



The 3 main factors to SEO

There are some very basic things that can be done by every fitness business to begin to optimize their websites in the search engines. They revolve around three basic factors; time, content and link population.

Many personal trainers think that they will get results overnight – they could take months, or longer, to come to fruition. For this reason, to get listed in the search engines immediately the best place to start would be to initiate a Pay-Per-Click (PPC) program immediately. Google and Yahoo have the two most popular PPC services. For more information and tutorials go to their websites:

Google AdWords

<http://adwords.google.com>

Yahoo Search Marketing

<http://searchmarketing.yahoo.com/srch/index.php>

As a geo-targeted niche business, such as PT, the benefits of PPC are great and the costs can be very low. This being said, getting listed organically in the search engines is still important especially considering the big picture. In addition to time and patience, getting ranked in the search engines takes some effort. The two main factors to consider when ranking a site are content and link population.

The content on your site is the one thing that you can easily control. The search engines approve of content-rich sites and even more importantly, content that is relevant to the keywords you are targeting. Let's look at it from the search engine's perspective – when one of their customers (a researcher) does a search, they want their customer to land on a page that is highly relevant to their search. The search engines, wanting to also deliver more than what was asked for, want the customer to receive as much relevant information as possible in order to stay in favor with the searcher. Having said that, adding content into your website with keyword(s) is imperative for your business and it is also important that you include your keyword(s) in your meta-tags and in the headline text as much as possible.

Each page on your website should have content specific to the focus on that page. For example, if you have a web page called 'Kettle Bell Training', the content on that page should reflect the topic and the keywords in both the text and the meta-tags should be based on the topic. It is also important to submit each individual web page or URL to the search engines.

Many trainers don't like to overload their websites with content as to not overwhelm the visitor with information, this somewhat conflicts with the process of adding content to a site in order to appeal to the search engines. A good way to keep the content simple on the main pages and to continue to add content on your website is to incorporate educational (content-rich) pages into your site. Some ideas would be: Articles, Tips, FAQ's, Newsletters and Resources. If you add educational pages to your website, make an effort to continually update and add new content to these pages.



Link population is the most important factor in getting ranked on the search engines. The more sites that link back to you, the greater your popularity and the more the search engines will like you. Getting other websites to link back to your site is somewhat out of your control and can make it tricky to succeed in gaining traction with the search engines. This doesn't mean that it's not worth doing and here are some ideas as to how to get links back to your site:

1. If your site is loaded with continually updated and relevant content, there is a good chance that other websites will want to link back to your site as a resource. It can be very helpful to send an on-going email newsletter with links back to your educational web pages in order to promote these pages.
2. Writing regular educational articles and submitting them to article directories is a great way to promote your site. When writing these articles, be sure to include links back to your website and each time you post an article on a directory site it is considered a link back to your site. In addition, if your article is interesting to someone they may post it on their website.
3. You could initiate a link exchange program and cross-link with other websites. This was a popular technique for link building for many years but recently the search engines have disqualified cross-links since the technique was being abused. But, if your website is linked up with other websites it could be a great way to drive traffic back to your site which is the ultimate goal.
4. You could hire a search engine optimization consultant to optimize your website. SEO consultants usually spend most of their time building links back to your website. SEO consultants are typically expensive but if you are in a competitive market and are contending for competitive keywords; it is critical that you are listed high up in the search engines, hiring an SEO consultant may be your best option.
5. List your website in all of the PT directories. Not only is this a great way to drive traffic back to your website but each listing could count as a link back to your website.

The links that are posted on other websites will gain you the greatest favor on other search engines that have similar content to yours. These links are referred to as relevant links. You get even more kudos from the search engines when other sites that link to you have several other links that are relevant as well. In other words, if you are linked with popular sites, you are more popular with the search engines. This is not much different than high school.

One of the most important elements in any equation related to web marketing is the quality of your website. A simple, attractive, easy-to-navigate website is very important since your website is the first thing many of your prospective clients will see when forming their opinions about your business.

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