



T77 Search Engine Marketing

Market your business without going Nuts!
<http://www.acorn-is.com> 877-ACORN-99

TOP Search Engines

From HotelMarketing.com "Web users conducted more than 5.1 billion search queries in October--marking a 15 percent increase from June, according to a Nielsen - Net Ratings report released December 13, 2005. **Google** maintained its leadership position, garnering 2.4 billion search requests, or almost half--48 percent--of all searches. **Yahoo!** accounted for 21.8 percent of all searches, followed by Microsoft's **MSN**, which was responsible for 11.3 percent of search activity."

All Innkeepers NEED TO KNOW the difference between an organic listing and a PPC listing in Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc. Mention PPI for Yahoo. Remember that Organic gets 70-80% of the web surfer traffic and Sponsored gets about 20-30% of surfer traffic.

Now that we know which search engines you want to show up in and where (organic) here are some steps to help you get there.

Search Engine DOs

- Use tools to identify best metas for each marketable page of the web site. (<http://www.overture.com> free tool)
- Unique Meta Title, Description and Keywords for all marketable web site pages. (Blue Line in browser)
- Have quality text content (150 words a the bare minimum, 250+ is better)
- Have anchor text links that support your title tags.
- Have your programmer use H1, H2, H3 ... tags appropriately
- Have a Site Map or at least a link from each page to every other page of the site
- Have quality links to support placement (<http://www.marketleap.com> free tool)

Search Engine DON'Ts

- Frame a site
- Be part of a link farm
- Don't over "stuff" your keywords in your text
- Don't over populate your Metas (title, description, keywords, etc.)
- Don't use hidden or slightly off color text to fool the search engines.
- Don't search engine market more than 1 URL to your web site.
- Don't provide more than 100 links on any one page.
- Don't create a web site that replaces text with FLASH imagery.
- Don't use a splash entry page - but if you ABSOLUTELY MUST and can't live without one, don't create it without using additional text on the splash page for the search engines to use to index the page.

On-Going SEO Maintenance

- Keep your site fresh (Acorn offers a Lite and Pro Version of Snippet Master, a content editor to enable customers to do their own freshness work, add links, change specials etc.)
- Keep your link popularity high (Acorn can do link work for any inn or teach the Innkeeper to do this themselves.)
- Monitor where your traffic is coming from. Acorn offers Urchin Tracker to our hosting customers at no charge to track what phrases are working, where your traffic is coming from, what your search phrases are, which of your pages are bringing you the most entry page traffic (based on the search phases that have been coded). Urchin will also monitor your bounce rate. (Are people staying and looking around when they first enter your site – or do they hop or bounce off?) All of our Enhanced Urchin statistics separate out spider / crawler traffic vs. humans. Not all trackers do this, and innkeepers get a skewed idea of how many rooms they could have booked.

Note: Google just purchased Urchin to use as part of their Google Adwords program.

- And MOST IMPORTANT of all – you have to KNOW where your bookings are coming from. Not just your traffic. Acorn is releasing a new service called Intell-a-Keeper™ that will tell our customers where their bookings are coming from. We can track online bookings, phone bookings, e-mail bookings. Pretty much any type of booking an inn can receive. This information includes what search phrases they used, if it was from a Search Engine. Or if it was a PPC account or an Organic listing, what entry page did they enter in on, and on what page of the referring system did the referral come from. If it was an online booking we pass back the reservation id. (This has been successfully tested in Webervations and Availablity Online.) The visitor information is kept on a 30 day rolling cycle. Once a visitor becomes a booking guest, we then e-mail that information to the innkeeper on each and every booking, and then we log the reservation information permanently into our database for future statistics gathering and analysis thorough our Intell-a-Keeper Reporting System.