

Q: What is the criteria for getting the 'more results' for the 1st search result? It's not just appearing first and having a sitemap recognized by Google because I've seen both for a given site with no 'more results', so what is it?

A (MattD): Gabe, are you asking about Sitelinks?

Q: One of my clients has a thumbnail next to their serp result instead of the sitelinks that were there before....what gives?

A (MattD): Sitelinks and Universal Search results are query-specific.

Q: Is Website Tools verifying site not working? i've tried verifying my site and it just doesn't work

A (John Mueller): The team is working on something with verification, it seems to be affecting some sites.

Q: The first result returning specific sitelinks below just after 'more results'.

A (MattD): Sitelinks are purely algorithmic, you can find some more information here:

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=4...>

Q: How is it that Search results get indexed

A (Susan Moskwa): Any URL that is reachable by our crawler has the potential to get crawled and/or indexed, including the URL of a search results page.

Q: Google recently added support for video sitemaps. When will Google offer support for audio sitemaps, so hardworking podcasters everywhere can have their files indexed? ;)

A (Reid): I don't know myself about Google support for audio sitemaps.

Feel free to post this feature request in our help group:

http://groups.google.com/group/Google_Webmaster_Help-Requests/topics

Q: I wanna know about social media optimization! what is the Google opinion about that?

A (John Mueller): Social media is a great way of attracting relevant visitors!

Q: About SiteLinks, what would be your advice to get results appear. I see them in the GWC, but not in SERPS

A (Susan Moskwa):

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=47334>

Q: In the webmaster tools, it shows the Top Search queries. However, over the past 3 months, these have changed when I looked back at the results. I.e. It showed results in week 1 that then didn't show when they went to week 2. Is that intentionally done?

A (Reid): Hey - thanks for the question. This data changes on a week-by-week basis, since users are finding your website using different searches each week. Does that make sense?

Q: If RSS feeds have near identical content as HTML pages, might that cause duplicate content penalties?

A (John Mueller): RSS feeds do not need to be indexed, you can block indexing through your robots.txt

Q: Would you recommend nofollowing the sorting links?

A (John Mueller): If those links lead to duplicate content, you can either add a nofollow to the links or block indexing through meta tags or a robots.txt entry.

Q: how does the search engine treat an https (secure) page versus an http

A (John Mueller): We treat https the same as http -- however, https

puts a bigger load on your server, so you might want to check that it can handle it on your side.

Q: Let me ask other question. If the website has no ERRORS and is 100% Search engines friendly, what do you think is the next step. Just submit the website general business directories?

A (Susan Moskwa): Google's webmaster guidelines are a good place to start; they have recommendations for content and getting the word out about your site:

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=35769>

Q: my client has the same issue as this: search for (sitename).com in google and you'll see the same thing

A (MattD): Thanks for the example. This site is triggering an image as a Universal result. Both Universal and Sitelinks are determined algorithmically, so you can't opt-in to either. You can opt out of Sitelinks in Webmaster Tools if that helps the situation.

Q: We are a comparison shopping website, (sitename).com, and we power the ecommerce section of 4 different sites, i.e.

marketplace.healthcentral.com those sites have identical content to our main site, can this get me penalized?

A (Susan Moskwa): Unfortunately we can't do individual reviews for every site, but you could start here:

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=66359>

Q: Confusion about robots.txt vs rel=nofollow. I don't want to pass PageRank to my Privacy Policy. Suppose I already blocked /privacy/ in my robots.txt. Do I also have to use rel=nofollow when linking internally to /privacy/ to prevent the pass of PageRank?

A (Susan Moskwa): Pages that are blocked by robots.txt can still have

and pass PageRank, so if you don't want that page to get PageRank from your Privacy Policy page, you should nofollow that link.

Q: How can I get better results in the image search?

A (Reid): Hi - that's a pretty broad question. Maile will be talking about image search in a few minutes, so I hope that will be helpful.

Q: Kind of depends on what duplicate content means -- if the sort is different on a results screen, different products/items will appear on a given page...but overall it's the same set of products as the default sort.

A (John Mueller): If the content is generally the same but just in a different order, I don't think it would provide much original value in the search results for the user.

Q: I wanna know about duplicate content inside blogs. about categories, archives, authors, have the same content of the article. in my webpages im blocking using robots txt, i blocked categories and archives. is it good?

A (MattD): If your content is the original, I wouldn't recommend blocking it. If you have content fed in from another site, it might be smart to use robots.txt as you've said. I'd recommend taking your site to the Webmaster Help Group as well.

Q: Can I ask a video sitemap question? We submitted a video sitemap back on Feb 19th. In Webmaster Tools, total URL is 11k, but Indexed URLs are 0. Of the 115 sitemaps off the index, 2 have warnings. Do video sitemaps just take a long time to get indexed?

