

Digital Marketing Glossary

301 status code: An HTTP status code returned by a web server indicating that content has been moved from one location to another. A 301 status code indicates a permanent server redirect, which is a signal that the original page no longer exists and that users and search engines should view the new page as the canonical version of that content.

302 status code: The 302 status code means that the document requested is "found" but temporarily resides under a different URL. Because a permanent redirect has not been used, the client should continue to use the original requested URL for future requests.

400 status code: The 400 status code means a "bad request," indicating that the server is not able to understand the document request due to malformed syntax.

401 status code: The 401 status code means "unauthorized." The server is requesting user authentication prior to fulfilling the document request.

403 status code: The 403 status code means "forbidden." The server understood the request, but is refusing to fulfill it. The webmaster may wish to alert the user as to why her request has been denied. If the organization does not wish to provide a reason, a "404 (not found)" status can be displayed instead.

404 status code: The 404 error message represents a document "not found." This means that the client was able to communicate to the server, but the server could not find the requested document. Alternatively, the server could be configured to not fulfill the request and not provide a reason why.

410 status code: Similar to a "404 (not found)" error message, the 410 status code indicates that the requested document is intentionally "gone" (i.e., is no longer available), and there is no forwarding address.

500 status code: The 500 error message states that there was an "internal server error" that has prevented the document request from being fulfilled.

501 status code: The 501 error message is displayed when the server does not recognize the document request method. The server is not capable of fulfilling this request and states that the request was "not implemented."

Absolute link: A link that specifies the exact location on the Web of a particular page. An example of this would be <https://nozakconsulting.com/blog>, which specifies all aspects of where the content is to be found. This is in contrast to a relative link, which specifies the location of a web page relative to your current location. For example, if you are on <https://nozakconsulting.com> and you specify a link as /blog, that will be interpreted as <https://nozakconsulting.com/blog>

Accessibility: The practice of making websites usable by disabled people (especially vision-impaired users).

adCenter: Microsoft's cost-per-click (CPC) advertising program. These are ads that you see in Bing's search results. Bing uses a variety of factors to determine the order in which the paid search results are shown, including historical click-through rate and the bid price.

AdSense: According to Google, "AdSense is a fast and easy way for website publishers of all size to display relevant Google ads on their website's content pages and earn money. Because the ads are related to what your visitors are looking for on your site – or matched to the characteristics and interests of the visitors your content attracts – you'll finally have a way to both monetize and enhance your content pages."

AdWords: Google's cost-per-click (CPC) advertising program. These are the ads that you see in Google's search results. AdWords takes click-through rate into consideration, in addition to the advertiser's bid and other factors, to determine the ad's relative position within the paid search results.

Affiliate site: An affiliate site markets products or services on behalf of another website. It sends visitors to another website to complete the sale, in exchange for fees or commissions.

AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML): Allows you to create a more user-friendly web application by working behind the scenes inside a web browser to make web pages feel more responsive. Using AJAX, you can create applications on your pages that change the content of the page without having to reload the entire web page.

Alt: Designed to provide an alternative text description (a text equivalent) for images. People often mistakenly refer to these as "alt tags".

Analytics tool: A program that assists in gathering and analyzing data about website usage. Google Analytics is a feature-rich, popular, free analytics program.

Anchor text: The actual text part of a link (usually underlined). Search engines use anchor text as an important ranking factor because it helps them determine the relevancy of the referring site and the link to the content on the landing page. Google pays particular attention to the text used in a hyperlink and associates the keywords contained in the anchor text to the page being linked to.

API: Programming tools that provide a gateway to data from an application or website without having to visit that website to obtain the desired data. For example, Google used to provide Google Suggest autocomplete keyword suggestions to third-party websites via an API but closed off access to that API in August 2015.

Article Directory: A website that hosts syndicated articles submitted by users. EzineArticles.com and The Free Library are examples of article directories.

Article Syndication: The process of creating content intended for publication on other websites (and normally not on your own site). This is an SEO strategy used to increase the number of backlinks pointing to your site.

