

# HOW TO RANK HIGH ON THE SEARCH ENGINES

## FREE SEO (Search Engine Optimization) Guide

### A Powwwerpages B2B US Yellow Pages White Paper

#### 1. Introduction to SEO

Have you ever wondered why search queries on the web will usually yield names, web sites, companies, or expressions that are **well-known** - such as "MacDonald's" - as opposed to "Uncle Joe's Diner"?

Did you ever put up a web site, ignored free **SEO advice** yet hoped - in vain - for a lot of visits and a high Google ranking ? Or have you ever placed an ad in some of those less effective **B2B** or **B2C US Yellow Pages**, yet no-one noticed your ad?

There could be many reasons why your web site or the **Yellow Pages** site you entrusted your Dollars wasn't attracting enough traffic. But the main reason is most likely that it hasn't been **Search Engine Optimized**, or not well enough. This might sound like a simplification but once you understand what **SEO** is, you'll see where we are coming from.

After such a bold statement, a definition of **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** is in order. Thousands of pages been written, and much has been said about **SEO**, some loaded with scientific terms and difficult to grasp, some simplistic. But what is **SEO** really?

**Search Engine Optimization** is (to put it very dryly and scientifically) the sum of strategies, tactics, methods (and yes, tricks !) used by webmasters to maximize and improve their **web site's search result position** on the major web-crawling Search Engines (Yahoo, Google, etc.), or their web ranking on Google.

The Powwwerpages team's definition is more inclusive: we define **SEO** as the systematic improvement of any search engine result (even if it's not targeted to a web site).

**SEO** would then be the science of having a keyword or term (not just a web site) rank as high as possible on search result pages.

For **Wikipedia's definition of SEO**, [click here](#).

To sum up our research and findings, it seems fairly safe to define **SEO** simply as "the science of getting Search Engines to rank, or, more accurately, **position or place** your search term or web site higher."

This emphasis is important. In **SEO** language, *Position or Placement* is the *ranking on a page*, as opposed to *Page Ranking* which is the *ranking of a page* in Google's estimation. ( **SEO** can sometimes be a bit confusing. But that's what our job is, to demystify and successfully apply **SEO**. )

Thus, *position or placement* is simply the place that a search result (pointing to a web site or to any other term) is allocated on the result pages (for example, number 3 which is excellent, or 630 which is pathetic, on a given search engine). *Page ranking ("PR")* on the other hand, is, on a scale of 1 - 10, the importance (or grading) which Google (at this point no other engines does this in a major way) ascribes to a given web page.

Another important, and very practical, difference is that a search result's placement can vary almost on a daily basis; a site's PR does vary over time, but much more slowly (it can take months to gain just one rank), depending on its changing importance and web popularity.

Most sites, millions of them, have a PR of zero, or maybe 1 - if they are lucky. (Looks like lack of **SEO** work). Page rankings of 4-5 are already considered very good. There are very few web sites with a PR of 10 and even Google's home page itself has only PR 9. The **US** government's official site, [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov), is one of the rare PR 10 birds.

A list of those Search Engine Optimization strategies and free **SEO** tactics (never mind tricks ...) that we referred to before, has filled whole libraries. We'll develop some of them in this **SEO** White Paper and then go into more detail in our Reports and individual free **SEO** consultations.

Above, we have discussed search result positioning. It's now time to explain how Google and their colleagues actually arrive at those results. This is a key **SEO** concept and applies to all businesses – even to **B2B / B2C Yellow Pages** sites.

## 2. How Search Engines rank Search Results

When you search for a topic using a major search engine, results will be displayed by the tens of thousands nearly instantly. No, it's not wizardry. And no, the search engine has not raced through the Internet in a second. It has done its own internal search and then just accessed the millions of pages (collected during its relentless crawls) in its database and has come up with the matches to your search query. The matches are then ranked, based on "relevance" – incidentally another important **SEO** concept.

Let's say you visit your library searching for a **book** on a particular topic. The librarian will retrieve books for you, based on the subject you choose, but if your subject is too general, he/she will ask you for clarification, a kind of verbal **SEO**, i.e.: you will need to narrow down your topic intelligently so you can have a broad enough choice but still find the book.

A search engine is not a librarian and has no idea what you really want when you type in a general expression. But it does apply all important **SEO** principles. It will compare your search query to the information in their database, find the contents which most closely match the requested information (**SEO** will have been highly important here, too), and then rank them in order of importance, or relevance, with the most important contents displayed first.

And these contents (as mentioned, regularly collected by the search engines) are simply **SEO** "material" that web designers or webmasters have written into their web sites, either explicitly in the copy, or - implicitly - as a set of logical **SEO** related connections, by way of code, or internal and external links to the individual web pages.