A (John Mueller): Video sitemaps take some time to get approved -- it can take up to 2-3 months.

Q: does a noindex, follow page pass pagerank?

A (Evan): Noindex pages accrue Google PR, and can pass Google PR - even though as a page in its own right, it does not exist in the SERP's

Q: What are your views on image replacement versus using alt= on an image. Is it a bad thing if used legitimately?

A (Susan Moskwa): There are many high-quality sites that use image replacement techniques (such as Fahrner image replacement) to provide a better user experience. If you're using this technique in a legitimate way to benefit your users, you shouldn't have problems.

Q: Would there be a problem with doing a large number of 301 redirects at once?

A (Susan Moskwa): I would recommend against doing "chained" redirects (a page redirects multiple times).

A (Susan Moskwa): If you're talking about moving an entire site, or a large amount of content on your site, you might want to start by redirecting a small amount of content and see how to move goes before redirecting a large portion of your site

Q: Why's he using ALT TEXT on text at the bottom of his site - is that wrong? (sitename).com

A (Evan): Hi, the site Wysz was talking about was learningguitarnow.com

Q: I setup a webmaster account and submitted my url. I also setup a Sitemap.xml file. Google reports that the url is indexed and the Sitemap file is OK yet when I google search my url the result is "No Documents Found". What have I done wrong???

A (John Mueller): It can take a bit for sites to get indexed, you

might want to post in the webmaster help groups for detailed suggestions.

Q: So duplicate content can cause page rank issues? I thought you were able to filter duplicate content?

A (JonathanSimon): If you have mutiple URLs for the same content within your site, each URL could be attracting it's own links. It would be better to instead have one page for everyone to link to thus consolidating the value of all the external links.

Q: For the Guitar lesson site, shoule they 301 the learnguitarnow.com/index.shtml page to learnguitarnow.com?

A (John Mueller): If that URL is not linked, it should not need to be redirected. If it's linked, it would be best to remove the links, a 301 could help to speed up the removal.

Q: I was hoping y'all would address the use of display:none and some basic guidelines for it's use

A (JonathanSimon): As long as the use of display:none is not abused to selectively hide content from site visitors while at the same time showing it to search engine crawlers, it should fine to use this.

Q: I see nofollow links in my GWC. Why is that ?

A (John Mueller): That's by design.

Q: I have alread reviewed that, however I have problems in which my websites are not considered for higher ranking, ever after following all the steps on

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=35769>

A (John Mueller): You might want to post about it in detail in the help groups.

Q: So, how google see websites what receive a lot of good links, by natural way but use rel="nofollow" in all of its external links?

A (Evan): Hi, could you clarify? Good Site A links to Good Site B, and Good Site B has rel="nofollow" links?

Q: Please provide opinion on Hackersafe and Authorize.net. Should a retail store use these services?

A (Susan Moskwa): I would recommend testing whether using these services, or a "trust badge" (such as "secured by HackerSafe"), makes a difference in your sales.

A (John Mueller): if those services provide value to your visitors without breaking any of our webmaster guidelines, then that can be a good thing for your site.

Q: Also can we get any comments on paid link re-inclusion process? Once the paid links are removed is the next step Google re-inclusion through Google Webmaster Tools?

A (John Mueller): Yes, a reconsideration request is the next logical step once everything is cleaned up. Please include all details in your request so that we can handle it appropriately.

Q: Related to the robots.txt issue - if you've placed a no robots tag on every page of a site and a disallow for all in the robots.txt file, but the home page still shows up in the top 10 for a competitive keyword, how else can you get the site removed?

A (John Mueller): If you are blocking crawling with robots.txt, we won't be able to see the robots meta tag. If you want the URL removed, it would be better to allow crawling (not block it in a robots.txt) so that the meta tag can be read.

Q: would you suggest subdomains or folders for state specific content for a US site? i.e. az.domain.com or www.domain.com/az ?

A (John Mueller): Both work.

Q: What are the benefits of submitting a sitemap if our site is already crawled well by Google? In other words, what are we missing out if we don't submit a sitemap?

A (John Mueller): By submitting a Sitemap we see which URLs have been added and changed. We can crawl those earlier than if we had to accidentally "stumble" upon them.

Q: Is there any major issue with using CMS, e.g. Joomla?

A (John Mueller): If the CMS is compliant with the normal web standard it should be no problem. However, each tool is only as strong as the person using it -- all CMS can create great sites and they can create bad sites.

A (MattD): From personal experience, CMS packages are great, though you will want to make sure you customize the templates and page titles so your snippets are unique.

Q: Any chance that Google will develop its own directory that folks can directly submit their website to?

A (Evan): Hi, we use the ODP (open directory project), to learn more go to dmoz.org

Q: any pros cons around using h1 tags. I like to add them from a usability perspective (for instance on a product detail page)

A (John Mueller): If you can provide context to your content by using headers, by all means use them.

