

Some Easy Tips for a Well-Ranked Site

Rather than write a big introduction, let's get to the meat of the matter. The best, consistently highly-ranked websites have the following things in common:

1. Links Matter. You need to have links to and (more importantly) from other respected sites. This means that you need to give people a reason to want to visit your pages. Either be an authority in your market or offer unique and compelling content.
2. Write good, fresh content, that flows naturally for HUMAN readers (forget about the searchbots, and how they read your pages. Traffic is not the ultimate goal-monetization is (assuming you are in business to make money) and that only happens when you are able to actually convert your visitors, which will never happen if your page is poorly written. Speak personally TO people to give them a sense of interaction-lose the corporate speak. Some SE's even penalize pages that have a high rate of visitors using their "back" button to return to results.
3. Valid Code Matters. It just does.
4. Meta-Tags matter very little any more, if at all. The only exception would be the Keywords tag, which is a good place to put common misspellings of your keywords/phrases, since you don't want that in your actual copy.
5. Have a physical address and a privacy policy on your website.
6. HTML Styling: Avoid Bolds, italics-instead use ONE H1 tag with your keywords and phrases, bulleted lists, and other <H> tags should have related key words, and ensure the first text paragraph is written well and interspersed (but not dominated by) your key words/phrases.
7. Find a niche. Begin by going after smaller markets, and moving up-not vice versa. You will convert more visitors if you think about your products and services and ask yourself what you would type to find it. Stats show that longer phrases show more buying intent and focus.
8. Have a custom 404 error page, and make your site navigation easy.
9. Forget Submissions to search Engines. They will find you naturally. Use a sitemap in XML form. Update it as needed and include a link to it on your 404 page.
10. Title EACH page appropriately, and try to include key phrases describing the content of the page, with the site name at the END of the Title.
11. Place links in your content as well as your navigation. Make them authoritative links.
12. Avoid questionable practices. There is no such thing as quick rankings that last. If you are in it for the long-haul, and follow honest best practices, you will eventually rank high longer.

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