FINALLY, OPTIMIZING YOUR BLOG FOR THE SEARCH ENGINES IS REALLY AS EASY AS PIE!

EASY WORDPRESS SEO

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

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Introduction

Have you ever wished it was easy to set up a perfectly optimized website? That with just a few clicks, you could have your blog ranked in the search engines, without spending days working on improving your search results?

If you don't have the money to hire an SEO consultant, and don't really want to spend days, weeks, or even months working to get your site ranked highly in the search engines, than this is the report for you. I've gathered some of the most exclusive Wordpress tweaks, tips, and plugins in this easy to read report.

When you've finished reading, you'll know how to optimize your blog for SEO, how to choose the perfect Wordpress theme (it's not just about appearance), how to use the right plugins to get your site ranked highly in the search engines, and how to tweak your Wordpress based sites so that they run like a dream, pull in traffic like mad, and rank highly for the search terms you've chosen.

Wordpress really is one of the most effective pieces of software available for web design. If you want to build sites quickly, there's no better way to do so. However, you have to know how to play the game - how to make the software work for you. Installing Wordpress, putting up a few PLR articles, and sitting back isn't going to make you any money. Instead, you need to learn how to turn your Wordpress blog into a profit pulling SEO optimized machine.

Luckily, you've come to the right place. Read on to learn the Wordpress tips and tricks that the gurus don't want you to know.

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Optimizing Your Core Blog for SEO

The first step in optimizing your Wordpress blog for SEO purposes is to make changes to your basic blog. These core changes are made immediately after installing Wordpress, before you pick out or install a theme. Some changes are made to the settings, while others will be changes in the way you add content, write your posts, and set up your blogs structure. I'll teach you, step by step, how to set your blogs up the right way, so that search engines will love your sites.

Permalinks

One powerful feature that you should take advantage of when setting up your Wordpress blog is - the ability to change the default URL of each page and post from the current "ugly" form to something that is much nicer for both search engines and end users.

By Default Wordpress uses an ugly string of numbers and this is no good for anyone!

In your Wordpress admin under the Settings tab on the left hand side you will see a list item called Permalinks. Click on this and options to change the way your URL's (permalinks) display. The good thing about this is that you can display your keywords (post title) actually in the URL giving the search engines even more information to help them place you correctly.

You have many default options which allow you to set the URL's to show the date, month, category, name and a combination but I prefer for SEO purposes to just use a custom structure of just the name. To do this simply enter "/%postname%/" (without quotes) in the Custom Structure box on the Permalinks page.

Optimizing Your Titles

Since the Wordpress software is now set up to name each link with the title of your post, it's more important than ever to have a well-optimized title. For each post, choose one keyword to focus on as you write your title. Lead with the keyword, and make your title clever and catchy. Your goal is to entice human readers to click on your title to read more, while telling the search engines exactly where and how to rank your content.

Optimizing Your Descriptions

Don't rely on auto generated descriptions for your post. There's no way to control the content your reader sees if you're relying on software to make content choices for you.

Instead, write a carefully crafted, SEO optimized description for each post, using the keywords you're attempting to rank for at least once in the text. Tell your reader in simple terms what the post is about, and what they can expect to read. Make your description as interesting as possible - this, after all, is what draws the reader in.

Pages Instead of Posts

As you add content to your blog, keep in mind the general structure that you're shooting for. Whenever possible, write your content on its own page, instead of as a post. Doing so allows the search engines to rank each page individually, and helps your reader to see your site as legitimate.

Using the pages instead of posts structure helps you to build an expansive, multi page website, with an interlinked network of related pages, instead of a blog with one long string of posts on one page.

When you write your content as a page, instead of a post, you can also remove the commenting option. This is important, as you're striving for a specific keyword density in your content. Comments won't be keyword optimized, and can quickly destroy your hard work.

Link to Related Sites You Own

For true niche domination, don't rely on the built in list of links that comes with Wordpress. In fact, deleting these should be one of your first steps after you install the software. For the best possible SEO results, use this area to link to other sites that you own in the same niche. If you don't currently own any other sites, consider using this area for cloaked affiliate links, advertising, or link exchanges with other marketers.

