Website jargon buster

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Like any business we have our very own SEO jargon. This document will help you understand some of the frequently used search engine words and phrases. If you need any other assistance call anytime:

We can explain everything in simple English!

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also see our dedicated SEO website

www.seowl.co.uk
Everything you need to know and more about search engine optimisation (SEO)

Oast House Media Ltd

About us:

Oast House Media Ltd is a Kent based website design company. We've already have many local and national web clients enjoying a professional design and SEO service.

Director Nigel Stevenson has over 30 years media design experience and over 10 years web experience creating his first website in 1998. Since then Nigel has been involved with hundreds of web projects creating 1000s of web pages

Co-director Wendy Stevenson has been supplying web and print copy/editorial for national/international and local titles for over 20 years and can call on a wealth of experience to supply the perfect web (or print) text content

About the company:
Oast House Media Ltd (est 2004) is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), CRB checked (N Stevenson) and affiliated to Trading Standards (Kent) 'Buy with Confidence' scheme which fully protects consumer rights and ensures a very high quality and audited code of conduct

301

A permanent server redirect – a change of address for a web page found in the htaccess file on apache servers. Also useful for dealing with canonical issues.

Adwords

Google Pay Per Click contextual advertisement program, very common way of basic website advertisement.

adwords site (MFA)

Made For Google Adsense Advertisements – websites that are designed from the ground up as a venue for GA advertisements. This is usually, but not always a bad thing. TV programming is usually Made For Advertisement.

Affiliate

An affiliate site markets products or services that are actually sold by another website or business in exchange for fees or commissions.

algorithm (algo)

A program used by search engines to determine what pages to suggest for a given search query.

alt text

A description of a graphic, which usually isn't displayed to the end user, unless the graphic is undeliverable, or a browser is used that doesn't display graphics. Alt text is important because search engines can't tell one picture from another. Alt text is the one place where it is acceptable for the spider to get different content than the human user, but only because the alt text is accessible to the user, and when properly used is an accurate description of the associated picture. Special web browsers for visually challenged people rely on the alt text to make the content of graphics accessible to the users.

Analytics

A program which assists in gathering and analyzing data about website usage. Google analytics is a feature rich, popular, free analytics program.

anchor text

The user visible text of a link. Search engines use anchor text to indicate the relevancy of the referring site and of the link to the content on the landing page. Ideally all three will share some keywords in common.

authority (trust, link juice, Google juice)

The amount of trust that a site is credited with for a particular search query. Authority/trust is derived from related incoming links from other trusted sites.

authority site

A website which has many incoming links from other related expert/hub sites. Because of this simultaneous citation from trusted hubs an authority site usually has high trust, pagerank, and search results placement. Wikipedia, is an example of an authority site.

B2B

Business to Business.

B2C
Business to Consumer

back link (inlink, incoming link)
Any link into a page or site from any other page or site.

black hat
Search engine optimization tactics that are counter to best practices such as the Google Webmaster Guidelines.

blog
A website which presents content in a more or less chronological series. Content may or may not be time sensitive. Most blogs us a Content Management System such as WordPress rather than individually crafted WebPages. Because of this, the Blogger can chose to concentrate on content creation instead of arcane code.

bot (robot, spider, crawler)
A program which performs a task more or less autonomously. Search engines use bots to find and add web pages to their search indexes. Spammers often use bots to "scrape" content for the purpose of plagiarizing it for exploitation by the Spammer.

bounce rate
The percentage of users who enter a site and then leave it without viewing any other pages.

canonical issues (duplicate content)
canon = legitimate or official version – It is often nearly impossible to avoid duplicate content, especially with CMSs like WordPress, but also due to the fact that www.site.com, site.com, and www.site.com/index.htm are supposedly seen as dupes by the SEs – although it's a bit hard to believe they aren't more sophisticated than that. However these issues can be dealt with effectively in several ways including – using the noindex meta tag in the non-canonical copies, and 301 server redirects to the canon.

click fraud
Improper clicks on a PPC advertisement usually by the publisher or his minions for the purpose of undeserved profit. Click fraud is a huge issue for add agencies like Google, because it lowers advertiser confidence that they will get fair value for their add spend.

cloak
The practice of delivering different content to the search engine spider than that seen by the human users. This Black Hat tactic is frowned upon by the search engines and caries a virtual death penalty of the site/domain being banned from the search engine results.