Authority site: A website that has many incoming links from other related authoritative expert/hub sites.

Automated submitting: The use of automated software to submit your web pages to the search engines. The search engines frown upon this practice.

Backlinks: Inbound links pointing to a web page or site that originates from another page or site.

Ban: When a search engine blocks your site from appearing in its search results.

Beacon: A line of code placed in an ad or on a web page that helps track the visitors' actions, such as registrations or purchases. A web beacon is often invisible because it's only 1 x 1 pixel in the size and has no color. Also known as a web bug, 1x1 gif, invisible gif, or tracker gif.

Bing: Search engine owned by Microsoft formerly known as Live Search and before that MSN. Yahoo! sources its search results information from Bing.

Bingbot: The name of the program that Bing uses to crawl the Web.

Black hat SEO: The opposite of white hat SEO. Sometimes called spamdexing, black hat SEO is the practice of using optimization tactics that cause a site to rank more highly than its content would otherwise justify, or making changes specifically for search engines that don't improve the user's experience of the site. In other words, black hat SEO is optimization that goes against search engine guidelines. If you step too far over the mark, your site may be penalized or even removed from the index.

Blacklists: Lists that either search engines or vigilante users compile of search engine spammers, which may be used to ban those spammers from search engines or boycott them.

Blog: An online diary or journal with entries made on a regular if not daily basis. Blog authors choose whether to blog openly or anonymously; some blogs are maintained by anonymous authors who use nicknames or handles instead of their real names. Weblog entries are made regularly and chronologically but are displayed in reverse chronological order. The range of topics covered is endless. Some blogs focus on a particular subject, like travel, fashion, or astrology while others are personal online diaries.

Body copy: The meaty textual content of a web page. Body copy refers to text visible to users and does not include graphical content, navigation, or information hidden in the HTML source code.

Bot: Short for robot and often also referred to as a spider or crawler, a bot is a program that performs a task in an automated fashion. Search engines use bots to find web pages and add them to their search indexes. Spammers often use bots to scrape content for the purpose of plagiarizing it for exploitation.

Bounce Rate: The percentage of users who enter a site and then leave it without viewing any other pages.

Breadcrumbs: Website navigation in a horizontal bar above the main content that helps the user to understand where they are on the site and how to get back to the root areas.

Cache: A collection of copies of web pages stored locally on an Internet user's hard drive or within a search engine's database. The cache is what allows web pages to load so quickly when a user hits the back button in the web browser; the page is stored, so it does not have to be downloaded again. Google is unusual among search engines in that it allows internet users to view the cached versions of web pages in its index. Simply click on the word cache next to the search result of interest and you will be taken to a copy of the page as Googlebot discovered and indexed it. The feature of Google makes it easy to spot cloaking.

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS): A mechanism that allows publishers to control the design and layout of website through a stylesheet without having to embed the details in the site's HTML code.

Click-through: The action of clicking a link, such as one found in an ad element or a search result, causing the user to be sent to another web page.

Click-through rate(CTR): A measure of the number of clicks received from the number of impressions delivered. If your page or ad is viewed 100 times and this generates 8 clicks, the CTR is 8%.

Cloaking: The practice of using user agent or IP address detection to recognize incoming visitors as either search engine spiders or users, and then delivering content to the spiders that differs from the content seen by users.

Comment spam: Blog or forum comments posted solely for the purpose of generating an inlink to another site. This is the reason most forums and blogs nofollow comment links and use third party comment management systems such as Disqus and IntenseDebate that utilize iframes or JavaScript to render comments.

Content Management System (CMS): A publishing platform intended to make the task of publishing and maintaining a website easier.

Content Marketing: The practice of publishing high quality content that helps build a company's reputation and visibility but at the same time results in people linking to the company's website.

Contextual Advertisement: Advertising that is related to the content.

Conversion: The act of converting a website visitor into a customer, or at least taking that visitor a step closer to customer acquisition (e.g: by convincing him to sign up for your email newsletter, download a white paper or free tool, etc.).

Conversion Rate: The rate at which visitors get converted to customers or are moved a step closer to customer acquisition.