Q: are we able to listen to a recording of this conference ?

A (Evan): Unfortunately we do not have an audio recording of this chat. There should be some people blogging about it ;).

Q: Is it because I'm French ?

A (Evan): Hi, there his a high volume of questions, we did not forget you :) (btw I love France), could you ask your quesiton again?

Q: Restated Q: What can a webmaster do to if re-inclusion requests don't work, Google Bot isn't spidering the home page but all else, no webmaster tools errors and we cannot find any problems? Buy a new domain and start over?

A (Reid): I'd say that you should try posting your URL in the Google Webmaster Help group - Googlers and other webmasters can help you troubleshoot your website.

Q: Is it worth it to put a <meta name="description"> or not?

A (Reid): Hey - meta name description tags can be useful for improving snippets in search results. Check out our blog post about it:

<http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/2007/09/improve-snippets-w...>

Q: Thanks Susan, but I'm actually asking about internal links pointing *to* /privacy/, not links from /privacy/. Will internal links pass PR to /privacy/ even if /privacy/ is blocked by robots.txt?

A (Susan Moskwa): Yes.

Q: Yes, I've been trying for 2 years to get a listing, but there is no editor for my category... so things have been slow. I guess I thought that Google might be a bit quicker in adding entries. That said, I've had good luck in getting my site listed.

A (Susan Moskwa): It sounds like you're talking about Google Directory, which our team doesn't really work with. If you're

referring to Google search results, there isn't an "editor" process to get in. Check out our Webmaster Guidelines for help getting into search results.

Q: My site dropped out of the rankings for any term with a date in it (2009 widgets) but didn't lose any ground for main non-dated keywords. A lot of our title tags have dates in them, could this be an over-optimization penalty?

A (John Mueller): There are many factors involved in ranking -- for details, you may want to ask the experts in the Webmaster Help groups.

Q: I want to make some case conversion of my URLs in order to have all them in minor case and avoid duplicates, , but I am afraid of overloading the server with 301 redirection. Any idea to make efficient redirects?

A (John Mueller): In general even a large number of 301 redirects will not be a problem in the long run. One way you can help that is by using a Sitemap file.

Q: Will Universal Image search results REPLACE links to sites? I.e. Instead of 10 sites plus images, will we see 1 image, 1 video and 8 sites?

A (Susan Moskwa): We're constantly testing what works well in our search results, including whether different types of universal results are "additive" or will replace one of the 10 web results. For now I'd say, stay tuned. :)

Q: Thanks for the reply John, do you know which is the BEST place to post any problem?

A (John Mueller):

http://groups.google.com/group/Google_Webmaster_Help/topics?start=

is where the official Webmaster Help group is located.

Q: since last 15 day google crawling was very slow as well as update, is any upcoming happening?

A (ramya): Hi, Can you post your question on the webmaster help group

Q: Regarding subdomains, I understand google can determine country codes from the URL, e.g. jp.mysite.com. What about japan.mysite.com?

A (John Mueller): No those are not recognized automatically. You can however use Webmaster Tools to set geotargeting for it.

Q: are you recording this conference for later reference ? i missed some of the advice on my website (www.(sitename).eu).

A (Adam Lasnik): Hi, we weren't able to record the audio, unfortunately, but I believe at least one blogger was doing a transcript :)

Q: With regards to the paid links question above about asking for inclusion, would it be the same to nofollow the paid links instead of just having them removed?

A (John Mueller): Yes, if you had paid links and added rel=nofollow to them, you can explain that in your reconsideration request.

Q: We have a regional sudomain, canada.domain.com (we don't have domain.ca). We set the geo location to Canada in Google Webmaster Tools a few weeks ago, but site is still not indexed as a Canadian site. How long does it take? Any other steps we should take?

A (John Mueller): This can take some time to take affect. If the setting is set, you should be fine in the long run.

Q: Hi Reid, I actually submitted it in the help group a while ago. I will have to see if it was in the exact group you mention.

A (Reid): Sounds great - thanks for the question Caleb.

Q: where do I access webmaster help groups

A (Jessica): Hi Gary, Thanks for your question. You can start by going to <http://www.google.com/webmasters/> and going to the discussion group.

A (Adam Lasnik): These are linked from www.google.com/webmasters

Q: Concerned about div tags. Any harm if they are used as a space saving technique and used completely legitimately

A (MattD): There should be no harm in extra div tags if they are being used legitimately. Let me know if this doesn't answer the question.

Q: One of my sites was severely penalized in Google though it respects all the guidelines. I filed a reconsideration request and it was quickly restored though I didn't change anything at my end. The problem has happened thrice in 3 months.. Can I prevent this ?

A (MattD): Reconsideration requests are the right path. You may want to set up a Webmaster Tools account to check the message center if you haven't already.

