

5 SEO Tips: Things Every WordPress Owner **MUST** Know

(Quick & Powerful Techniques
You Can Start Using Today)

**BONUS: 5 Common
SEO Mistakes to Avoid**

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About the Author

Michael Torbert established [Semper Fi Web Design](#) in 2007 after working as an engineer at several leading IT companies in the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. As the author of [All in One SEO Pack](#), which is the most downloaded plugin at over 9 million downloads, and the co-author of *All in One WordPress Desk Reference for Dummies*, Michael is a leader in the WordPress community. He is currently expanding his company by launching [Semper Plugins](#) in December 2011 and [Semper Themes](#) in January 2012. Michael also sponsors several WordCamps around the world, and organizes the monthly Raleigh WordPress Meetup Group and WordCamp Raleigh.

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Because search engine algorithms are constantly changing, the world of SEO has a constantly changing landscape. It is essential to stay up-to-date with the latest information and tools to help you achieve the best results possible. Obviously we cannot make any guarantees about where your site will rank on any given search engine. What we can say is that if you implement these 5 strategies consistently, and avoid the 5 mistakes, your site will be more search engine friendly, and therefore more easily recognized by both search engines and human beings.

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Why SEO Is Important

Most website owners know that search engine optimization (SEO) is important because it drives a lot of web traffic, but aren't quite sure what to do, or not do, to get the desired results. That's in part because there is a fair amount of misinformation about SEO, and also because once you do start learning about it, it can seem like a daunting process.

This ebook consists of tips you need to know to maximize your search engine ranking. This is a foundation of tips, which when implemented, can make a significant difference. We intentionally selected easy tips to start with because you're more likely to implement them and start seeing results. *Then* you can get into the more complex elements.

The key is that SEO refers to search engine rankings that people actually click on. Just getting on page 1 of a Google search isn't enough. The information displayed on the search engine results page needs to be compelling and useful enough for a human being to want to follow the link.

High quality SEO efforts aren't about gaming the system, but rather are about consistently applying proven techniques and strategies that have the greatest likelihood of withstanding changes to the search engines' algorithms.

Ultimately, your site has to be useful for actual human beings. If you keep that in mind as you apply search engine techniques, it will be easier on you and will create better results in the long run.

Tip #1: SEO Friendly Images

Search engine traffic from images is extremely underrated. WordPress has some great tools built in for optimizing the use of images for search engines, but they often go unused. The thing to remember is that search engines cannot “read” images. They can only read the descriptions, tags, and titles you give your images.

■ All images should have ALT and TITLE attributes defined. This is the image equivalent of the doc title or metadescription for the page.



**All in One
SEO
Pack**

File name: AllinOneSEOPack.png
File type: image/png
Upload date: December 12, 2011
Dimensions: 150 × 150

Edit Image

Title * All in One SEO Pack

Alternate Text Get the All in One SEO Pack Pro Version
Alt text for the image, e.g. "The Mona Lisa"

Caption |

Description The All in One SEO Pack Pro Version optimizes your WordPress website or blog for search engines.

Link URL

None File URL Post URL

■ Use the built in functionality in WordPress for attachment pages, rather than having images open in a lightbox or in their own page. Attachment pages combined with the [All in One SEO Pack](#) create excellent SEO for images.

■ Image filenames should have a relevant name, ideally with a keyword in it. (More on keywords later.) For example, an image filename of “obam435.jpg” might make sense to you, the website owner, but won’t mean anything to a search engine. “obamastateoftheunionspeech.jpg” is a much more descriptive, and relevant, filename.

