SEO for Bloggers

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Firstly…

Congratulations!

Introduction - What is SEO?

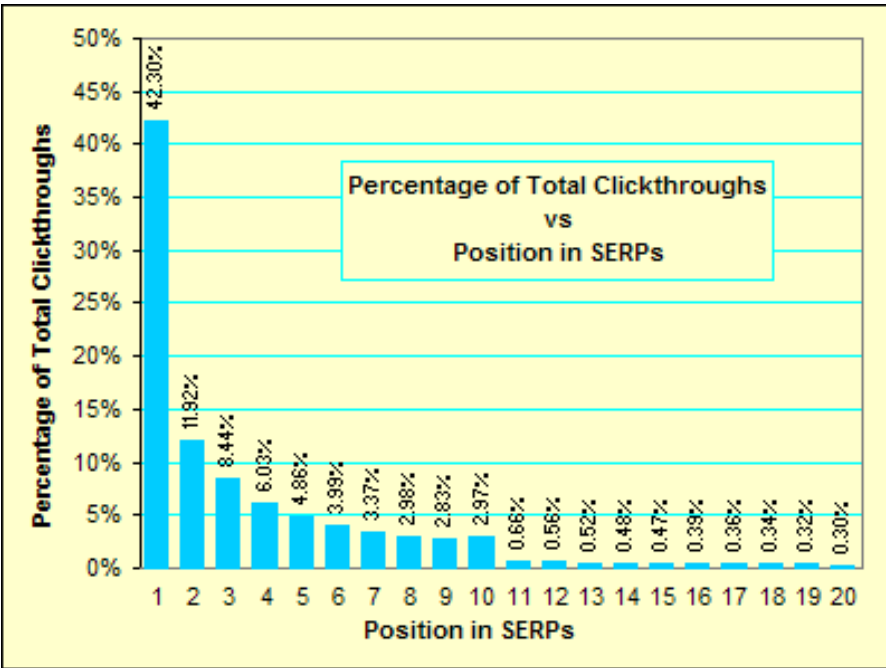**SEO =**   **Search Engine Optimisation**

Definition: The process of changing web page content to improve natural search engine rankings for selected keyword phrases

Why?

- To increase the number of visitors to our pages (quantity)

- To get more relevant visitors (quality)

- To strengthen your 'brand'

- The 'snowball' effect

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How People Find Stuff Online

- Links from other Sites - 88%
- **Search Engines - 82%**
- Printed Media - 63%
- Word of Mouth - 58%
- Newsgroups - 32%
- E-mail - 32%
- Television - 32%
- Books - 28%

More supporting evidence

Percentage of Total Clickthroughs vs Position in SERPs

The information above is extrapolated from AOL's data, with a default of 10 results per page.

Graph courtesy of Michael Duz of seo-blog.com

- 87% of Internet users find websites through search engines. *(Georgia Tech)*

- 92% of online consumers use search engines to shop and/or purchase online. *(NPD Group)*

- 55% of all online purchases originate from Search Engines as opposed to only 9% from banners. *(NPD Group)*

