

The Essential 2007 Code Optimization Tutorial for SEO

Do you want to get the traffic you deserve flooding into your website? Code optimization is an essential component of the search engine optimization process and if you aren't technically minded then it can be difficult to get your head round. This guide is meant for beginners and more advanced webmasters alike.

A shallow knowledge of HTML coding is useful, however, it is not necessary. Optimizing your code can be done by simply opening your html document in a text editor and changing different parts as shown below. Follow these steps carefully and your code will become 100% search engine optimized and ready for promotion and link-building campaigns.

The steps below assume you have chosen the keywords which you want to optimize the page code for. If you have not done that, go and do that now and return to this guide later.

HTML Code Optimization

The optimization of your HTML code for search engines is vital. It is the base of your SEO campaign. It must be optimized in a number of ways in order to improve the relevance of a chosen keyword. Follow the advice below as closely as possible. The closer the better and the higher your rank will be.

Remember: Keywords are the words people will use in search engines. Including a keyword in your site content (and optimizing your site) will cause your site to be returned as a search result. You can choose to optimize your page for a keyword or a keyphrase (a number of related words, eg: 'free red hats'). Using a keyphrase is more advantageous (as discussed later) but for simplicity, I will refer to keywords AND keyphrases as just keywords.

TIP: Try to optimize each page for just one keyword. This will stop each keyword competing against each other for weightings and you will rank higher for the chosen keyword.

The TITLE Tag

Location: just below the <head> tag

<title>Web Promotion, Affiliate Marketing, SEO</title>, for example

1. The title tag should not contain any of the words Google disregards. These are words like 'and', 'not', 'a', 'the', 'about' etc which are too common for Google to take any notice of. Using these words will dilute the importance that your keyword is given in your title (if you put it in your title). These words are known as 'stop' words.

2. Include your keyword in the title of your page. Including other words in your title that are not your chosen keyword/s will be detrimental to your ranking. This is because it makes your keyword seem less relevant to the title of the page. This relevance is known as 'weight'. The more weight your keyword has in a certain criteria the better.

3. Don't include the name of your website in the title of your page: for example 'Share The Wealth – affiliate marketing'. This is because it will dilute the prominence of your keyword (in this example 'affiliate marketing'). It is tempting to include your site's name as it may look better, however it is not that important as people don't pay much attention to the title.

The Meta tags

Location: just below the title tag.

Meta data appears as follows:

```
<meta name="Description" content="Free articles and guides on affiliate marketing and SEO">
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```
<meta name="Keywords" content="Affiliate Marketing,SEO">
```

1. This is where you specify your keywords:

```
<meta name="Keywords" content="keyword1, keyword2, keyword3">
```

Also, weight is given to how near your keyword is to the beginning of your keywords list. So you should try to have your most important keyword in the place of 'keyword1' in the above example.

```
<meta name="Description" content="Free articles and guides on affiliate marketing and SEO">
```

1. The above line is where the description, shown in google results, is written. It goes after content=". Do not worry about keyword weighting in here as search engines do not take this into consideration anymore.

The BODY of your HTML

Once you have written the content of your page, you can begin SEO on it. Complete the page ready for publishing and then apply the following rules to it to ensure its optimized 100% for the top search engines.

1. Your keyword should appear in bold at least once on your page. This will show the search engines that the word, your keyword, is important to the subject of your page and so must be relevant to the keyword search performed by the search engine user.
2. Your keyword should have a weight of 2% on your page. This is the ideal percentage as if it is too high a search engine may penalize your page for sp@mming. Sp@mming is a term used to describe the action of webmasters that trick search engine page ranking systems (SEPRS) into thinking they are relevant in order to get a high ranking. These pages will not usually be relevant at all and simply "cāsh in" selling advertising space with the high traffic they receive. Sp@mming is increasingly becoming a thing of the past as the search engine page ranking algorithms become more sophisticated. To work out the percentage weight your keyword has, visit www.live-keyword-analysis.com.
3. Use heading tags (<h1>heading</h1> etc) and put your keyword into the heading. Again the usual weighting rules exist. Have your keyword as close to the beginning of the heading and have as few other words in the heading as possible. Position this heading as close to the top of your page as you can for increased relevance.
4. Put your keyword in up to three of the alt attributes for images and include it in one of the first three alt image attributes in your code. Alt image attributes are the alt tags given to images in your code which can be seen if the image fails to load. These are great for hosting your keyword as users cannot usually see them. Don't sp@m though, stick to three alt tags. Alt tags are used as follows:

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5. Keep your page content between 100 and 1400 words. This is for a number of reasons, including the size of Google's page cache (amount of data from a page Google stores). If you have too much content, you could try splitting the page into two separate pages and perhaps having a 'page 2' link at the bottom of the content.
6. Your keyword should appear at the beginning of your content and at the end (The first and last 50 words)

Code Optimization Checklist

- No stop words in your title tag
- Keyword included in title
- Website name not included in title
- Keyword in meta keywords list
- Keyword placed as close to the beginning of the meta keywords list as possible
- Keyword appears in bold at least once in the content
- Keyword has a 2% weight
- Keyword is in the first heading tag and is at the top of the page content
- Keyword is in the first 50 words and last 50 words of the page
- Page content is between 100 and 1400 words
- Keyword is in one of the first three alt image attributes and is in three of them in total

Tips and Advice

- Try to optimize each page for just one keyword. This will stop each keyword competing against each other for weightings and prominence and you will rank higher for the chosen keyword.
- Not every page of your site will be able to be optimized for every criterion. Don't worry; just try to hit each criteria as best you can. Sometimes you won't be able to achieve a content size of above 100 words: on a contacts page for example. Issues like this are of little importance as not every page will have a particular need for perfect optimization, because surfers will find contact information from a link shown on the home page.
- Constantly check your competition. You may not feel it is possible to get onto the first page on Google for a certain keyword/phrase. Choose a less contested keyword.

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