



# INCREASING TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE THROUGH SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION TECHNIQUES

Small businesses that want to learn how to attract more customers to their website through marketing strategies such as search engine optimization will find this booklet useful. You may want to read this booklet in conjunction with other booklets in this series such as *Successful Online Display Advertising* and *Social Media for Small Business*.

## Key Concepts

Search engine optimization (SEO) involves designing, writing, and coding a website in a way that helps to improve the volume and quality of traffic to your website from people using search engines. These “free,” “organic,” or “natural” rankings on the various search engines can be influenced, but not controlled, by effective SEO techniques. Websites that have higher rankings (i.e. presented higher in the search results) are identified to a larger number of people who will then visit those sites.

The majority of web traffic is driven by major search engines, including Google, Bing, YouTube, AOL, Yahoo, Duck Duck Go, Ask Jeeves and other country-specific ones (e.g. Baidu in China).

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## How Search Engines Work

Search engines have four functions—crawling, building an index, calculating relevancy and rankings, and serving results. They scour your website and, for each page, index all of the text they can pick up, as well as a great deal of other data about that page's relation to other pages, and in some cases all or a portion of the media available on the page as well. Search engines index all of this information so that they can run search queries efficiently.

Search engines create these databases by performing periodic crawls of the Internet. They must weigh the value of each page and the value of the words that appear on it. Search engines employ secret algorithms (mathematical formulas) to determine the value they place on such elements as inbound and outbound links, density of keywords and placement of words within the site structure, all of which may affect your SEO ranking. Search engines have difficulty indexing multimedia, but there are workarounds which will be discussed later in the booklet.

The newest trend in search engines, and likely the future of search in general, is to move away from keyword-based searches to concept-based personalized searches. When a person clicks on certain search results, search engines like Google, Bing and others record this information to collect trends of interest and then will personalize the search results based on specific interests. This is still a developing field, but appears to have good potential in making searches more relevant.

The following pages outline SEO techniques that will help you to draw more visitors to your website.

## Getting Started

### Planning

#### 1. Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Who am I trying to attract to my website? Who is my target audience?
2. Do I have the resources and knowledge-base in-house to optimize my site or should I use the services of an SEO specialist?

3. Who are my competitors?
4. Who are my allies and associates to help influence my optimization results?
5. What is the budget and time I can allocate to optimizing my website initially and going forward?

#### 2. Setting SEO Objectives and Goals

The ultimate goal of search engine optimization is to boost your revenue by driving traffic to your website. However, there are other important objectives:

- **To establish you as an expert in your field.** Visibility in search engines creates an implied endorsement effect where searchers associate quality, relevance and trustworthiness with sites that rank highly for their queries.
- **To enhance product awareness.** It is better to have an image or video displayed as opposed to just text since it will attract more attention.
- **To increase sales leads.** The goal is to drive the right traffic to your site by encouraging people to provide qualified contact information for future relationship building.
- **To reduce cost per order.** Free search engine traffic will help you reduce the cost of advertising compared to other media channels.
- **To encourage repeat visitors.** Optimized pages help customers find additional products or services more easily and quickly after they have purchased from you, thus improving customer support and service.
- **To qualify visitors.** Search can help you understand the stage your buyer is at—just beginning or further along. Getting a clear picture of searcher and visitor intent helps you to adjust your site to accommodate their needs.

When planning your search engine optimization strategy, bear in mind that, although many site owners seek a #1 ranking, search engines want the #1 result to be the one that offers the most value to users. Unless your website offers this, it may be unrealistic for you to expect to get to that position. Be realistic when setting your objectives.

### 3. Do-It-Yourself Options

Many small business owners hire the services of an SEO expert to optimize their websites. If you would prefer to do it yourself, here are some questions to ask yourself first:

1. **Do I really have the time it takes to optimize my website?** Entrepreneurs wear many hats, and there may be too many other business priorities that take precedence over a website project.
2. **Will doing my own SEO save money?** Time spent doing one job is time away from doing another. Could focusing on web development and SEO instead of business planning, building customer relationships and handling staff issues end up costing more money in the long run?
3. **How strong are my web development skills?** Be honest with yourself. SEO requires specific technical and marketing expertise. And marketing is an ongoing process.

