

A-Z of web terminology

404: When a page is removed, the server will generate a 404 when a visitor attempts to view that page.

Above The Fold: refers to the part of the screen where a user does not have to scroll to see content. It is a reference to newspapers where the top part of the page is above the fold.

Ad words: A system to advertise on Google & partner sites on a CPC (cost per click) basis.

Algorithm: In the context of search engines, it is the mathematical programming system used to determine which web pages are displayed in search results.

ALT Tag: An HTML "tag" that allows a browser to display text instead of a graphic. Some search engines read these tags in order to help with rankings.

ASP: Active Server Pages - is a server-side-scripting environment which allows for dynamic, fast and interactive pages.

B2B: Business to Business. Products and services designed to be sold to other businesses.

B2C: Business to Consumer. Products and services designed to be sold to the general public.

Back link: A link from one website to another.

Band width: The size of the Internet pipe you have when you connect to the Web. If you are on a T1 line, you have access to a higher bandwidth than someone connecting with a 56kbps modem.

Blog: It started out as referring to specific content management software (blogger), and has transitioned into a description for a wide range of personal pages, journals, and diary type setups.

Broadband: A network transmission method which uses a single divided medium so that multiple signals can travel across the same medium simultaneously.

Browser: To view web pages, you need software that can interpret the HTML code that makes up the pages. The two most common browsers, Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator, interpret the HTML code and scripts allowing you to view the graphics, color, and text in a web page.

CGI: Common Gateway Interface - scripting specification which can be used to transmit data over a network, such as in a "contact us" form.

CGI-BIN: One of the most common name for a directory on a web server that contains CGI files. These directories are often under heavier access controls than standard directories.

Click Through: When a user selects a hyper text (web page) link. The Click refers to the noise a input mouse makes when a button is depressed. The through refers to the act of going "through" the link. Many web statistics are kept on click-through (sometimes abbreviated as Click-Thru). Some advertising systems are based on paying sites when someone actually Clicks-Thru to a new site.

Cloaking: Using some system to hide code or content from a user, and deliver custom content to a search engine spider. There are three main types of cloaking: IP based, User Agent based, and the combination of

those two. IP based cloaking custom delivers a page based on the users IP address (this can be used to deliver custom language based sites or target groups of users from particular ISP's such as AOL or @home users). User Agent cloaking sends a custom page based upon the users Agent (most often use to take advantage of a particular agents strengths or features). Finally, the combination of Agent and IP cloaking is use to target specific users with specific agents (such as search engines).

Conversion Rate: The relationship between visitors to sales or actions. If 1 person out of 100 purchases a sites product, it has a conversion rate of 1 to 100.

Cookie: A special text message given to a browser by a server. The browser stores this message on the hard drive. The next time this same site is visited, the browser sends this message back to the server.

CPC: Cost Per Click. Search engine such as Overture.com charge sites for the number of users they send them on a per click basis.

CPM: Cost Per Thousand (think metric where M=T). CPM advertising models are based upon advertisers purchasing page views in blocks of 1000. If a website displays 7000 page views with banners, the site has just shown 7 blocks. If they are receiving £8 cpm, then they just made £56.

Crawler: A type of a A HREF="#spider">Spider that will download multiple pages from the same web site. Crawling refers to the fact, that the spider will look for links in the pages it downloads and then walk or crawl down through a web site.

Cross Linking: Cross linking is linking across content within the same site.

Cross Browser: A reference to "Cross Browser" is usually in relation to java script, html, or css code that can work in multiple browsers.

CSS (Cascading Style Sheets): enable you to apply a property or group of properties to an object by applying a style to that object. Styles can be used for positioning objects, creating borders, link colors, text colors and lots more. CSS is used to add simple display styles to web pages. Of the 3 major browsers, Opera is probably the most compliant and has won several CSS awards (<http://www.opera.com>).

Dead Link: An html link that has gone bad. The destination page no longer exists. Many search engines routinely check for "dead links" by spidering the page again. Dead links used to be a serious problem on search engines (mostly yahoo), but with increased link checking, dead links are becoming more rare.