CMS
Content Management System – Programs such as WordPress, which separate most of the mundane Webmaster tasks from content creation so that a publisher can be effective without acquiring or even understanding sophisticated coding skills if they so chose.

code swapping (bait and switch)
Changing the content after high rankings are achieved.

comment spam

Posting blog comments for the purpose of generating an inlink to another site. The reason many blogs use link condoms.

content (text, copy)

The part of a web page that is intended to have value for and be of interest to the user. Advertising, navigation, branding and boilerplate are not usually considered to be content.

contextual advertisement

Advertising which is related to the content.

conversion (goal)

Achievement of a quantifiable goal on a website. Add clicks, sign ups, and sales are examples of conversions.

conversion rate

Percentage of users who convert

CPC

Cost Per Click – the rate that is paid per click for a Pay Per Click Advertiser

CPM (Cost Per Thousand impressions)

A statistical metric used to quantify the average value / cost of Pay Per Click advertisements. M – from the Roman numeral for one thousand.

crawler (bot, spider)

A program which moves through the worldwide web or a website by way of the link structure to gather data.

directory

A site devoted to directory pages. The Yahoo directory is an example.

directory page

A page of links to related WebPages.

doorway (gateway)

A web page that is designed to attract traffic from a search engine and then redirect it to another site or page. A doorway page is not exactly the same as cloaking but the effect is the same in that users and search engines are served different content.

duplicate content

Obviously content which is similar or identical to that found on another website or page. A site may not be penalized for serving duplicate content but it will receive little if any Trust from the search engines compared to the content that the SE considers being the original.

e commerce site

A website devoted to retail sales.

feed
Content which is delivered to the user via special websites or programs such as news aggregators.

FFA (Free For All, link farm)
A page or site with many outgoing links to unrelated websites, containing little if any unique content. Link farms are only intended for spiders, and have little if any value to human users, and thus are ignored or penalized by the search engines.

frames
a web page design where two or more documents appear on the same screen, each within it's own frame. Frames are bad for SEO because spiders sometimes fail to correctly navigate them. Additionally, most users dislike frames because it is almost like having two tiny monitors neither of which shows a full page of information at one time.

gateway page (doorway page)
A web page that is designed to attract traffic from a search engine and then redirect it to another site or page. A doorway page is not exactly the same as cloaking but the effect is the same in that users and search engines are served different content.

gizmo
small applications used on web pages to provide specific functions such as a hit counter or IP address display. Gizmos can make good link bait.

Google bomb
The combined effort of multiple webmasters to change the Google search results usually for humorous effect. The "miserable failure" – George Bush, and "greatest living American" – Steven Colbert Google bombs are famous examples.

Google bowling
Maliciously trying to lower a sites rank by sending it links from the "bad neighbourhood" – Kind of like yelling "Good luck with that infection!" to your buddy as you get off the school bus – there is some controversy as to if this works or is just an SEO urban myth.

Google dance
The change in SERPs caused by an update of the Google database or algorithm. The cause of great angst and consternation for webmasters who slip in the SERPs. Or, the period of time during a Google index update when different data centres have different data.

Google juice (trust, authority, pagerank)
trust / authority from Google, which flows through outgoing links to other pages.

Googlebot
Google's spider program

hit
Once the standard by which web traffic was often judged, but now a largely meaningless term replaced by page views AKA impressions. A hit happens each time that a server sends an object – documents, graphics, include files, etc. Thus one page view could generate many hits.

hub (expert page)
a trusted page with high quality content that links out to related pages.

HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language)
directives or "markup" which are used to add formatting and web functionality to plain text for use on the internet. HTML is the mother tongue of the search engines, and should generally be strictly and exclusively adhered to on web pages.

impression (page view)
The event where a user views a webpage one time.

in bound link (inlink, incoming link)
Inbound links from related pages are the source of trust and pagerank.

index
Noun – a database of WebPages and their content used by the search engines.

index
Verb – to add a web page to a search engine index.

indexed Pages
The pages on a site which have been indexed.

inlink (incoming link, inbound link)
Inbound links from related pages are the source of trust and pagerank.

keyword – key phrase
The word or phrase that a user enters into a search engine.
keyword cannibalization
The excessive reuse of the same keyword on too many web pages within the same site. This practice makes it difficult for the users and the search engines to determine which page is most relevant for the keyword.

keyword density
The percentage of words on a web page which are a particular keyword. If this value is unnaturally high the page may be penalized.

keyword research
The hard work of determining which keywords are appropriate for targeting.

keyword spam (keyword stuffing)
Inappropriately high keyword density.