Cookie: Information placed on a visitor's computer by a web server. While the website is being accessed, data in the visitor's cookie file can be stored or retrieved. Cookies are primarily used as unique identifiers to isolate a visitor's movements from others' during that visit and subsequent visits. Other data that may get stored in a cookie includes an order number, email address, or referring advertiser.

Cost Per Action (CPA): The cost incurred or price paid for a specific action taken, such as signing up for an email newsletter, entering a contest, registering on the site, completing a survey, downloading trial software, or printing a coupon.

Cost Per Click (CPC): The cost incurred or price paid for a click-through to your landing page. This cost normally relates to a scenario where you have placed an advertisement on another site, such as the search engines' sites (through Google AdWords or Microsoft adCenter) or a third-party website, or through an affiliate program.

Crawler: Another name for a search engine's program for traversing the Web by following hyperlinks. This program can also be referred to as a bot, robot, or spider.

Database Driven: A database driven website is connected to a database, and web page content is based in part on information extracted from that database.

Directory: This is a site where human editors group websites into categories and provide site descriptions or edit the descriptions that are submitted to them. With a directory, picking the right category and composing a description rich in key phrases will ensure maximum visibility. Contrast this with a search engine, which is not human edited.

Doorway: Also known as a bridge page or a gateway page, a doorway page is a web page full of keyword-rich copy that doesn't deliver any useful information other than a link into a site, and whose sole purpose is to capture traffic from search engines and then send that traffic to a highly commercial web page. Microsites that don't add much new information and that focus on sending traffic to a main site can also be considered doorways.

Duplicate Content: Content on one web page that is similar or identical to that found on another website or page.

Ecommerce site: A website devoted to retail sales.

Editorial Link: A link that is published only because the webmaster considers it to add value for users of that site.

FFA (Free For All) site: Sometimes called link farms, these are sites or pages with many outgoing links to unrelated websites, containing little if any unique content. Link farms are intended only for spiders and have little or no value to human users; when discovered they are ignored or penalized by the search engines.

Flash: A technology developed by Macromedia Inc. (Now owned by Adobe) that allows a web designer to embed interactive multimedia into web pages.

Forum: A virtual community used for information exchange. Users can post messages in different forums, either to the group at large or to certain users. However, all postings can be seen by anyone else who has access to that forum, so save sensitive materials from private email! Forums are also threaded which means a reply to a particular post becomes part of that post's thread and can be followed to provide a cohesive progression through a particular topic.

Frames: A method for combining a separate web pages into one, each potentially with its own scroll bar. You know you're on a framed website when part of the page scrolls while the rest of the page stays in place. Frames can frustrate people because when they try to bookmark a specific page it often doesn't work as intended but instead bookmarks the frameset page which is typically the home page.

Geotargeting: Pinpointing the user's location for the purpose of serving targeted advertisements or web pages. For example, Google AdWords and Microsoft ad Center allow for targeting of countries, states, cities, and suburbs.

Google bowling: A black hat SEO technique used to knock competitors down in, or out of the search engine results. This form of SEO sabotage is conducted by pointing hundreds of questionable links from low quality sites at a competitors site so that site ends up being banned or penalized by Google. Generally, newer sites are more susceptible to Google bowling, as older sites are better established with a range of existing high quality links.

Google supplemental index: A secondary Google database containing supplemental results pages that are deemed to be of lesser importance by Google's algorithm or are less trusted. These are pages that are less likely to show up in the search results.

Googlebot: The name of the program that Google uses to crawl the Web.

Grey hat SEO: SEO using both black hat and white hat techniques. This can also refer to the use of techniques that do not strictly follow the search engines' guidelines but that are only slightly over the line.

Heading Tag: An HTML tag that is often used to denote a page or section heading on a web page. Search engines pay special attention to text that is marked with a heading tag, as such text is set off from the rest of the page content as being more important.

Hidden Text: Contextual HTML text that is concealed from human visitors to a web page but is made available to search engines spidering the site. Using hidden text is considered an SEO spam tactic.