Q: Thank you Jonathan, I ask because we are doing a redesign now and are using it in our navs rather heavily

A (JonathanSimon): sure np

Q: Is it possible (sitename).com is being penalized on Google.com by the geo-relevancy component due to the site being hosted on servers in germany, japan, and the US? Load balancing determines which data center handles the session.

A (John Mueller): By setting the geotargeting in webmaster tools the server location will be less of an impact. We understand the need for load sharing across locations.

Q: Our site is CSS based, content pages are heirarchy based, using 2 <h1> tags, 2 <h2> tags and then <h3> tags for additional content sections to organize content sections. Will we be penalized using this approach?

A (John Mueller): That's a great way to provide context to your content. Keep it up!

Q: How about <meta name="keywords">? Worth it? Or just let the search engines get it from the content?

A (John Mueller): We do not read the keywords meta tag -- but if you want to use it for yourself, feel free to keep them.

Q: John, I work for a site where I think a competitor is trying to buy links "for us" to try and get your google bomb algo to kick in...what can I do about this?

A (John Mueller): That's generally no problem as we always look at the bigger picture and try to assess the intent.

Q: Does Google rank "static" URLs better than dynamic URLs? Ex. /q-digital-camera.html vs /search?q=digital+camera

A (John Mueller): There's no preference.

Q: Is there any process for confirming a TBPR penalty? Working with authority site which recently went PR7 -> PR3

A (John Mueller): If you know that the site did not comply with the webmaster guidelines, you can clean that up and file a reconsideration request.

Q: When can available option pay per call in India

A (ramya): You can post your question with respect to Pay per call on <http://groups.google.com/group/adwords-help,they> should be able to help you better

Q: OK here goes. This site www.(sitename).com - starts out with an optional flash splash page which redirects (in flash) to the proper homepage whihc with js on is a /home/. With js off you dont' get the splash flash and the page displayed at the root url

A (John Mueller): That should not be a problem :-).

Q: Does google better understand a page if the url contains the major keywords the page is about?

A (Evan): If the subject of the page is already adequately covered, then search engines will understand. Having the keywords in the URL will help your users understand what to expect on the page.

Q: is the same as would be at /hom/ which is not accessible except though js.

A (John Mueller): If users can link to it, they probably will sooner or later. In general it's no problem if it's just a duplicate.

Q: Do you guys think this could be considered deceptive cloaking or in any way bad?

A (Susan Moskwa): If it's treating **all** user-agents without Flash/JS in the same way (e.g. crawlers and human users who are browsing with limited abilities), it shouldn't be a problem

Q: Should we use alt and title tags, or just alt tags, on images?

A (John Mueller): You can use both, since the title tag is shown as a tool tip in Firefox, but the alt text is more of a replacement for the image -- they're two different things, which can be used at the same time.

Q: would including the img url in the site map help?

A (John Mueller): Yes, but it will not pass as much context for image search as an image that is embedded in a HTML page.

Q: Our site has a number of categories and within each category products are shown 9 thumbnails at a time. It seems that our category names come up great in the search results, but products below the first nine in a category do not appear well.

A (JonathanSimon): I've seen similar situations as this where the problem turned out to be how the product pages were linked using a Javascript method instead of a standard HREF link. Another thing to consider is if the product pages have unique content..check web for dups

Q: again with asking for inclusion, would you need to wait until Google has recrawled any/all sites you have had paid links changed on before asking? And how long would you expect to wait to see results from asking for inclusion?

A (John Mueller): If you have cleaned up the links to your site as much as possible, make sure that you detail what you did and file a reconsideration request. However, make sure that all of your site complies with all of the guidelines beforehand.

Q: For top menus displayed on all pages, we load the CSS menu at the end of the page in a hidden div and set to the proper div after loading for help search engines not see the common content first. Is this OK ?

A (John Mueller): That's fine, if it works for the users and if the content shown / hidden is not misleading to search engines.

Q: Should you only submit for re-inclusion if your site has been completely banned from the index? or can you submit if you've seen a huge drop in rankings but you're still in the index? What if only a few pages got dropped?

A (Susan Moskwa): You can request reconsideration at any time, if

you've seen a sudden and significant change in your site's performance.

Q: Does using an image caching/delivery network, like Akamai, where the host domain of the image is different than the web page, a problem for Google image search?

A (John Mueller): The host domain does not have to be the same as the web page - it'll still be indexed in the context of the web page.

Q: What about the image enhancement function in Google Webmaster Tools, how does this help?

A (MattD): Maile is answering you right now. No automatic boost, but a program to help us understand images better. :)

Q: can subdomains increase my visibility

A (MattD): pages on subdomains should not increase visibility any more than pages on subdirectories. It's more of an organization (and sometimes navigation) preference.

Q: I noticed that in Google News, the thumbnail is from a different site to the news content. How does Google determine what image thumbnail is paired with a google news entry?

