in the title of most search engine results
   c. A very important factor in determining ranking
   d. Must contain the keyword targets for the webpage
   e. Must be unique to each page!
   f. Lead with the most important keywords first
   g. Length = 6 to 12 words – no longer than 65 characters including spaces
   h. Try not to repeat identical words (unless high ranking competitors do)
   i. Try not to include “stop words” (i.e., “a”, “the”, “and”)
   j. Make each page’s title tag unique. There should be no other page on your site with that exact title tag

5. Meta description tag
   a. Usually the text that appears in the search engines, just under the title of the result
   b. A short text “advertisement”
      i. Your goal: entice searchers to click on your listing
   c. Should contain the keyword targets for the page
      i. Carry the same ones through from the title tag
   d. Include all the keyword targets from the title tag
   e. Length = between 12 and 24 words and about 155 characters, including spaces
   f. Repeat identical words a maximum of 2 times
   g. Highlight product or service benefits / features
   h. Make it truthful -- meaning does your landing page fulfill on the expectations set in the meta description?

6. Meta keyword tag
   a. Keyword Tag
      i. Although no longer used by major search engines in determining ranking, meta keywords are often used by internal search appliances.
         ii. Located only in the “behind-the-scenes” code
         iii. A list of the keywords for the page
   b. Carry the same ones through from the title & description tags
   c. Include all the target keywords in the title tag
   d. Include only words important to the page. Don’t just add keywords vaguely associated with the subject matter

7. Architecture
   a. Web site architecture needs to be “silo-ed”
      i. Keep similar themes together
      ii. Let keyword research guide you
   b. Directory structure
      i. Flat as possible
   c. Parameter driven urls & url structure
      i. Page names should be keyword-rich
   d. Internal linking structure
      i. Use keyword rich “anchor text” to foreshadow content of the next page
ii. It's a clue to the spider
iii. No "click here”s

e. Navigation
   i. No drop downs
   ii. If Flash or JavaScript, have an alternative static form of navigation

f. Forms
   i. Spiders cannot fill out forms

g. Identify the keyword phrases within your content / text which are keyword targets for other pages

h. Make those keyword phrases “anchor text” links

i. Be consistent!