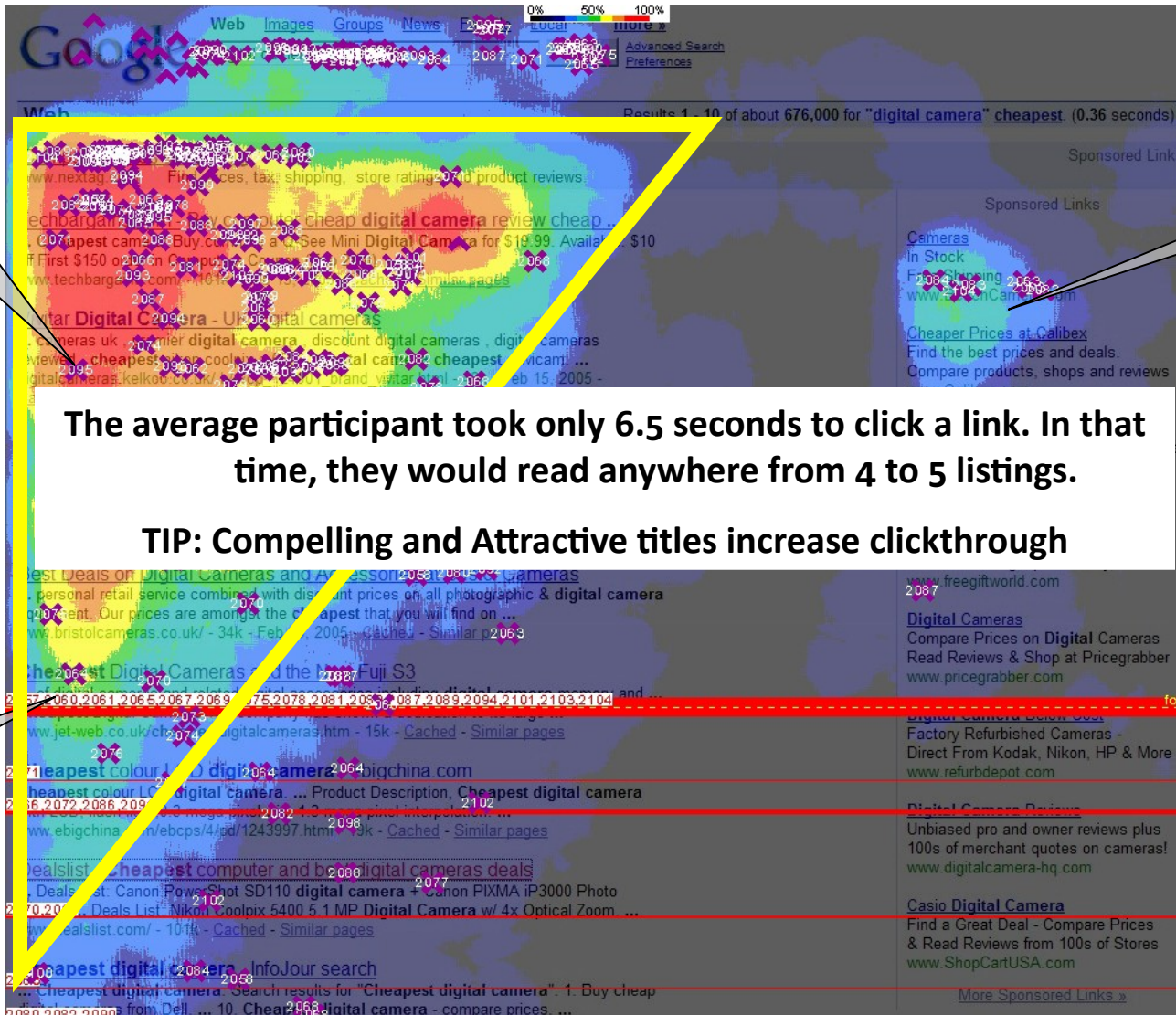- Users are 20 times more likely to click on search listings than banners or tiles. *(NPD Group)*

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Where Search Engine Users Look

Crosses indicate where eye rests for a microsecond

Paid AdWords listings

Bottom of screen at different resolutions

The average participant took only 6.5 seconds to click a link. In that time, they would read anywhere from 4 to 5 listings.

TIP: Compelling and Attractive titles increase clickthrough

Searchers are getting more specific

% of searches by number of words in query:

3 word phrases	28.74%
2 word phrases	23.21%
4 word phrases	21.52%
5 word phrases	11.90%
1 word phrases	7.71%
6 word phrases	4.64%
7 word phrases	1.58%

What's this mean for you?

- Think *KEYWORD PHRASES*, not just *KEYWORDS*
- Target the 'long tail'
- Predict which phrases may become popular and optimise in advance
- Blogs can be excellent results (happy users = happy search engines)

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How Do Search Engines Work?