Hijacking: Hijacking of websites is a practice that makes search engines believe that a specific website resides at another URL. It is a form of cloaking and an illegal spam tactic. Spammers may do this to increase a page's ranking in the search engine results pages.

HTML (HyperText Markup Language): The main markup language for the creation of web pages, used to mark up web content and display it in a formatted manner. HTML defines how data is structured and informs the web browser how the page is to be displayed. It's up to the web browser how the page is to be displayed. It's up to the web browser software to render the HTML sources. Some of the page elements that can be coded with HTML include page titles, text, lists, tables, forms, basic HTML data types and much more.

The source HTML code of any web page can be viewed in a web browser such as Firefox (Right-click and select "View page source"). HTML is not a programming language and therefore is quite static in nature. It is considered to be a subset of SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language). Tim Berners-Lee first described HTML in 1991 in a publicly available document called "HTML Tags".

HTTP: Short for HyperText Transfer Protocol. This is one of the basic methods used by browsers and web servers to transfer data information such as web pages, across the web. One of its weaknesses is that the information is sent as simple text, and is easily intercepted, read, and modified, by third parties.

HTTPS: Short for HyperText Transfer Protocol Secure. This is one of the basic methods used by browsers and web servers to transfer data information across the Web. Unlike with HTTP, the data sent is encrypted, making it quite difficult for third parties to intercept and read or modify the data.

Hub: Trusted pages or sites that link to the authority websites in a given market space. For example, in the online music space, a hub would be a page or site that links to most of the authoritative sites for online music and does not link to any, or extremely few, poor-quality sites).

Impression: Any event where a user views a web page or ad. Each view is considered one impression.

Inbound Link: Any link that points to your site from a site other than your own. Inbound links are an important factor in the search engines' algorithms.

Index (n.): A search engine's database, in which it stores textual content and other information about web pages that have the potential to show up in its search results.

Index (v.): The act of adding a web page to a search engine's index.

Indexed Pages: The pages on a site that have been incorporated into a search engine's database.

Information Retrieval (IR): The part of computer science dealing with the retrieval of information (not data) from a collection of written documents. The retrieved documents attempt to satisfy a user information need, usually expressed in natural language.

Interlinking: The linking structure of various web pages within a site that helps users and spiders navigate its content.

Internal Link: A hypertext link that points to another page within the same website. Internal links can be used as a form of navigation, directing visitors to pages within the website. Links assist with creating good information architecture within a site. Search engines also use internal text links to crawl pages within a website. The way internal links are structured will impact the way in which search engine bots spider and subsequently index a site's pages.

Internet Service Provider (ISP): An ISP provides a range of internet related services to customers, including internet connectivity, email, website hosting, and domain name registration.

Inventory: Usually provided service for a monthly fee, an ISP can be a commercial business, a university, a government organization, a school, or any other entity that provides access to the internet to members or subscribers.

ISP: An acronym for internet service provider.

Inventory: Advertising space available for purchase on a website. Based on projections, inventory may be specified as number of available impressions or as a share of voice.

Invisible Web: A term that refers to the vast amount of information on the web that is not indexed by the search engines. Coined in 1994 by Dr. Jill Esllsworth.

IP (Internet Protocol): The communications protocol used for sending datagrams (information packets) across the internet.

IP Address: Each server or device connected to the internet is assigned a unique permanent (Static) or temporary (Dynamic) IP address. It is expressed as a four part series of numbers separated by periods that identifies every sender and receiver of network data. The numbers, each of which has a range of 0 – 255, represent the domain, the network, the subnetwork, and the host computer (for example 127.0.0.10). The IP address sometimes translates into a specific domain name.

ISAP_Rewrite: A module or plugin for Microsoft IIS web servers that can be used to rewrite requested URLs on the fly. Modeled after mod_rewrite, it supports an unlimited number of rules and unlimited number of attached rule conditions for each rule to provide a flexible and powerful URL-manipulation mechanism that can be used to offer search engine-friendly URLs, thus increasing indexing chances for a dynamic database-driven website.

Fava Applets: Small programs written in the Java programming language that can be embedded into web pages. Applet program run on the internet user's computer rather than the web server's computer.