A (John Mueller): Google News has a completely different setup than normal web search. The help center has more information on Google news and News Sitemap files.

Q: i have been scrambling my brains to find a better way to transition without visible query string parameters

A (JonathanSimon): You might want to consider using hidden HTML input fields

Q: I mean, we load menus at end of page, move to top of page via script. Is this OK ?

A (John Mueller): Should be ok, if it's not misleading.

Q: Should I rather have HTML drop downs to all the 50 categories on my website, or should i rather have the top 5 category links on my front page

A (Susan Moskwa): I'd recommend thinking about it from a user perspective. If you were a new visitor to your site, which method of organization would be easier for you to use?

Q: Just on that last point about optimized urls...is there a preference for hyphens over underscores?

A (Susan Moskwa): We generally break words at punctuation symbols. But even if you don't explicitly include punctuation, Google's pretty good at distinguishing words in a URL. I would do whatever you think looks best to a human user.

Q: Follow-up. We haven't made a full analysis, but we want to confirm the penalty first. No known contravention of TOS, but initial thoughts are that some external linking may have been viewed as paid while they are not.

A (MattD): It doesn't look like we have time to do any more individual site analyses, but if you suspect a penalty, I'd recommend submitting a reconsideration request or visiting our Webmaster Help Group.

Q: Does Google have plans to include programming algorithms that provide higher results for W3C standards-compliant sites as well as great content?

A (John Mueller): If your site has compliant code then that could increase your number of happy visitors -- which could in turn help your site across the board.

Q: We have a very large site with tons of dynamically created pages (like user generated content). We notice that Googlebot's crawl rate fluctuates a lot. Any tips on increasing Googlebot's crawl rate? Crawl rate is already set to Fast in Webmaster Tools

A (Susan Moskwa): One thing I'd recommend is to try to limit any duplicate URLs on your site. E.g. if we're crawling the same content under more than one URL, we're "wasting" some of our bandwidth on that when we could instead be crawling new and unique content on your site

Q: If there's a paid links penalty, what's to stop my competition from buying paid links to get my site penalized? And, many of the top rankings sites for a client of mine are breaking all the paid link rules. How are they ranking and my site isn't?

A (John Mueller): If you feel that a different site is buying / selling links, you can report that in WEbmaster Tools. This helps us fine-tune our algorithms. In the end, we will take a look at the broader picture.

Q: Are all penalties confirmed via message in GWC?

A (Susan Moskwa): Some, but not all.

Q: Is there an difference in indexation for http vs https pages?

A (John Mueller): No - both are fine.

Q: Do domains (with a 7 year history but has been redirected for 2 years) keep bad neighborhood links and ip penalties when they swtich owners?

A (John Mueller): If you buy a domain which you suspect has a bad history, you can file a reconsideration request detailing the new ownership.

Q: Is there a limit to the length of a URL? Does it change if you are pointing to a page that is deep in your hierarchy?

A (Susan Moskwa): Many browsers have a maximum length for URLs, and I'd recommend not exceeding that in order to ensure that people are able to visit your pages using all major browsers.

Q: If multiple keywords are used in a url is it better to separate with an underscore, dash or does it matter?

A (John Mueller): It doesn't really matter.

Q: Is subdomain considered a "separate" domain that will come up in search results as "competing" with the main domain?

A (Evan): Hi, there is usually some level of connection among subdomains and root domains.

Q: Site penalized, not ranking for company name. Buying links I was the only thing I did b/c everyone else was. Not anymore. How do I fix??

A (John Mueller): If you can get those links removed or if you can add a rel=nofollow to them that would be a good idea. Once you have cleaned up as much as possible, filing a reconsideration request would be a good next step.

Q: Can you tell us about the pro's & con's if we use the shortened URL's using TinyUrl or some other similar service.?

A (John Mueller): Shortened URLs are often not as descriptive, which might make it harder for users to recognize the content that is behind them. For us it's generally not a problem, as long as the content is available normally.

Q: what is the typical google index rate for urls in sitemap. If I introduce about 30000 new urls today, when can I reasonably expect

those to be indexed (assuming I'm at medium crawl rate and the site performance is good)

A (John Mueller): There's no guarantee for crawling and indexing of Sitemap URLs. There are many factors that play a role in that.

Q: Yes, that does, but I was wondering more about the archive of the info. For example, 3 weeks ago I saw "Yucaipa real estate" as one of my searches. but once time passed, and the results went to "February", it no longer showed that I used to rank for that..

A (Reid): Hey, since I can't look at the same data you saw, my only advice is that when you look at 1 week's worth of top search queries, that's only the searchers used on a given week.

A (Reid): When that eventually gets placed into a 1 month view - it takes into account all four weeks, which might account for these changes.

Q: Does Googlebot strictly ignore all Javascript? What about <a> anchor links that don't have a "href" attribute?

