

Element 3 How to Get Your Web Site Seen

You can promote your Web site in many ways. You should make sure the Web site is mentioned on your business cards, flyers, signs, produce bags, and on anything else that you give to customers. If you speak about your farm to groups, do radio or TV interviews, or have articles written about your farm, be sure that you refer people to your Web site. You can promote the site in press releases, e-mail announcements, paid advertisements, and through getting links to your Web site placed on other sites.

Using Tags to Help Search Engines Find Your Site

An important part of getting your Web site seen is making sure that search engines can find it. Since 86% of Web surfers only review a single page of search results, your search engine ranking is essential for guiding traffic to your site.

These eight search engines generate 89% of total search engine queries per day: Alta Vista, Google, AOL, Lycos, Excite, MNS, Go Network, and Yahoo!

Use the **tags** described below to help search engines find your site.

- **<TITLE> Tags** - Information in this tag is what Web users will see in the bookmark. Be sure to include the name of your business and short description in the title.
- **<META> Tags** - Information in this tag give site owners the ability to control information processed by search engines. These tags serve as mini site-indexes and provide keywords and descriptions on pages without text.

There are several kinds of <META> tags, but the two most important are description and keyword tags.

- Description tags return a copy of a pre-fabricated description of your page instead of the summary that would otherwise be created by a search engine. A description tag enables you to control your message. To create useful description tags, include your organization's name as well as your market, industry, or area of expertise. Don't exceed the 200-character limit—it's best to keep it under 150 characters. Be sure to use keywords and key phrases in your descriptions.
- Here is an example of an effective <META> description tag:

Libby's Goat Farm of Asheville, North Carolina sells a variety of handmade organic goat milk products, including fresh milk, cheeses, soaps, and lotions.

- Keyword tags include all the words that a search engine will use to associate with your page. Web users type these words into the search box to find Web sites that match their desired information. To create effective <META> keyword tags, construct your keyword list with commas separating the words. To determine your list, think of words your target market might use to find you—asking friends can be very effective in helping think of keywords. Include commonly misspelled versions of your keywords. Put your keywords



in the plural form since search engines are designed to process both singular and plural forms. Start the list with the most important and descriptive keywords. Keyword tags need to be fewer than 1000 characters (including spaces) with little repetition of words.

Body Text

Include the keywords and key phrases in the first 60 words of your body text, as this is especially important for search engines that do not use <META> tags for indexing. Use text links in addition to image links. Try to include the most important words early and often in the page, and use larger type.

Free <META> tag generators are available at

www.siteannounce.com/tools/meta-tag-generator or www.siteup.com/meta.html.

Registering Your Site with Search Engines

You can use a registration service that will do the work for you, for a fee. Examples include:

www.submit-it.com

www.siteadd.com

<http://register-it.netscape.com>

Or, you can register the sites manually. To do so, you contact the search engines that you want to be listed in, allowing you to customize your listing depending on the needs of various search engines. For example, you can suggest a site for inclusion in Yahoo's search engine at <http://docs.Yahoo.com/info/suggest>.

In the case of the Google search engine, you can add your site here:

<http://www.google.com/addurl.html>

You should register multiple pages of your Web site, target search engines and directories that cater to your special interest or region, re-register your site often, and keep your home page simple and easy to navigate (do not use re-direction).

Remember that search engines can take up to 6 weeks to process registrations, so don't keep re-registering within that period or the site may see this as "spamming," (sending unsolicited e-mail).

