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## **The Importance of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO):**

Nearly 90% of Internet users turn to search engines such as Google and Yahoo! to find what they are looking for online, and searching for information ranks as the second most popular activity online after email. Indians conduct an approximate one billion searches a month.

Unlike other forms of online advertising, search engines deliver highly targeted traffic. When people use search engines, they are actively seeking information on products, services or companies.

There are many other reasons why a prominent ranking on search engines is critical to the success of your web site.

There are billions of pages on the Internet. Finding a web site, in the absence of a search engine, would be akin to looking for a needle in a haystack. Very few users go beyond the second or third page of search engine results to find what they are looking for. Over 50% of Internet users abandon their searches after the first two pages of results.

So, how can you ensure that your site ranks on the first few pages of a search engine?

Search engines use a variety of factors to determine which pages are most important to a user's query, but two of the most important are content (keywords) and the number and quality of inbound links (link popularity).

**Content (keywords):** The text content on a page is one of the ways a search engine can tell what your site is about. To put it simplistically, if a user searches for 5-megapixel digital camera, a search engine, other things being equal, will rank those pages higher that...

- ... have a higher concentration of the phrase 5-megapixel digital camera (be wary of this though, search engines may treat pages that have a rather abnormal concentration of a single phrase as spam)
- ... have the phrase displayed in prominent areas (page headings, page titles, sub-headings, etc)
- ... are part of a site that is thematically in line with the phrase (for instance, a page on a digital camera portal may rank higher than a page on a automobile portal even if the latter has a higher concentration of the key phrase)

**Inbound links:** Since content by itself is easy to manipulate by spammers (through a process of keyword stuffing), search engines evolved a system of ranking pages by the quality and number of inbound links they attract. In essence, search engines treat every inbound link to your site as a vote for your site. However, it is not a sheer numbers. Search engines also look at the quality of sites linking to you to avoid manipulation by unscrupulous webmasters.



SEO is the process by which you optimize these two as well as a host of other elements, including design, navigation, structure and HTML code, of your web site to rank highly on search engines.

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