ABOUT WEB DIRECTORIES

Why Directories Still Have SEO Benefits
Article By David Lopez, emarketing Consultant © 2010

Web directories have been around since the beginning of the World Wide Web in the early 1990's and are still recognized as an important channel for advertising businesses online. People often get web directories and search engines mixed up. The difference between a search engine like Google and web directories is that Google uses a web crawler to automatically index websites to show up in SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages), while a web directory organizes links under various categories and sub-categories.

How Can Submitting to Directories Help Your Website?

Here are some tips:

Get Indexed Quicker in the Search Engines

When search engines crawl directory websites any new entries within those directories also get crawled and indexed.
Directories that are deemed authoritative by search engines like Google are crawled regularly, finding new website links to index which are then ranked to appear in the search results. If you are launching a new website, you should seriously consider submitting to website directories to speed up the process of getting indexed into Google.

Increase Your Positions in Google

As many website owners should know, the more quality links to your website that you obtain, the more favourably Google will rank your website. Website Directories are a great source for one-way or reciprocal links. Well maintained directories will place your link in an appropriate category or sub-category, meaning that the directory's human moderators agree that your website is about what your website claims to be about and is useful to human beings.

Drive Traffic to Your Website

Having a listing on a popular, high traffic website directory can also bring you website traffic. You can usually judge whether a web directory receives much traffic from looking at its Alexa rank. This can be found simply by going to www.alexa.com and entering the directory's domain name into the search field. The lower the "Alexa rank" the more traffic the website gets. You can also get a "Country Rank" that indicates how much traffic it gets per country. If the Alexa rank is 100,000 or less, you can be confident that you will get some traffic from it.

How to Pick Good Directories from Bad Directories

Good website directories allow you to enter your preferred link title that best describes what your website is about. The link title, or anchor text, is an important factor in determining where your site appears for certain search terms in Google's search results.

Good website directories are human edited, meaning that links are not approved automatically. This means that a directory moderator will review your website before making the listing live and won't approve your website if it does not meet the directory's quality guidelines.

Many website directories that were previously actively moderated and regularly updated are now pretty much dormant. One way to determine this is to see if the directory shows link statistics on the number of links approved and the number of links awaiting review. If the number of links awaiting approval is vastly larger than the total number of published links, it's probably a waste of time submitting a listing.

Good website directories pass Google Page Rank through links to your website within their directory listings, but there are directories out there that prevent this from happening. They do this by using a tag in their links called a "nofollow attribute." If the link to your website contains this tag, it is rendered almost useless to you.

[If you are not sure how to check this, ask us (cr@woodhamwebwriter.co.uk) to check it for you.]

Good directory websites do not accept links to rubbish websites (link farms and websites with nothing but affiliate or advertising links) or to sites that are otherwise not useful to real humans. A directory worth its SEO salt should also not allow links that redirect to another site.

Good directory websites require manual submission. Avoid automated directory submission software because there is a good chance that any directories that accept automated software driven submission are not going benefit your website.