

Search Engine Optimization- If I Had a Hammer

Contributed by Gregg Elberg
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Search Engine Optimization- If I Had a Hammer explores a little known a little know aspect of website design than can cause an improper description of your website.

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Murphy's Law states: When in the course of human events things can go wrong, they will go wrong, at the worst possible time. O'Tooles Law states: Murphy was an optimist.

{bot_wrgoogle}What does this have to do with search engine optimization? You better believe these laws are in full force and effect when you design or redesign your website. Any business that is modern in terms of communication with their customers must create a website. This is as fundamental as having a listing in the telephone book; it is the digital equivalent of a telephone number. Would you want your business to have an unlisted number? Probably not. If you are legitimately interested in making it easier for customers to find you a website for your business is a necessity.

A year and a half ago I started a business and developed a website. It has been quite a learning experience. During this period I have written several articles on this subject including: Search Engine Optimization for Beginners, Search Engine Optimization- The Long Road to Internet Success, Website Redesign- A Perilous Road and Website Design- A Tandem Approach. Little did I know how perilous the journey would be. Murphy and O'Toole were waiting to attack the very moment the website redesign project was "finished".

Here is what happened. It took the better part of three months for the site redesign to be "completed". The site has two versions: a dynamic version which I am told is like a movie. This is the flash version. Images move. The flash version is "invisible" insofar as the web search engines are concerned. The second version is the static version. Things do not move. Both versions are reached by the landing page, the dot.com page you go to visit a commercial site (goodcompany.com for instance). This landing page is also called a splash page. Since web designers are proud of their work and want to advertise their services, they often put a small logo for their firm on the splash or landing page. What you do not see is a hidden description of their business which is supposed to be for the search engines benefit. Every time the web designer creates a website for their customer that contains the designer's logo a link is created to the designer's website. This improves their popularity on the search engines. It tends to drive more business to them, just like your website is designed to attract more customers.

In this particular case the splash page had my business logo and the web designer's logo plus links to the dynamic and static versions to the new website. Google picked up my business' name and metatags plus the website designer's business description and logo. For two weeks until Google revisited the site (after the web designer fixed the problem by deleting their logo), the business was described as "flash version | static version • Award-Winning Web Hosting • Web Hosting • Domain Name Registration • Web design at Affordable Prices • Dedicated Servers ..." Which, by the way, had nothing to do with my financial services business. Thank you very much Mr. Murphy and Mr. O'Toole.

"If I Had a Hammer" is a song written by Pete Seeger and Lee Hayes in 1949. It became very popular in 1962 when it was recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary. It was a top 10 hit. It was considered a civil rights anthem. Here are the lyrics:

If I had a hammer

I'd hammer in the morning

I'd hammer in the evening

All over this land

I'd hammer out danger

I'd hammer out a warning

I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters

All over this land

If I had a bell

I'd ring it in the morning

I'd ring it in the evening

All over this land

I'd ring out danger

I'd ring out a warning

I'd ring out love between my brothers and my sisters

All over this land

If I had a song

I'd sing it in the morning

I'd sing it in the evening

All over this land

I'd sing out danger

I'd sing out a warning

I'd sing out love between my brothers and my sisters

All over this land

Well I've got a hammer

And I've got a bell

And I've got a song to sing

All over this land

It's the hammer of justice

It's the bell of freedom

It's the song about love between my brothers and my sisters

All over this land

The bottom line: If I had a hammer, I would like to hit Murphy and O'Toole and possibly the web designer who caused my site to look so foolish. But I love the irony of the process and their work technically was superb. To error is human and to forgive is divine.

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