

SEO - Unethical SEO Practices

There are thousands of sites that get expelled from search engines because of unethical search engine optimization (SEO) techniques.

Many of the site owners don't know why they were expelled because some of them used SEO companies that used so called black hat tricks. Avoid the following practices even if you really want to be first on a page result.

Keyword stuffing

There is a fine line between optimal keyword density and keyword stuffing. Keyword stuffing is where the keyword is used throughout the text too often. The best keyword density is between 3-8%. If you have a higher keyword density it will look suspicious and the search engines will pick it up. Keyword density should be one keyword for every twenty words otherwise the content becomes unreadable and is considered bad practice.

Google uses the so-called Florida update to locate and penalize over-optimized pages. Titles, headings and first paragraphs carry more weight than rest of the page. If these areas are over optimized, your site may get penalized. When you have too many of the same keyword, try using alternative terms. Keywords in bold, underlined, or in italics carry more weight. If you have too many of them, it may also lead to penalties. You can place a few keywords in bold.

Hidden keywords

It is considered a form of keyword stuffing when you make keywords the same color as your background. They are thus not visible for the reader, but are visible to the search engine, which frowns upon this practice. If your page background is black, with a large white table and your text is also black, you may get penalized even though you were not stuffing the page. Change the color of the text to one step less black, to prevent this.

Doorways

Doorways are pages that cannot be seen by the visitors. They are created solely to get higher rankings. Google and other engines consider it as manipulation even though they were legal a few years ago. They will not push your page rank up.

Stuffing Meta tags

They work the same as hidden text or doorways and serve no other purpose than to attract search engine attention. Another form of Meta stuffing is when keywords are repeated more than three times in tags. Avoid using two exact keywords or phrases in the Meta tags, rather use synonyms. Too long Meta tags are simply thrown out.

Content duplication

This is where there are the exact same content on different pages of your website, or a sister website, or a related site linked to your site, with more than one link. Syndicated content doesn't fall in this class. By putting the same content on another site, heavily linked to you, one of you will get penalized.

Link spamming

Reciprocal links are important, but inbound links from linking farms or blacklisted sites will damage your page rank. If you have far more outbound links than inbound links, it will not do anything for your ranking.

Embedding applets & FLASH

Avoid embedding different applets from java and flash scripts in your site. The spider bots are unable to read it and if too many are found, it will simply not index your page at all.

Domain names

It is a perfectly good place to optimize, but if your domain name is stuffed with keywords and your web content is not highly relevant to those keywords, you will damage your ranking.

File names

They carry less weight than titles and headings, but if the links are stuffed with keywords, it will look unnatural and lead to penalization by the search engines.

None of the search engines distinguish between intentional over optimization and unintentional stuffing. You will get penalized if you use any of the above techniques. If you have a low page rank check whether your page is search engine friendly.