- **Crawling**. A 'spider' or 'robot' explores sites, following links from page to page.

- **Indexing**. Data from the crawl is stored in the search engine index. The stored copy is referred to as the 'cached page'.

- **Ranking**. The Search Engine algorithm weighs up many complex factors to determine how pages should rank in relation to other pages/documents.
  The two main factors:
  a) what is on the page
  b) which other pages link to it

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Keyword Research

How do you select the best keyword phrases?

- **Which 3 words sum up this article?**

- **Think like your target audience**. Will people search for "fire" or "blaze", "sport" or "sports", "tv" or "television"?

- **Ask people**. Quickly poll your friends and colleagues. E.g. "Would you search for *WA* or *Western Australia*"

- **What are the competition doing?** Are they ranking ahead of you? Are they re-formatting feed stories?

- **Synonyms & plurals.** People search for information in different ways. Use your thesaurus

- **Be descriptive.** 'Clever' headlines don't work in search

- **Use tools.** Several available, but some are US-centric **Wordtracker**, KeywordDiscovery , Google Keyword Tool, etc.

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Keyword placement

Page Titles - the most important page element to optimise

- **Length.** Titles should be under 80 characters

- **Keyword Prominence.** Put your primary keyword phrase at the start of the title. This position has the most 'weight' in most search engine algorithms and will be the first word read in a results listing.

- **Uniqueness.** Every title should be unique and descriptive

(Sub)headings - break the article up logically

- **Apply <h1> tags** to main headings

- **<h2>** for sub-headings

Body copy

- **Repeat your main phrase(s) 2 or 3 times** but keep it natural

- **Include keywords in links** to the target page (i.e. in anchor text)

Keywords in headlines

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Improving headlines

"Own grown the way to go"

Grow your own organs

"No, no, no, no, no … unless Ricky asks me to"

Shane Warne retires from one day internationals

"Flower tributes a message of hope"

Floral tribute to trapped Tasmanian miners

"How young is too young?"

PC for kids under 3 criticised

"Out of hospital"

Keith Richards discharged from NZ hospital

"Publishers to put the E into the news"

Belgian publishers test electronic paper

Keyword placement examples

http://au.movies.yahoo.com/Resident+Evil%3A+Extinction/movie/17668/

Yahoo!7 Search

Resident Evil: Extinction (2007) - Yahoo!7 Movies

Page ▾   Tools ▾

Yahoo!7   My Yahoo!7   Yahoo! Mail | Make Yahoo!7 Your Home Page

Search the Web   powered by YAHOO! SEARCH   Search

YAHOO!7 MOVIES   **Sign In**
[New User? Sign Up]

Movies Home - Help

Search Yahoo!7 Movies: Search

Home | **In Cinemas** | **Screening Times** | **Box Office** | **Coming Soon** | **Trailers & Clips** | **News** | **Top 50 Movies** | **Browse Movies**

Resident Evil: Extinction (2007)

Find Local Movie Times

▪ **Hoyts**   ▪ **Greater Union**
▪ **Village**   ▪ **Reading**

Search by Postcode or Suburb

Find

e.g. 2026 or Bondi

- or -

Browse by Movie Title

Also In Cinemas   Find

[**Favourite Cinemas - Sign In**]

What's New
SLIDESHOW: '30 Days Of Night' Los Angeles Premiere

User Ratings   Read reviews | **Write a Review**

(32 ratings)

Y! Users: ★★★★☆   **Sign in** to rate this movie
☆☆☆☆☆ Rate It:

Release Date: 11th October 2007
Details: 94 mins, MA, Sci-Fi
Starring: **Oded Fehr**, **Ali Larter**, **Milla Jovovich**
Directed by: **Russell Mulcahy**
Local Distributors: Sony Pictures Releasing

Alice, now in hiding in the Nevada desert, once again joins forces with Carlos Olivera and LJ, along with new survivors Claire, K-Mart and Nurse Betty to try to eliminate the deadly virus that threatens to make every human being un-dead, and to seek justice. Since being captured by the Umbrella Corporation, Alice has been subjected to biogenic experimentation and becomes genetically altered, with super-human strengths, senses and dexterity. These skills, and more, will be needed if anyone is to remain alive.

