

# SEO/SEM Best Practices Revision 1.1

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## Purpose:

Infinity Engine Software wants to familiarize clients with the concepts of SEO/SEM and how it helps build a successful business. This requires a long-term collaborative relationship between the site designer (IES), and you the site administrator/owner.

## Definitions:

**SEO** (Search Engine Optimization) On or Off page design strategies to improve search engine ranking.

**SEM** (Search Engine Marketing) Marketing strategies to include Paid Per Click advertising and other means to ensure your web site ranks high as possible in search engine results

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## Marketing

To sell your products on the Internet, you need to be found by your customers. Your potential customers using search words or phrases, results of their search produces ranked pages. Our goal is to keep your business ranked to appear on the first or second page of these result pages. What ranks a business to appear high on the list of results is either paid click advertising (in-organic marketing) or your site keyword/content (organic click marketing).

A company or organization really needs to understand that ranking well in search engines to build content, building valuable content on your website or out in the community. It's not always about getting top rankings on the search engine results page; it's about getting the right people to your site and then engaging them.

Providing information to potential customers through tutorials, blogs, high-quality tips, tricks, informative videos, and constructive links to other related quality sites, is the best way for your site to rank high. Valuable content on your web site requires your input and needs to be regularly updated to keep your site fresh and current. A tip to consider would be to place your video's on YouTube.com and the like...

SEO is ever changing. It requires a web site manager to stay on top of your game so to speak. Google and Yahoo are always improving their search algorithms and that requires changes to the web site to keep up. Stories abound about how Google will change their algorithm and then companies will lose 80 percent of their business. This demonstrates graphically how important is to stay ahead of the changes. Keep your content fresh... it's about staying current and giving the search engine bots a reason to come back again and again.

## Know your Customer

A lot of companies like the concept of SEO but they don't have the infrastructure to support it and it fizzles out over time. It's a matter of understanding your customers – how they search and how they think, what words do they use when they search? What phrase of the buying or information gathering cycle are they in when they get to your site? And once you understand the customer, it's much easier to reach them.

## Content

With recent updates on Google and Ask, it's more apparent than ever before that content is important. This means developing videos, blogs, newsletters via E-Mail subscriber basis, generating news articles, and having a presence on social networks. Most people think of MySpace or FaceBook when the subject of social networks is discussed, but there hundreds of specific niche networks that are worth marketer's attention. As an example, Café' Mom and Stylehive are terrific networks for the beauty and fashion industry. Use Google or yahoo to find your niche network and use it for your marketing. Changing your content as often as possible all will help keep your site fresh and marketable.

## Vertical vs. General Niche

Research your vertical niche and stay current. The better you know your business the better you can "tune" your website. The content will reflect your knowledge and you will do better with your SEO efforts.

It really starts with keywords and knowing what keywords work for your industry. Then make sure you have content and are included in the right directories in the industry. Then the keywords will pull more weight in a vertical search engine than with other general search engines. Your site is going to get weighted more heavily than if you're in general.

## Tracking Results

Install a tracking system to find out what actually works and who is hitting the site. From the Google site: "Google Analytics shows you how people found your site, how they explored it, and how you can enhance their visitor experience. Improve your website return on investment, increase conversions, and make more money on the web.

With over 80 reports, your free Google Analytics account will track visitors through your site, and will keep track of the performance of your marketing campaigns - whether they're AdWords campaigns, email campaigns, or any other advertising program. With this information, you'll know which keywords are really working, which ad text is the most effective, and where your visitors are dropping off during the conversion process. Don't be fooled by the fact that this functionality is available to you for free - Google Analytics is a full-featured, powerful analytics package.

AdWords advertisers can find all of these benefits from within their AdWords account - Google Analytics has been fully integrated with AdWords. All of your reports and settings are available from the **Analytics** tab."

This tool will provide useful tracking information for your web site to assist with SEO/SEM.

## Links

There are basically three ways to get to your web site; someone gives you the link, you find it through a search engine or by a link from another web site. Even though we have powerful search engines today to help us find information on the Web, linking from one page to another is still a powerful tool for helping your site get found. And links can group sites that are relevant, giving you more leverage with search engines than a site without links might have.

There is a fine science to creating a link strategy, however. It's not enough to just add a few links here and there within the pages of your site. There are different types of links that register differently with search engines and it's even possible to get your web site completely delisted from search results if you handle your links improperly.

## Keywords

Keywords are those words used to catalog, index and find your website. Of course, it's not nearly as simple as it sounds. There is a fine science to finding and using the right keywords on your website to improve your site's ranking. In fact, an entire industry has been built around keywords and their usage. Consultants spend countless hours finding and applying the right keywords for the clients, and those who design web sites with SEO in mind also agonize over finding the just the right ones.

Using effective keywords on your web site will help assure that it will be visible in the search engine results instead of being buried under thousands of other web

Basically, keywords capture the essence of your web site. Keywords are what a potential visitor to your site puts into a search engine to find web sites related to a specific subject, and the keywords chosen throughout the optimization process. Using the correct keywords in your web-site can mean the difference in whether you come back in search results as one of the first 20 web sites (which is the goal) or buried under other web sites several pages into the results. Studies show that searchers rarely go past the second page of search results when looking for something online.

## Things to think about...

Research shows that less than 10 of small and medium sized business in the U.S. and less around the world, have paid any attention to search marketing and are deriving any value from it at all. And they really don't care. Many small and micro business owners don't know how the Internet can impact their business, and they don't care.

But then there are a very small number of tiny web-based businesses that have come to it over time that have seen amazing results. Over \$130 Billion US was spent online in 2007. That is significant.