So it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the better designed and written a web site is, the more relevant its contents will be for the search engines. A free old **SEO** rule. We at Powwwerpages, one of the leading **B2B US Yellow Pages**, do this for our advertisers' sake, so that they show up high on the search results. Increased relevance will, in turn, rank the site higher on the search engines' results pages. Another **SEO** rule.

But what is a "better designed or written" web site or **B2B US Yellow Pages** placement? And how does relevance work?

It is extremely important to know this, or else it is virtually impossible to understand, let alone freely apply **SEO**, whether for an individual business, a web site or a **Yellow Pages** ad.

### 3. Search Result Placement Factors

First, let's look at the question of what a "better designed" website is. We are obviously not talking about graphic design here but about structure and content. These two components add up to strength.

And it stands to reason that the greater prominence you give your own web site, its structure, keywords and other content, in short: the more seriously you treat your own site (free **SEO** advice again !), the more seriously it will be taken by search engines.

#### 3 a. Your site's contents

This is a vast topic and a science in itself – complex **SEO work** is needed, way beyond the scope of this introduction. Suffice to say for now that keywords are key (forgive the pun) in any **SEO** job.

Keywords: important, relevant, well thought out. Intelligently placed and reasonably repeated. Just like in advertising. After all, don't forget a web site is [advertising](#).

#### 3 b. Titles, Headlines, Tags

As part of any **SEO** lecture, we also have to mention headlines, titles, tags, and more, as well as the concept of content. Plus the fact that web pages have other components, too, albeit sometimes more technical ones, programming code-oriented in nature – **SEO** in full flight !

### 4. Page Ranking Factors ("PR")

This is one of the better-known but often misunderstood factors. We are talking about links pointing to one's web site ("**web site popularity**"), another important **SEO concept** (careful, though: web popularity will lead your site to a better PR but won't directly result in higher search result placements, as PR is a different "branch" of SEO. There is a correlation, though.)

A real life example can be useful here. A person's popularity in society is deemed high if she or he gets a lot of phone calls, e-mails, or visitors. Conversely, it's a sign of being ignored if no one calls or writes.

The same holds true for businesses in general, and websites in particular. And yet again, free advice and **SEO** wisdom: the more web sites "point" to your site with links or references, the more popular your site is considered to be. And, indirectly, the search engines will rank such popular sites higher, too! It is therefore important to have **links to your site** placed on other web sites (these are called **Backlinks** in **SEO** lingo).

The common misconception here is that any link from any web site will do, and that many links, from many sites, will increase your popularity - free (if **SEO** was only that simple !). This is true if - and only if - those other sites are themselves popular (= reputable, high ranking or well-visited). It is not true for obscure, very low-ranking web sites or for sites with no common theme with yours.

The problem is that it's difficult to find highly-ranked web sites that will accept your links, especially if you are still relatively unknown – unless you pay for it. But that's another topic.

But what about **Link Exchanges** ("Give me yours, I'll give you mine")? Those are sites that host and connect web sites with one another, enabling them to exchange links. In our periodic **free SEO Reports** this topic, along with dozens of others, will be given detailed treatment.

We hope this overview was a useful introduction to **SEO** and a good overview. We don't claim it was much more than that.

However, our **FREE SEO Reports** are much more detailed and will provide practical guidelines and rules, and hands-on **SEO tips**. They are absolutely **FREE** and come with no strings attached. To receive these **SEO Reports** that can get your web site's ranking and site popularity zooming, [click here](#).

And remember: our Powwwerpages [advertisers](#) (Premium Listings and higher) can receive free individual SEO guidance, tips, and dedicated Search Engine Optimization support. We encourage them to contact us for a free SEO consultation (on a first-come-first-serve basis) with no strings attached.

To view some **SEO statistics** and **research**, [click here](#).

If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).

## 5. Statistical Highlights

Below, you'll find some **SEO research results** and insights. We invite you to draw your own conclusions although some of the numbers might be pretty obvious in any case.

Further corroborating the general consensus about search behavior, a November 2005 SEO discussion on [www.webmasterworld.com](#) quotes the following statistics:

- 16 % of **Internet users** only look at the first few search results
- 32 % will read through to the bottom of the first page - but not beyond.
- Only 23 % of **Internet searchers** go beyond the second page ; that number drops even further for third-page searches.
- Only 10.3 % of **web users** will actually read through the first three results pages.
- Just 8.7 % tend to open more than three pages.

And Web Marketing and **SEO** expert Mike Moran ([www.mikemoran.com](#)) quotes extensive research to the effect that in average, searchers spend no more than 7 (!) seconds looking at a search result page. It goes without saying that during those 7 short seconds only very high-ranking results will be given more than a fleeting glance.