DHTML (Dynamic HTML): is an extension of HTML that enables greater control over page layout and positioning. It also allows greater interactivity without depending on interaction with a server.

Directory: A directory is a web site that focuses on listing web sites by individual topics. A quasi table of contents. A search engine lists pages, where a Directory (such as Yahoo, Looksmart or The Open Directory Project lists websites).

Domain Name: This is the web address or URL (Uniform Resource Locator). For example, <http://www.MicroSoft.com> is the URL for their server site. These names are registered with Network Solutions/ InterNIC (.com) or Nominet (.co.uk), and are very similar to personalized license plates. Once you own the name, it is yours for as long as you pay the fee.

DNS: Domain name Server An Internet Host that is dedicated to receiving, translating, and transferring specific web requests resulting in pages and images being sent to your PC at your request.

DNS Lookup: Or sometimes referred to as Reverse DNS Lookup. Most often used by webmasters while looking at server log files. It converts a unique IP address of a site visitor to its domain name.

Domain: There are Top Level Domains (such as .com, .net, or .org), and then there are midlevel domains such as Ford (ford.com ford.net or ford.org). Domain is a generic term to describe any of these levels and is most often used to refer to the mid level domain (ford.com). In reference to search engine technology, domain names can play an important part in determining a sites rankings on the search engines.

Doorway Page: A page designed as an entrance to a website. Many doorway pages a specifically created to rank high on a particular search engine. Sometimes referred to as a Gateway Page or a Welcome Mat Page.

Download: The process of retrieving information from any computer is called Downloading. When one computer sends information to another, it is called Uploading.

DSL: Digital Subscriber Line - which is used to bring high-speed digital networking to homes and businesses.

Dynamic Content: A page that is generated just as the user views it. The content delivered to the user is often updated on-the-spot out of a database or based upon the users browser. It used to be easy to spot one of these pages, but with most systems now allowing dynamic content from any page at any time, you just never know. Search engines no longer penalize for dynamic content as long as the URL does not include submitted data (a ? question mark in the url).

E-Mail: An application that provides a routed, stored-message service between any two user accounts.

Encryption: This secures information being transmitted over non-secure or un-trusted media. Two items to look for: 1) that the URL starts with "https", and 2) that a lock shows up at the bottom of your browser. It is a must when transmitting credit card information.

Error Log File: Web servers run separate logs that show web site errors. These logs can show things like access to robots.txt (if it doesn't exist), and cgi program failures.

Everflux / Google: This denotes the continuous changes in the Google search results pages.

Favicon: A small icon that some browsers display next to a bookmark when the site is viewed. It is placed in the root of a website and named "favicon.ico".

FFA: Free For All links. These are places that allow anyone to add a link. Do not ever sign up for one of these! You will be spammed forever! Also know as a link farm.

FLASH: A software tool manufactured by Macromedia which has become a standard for web animation, creating smooth animation sequences. It uses vector graphics which are scalable and small in file size. Flash can serve dynamic content from a database and can be used for intricate navigation sequences.

FTP: File Transfer Protocol - This is how text and images are transferred from a PC to a host server (Uploading), as well as from a host server to someone's PC (downloading).

Frames: A structural design style which allows for multiple windows to be visible within one browser. One might place a stationary navigation bar and have the text of the page scroll up and down. Frames are not the best way to design a modern site for a few reasons. Considering the above example, the browser window actually has 3 windows present (navigation, text and overall). This idea of multiple windows can be confusing for search engines, for which they do not know where the actual content is located. A better way is to use SSI (server side includes ... see below). Also - An HTML tag construct for making a website appear to have multiple windows within one browser. A frame with links can remain static while clicks cause a different frame to be updated. Most serious websites stay away from frame usage because of browser compatibility problems and search engine problems. Most search engines will not index a framed site.

Freshbot: This is the name for the Google crawlers that are known to add pages to the Google index more promptly than others.

GIF: A graphic file format for saving images on the web. GIF is best for art and drawings having flat, solid areas of color.

Google: The largest and currently the #1 search engine.

