

Brighter Search Engine Results

Winning the Internet search engine and name link game

1. Make sure you have a lot of keywords on your home page “index.html”. Ideally most of these are visible, but if not, they can (and should also) be in metatags. If you are at a loss as to which keywords to use, look at the source code of your competitors home page, especially ones that show up frequently on search engines. Do not duplicate any words on purpose - this might look like you are ‘stuffing’ words and search engines will delete you.
2. The most important field on any home page is the ***Title line*** so don’t waste it on dumb words like “Home page” nor repeating your domain name. It must have the company name as well as your personal name (so people who know you personally will find you). It can be as long as you like. So what if it scrolls off the edge of the title bar in someone’s browser.
3. Realize also that a lot of people restrict their searches by region. So if you want to be found when they search for “Widget Agency Chicago”, then you need the word Chicago somewhere - even if you are based in San Francisco. Experience also tells us, people use regional names like Silicon Valley, Tri Valley, Bay Area or the big cities of course, San Jose, San Francisco. As well as of course, the states...so do add California in somewhere.
4. Another way to get key words into your pages is to use ALT names on all your picture files. Names that might also trigger keyword searches.
5. Search engines will still not find you. You have to go to each one in turn and submit your URL. Some will then require either a 5 word description, or a 25 word description, etc. So you should think about these well in advance. All the search engines that matter are listed in Yahoo’s list of search engines. Google and Yahoo are no longer free for businesses, but probably are still worth paying for. If you really can’t afford their few dollars, make sure you work hard at getting into the public domain database *www.dmoz.org* that many of them use for their raw data anyway. If you use a search engine submission service, you save a few hours, but get a lot of headaches. There are not 4000 or whatever search engines in the world! They just send your name to lots of other people who then decide you opted in to their email lists. Painful results ensue! You will live in email spam hell from that day forth. Plus these submission services are now all owned by bigger companies (like Microsoft really owns Submit-it) and all their affiliates and associates will bombard you with email forever afterwards. Even worse than that, they pass your name on to many others.
6. Industry directories are perhaps even more important for many people than search engines. What industry are you in? Find all the sites that have lists of industry players and get yourself listed there. Most of these directories are themselves listed in search engines, so it is a nice back door (that is often free) into search engines. For example,

there are sites like *www.AgencyFinder.com* that are free for all sorts of creative agencies.

7. What associations do you belong to? Have you asked to be listed on the website of members/partners/vendors? Some friends of mine was getting email inquiries before their website was live because people were seeing the awards and mentions they had received through two industry associations!
8. Public Relations can generate a lot of references to you and your site. In fact, if you put out a press release on the Business Wire, it will be picked up immediately by many other online news sites, including Yahoo. So even if no-one from the press calls you that week, you have still established some presence on the web, as well as in publicity databases. Of course, all your press releases should be displayed on your own site too, as well as the links to any article that ever mentioned you. Get your partners to reciprocate. Mention all your partners. People might search for them and find you. Whenever you get an electronic or paper solicitation to be in some directory, reply quickly. A lot of print media directories and show directories find their way online too, often with hot links to your site.
9. LINKS: This is now the magic scorecard. The more links TO you, the higher you score with search engines. But, you can only dummy up so many links to yourself. (If you own any other domains that are not in use, make sure they all point to your main site...this is a free service with most registrars and ISP's and creates some links.) OK, the big manual job of soliciting links starts now! First, use your brains and make a list of people and organizations that might choose to link to you if they were really nice. Then send them all a very brief email (6 lines max) asking if they would be so kind as to list and link to you, as well as providing your home page address. (Other pages are possible too, but what if your web designer moves or changes or deletes them later?). This may take a while of course. But sooner or later you will run out of ideas of who to solicit. Don't despair! Go to your major competitors' sites, and see who is linked to them!! Then you kindly send all their linkees the same message. To find who is linked to your competitors, go to AltaVista search engine and enter "Link: " ahead of their name, and voila! This is not 100% accurate, so you may want to repeat it with some other search engine too. Of course, you have to then chase all these links and find a person to send the email too. But what the heck, you might scare up some prospects and partners at the same time. Also, there are some tools out there that try to help you with these searches, but they are mostly more trouble than they are worth - or they are dumb. Just because IBM links to your competitor doesn't mean they are going to link to you if you are not their partner.
10. Volunteer to be a reference for many of your vendors, provided they will link to you. There may even be joint press opportunities while you are about it.
11. Put some industry content on your site, so that people will link to you as a reference point for information or the starting points for more searches. Other sites may be more willing to link to you if you are not just promoting yourself but are

helping all persons interested in that subject matter. This paper itself is such an example.

12. Work diligently at the above process, and it will work for sure, because it will start propagating itself. There is no cheaper form of guerilla marketing. And one day, clients will call and say they saw you on such and such a site. One you have never heard of nor contacted! Guard carefully against web designers who change your home page to make it full of flash and dash and mess up your search engine words. And never, never use frames on a home page! Search engines do not look inside frames.

P.S. If you like the information in this brief writeup, please do not forward it to others. Rather reference a link to SV Marketeer so they can download their own copy.

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