Webisode: A Fresh Take

Movie Overview

▸ **Main Page**
Screening Times
Cast & Crew
Trailers & Clips
User Reviews
Production Photos
Premiere Photos
Official Website

Y! **MUSIC** radio Listen while you browse

Sarah's Girlfriend Soundtrack

Images

- Avoid using an image for text

  NO. 1 FOR FREE MUSIC   FREE VIDEOS ▷   FREE Y!7 RADIO ▷
  MUSIC FEATURES   LIVE MUSIC GIG GUIDE ▷   BROWSE VIDEOS

- Apply descriptive alt attributes

- Keyword in file name where possible
  e.g. photo-of-shoes.jpg not shoepic32.jpg

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'Dynamic' URL Structure

☹ Avoid more than 2 parameters, e.g.
site.com.au/page.asp?catid=442&subcatid=31&itemid=A3B1&author=smith

☺ ...would be better structured as:
site.com.au/book-reviews/gardening/organic-fruit-guide.htm

☹ Avoid session IDs, e.g. page.htm?id=D361G783F3301C

☹ Avoid date/time stamps, e.g. page.htm?time=20080330124606

☹ Avoid "id="

- *If you're using Apache, use **mod_rewrite** to re-structure your URLs.*
- *If you're hosting on IIS, consider ISAPI rewrite.*

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Getting Indexed

You can't rank unless you're indexed

Some common obstacles:

☹ JavaScript links
☹ Dropdown form menus
☹ Search box
☹ Redirects (unless 301)

☹ Links in Flash
☹ Frames/iframes
☹ Multiple URL parameters

…and some effective solutions:

💡 Use standard <a href> HTML links
💡 Employ a sitemap page
💡 Structure site in a logical taxonomy

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Why links are important

Link Popularity

- Links = "Votes"

- Links from many pages signify an important page

- Links from important pages carry more 'weight'

