

How to Optimize Your Website Content: Part 3

It's no secret that the very best way to optimize your website content is to build your site with your audience in mind. Provide compelling, targeted, and relevant information to them so that when they go to your site, they find what they need.

That being said, there are things you can do to optimize your website.

In previous articles, I've talked about optimizing the text on your website. Now it's time to get a little more technical and talk about best practices for optimizing your HTML code.

Title Tags:

A title tag is the text that appears at the top of a web page in your browser. For instance, for my website, the title tag is:

"Freelance Copywriter, Buffalo, New York: The Constant Writer"

For your site, you should write a customized title tag for each page. The title tags should include your keywords or keyword phrases for that particular page (Freelance Copywriter, Buffalo, New York), as well as your company name (The Constant Writer). Keep it short though; no more than about nine or 10 words.

Meta Tag Descriptions:

A meta tag description is the summary that describes information on a particular page of a website. These descriptions are not necessarily important for optimizing your website, but they are important for getting people to click on your site.

So, for instance, if you Googled "freelance copywriter buffalo," you'd get the following meta tag description for my site:

Award-winning copywriter in Buffalo, New York providing compelling and informative content for websites, brochures, direct mail campaigns, press releases, and more.

You should write customized meta tag descriptions for each page of your site. They shouldn't be any longer than about 25 words.

Meta Tag Keywords:

Meta tag keywords are the list of keywords and phrases that are typically encoded in every page of your site to help search engines figure out how to index your site. To view a website's meta tag keywords, simply click on View Page Source. Keywords are under the page title and meta tag description.

Most SEO experts agree that the use of meta tag keywords is no longer that relevant, especially for Google, which is the most used search engine. In fact, some experts even warn against using meta tag keywords in your HTML code so as not to tip off your competitors about what keywords you're trying to rank for.

Others say that meta tag keywords are still somewhat relevant for search engines like Yahoo. One way you could use these meta tag keywords is for common misspellings of keywords you want to rank for, but

don't necessarily want to include in your page content.

The bottom line, though, is that either way, meta tag keywords will not make – or break – your SEO efforts.

Alt Tags:

An alt tag is the "alternative text" that accompanies an image. It is visible when your mouse hovers over an image on a website. Originally, these tags were meant for screen reader software used by visually impaired people; nowadays, though, it is considered useful to include keywords or keywords phrases in your image alt tags.

So, if you own a company that manufactures fishing lures, alt tags for your product images might go something like this:

- Bass-fishing-lure.jpg
- Walleye-fishing-lure.jpg
- Trout-fishing-lure.jpg

Rather than just:

- image1.jpg
- image2.jpg
- image3.jpg

Search engine optimization is far from an exact science. Hopefully, though, by reading these articles, you've gained a better understanding of how search engines work and what you can do to increase your website's visibility.