Google Bot: The crawlers which index pages into Google.

Hit: A request for a file on a webserver. Most often these can be graphic files and documents. In more modern lingo, website owners refer to a HIT referrers as a request for documents only, while system administrators who are chiefly concerned about server performance, refer to it as any file request.

Home Page: This is the starting point of a web site. (The first page of a web site)

HTML: Hypertext Markup Language. A computer language used to create web pages. It controls how text and graphics are displayed in a web page. A browser uses HTML to interpret how text and graphics load into the browser.

HTTP: Hyper Text Transfer Protocol. The agreed upon system to transfer data between a web server on the browser.

Inktomi: A search engine database of sites that just services other search engines providing search results. Inktomi provides more searches per search engine than any other site on the internet. Some of its bigger customers in 2000 were HotBot, Search.MSN, Yahoo, and AOL Netfind.

Internet: The Internet is a worldwide collection of computers that can communicate with one another. When you connect to the Internet, your computer actually becomes part of the Internet.

Intranet: Like an Internet, it is a collection of computers linked together. However, access is restricted to a specific, smaller group of computers. Usually companies will use an Intranet to link together allowing privacy.

IP Address: Whenever you connect to the internet, you are giving a unique 4 number Internet Protocol Address (IP Address). Your IP address is how data from your computer to a website is how data finds its way back and forth. Your IP address may change each time you attach to your ISP. If your IP address stays the same from connection to connection, you are said to have a static IP address. If it changes each time you connect, you are said to have a Dynamic IP Address. IP addresses can be important in the context of

search engine submission because some search engines have been known to ignore submissions from any one IP over a certain limit.

ISP: Internet Service Provider. An ISP service that, for a fee, provides you with direct high-speed access to the Internet. The name designed by a Madison Avenue advertising and marketing firm for internet point of access sellers.

Java: A computer language designed to be delivered from websites to a user's browser. Small programs are transferred to the user, and then executed on the users system.

Javascript: A language embedded within HTML that is executed after a page of HTML is transferred to a users browser. Many search engines will ignore Java and JavaScript commands.

JPEG: A graphic file format for saving images on the web. This works best with graphics having gradations and shading (photos).

Keyword: A singular word or phrase that is typed into a search engine search query. Keyword mainly refers to popular words which relate to any one website. For example web site about real estate could focus on keywords such as House, or phrases such as Home for Sale.

Keyword Density: A percentage measure of how many times a keyword is repeated within text of a page. For example, if a page contains 100 words and ten of those words are "house", then "house" is said to have a 10% keyword density. There are programs that will rate keyword density by singular words or by groups of words, "new home for sale".

Keyword Stuffing: The process of loading a page up with keywords in the META tags or main HTML body. Search engines do not like to see this procedure!

Linkage Popularity: A count of the number of links pointing (inbound links) at a website. Many search engines now count linkage in their algorithms. A measure of a website's on-line visibility through the number of the links pointing to it. This is the reason why link building or link campaigns are becoming so critical for webmasters.

Meta Tag: Author generated HTML commands that are placed in the head section of an HTML document. Current popular Meta tags that can affect search engine rankings are Meta Keywords, and Meta Description. Meta KEYWORDS tag is used to group a series of words that relate to a website. These tags can be used by search engines to classify pages for searches.

The Meta DESCRIPTION is used to describe the document. The Meta description is then displayed in search engine results. The Robots Meta Tag is used to control certain aspect of how a search engine indexes the page. An HTTP-EQUIV Meta tag can sometimes be used to issue some server HTTP commands. Most common is a HTTP REFRESH command. Gaining in popularity is a NOCACHE command to thwart server caching of a page. Other useful tags are the CHAR SET tag to describe the document language and character set. The Author Meta tag and the Generator Meta tag (software used to generate the page).

Mirror Site: A shadow duplicate copy of a web site at a separate URL. This allows websites to spread out the resource load on a server. Mirror sites are difficult to get indexed properly by search engine. Search engines view the multiple duplicate pages as spamming.

