

Handicapping Your SEO

It is not uncommon to find some examples of sarcasm and irony within the pages of Tudog's newsletter, and so this article can find its place among the rest. The idea that a company might seek to intentionally handicap their SEO – thereby reducing their exposure on the Internet search engines – is indeed absurd. And yet the examples of poor (and sometimes outright horrible) SEO are everywhere to be seen.

Perhaps once upon a time (like 2 years ago) the secrets to great SEO were known only to a few and so companies could not be expected to operate websites with strong search engine appeal. Today, however, we live in an enlightened era when all companies have access to the actions they can take to make certain someone searching Google or Yahoo! for something they sell might happen upon them.

But this article is not for those of you who want to be found on the search engines. This article is for those companies who are against making sales and are interested in remaining invisible to potential customers searching on the Internet. Yes, this article is all about how to have really lousy search engine exposure. ***(Author's Note: For those companies seeking really great search engine exposure simply do the opposite of what this article suggests).***

Tudog has identified 5 things your company can do to have the absolute worst possible Internet strategy. These include:

1. *Have Lousy Content*

By lousy content it is not intended to mean that what you say should be composed poorly or be unfocused or fail to explain what you do (although these are also excellent bad business practices). As relates to search engines, your website should seek to have content that is completely unfriendly to the search engine crawlers. By having information the search engines cannot index you will be able to avoid being picked up and listed. Just for the record, if you were trying to get preferred listing (and no one is accusing you of wanting that) you would want your homepage to "tell" the search engine what your company (website) is about by having 200 carefully selected (keyword intensive) words.

2. *Isolate Yourself*

Hey, what could be more annoying than all those pesky websites linking themselves to your website. So what that their content and yours are compatible and that they are sending traffic your way. No matter too that those links serve to validate your website for the search engines, resulting in higher ranking. The best thing you can do to make sure your website is completely invisible is to isolate yourself and keep away from links.

3. *Ignore Your Visitors*

There is absolutely no reason to know where the people visiting your website are going and definitely no reason to enrich the most visited of those same pages with keywords so that they attract more visitors. Just because those pages are the most popular on your site doesn't mean you want to draw more attention to them. You could, if you

suddenly decided you wanted to optimize these pages, put titles on them that emphasized the content that was attracting so many visitors, and you could, also, if you wanted to, embed keywords in the text that would allow the search engines to recognize and give priority to the topic you wish to emphasize.

4. Go With Fancy Graphics

Nothing says “I have no interest in search engine ranking” like a homepage with no text, or even better, one built with flash. The search engine crawlers cannot read flash, and so for them, your website doesn’t exist. But, hey, isn’t it more important to look flashy, even if no one comes to see it? On the other hand, if you did want to create your graphics with an eye toward optimization, you could coordinate the graphics with the text, making sure that you don’t place graphics anywhere that might inhibit or limit the ability of the search engines to recognize and index your website.

5. Use Graphics for Links

The best way to make sure the search engines don’t pick up your website is to use graphics (jpegs, bitmaps) for your links. Many graphic designers like to use these because they have a nice look, and for those seeking to handicap their SEO, the graphic links are perfect. For those hoping to get noticed and ranked by the search engines, the design benefits should be sacrificed for the more practical goal of getting the listed.

Perhaps this article is a bit too tongue-in-cheek, but it has tried to push the envelope a bit to emphasize how we sometimes sabotage our own businesses by acting in ways so blatantly against our own interests that it could appear to an outside observer that we intentionally seek poor performance. The way to shake that absurd appearance is to conform to best practices and take the easy, simple steps to improve our performance. When it is clear we seek excellence we send a message that we are excellent. All joking aside, isn’t that really how you want to be perceived?