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Search Engine Optimization

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1.0 Aims

Our aims for the site should be to be the top listed page with in designated search engines in the next few months, we accomplish this through search engine optimization and a relentless advertising campaign which will be the driving force behind the sites traffic in the near future.

The designated search engines which we wish to claim victory in are of course google.co.uk and yahoo.co.uk.

1.1 Where we are

Currently we are not listed in the returned results in Google and Yahoo search engines, this needs to be altered quickly as we are losing business because of it.

This is because the site is under a sub domain directory of a hosting providers name and therefore breaks Google's sitemap rules and isn't being indexed properly.

To solve this I am going to acquire a domain name for the actual site and refer traffic to the hosting page, this should hopefully fix the sitemap issue and our site will then start being indexed.

I will also achieve our goal by using the various techniques and resources listed below to help propel our site in to the search spotlight.

1.2 Key words

Key Moments of Opportunity

Description	Need	Action
A mother wants to her son/daughter to gain extra musical curricular certificates outside of school, particularly relating to percussion instruments made from recyclable materials.	She needs local clubs/workshops which provide recognised national curriculum awards in subject areas relating to percussion instruments.	Looks in her local news paper. Looks in the yellow pages. Searches Google.

Strengths -

- Our program is up to the national curriculum standard therefore participants will be accredited with a recognised qualification upon successful completion. (Key stage level 2 in Science)
- Our staff are highly experienced and trained in various subject fields.
- The workshop we provide is both fun and stimulating making it appeal to kids more than your average workshops.

Weaknesses -

- Due to the small size of the business we can only offer services to Tees Valley area which limits our national coverage and therefore losing out on business i.e. profit.
- One member of staff currently employed and so cannot overbook her as she can only manage certain times.

Opportunities -

- Customer may have multiple kids and this equals more business.
- Knowledge of the business will spread via word of mouth from the customers.

Threats -

- No known threats as a rival company is yet to be formed but if this said company appears it may offer cheaper services and be able to cover more territory due to its financial backing or sponsors.

Key Moments of Opportunity

Description	Need	Action
A school would like to put on after school workshops for its pupils relating to musical percussion instruments made from recyclable materials.	School needs local experienced teacher to take a class of pupils for a workshop with in the field of science relating to music instruments, particularly percussion.	Look in the local news paper. Look in the yellow pages. Searches Google.

Strengths -

- Our program is up to the national curriculum standard therefore participants will be accredited with a recognised qualification upon successful completion. (Key stage level 2 in Science)
- Our staffs are highly experienced and are trained up to a level that they are allowed to work with kids.
- The workshop we provide is both fun and stimulating making it appeal to pupils more than your average workshops.

Weaknesses -

- Due to the small size of the business we can only offer services to Tees Valley area which limits our national coverage and therefore losing out on business i.e. profit.
- One member of staff currently employed and so cannot overbook her as she can only manage certain times.

Opportunities -

- As the customer is a school, may be offered a contract with them to provide workshops all year round.

Threats -

- No known threats as a rival company is yet to be formed but if this said company appears it may offer cheaper services and be able to cover more territory due to its financial backing or sponsors.

“Use key words in heading, sub headings, and links.

Design your narrative so that keywords are visually and logically prominent.

Heading tags (H1-H3) and Bolding text increase the visual and logical weight of keywords.

Keywords should be in all headings and when within narrative be bold.

How many times do key words appear within the 1st 25 words of each page of you web site?

How many times do keywords appear within the 1st 200 words of each page of your web site?

The 1st 25 words – are very, very important

The 1st 200 words – are very important

Key word proximity is important but not vital

Single key word (phrase) density must be more than 2% but less than 10%

- it must appear once in the first 25 words

- then at least once more in the next 75 words,

- but always less than 10 times in each 100.” [3]

From the analysis above of the Key Moments of Opportunity tables, we can discover keywords. These key words should be used throughout the website as they influence search engine results and rankings, keeping in mind the guidelines above for use of keywords on the site.

