

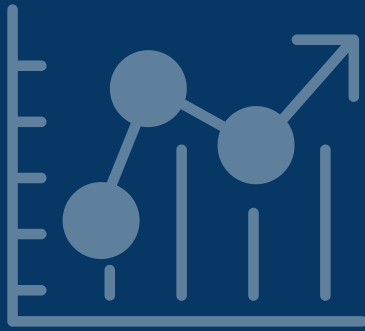
SEO Secrets and Common Sense with Stephan Spencer

www.marketingspeak.com/343-A



10 SEO Myths

- Don't use Google Analytics because Google will spy on you and use the information against you.** This one comes straight from the conspiracy theorists. Google has made numerous assurances that they aren't using your traffic or conversion data to profile you as a spammer.
- Having an XML Sitemap will boost your Google rankings.** In any event, Google will use your sitemaps file for discovery and potentially as a canonicalization hint if you have duplicate content. It won't give a URL any more "juice" because you include it in your sitemaps.xml, even if you assign it a high priority level.
- Meta tags will boost your rankings.** Unfortunately, optimizing your meta keywords is a complete waste of time. Spammers have abused them so much that the engines haven't put any stock in them for years. What about other meta tags – such as meta description, meta author, and meta robots – you ask? None of the various meta tags are given any real weight in the rankings algorithm.
- It's a good practice to include a meta robots tag specifying index, follow.** This is a corollary to the myth immediately preceding. It's unnecessary. Search engines all assume they are allowed to index and follow unless you specify otherwise.
- You can keep search engines from indexing pages linked-to with Javascript links.** However, there are many documented cases of Google following JavaScript-based links. Google engineers have stated that they are crawling JavaScript links more and more. Of course, don't rely on Google parsing your JavaScript links, but don't assume it will choke on them either.



"If you have a secret weapon, namely somebody who understands the ins and outs, the science, and the art of SEO, then you can leverage it."

-STEPHAN SPENCER

- Googlebot doesn't read CSS.** You'd better believe Google scans CSS for spam tactics like hidden divs.
- You can boost the Google rankings of your home page for a targeted term by including that term in the anchor text of internal links.** Testing done by SEOmoz found that the anchor text of your "Home" links is largely ignored. Use the anchor text "Home" or "San Diego real estate" – it's of no consequence either way.
- It's important for your rankings that you update your home page frequently (e.g. daily.)** Plenty of stale home pages rank just fine, thank you very much.
- Linking out (such as to Google.com) helps rankings.** Not true. Unless perhaps you're hoarding all your PageRank by not linking out at all – in which case, that looks unnatural. It's the other way around, i.e. getting links to your site – that's what makes the difference.
- H1 tags are a crucial element for SEO.** However, research by SEOmoz shows little correlation between the presence of H1 tags and rankings. Still, you should write good H1 headings, but do it primarily for usability and accessibility, not so much for SEO.

For the complete interview, transcript, and important links, visit www.marketingspeak.com/343-A

Thank you!