- Important pages rank higher ☺

Link Relevance

- Links from related pages enforce the *theme*

- Links from related words pass on that theme*

- Strongly themed pages rank well for related queries ☺
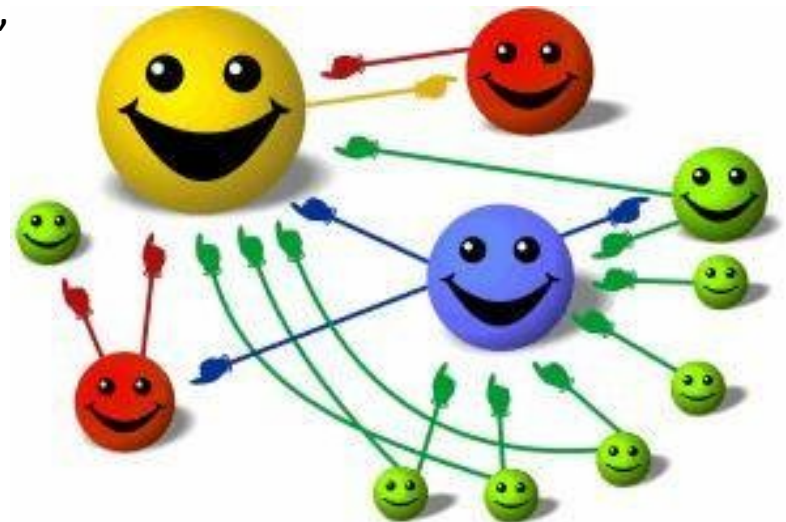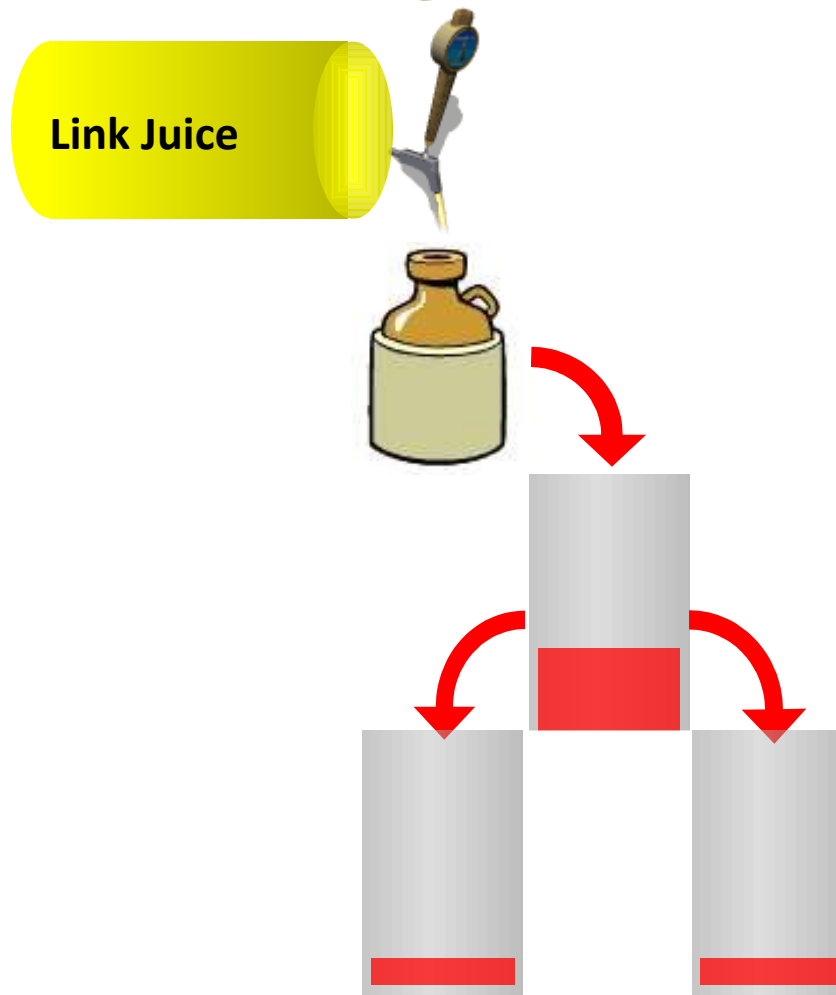
* So avoid 'read more' or 'click here'

Keeping your 'link juice' flowing

The internet

A friendly site

Your home page

Internal pages

Link Juice

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Robots.txt

- Used to prevent specific pages or areas of your site from being indexed

- A simple text file that sits in the root directory:
www.site.com.au/robots.txt

Example:

```
User-agent: slurp
Disallow: /webstats/
Disallow: /photos/my-bucks-night.htm
```

- Or a meta tag in the page's <head> area

Example:

```
<meta name="robots" content="noindex, follow">
```

💡 For more information go to www.robotstxt.org

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Blog-specific tips

- Encourage RSS subscriptions (with pings) – this helps spread your words and builds link-popularity
- Individual post archives – easier to link to and focus *theme*
- Keyword-rich URLs
- Link to other bloggers often – karma!
- Blog regularly - but not for the sake of it
- Think about keyword phrases
- Optimise your home page and get links to it
- 'Linkbait' – write compelling/controversial titles
- Tag posts and archive every one (tag pages can rank well)
- Ensure your posts are attributed if they appear elsewhere
- Answer your comments
- Consider video ('vlogs') and audio (podcasts) and distribute accordingly
- Cover 'live' events (Twitter etc is great for promoting the final article)
- Use Facebook intelligently (and MySpace, LinkedIn, Delicious, Flickr, Upcoming etc)

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Further reading

- The Blogger's guide to SEO
- Problogger SEO Guide
- SEO Theory – SEO for Blogs