



keywords and SEO Best Practices

Keywords are the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) fuel. All your efforts to fine-tune your web pages adjusted for top rankings on search engines will not pay-off if the targeted keywords are not tweaked to your market correctly. The key is to use the most relevant and important keywords on top of your keywords list on a given web page. Finding top ranking keywords set, and inserting them **ALL** at once on all your web pages will not pay off. Instead, it is advisable to use the keywords tuned to each web page, as well as using those keywords on the content / body of your web page that will pay off higher in search results. Certain areas of the HTML documents (i.e. Meta tags on Header) are attributed to relevancies of specific web page content by various search engines. Following is the Best Practices for how to use your keywords as well as other SEO factors:

1. <title> tag - Search results always shows the title tag as your page title. The Title must be short and precise, say 6-12 words (maximum of 150 characters)¹. A fine-tune / specific Keyword can be anywhere in the <title> tag but preferably near the beginning. ★★★★★
2. Anchor text² - Even though internal anchor text-over can result in Google penalty, anchor text with keyword focus from external links is an important factor. Inbound links are considered positive not only for the site but for the keyword as well. ★★★★★
3. Headings - The Keywords placed on the heading in H1 is an important factor but the web page should have actual text relevant to the keyword. I was not surprised to find that this is a policy of [W3C](#) but, I would suggest keeping the heading (H1 tag) precise (less than 10 words). ★★★★★
4. It is a good practice to keep high-ranking keywords as first words of the heading (to be assured of their inclusion, if any). ★★★★★
5. Domain Name - Domain names incorporating vital keywords is a very important factor. Also, domain name extension³ (for trusted domains), domain registration and expiration date (also for trusted domains), and the time spent on a given domain are all major factors when search engines are considering a trusted domain⁴. ★★★★★

★★★★★ Reveals importance level of the subject practice.

¹ For SEO purposes, "Every HTML document must have a TITLE element in the HEAD section." [The global structure of an HTML document - 7.4.2 The TITLE element](#)

² Google changed algorithm regarding Anchor Text around January 2009. Google algorithm is set to show the most relevant / trusted websites at the top of search results but anchor text has no relation to trust for most queries.

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_name

⁴ <http://www.seowizz.net/2009/08/domain-juice-and-authority.html>, also I wonder if the readers have ever paid attention to Google's documentations in their App Engine section when they stress importance of trusted domains!

6. Age, size and freshness –Older domains with large number of web pages (preferably less than 100 KB in size) that are frequently updated more are considered more trusted sites by most search engines. Google for instance have filed many patents regarding these factors. ★★★★★
7. Keyword Stuffing – [Over-optimization](#) and overloading of a web page with keywords will lead to disqualification of the web page by most search engines. ★★★★★
8. In URL – Having targeted keywords in URL of a web page will lead to better ranking⁵. However, keywords shall be in the other parts of the document (Meta Keyword and description tags as well as content). Be careful that over-optimization (keyword stuffing) might lead to your web site be penalized. ★★★★★★
9. Density - It is a measure to check the relevance of a given keyword on the web page content⁶. Keep keyword density on a given web page for less than 10%; up to 7-8% (2-3 keywords) for targeted keywords and 1-2% (1 keyword) for minor / secondary keywords on a web page. ★★★★★★
10. Keyword Dilution – Dilution and excessive cross-link can cause penalties to the ranking of a web site. Keyword dilution and stuffing will lead to rank-punishing of any web site. ★★★★★★
11. In the beginning of the document - It is a good practice to have the keyword in first 25-50 words of the document. Be it a table or a paragraph, try to keep it in the beginning of the document. ★★★★★★
12. In Alt Tags - *ALT* attribute is a decisive tag that is often overlooked which can be a lost opportunity for better rankings. Label all images on your page with <alt>/<title> tag providing descriptive text. In addition, we recommend using a human-readable caption and descriptive text around the image. It is useful to categorize non-text content into three levels⁷
★★★★★
13. Keywords in Headlines - It is a good practice (if possible) to include relevant keywords in other headlines (h2 - h6). Please remember that headlines are one of the most important aspects of SEO. ★★★★★★
14. All Meta Tags – Even though most search engines such as [Yahoo](#) and [Bing](#) are still relying on Meta tags, others (such as [Google](#)) do not emphasize on them with little or no importance. However, having Meta tags properly filled and inserted will not harm. ★★★★★★
15. Proximity – In both Meta tags (title, description, etc.) as well as the content of the page, the closeness between 2 or more keywords is awarded with higher ranking.

⁵ Numerous tests has shown that keywords in URL are taken into account by Google, MSN, Yahoo! and few other search algorithms

⁶ Keyword Density = ([Keyword Count] * 100) / [Total Word Count]

⁷ <http://www.seoworkers.com>, categorize non-text content into 3 levels as Eye-Candy, Mood-Setting, Content and Function



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16. It is the best practice to place keywords one after the other with no words in between them (customers testimonials rather than testimonials of customers). ★★★★★
17. Meaningful Image Names – A short descriptive image name (along with descriptive ALT attribute) will provide more weight in ranking. ★★★★★
18. Secondary Keywords – Primary keywords (1 to 3 keywords) are the mostly emphasized / used in your list (inserted on Title, Description, H1, inbound anchors, etc.) Secondary keywords are supporting ones, mostly combination of one or more primary keywords. Please be advised of keyword stuffing in a given web page to prevent being penalized. Applying optimized secondary keywords are beneficial as they might have a lot less competition than the most popular keywords. ★★★★★
19. [Synonyms](#) - Using keyword synonyms is beneficial as most search engine algorithms take keyword match / ranking of synonyms into consideration (especially for sites in English language). ★★★★★
20. Other Factors – There are many other factors when considering full-optimization of a web site. A few factors contributing to high ranking or disciplinary ranking include broken links (or links to broken sites), text presented graphically, Misspellings, immediate redirect Meta tags, copyright violation (text or image), cloaking (representing different versions of a web page to spiders and public), domain hijacking (may result in imprisonment), etc.

This document would become many pages in length if all factors were listed and explained. In fact, the list above could reach well beyond 100 SEO topics! Search Engine Optimization professionals shall look into all “positive” and “negative” factors when optimizing a given web page / site.

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