

Keywords and their Placement • Internet Marketing

Proper keyword placement on your website is extremely important for your readers and for the search engines that will refer your site to viewers. Before writing anything, research your keywords and make sure that you have selected the best keywords and keyword phrases that define your product or service and will bring you customers that meet what you have to offer.

Keyword choices for your readers means letting them know what your most important goods or services are. What is the niche you want to fill for meeting their expectations when coming to the site the first time and then many times after that.

Keyword choices for search engines means using words that you intend searchers to use to find your site. Search engines use algorithms that use many different factors to decide where to position the page with searches. One guideline that most agree on is to use keyword placements and choices that have relevance to one another and to how you want to be found.

Also, when building the website the coding should follow a semantic markup. The more important keywords receive markup that identify the most important pieces of content.

After determining your keywords they are placed throughout your website. Keywords positioned throughout your content and also in the HTML text that is hidden (for example meta tags) to the viewer.

Use your keywords in (in no particular order):

- Use keywords in the **domain name** if at all possible. When using a hyphen to separate the words in the domain name the search engine will read each word separately.¹ For example: myfavorite-website.com is read as one long word. Change to my-favorite-website.com and the search engine reads it as three different words. Note: your website can have two different domain names with both directing traffic to the site. Allowing for one domain name for search engine submission and the other to give out to clients.
- The **titles** of your web page, articles posted to the website or blog posts are an important factor for search engine optimization. Your title tag needs to be as relevant and as keyword specific to your website as possible. The title of the web page is what the search engine shows on the results page and what the Bookmarks show in the web browser. Every page in the site should have a different and distinctive title.
- The **first words in the first paragraph** should have the most important keywords to send a clear message to the reader and to the search engine. The copy of your page is important in order to achieve good search engine rankings as well. Each page should have at least 200 words of copy on it if possible and it should include your most relevant keywords and phrases while still being logical and easy to read. The more copy filled pages (often resources, articles, etc.) that you have on pages within your site, the better your site will rank overall in the search engines.
- In text that **uses** the bold, italics, underlining and emphasis tags
- The **last sentence** of your article.
- The **headings and sub-headings** should contain your same relevant keywords and phrases as they are given heavier ranking weight than plain text within your site. This is part of the semantic
_____ markup.

¹ Building Findable Websites by Arrron Walter, p. 51.

- At the top of the HTML code there are **META tags** for keywords and website descriptions. Meta tags were originally designed to help search engines decide what was important about a website. Today, your keyword and description meta tags are still very important with certain search engines. Meta tags should not be unreasonably long, but should contain all relevant words and phrases. The description meta tag is what shows in a search result after the title of the page.
- **ALT tags** are applied to images on your web site. Each image on your page can contain a keyword phrase or two that is relevant to your site and your image. Use the same keywords and phrases that you have used in your copy, meta tags, etc. or use synonyms to attract an even wider search.
- Additionally ALT tags **assist viewers** who cannot see the image by placing text created by the alt tag on the screen.
- The **title/label tags associated with links and images** may give heavier algorithm credit to hyperlinks within your website. So a text based hyperlink should contain keywords relevant to your web site.
- Web **page names** throughout the site.
- In the rest of your content.

Remember you are writing for the web and not published piece that a viewer holds in their hands.

Search engines need to see keywords often—**but not so often they think you are a machine writing to get your site placed high on the search engine** (even if you are). General rule of thumb for how many times a word should be used could be:

- Use a density of no more than 7-8%
- For example: a web page has 50 instances of a keyword within a total of 500 words. This would be a keyword density of 10%. This could lead to a search engine penalty in ranking.²

Counterproductive strategies:

Always include your top most important keywords and phrases. But don't try to trick the search engines by using irrelevant terms to rank high for a search that isn't really relevant to your web site. Avoid:

- Repeated keywords over 7-8%
- Keywords that have nothing to do with the site
- Trademarks owned by other sites
- Colored text that fades into the background
- Repeated URL submissions to search engines
- A <meta> refresh page
- Using javascript or flash to either build or use for linking in the site (discuss with the website builder)
- Pages with the same HTML title