A (Susan Moskwa): We're getting better at parsing some JavaScript, but we still don't get it all 100%. If you're trying to keep some content away from a crawler, I wouldn't recommend using JavaScript as a fool-proof way to do that.

A (Susan Moskwa): But if you want to make sure the crawler does see that link, I'd recommend not putting it in JavaScript.

Q: A couple of my company's site's home pages have recently dropped from a significant pagerank to 0. traffic from google remains steady. do you think this is something we should be concerned about, or just a temporary glitch in the system?

A (Evan): There are many possibilities of why that could happen.

Q: Question on links: Many competitors in the real estate industry by far out rank some of my clients because they've been around for years and have hundreds or thousands of agent to agent links. Any chance of flushing Google's aged in bound links?

A (John Mueller): Even giant sites can be surpassed by creative webmasters!

Q: If I provide good keywords within Title and Description tags, will I need additional Keywords tag in meta information?

A (Susan Moskwa): First and foremost you should make sure that the relevant words are included in your site's content. Title and meta tags can supplement that, but they're not a replacement for highly relevant content.

A (Susan Moskwa): Google doesn't use the meta keywords tag very much, but some other search engines may. so it's up to you whether you want to spend your time on that tag, or on adding and improving your content.

Q: when is google going to get better at finding good videos that are not in youtube

A (Evan): Google is constantly working on improving search.

Q: Should I rather have HTML drop downs to all the 50 categories on my website, or should i rather have the top 5 category links on my front page

A (John Mueller): I would try to limit the number of links to less than 100 per page -- if you can make 50 links more usable to your user than 5, it can be good for your site in general.

Q: Site A has a link with nofollow to site B, will google visit site B by this link?

A (JonathanSimon): No, but keep in mind there may be other links out there pointing to site B

Q: @MattD - I'm fairly familiar with the group ;) I cant give the URL publicly, and we need to discern if a penalty is in place

A (Susan Moskwa): I imagine you know that we can't really confirm or deny the existence of penalties. If we could see the URL maybe we could take a look at it and make some recommendations...

Q: Are there any detriments to 'hot-linking' videos on youtube?

A (John Mueller): No, that's fine.

Q: The page uses at /hopme/ "noindex,follow" whereas the regular homepage has no block

A (John Mueller): That's a great way to control the indexing of it.

Q: Matt, if a site is hosted internationally, its preferred to use a top level domain extension such as .co.uk, however wont that affect traffic within the US though.

A (MattD): Ah, I see. If you have a country-specific TLD, you are inherently already targeting a region. If you have a generic TLD, you can use the geolocation feature in Webmaster Tools to specify either a subdomain or subdirectory as targeted to a country.

Q: My suggestion to Google is to detail issues in webmaster tools, especially if there's a site problem, or penalty. we have to guess. You could save millions of hours of effort.

A (John Mueller): We are considering & working on that, thanks!

Q: What meta data so we use for geolocation, and what tags do you not use?

A (John Mueller): We don't use meta tags for geolocation -- you can use the Webmaster Tools settings though.

Q: Our products can be accessed by different url's (e.g. ex.com/catalog.asp?P=1234 or ex.com/catalog/keyword.asp). Is that considered duplicate content?

A (Evan): Hi, as far as SERPs go, Google will show the most appropriate URL of the two to the user if they're the same.

Q: I have seen aggregators like (sitename).com, social sites like Digg and even splogs rank above in Google than the actual webpage. Can we prevent this ?

A (Reid): Hi - if you see a splog rank above the actual webpage that owns the original content, feel free to file a spam report to let Google know: <http://www.google.com/contact/spamreport.html>

Q: Thanks MattD - I have a Webmaster account and I use that for sending reconsideration request. I am worried because the site gets penalized too frequently (once per month) - There are no warnings or messages in the Webmaster Message center.

A (MattD): since we're getting toward the end, I'd recommend taking your site to the Webmaster Help Group. The community there is awesome. It seems like this may just be normal algorithmic fluctuations as opposed to penalties.

Q: If we have two websites one .ca and one .com, how would Google.com or Google.ca handle these?

A (John Mueller): Google can use that information to determine which one would be most relevant to the users (especially those in Canada who use "sites in this country" as a search setting).

Q: Wanting to serve mobile content at mobile.example.com using the same db and some of the same content on the main site. How do I get ranked on mobile devices and still avoid duplicate content filters on the mobile content?

A (John Mueller): That should be fine -- don't forget mobile sitemaps!

Q: What is your take on image replacement?

A (John Mueller): It's great! But you need to make sure that it's a correct replacement (do not replace lots of keywords with a simple image). Also, those images are usually not indexed with image search.

Q: How about getting us first into the next round of really secret beta invites list ?

