

SEO Checklist

Is your CMS SEO-friendly? The following checklist will help you determine the capabilities of your content management system (CMS) with respect to search engine optimization (SEO):

Page Titles

- For any given page, do you have the ability to modify the page title tag to whatever you want (i.e., any combination of keywords to accurately describe the page)?
- Can you ensure that there is a different title for each page of your site?

Page URLs

- Are your URLs human-readable?
- Do your URLs simulate an easy to navigate directory structure?
- Are your URLs free from irrelevant server querystrings, special characters, question marks, numbers, etc?
- Do you separate keyword spaces in your URLs with hyphens?
- For any given page, do you have the ability to modify the keywords in your URL to more accurately describe the page?
- Is the URL for your index page "/" (instead of "index.htm" or "index.php")?

Meta Tags

- For any given page, do you have the ability to modify the entire content of your meta description and meta keyword tags?
- Can you ensure that these tags are different on each page of your site
- Do you have the ability to leave them blank if necessary?

H Tags

- Does each page of your site have an H1 heading?
- Does the main body content of each page follow immediately after the H1?
- For any given page, do you have subordinate header tags (H2, H3...) to further outline your body content?
- Do you have the ability to modify these tags to whatever you want?

Image Tags

- For any given image on your site, do you have the ability to customize the ALT tag and image title tag to whatever you want?
- Are your images properly optimized for the web?

Body Text

- For any given page, do you have the ability to easily modify the body content to whatever you want?
- For any given paragraph or content element, do you have the ability to easily re-locate its position on the page with respect to other content elements?

Links

- For any given internal or external link, do you have the ability to add custom keywords to the anchor text and title parameter?
- Do you have the ability to quickly validate all links to all pages on your site or external sites?
- When pages on your site are relocated, does your CMS "remember" internal link locations (so that internal links don't need to be manually updated)?

Page Structure

- Are you structuring your HTML page templates using CSS (instead of tables)?
- For any given page, do you have the ability to modify the content or organization of the CMS-generated HTML?

Site Organization

- Can search engines easily crawl your site?
- If your main navigation is Flash, javascript, image, frame, or AJAX based, do you serve up a simple text or CSS-based alternative for search engines? If not, do you have the ability to add text based footer navigation to every page of your site?
- Do you have the ability to easily modify and re-organize your site structure (to achieve clear organization and distributed link authority)?

Site Maps

- Do you have the ability to add a simple text-based sitemap page containing a link to every page on your site?
- Is it easy for you to publish a separate XML-based sitemap for submission to Google and Yahoo.

301 Redirects

- Are you using 301 redirects for any page which has been permanently moved or deleted?
- For the non-www version of your site (domain.com), are you 301 redirecting to www.domain.com?