Modem: Hardware that connects to your computer allowing your computer to send and receive data through your phone line. (Needed for connecting to the Internet).

MP3: Compact file size with excellent sound quality.

Open Directory Project: The Open Directory Project (ODP) is a site directory run by volunteer editors. This is one of the great internet success stories of 2000. The ODP is used by Lycos, Hotbot, AOL-Netfind, Netscape Netcenter, and the home base www.dmoz.org itself. Currently there are around 700,000 hand picked and selected sites in the directory. The first edition of the ODP was known as NewHoo (a play on Yahoo). Netscape provided server space for the NewHoo directory and it was collectively renamed The ODP.

Open Source: Open source software is software that is released with source code. People are allowed to make derivative works from open source software as long as it is released under the same open source agreement.

Optimization: Creating a page that is specifically intended to rank well as search engines. Basic optimization includes a descriptive paragraph of the site with keywords near the top, avoiding frames and deep tables that have menus on them.

Page View: Web Page Hits or number of times a page is viewed.

PFI Pay-for-Inclusion. For the past few years, many of the search engines (except Google) have offered a simple PFI model so you could speed up the indexing of any page of your site by paying a fee. This fee covered a year of inclusion in the search engine database plus frequent re-spidering of the page, if it met with the engines' quality requirements.

PHP (Hypertext Preprocessor): A server side scripting language that sends dynamic web pages after interpreting PHP code. PHP code usually begins with `<%` and ends with `>`.

POP3: Post Office Protocol. The common protocol used to connect with an email server.

Pop Under: A pop-up that loads under a page so that it is only viewable when the current page is closed.

Pop Up: An ad or page that spawns a new browser window.

Portal: A once popular term to refer to a site that is an entry point to other sites on the internet. Often refers to search engines and directories. The use of this term is declining rapidly.

PPC: Pay Per Click. A Pay-Per-Click search engine charges websites on a per click basis. Often, an auction is held to see who is willing to pay the most for users.

The search engines also offer PPC programs where you purchase ads that show up at the top, side or below the search results for the specific keyword phrases you bid on. Google Adwords and Overture are the best known of these programs. Ads that you place with these companies show up at the search engines as well as many content sites (if that option is turned on). Generally they are labeled as "sponsored" or "featured" results.

PR: Google's Page Rank. This is Google's "...measure of importance of a particular page or site." The higher the rank the better position your website or page will have in their results. Page Rank is a topic much

discussed by Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) experts. Google's order of results is automatically determined by more than 100 factors, including their PageRank algorithm.

Page Rank: One of the methods Google uses to determine a page's relevance or importance. Page Rank is displayed on the toolbar of your browser if you've installed the Google toolbar (<http://toolbar.google.com>). The Toolbar Page Rank only goes from 0 – 10 and works like a logarithmic scale.

Query: The very heart of search engine interaction with a user. The user types in words or topics to search for, and the search engine returns results that are matches from its database. The action of searching is called Querying the database. A single search of any database is called a Query.

Ranking: In the context of search engines, it is the position that a site's entry is displayed in a search engine query results.

Reciprocal Link: When two websites swap links to point at each other. The mutual agreement between two web sites to display the other's link somewhere on their website. Also known as a link exchange.

Referrer: The address (URL) of the web page a user came from, before entering another site. Each time a user clicks (selects) a new HTML link on a web page, most browsers report a "HTTP-REFERER" string to the new site. Web hosts can record these "referrer strings" in a log file for usage by a web site. In the context of search engines, these referrer strings are a powerful way to determine what searches users used to enter your website. As part of a referral string from search engine, the search terms a user typed in will be included. Some IMG tag counter style logging software can also record referral strings.

Robot: A program that automatically does "some action" without user intervention. In the context of search engines, it usually refers to a program that mimics a browser to download web pages automatically. A spider is a type of robot. Some times referred to as Webbots.

Robots.txt: A file on a web site in the root directory of a website that is used to control which spiders have access to which pages within a website. When a spider or robot connects to a website, it checks for the presence of a robots.txt. Only spiders that adhere to the Robots Exclusion Standard will obey a robots.txt command file. There are several specific fields in a robots.txt such as User-agent specifies which User Agents are allowed to access the site and "Allow/Disallow" specifies which directories a spider may access.

