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Justin Spencer • Sep. 01, 2011



Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is a collection of tactics that are applied to your website to help it rank better in the results when people use searches to find people and businesses they need. SEO, as an industry, literally changes every day. Search engines, like Google, constantly tweak how they rank and present search findings.

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search results, and there is a very good chance that you are not taking full advantage of these current opportunities. Here are seven ways to quickly boost your ranking and web presence so more people will find you:

1) **Robots.txt File:** The robots.txt file tells Google, Yahoo!, Bing and other web crawlers how to access your site. If your website has a non-existent or improperly written robots.txt file, your site would be like a locked door to search engines. To check, visit www.YourWebsite.com/robots.txt and visit www.robotstxt.org for more information on how to write it. Or better yet, seek the advice of a professional who can offer more advanced tips for creating an effective robots.txt file.

2) **Google & Bing Webmaster Tools:** Search engines provide an incredible amount of useful data about your website. These tools allow you to view how often your site is visited (or *crawled* is the technical term) by search engines scouring the web, which pages are indexed, error diagnoses and much more. It is important to know how your site is accessed on the web and how to better manage it. You can find out more detail and verify your website at <http://www.google.com/webmasters> and Bing.com/Webmaster.

3) **Optimized Multimedia:** Search engines don't access pictures, video or audio, because they do not know how to interpret and therefore index multimedia. However, by adding attributes (metadata), such as file name, alt tags and descriptions, this information suddenly becomes alive and can be searched and indexed. For instance, for a short movie about Accounting Best Practices, use *Accounting-best-practices.mov* instead of *movie1.mov*.

4) **URLs:** It was once incredibly popular to use keywords in your URL. A URL of www.example.com/keyword-rich-url.html, for example, is not as effective, but such a naming practice is still recommended over “www.example.com/?pageid=1&articleid=7&sourceid=44.” Ensure that your URLs include keywords.

5) **Internal Linking:** The way that pages are navigated within a website is

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picture posting and culture showcasing; YouTube or Vimeo for videos; LinkedIn for professional information; and Foursquare and Facebook Places for check-ins.

7) **Go Local:** It is untrue that you have to be a large national or international company to promote yourself on the Internet. Most traffic that comes to your site is going to be individuals and businesses within a radius of just a few miles. Google, Yahoo! and Bing (both desktop and mobile) are quick to determine your current location and deliver results that are geographically tailored. It is easy to register your business at the big ones: [google.com/places](https://www.google.com/places), [Bing.com/Local](https://www.bing.com/Local) and [Yelp.com](https://www.yelp.com). Reviews are encouraged, so incentivize your customers to write reviews, and you will reap the benefits in search results.

8) **Bonus Tip: Track Your Site:** If you are not currently tracking the activity and worthiness of your website, I recommend you visit [Google.com/Analytics](https://www.google.com/analytics) to set up a free account. Most website content management systems and developers can quickly and easily install a Google Analytics tracking code. It provides priceless data on your visitors such as how much time they spend on which pages and which pages are most popular.

These are just a few SEO helpful tips and tactics that can help boost your rankings and overall search engine presence. There are well over 200 signals that search algorithms take into account, and some weigh more heavily than others ... so this only scratches the surface. There is no silver bullet that can take your site to #1, but employing the basics in a way search engines like is a great way to get an advantage over your competitors.

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