If you are satisfied with the answers and your preference is still the do-it-yourself approach, here are some guidelines:

- Define your target audience and brainstorm keyword phrases that are applicable to them.
- Identify your competitors and conduct a competitive analysis using tools like *compete.com* or *wordtracker.com*, or review their websites.
- Conduct formal or informal surveys of your customers and prospects or set up Google [www.google.com/webmasters/tools/](http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/) or Bing Webmaster [www.bing.com/toolbox/webmaster/](http://www.bing.com/toolbox/webmaster/) to see what keywords people are searching for in your field.
- Write appropriate content, utilizing keyword best practices (see *below*).
- Understand what is entailed to optimize a website. Know who to ask to implement your ideas, or have the appropriate resources (software) or knowledge base to do it yourself.

- Allocate appropriate time for continuous efforts.
- Have the appropriate metrics in place for review and analysis so you can continue to improve your positioning.

### 4. Choosing an SEO Specialist to Work With

Because SEO is such a specialized and ever-changing world, you should consider working with an expert. The best time to hire an SEO specialist is either at the creation of a new website or the major redesign of an existing one. This will ensure that you implement the necessary steps to make your site optimized right from the start.

Here is a list of key questions to ask to help in choosing an SEO specialist:

#### Questions to Ask a Potential SEO Specialist

1. What are your most important SEO techniques?
2. Can you show me examples of your previous work and share some success stories?
3. Do you offer any online marketing services or advice to complement your SEO business?
4. Do you follow the Google Webmaster Guidelines?
5. What kind of results do you expect to see, and in what timeframe? How do you measure your success?
6. What is your experience in my industry?
7. What is your experience in my country/city?
8. How long have you been in business?
9. How can I expect to communicate with you? Will you share with me all the changes you make to my site, and provide detailed information about your recommendations and the rationale behind them?
10. How do you charge for your services? Is this a one-time fee or an ongoing contract? What are the deliverables if it is ongoing?

## Types of Services Most SEO Specialists Provide

- Review of your site content and/or structure
- Advice on technical aspects of SEO and their impact on your website
- Content development and/or editing
- Management of online business development campaigns

- Keyword and competitive research
- SEO training

**CAUTION:** Be wary of emails that may appear legitimate but are often spammers offering SEO services and claiming they can “Guarantee #1 Ranking”.

## 5. Understanding Best Practices, Pitfalls and Barriers

### SEO BEST PRACTICES

Category	Actions
Keyword Search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find the words and phrases your customers use rather than industry jargon.</li> <li>• Look for synonyms.</li> <li>• Reflect the answers to viewer questions in your keywords and in the content of your pages.</li> <li>• Move away from thinking of keywords as data. Imagine instead the person who will be typing in that keyword and what they are searching for.</li> </ul>
Quality Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content is still “king” and search engines are looking for keyword phrases surrounded by semantic phrasing that supports the overall theme of that section. Try to incorporate synonyms.</li> </ul>
SEO Local (Optimizing your site to attract local business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimize your website to acquire foot traffic or local area interest. Add service location addresses and/or city listings and include good local links to your pages.</li> <li>• Choose the proper categories in Google Places.</li> <li>• Make sure Google can recognize that your website and your Google Places page are associated and linked.</li> <li>• Ask users for citations and reviews which will link back to you.</li> </ul>
Social SEO (Optimizing your site for social networks and social media)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use social cues such as Twitter shares, Facebook likes and social bookmarking which heavily influence search rankings. For more optimization suggestions such as tagging and keyword titles, see the <i>Social Media for Small Business</i> booklet.</li> </ul>
Guest SEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a guest blogger on other related blogs.</li> <li>• Consider targeting blogs that aren’t direct matches to your industry to get a leg up on your competition. For more about blogging, see the <i>Blogs for Small Business</i> booklet.</li> </ul>

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Category	Actions
Link Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use reciprocal link exchange moderately. Instead, let link building happen naturally through people retweeting and passing on your good content and articles.</li> <li>• Ensure quality of links rather than quantity. The higher the quality of links, the more trust and authority will be established.</li> <li>• Use targeted keywords in anchor text.</li> <li>• When you do a link exchange, don't always link back to your home page. Instead, provide a link to the most relevant section of your site that relates to the anchor link – e.g. "what you need to know about <i>gluten-free products</i>" should link to the page about gluten-free products.</li> <li>• Ensure any out of date or old web pages are redirected to the relevant new pages through a 301 redirect.</li> </ul>
Technical Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyword density (how often keyword phrases are used in comparison to total number of words on that page) of over 10% is considered suspicious and does not look like naturally written text. Aim for 3–7% of total words per page to be the keywords you are trying to optimize for.</li> <li>• Have a short title tag (6 or 7 words at most), with the most important keywords near the beginning and used only once.</li> <li>• Avoid cumbersome URLs. Instead, create user-friendly URLs for easy accessibility by viewers and search engines – e.g. change <i>www.mysite.com/recipes.php?object=1&amp;type=2&amp;kind=3&amp;node=5&amp;arg=6</i> to <i>www.mysite.com/recipes/apples</i>.</li> <li>• Submit an XML site map to the search engines after making any major structural changes to your site.</li> </ul>

