

When I started in Internet Marketing twelve years ago, there WERE no courses, there WAS no qualification, and everyone learned by trial and error. And mistakes were made. With that in mind, here are 7 mistakes to avoid when optimising your website.

### 1) Single Word Optimisation

Let's face it; it just isn't going to work. It's 2006 and the time has passed when you could get to number one in Google or anywhere for a single word search. So stop trying to optimise for 'cars' or 'money' or 'business' – it's not going to happen. And even if by some miracle it does, it really won't do you any good. It's too generic. If I search for 'business' I could be searching for networking, or accountants, or business advice. If you rent out offices in London, then you're not what I'm looking for.

So STOP optimising for single words and start thinking in terms of key PHRASES not keywords. Need some help thinking of phrases for your site? Drop me a line and I'll be happy to suggest some at no charge. Even better, visit [www.nikkipilkington.com](http://www.nikkipilkington.com) for a free report and you'll get details of how many people have searched for the phrases too.

### 2) Mass Optimisation

Another fact you can't avoid – you can't optimise one page for every phrase you want. I saw a potential client the other day that had put every single phrase he could think of in his META tags. When I printed them out, they ran to 7 pages of A4! All he was doing was getting RSI from all that typing!

Look at your site, look at the pages and optimise different pages for different phrases. Choose no more than 2 for each page, and if you can't find a page for a phrase, then you shouldn't be optimising for it anyway.

This leads me nicely on to:

### 3) Mismatched Optimisation

Every day I get emails from people saying they've optimised their site for a specific key phrase, but it's nowhere to be seen – can I tell them why? So off I go to look at their site, and find beautifully written META tags, and a gorgeous website. So what's the problem? The problem is that the phrase they've put in the tags, title, page name etc, doesn't appear ANYWHERE in the site! Put simply, if you can't incorporate the phrase into your website, then you can't optimise well for it.

So look at the phrases you want to be listed highly for and see where they appear in your website – they don't? Then do something about it!

### 4) Title-less Optimisation

I lose track of the number of sites I see where the title of the homepage is 'Home' or 'Untitled Page'. The title tag in your website is extremely important – use it. And by use it, I don't mean for some silly playing around with symbols (like one I saw recently that read:

**~#~---- Welcome to our site ----~#~**

All very pretty, but useless when search engines come a-calling.

Use the title properly – let it show the visitor they're in the right place by detailing your services, and also enable a search engine to 'file' you in the right place.

Want me to craft a title for the front page of your website that will work in search engines? Email me and I'll do it for nothing.

### **5) Impatient Optimisation**

So you submit your site to Google, Yahoo, MSN et al, and wait. A week later you check and you're not there, so you submit again. And again. And again.

Go on, admit it, you've done it (I won't tell anyone!)

The thing is, it won't get you listed any quicker, and could in some cases actually get you banned! Most major search engines take between 6 and 18 weeks to accept brand new websites, and to be honest, there's nothing you can do about it.

So stop fretting, stop checking your listings, and instead check your web stats to see if the spiders have been around. If they have, then don't resubmit – they know about you already!

### **6) Wasted Optimisation**

Another mistake lots of people make – submitting to 1000+ search engines. Only surpassed by the people that promise to submit your site to 1000+ search engines for you for 'just \$19.95'.

Here's some news – there AREN'T 1000 search engines. Most of the traffic that comes via search engines comes from ten main search engines. Google, MSN, AOL and Lycos make up the bulk, Alta Vista, Ask Jeeves, Hotbot, Wanadoo, follow on, and any one of about 5 smaller engines make up the rest. What you WILL get from those 1000+ submissions is spam .... And lots of it.

Don't waste your time on Fred's Personal Search Engine that no-one ever visits – stick to the main ones or ones that are recommended and you won't go far wrong.

### **7) Time Consuming Optimisation**

Last, but not least – sometimes the search engines need a helping hand. I hear of people spending hours submitting every page on their site to the search engines, and it really isn't necessary. Design a site map for your site, listing every page of the site, and submit THAT and your front page. The engine's spider will find its way around your site without any further help.

You can spend the time you've saved writing some more content for your site – after

all, it's true what they say – Content Is King!

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