

# Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Glossary

Written by Paul Kaufman, [Pitch Perfect Marketing.com](http://PitchPerfectMarketing.com)

**AdWords** – Google’s advertising service for displaying Ads of your website as paid inclusion.

**Algorithm** – A program used by search engines to determine what pages to return for a given search query.

**Alt tag** – A tag that provides alternative text for visually impaired users.

**Analytics** – A program which assists in gathering and analyzing data about website usage.

**Anchor text** – The visible text in a hyperlink.

**Backlink** – Any link into a page or site from any other page or site.

**Black hat SEO** – Unethical/underhanded search engine optimization tactics.

**Blog** – A truncated form for "web log." A blog is a frequently updated journal that is intended for public consumption.

**Bounce rate** – The percentage of users who enter a site and then leave it without viewing any other pages.

**Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)** – A web site’s "css file" contains site wide information on paragraph layout, font sizes, colors, etc.

**Cloaking** – The process by which a web site can display different versions of a web page under different circumstances. Used to display an optimized or a content-rich page to the search engines and a different page to humans. A black hat SEO technique.

**CMS (Content Management System)** – Software that allows publishing, editing, and modifying website content as well as site maintenance all from a central interface.

**CPC (Cost Per Click)** – The amount search engines charge advertisers for every click that sends a searcher to the advertiser’s website landing page.

**Domain name** – A unique address on the internet. For example, [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com).

**Googlebot** – Google’s spider program.

**HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language)** – A standardized system for tagging text files to achieve font, color, graphic, and hyperlink effects on World Wide Web pages.

**HTTP** – Stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

**Internal link** – A link that forwards to another page within the same website.

**JavaScript** – A scripting/programming language used on many websites.

**Keyword** – A word that relates to a specific subject or topic.

**Keyword density** – The percentage of words on a web page which are a particular keyword. If this value is unnaturally high the page may be penalized by the search engines.

**Keyword Stuffing** – The act of adding a large number of keyword terms into the HTML or meta tags of a web page. A black hat SEO technique.

**KPI** (Key Performance Indicator) – Used to quantify objectives that indicate the strategic performance of an online marketing campaign.

**Link bait** – A webpage or piece of content with the designed purpose of attracting incoming links.

**Link building** – The process of getting inbound links to your web page or site.

**Link popularity** – A measure of the value of a site based upon the number and quality of sites that link to it.

**Long-tailed Keywords** – Keyword phrases that contain at least 2 or 3 words.

**Meta-tag** – A special HTML tag that provides information about a web page.

**Nofollow** – A command found in either the HEAD section of a web page or within individual link code, which instructs search engine robots (spiders) to not follow the link.

**Off-page SEO** – Everything you do outside your website to improve its rankings.

**On-page SEO** – Everything you do within your website to improve its rankings.

**Organic Results** – Those listings on SERPs that were not paid for (i.e. naturally occurring).

**PageRank** – A value between 0 and 1 assigned by the Google algorithm, which quantifies link popularity and trust among other factors.

**PPC** (Pay Per Click) – a contextual advertisement program where advertisers pay ad agencies (such as Google) whenever a user clicks on their ad. Google Adwords is an example of PPC advertising.

**Query** – The word or words a searcher enters into a search engine.

**Rank** – How well positioned a particular web page or website appears in search engine results.

**Reciprocal Link** (crosslinking) – Two different sites that link out to each other.

**Relevance** – A measure of how closely your website content is related to the search query and the searcher's expectations.

**Robots.txt** – This file notifies the search engines which areas of your site are restricted and which can be indexed.

**RSS** (Really Simple Syndication) – A standardized system for the distribution of content from an online publisher to Internet users.

**Search engine** (SE) – A program, which searches web pages for relevant matches of a users keyword phrase and returns a list of the most relevant matches.

**SEM** – Acronym for Search Engine Marketing.

**SEO** – An abbreviation for Search Engine Optimization, the process of optimizing and promoting your website so search engines rank it higher in the search results.

**SERP** – Abbreviation for Search Engine Results Page.

**Social media** – Various online technologies used by people to share information.

**SPAM** – Any SEO method that a search engine deems to be contrary to its goal of delivering relevant, quality search results to Internet searchers.

**Spider (bot)** – Search engines use these programs to find and add web pages to their search indexes.

**Title Tag** – An HTML tag appearing in the <head> tag of each web page that contains the page title.

**Traffic** – The number of visitors a website receives.

**URL** (Uniform Resource Locator) – the web address for a site.

**Usability** – Measures the quality of a user's experience when interacting with a product, website or system.

**White hat SEO** – Ethical SEO practices. Those that search engines encourage you to use.

**Wiki** – Software or website that allows people to contribute and share knowledge on a particular topic of interest.

**XML sitemap** – A file (usually *sitemap.xml*) designed to give search engines a map of all the different URLs (pages) that your website contains.