

Net Results
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Welcome

Now this is summer! I couldn't come out with my summer issue until the weather fully cooperated. After weeks of variable weather, the sun is here to stay for the next couple of months. I've decided.

This is certainly the time of year to be thinking about holidays and just being outside. But, since it's also a slow time of year for many businesses, this is the perfect time to be tackling the stuff that you didn't have time for during the really busy seasons. While I strongly believe that it's important to keep up with some form of marketing no matter how busy you get, summer is generally a good time to take on the big marketing projects, such as starting or revamping your web site. Hey, you can even do some of the planning while sitting outside, sipping a cold drink!

FAQ: Do I Need to Use Text Links in My Menu?

I should clarify one thing before answering this: We're talking about actual HTML text here, as opposed to text graphics – i.e., ones generated using something like Photoshop.

Most menus these days use one or the other form of text links. Some combine them with icons, but almost all have text for the visitor to read, rather than just guess what the icons represent. That's one reason to use at least some form of a text menu.

Now, it's true that search engines can't read graphics, so if your text menu is made up of text graphics, Google et al won't be able to tell what they say, which could hurt the ranking of the pages being linked to. So, if you do use some form of a graphic menu system, make sure to use the 'alt' attribute with each graphic, so the search engines know what the pages linked to are about.

The other thing I highly recommend is adding a duplicate pure HTML text menu, at the bottom of each page. This is a good idea, even if you are using a pure HTML text main menu, as it saves your visitors from having to scroll back to the top of the page to jump to another page.

Featured Article: Advantages of Splitting Up Long Pages

In creating pages for your web site, there's a balancing act you'll likely become involved with: writing for your visitors (potential clients) or writing for the search engines (Google, etc.). If you focus solely on the former, you'll have great content, but not many people who will actually see it. Focus on the latter and you may have many people finding your site, but few who stick around long enough to do anything (i.e., take action toward making a purchase or contacting you).

In selling your services or products on the web, you are certainly wise to elaborate on their benefits, in detail, in a compelling manner, with plenty of testimonials. If done properly, this often requires a fair bit of copy (text).

If you offer several products or services, theoretically each of those can have their own detailed page, which the search engines can find and index separately. This means there are many more ways that potential customers can find your site. It also might mean that Google will consider your site more "important" thus bumping up the site's rankings.

Here's a practical example:

Say you are a massage therapist, who offers several type of massage: acupressure, reflexology, shiatsu, Swedish massage, etc. Your site could have one page ("Services"), which talks about all of these types of massage that you offer. If someone were to do a Google search for "massage" and your geographical location, that page should appear in the results pages. But, it might not rank very high, especially if there is a lot of competition in your geographic location.

But... if you split each of your individual services into separate, detailed pages – linked either from the menu or from a main Services page – then you would have one page talking specifically about acupressure, one talking about reflexology, one talking about shiatsu, one about Swedish massage, and so on. By "detailed" I don't necessarily mean that they have to be very long. Even a couple descriptive paragraphs, the cost, perhaps a

photo, and a “call to action” for people who want to book an appointment for that type of massage would suffice.

What you’ve got now are several “ins” to your site. So, if someone does a search for “Swedish massage” plus your geographical region, that page of your site should appear (hopefully, fairly highly) on the search engine results pages. Same for each of the types of massage you offer.

See what’s happening? Instead of one way for potential clients to find you, you have several. Google will see each of these specific types of massage pages as a specialized page, so they’ll have high weight for their specific keywords. If you dilute your page by talking about all your services, that page won’t get much weight, if any, for the specific types of massage you offer. Individual, detailed massage pages should.

There’s no reason why you can’t also include on your site a main Services page, speaking in general terms about the types of massage you offer, with links to each of the detailed massage pages. It’s always better to have too much (even repeated) information than not enough. Just make sure to have as many of those well-written, individual detailed pages as you can.

Try this with each type of product or service you offer and I’m willing to bet you’ll get a lot more quality traffic to your site.

About nrichmedia

nrichmedia creates innovative and unique web sites and other multimedia for ethical and socially responsible businesses and organizations. We also offer web site maintenance, CD-ROM production, and more.

nrichmedia was founded by Nathaniel Richman in 2000. Nathaniel graduated from the Vancouver Film School with a Certificate of Recommendation in Multimedia Studies in 1997 and has been working in the web design and new media industry ever since. He previously received a Bachelor of Mathematics degree (Honours Actuarial Science) from the University of Waterloo and worked in the pension consulting field.

Nathaniel works with several other designers and programmers, according to the needs of the project, to provide the client with the most professionally designed web site or presentation possible.

"It has been my distinct pleasure to have commissioned nrichmedia to design and implement three new web sites for organizations I have been connected with over the last decade.

I have returned to nrichmedia each time I have required web development services because of the professionalism, knowledge and creative flair of Nathaniel and his team of associates. I have also chosen to return to nrichmedia because of the unbelievably positive feedback I have received from my employers and colleagues on the results of that association.

I have certainly looked good in the eyes of my superiors because of my choice of web designer and the reasonable costs that I have incurred for such a service. I highly recommend nrichmedia for both the inexperienced as well as the seasoned web developer."

- Keith Liddiard, Partner/Technical Advisor, Premier Soccer Experiences
(www.premiersoccerexp.com)

To learn more about nrichmedia's services, view our online portfolio, and read glowing testimonials from many satisfied clients, please visit www.nrichmedia.com.

Web Site Design and Promotion Blog

For plenty of tips and tricks on designing, marketing, and promoting your web site, have a look at www.websitedesignandpromotion.com, a blog co-authored by nrichmedia and Juliet Austin.

Recent postings include:

[Getting Your Site Indexed in Search Engines Before It's Launched](#)

[Search Engine Lingo](#)

[The "How To..." Headline](#)

[Websites More Convincing Than Celebrities](#)

Feel free to place a comment on any of the posts there. It's an easy way to get a link to your site, which can increase your exposure and help your site's search engine rankings.

Charitable Causes

nrichmedia donates 5% of proceeds on all projects of \$500 and above to charitable organizations. We are pleased to have supported and continue to support several worthy causes. To see a list of the organizations we support, please visit www.nrichmedia.com/causes.htm.

The Not-to-be Missed Link: Zerofootprint

www.zerofootprint.net is an excellent resource for green products, green events, and green stories. The tagline, "Connecting people who care about the environment" pretty much says it all.

Archives

To view previous editions of Net Results, visit www.nrichmedia.com/archives.htm.

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