JavaScript: A programming language that runs on the internet user's computer rather than the web server's computer. In the past, search engines did not run JavaScript, but that has changed.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Metrics selected by an organization to help it achieve organizational goals through the definition and measurement of progress. The KPIs are agreed upon by an organization and are indicators that can be measured that reflects success factors. The KPIs selected must reflect the organization's goals, they must be key to its success, and they must be measurable.

Keyword: A word or phrase that a search engine user might use to find relevant web pages. If a keyword doesn't appear anywhere in the text of your web page, it's less likely that your page will appear in the search results for that term (Unless of course you have bid on that keyword in a pay per click search engine).

Keyword Cannibalization: The excessive reuse of the same keyword on too many web pages within the same site. This practice makes it difficult for the users and the search engines to determine which page is most relevant for the keyword.

Keyword Density: The number of occurrences of a given keyword on a web page. It used to be that the more times a given word appeared on your page, the more likely it was that the search engine would return that page when users searched for that keyword. As search algorithms have gotten much more sophisticated, this is no longer the case, although it is helpful to have the target word or phrase show up a small number of times on the page.

Keyword Popularity: The number of searches internet users have done for a given keyword during a period of time

Keyword Prominence: A measure of the location of a given keyword in the HTML source code of a web page. The higher up in the page a particular word is, the more prominent it is and thus the more weight that word is assigned by the search engine when that word matches a keyword search done by a search engine user. Consequently, it's best to have your first paragraph contain important keywords rather than superfluous marketing speak. This concept also applies to the location of important keywords within individual HTML tags, such as heading tags, title tags, or hyperlink text.

Keyword Research: The process of determining the words and phrases that people use to find something, then combining them into a list for use on web pages, websites, and more.

Keyword Stuffing: Placing excessive amounts of keywords into the page copy and the HTML in such a way that detracts from the readability and usability of a given page, for the purpose of boosting the pages rankings in the search engines. This may include techniques such as hiding keywords on the page by making the text the same color as the background, hiding keywords in comment tags, or overfilling alt tags with long strings of keywords. Keyword stuffing is just another shady way of gaming the search engines, and as such, it is strongly discouraged.

KPIs: An acronym for key performance indicators.

Latent Semantic Indexing (LSI): An algebraic model of document retrieval based on a singular value decomposition of the vectorial space of index terms. In plain English, LSI is a method for extracting the words on a web page to determine the topics that it is likely to be relevant for.

Link Bait: A web page with useful or entertaining content intended to attract incoming links, often mostly via social media. This term is not used as much anymore because it sounds manipulative.

Link Building: A marketing discipline whose purpose is to obtain inbound links from webmasters of other sites with the aim of increasing link popularity and page rank. There are many methods for link building.

Link Exchange: The practice of exchanging links with another site

Link Farm: A group of highly interlinked websites formed for the purpose of inflating link popularity or page rank. This is a form of link spam.

Link Juice: A generic term used to refer to the value of a link. This term is much broader than the original term coined by Google, PageRank. Unlike PageRank, link juice is meant to consider the notions of the trust and authority of a link.

Link Popularity: A measure of the value of a site based upon the number and quality of sites that link to it.

Link Spam: Links between pages that exist for the sole purpose of inflating search engine rankings. Frequently these are links that do not provide end user value.

Link Text (Anchor Text): The user-visible text of a link. Search engines use anchor text to determine the relevancy of the referring site and the link to the content of the landing page. Ideally all three will share some keywords in common.

Linkerati: Internet users who own websites that have a tendency to link to other quality content. Bloggers and news media are part of the linkerati, as are other site owners who link to high-quality content.

Logfile: Most web servers maintain a log of all accesses to a website. Data that is usually logged includes the date and time of access, the filenames accessed, the user's IP address, the referring web page, the user's browser software and version, and the cookie data.

Long-tail Search Queries: These are longer queries containing more words that are often more targeted than shorter broad queries.

LSI: An acronym for latent semantic indexing.

