

OPTIMIZING BODY CONTENT

He Who Has the Least Keywords Wins: Body Optimization

If you have a list of 20 phrases that you want your site to be first for, forget about it. It is almost a mathematical impossibility for that to happen--you would ultimately end up getting a poor rating for everything. It's best to narrow it down to a few words and phrases that your site relates to.

By now you have your title, and keyword phrases selected. Keep in mind, don't think of what your site is *about*, think of who your potential audience is, and what they would be searching for. Also, it is much easier if you choose phrases which don't already have a lot of sites competing; try searching for the phrases and seeing how many total results Google reports, as well as the PageRank of the top sites (using the Google toolbar).

Always remember the keywords you selected for your title, description and keyword tags should be used throughout the body of your website or else your relevancy drops.

The Different Types of Tags

Here are the main things that search engines look at on your page. Some I have introduced already in my others reports which you may have read, which are the Title, Meta Tags, and Links. They are repeated here for emphasis as each point/tag listed below is what each search engine is looking for within your site.

- **The Title** - The <title> tag is given huge weight in most search engines. It should be short though, ideally only a phrase or two.
- **Meta Tags** - Some search engines give varying amounts of weight to the Meta tags (Google ignores them).
- **Regular Text** - Equally important as everything else is the regular text of your pages. You should have frequent references to all of your target words and phrases.
- **Formatting** - Some research has shown that more weight is given to words in bold or italics. Do not overuse this feature, use it sparingly or your site will look rather untidy.

- **Header Tags** - Tags like <h1> and <h2> are given more weight by some engines. Use CSS to change the appearance of header tags or they will look very big and ugly. If you do not know what CSS is, you can read all about it by [clicking here](#). This will allow you to integrate an <h1> tag but still ensuring it does not look ridiculously huge. CSS can control the size, style and overall look of all your header tags.
- **Links** - Some search engines give more weight to the text of links. Don't have your link with "click here" For SEO purposes a link's text should always be representative of the content that it points to. Once again, this also has usability benefits.
- **Alt Tags** - In image tags, the "alt" attribute is a favorite place to include text that is invisible to users, but that search engines still consider. Nevertheless, don't pack it full of keywords--your site will be considered spam. It's ideal to have a few short phrases in the alt tag (not all of which need to be your target words or phrases).

An example alt image . After the image reference, you simply type the word ALT="keyword phrase goes here". Do not stuff your image with too many keyword phrases; focus on one keyword set per alt tag.

- **URLs** - Some search engines are believed to give some weight to words in the URL. This includes the domain, directories, and the page's filename. You should optimize these to have your target phrases in them.

What Search Engines are Looking for in the Body of Your Page

Position on the Page

Words at the top of the page are given more weight than words at the bottom. This may seem simple, but search engines "see" pages differently. Many webmasters have navigation bars on the left of their pages. They see something like this:

Home Text about the company here.
Inventory
Contact

It would seem that "text about our company here" is at the top of the page, but it isn't. The engine sees:

Home Inventory Contact Text about the company here.

So, of every word on the page, "home" is given the most weight. That's probably not what you want, but you can still have your menus on the left.

Rather than rearranging all of your pages, try using words for your menu links that reflect the keywords relevant to the page being linked to, as well as to the page linking to it. For example if your site dealt with computers, instead of using the link "Home," try "The PC Store." This will also have an added benefit on Google, which puts a lot of importance on the text being used to link to a given page.

In addition, consider using images instead of text on your navigation bar. This will make your body text the top of the page. For even better results, use alt tags for the images on your navigation bar that contain (among other things) your target words and phrases.

The best way to review what the spiders see when they visit your page in terms of reference is going to View, and then Source in your I.E browser to view the order the page will be spidered according to the search engines. If you find that your body text starts too far down the page, then your relevancy will drop, as the spider has to do too much to actually get to the content, and it's considered less important.

When designing your website it is crucial that you use a professional look which impresses the user, but you have to take careful note of your source code to ensure you are not burying the body of your content too far down the page. It's been shown that pages with "less complicated coding" with standard html do rank better than complex pages with a lot of JavaScript and external reference code.

How Words Relate to Each Other

If you consistently place words close to each other, many search engines will notice it. For example, if you almost always have "online" and "games" in the same sentence (or, even better, the same phrase), then you will get a higher ranking under searches for "online games."

This is why it's important to consider the phrases that potential customers would use when searching.

How Often Words Occur

Obviously, search engines consider how often a given word occurs on your page. They look at it with both a raw count, and a percentage. For the percentage, common words like "a" or "the" aren't counted.

As a general rule, try to use each of your target words about five times (give or take a few) for every 100 to 150 words of text. So for example, if your keyword focus is "online games", then every 100 - 150 words you'll have a sentence that implements the phrase "online games" without making it seem like you are keyword spamming. The sentence must flow properly and must make sense to the user reading it. You can do this five given times within the body of your page. Combining this technique with the linking structure mentioned earlier of having your keywords as links, should give your body optimization a good relevancy boost for the keyword you are targeting.

Body Text Conclusion

This should be a good start to writing text that search engines rank favorably.

However, resist the temptation to have blocks of text at the bottom of your pages in a 2-point font containing nothing but keywords. Search engines are smart enough to not count that, and many will go so far as to ban your pages from their index. When optimizing your site's text, play fair.