## SEO PITFALLS/BARRIERS

Category	Actions
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When choosing keyword phrases, avoid using the word "free" unless you're offering something unconditionally.</li> <li>• Be careful adjusting page titles without altering page content. Google may view it unfavourably.</li> <li>• Avoid overly aggressive or manipulative SEO techniques, such as loading too many keywords in the website's content, which might get your site excluded from a search engine.</li> <li>• Exclude linking affiliates that are not relevant as this could negatively affect your positioning.</li> </ul>

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Category	Actions
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In structural design, do not use frame set up (check with your developer).</li> <li>• Avoid free hosting since it is difficult for search engines to wade through all the data when there are many sites sharing free hosting.</li> <li>• Watch for and remove any broken links (URL links that no longer work and are not accessible).</li> <li>• Do not use FLASH, videos or images without alternative tags (alt tags), transcripts or synopsis content.</li> <li>• Do not try to optimize by using an excessive number of keywords, especially unrelated ones, as this will affect the performance of all your keywords.</li> <li>• Avoid artificially inflated keyword density (over 10%) or you will risk getting banned from search engines.</li> <li>• Keep the number of links on a page to a reasonable number since Google does not like pages that consist mainly of links.</li> <li>• Avoid writing text that is the same colour as page background since you will be penalized by Google for this practice.</li> </ul>

## Implementing SEO

### 1. Keywords

Knowing what keywords your target audience will use to find the products or services that you offer is the most critical consideration in search engine optimization. Put yourself in the shoes of your prospects and start by brainstorming all the keyword phrases they might use, both single words and up to four or five keyword phrases (called long tail keywords).

An analysis of search behaviour typically shows that, when people use a one word or two word search phrase, they are at the beginning stages of their research, whereas use of a four or five plus keyword phrase reveals they are close to the “buying” stage (e.g. “Car sales” vs. “Mercedes 350 SL vintage”).

To assist in analyzing keywords, you can also use online tools like Google Ad Words Selector Tool <https://adwords.google.com>, Wordtracker <https://freekeywords.wordtracker.com>, SEOBook Keyword Tool <http://tools.seobook.com/keyword-tools/seobook/> and Wordstream Keyword Niche Tool [www.wordstream.com/keyword-niche-finder](http://www.wordstream.com/keyword-niche-finder).

After brainstorming keyword phrases, look for creative ways like these to expand your keywords:

- Plural vs. singular (“examples” vs. “example”)
- “Double” words (like “everyday” and “every day”)

- Other tenses (as with “develop”, “developed”, “developing”)
- Different spellings (alternate spellings, British/American spellings, and, yes, misspellings)
- Turning verbs into nouns (as in “select” >> “selection”, “selector”)
- Other prefixes and suffixes (e.g. prefix “pre/selling”; or suffix “find/able” or “suggest/ive”)
- Any associated acronyms (e.g. “WAN” as well as “Wide Area Network”)

You will also want to think in terms of expanding a search term by:

- Adding other words to the beginning or end. Common ones searchers use are “how to”, “how to do”, “how do I”, “how can I”, or “where can I find”;
- Breaking it apart with other words or rearranging keywords (as in “strawberry rhubarb pie” vs. “strawberry pie and rhubarb pie” and “the 2012 NHL playoffs” vs “the playoffs in the 2012 NHL season”).

When developing your content sections and body text, consider the following:

- Group like-minded keyword phrases and divide your content areas to determine your site map navigation layout.