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landing page
the page that a user lands on when they click on a link in a SERP

latent semantic indexing (LSI)

This mouthful just means that the search engines index commonly associated groups of words in a document. SEOs refer to these same groups of words as "Long Tail Searches". The majority of searches consist of three or more words strung together. See also "long tail". The significance is that it might be almost impossible to rank well for "mortgage", but fairly easy to rank for "second mortgage to finance monster truck team". Go figure.

link

An element on a web page that can be clicked on to cause the browser to jump to another page or another part of the current page.

link bait

A webpage with the designed purpose of attracting incoming links, often mostly via social media.

link building

actively cultivating incoming links to a site.

link condom

Any of several methods used to avoid passing link love to another page, or to avoid possible detrimental results of indorsing a bad site by way of an outgoing link, or to discourage link spam in user generated content.

link farm (free for all, link exchange)

a site devoted to directory pages. Link farms allow links to sites of low or no quality, and add no value themselves. Quality directories are usually human edited for quality assurance.

link juice

(trust, authority, pagerank)

link love

An outgoing link, which passes trust, unencumbered by any kind of link condom.

link partner (link exchange, reciprocal linking)

Two sites which link to each other. Search engines usually don't see these as high value links, because of the reciprocal nature.

link popularity

a measure of the value of a site based upon the number and quality of sites that link to it

link spam (Comment Spam)

Unwanted links such as those posted in user generated content like blog comments.

link text (Anchor text)

The user visible text of a link. Search engines use anchor text to indicate the relevancy of the referring site and link to the content on the landing page. Ideally all three will share some keywords in common.

long tail

longer more specific search queries that are often less targeted than shorter broad queries. For example a search for "widgets" might be very broad while "red widgets with reverse threads" would be a long tail

search. A large percentage of all searches are long tail searches/

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mashup
A web page which consists primarily of single purpose software and other small programs (gizmos and gadgets) or possibly links to such programs. Mashups are quick and easy content to produce and are often popular with users, and can make good link bait. Tool collection pages are sometimes mashups.

META tags
Statements within the HEAD section of an HTML page which furnishes information about the page. META information may be in the SERPs but is not visible on the page. It is very important to have unique and accurate META title and description tags, because they may be the information that the search engines rely upon the most to determine what the page is about. Also, they are the first impression that users get about your page within the SERPs.

metric
A standard of measurement used by analytics programs.

MFA
Made For Advertisements – websites that are designed from the ground up as a venue for advertisements. This is usually, but not always a bad thing. TV programming is usually MFA.

mirror site
An identical site at a different address.

monetize
To extract income from a site. Adsense ads are an easy way to Monetize a website.

natural search results
The search engine results which are not sponsored, or paid for in any way.

nofollow
A command found in either the HEAD section of a web page or within individual link code, which instructs robots to not follow either any links on the page or the specific link. A form of link condom.

noindex
A command found in either the HEAD section of a web page or within individual link code, which instructs robots to not index the page or the specific link. A form of link condom.

non reciprocal link
if site A links to site B, but site B does not link back to site A, then the link is considered non reciprocal. Search engines tend to give more value to non-reciprocal links than to reciprocal ones because they are less likely to be the result of collusion between sites.

Website Jargon Buster

OHM

Oast House Media Ltd are a Kent based website design company. We've already have many local and national web clients enjoying a professional design and SEO service.

organic link

organic links are those that are published only because the webmaster considers them to add value for users.

outlink (Out going link)

pagerank (PR)

a value between 0 and 10 assigned by the Google algorithm, which quantifies link popularity and trust among other (proprietary) factors.

pay for inclusion PFI

The practice of charging a fee to include a website in a search engine or directory. While quite common, usually what is technically paid for is more rapid consideration to avoid Googles prohibition on paid links.

portal

A web service which offers a wide array of features to entice users to make the portal their "home page" on the web. IGoogle, Yahoo, and MSN are portals.

PPA (Pay Per Action)

Very similar to Pay Per Click except publishers only get paid when click throughs result in conversions.

PPC (Pay Per Click)

a contextual advertisement scheme where advertisers pay add agencies (such as Google) whenever a user clicks on their add. Adwords is an example of PPC advertising.

proprietary method (bullshit, snake oil)

sales term often used by SEO service providers to imply that they can do something unique to achieve "Top Ten Rankings".

reciprocal link (link exchange, link partner)

Two sites which link to each other. Search engines usually don't see these as high value links, because of the reciprocal and potentially incestuous nature.

redirect

Any of several methods used to change the address of a landing page such as when a site is moved to a new domain, or in the case of a doorway.

regional long tail (RLT)

a multi word keyword term which contains a city or region name. Especially useful for the service industry.

RLT see Regional Long Tail

robots.txt

a file in the root directory of a website use to restrict and control the behavior of search engine spiders.

ROI (Return On Investment)
One use of analytics software is to analyze and quantify return on investment, and thus cost / benefit of different schemes.

sandbox
There has been debate and speculation that Google puts all new sites into a "sandbox," preventing them from ranking well for anything until a set period of time has passed. The existence or exact behavior of the sandbox is not universally accepted among SEOs.

scrape
stealing content and re-posting it on another site, often facilitated by automated bots.