Tip #2: SEO Plugins

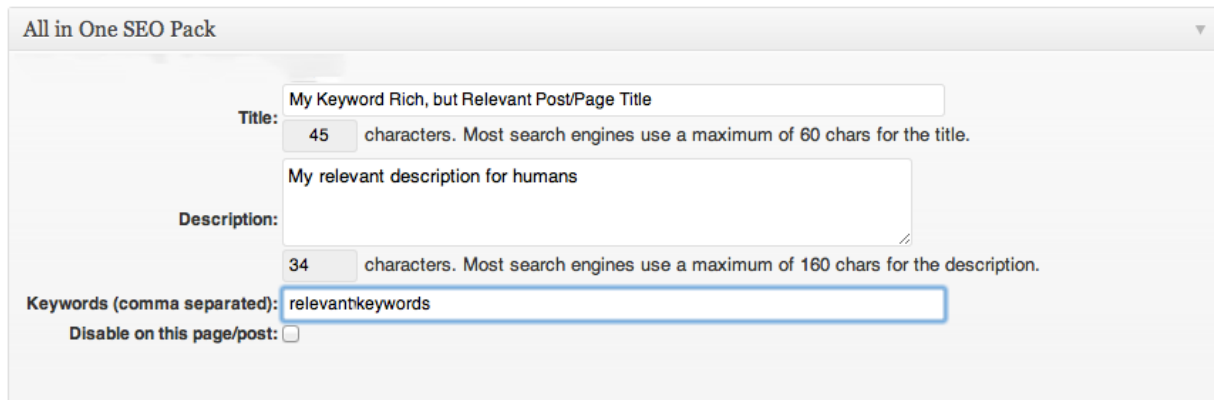
Using additional tools, such as SEO plugins, can help you maximize your search engine rankings as well as your site's usability for human visitors.

■ All In One SEO Pack

The [All in One SEO Pack](#) is the most downloaded SEO plugin from the WordPress repository. I'm not just saying that because I created it, but because it's the truth. Being able to control your search engine data without having to know anything about code is a huge time (and money) saver.

The All in One SEO Pack allows you to control all your meta data on individual pages and posts, as well as having site-wide default settings.

Among other things, the All in One SEO Pack automatically optimizes titles for search engines, generates meta tags automatically, uses canonical URLs and supports custom taxonomy. For beginners it works "out of the box", so you can simply install and go. For advanced users you have the ability to fine-tune everything.



The screenshot shows the 'All in One SEO Pack' settings for a specific page or post. The interface includes the following fields and options:

- Title:** A text input field containing 'My Keyword Rich, but Relevant Post/Page Title'. Below the field, it indicates '45 characters. Most search engines use a maximum of 60 chars for the title.'
- Description:** A text input field containing 'My relevant description for humans'. Below the field, it indicates '34 characters. Most search engines use a maximum of 160 chars for the description.'
- Keywords (comma separated):** A text input field containing 'relevantkeywords'.
- Disable on this page/post:** A checkbox that is currently unchecked.

Home Title:

Home Description:

Home Keywords (comma separated):

Canonical URLs:

Rewrite Titles:

Post Title Format:

Page Title Format:

Category Title Format:

Archive Title Format:

Tag Title Format:

Search Title Format:

Description Format:

404 Title Format:

Paged Format:

SEO for Custom Post Types:

Custom Post Types for SEO Column Support:

Google Analytics ID:

Use Categories for META keywords:

Use Tags for META keywords:

Dynamically Generate Keywords for Posts Page:

Use noindex for Categories:

Use noindex for Archives:

Use noindex for Tag Archives:

Autogenerate Descriptions:

Capitalize Category Titles:

Exclude Pages:

■ Scribe SEO

The [Scribe SEO Plugin](#) is another useful plugin. It helps you identify and focus on keywords with an integrated keyword suggestion tool, create reader-focused content, and has link building tools to help you get incoming links as well as build links within your own site.

■ Google XML Sitemap

A sitemap is used by search engines to index all the pages, posts, content and content meta data on your site. It even keeps track of when the content was last modified and identifies what are the most important parts of the site.

This is important because you want your site to be easily and accurately indexed by the search engines. This is how the search engines determine what your site is about, how relevant it is for a particular search term, and what parts of the site are most important.

The [Google XML Sitemap Plugin](#) does all of this for you. Even better – once you tell it to create the sitemap, you don't have to do anything to maintain the sitemap – the plugin does that for you automatically.