- Prioritize money-making keyword phrases (those that lead to a sale, as identified by examining your metrics) and make sure you position them within your page so that search engines and your audience can easily identify them.
- Use keyword phrases in your web address that best describe the page content – e.g. *http://www.yourdomainname.com/choosing-keyword-phrases.html*.
- For each page, choose a title (60 characters), description (150 characters) and Meta keywords reflecting the theme and content of the page, with each word separated by a comma.
- Placement of keywords is very important. Think backwards, and put the “result/ conclusion” at the beginning, thus keeping priority keywords “above the fold” (i.e. closest to the top of the page). When indexing your site, search engines move their robots from top to bottom, left to right, so the placement of your keywords should be optimized strategically in order to be picked up by the engines.
- Avoid filling the top part of your site with large images or image navigation (text that is actually an image) as you will miss the opportunity to have keywords captured for indexing.

## 2. Finding the Right Keywords

### Steps for finding the right keywords (or search terms)

1. Determine what your existing and potential customers might be looking for. Ask your current customers what terms they would use to find the products and services offered by your business.
2. Brainstorm a list of keywords that are related to your business.
3. Check out the competition to see how many other websites are listed in search engines (particularly Google) for that keyword. You can use tools such as Google Page Rank—which goes from 1 to 10 (10 being the best ranked)—to see which websites hold the top positions.
4. Select the best keywords—the ones most suited to your business and target audience.

5. Ensure that the content on your website is high quality and is consistent with your keywords.
6. Check out various online resources (some are free) that will help you assess the relevance of your keywords by typing “keyword tools” into a search engine.

## 3. Search Engine Optimization Techniques

SEO involves a wide range of techniques, some of which you may be able to do yourself and others that will require web development expertise. Techniques include increasing the number of links from other websites to your web pages, editing the content of the website, reorganizing the structure of your website, and coding changes. It also involves addressing problems that might prevent search engines from fully “crawling” a website.

### On Page and Off Page Optimization Techniques for Increasing Traffic to Your Website

#### On Page Optimization Techniques

On page optimization includes those techniques that can be done on the pages of a website. On page optimization relates to those things that are within your control – i.e. the content of your website. On page optimization techniques help the search engine crawlers read the website content. A readable site helps to show quality and will result in higher ranked web pages.

Review the following with your website developer to ensure that all these items have been considered:

#### On Page SEO Checklist

- Always start with keyword selection, research and testing.
- Have a Meta description tag for each page.
- Create ALT tags for all images.
- Place a keyword phrase in H1, H2, H3, H4 tags and in URL structure (domain name and your pages).
- Develop an internal linking strategy.
- Have relevant, keyword-rich content.
- Follow keyword density rules.
- Create and submit site maps, both XML and user facing.

- Design for usability and accessibility.
- Track target and converting keywords.

### Off Page Optimization Techniques

Off page optimization includes those techniques that can be done outside your website to increase traffic to your website. The various free off page optimization techniques (also known as free traffic sources) that you can use to drive traffic to your website and increase its ranking level in major search engines include link swaps, blogging, social networks, white papers, infographics and forum postings.

Additional guidelines to consider:

- Include the keyword in your domain name when registering both your main website and any micro-sites.
- Include the keyword when naming your digital resources such as a white paper, video and images (e.g. Rather than naming your image, "image-1.jpg", include a descriptive name like "weather-satellite.jpg" or "weather-satellite-tips.pdf").
- Ensure targeted anchor text is keyword rich so that when people copy blog posts or other content, that linked anchor text will come with it and generate more links back to you.

## 4. Link Popularity – A Key Factor for Increasing a Website's Page Ranking

One of the most critical ways to improve your website's ranking in the search engine results pages is improving the number and quality of websites that link to your site. Google PageRank is a system for ranking web pages used by the Google search engine. PageRank assesses the extent and quality of web pages that link to your web pages. Because Google is currently one of the most popular search engines worldwide, the ranking of your web pages received on Google PageRank will affect the number of visitors to your website. Techniques to improve your page rank are discussed below.

### Link Building Techniques

1. Send out product samples and ask for reviews, then ask reviewers to link to your site.
2. Participate as a guest blogger or guest newsletter contributor, with a link back to your site.

3. Host awards or certifications within your industry, create an award 'badge' and then have it link back to your site.

4. Utilize social media and search strategies:

**Twitter.** This can be very effective in capturing attention.

- Follow thought leaders within your industry.
- Make a note of what they like to tweet about.
- Check their personal websites for more info.
- Look at what kind of content they retweet.
- Retweet their content.
- Interact with them constructively.
- Ask for their opinion.