From the key moments of opportunity table I can create my list of keywords;

- Extra
- Curricular
- Learning
- School
- Outside
- Clubs
- Workshops
- Awards
- Learning
- Curriculum
- Supply
- Teacher
- Specialist
- Fun
- Drum
- Percussion
- Recyclable

- REMOVED
- Experienced
- Music
- Recycled
- Instruments
- Tees
- Valley

We can analyze these key words and decide upon a route to make them more effective in search engines for us;

- Extra curricular **Tees valley**
- Learning outside of school **Tees valley**
- Learning clubs **Tees valley**
- Workshops **Tees valley**
- Learning awards **Tees valley**
- Fun learning **Tees valley**
- Extra curriculum **Tees valley**
- Supply teacher **Tees valley**
- Specialist teacher **Tees valley**
- Fun teacher **Tees valley**
- REMOVED **Tees valley**
- Experienced workshops **in the Tees valley**
- Tees valley
- **Tees Valley** Music teacher
- Recycled percussion instruments **Tees Valley**

The above list gives us more a search engine presence by maximizing the keywords and then combining them to make key phrases.

1.3 Site Issues

Here I shall discuss various issues which will have to be solved or added to make the site more search friendly and be able to acquire better search results form advanced search engines such as google.co.uk and yahoo.co.uk.

1.31 Links

It would be prudent to get your site linked too from as many pages as you can. This can include profiles on forums and signatures. If you make posts on educational forums be sure to leave a link at the end of every post. Add the link to your signature on the forum, the more links you have to your page the more popular it will be.

If you can get partner companies to add you as a parent on their own site and link to you, this will boost your search engine rating too.

Comments on people's blog could also help you if you link your site via their comments section.

1.32 DMOZ

A submission to DMOZ would be prudent as this is a very valuable resource and helpful to search engines to view our site more efficiently. Major changes to the website should also be re-uploaded to DMOZ to ensure up to date information.

1.33 Domain Name

As we currently do not have one yet we will need to rectify this quickly and purchase one as soon as possible to fix sitemap error and Google indexing of the site.

The domain name must be easily memorable and catchy but also describe the business. An easy to remember domain name will let the customers easily and rapidly access the site and they will be able to tell their friends the name without having to write it down and then hopefully they will also visit.

If you can include keywords in your domain name, I would advise it but do not use key words if they overcomplicate your domain name unless this is what you want as it will lead to customers forgetting the name.

Easy to spell words provide less chance of a customer misspelling the name and therefore being diverted to another site which may be your rival.

1.34 Title tag

Giving a clear and precise title tag to our page is very important as when it is showing in search engines people want to know just what the page is about so keeping it short but yet informative will draw users to clicking and viewing the site.

1.35 Meta tags

These are important to our site and how it will be listed by search engines. Meta description tag should be kept but again informative giving the sure the exact description of the page that the tag is embedded into.

Meta keywords are also embedded into the pages code too and list keywords which relate to the page, although I researched this and was informed by various sources that search engines like to ignore this tag.

This is because webmasters could list hundreds of keywords which did not actually relate to the site and so influencing their ranking falsely.

“Much of the advice for your description tag also holds true for your Meta keywords tag. The keywords tag used to be very important when optimizing a website with all the search engines spidering and utilizing the information. When it became obvious to the search engines that webmasters were stuffing their keywords tags with dozens of unrelated search terms, the search engines moved away from algorithms that used information collected from keywords tags. We are now at the stage where, very few search engines use the keywords tags to any significant degree. However, examine your traffic logs and you will be surprised at how many different search engines bring traffic to your website. I'll bet there are many small search engines, bringing traffic to your website, that you have never heard of before. With many of these smaller search engines relying on

older technology, and with it only taking a couple of minutes to add a keywords tag, it is worthwhile to at least look at the way you format your meta keywords tag.” [1]

1.36 Alt Tags

Alts tags are for when browsers cannot load an image so the alt text is loaded in its place, this is useful as if our image link is dead the alt tag will still load providing information.

The alt tag is extremely handy to SEO as web crawlers cannot read what is in an image embedded into a page; giving the image an alt tag gives your page another hit on the words you put into the alt tag, increasing the amount of relevant words which could be searched on Google or various other search engines.

“Images are an important part of making your site visually attractive to your visitors. But, search engines do not understand the content of images on a page. This is true even if the images have text in them. For example, your logo may have words in it. The search engines can not read these words because they are not standard text. They are a picture.