SE (Search Engine)

search engine (SE)
a program, which searches a document or group of documents for relevant matches of a users keyword phrase and returns a list of the most relevant matches. Internet search engines such as Google and Yahoo search the entire internet for relevant matches.

search engine spam
Pages created to cause search engines to deliver inappropriate or less relevant results. Search Engine Optimizers are sometimes unfairly perceived as search engine Spammers. Of course in some cases they actually are.

SEM
Short for search engine marketing, SEM is often used to describe acts associated with researching, submitting and positioning a Web site within search engines to achieve maximum exposure of your Web site. SEM includes things such as search engine optimization, paid listings and other search-engine related services and functions that will increase exposure and traffic to your Web site.

SEO
Short for search engine optimization, the process of increasing the number of visitors to a Web site by achieving high rank in the search results of a search engine. The higher a Web site ranks in the results of a search, the greater the chance that users will visit the site. It is common practice for Internet users to not click past the first few pages of search results, therefore high rank in SERPs is essential for obtaining traffic for a site. SEO helps to ensure that a site is accessible to a search engine and improves the chances that the site will be indexed and favorably ranked by the search engine.

SERP
Search Engine Results Page

site map
A page or structured group of pages which link to every user accessible page on a website, and hopefully improves site usability by clarifying the data structure of the site for the users. An XML sitemap is often kept in the root directory of a site just to help search engine spiders to find all of the site pages.

SMWC (Slapping Myself With Celery)
indicates an extreme reaction similar to a "spit take" but more vegan-trendy. Often combined with other

exclamatory acronyms. – WTF/SMWC, or perhaps ROTFL/SMWC.

SMM (Social Media Marketing)
Website or brand promotion through social media

SMP (Social Media Poisoning)
A term coined by Rand Fishkin – any of several (possibly illegal) black hat techniques designed to implicate a competitor as a spammer – For example, blog comment spamming in the name / brand of a competitor

social bookmark
A form of Social Media where users bookmarks are aggregated for public access.

social media
Various online technologies used by people to share information and perspectives. Blogs, wikis, forums, social bookmarking, user reviews and rating sites (digg, reddit) are all examples of Social Media.

social media marketing (SMM)
Website or brand promotion through social media

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A term coined by Rand Fishkin – any of several (possibly illegal) black hat techniques designed to implicate a competitor as a spammer – For example blog comment spamming in the name / brand of a competitor

spam ad page (SpamAd page)
A Made For Advertisement page which uses scraped or machine generated text for content, and has no real value to users other than the slight value of the adds. Spammers sometimes create sites with hundreds of these pages.

spamdexing
Spamdexing or search engine spamming is the practice of deceptively modifying web pages to increase the chance of them being placed close to the beginning of search engine results, or to influence the category to which the page is assigned in a dishonest manner. – Wikipedia

spammer
A person who uses spam to pursue a goal.

spider (bot, crawler)
A specialized bot used by search engines to find and add web pages to their indexes.

spider trap
an endless loop of automatically generated links which can "trap" a spider program. Sometimes intentionally used to prevent automated scraping or e-mail address harvesting.

splash page
Often animated, graphics pages without significant textual content. Splash pages are intended to look flashy to humans, but may look like dead ends to search engine spiders, which can only navigate through text links. Splash pages are bad for SEO and usually a pain in the ass for users.

static page

A web page without dynamic content or variables such as session IDs in the URL. Static pages are good for SEO work in that they are friendly to search engine spiders.

stickiness

Mitigation of bounce rate. Website changes that entice users to stay on the site longer, and view more pages improve the sites "stickiness".

supplemental index (supplemental results)

Pages with very low trust, which are still relevant to a search query, often appear in the SERPs with a label of Supplemental Result. Googles representative's say that this is not indicative of a penalty, only low trust.

text link

A plain HTML link that does not involve graphic or special code such as flash or java script.

time on page

The amount of time that a user spends on one page before clicking off. An indication of quality and relevance.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator – AKA Web Address

user generated content (UGC)

Social Media, wikis, Folksonomies, and some blogs rely heavily on User Generated Content. One could say that Google is exploiting the entire web as UGC for an advertising venue.

walled garden

a group of pages which link to each other, but are not linked to by any other pages. A walled garden can still be indexed if it is included in a sitemap, but it will probably have very low pagerank.

web 2.0

Is characterized by websites which encourage user interaction.

white hat SEO

techniques, which conform to best practice guidelines, and do not attempt to unscrupulously "game" or manipulate SERPs.

The information displayed on this website is an overview of services and cannot be used to form part of a contract. This document intends to overview the web design process and some comments are personal thoughts based on the authors own experience