ROI: Return On Investment. In relation to search engine advertising, it often refers to sales per lead.

Search Engine: Search engines allow you to search the web for a specific topic and web page (URL). A program designed to search a database. In the context of the Internet this refers to a web site that contains a database of information from other websites. Directories of sites are *not* search engines (such as Yahoo).

SEM: Search Engine Marketing: interchangeable with SEO and may also include other variables such as PPC advertising.

SEO: Acronym for Search Engine Optimization.

SERP: Search Engine Results Page: the page on the search engines that show the web site listings.

SEP: Search Engine Positioning: the position your site is at on the SERP.

Shopping Cart: Software designed to keep track of customer purchases until they "check out" on an ecommerce website..

Spamdexing: The submission of pages that are intended to rank artificially high by various unethical techniques. These can include submitting hundreds of slightly different pages designed to rank high, small invisible text, or word scrambled pages. Most of these techniques are flagged by search engines as spam.

Spamming: A broad term referring to un-solicited junk email. (See spamdexing)

Splash Page: Also referred to as a Welcome Mat Page. It is a page that normally just includes a logo and a "click here to enter" type link. These can be used to direct traffic based upon user variables.

SSI (Server Side Include): This enables the server to place external data into your web page. This data can be either a data string or the contents of a file. - An acronym for Server Side Includes. These are HTML Comment commands placed in an HTML file, to cause a web server to execute some action when the page is viewed by a user. These include calling external programs such as CGI programs, displaying date or the last modified date on the file. Apache is the most widely used web server and has a wide range of SSI commands available.

Stealth: A broad term referring to the hiding of data from a user or robot. Often this includes Obfuscation where by the data presented looks correct, but there is something wrong with it. In the context of search engine optimization this can include Stealth Meta Tags that are displayed for search engine robot but not users.

Submission: The act of submitting a web page to a search engine or web site to a directory.

Tables: A format to visually present data in an organized form, using columns, rows and cells.

TLD: Top Level Domain. This is the far right portion of any domain name. .com, .org, .uk, .net are examples of Top Level Domain names.

Unique User: A single individual website visitor. Visitors (or users) can visit multiple pages within a site. Unique users are important because it is an indication of success of a website. If you have high visitor counts, but relatively low page per user counts, that indicates that people are not finding your site attractive enough to set and read through it. On the other hand, if you have low visitor counts and very high page per user counts, that is an indication your site is providing good information to people and you should do a better job a promotion. High page per user counts indicate good site potential, while low page per user counts indicate you need to rework the site with more content or better displays.

URL: Uniform Resource locator. A URL is the address for a web site. Each page on the Web has its own unique URL. "The URL for Jellyfish Creative is: <http://www.jellyfishcreative.co.k> .

URL , an acronym for Universal Resource Locator. Is the basis of how we find web sites on the internet URL's can include different forms of communicating with a server: (an HTTP URL is Hyper Text Transfer Protocol while a FTP URL is a File Transfer Protocol).

You can determine how you are connecting with a site, by looking at the beginning of a URL for the HTTP, FTP, or other protocol identifier. Most websites are located on http servers and begin with HTTP://. In the

context of search engines, URL's are important because they contain entities which the search engine may or may not like. For example, your domain may include keywords related to your website.

Virtual Domain: A website setting on its own domain name. For example Jellyfish may choose to host your site on our server buy using the address www.yourcompanyname.jellyfishcreative.co.uk

World Wide Web: A feature of the Internet, allowing people to access websites through, "WWW".

Web site: A collection of web pages that are linked together.

Whois: A search that provides the company name, addresses, and contact information of a visitor to a site.

WYSIWYG: "What You See Is What You Get". This usually describes a web page editor that creates pages or items without the ability to knowing codes and languages. A few examples are Macromedia Dreamweaver, Microsoft FrontPage and Adobe PageMaker.

Yahoo: A popular search directory. (www.yahoo.com)