The screenshot shows the 'XML Sitemap Generator for WordPress 3.2.6' interface. The main content area displays the 'Result of the last build process, started on July 22, 2011 1:26 pm.' It reports that the sitemap was last built on July 22, 2011 1:26 pm, and that Google, Bing, and Ask.com were successfully notified about changes. The build process took about 8.39 seconds and used 25.5 MB of memory. Below this, there are 'Basic Options' for configuring the sitemap file (normal or gzipped), building mode (rebuild on content change or manual via GET request), and update notification (notify Google). The right sidebar contains sections for 'About this Plugin' (with links for Plugin Homepage, Suggest a Feature, Notify List, Support Forum, Report a Bug, Donate with PayPal, and My Amazon Wish List), 'Sitemap Resources' (with links for Helmaster Tools, Helmaster Blog, Helmaster Tools, Helmaster Center Blog, Sitemap Protocol, Official Sitemap FAQ, and My Sitemap FAQ), and 'Recent Donations' (listing S. du Prez, Desmond Rennebohm, Eugenio Perinelli, and Leonard Kutzhma).

A perfect combination is to use the [Scribe SEO Service](#), the [Google XML Sitemap Plugin](#), and the [All in One SEO Pack Plugin](#).


Tip #3: Meta Descriptions

We have found that most people are confused about how to use meta descriptions.


Basically, meta data serves two purposes:

- tells search engines what your site is about
- shows up in search results, which tells people what your site is about

Your Meta Description, specifically, doesn't actually affect your placement or ranking in the search engine results, but it is extremely important for what appears on the Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs). The meta description is what people see and helps them determine whether or not to click through to your site. As mentioned before, high rankings are meaningless if nobody clicks on the links because the description isn't appropriate for humans.

[How to Train Cats](#) - learn how to train cats from cat training experts
www.traincats.net/ 

Yes you can **train cats** because cat training is easy. If you want your cat meowing out songs you might be mistaken. I'll teach you some cat training secrets.

 meta description

A couple of key points to keep in mind when crafting your meta description:

- You are limited to 140 characters. If you do not specify a meta description, the search engine will either automatically use the first 140 characters of your page or post for the description, or will examine the on-page content for what it thinks is the best description to use. This isn't always a good thing.
- You want to have a naturally worded meta description. This is where the [All in One SEO Pack](#) comes in handy by making it super easy to create this for each page and post, without having to do any coding. Remember, it will be a *person* reading the description, so make sure it makes sense to a human, not a robot.
- Don't over use keywords in your meta description. Not that keywords should be over used anywhere, of course, but this is an exceptionally bad place for it.

Tip #4: Keyword Placement

Content is the most powerful tool you have in your search engine optimization strategy. Relevant content, optimized for keywords, and published frequently can shoot your website to the top of the search engine results.

■ Keywords are not just for your meta data, which is what many people erroneously believe. Keywords are part of how search engines determine the relevance of your site for a particular search. And just as important...they help the searcher know if your site is a match for what they are searching.

■ There are different opinions on how often you should use keywords in your content. As a general rule, keywords should be used naturally, not forced into the content so that it reads awkwardly or unnaturally to a human being.

Many beginners are tempted to place their keywords in every single sentence. That generally creates an article or page that's extremely difficult to read. Instead, write your content and then go back and position your keywords. Make sure to sprinkle other relevant keywords throughout your content as well. A good test is to read the content out loud. If it sounds awkward, you've probably over done it.

■ Use your keywords strategically. There are a few prominent places to position your keywords so they're recognized by the search engines. These locations include:

- Your headline
- Any headings or subheadings in your content
- The first and last paragraphs of your content

■ Consider using one primary keyword per page. You can keep it simple and optimize each webpage for one primary keyword. You could include a couple of secondary keywords that might be extensions of the primary keyword. However, trying to incorporate too many keywords into one page diffuses the results.

Tip #5: Linking Strategy

You'll start with creating two different types of links – Internal and External. One thing to know is that every time you link to a page, post or other site, you are passing "SEO juice" from *every single page or post you are linking from*. If a page or post isn't important to your SEO strategy, don't link to them. Or, if you must, use the "no follow" code so the search engines will know not to follow the link. (A "no follow" link can be followed by a person, but not a search engine.)

An example of using the "no follow" attribute in html code:

```
<a href="http://address.com" rel="nofollow">My Site</a>
```

■ Internal Links are cross links within your own site. For example, one blog post may contain a link to another blog post or page on the same topic. Developing internal links is a great way to teach the search engines of the relevancy of your site, as well as assist the human reader in finding valuable information. Just make sure that you are linking to related posts and pages. You may want to select a few pages to focus on to start with.