Made for AdSense (MFA): MFA sites are websites that have been designed from the ground up as a venue for Google AdSense advertisements

Meta Description: A meta tag hidden in the HTML that describes the page's content. Should be relatively short; around 12 to 20 words is suggested. The meta description provides an opportunity to influence how your web page is described in the search results, but it will not improve your search rankings.

Meta Keywords: A meta tag hidden in the HTML that lists keywords relevant to the page's content. Because search engine spammers have abused this tag so much it provides no benefit to your search rankings.

Mobile Friendly: A phrase used to describe web pages that render in a user friendly way on smartphones or tablets which have smaller screens and don't have access to a full sized keyboard or a mouse.

Mobilegeddon: The phrase the industry used to label Google's planned mobile friendly algorithm update.

mod_rewrite: A module or plugin for Apache web servers that can be used to rewrite requested URLs on the fly. It supports an unlimited number of rules and an unlimited number of attached rule conditions for each rule to provide a flexible and powerful URL manipulation mechanism that can be used to offer search engine friendly URLs thus increasing indexing chances for a dynamic database driven website.

Monetization: The process by which a publisher derives income from a site.

nofollow: A link attribute (rel="nofollow") that instructs the search engines not to pass any link juice on to the linked to page. NoFollow can also be specified in the head section of a web page, with the result that none of the links on the page will pass link juice to the linked to pages.

noindex: A value found in the head section of a web page that instructs robots to not index the page.

Nonreciprocal link: If site A links to site B, but site B does not link back to site A, then the link is considered nonreciprocal. Search engines tend to give more value to nonreciprocal links than to reciprocal ones because they are less likely to be the result of collusion between sites.

Organic Search Results: Search engine results that are not sponsored or paid for in any way.

Outbound link: A link that points off site to another website. Also known as an outlink or outgoing link.

Page Load Time: The amount of time it takes for a page to load. With the intent to improve search quality Google considers page load time as a ranking factor in its algorithm.

Pagejacking: Stealing high ranking web page content from another site and placing it on your site in the hopes of increasing your site's search engine rankings. Pagejacking is yet another shady way of gaming the search engines, and as such it is strongly discouraged.

PageRank (PR): A Google algorithm for measuring the importance of a web page based on its inbound link profile. PageRank is a purely numerical measurement and does not take into account the relevance or the linking page, or how trusted or authoritative that page might be.

PDF: Adobe's Portable Document Format, a file format that renders the page exactly as intended regardless of the computer used. Typically used for creating documents that will be printed. PDF is used instead of HTML when the content creator wants absolute control over the display of the document. In Contrast, the display of an HTML document depends on the computer and web browser software used.

PHP: An "open source" programming language for building dynamic websites, PHP can be used to write server-side programs that access databases. PHP is the most popular web programming language-more popular than JSP (Java Server Pages), Microsoft's ASP (Active Server Pages), and Macromedia's Cold Fusion. PHP is especially well suited to web development and can be embedded into HTML. It is secure, and fast to deploy. As of 2011, PHP is used by over 9 million websites (over 24% of the sites on the internet), due largely to benefits it offers such as quicker response time, improved security, and transparency to the end user.

Probabilistic Model: A classic model of document retrieval based on a probabilistic interpretation of document relevance to a given user query.

Pull-down list: A web form where the user chooses from a list of items. For example, you might be asked to identify which country you are from using a pulldown list. A pull-down list usually displays the default choice within a box and a down arrow immediately to the right. Clicking on the down arrow will display the full list to choose from.

Query: A keyword or phrase inquiry entered into a search engine or database. In search, a person types in the word or words she is looking for information on, and the search engine database returns results that match the user's query.

Reciprocal Linking: The practice of trading links between websites (A.K.A. link exchange). Search engines usually don't see these as high- value links, unless the relevance of the two swapping sites to each other is very high.

Redirect: Any method used to change the address of a landing page, such that the user is automatically taken to another URL without clicking on anything.

Referrer: When a web page receives traffic as a result of a user clicking on a link on another web page, this is considered a referred visitor. The page containing the link the user clicked on is called the referrer. Seeing which pages on the Web send traffic to your website can provide a lot of useful data for your SEO (and other marketing) efforts.