This is why ALT Tags can be useful. ALT Tags are text descriptions that are used to describe an image on a page. These are not seen by the visitors to your site unless they look at the source code.” [2]

1.37 Site Map

As the sitemap is currently broke for our site this is a priority situation and will need to be fixed immediately, steps are being taken towards this goal and the sitemap should be fixed very soon.

A sitemap is a list usually in .xml format which shows all the pages or the pages you select yourself, this is handy as it will allow search engines easier access to our pages and making sure the correct pages are indexed.

Google offer a free site map generator tool or you can write your own as the structure of sitemap file is straight forward and easy to write/edit.

I recommend having a precise sitemap for the site but setting up certain precautions to make sure classified directories and files are not listed with in the sitemap for security reasons.

1.38 JavaScript

If we need to use JavaScript for some dynamic effects, I recommend embedding it so that the script is loaded externally by the page rather than internally as this can cause problems with some indexing crawlers.

1.39 Robots.txt

Robots.txt is a simple text file which states a list of rules for crawlers/spiders to act upon, such as restricting access to certain folders and files and optimizing the indexing process.

A robots.txt file should be used with in the site to properly affect the crawlers indexing process.

A robots.txt file can also be cause for concern as it can be a security flaw. If we state in the file you don't want a directory called "admin" to be indexed although this will protect it from a crawler, your robot.txt file has just given away an important document/directories existence to the public or a hacker, as a robot.txt file can be read by anyone.

1.4 Illegal / Non ethical

Just incase we're feeling bold or adventurous there are certain frowned upon methods or illegal ways to influence search engine results for your page.

You could flood your Meta tag keywords with thousands of "keywords" this method is highly discouraged by experts and because most sophisticated crawlers tend to ignore this now it may not provide the results it would of 5 years ago.

Create a "search pot" which is just a page under your domain with nearly an unlimited amount of words written on it, some people have copied the entire English dictionary onto a page in a bid to influence search results.

If your company has the capital you could "buy off" companies such as Google and Yahoo to prioritize you above everyone else's web site.

2.0 Site Analysis

In this section I will analyze the sites contents and code to find any bugs or vulnerabilities which will result in a less than adequate performance with a search engine.

2.1 Keyword Density

Keyword	1 st 25	1 st 100	Density
Extra curricular	1	2	2
Learning outside of school	0	0	0
Learning clubs	0	0	0
Workshops	2	4	4
Learning awards	0	0	0
Fun	0	1	1
Supply teacher	0	0	0
Specialist teacher	0	0	0
Fun teacher	0	0	0
REMOVED	1	4	4
Experienced	1	1	1
Tees Valley	1	2	2

As you can see, this is a poor performance in key word density for the index page, it is lacking in the density department which will be no doubt affecting our search engine ranking.

I propose a re-write of the main page to reflect the guidelines provided by Google Inc.

Some keywords are used in the right way provided by Google but the other keywords which I have chosen are not being used at all, which is what I wish to rectify with the proposed re-write of the page.

2.2 Code Review

Meta tags - REMOVED, REMOVED, REMOVED, REMOVED, teacher, curriculum, national, learning, workshops, fun, tees valley, school, teacher, supply, experienced.

As you can see above the meta tags for the index page are nearly all keywords with only a minority of them missing. We should add more key words to the meta tag and then find alternatives in which to say a certain word and list that also.

Title - Our title tag for the index page uses the keyword, REMOVED adding to the search engine optimization.

Emphasis on keywords - We emphasize the keyword "REMOVED" by using it in the websites banner, the text in the banner is very large and should catch the attention of users viewing, which will add to a viral marketing campaign if we chose to do so as the name may not be forgotten easily due to the large in your face text.

3.0 References

[1] Beal, A. *Search Engine Optimization Basics Part 3 - Meta Tags*,
<http://www.searchengineguide.com/andy-beal/search-engine-optimization-basics-part-3-meta-tags.php>, Date accessed 25/12/2007.

[2] Beal, A. *Search Engine Optimization Basics*,
<http://www.searchengineguide.com/optimization.html>, Date accessed 26/12/2007.

[3] University of Teesside, *Search Engine Optimization Basics*,
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[4] Google, *Search Engine Optimization Basics*,
https://blackboard.tees.ac.uk/@@5a240d62850e64cd764a073ca339dce5/courses/1/MUL3011-N-YEAR-2007/content/_389902_1/SEO%20Basics_1.ppt, Date accessed 23/01/2008.