

Google: The One Big Theory

I have created quite a large number of websites, and if, like me, you have spent hours building yours, then it can be a thankless task when it comes to waiting for customers to hit your virtual door. Like any overnight success, it can take weeks or even months for your website to start to gain popularity unless you have the benefit of advertising in other areas, such as banner adverts, posters, flyers and so on. For the average site builder, the date of publication can come and go as though all your hard work has made no difference to the value of the internet.

But once you can see a trickle of people starting to dribble through to your website, you may wonder why it isn't a torrent. Perhaps next week? Or next month? You start seeing your creation as an investment rather than an overnight sensation that will see you retiring by the end of the month. Clearly people are starting to find you, and perhaps you have had a few comments or a few orders, but what else have you done to try to improve the popularity of your site and the overall number of visitors it receives?

You may have spent some time thinking about the keywords used throughout the pages of your site, since you are almost certainly aware of the fact that these will help the big search engines locate your site and evaluate its relevance. Clearly being listed on Google is a significant step, but this in itself is in no way going to guarantee a flood of eager customers desperate to part with their cash. What matters more than being listed, is where you are on the list.

The rank of your site refers to how far up the list of results your website is when someone searches the internet. If your website sells left handed calculators for example, then you will expect and hope that if someone enters the keywords 'left handed calculator' in a search engine that your website is near the top. If it is at the top, that is fantastic, but you really need to be in the top ten, on that first page, to be a success. Unbelievably, only 3% of people who search online ever look past the first page of results that a search engine brings up. That means that if they search for 'left handed calculators', which brings up almost 400,000 results in Google, you need your website to be high up the first page to stand any chance of someone finding it. Even being in 11th place out of those 400,000 will mean that you're missing out on 97% of visitors.

Possibly you might have heard of tips or companies that can rocket your website skywards and make sure your site is listed right near the top. Perhaps you've tried a few of these tips, and wondered why your site didn't suddenly become the hottest place on the net? Maybe you even forked out a small fortune on a company that promised you the world and delivered you maybe a few places higher, rocketing you all the way from 164,378th place to 153,735th? Yes, 10,000 places higher, but the only difference is that number. Remember, unless you're on the first page of results, it makes almost no difference where you are, so even if they had rocketed you to 1000th place, it still isn't go to make much difference to your business. The thing is, that there is no single way of achieving this, and any company that takes your money on the premise that there is, is one to avoid. There are a whole range of factors, many of which are easily achievable yourself in a few hours, or even minutes. The other thing to remember is that this progress in rank doesn't happen overnight. For many reasons, search engines don't respond to changes immediately, and it can take many months to achieve a high rank.

So what are these factors which affect the rank of your website? There are many different ways to win over the approval of a major search engine. The big factor used to be keywords, with search engines scanning through the pages on your site and identifying the relevant keywords. Unfortunately, many people took advantage of this and simply inserted great blocks of keywords, whether they were relevant or not, just to grab the attention of the search engines. This technique is more likely to lower your rank these days. One of the biggest factors is how many websites link to yours. Obviously if several hundred sites all have a link encouraging people to visit yours, that tells the search engines that your site must be pretty good, and so increase your rank.

There are many free things available on the internet, and many good services that cost money. I rarely come across a good service that I'd recommend, which also happens to be free, but if you're a website owner like me, and are interested in knowing how your site's doing as far as the search engines are concerned, it's great to find a free service that offers interesting and valuable information on how your website is ranked in the major search engines. As the work is done manually, the results are very thorough. Of course, they'll offer to do the work for you, but if you've already built your site, the chances are that you'll be quite happy making the changes they recommend.

It can often be quite obscure little changes that you wouldn't think of - such as the position of the text on the page, the number of menu links and outside links you have, the length of your sentences and so on. Knowing what you can do to help get your website noticed is a massive step toward getting up towards that golden first page. I have a number of websites, and I can't say I have always tried every single bit of advice, but even by applying a few which suit me, I have noticed that my sites are climbing higher. Don't forget, no one ever gets overnight top rank placement, and your eventual position will depend largely on the number of keyword competitors you have, but I'd certainly recommend getting your site checked out, after all, it's free!

About the Author

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