

Drupalace.com Site Promotion and SEO One-Page Checklist !!

Sites cater to two audiences: human visitors and search engines. Appealing to each audience involves a wide range of activities, but these largely overlap, and success in appealing to one audience improves success with the other.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is all activities to improve search engine result rankings, and covers two areas: on-site optimization (site map, content keywords, etc) and off-site activities (backlinks, listings in directories, etc).



THE MOST IMPORTANT STUFF - all the rest of this page is detail

1. Set measurable, specific goals for site
2. Plan and deliver what visitors should get from site
3. Implement items a little at a time, and keep improving
4. Get linked to by quality external sites – *the* key to search engine ranking
5. Offer lots of high-quality content to attract both direct visitors and external links



OFFER GREAT CONTENT – attract visitors and links

- ✓ Offer lots of great content that people will seek and link to
- ✓ Make content titles clear and appealing
- ✓ Make key content visible near top of pages
- ✓ Write well with unique voice
- ✓ Use consistent writing, graphics, other elements
- ✓ Don't annoy (no splash pages, excess ads, pop-ups, audio, clunky/unneeded registration, links without sources, etc)

BUILD SITE BRAND – attract and retain visitors

- ✓ Have good name, domain, logo, tagline, and favicon
- ✓ Make site name (and slogan/mission) clear and obvious
- ✓ Give site attractive/unique appearance
- ✓ Clearly introduce/explain site (via "about" page etc)
- ✓ Add welcome/info for new visitors
- ✓ Offer some specific, outstanding feature(s)
- ✓ Establish expert voice on topic
- ✓ Act as leader of a group
- ✓ Make brand and URL ubiquitous (all site pages, email sig, advertisements, offline documents/communications, etc)

MAKE NAVIGATION EASY - aid visitors and SEO

- ✓ Make main (home) page easy to find
- ✓ Make key content findable (link to popular/recent/related/similar posts, recent comments, tagged content, etc)
- ✓ Make old content findable (archives, internal links, etc)
- ✓ Offer a site map for users
- ✓ Make navigation (menu structure, etc) consistent
- ✓ Keep navigation simple (limited menus, few items, etc)
- ✓ Use path breadcrumbs (trail of links showing current page location within hierarchical structure)
- ✓ Use clean paths (*abc.com/news*, not *abc.com/?q=node/5*)
- ✓ Use clear path names with relevance to content
- ✓ Make internal links visible (color, underlining, etc)
- ✓ Tag content with keywords
- ✓ Add easy search function

BUILD COMMUNITY - maintain and grow audience

- ✓ Make RSS subscription method visible and easy
- ✓ Build trust (certificates, testimonials, privacy policy, etc)
- ✓ Enable and solicit comments, contribution, feedback, etc
- ✓ Add contact page or area
- ✓ Make newsletter subscription method visible and easy
- ✓ Participate in other online communities
- ✓ Make "not found" error pages useful (redirect to site map, to popular content links, etc)

BE ACCESSIBLE - be open to widest audience

- ✓ Check compatibility with key browsers
- ✓ Check conformance with W3C standards
- ✓ Give images "alt" tags
- ✓ Welcome international visitors (multilingual "about" info, etc)

PROMOTE SITE - find new audiences

- ✓ Submit to directories (Yahoo Directory, Open Directory Project, topic-specific directories, etc.)
- ✓ Use social networks for promotion
- ✓ Contribute content w/ backlinks to Wikipedia, YouTube, blog carnivals, guest posts, syndicators, etc.
- ✓ Take part in other sites' comments, forums, groups, etc.
- ✓ Introduce site directly to potentially interested sites
- ✓ Ask other sites for attention/reviews
- ✓ Trade links with appropriate sites
- ✓ Make linking/sharing easy (use social network buttons, offer link code, etc.)
- ✓ Use RSS feed (either full feed or teaser only)
- ✓ Ping search engines & aggregators about new content

GET FOUND WITH SEO - improve search ranking

- ✓ Keep content flowing to keep crawlers visiting often
- ✓ Get linked to by quality external sites
- ✓ Offer site map in engines' preferred XML format
- ✓ Use metadata, include page meta descriptions
- ✓ Use descriptive page titles
- ✓ Keep paths unique (ie, one path per page)
- ✓ Include search keywords in content and in path names
- ✓ Use dashes, not underscores, between words in paths
- ✓ Use anchor text for internal links
- ✓ Avoid borderline techniques (stealing content, cross-linking own sites, backlinks from "link farm" or other shady sites, buying/selling links, etc.)
- ✓ Use SEO experts as appropriate (but be skeptical)

BOOST PERFORMANCE - aid visitors and SEO

- ✓ Reduce "heavy" features/functions
- ✓ Keep images few and small
- ✓ Spread load (ie, embed YouTube, don't serve videos)
- ✓ Break long pages into multiple pages
- ✓ Use content caching
- ✓ Use fast host and tune server for performance
- ✓ Keep web server/CMS software up to date
- ✓ Prepare for traffic surges (set up early warning system, "throttle" functions during heavy load, etc)

MONITOR AND IMPROVE - keep boosting results

- ✓ Monitor key statistics (visits, page views, RSS/newsletter subscribers, Google search ranking for keywords, revenue or other goal conversion, etc)
- ✓ Perform regular maintenance (spam removal, comment clean-up, broken link fixing, site backup)
- ✓ Get feedback (solicit visitor feedback; test navigation with real users; check Technorati links; subscribe to RSS feed for Google search on site brand name; etc)
- ✓ Test performance (page-loading & download speed, etc)
- ✓ Check logs for trouble (404 errors, illegal access, etc)