

The Top Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Myths - Part I

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There are many SEO myths and rumors talked about everyday. While there is an abundance of search engine information available on the web, a lot of it is contradictory. Some SEO myths are based upon techniques that were effective years ago but definitely no longer work. While there are some SEO tricks that will work for a certain time (until the algorithms are updated to detect and prevent the SEO sp@m), inevitably they will come back to haunt the website using them. SEO is knowledge, experience and hard work. Some SEO sales reps may tell you exactly what you want to hear. We have listed some of the most prevalent Search Engine Optimization myths in a 2 part article.

SEO Myth: Using a program/service to "Submit your site to 10,000 Search Engines" is a good idea.

Fact: There aren't 10,000 search engines. There aren't even 500. In fact, the top 3 search engines (Google, Yahoo, MSN) account for the vast majority of search traffic (studies vary from between 85 and 90 percent). Nearly all of the sites that these programs or services list as "search engines" are so called FFA (Free-For-All) sites, also called "link farms". These sites will agree to place a link to your site on their site, which is usually just a collection of links. Your link will usually only appear for a short time, since as new links are added, the older ones are pushed off the page. The only thing you will get out of such submissions is a lot of unsolicited mail to the email address that you provided!

SEO Myth: Websites are optimized while they are being developed.

Fact: Only a small percentage of designers and developers actually optimize pages for the Search Engines during the build process. Most web designers actually lack the skills to properly optimize a site. Nearly all search engine optimization is done after the fact, if at all. As many as 70% of all sites are not properly optimized to rank high in the search engines, so anything you do to optimize your site puts it ahead of many of your competitors.

SEO Myth: Sites must be constantly resubmitted to retain rankings.

Fact: This is a scare tactic popularized by various submission services and software companies. In fact, it is a waste of money to pay to have your site resubmitted once it is already listed in an engine's database and a waste of time to do it yourself. A search engine is using a spider (bot) to crawl the web and index your site on a regular basis.

SEO Myth: Meta tags are the most important factor in search engine rankings.

Fact: Many search engines (most notably Google) ignore Meta tags completely due to constant abuse by webmasters. The only importance placed on Meta tags these days is actually the Meta description tag, which can appear as the description for the corresponding page on some engines, for example MSN. Meta tags are virtually irrelevant in the ranking algorithms of the top engines but – unbelievable as it sounds - many site owners continue to believe that Meta tags are the only optimization strategy that they need.

SEO Myth: Simply inserting keywords in the keyword Meta tag will help list your site for that keyword

Fact: Most major search engines do not spider or index the keyword Meta tag and those that do, if the keyword is not also in the copy of the same page, it is considered sp@m which could lower your rankings, but definitely not raise it.

SEO Myth: Hidden links or text in a page can get your page ranked higher.

Fact: Keyword stuffing and hidden links in the page can get your site penalized or banned if detected. It is considered search engine sp@mming.

More revealing facts in Part II.....