Relative Link: A link that does not specify the full web address. Because the https:// part of the link is not specified, the web server knows that the link is relative to the current location of the user and looks for the specified page in the same directory as the current page.

Relevance: The likelihood that a given web page will be of interest or useful to a search engine user for a keyword search.

Repeat visitor: A single individual or browser who accesses a website or web page more than once over a specified period of time.

Return on Investment (ROI): The benefit gained in return from the total cost of investing budget into advertising or some other project. ROI can be measured by one of the following two calculations:
 $ROI = (\text{revenue} - \text{cost}) / \text{cost}$ or, more simply: $ROI = \text{Revenue} / \text{cost}$.

Robot: Another name for a search engine's program for traversing the Web by following hyperlinks. This program can also be referred to as a crawler, bot, or spider.

Robots.txt: A text file placed in a website's root directory and linked in the HTML code that controls the behavior of search engine spiders on the site, or even denies them access.

Sandbox: An outdated concept that referred to Google putting new sites into a "holding pen," preventing them from ranking well for anything competitive until a period of time has passed.

Search Console: A web application offered by Google that provides publishers with information about how Google sees their website. This program was formerly known as Google Webmaster Tools.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM): A term often used to describe acts associated with efforts to achieve maximum exposure of a website within the SERPs. SEM May include search engine optimization, PPC campaigns (paid listings), social media campaigns, and other search engine-related services and functions that will increase the exposure of and traffic to your website and increase the amount and quality of sales leads. Note that many people mistakenly use this term to refer only to pay-per-click advertising on search engines.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The process of increasing the number of visitors to a website by achieving high rank in the search results returned by a search engine. The higher a website ranks in the results pages, the greater the chance is that users will visit the site.

Search Engine Results Page (SERP): A page of search results delivered by a search engine.

Search Engine Spam: The result of manipulation techniques that violate search engine guidelines – for example, pages created to cause search engines to deliver inappropriate or less relevant results. SEO professionals are sometimes unfairly perceived as search engine spammers.

Search Intent: The intention of the end user who is searching for information on the Internet. Search engines are focused on improving the user experience by better understanding search intent so they can deliver consistent and relevant search results. On the other hand, advertisers strive to better understand users' search intent in order to sell them relevant products and services.

Search Term: A keyword or phrase used to conduct a search engine query.

SEM: An acronym for search engine marketing.

SEO: An acronym for search engine optimization.

SERP: An acronym for search engine results page.

Sitemap: There are two types of sitemaps: HTML sitemaps and XML Sitemaps. An HTML sitemap is a page or structured group of pages that link to every user-accessible page on a website, and hopefully improve site usability by clarifying the data structure of the site for the users. An XML Sitemap is a file that is not visible to users, but is designed to help search engine spiders to find all of the site's pages.

Social Media Marketing (SMM): The practice of website or brand promotion through social media. SMM is a subset of SEM.

Spamglish: Keyword rich gibberish used as search engine fodder instead of thoughtfully written, interesting content. Spamglish often includes meaningless sentences and keyword repetition

Spammer: A person who uses techniques that violate search engine guidelines to obtain high search rankings for his websites

Spider: Another name for a search engine's program for traversing the Web by following hyperlinks. This program can also be referred to as a crawler, bot, or robot.

Spider Trap: An infinite loop that a spider may get caught in if it explores a dynamic site where the URLs of pages keep changing. For example: A crawlable calendar program that goes on infinitely.

Static Page: A web page that always shows the same content. Pages whose content is dynamically generated when they are requested may still be considered static pages if the actual content eventually rendered does not change from access to access.

Stemming: A process used by search engines to reduce words to their grammatical roots and deliver results based on the spelling of the root. For example, a search for "Clothes" will also return results for clothing.

Stickiness: A measure of a site's ability to retain visitor's interest, by getting them to view more pages or spend more time on the site.