There are plugins for this, but manually choosing which pages to link to is best since algorithms that automatically determine this can, and will, make mistakes, wasting valuable "SEO juice".

Insert/edit link

Enter the destination URL

URL

Title

Open link in a new window/tab

▼ Or link to existing content

Search

No search term specified. Showing recent items.

Some other post
Another Post
sdfsdfdsf
Hello world!
Sample Page PAGE

[Cancel](#)

- ✓ Don't link to a bunch of posts, pages, etc. (particularly archive pages) from your sidebar.

- ✓ DO use a keyword as your link. Having a link that says “click here” does nothing for your search engine efforts.

■ External links are when you link from your site to another site. While there are lots of sites you like, don't link to all of them from your sidebar. This just gives away your SEO juice to the other site. Use external links sparingly and strategically.

*A note about Social Media and Linking..

While the links back to your site from Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn may not do anything for your official search engine results, they can do a lot for sharing useful information and driving traffic by bringing people to your site. The more useful your information, the more likely people are to pass it on to others. There's nothing like word of mouth advertising.

If you use your full domain name in the link, as opposed to a URL shortener, these links can also serve a branding purpose.

Just remember to use social media as a place you can “give back” as well. Don't think only of driving people to your site. Share useful links and helpful information from other people and sites. You'll be seen as a true contributor of value, and therefore be considered more trustworthy.

BONUS: 5 SEO Mistakes to Avoid

Whether you've been optimizing your web pages for quite some time or are new to the strategy, everyone makes mistakes. While the bad news is that these mistakes can have a significant effect on your page ranking, the good news is, they're reversible. Here are five SEO mistakes to avoid (And if you've already made them, not to worry, you can make changes and move forward with your SEO strategy).

■ **SEO Mistake #1: Not using keywords correctly.**

Many webmasters are concerned about being banned from the search engines for keyword spamming or stuffing so they limit the use of keywords on their web pages. As long as your content sounds natural and reads easily, the chances are you have not overused your keywords.

Make sure your keywords are included in the first and last paragraphs, in your headings and in your title and meta tags.

■ **SEO Mistake #2: Trying to fool search engine spiders.**

Search engines are a lot more sophisticated than most of us realize. They recognize - and penalize - hidden text, keyword spamming, and cloaking, which is showing different content to the search engine spiders than to your visitors. All of these practices only serve to hurt your page ranking and can in fact cause your website to be banned by the search engines, which means no one will find you - and no traffic means no profits.

■ **SEO Mistake #3: Using Flash**

Flash is a great presentation tool and can be dramatic and effective if used sparingly. It's particularly appropriate if you have a media related website and want to demonstrate your industry savvy. However for most website owners it's just not necessary and can harm your page ranking. Search engine spiders cannot read content embedded in Flash files, which means they're not recognized or indexed.

■ **SEO Mistake #4: Using Your Company Name (and Only Your Company Name) As a Title Tag**

Unless you're branding your company name, your company name shouldn't be the only element in your title tag. Feel free to include it, however it's also important to use your primary keyword for each webpage title tag. This is more useful for your customers and helps the search engines identify the various pages on your site.

■ **SEO Mistake #5: Using A Splash Page**

A splash page is a web page with a large graphic or company logo, and a link to enter the site. This is an ineffective strategy for a number of reasons:

- * No keyword rich text on the page, nothing for the spiders to index.
- * Only one internal link on the page
- * These pages often have a redirect which often causes spiders to ignore them

If search engine optimization is important to your business, you may need to forgo the splash page. Your home page should be easy to navigate, content rich, and link visitors and spiders to other main web pages.

In general, unless you're trying to outsmart the search engines and using nefarious tactics, the majority of search engine mistakes are reversible. If you've committed a few of these mistakes, simply correcting them can increase your page ranking almost immediately. Take some time to evaluate your SEO strategy and eliminate these SEO mistakes.

Visit SemperPlugins.com to get your copy of the All in One SEO Pack Pro Version.