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Optimizing Your Blog Theme for SEO

When choosing a blog theme, it's not just about appearance. In fact, some of the fanciest, most attractive blog themes are the absolute worst in terms of SEO.

When you're ready to pick a theme for your blog, there are a few things you should keep in mind.

Choose a simple, clean theme

Complicated themes and graphics can actually detract from the point of your website. If your visitors have to think to hard about how to find the content that they need, they'll simply navigate elsewhere. Instead of focusing on a graphically intensive theme, choose a simple theme with clean code. This makes it easier for the search engines to find your SEO optimized content.

Disable widgets

Widgets can be fun to set up and customize, but they're also very distracting to both human and robot visitors. Wherever possible, disable the widgets on your blog. After all, your visitors don't really need to know who was there before them, how many followers you have, or what the weather's like in your home town this week. Instead, focus on generating high quality, effective content that they'll keep coming back to read.

Generate a Sitemap

Whether you use a plugin to help or do so manually by adding the proper code, it makes good sense to generate a sitemap. This map allows search engines to find what they're looking for on your site quickly and easily, which helps boost your ranking.

Keep Keyword Density in Mind

No matter what type of content you're adding to your site, it makes good sense to keep keyword density in mind. This is especially important when you're adding META tags, descriptions, captions, or titles. Choose a few of your main

keywords, and be sure to include them in these types of content strings for best results.

For the best possible SEO results, be sure to choose a clean, simple theme. I personally like the themes that Courtney Tuttle designs, but there are other simple themes available, as well. No matter which theme you decide to go with, it's important to do your best to make your website look like as much like a static site (and as little like a blog) as possible.

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Optimizing Your Wordpress Blog with Free Plugins

Everyone loves a freebie, right? Luckily for you, Wordpress software is free, and so are most of the plugins. I'd like to offer a list of free Wordpress plugins, current as of 2010, for your blogging enjoyment. Set your software up, install these babies and you've got an SEO optimized, traffic pulling machine.

There's really no need to hire a consultant or pay a professional to boost your SEO results if you can install Wordpress and these plugins, you're good to go. Instead, you can spend your time focusing on creating or outsourcing high quality content to draw your readers in and keep them engaged.

List of Free Plugins to Optimize Wordpress

All in One SEO Pack:

This unique little plugin adds custom fields for you to optimize your posts and pages for SEO. The software is user friendly and works immediately upon installation, but can also be tweaked slightly to meet your needs.

SEO Smart Links:

SEO Smart Links automatically links phrases and keywords in your posts to other, related posts on your blog.

SEO Slugs:

This plugin removes articles like a, an, and the from the title slugs of your posts. This helps keep your titles keyword focused and removes distracting words that add little value.

Google XML Sitemaps:

This plugin makes it quick and easy to generate a sitemap of your Wordpress site and submit it to Google. It also notifies all major search engines when you make a change to your website.

MetaRobots:

This plugin makes it incredibly easy to optimize your meta tags, set up nofollow and do follow links, and more.

Platinum SEO Plugin:

This plugin offers the same features as the All in One Plugin, plus a few more. It's also compatible with some plugins and software that All in One isn't. Do your research to see which plugin works best for you.

SEO Blogroll:

This plugin allows you to make the links in your Blogroll or Links list nofollow or dofollow on a link by link basis. This means you only have to share link juice when you want to, a great option for SEO.

SEO Friendly Images:

This plugin adds appropriate META tags to each photo you upload to your site, making it easier than ever to optimize your blog.

SEO Title Tag:

This plugin allows you to quickly and easily optimize every title, post title, and tag on your blog. This truly is an easy solution to most of your SEO problems, and automates quite a few actions that you'll be completing on a regular basis.

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Optimizing Your Page Speed for Google SEO

When you are preparing your blog to be Search Engine Optimized Google is often the search engine you think about the most. Of course Bing, Yahoo and the others are important but Google generally calls the shots and when they make an announcement it pays to stand up and listen.

