

THE HIDDEN IMPORTANCE OF YOUR PAGE TITLE SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Here's a search engine optimization concept that most people don't think about: make sure you have keywords and key phrases in your TITLE tag. You know what the TITLE tag is, it's the tag that gives you the name of the page on the Window frame in your browser, and it's remarkable how few sites pay any attention to what's in that critical search engine optimization (SEO) field.

Let's take a quick tour of some big sites and have a look, shall we? HBO.com has a title tag of "HBO Online". ESPN.com has "ESPN.com" as their title. No kidding. NYTimes.com is better, with "The New York Times > Breaking News, World News & Multimedia", Microsoft has "Microsoft Corporation", though, and, finally, BMW.com has "BMW International Website".

What's wrong with these? The problem is that each and every word in a TITLE tag is considered quite important by search engines (e.g, Google) when they figure out what your page is about and how relevant a given topic is on the page. Keyword density is definitely important in this regard, but one of the easiest ways to become more relevant to a given search result is to ensure that the keywords or key phrases you want to match are in the TITLE tag.

The downside is that sometimes the TITLES look a bit weird - as is demonstrated on this very site - but the upside is that if you want to have a site that Google thinks is an excellent match for, say, "acupuncture information", then having a TITLE like "Acupuncture Information for Everyone" will yield a definite improvement.

If nothing else, please, do me a favor and don't use "Welcome to", "Home Page", "Website" or any other empty words in your TITLE. After all, with all due respect to BMW, I think it's pretty obvious that if I'm looking at their information on the Web with a Web browser that it's a Website. So why bother saying so in the TITLE?

Frankly, for BMW, I think I'd suggest that they have a TITLE more like "BMW:Luxury Automobiles and Sports Cars from Germany for over 80 Years" which is still readable and friendly, but now it includes other keywords that can help with searches, making it a more relevant match for "luxury cars", "luxury automobiles", "sports cars", "German cars", etc. See how that works? Simple, but surprisingly effective.

So take five minutes and think about your TITLE tag. Is it doing the job you want? And keep in mind that Google and other search engines look at *pages*, not *sites*, so you need to ensure that the TITLE on every page of your site is helping your relevance with search engines.

