

## Glossary of Search Engine Ranking Term

Here is a glossary of commonly used terms in the world of search engine ranking.

**Alt Tag:** The alternative text that the browser displays when the surfer does not want to or cannot see the pictures present in a web page. Using alt tags containing keywords can improve the search engine ranking of the page for those keywords.

**Bridge Page:** See Doorway Page.

**Click Popularity:** A measure of the relevance of sites obtained by noting which sites are clicked on most and how much time users spend in each site.

**Cloaking:** The process by which your site can display different pages under different circumstances. It is primarily used to show an optimized page to the search engines and a different page to humans. Most search engines will penalize a site if they discover that it is using cloaking.

**Comment Tag:** The text present within the tags in a web page. While most search engines will ignore the text within the Comment Tags, some, like Excite, will index the text present within them.

**Crawler:** See Spider.

**Directory:** A site containing links to other sites which are organized into various categories. Examples of directories are Yahoo!, Open Directory, LookSmart, NBCi etc.

**Doorway Page :** A page which has been specially created in order to get a high ranking in the search engines. Also called gateway page, bridge page, entry page etc.

**Dynamic Content :** Information in web pages which changes automatically, based on database or user information. Search engines will index dynamic content in the same way as static content unless the URL includes a ? mark. However, if the URL does include a ? mark, many search engines will ignore the URL.

**Entry Page :** See Doorway Page.

**Frames :** An HTML technique allowing web site designers to display two or more pages in the same browser window. Many search engines do not index framed web pages properly - they only index the text present in the NOFRAMES tag. Unless a web page which uses frames contains relevant content in the NOFRAMES tag, it is unlikely to get a high ranking in those search engines.

**Gateway Page :** See Doorway Page.

**Hallway Page :** A page containing links to various doorway pages.

**Heading Tags :** A paragraph style that is displayed in a large, bold typeface. Having text containing keywords in the Heading Tags can improve the search engine ranking of a page for those keywords.

**Hidden Text :** Text that is visible to the search engines but is invisible to humans. It is mainly accomplished by using text in the same color as the background color of the page. It is primarily used for the purpose of including extra keywords in the page without distorting the aesthetics of the page. Most search engines penalize web sites which use such hidden text.

**Image Map :** An image containing one or more invisible regions which are linked to other pages. If the image map is defined as a separate file, the search engines may not be able to index the pages to which that image map links. The way out is to have text hyperlinks to those pages in addition to the links from the image map. However, image maps defined within the same web page will generally not prevent search engines from indexing the other pages.

**Inktomi :** A database of sites used by many of the larger search engines like HotBot, <http://www.inktomi.com> MSN etc. For more information, see

**JavaScript :** A scripting language commonly used in web pages. Most search engines are unable to index these scripts properly.

**Keyword :** A word or phrase that you type in when you are searching for information in the search engines.

**Keyword Frequency :** Denotes how often a keyword appears in a page or in an area of a page. In general, higher the number of times a keyword appears in a page, higher its search engine ranking. However, repeating a keyword too often in a page can lead to that page being penalized for spamming.

**Keyword Prominence :** Denotes how close to the start of an area of a page that a keyword appears. In general, having the keyword closer to the start of an area will lead to an improvement in the search engine ranking of a page.

**Keyword Weight :** Denotes the number of times a keyword appears in a page as a percentage of all the other words in the page. In general, higher the weight of a particular keyword in a page, higher will be the search engine ranking of the page for that keyword. However, repeating a keyword too often in order to increase its weight can cause the page to be penalized by the search engines.

**Link Popularity :** The number of sites which link to a particular site. Many search engines use link popularity as a factor in determining the search engine ranking of a web site.

**Meta Description Tag :** The tag present in the header of a web page which is used to provide a short description of the contents of the page. Some search engines will display the text present in the Meta Description Tag when the page appears in the results of a search. Including keywords in the Meta Description Tag can improve the

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