

## The 20 Most Common Search Engine Optimization Mistakes

Every purchase, especially BtoB, involves the search engines. You must know how they work and how they're changing. All integrated marketing programs should be informed by this knowledge. When properly integrated, marketing programs become much more visible and effective. So remove the barriers that will help you grow! Here are the 20 most common mistakes made in marketing today:

- 1. Excessive Repetition of Keywords**  
Using keywords excessively when writing content can lead to being labeled as "spam".
- 2. Obscure Keywords**  
Including irrelevant and inappropriate keywords in website content will hurt your authority.
- 3. Hidden Keywords**  
Making commonly searched, but unrelated keywords the same color as the background or making the text very small can get your website blacklisted by search engines.
- 4. Hidden Links**  
Creating links that are not visible to human eyes by creating images the same color as the background.
- 5. Duplicate Pages**  
Search engines like original content made for human visitors. Do not create duplicate pages with slight variations in content.
- 6. Doorway Pages**  
Never create pages that humans cannot read (doorway pages). These should not be referred to as "entry pages", which are meant for human online viewers.
- 7. Lack of Unique Title & Meta Tags**  
You must apply unique title tags and meta descriptions for every webpage of your site.
- 8. Not using search engine friendly URL's**  
Dynamic URLs should be avoided (if possible). Having multiple dynamic url strings can have a negative impact on the value of the page. Static URLs with page related keywords are preferred.
- 9. A Deep Navigation Architecture**  
A flat navigation where the important pages are linked from every page of the site is critical.
- 10. Creating a Website Entirely in Flash**  
While there are techniques that will help the search engines read Flash, most companies don't employ them. High-design is important, but know the impact it's having on page rank.
- 11. Using an Image Navigation**  
A text link is believed to have a stronger algorithm value than an image alt-tagged link.

**12. Website Functionality Problems**

Check for broken links, invalid sitemaps, invalid image locations, etc.

**13. Lack of 301 Redirects**

Implementing proper 301 permanent redirect commands for new URLs is important.

**14. Creating Content only for the Search Engines**

Search engine guidelines need to be obeyed. “Keyword Stuffing” for the sake of search engine rankings should be avoided at all costs.

**15. Linking to “Bad Neighborhoods”**

You have to be aware of sites that use bad SEO practices and not link to “un-trusted” sites.

**16. Lack of Proper Keyword Research**

Targeting underperforming keywords can cost you time and wasted links. A comprehensive keyword research strategy is a must before jumping into an SEO campaign.

**17. Magic Dust Theory**

Before starting an SEO campaign, you must be prepared for the long haul. SEO is not magic fairy dust. Proper expectations need to be established through strategy, investment and goals.

**18. Lack of Domain Alignment**

Site owners have to align all different domains and sub-domains that point to the website.

**19. Using Frames**

Frames just like flash have accessibility issues when it comes to search engine spiders.

**20. Not Leveraging Social Media**

SEO has exploded out of the tactical, technology realm and become highly strategic. Relevant, high quality content is the most important thing you can add to your website and social media is the perfect channel for distribution. When “conversations” are syndicated regularly, you will create a business development pipeline that is powerful and profitable.

These guidelines are for your information and education. If used properly, they will guide you to a much higher level of marketing success.

**Vivid Ascent**

An expert in PR, Digital Marketing, Advertising, Video and Social Media, Vivid Ascent is the only integrated marketing agency that applies *Strategic* SEO to each discipline. Contact Dan O’Brien, CEO 312-346-7812.

