

WHY DOESN'T MY WEBSITE WORK? - CHECK LIST FOR EXISTING SITES PART ONE – ARE PEOPLE VISITING MY SITE?

INTRODUCTION

Use this check list to help you establish why your web site is not bringing you the business you expect. Keep in mind that there are two things that have to be achieved to get business through your site.


First, you have to get relevant visitors to your site - this is different from getting traffic. There's a lot of talk on the Internet about increasing traffic, but getting visited by people who aren't interested in your goods and services is of no value, indeed these irrelevant visitors could end up costing you money. Lets find out if people are coming to your site.

WHAT DO YOUR STATS TELL YOU?

All good hosting companies should be able to provide you with statistics. (If you don't know how to access statistics for your site, contact your hosting company and ask for instructions. If they cannot provide you with visitor statistics then you should change to a service that does. Without stats you have no way of measuring the value of your work.)

What you need to check first on your Stats is how many visitors you get per week. Then look for the amount of time spent per visit. If the majority of the visits last for no more than a couple of seconds you should subtract those "irrelevant" visits from the total visits figure. If you have your web site set as your home page remember to deduct your visits from the visits figure as well.

	TOTAL VISITS	NUMBER OF VISITS THAT LAST FOR LESS THAN 5 SECONDS. (IRRELEVANT VISITS)	VISITS YOU HAVE MADE TO THE SITE. (IRRELEVANT VISITS)	TOTAL RELEVANT VISITORS/WEEK
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				
Average				

 By averaging the figures from four weeks you will get a good idea of your current base. You should also record these figures on your Web Assets "Stats Tracker". (This will set you up for tracking the success of your work.) For more information on stats and how they can help you please see the Web Assets Resource [Statistics Packages and How to Use Them](#).

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Search Engine Optimisation & Website Marketing

Checklist for Existing Sites Part 1 Are People visiting my Site.doc

IS YOUR SITE LISTED IN THE SEARCH ENGINES?

This is not difficult to establish and indeed it is not necessary for you to check every search engine. If you are targeting the Australian market here are the search engines you should check. To see if you are listed, go to each site and search for your domain name. At this stage don't worry about looking for your site using keywords or phrases.

SEARCH ENGINE	URL	LISTED	NOT LISTED
Google	www.google.com		
Nine MSN	www.ninemsn.com.au		
LookSmart	www.looksmart.com.au		
Yahoo	www.yahoo.com.au		
Alta Vista	www.altavista.com		
Dog Pile	www.dogpile.com		

 Mark on your Web Assets Stats Tracker what search engines are listing your site.

HAS YOUR SITE GOT KEYWORDS AND DESCRIPTIONS?

To view your keywords and description you need to view the source code for your site. You do this with your browser. Follow these instructions:

1. Ensure you are connected to the Internet and surf to your web site.
2. Click on the View option on the top tool bar of your browser.
3. Select "Source". Notepad or your preferred text editor will open displaying the source of the page. Often you will find the keywords and description in the first paragraph or two, if you can't see it click on the Edit option from the toolbar of the notepad window that is displaying the code. Select Find and type in "meta"; searching for meta will help you to find all the meta information. Keywords and Description should look like this:

Meta keywords =

Meta description =

YOUR HOME PAGE	YES	NO
Does it have keywords?		
Are the keywords relevant to your site and the services and products you provide?		
Does it have a description?		
Is the description persuasive? Does it entice the visitor to visit your site?		
Does the description provide accurate information on what a visitor can expect to find on your site?		


- Each (html) page of your website **can** have its own relevant keywords and description.
- Each important page of your web site **should** have its own customised keywords and description.


If your site has irrelevant keywords and descriptions, or worse still does not have any keywords or descriptions you should go back to your developer and discuss this. If you built the site yourself you should refer to the Web Assets Resource [Everything You Need To Know About Meta Information](#) .

OTHER FACTORS TO WATCH OUT FOR

There are three common reasons why otherwise good looking sites fail to attract visitors from search engines. They are:

1. Some content management systems may not allow for, or include keywords and descriptions. If this is the case you should get back to the developer of the content management system and ask them how they can help you add keywords and descriptions to your site. For more information on Content Management Systems please reference Web Assets Resource [The Pro's and Con's of Proprietary Content Management Tools](#).
2. If a website is created just out of images or Flash, having good keywords and descriptions will have little consequence to search engines, as they will not be able to index any text from your web site. This is a very common problem and can only be addressed by redeveloping your site using text, (along with Flash and other images). For more information on Flash please reference Web Assets Resource [Is a Flash Site Really That Flash?](#)
3. Your web site is just too slow for people to bother with. If you have particularly large images, or if you host your site with a free service overseas you may be putting your site beyond the reach of your market. To test this you can do a number of things.
 - a) Try to access your site as one of your target market would; i.e. ensure you are not looking at files stored in your browser cache instead of the files stored on the web server. To do this you will need to remove all temporary Internet files from your browser. Go to your browser, click on the Tools Option of the menu. Select Internet Options and click on the button Delete files under the Temporary Internet files Heading. *Note that some ISPs also cache web pages.
 - b) Ask a friend to visit your site from their computer and get them to tell you about how long it takes to download.
 - c) Visit www.netmechanic.com and do a free five page test on your site. This will not only tell you the actual download speed of the pages, it will point out any images that are too large.

 ISPs cache web pages because it saves them money. If you have doubts about whether you have downloaded files from your web host or your ISP you may want to do a quick test. Make a subtle change to one of your web pages, then see if you can see that change. If you can't it is very likely that you are looking at files stored at your ISP. You can call your ISP to find out how long they hold their cache for before refreshing. (It is likely that the people on the support desk will not know anything about this so you should ask to speak with the Network or Systems Manager.)

 Use the following page to record the keywords and descriptions on your web site. Print off as many copies of the page as you need to record the status of all your web pages.

YOUR HOME PAGE	YES	No
Does it have keywords?		
Are the keywords relevant to your site and the services and products you provide?		
Does it have a description?		
Is the description persuasive? Does it entice the visitor to visit your site?		
Does the description provide accurate information on what a visitor can expect to find on your site?		

YOUR PAGE	YES	No
Does it have keywords?		
Are the keywords relevant to your site and the services and products you provide?		
Does it have a description?		
Is the description persuasive? Does it entice the visitor to visit your site?		
Does the description provide accurate information on what a visitor can expect to find on your site?		

YOUR PAGE	YES	No
Does it have keywords?		
Are the keywords relevant to your site and the services and products you provide?		
Does it have a description?		
Is the description persuasive? Does it entice the visitor to visit your site?		
Does the description provide accurate information on what a visitor can expect to find on your site?		

YOUR PAGE	YES	No
Does it have keywords?		
Are the keywords relevant to your site and the services and products you provide?		
Does it have a description?		
Is the description persuasive? Does it entice the visitor to visit your site?		
Does the description provide accurate information on what a visitor can expect to find on your site?		