

## Pivotal Steps Before Website Traffic

By [Mike Burke](#)

Published 01/3/2006

By now, you probably already have the theme of your website established, your keywords picked and your website ready to go live. You're thinking that you'll submit your site to the search engines, sit back and see how much traffic the search engines will send you, right?

STOP! There are many different avenues you can take to drive traffic to your site but they should only be taken after you make the search engines your first priority. The search engines should be your foundation. They'll always send you a certain amount of traffic if you have a high page rank.

### **IMPORTANT!**

Your website must be 'set up' for a high page rank in the search engines and it's important to do it 'before' you submit your site for the first time. Here's the reason why:

Usually, after you submit your website to the search engines for the first time, your website will be 'spidered' fairly quickly and hopefully your site will be listed on one of the top pages.

Your website may not get 'spidered' again for months so if you make changes to optimize your site, you may not see your changes take effect for quite a while. You could be stuck on a back page, if any page at all, for a very long time.

Without getting into the mechanics of designing your website, here are the basics of setting up your website to be search engine friendly.

THE FIRST STEP is to establish the main keyword for your site. This is the word or phrase that you want people to type into the search engines to find your website. It's important to have your site focused around your main keyword.

Let's say you have a site dedicated to 'building your own home' so we'll use 'home building' as our main keyword example.

THE NEXT STEP is to create a title for your website and to place it in the 'title tag' of your site. The 'title tag' should be the first tag in the 'head' of your site and it's important because many search engines use the contents of the 'title tag' as the title of the listing. They also look for keywords in the title and your main keyword should be the first words in the title.

Generally, your title should be no more than 40 characters and, again, it should begin with your main keyword. Try to avoid using 'stop words' in your title. Stop words are transition words such as - and, but, or, for, with, etc.

Here's a possible title using our example main keyword 'home building' - Home Building - Home Construction Plans

Notice our main keyword is first, the title is less than 40 characters (39), there are no stop words and we managed to sneak in 3 secondary keywords - home construction, construction plans and home construction plans. Clever huh?

THE NEXT STEP is to create a 'keywords meta tag'. This is where you list all the keywords you want to use for your website starting with your 'main keyword'. A good rule of thumb is to use about 20 keywords and your main keyword should be contained in about half of them.

Using our example keyword 'home building' our keywords could be - home building, home construction, home building plans, home building cost, construction plans, etc.

Notice I didn't use our main keyword 'home building' twice in a row. For example - home building, home building plans, etc. Search engines might see this as spam and it could hurt your ranking.

THE NEXT STEP is to create a 'description meta tag'. This is where you describe your website and, again, you should start with your main keyword.

Keep your description to about 150 characters, use as few 'stop words' as you can and sprinkle in as many secondary keywords as possible. Make your description interesting because search engines often use the contents in your 'description meta tag' as the description of your website in the listing.

THE NEXT STEP is to use your keywords often in the body of your website. Make sure your 'main keyword' is somewhere in the beginning and at the end of the body of your page.

It's a good idea to use your main keyword in an 'h1' tag and a few of your secondary keywords in an 'h2' tag. This tells the search engines that you put importance on your keywords.

It's also a good idea to underline your main keyword no more than once and to use bold text for your main keyword no more than once.

Although there are other factors that determine your position in the search engines, having the basics of what search engines look for will give you a much better chance of making that illusive first page and driving consistent website traffic to your site.

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Mike Burke is the author of numerous articles and has an affection for website marketing. Learn how to drive tons of targeted website traffic to your site without spending a dime on advertising. Visit us at <http://www.starttheprofits.com>

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