



eCommerce Small Business T.I.P.S. Newsletter - (*Targeted Internet Promotion Strategies*)



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Issue 1 - December 2006

The Most Important Steps In eCommerce Website Marketing

This month our eCommerce TIPS newsletter is packed with essential strategies and links for marketing and promoting your website on search engines.

How do you get that extra advantage on Google? What do I need to do after I've built my online shopping cart website? What else do I need to do to ensure I start making money online? These are just some of the questions we have answered in this special Year-end newsletter!

Building a proper website for Search Engine eCommerce exposure

Most important from the start - you need to ensure your website has been built to proper specifications - we have listed the issues you need to concern yourself with and also provided alternate links for further details. If you are a [ShopFactory7](#) user your site already has the website structure coding you will need. The rest is the content additions you make and how you do it that makes the big difference. Outside of building the site, there are some other strategies you need to concern yourself with.

Related and Sufficient Content - Still and always was the number one issue you need to concern yourself with! On Google, Yahoo, MSN (Organic Search Engines), your "text" content is how these engines rank you in their listings. If you have limited or low text content on your website, chances are you will not rank well. The most important part of your website as far as search engines go - is your Home Page. Your Home Page is a "Book-Cover" or "Preface" to the rest of your website. You want to have your home page completed with your relevant and most important text content, and have that content linked strategically to your most important products/pages you're trying to sell online. If you have only images with little or no text content - you will not get search exposure!

Starting at your Home Page, your website is read by search engines like a book. Chapter by chapter (webpage by webpage) your site is ranked on "all the content" in your website. So the more related text content you have, the better. The Home Page is how the search engine will classify your site based on the keywords and meta-tags through-out the rest of your site. So if you keyword your Home Page for say "Apples" and it only finds "Oranges" on all the other pages, you're not going to rank well for "Apples". But if it finds "Green Apples", "Red Apples", "Apple Pie", etc on the other pages, you will rank well for "Apples" on the Home Page. It's kind of like an information written word domino effect.



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VERY Important Search Engine Exposure Tools:

Googling it - Google has supplied a quick online interface for webmasters to submit their sitemap.xml file: [Google Webmaster Central](#)

In the Webmaster Central

To illustrate a *simplified explanation* of how your ranking is determined: On a 10 point based system for a top search engine ranking, your ten page site (including Home Page) has specific "Apple" content on each page - that's 1/4 point for each page (2.5 points). On each individual page there is related "Apple" content like a "Red Apple" page, a "Green Apple" page, "How to peel and Apple" page, etc. those ten pages have "related content" to "Apples" giving you another 1/4 point for each of the ten pages (another 2.5 points - 5 total). Each of those pages links to other related "Apple" pages on the internet (1 point - 6 total). Those external "related" pages link back to your website (another 1 point - 7 total). There are other non-related multiple pages found on the internet linking back to your "Apples" pages (directories, forums, etc) adding to your exposure (1 point - 8 total). Because your Home Page is the catalyst for your entire website content structure and your inbound / outbound links are related, your Home Page gets another 2 points, giving you 10 points total to give you a top search engine listing for "Apples". Remember, this is just a simplified explanation - the process the search engines go through is more complex, but this illustrates perfectly how your entire website supports your important Home Page content!

So you can see how important it is to have "Related and Sufficient Content" not just on your Home Page, but through-out your website. How you arrange those Apples for the viewers, is up to you!

Remember - You are building your website for two audiences: 1) The people browsing your website, 2) The Search Engines! Both read your site differently and the "Organic Search Engine" is a relatively easy audience to please because it reads everything! ([Click Here to read our prior eCommerce Newsletter on - Content Is King - for Search Engines](#))

Meta-Tags, Keywords and Alt. Tags - Meta-Tags and Keywords were once the higher form of search engine marketing for building your website. These days the search engines place less attention to them, though it's best to still optimize your sites relative content and pages with the keywording and Meta-Content. More important these days are the Alt. Tags on images. These are the little pop-up text phrases that show up when you mouse over an image or active link. Mouse over one of the images or links on this page to view one. It's important to keep the images tagged in this manner because a search engine cannot see what the image actually is...remember text content is the big factor on your website as far as search engines are concerned. Another important part of Alt. Tagging is to *Name Your Images Correctly!* If you have pictures of "Apples" name the file like this: "sour_green_apple.jpg" NOT like this: "image001.jpg". The "_" acts like a space to give the search engine the full picture! And combined with the Alt. Tag and additional related content on your site, you'll end up ranking higher than your competitors who don't do this (In the New Year we'll have a special eCommerce Newsletter specific to examining and beating your competitors online).