These SEO statistics sound a little harsh. But here's the good news:

**Powwwerpages'** own **research** has yielded results that are much less discouraging. An August 2007 study goes deeper into the SEO soul and suggests that search behavior is more differentiated and in a way more complex : searchers' patience drastically [increases](#) when given the choice between very similar search results. In such a case, a user will spend much more time before deciding. (Makes perfect sense to us !)

Conversely, the more diverse (=the less subtly different) the results, the more clear-cut are the choices. And in such cases, searchers will decide much faster. (That's pretty logical, too).

Our **SEO study** suggests that at that point (i.e.: when facing more clear-cut choices) users tend to spend closer to 18 - 22 seconds per page (not a mere 7), and even longer time when choices are more subtle. This looks friendlier from a potential web marketer's vantage point.

Either way, the above leads SEO researchers to conclude that the average web searcher will scan the results, form his opinion quickly if possible, and then click on the links he likes without bothering to look further.

All this tells us: it's not so easy to get a second chance. Which makes it even more necessary to plan your **SEO structure** very well and to apply the rules. Don't forget: Google is the boss !

Further SEO research highlights: only about 60 % of Internet searchers scroll below "the fold" (the part of the page that is below the bottom of the screen when first shown), according to Greg Edwards, the CTO of Eyetools ([www.eyetools.com](http://www.eyetools.com)).

Users returning to a search, SEO expert Greg says, do tend to look further down the **search results page** for more results, but even then the "above the fold results" will still get looked at (and clicked) with significantly higher frequency. However, exact percentages are unavailable.

Other **SEO** research arrives at even more sobering results by claiming that many **web searchers** often consider only the top few listings on Page 1. We don't think this is very likely (unless a searcher is in a big hurry), although it would support Mike Moran's 7 % hypothesis above. If this is correct, it would suggest that even a Page 1, Number 7 or 8 ranking may not always be sufficient - certainly food for thought, and even more reason for the big rush to Google's Page 1.

True, Jarvis Mak, at **Nielsen/NetRatings** ([www.nielsen-netratings.com](http://www.nielsen-netratings.com)), notes that as users perform more and more searches within the same session, they are more likely to look at a second page of search results, perhaps even a third page (the reason probably being that - not having immediately found satisfactory search results - they will give deeper and more extensive searches a chance). But that's as far as they'll usually go.

It therefore seems to us that the buck stops on search result page 3 ...

However, there is good news.

## 6. The Good News

After all the gloomy **SEO** statistics, the good news is that you, too, can dramatically improve your web site's ranking.

How? With smart, Google-friendly (after all, Google is King !) and therefore effective, **SEO**.

It's never too late, and it can be done any time (during or after hours), and wherever you are - whether in **Los Angeles, CA** (the largest US City), or in **Lost Springs, WY** (the smallest inhabited town in the USA, with exactly 1 [one] resident, according to [Stateistics.com](http://Stateistics.com), a US State facts information provider).

You can boost your placement on search result pages with good SEO : intelligent keyword application, smart link management, and other up-to-date Search Engine Optimization weapons.

It's not a piece of cake ; and no, results of your SEO won't appear overnight (no matter what some submission artists and quick-fix marketers tell you). But it is realistically doable. And good **SEO** is absolutely vital for high search engine result placements.

And yes, it is possible to rank high, without large SEO budgets or a big IT department.

You are welcome to ask us, at the Powwwerpages **B2B US Yellow Pages**, at any time for **SEO guidance** and tips. They are valuable. They are presented with expertise and a good deal of enthusiasm by our SEO people. And they are FREE, with no obligation at all.

Ask away, and we'll try to give you good answers, applicable to your individual situation and whether or not you have a web site. We'll also periodically publish free **SEO** newsletters with more tips, such as

- How to **attract quality links** and build a link network (no, **not** with link exchanges!)
- How to place keywords in a Google-friendly way - and to the greatest effect !
- Which meta tags have lost their significance and what you can do about it
- The Dos and Don'ts of **SEO**
- The no-no actions that can **cost you very dearly** on Google
- What makes a web site tick
- What has replaced meta tags as Google-friendly SEO components
- The truth about submission companies
- The **common mistakes** that are sure to deny you a high web ranking
- **Secret keyword weapons**
- More avenues to visibility
- **Simple Google-friendly tricks !**
- **SEO** : All about Titles, Headlines, and Content
- Search Tips and Tricks

(These topics will be useful and apply mainly to web site owners and webmasters ; we realize, however, that non-web based companies need a lot of search engine attention, too, and will accommodate all kinds of businesses for advice).

**Welcome, then, to Powwwerpages' US B2B / B2C Yellow Pages Directory and its many functionalities.**

## **SEO or HOW TO RANK HIGH ON THE SEARCH ENGINES**

is a **FREE B2B US Yellow Pages SEO (Search Engine Optimization)** Guide