Google recently came out and said that the speed of your individual webpages will be a factor that affects ranking within their search engines. In short this means you have to make your webpages load as fast as possible. Obviously this is not the only factor in ranking but good SEO involves dealing with the little things.

What Affects Page Speed?

When you open a webpage your browser makes a call to the host server to serve up the page. This action sets off a sequence of loading the content which goes down the code in order and creates the visual display of the web page that you see. The more code and images involved in a page the longer the load time is likely to be.

So things like extra plugins, JavaScript code and large images will dramatically slow down your page speed. It's your job to optimize in these areas and get your pages running as smoothly as possible.

Optimizing Images For Page Speed

It's always a good to start with your images.

I advise you download your blogs images and go through them one by one making sure that firstly if they display at a certain size (for example, 100px) on your blog that the actual image is that size. In your image editor open the image and check the image dimensions to find out if it needs fixing.

You also need to consider image compression. I like to use a tool called "Save for Web" in Adobe Photoshop. This tool allows you to see what different kinds of compression will do to an image visually and also allows you to see the final file size before saving. This way you can find the smallest file size with the best quality. If you do not own Photoshop then I suggest that you JPEG files with a Medium compression. You can play with the compression levels to get acceptable quality for your website.

Optimizing Wordpress Code and Plugins

Plugins and extra code can be a huge drain on your server.

In your Wordpress admin you should go to your plugins and deactivate any plugin that you do not need. I would even consider removing plugins that add any functions that are not absolutely necessary.

Next up you should look at your Wordpress widgets and remove any extra code blocks (Iframes, JavaScript) from your sidebars that are not needed.

Your Wordpress header.php and footer.php may also include tracking code to various services such as analytics, Izea, BlogCatalog, etc. Remove any code that you do not use.

Finally I suggest you take a look at your style.css file and if you have the knowledge go through and remove any code that is not needed. Often if you have made tweaks to your site you will find extra code here.

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Monitoring Analytics to Build Content for SEO

I highly suggest you use Google Analytics or Woopra Analytics to monitor traffic coming into your website. With both services it is very easy to find out what keywords are bringing people to your site and this gives you the perfect opportunity to capitalize on what people are searching for. One of the most important things about SEO is delivering the right content to the people. Knowing what people want to know helps you achieve this.

Pillars and Supports

This concept has been around in various forms for a while now and many bloggers have talked about this idea. The idea is that you have your main pillar articles and then many support articles that all link back to the main pillar articles. A very simple concept that in my opinion works great for drawing traffic from search engines to the right places on your blog. For example if your main article that you want to rank for is called "How To Build a Treehouse" then you may consider adding many smaller articles that are similar but all point readers to your main article. These could be things like "Materials Needed For Building a Treehouse" and "Building a Treehouse Plans".

Even if you planned your pillars and supports very well analytics adds an important aspect in expanding on this idea and I think this is where you can really pinpoint your SEO practices to bring targeted results. When studying analytics you may find that someone came to your main "How To Build a Treehouse" article using a keyword you never thought of like "Treehouse Trapdoor Ideas". I suggest that you then write an article purely on this subject and of course link back to the main article. I believe this kind of micro management of SEO will help get your blog spread far and wide in the search engines and catering for a wider range of potential visitors.

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External Tweaking and Other Tips

When setting up Wordpress, your goal is to make your site as user friendly for both you and your visitors as possible. This means you need to make your content engaging, but you also need to make your site easy to navigate and your content easy to share. After all, the easier it is for your visitors to share your content with their friends, the more likely they are to actually do so. I'd like to offer a few tips for making your site as user friendly as possible.

Use Current Version of Wordpress

Keep your Wordpress software up to date. This is the best way to discourage hackers, keep plugins working properly, and minimize downtime and frustration. With most hosting providers, updating Wordpress is a five minute job, involving just a few clicks. There's really no excuse for not keeping your software up to date. The latest versions of Wordpress also allow updating from within their admin panels, this is the easiest option and you should be up to date anyway.

