

Submit Your Site to Search Engines and Directories

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There is a huge industry out there just waiting to take your money in exchange for submitting your site to “thousands” of search engines. Don’t fall for it. There is no need to pay someone to submit your site. In the first place, there is no need to submit your site to “thousands” of search engines. The top 8 search engines account for about 99% of all web searches. So it is safe to say that if you are listed in these engines, you have pretty much covered the entire web.

The top eight search engines are listed in order of popularity:

- Google
- Yahoo
- MSN
- AOL
- Ask Jeeves
- Dog Pile
- Altavista
- Excite

Google alone accounts for 62% of all searches; Yahoo comes in at just 28% and MSN at about 7%. And from there the numbers go down dramatically. Excite, the eighth most popular search engine on the web, accounts for just a little more than one-tenth of one percent of all searches! Just imagine what the twentieth most popular search engine could do for your business! Don’t even waste your time.

Now that I have convinced you that you don’t need to submit to “thousands of search engines” I will tell you how simple your submission process will be. Of those top eight search engines, you really only need to submit your site to Google, Yahoo, MSN, and Excite. That is right. You just need to submit to those four! Ask Jeeves and AOL obtains their search results from Google. Dog Pile is a metasearch engine which means it pulls its results from many of the top engines, and AltaVista pulls their results from Yahoo. These relationships could change at any time, but right now submitting to those four is all you need to do.

My advice to you is not to get in a hurry to submit. Although your site will always be a work in progress, wait until you have a good number of pages created, and you are sure you have the linking structure just the way you want it. I would suggest having 20 or 30 pages (at least) in your site before you submit. Make sure you have your internal linking set up really well before you submit. Also, it would be great to go ahead and try to get some incoming links to your site. A great way to do this for free is with directories which I will discuss later.

If you do these steps first, there is a good chance your site will already be indexed anyway. The engines will find your site when they visit those other sites which have

your links. But go ahead and submit your sites manually anyway. Only do it ONCE. Do not aggravate them by submitting your site every day until you see it in the index. Submit once and forget about it. If within 4 or 5 months you don't see it in an index, submit it again. But if you follow all the rules and have a good quality site, your chances of being indexed by the top eight in a month or so are very good. In order to find out if your site is indexed by those 4 search engines, type the following into their search field:

site:www.yourdomain.com

Your pages will show up in the results if your site has been indexed by the engine. If they show up, use the DigitalPoint tool to find how they are ranked for specific search terms. Hopefully you will see some results in the top 20. But don't worry if you see them at 100 or worse. If they are at least indexed, the fun of SEO can really begin!

Submitting to Directories

There are dozens of great directories on the Internet you should have your site in. It is a lot more work to submit to directories than to search engines. It will take only minutes to submit to the four search engines. But submitting to directories will involve many hours of ongoing work.

These directory listings will be one-way text links which are very valuable. If your site sells garden products, gardening directories will be most effective for your site to be listed in. In large directories you need to submit your site to the most relevant subtopics within the directory. It is best to find directories with at least a page rank of 3 or 4. Higher is better. BE SURE the page rank of 3 or 4 is of the page your link will be on. In many cases the home page of a directory will have good page rank. But as you drill down through the directories to where your site will be listed, that page may have smaller, and in some cases, 0 page rank. Go ahead and submit to those directories. After all, all pages started with a 0 page rank. Some of those 0 page rank directory pages your link is on might some day increase in page rank! Maybe a low page rank directory you list in for free may someday start charging money since their page rank has grown to 6 or 7. In most cases, the directory will go ahead and allow the current listings to remain for free when they start charging for listings.

Like I said, go ahead and list in as many directories as you have time for. But be aware of the page rank of the page your listing is on. Spend some time searching for that high value, free directory which has good page rank. Do searches for them. If you sell supplements, do Google searches for "health directory", "fitness directory", and so on. It does take some work, but having those one way links to your site is worth it.

Should you pay for directory listings?

I have paid for a few directory listings and feel it is worthwhile sometimes. I have listed Cactus Canyon in several paid directories for around \$35 per year. I never pay for a listing unless I am positive my link will be on a page with high page rank AND

there are not dozens of links on the same page. The fewer other links the page has, the better. Without getting too far into the specifics of link value, all the links on a given page have to share the page's page rank. So the fewer links there are on that page, the more weight Google places on the links there.

After your site is doing well in all the search engines, you may want to consider paying for placement in the Yahoo Directory. Being listed in Yahoo's search results is not the same as being in the Yahoo Directory. For business sites, the cost is \$299 per year for them to consider your site. It is not guaranteed your site will be accepted, and there are no refunds. But if you follow all the rules of their submission process, and you submit a clean-cut site which works well and has original content, they will list it. Even though these are paid listings, Google gives them excellent consideration. After all, these listings have all passed Yahoo's scrutiny, so Google assumes they are good quality sites.