Stopword: Certain words such as: "the, a, an, of, and with" are so common and meaningless that a search engine won't bother including them in its index, or database of web page content. So in effect, the stopwords on your web pages are normally ignored as if those words weren't on your pages in the first place. Including a lot of stopwords in your title tag waters down the title tag's keyword density. Note that there are important exceptions that search engines track, though, such as references to the TV show "The Office" where the word the is very important to the context. In addition, searchers can implement search queries in double quotes to require that the stop words not be ignored.

Supplemental Index: Google's supplemental index is a secondary database containing supplemental results pages that are deemed to be of lesser importance by Google's algorithm or are less trusted. These are pages that are less likely to show up in search results.

Tagging, Tags: Simple word descriptions used to categorize content.

Target Audience: The market to whom advertisers wish to sell their products or services.

Taxonomy: Classification system of controlled vocabulary used to organize topical subjects, usually hierarchical in nature.

Text Link: A plain HTML link that does not involve graphic or special code such as Flash or JavaScript.

Theme: The main keyword focus of a web page.

Thin Affiliate: An affiliate site that provides little value-added content.

Thin Content: Content that offers little material value. This type of content is considered undesirable by search engines as they prefer not to offer it to their users in the search results.

Time On Page: The amount of time that a user spends on one page before moving to a different page. This is an indication of quality and relevance.

Title Tag: The text displayed at the very top of the browser window, above the address bar and the Back, Forward, Print, and other buttons. Although inconspicuous to the user, the title tag contains the most important bit of text on a web page as far as the search engines are concerned.

Toolbar: A browser add on usually including a search box. A popular example is the Google Toolbar.

Toolbar PageRank (PR): A value between 0 and 10 assigned by the Google algorithm, which very loosely quantifies page importance and is not the same as PageRank.

Traffic: The number of user that surf to a site.

TrustRank: A measurement of how much a website or web page is trusted. It is likely that the search engines measure this in some form, but there are many different potential algorithms for doing so.

Unique Visitors: Individual users who have accessed your website over a period of time. If one person visits your site multiple times during that period, that user still only counts as one unique visitor. For example, the number of daily unique visitors is equal to the number of different people who visit the site during that day.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator): Used interchangeably with "Web Address," a URL can specify the location of a web page, an email address, or a file on an FTP server, among other things.

URL Rewrite: A technique used to help make website URLs more user and search engine friendly.

User Agent: A text string exchanged between a browser or a robot and a web server that identifies the source of the visit to the website. It allows the web server to get some basic information on the visiting person or bot.

User Intent: In the context of the search engines, user intent refers to the objective of a user conducting a search query. This may not always be immediately clear just by reading the query string itself.

User Generated Content (UGC): Content created and published by the end users online. UGC is composed of videos, podcasts, and posts on discussion groups, blogs, wikis and social media sites. UGC allows for a wider content provider base and the chance for all users to share their opinions online. Criticism of UGC includes credibility and quality issues.

Webmaster Tools: Google offers a web application that can be used by publishers to get information about how Google sees their website. This used to be called Google Webmaster Tools, but as of 2015 was renamed to Search Console. Bing also offers a similar program, called Bing Webmaster Tools.

User Session: An instance of an internet user accessing your website for a length of time, then leaving the site. During a user session any number of pages may be accessed. A user session is also considered finished once an arbitrarily chosen period of inactivity occurs. This is typically 30 minutes even if the user never leaves the site.

Web Address: Used interchangeably with URL; can specify the location of a web page, an email address, or a file on an FTP server, among other things.

Web Browser: Software installed on the internet user's computer that allows him to view web pages. Popular web browsers include Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Safari, and Firefox.

White Hat SEO: A term that refers to ethical SEO practices that conform to the guidelines of the major search engines and do not attempt to game or manipulate the SERPs.

XML (eXtensible Markup Language): A scripting language that allows the programmer to define the properties of the document.

XML Sitemap: An XML file that lists the URLs available on a site for the search engines to crawl. The aim is to help site owners notify search engines about the URLs on a website that are available for indexing. XML sitemaps are not viewable by end users; they exist solely to help search engines better understand what content is available on a website.