A (JonathanSimon): How did you find out about the "really secret beta invites list? [:]

Q: how does Google deal with syndicated articles or duplicated content. How do the original content providers get the original value?

A (John Mueller): If content is syndicated, you might want to make sure that you have a link back to your site (if your site is the original).

Q: Susan how long does it usually take to get a post to show in the webmaster google group

A (Susan Moskwa): It should show up almost immediately, but sometimes Google Groups has problems that delay posts. Check their "alerts and updates" section here to see if they're having problems:

<http://www.google.com/support/groups/>

Q: can you explain rel=nofollow tags on links? When and where should we use these tags?

A (JonathanSimon): If you want to link to a site that you either don't

trust or can't vouch for use rel nofollow. For user generated content like the comments section of a blog, user added URLs can be auto nofollowed if you don't have time to monitor these Links

Q: I wouldn't mind following up in regards to some of the questions I've asked. For those that have answered; John Mueller, Reid and Susan Moskwa. Best way to do this?

A (Reid): Hey - feel free to post your questions in the Google Webmaster Help group:

http://groups.google.com/group/Google_Webmaster_Help/topics

I'm sure your questions can be beneficial for all webmasters to learn from :)

Q: Could you go into more detailed of the links? what does "float" PR mean?

A (John Mueller): I'm not aware of "float" PR.

Q: I guess the usual "an image is worth 1000 words" doesn't quite apply ;)

A (John Mueller): Only if you do not use keyword stuffing in your alt tags.

Q: Thanks Evan. So it's ok to have two url's to the same page?

A (Evan): As long as they follow Google Webmaster Guidelines, everything is up to you :)

Q: There are many high-quality sites that use image replacement techniques (such as Fahrner image replacement) to provide a better user experience. If you're using this technique in a legitimate way to benefit your users, you shouldn't have problems.

A (John Mueller): That's correct.

Q: Are we safe with 302ing paid links?

A (John Mueller): if you have paid links, you need to make sure that they do not pass pagerank. If you can redirect them, make sure that the redirecting URL cannot be indexed (blocked with a robots.txt).

Q: how often do take action on paid text link (or spam reports) reports in google webmaster tools

A (Mariya): Alan, be assured that all spam reports which are submitted are reviewed.

Q: I have reported a competitor for spam multiple times (they use CSS to push about 50 repeated keywords off the screen on load). I've seen nothing happen as a result of my spam report, is there a better way to report this?

A (Susan Moskwa): The spam report is the best way to do this. FYI we do take all spam reports into account, but we don't take immediate manual action on all of them (we use many of them to improve our algorithms in the long term), so you may not see immediate changes.

Q: So in certain cases, 302s could be passing PR?

A (John Mueller): You should make sure that the redirecting URLs cannot be crawled, then you should be ok.

Q: What would be the process if you feel google thinks you have paid links but you do not

A (Wysz): If you feel that your site may have been detected as being in violation of the Webmaster Guidelines and it is not (or is no longer), then submitting a reconsideration request in Webmaster Tools is the way to go.

Q: where do I access webmaster help groups

A (John Mueller):

http://groups.google.com/group/Google_Webmaster_Help/topics?start=

Q: It sounds like you are big on blogs. How would you rank the blog software out there (wordpress, blogge, etc.) in terms of which has the most SEO friendly coding so that we can best succeed in search results?

A (MattD): Hey Gabe, covering this over voice right now.

Q: Are .com domains better placed in SERPs than say .in domains ?

A (Mariya): Manish, the .com domain is a generic top-level domain, while .in is a country-specific domain. While they could appear mixed in the serps, the .in domains would be naturally better targeted for India-specific local queries

Q: Thx again Susan. I'm a bit anal about internal PR sculpting. If Googlebot has some JS parsing, should I also nofollow links that are JS functions or CSS toggles to make sure no PR is passed? Ex. a link that opens a email box.

A (Susan Moskwa): IMO PR sculpting is such an advanced technique that the majority of sites would be better off spending their time and energy on other things that will provide bigger benefit. You can do it if you want, but personally I'd focus on other things...

Q: Are there any penalties for brand new sites? Seems like one of our sites is burried in the search result, but has many great incoming links?

A (Susan Moskwa): It can take a surprisingly long amount of time to establish a site's authority online, since there is SO much content online these days and webmasters are getting savvier. I'd just

continue to build the quality of your content and your site's community.

Q: Are there any APIs provided to access data from Google Webmaster Tools from our own apps?

A (Susan Moskwa): Not right now, but stay tuned. You might want to check out our iGoogle gadgets if you want to access your WMTTools data outside of the WMTTools interface.

Q: I posted a question on crawl rate, response appreciated. The question again is, if I introduce 30K urls as we expand geography , how soon can I expect those urls' to be indexed?

A (Susan Moskwa): There's no guaranteed time or turnaround for getting indexed. It depends a lot on the size and quality of your site, your site's reputation/authority, quality, freshness of content, etc.

