

YAHOO! SITE MAP: A USEFUL INTERNET MARKETING TOOL

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A website refers to a compilation of Web pages that can be typically accessed through a software package, commonly known as a Web browser (one example is the HTTP on the Internet). These pages, which are essentially documents that are in the HTML or XHTML format (HTML stands for Hyper Text Markup Language), are accessed from a 'common root URL' - or the website's homepage (as most people know it). From this homepage, the visitor/Internet user can browse or look through the entire website either with the use of the hyperlinks or the URLs of the different web pages.

Viewed on computers and other devices that are capable of connecting with the Internet (such as PDAs and cellular phones), websites can be grouped into numerous types, depending on their use or the services that they offer.

Some of them include the following:

• Archive site - maintains and protects electronic contents that are valuable to the point of extinction.

• Business site - promotes a business or a service.

• Commerce or eCommerce site - offers goods for sale.

• Community site - allows people with related and similar interests to communicate with each other (either through chat or message boards).

• Database site - searches and displays a particular database's content.

• Development site - provides data and sources that are related to software development and web design, among others.

• Directory site - contains wide-ranging contents that are usually divided into categories and subcategories.

• Download site - allows users to download electronic contents, such as game demos and software.

• Game site - provides a 'playground' where people meet and play.

• Information site - contains data or content that have the sole purpose of informing visitors (not for commercial purposes).

• News site - dispenses or distributes news and commentaries (similar to an information site).

• Pornography site - shows pornographic videos and images.

• Search engine site - provides general information and serves as a 'gateway' for other sites and resources (can also be a web portal site).

• Shock site - shows images and other materials that aim to offend viewers.

• Vanity site - a personal site that is run or maintained by an individual or a small group, the contents of which can be of any information that the site owner wishes to include.

• Blog site or blogs - registers online readings and posts online diaries or discussion forums.

• Wiki site - allows users to collaboratively edit the contents.

Yahoo! is perhaps the most famous example of a very large website. The most popular and

widely-used website, Yahoo! is a mixture of the different types of sites - it is a directory site and a search engine site, among others.

Because of the enormous (and diverse) amount of information that it contains, the Yahoo! site map is an extremely useful feature in the Yahoo! website.

A site map is a web page that lists the entire pages on a web site. Organized in a hierarchical fashion, site maps can be in textual or visual form (a diagram or an image).

The Yahoo! site map serves as a blueprint for the Yahoo! website. Similar to a book's Table of Contents, the Yahoo! sitemap makes it easier for visitors or users to find specific information or pages on the Yahoo! web site without having to browse many pages, because the site map gives an overview or a visual outline of the Yahoo! web site, with each location provided with active links to enable the user to directly move to a specific location.

In addition, the Yahoo! site map allows web developers to put out links from across their sites, making it easier for search engine robots (or engine spiders) to find these pages.

Because the Yahoo! site map improves the search engine optimization of a site, this feature can be considered a valuable tool for online marketers, whose aim is to stimulate and direct traffic to their web sites.

Note, however, that the Yahoo! site map can only give you the 'basics'. Because it is important for web marketers to 'rank high' on main search engines, an effective web marketing strategy that promotes your web site is also very much needed.

Listed below are some search engine strategies to consider:

1. Write a descriptive page title at the top of your webpage that avoids 'filler' words like "the" or "and".
2. Incorporate descriptive keywords on your home page, along with your business name. This is called "keyword prominence".
3. Include a Description Meta Tag at the top of the web page. This refers to the sentences (1 or 2 lines, with a maximum of around 255 characters) that describe the content of your web page. These are just some of the many techniques that you can employ to get more users to visit your website. The important thing is to focus on keywords - and let Yahoo! site map do the rest.