

Dual Web Site Design

RESEARCH

Hello! I'm Dave Reale and this is one of a series of articles I've written and devoted to designing web sites that are friendly to both the viewer and the search engines.

Before you decide on a title and description, research your keywords and compare with your competition. Keywords are at the heart of every page in your web site and using them properly will improve your search engine ranking.

To find out which keywords are best suited to your web site, write down 25 words in simple or complex form that relate directly to what you are selling. If you're Jack and you sell hammers, the word "hammer" is a simple keyword while the complex form is "Jacks Hammer Store", or "Jacks Hammer Store in Tampa". Someone looking for a hammer in Tampa can follow a clear relevant path to your site on the Internet.

Take your list of keywords and enter them, one at a time, into the text search box of your favorite search engines, like AltaVista, Yahoo, or Google. Print out the first page of results for each keyword

entered. Do this for every keyword in your list. Use both simple and complex search terms that are closely related to what you sell.

Now, compare your initial list of keywords with your search results by asking yourself two questions. One, which web site(s) ranked in the top 10 of all your search results; two, how did the successful sites use their keywords to create the Meta Tags, i.e., the title and description, that search engines look for? You can lean on the success of other sites that rank high in the search engines to enhance your own success.

Choose the most successful sites and review their Meta Tags. They can be found in the source code of each web page between the <HEAD> and </HEAD> tags. For this, go to your browsers tool bar and click on "VIEW". Select "Source Code" from the drop-down menu. This is the raw HTML that the search engines look for and use to rank your site. Print out the Source Code of the pages you find on the most successful sites.

Again, compare all of the printed information and ask yourself, "How can I apply what I've just learned to get my web site ranked higher in the search engines?"

Consider using keywords you didn't have on your initial list or dropping some that didn't show up at all in your research; unless they are unique to your specialty.

Continue by looking closely at the web site descriptions. Will your visitors like what they read? Can you make a change(s) in yours to be more competitive, to improve your ranking, and to attract more visitors? Will it entice them to click on your hyperlinks to more information? This is often your only chance to rank higher and found easier in the Search Engines.

Until the next time, follow the directions above. Make your list of 25 relevant keywords and compare them with those found in the top 10 sites of your Internet research and their Source Codes. Use your results to write a description of your products or services.

I'll continue with this in my next article.

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