**Blog commenting.** Find high-quality blogs written by people with whom you are seeking links and provide constructive, useful comments. This can prompt them to click through to your website and create a relationship building opportunity where they can either become influencers willing to share your content and/or invite you to become a guest blogger with your byline pointing back to your site. All this contributes to gaining "inbound" links, which help your overall link popularity.

**Profiling.** Complete your profiles in the social circles and map listings. This improves the likelihood for your business to be more visible to search engines.

**Keyword tags.** Use these in content posts and post titles to reinforce the specific keywords that your audience is searching for.

**RSS feeds.** Constantly making fresh content available, combined with "pinging" and natural share among followers, shows search engines how popular your "brand" is.

5. Build a free tool that links back to your site. If it is useful, people will want to download it and possibly share it. Include a byline that brings them back to your site.
6. Build supplementary micro-sites and link back to your main site.

## More about Increasing Link Popularity

This table highlights some tips for increasing link popularity. For best results, ensure that links to your website are relevant.

Tips to Increase Link Popularity	Description
Distribute Articles/Press Releases to Other Websites	Build inbound links by distributing articles/press releases through websites and article directories. Make sure that the articles contain a link back to your website.
Participate in Link Campaigns	Businesses can ask partners (e.g. suppliers), other businesses, professional organizations, chambers of commerce and customers to add links from their websites. Be prepared to link back to their sites. The more relevant the partner, the better.
Create Interesting Content	Provide interesting information that users may find useful. Offer tips to benefit users (e.g. Pitfalls to Avoid When Hiring Contractors). Create tools that people will use (e.g. Product Quality Checklists). Create lists (people love Top 10 lists). Submit to article directories, press release websites, and/or guest blog.
Give Testimonials	Many would think it is important to get testimonials, but it is equally important to give testimonials, as long as they are authentic and well deserved. Ask to have your link come back to your site.
Turn Raw Numbers into a Data Story	Be creative in taking your numbers and crafting an interesting story. When you are the resource reference, then all others who use this story will link back to you.

## 5. Keyword Conversion

Site owners used to be satisfied simply to attract traffic to their sites; now they want to know what is working, such as which keywords most often lead to a sale. If you're trying to sell a product or service through your website, knowing the keywords that lead to this conversion at a high rate is an enormously valuable marketing asset. With this knowledge, you can adjust your site content accordingly. The following reference link will help you with conversion tracking: <http://support.google.com/adwords/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=1722022>.

## Test, Measure, Test Again

### 1. Webmaster Tools

The three major search engines, Google, Bing and Yahoo, have webmaster tools that you as a site owner can sign up for at no cost to manage your website statistics, submit your content and site map and view diagnostic errors, malware or other concerns that the search

engines find from indexing your site. You can also see broken links and the pages from where they originate in order to fix them quickly.

Google Webmaster tools can be found at [www.google.com/webmasters/tools](http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools). You require a Google account to set up the webmaster account. You will then need to follow Google's instructions to verify your website. Verified site owners can see information about how Google crawls, indexes and ranks your site. One of the key indicators that can be gathered from this tool is an understanding of the keywords that visitors to your site are using, and then comparing them to the keywords that Google finds on your site. You can modify your content to reduce the "Bounce Rate", which occurs when someone enters your site, doesn't find what they like and leaves before proceeding to any other part of the site.

Yahoo and Bing have now merged together to offer Bing Webmaster Tools. Getting started involves setting up a Bing webmaster tools account at [www.bing.com/webmaster/WebmasterManageSitesPage.aspx](http://www.bing.com/webmaster/WebmasterManageSitesPage.aspx), then validating your website, creating and uploading a sitemap and developing a search optimization plan. You should sign up for both.

## 2. Tracking Your Progress/ Website Analytics

You should regularly check your search results on the main search engines. Type in keywords or phrases that describe your business to find out how it ranks in the search engine results pages. You can also use various online tools (e.g. Web Trends [webtrends.com](http://webtrends.com), One Stat [www.onestat.com/](http://www.onestat.com/) and Google Analytics [www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics)) to check your ranking against that of your competitors. Key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor include the number of landing pages you have, the bounce rate of those pages and the number of keywords driving traffic to each of those landing pages.