Q: How do you deal with Google search results listed on a personal website that offers a link back to a site (even though it is Google search results that are offering the link - a Google results syndicate?

A (Evan): Hi, are you talking about Google Search for your domain? Or a copy of a search results page?

Q: Does the country where your .in domain is hosted makes any difference in SERPs

A (Evan): Hi, this may affect different geographical google domains, such as google.co.uk or google.com. I would suggest using WM Tools to set geolocation preferences.

Q: You said that words in the url are good for users Adam, but what about for search engines?

A (MattD): I'll try to cover this while Adam talks. :) If you think

about this in the same way as images, a descriptive file name can be more helpful than a non-descriptive filename for users and search engines.

Q: Can you say that PR Sculpting is important for most all websites to use?

A (Susan Moskwa): Personally I think that the majority of sites would benefit more from spending their time and energy on other things (making sure the site's content is accessible, unique and compelling, promoting their site, building community, etc.).

Q: Spam reports are good but i think that some type of reputation should be given to them based on how man someone does maybe

A (John Mueller): If you file spam reports, make sure that you do that from within your webmaster Tools account. Those reports are treated with higher priority.

Q: Evan, the geolocation preference only works for generic tld's, isn't that true? If your tld is already a country tld then that's the geolocaliton already

A (Susan Moskwa): True.

Q: What if a link is not paid but google thinks its paid and treats it like one.

A (John Mueller): We take a look at the bigger picture.

Q: If i have a site A that is redirect to site B (301) and i remove the redirecting, site A can be punished ou lost its pagerank?

A (Susan Moskwa): I would think about your redirects from a user perspective. When a user navigates to page A, what do they expect to see? Does the redirect make sense from a user perspective?

Q: We recently added a favicon to our site. When I view source it appears above the <title> tag. Will that affect our rankings since the title and meta description are further from the <head> tag?

A (John Mueller): No, that does not matter.

Q: Thanks. It was strange that after years of pagerank of 7 or so, to have it drop off to 0, but since traffic was unaffected we didn't completely freak out. ;)

A (Evan): Its always best not to freak out. We have a great blog post about housekeeping items at

<http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/2008/03/good-housekeeping...>

Q: Is it better to clean up / remove / update in bound links even if those links probably don't pass ANY value?

A (John Mueller): If those links cannot pass any value then you should be fine. However, you should also make sure that there are not other items which are problematic with your linking.

Q: Is it ok to post screen shots of a few slides in my blog?

A (Adam Lasnik): Hey, I appreciate you asking; let me get back to you after checking with Maile. Remind me via e-mail if I forget ;)

Q: How can I know which page on my site is leaking PR. Some of my blogs are penalized for paid links. I have nofollowed or roboted out whatever I cud find. I hv requested reconsideration requests too. but still no PR.

A (John Mueller): There's gnerally no need to worry about "leaking PR".

Q: Seeing as you're going to look through this Q&A - can you please go over (ina post) about which meta language data you will look at, specifically which out of these: html lang=, meta name=language, meta

http-equiv=content-language

A (John Mueller): We do not look at the language meta tags -- we've discovered that they are often incorrect and that it is better to recognize the language through the content.

Q: @ John Mueller: biggest indicator that a link isn't passing value would be what in your opinion? If Webmaster Tools knows of the link wouldn't that go to say that it is passing something?

A (John Mueller): To prevent passing of pagerank from a link you can apply a rel=nofollow or make sure that they redirect through URLs which cannot be crawled.

Q: so ya mean I've been wasting my time setting the language properly?
lol

A (John Mueller): No, it shows that you take your content seriously, which is probably reflected in the rest of your content!

Q: @ John Mueller i'm talking about in bound links. Sorry for the lack of clarification. Can you re-address?

A (John Mueller): You can still check to see if they're passing PR - with the normal methods.

Q: Is it better to have a site with a different tld for different languages or to point someone to a language based on their IP

A (Susan Moskwa): I'd recommend always allowing the user to make a choice about what language to see; some people may prefer a different language than you would automatically assign to them based on their IP.

Q: Tags vs categories navigation or pagination: which is best? which shoul <l nofollow?

A (Evan): It is up to you how you want to have users navigate your

pages, both can work well. I would suggest using nofollow on links that you do not want to pass PageRank (links that are unrelated to your website, etc)

Q: How would you rate the importance of <title> tags?

A (Evan): Title tags are important for users to understand what to expect on your website. Google will serve your title tag in the results page, and you want your users to have a clear understanding of where they are going.

Q: If a company is dominating a SERP because they use multiple domains, would that be considered spam or a reportable issue?

A (Susan Moskwa): If you think it provides a poor user experience from a searcher's perspective, you're welcome to report it. We'll decide whether or not we feel we're treating it appropriately.

(end of transcript)