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## BASIC SEO TIPS

<http://www.hochmanconsultants.com/articles/how-to-seo-a-website.shtml>

SEO is often sold as an expensive and time consuming service, but we have found that many websites can easily improve their search engine positioning by following a few basic SEO tips.

The first thing to do is figure out your unique value proposition. What does your web site or web page offer that cannot be found elsewhere? When crafting your offer, it can be very useful to look at historical search trends to see what people are looking for. The [Google AdWords Keyword Tool](#) and [Google Trends](#) can give you this sort of data. Once you have decided on your unique offer and found the relevant keyword phrases that people actually use, the next step is to improve your website.

### Ranking Factors

Search engine rankings are determined by a couple hundred factors, but the most important three that are within the webmaster's control are:

1. The search phrase needs to appear somewhere in the text of the page. It is not a good idea to overdo it with excessive repetition, but the content of the page should focus on its most essential

search phrases. Variations of the keyword such as plurals or stems (i.e. fish, fishing, fishes) are good.

2. The search phase should occur in the HTML title tag at the top of the code. In most browsers you can visit a webpage and press Ctrl-U to view the source code. Look for the title and make sure it is descriptive: `<title>Cape Cod Fishing Trips - Wellfleet, MA</title>`
3. The page should have links pointing to it. Links within the website are good, as are links from outside the site. Any sort of promotion that helps increase the digital footprint of a website will tend to attract more links. If you can arrange for the target search phrases to be present within the link text, that is more helpful than having a link with non-descriptive text, such as "click here".

Once the content of a website has been improved to focus on the right keywords, it is also a good idea to perform a technical review of the site to make sure search engines can successfully access all the pages, and to learn whether they have found any problems. Both [Google Webmaster Tools](#) and [Bing Webmaster Tools](#) provide comprehensive diagnostics. Simply login and check each screen, and then follow any tips provided.

A frequent issue with un-optimized websites is a lack of unique [meta descriptions](#). The meta description does not directly influence rankings,

but it may appear on the search results page and could influence whether people click your listing or some other listing. Having good meta descriptions, and a different one on every page rather than the same one repeated throughout the site, helps Google understand that all your pages are unique, rather than [duplicates](#).

## SEO for New Sites

If your website is new, it may take several or many months before your site will rank for anything other than its name. If you have a new site, you should especially focus on attracting high quality links from other trustworthy websites.

Submitting your home page to Google Webmaster Tools may speed up indexing. Sign up, [register your site](#), and then navigate to [Google Webmaster Tools](#) > (your site) > Diagnostics > [Fetch as Googlebot](#). Leave the input box blank, and click "Fetch". Once the page has been fetched, click the link to submit the page and all pages linked from it to the index.

Registering for Google Webmaster Tools allows Google to email you helpful advice from time to time or a warning if they discover something wrong with your site. If you receive a warning email, be sure to investigate what might be causing the problem.

## Free Analytics

Finally, you should install a tool such as [Google Analytics](#) to measure results. That way you can identify which pages are most interesting to your audience and produce more content that relevant to their needs.

### By Jonathan Hochman



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