You can look at the following metrics to track your optimization progress and help you make decisions to improve your website and your marketing strategies:

Metrics	Function
Page views	Web pages that attract the most visitors. You will also see web pages that are not performing for you.
Referrers	The number of inbound links or back links. Where are visitors coming from (e.g. via a search engine or another link)?
Bounces	The number of clicks on links that lead away from your website.
Traffic reports	The number of visitors, new and returning.
Entrance keywords	What words are people using to find your site? What pages are they landing on?
Exit pages	What pages are people leaving the site from? Are they not finding what they initially thought they were looking for?
Google Page Rank	This measurement is what Google uses to determine how popular your site is. It measures how important those sites linking to yours are in relation to your site. It's not about quantity, but quality.

## Future of Search Engine Optimization

- **Social rules.** Expect to see links with long term longevity on social networks to rank higher and both web page links and page rank to matter less and less.
- **Personal SEO results.** With users offering personal information to profiling sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google Places, etc. and search engines able to track personal preferences via user clicks, search results and advertisements can now be customized to suit individual preferences. We will see more of this customization as technologies become more fine-tuned to collect this kind of information and users become more willing to provide personal data.
- **Quality vs. quantity.** With the introduction of Google Panda (one of Google's ranking search engine filters that aims to lower the rank of low-quality sites), review and clean up of your site must be ongoing to ensure your pages offer quality content, not just quantity. Make sure you keep content relevant and fresh.
- **Mobile search will continue to grow.** Searching using voice and tablet technologies will grow in importance. With iPhone Siri and Google's own voice system, it will not be long before searching using voice will become an everyday occurrence.

## Related Topics Covered in Other Booklets

- *Social Media for Small Business*
- *Blogs for Small Business*
- *E-Commerce: Purchasing and Selling Online*
- *Integrating Mobile With Your Marketing Strategy*

To view or download these booklets visit [Ontario.ca/ebusiness](http://Ontario.ca/ebusiness).



## Glossary of Terms

**301 Redirect:** Method of letting web browsers and search engines know that a web page or site has been permanently moved to a new page or site.

**Algorithm:** A mathematical formula providing a set of instructions for completing a task. Crawler-based search engines use a set of instructions to index and rank websites.

**Anchor text:** Words used in the link text. It is best to stay away from words like [Read More], [See More], and use a more keyword-rich phrase pointing to where the link is directed – e.g. “Discover Niagara’s Hotel Package Deals today”.

**Backlinks:** Links from external sites that connect to your website. They are also referred to as inbound links.

**Blogs:** A blog (short for weblog) is an online journal. Most blogs have an open format that allows any Internet user to post entries (comments, questions) to other bloggers. Blog discussions are usually organized according to certain themes or topics.

**Bounces/Bounce Rate:** Bounce rate is the percentage of visitors that visit one page on your website then exit the site before visiting another page.

**Crawlers:** (also called spiders, robots, or bots). A program which searches or browses the Web in a logical, automated manner. Search engines use crawlers to find up-to-date information.

**Frames:** (Frame set-up). A browser display area (web page) is divided into two or more sections (frames). The contents of each frame are taken from a different web page.

**Google PageRank:** A rough indication of the popularity and importance of sites that point to your page. A higher PageRank indicates a more popular page.

**HTML (Hyper-Text Mark-up Language):** A programming language used to create sites and pages on the web. This is the primary language of websites.

**Link building:** The process of gaining links to other websites that link to your website.

**Link popularity:** The number and quality of links that point to your website (i.e. back links). The number, quality and credibility of these links can influence your page rank.

**Link swap:** An exchange where site owners agree to mutually link to each other’s sites.

**Malware:** Malicious software that can destroy a computer. Common examples of malware include viruses, Trojans, worms and spyware.

**Meta tags:** Keywords, description and content describing your website that is contained in the section of HTML coding and is not visible on your website.

**Outbound links:** Links from your website to other websites.

**Reciprocal links:** Exchange of links between websites.

**Referrers:** Sites that suggest your site through links coming from their website, blog, email, directory, tool, etc.

**Search Engine Results Page (SERP):** The pages that result from a search engine query run by a user. You can run a search using certain keywords to assess where your web pages are ranking.

**Social media optimization (SMO):** Using social media activity to attract visitors to websites by using methods such as adding social media features (e.g. RSS feeds, sharing buttons) to the website content and doing promotional activities like blogging, participating in discussion groups and updating social networking profiles.

**Submission:** The process of submitting a website to search engines so they are aware of the website and can crawl it.



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This publication is part of an **E-Business Toolkit** which includes a series of booklets on advanced e-business topics and an introductory handbook *How You Can Profit from E-Business*. The entire Toolkit is available at [ontario.ca/ebusiness](http://ontario.ca/ebusiness).