Add a Social Networking Plugin

If you want your visitors to share your content, you have to make it easy for them to do so. Spend a few minutes adding a social networking plugin to your site. The results will pay off, as over time your visitors link to their favorite content and share it with your friends. Social networking is a quick and easy way to increase traffic to your site.

Set Up RSS Feeds

If you don't have an RSS feed, you're likely losing traffic. It really is that simple. Many of your readers get their content through their blog reader, and if they can't add your feed, they may not bother coming back. Take the time to burn your RSS feed and add a subscribe button to your website. Your readers will thank you, and you're likely to see a traffic increase.

Be Sure You Have Error Pages in Place

Spend a few minutes setting up error pages that link your visitors to other related content or back to the home page. Otherwise, anyone who gets an error may assume your site is down and simply navigate away to another site on a similar topic.

Monitor your 404 errors and plug the holes

You can use your analytics or better a plugin such as http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/seo-ultimate/ to monitor visitors that end up on your 404 error pages. When this is happening you can see the URL's that are taking people to your 404 page. Often it's because you changed a URL or deleted an old post. I would personally plug the leak by writing a new (even if short) post with the exact missing URL and use it to either create a full post or redirect people to the post you would prefer they read.

Learn Enough Code to Meet Your Needs

While automation is great, occasionally you'll need to modify a theme, add some html to a page, or tag a photo. For this reason, it's wise to learn enough code to meet your needs whether that's just a little html, or a full on class in CSS. If you regularly find yourself asking for technical support, it's important to take the time to learn the skills that you need.

Direct Traffic to Articles and Individual Page Content

As you begin to drive content to your site with articles, backlinks, and social networking, it's important to be sure you're directing visitors to the right place. Instead of simply linking them to your site's home page, be sure to link to individual posts or pages. This will help boost the search engine ranking of individual pieces of content on your site, which, in turn, will boost the ranking of your site as a whole.

Use .htaccess to Merge WWW and no-WWW Results

Sometimes a site can end up double indexed in the search engines. For example "www.yoursite.com/great-post" and "yoursite.com/great-post" could both appear. This can cause some technical issues and also water down the potency of your link juice as people may have linked to you from both versions of the URL.

A simple fix with the .htaccess file can redirect traffic from the www to the non www version of your site or vice versa.

You can find you .htaccess file in the root of your site via your ftp program. You may have to show hidden files to see it but it is likely there. I would first rename it by removing the "." to become just "htaccess" if you are going to copy it to your computer for editing.

After editing you can re-upload it and add the "." back to the original file name (If for any reason you cannot find your .htaccess file it can be easily created in your text editor. Create a file called htaccess, upload it to your root via ftp and then add the full point before to make it .htaccess).

So download the file, open it in text editor and add this line to the top of the file to redirect all traffic to the www version of your site:

Code:
```
RewriteEngine On
RewriteCond %{HTTP_HOST} ^yoursite\.com$ [NC]
RewriteRule ^(.*)$ http://www.yoursite.com/$1 [R=301,L]
```

If you want to direct all traffic to the non www version of your site use this code:

Code:
```
RewriteEngine On
RewriteCond %{HTTP_HOST} ^yoursite\.com$ [NC]
RewriteRule ^(.*)$ http://yoursite.com/$1 [R=301,L]
```

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Conclusion

SEO is not an exact science so common sense is the best tool you can have in your box but supported with the techniques discussed in this report you can set your blog off in the right direction. Google and the other major search engines will never reveal all their secrets as it would then be easy to "Game their system". As a webmaster you do not want to game any system. You just want to supply great content in the easiest and friendliest ways to please the search engines and aid them in positioning your content correctly. This way the reader will get the correct info they are searching for.

Out of the box Wordpress is by no means perfectly set up for SEO as we currently understand it but the community of users is so huge many plugins and invaluable advice, as given in this report, give us the chance to create a robust and sturdy site that will help you achieve great search engine results for your great content.

If you set a good routine with your SEO practices and think carefully about the machine reading your site and the user reading your site then you can keep a high standard and well structured Wordpress blog that will time after time hit the search engines in the right spots.

Remember Content is King and SEO is Queen, keep these two happy and in their rightful place and all will be well.

Good luck.