

Improving Your Search Rankings

Now that you have a great Web presence, you most likely want people to find it.

One way to get more visitors is to directly distribute your site's address, and even if you only have a handful of close connections who need to see your site, well this just might work.

Using Personal Messages opposed to just "posting on your timeline" will make the biggest impact. Simply create a script with a specific CTA (Call-to-Action) and let each individual know. This works best for the people you know personally.

For the rest of the world, finding your site will depend on searching via a search engine like Google, Bing or Yahoo, Business Cards, Newsletters and so on.

But how can you optimize your site to ensure you appear as high as possible in the search engine rankings? You may get lots of calls from people telling you that, for a fee, they can quickly get you to the top of the rankings ...most of those claims are simply rubbish.

This is not a negative towards SEO professionals. Indeed, you can gain ranking by using professional services and yes some companies can get you there faster, but in our experience most small business budgets can not handle the cost involved to get to the top of search engines...more importantly, most businesses are not prepared to handle mass outcomes. Think of this...Thousands of people all of a sudden wanting what you have! Sounds great right? And what if your business could only adequately handle 50 of them? Do you think the other 4950 would hang around until you get up to speed? That's not likely in today's "gotta-have-it-now" world. Most likely, you'll draw so many negative reviews, your business would suffer and sink, before it has a chance to rise and thrive.

That's why a more holistic marketing strategy is a great approach for startups and small businesses. To be clear...you definitely want to get the word out to large numbers of people that you are open for business, but on the other hand you only want to spend your limited time on developing a TARGET audience.

Use Descriptions, Titles and Keywords. Start with the basics.

Keep in mind that keywords are not made out of magic. Just because you add a keyword to your site does not mean search engines are going to find you through that keyword. If life were that easy, we'd all be rich and retired to our own private islands by now. We'll help you sort it all out.

Get your site verified with Google. It's easy to set up an account with Google Webmasters, and we can help you do that, but a free hosting account typically does not work. It's ok to use free hosting for a few months, if your budget is shaky, but as soon as possible you should upgrade. Then you can verify your site, view your ranking, and ensure Google indexes your site on a regular basis. It goes without saying, but Google is far and away the most important search engine. We show you how to setup an account for Google Webmaster Tools. Let me say that there are ways to get a FREE hosted site indexed...but in essence, you'll be promoting the

platform and not your business! That's because nothing is really free. So it really is good business sense to spend a few extra dollars and upgrade your platform.

Search-friendly Pages. We'll help you make your page names work for you. The name you give to a Web page in Weebly appears both in the site navigation and in the address (or url) of that page. Search engines consider words in your address more relevant, and therefore more important when displaying search results.

We want to be careful here because making a page name too long can work against you. We'll help you find the right balance.

Use keyword phrases in your links. We'll help you create links from keyword phrases or descriptive text to pack more punch. While you can link from phrases like "go here" and "read more". You'll want to place links into sentences that will draw attention to more information on your site...especially information that is NOT found in the main navigation menu.

Title Your Content. We put titles on every page because Search Engines see Titles as generally more important than regular text. As you begin to go DIY and create new pages or sections on your own, you should add Titles to your site via the Title element. **But don't write all your text in a Title Element;** as that will make things worse for your site. You can't trick the search engines like this, so don't try. Plus, if you write everything in a title it'll make it seem like you're screaming at all your visitors and it will make the search engines put you at the bottom of the rankings.

Location-Relevance. If your site is only relevant to people in a specific area, use content to highlight your location. Create a Google Map and pinpoint your location. Also, refer to the physical location when applicable throughout your site, such as "Visit our San Francisco showroom" or "Located in beautiful Nome, Alaska".

Alt-Text w/ Photos. Be sure to add alt-text to all images! We start you out and if you start going DIY, this is an important point to remember. For clients with an agreement ...we will take care of this for you. (Note: this only works with the Image Element, not Gallery or Slideshow Elements.)

Use a Blog. As a startup or small business, you may not have time in your business schedule to blog each day, but you should at least find time for an article, at minimum, once a month. By maintaining a regular blog, you are continually adding new content to your Web site. This appeals to search engines, because similar to Princes of Bel Air, they like their sites fresh. We can help you install a blog or you can do it on your own.

The Power of Links. The more Web sites that link to your site (as a general rule), the more Google rates your site to be worthwhile. Site to site linking is digital word-of-mouth, both for potential visitors and for search engines.

There is no fast or magic way to get links back to your site, but the effort is worthwhile, since this is a critical factor in your search ranking. The best you can do is build interesting content and let people know it exists.

Social network links are a good place to start: We link your site to your business profile for Facebook and we link other social networks that you have created to your site as well. (Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, etc.). Listing your Web site on Yelp, and other popular directories can create a positive outcome for search engines.

Use Video: Video is one of the most overlooked tidbits liked and loved by your audience and by the search engines...and who owns YouTube? Google owns YouTube. Start a YouTube Channel if you don't already have one, and sprinkle short, interesting videos all through your Web site.

Know Your Limits, Keep Working at it. It is not necessary or realistic to join every social media site or signup for every "get more traffic" gimmick that comes your way. We know your time and budget can restrict you from doing some of the things you may want to do...but you don't have to do everything all at once.

Be realistic with your goals. [Focus on the attainable. We are here to helpconnect with us!](#)