

SEO Web Content Guidelines



Thank you for downloading No. 2 Pen's basic **SEO Web Content Guidelines**. While the following list of guidelines will point you in the right search-engine-optimization direction, keep in mind that there are more than 200 factors that search engines consider when they index a website. In other words, SEO-friendly web content is only one piece of a very large formula.

Here's a summary of the SEO content writing guidelines we'll address:

- ✓ Assign 2-3 keyword phrases for each page of content.
- ✓ Make sure the most important pages have somewhere between 250-450 words.
- ✓ Don't stuff keywords into the copy. Use keywords logically.
- ✓ Write an enticing headline for every web page.
- ✓ Include sub-headlines in your content to make it easy to scan.
- ✓ Place in-text links throughout your website.
- ✓ Use keyword-rich anchor text.
- ✓ Emphasize keywords by including them in headlines, with formatting, in lists, as part of page titles and meta descriptions, and as image file names and alt text (the descriptive text for your images found in HTML code).
- ✓ Add calls to action on every page of content, possibly more than once.
- ✓ Create compelling content first and worry about SEO second.

**Search Engine Optimization
(SEO)**

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- 1** Focus on two to three keyword phrases on each page of your website. Remember that single words are difficult to rank for, but specific phrases are easier. For example, ranking for “real estate” will take a lot of time and a lot of effort, whereas “Green Mountain, Colorado real estate” will be easier and cost much less.
- 2** Aim for at least 250 words on a page of web content, with a typical page having 400-450 words. Search engines are designed to reward pages that answer specific questions and/or address a specific topic. It's very difficult to give a complete answer or description of a specific keyword with less than 250 words of content, which is why this guideline exists.
- 3** There is no such thing as keyword density—it simply doesn't matter. There was a time when search engines looked at the number of keywords on a page and then used that information to figure out a page's content, but those days are long gone. Don't ever “stuff” a page with keywords because you want to hit some sort of density—use keywords as they make sense. Don't force it.
- 4** Write a headline for every page of content instead of calling the page by its name—for example, write “How Our Purple Paperclip Company Got Its Start” instead of just saying “About Us.” Your headline must include keywords and should be surrounded by header tags (i.e., <H1> tags) in the HTML.
- 5** Add sub-headlines throughout your copy (surrounded by <H2>, <H3>, <H4> tags, etc.). Be sure to include keywords here, too. Subheads make it easier to scan web content, which is what most of us do on a website.
- 6** Create one or two opportunities to link elsewhere within your site on most pages of web content. It's not useful to litter pages with links—it could be perceived as stuffing, which is a telltale sign of a spammer. However, in-text links are very powerful and should be added to most pages of content.
- 7** When you add a link to your page content, use keywords in the link's anchor text that match the topic of the page you're linking to. Using “click here” or “read more” is bad use of anchor text.

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8 Emphasize keyword phrases. You may have noticed by now that it's not about the number of times a keyword phrase appears on a page, but the way in which you emphasize the keywords. Headlines, subheads, and anchor texts are important aspects of any page, and search engines pay attention to these features for this reason. Other ways to emphasize your keywords:

- Bold and italic formatting
- Bulleted list
- Image file name and image alt text
- Page titles
- Meta descriptions

9 Add calls to action in the content of your page. For example, this might make a nice call to action: Want to build your own rocket ship? Call us and we'll tell you how— 555-555-5555. You want to have a call to action both above and below the fold of the page. "Above the fold" references the area of the screen you can see without having to scroll.

10 Number nine on this list is less about search engine optimization and more about user experience, the crux of what really matters in web marketing. Write well, provide compelling information, and make it easy for the visitor to take the next step. Without valuable content, SEO doesn't mean a thing.

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