It's also important to properly tag your images and image file names correctly and accurately to take advantage of Google's Image Search Engine (see to the right under "Very Important Search Engine Tools").

you can submit your sitemap.xml, set Google to advance browse your images, and upload Google Base content for that added exposure you need in eCommerce marketing!

Google Base is another form of submitting your content to Google. It also allows you to upload offline content, as well as your online content. It gives you that extra exposure on Google main search engine as well!

Froogle is another of Google's search engine strategies...with it you can upload product data and images that link directly to your website pages or products.

By USING All of the above Google tools, you can help push your ranking up on the main organic Google Search Engine higher.

Yahoo 4u - Yahoo Site and Search Tools - Following much of what Google has done, Yahoo provides easy connect tools for site owners. On this page you'll find Yahoo's version of their [Image Search](#), [Site Tools for shop owners](#), etc. etc. etc.

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Final Sound Advice...

What ever your product or services are that you sell online, the best advantage you can have is to become an authority website. An Authority website usually

Submit Your Website to the Search Engines - This is one of the most important and most overlooked essential steps in eCommerce. Many people contact us because they either didn't know, or had a third party company handle their webmastering and their website was never getting any traffic. After you have built your site and published it live, submit it to as many search engines as you can...not just the BIG THREE - Google, Yahoo, MSN (See above right side links).

Alternately, many eCommerce website owners do not submit to online business directories. There is an advantage to doing this because it provides "local" traffic from small business directory search engines for you from out of state / provincial and out of country customers, and also gives you another inbound link for Organic Search Engines to find. Remember your 10 points theory above which determines your ranking? This is where the pluses add up! The more directories you can submit to, the better. Those directories usually give you a "category" to sign up in, so you are provided with a relative inbound content link automatically from their site to yours. The people who use these directories may not use regular organic search engines at all so they're lead to your site by other means - direct regional searches through the directory! Which is what those directories were designed to do. But check with the directory you are considering a listing on to ensure that they are browsed and indexed by the larger search engines. If your link is scripted to a database, and is not found by search engines in that directory, there is no advantage to you.

Other strategies you can pursue - There are many new and seasoned tactics you can delve into to get your site listed even further through backlinks and related content posting (in the new year we will have our own eCommerce TIPS articles on how to use each of these effectively):

- Publishing a press release or article on a website that accepts them (make sure you place a copy of any articles or press releases on your site to add to your content!)
- Blogging and webcasts.
- RSS Feeds
- Online Demos and Videos (with increasing areas of highspeed coverage, this is where the future of eCommerce is heading).
- Provide links on your site to other useful and related websites that your viewers might be looking for (don't forget to try and get a back link from those "related" sites).

Long Term eCommerce Strategies - It is also important to remember that eCommerce is not only "part of the marketing mix" -- it's a long term goal. Don't expect success to happen overnight. When you first submit your website to Google, Yahoo, MSN and other main search engines, your site is held for 90+ days in some cases until the search engine considers you a viable long term site. From there you are constantly assessed and re-assessed with millions of other websites on the internet. Take the time to update your site at least monthly with some new content and make the necessary changes to your sites as new technologies like Windows Vista and Internet Explorer 7 are released. Most importantly, don't stop learning and research eCommerce tactics and strategies because they change and grow as well!

has more content and a greater range of resources for your customers than just your products.

Example, if you sell "Apples", expand your separate page content to include related content and articles including Apple Pies, Apple Drinks, Apple Trees and Blossoms, Apple Pictures, etc.

Because Apple is a fruit, once you've built up your Apple Orchard website, you can later expand to other fruits to further support your Apple site - and then eat the fruit of your hard work!



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