

SEO

Search Engine Optimization An Introductory Guide from Ecademy

- How to get more visitors to your Ecademy content
- How to get your own website found on Google

What this guide covers:

[What is Search Engine Optimization \(SEO\)?](#)

[Tip 1:](#) Discover your keywords & key phrases

[Tip 2:](#) Now check your keyword attractiveness

[Tip 3:](#) Always write for readers first, search engines second

[Tip 4:](#) Understand what a <title> is

[Tip 5:](#) Where to use <title>s on Ecademy

[Tip 6:](#) How to write effective <title>s

[Tip 7:](#) Understand what a <meta> description tag is

[Tip 8:](#) Where to use <meta> description tags on Ecademy

[Tip 9:](#) How to write effective <meta> description tags

[Tip 10:](#) Understand what a <meta> keyword tag is

[Tip 11:](#) Where <meta> keyword tags are used on Ecademy

[Tip 12:](#) Use your keywords in your Ecademy content

[Tip 13:](#) Bringing it all together! An example post with all Ecademy SEO elements

[Tip 14:](#) Additional things to do on your own website

[Tip 15:](#) You are not finished yet (or ever, really...)

[SEO Tools and Further Reading](#)

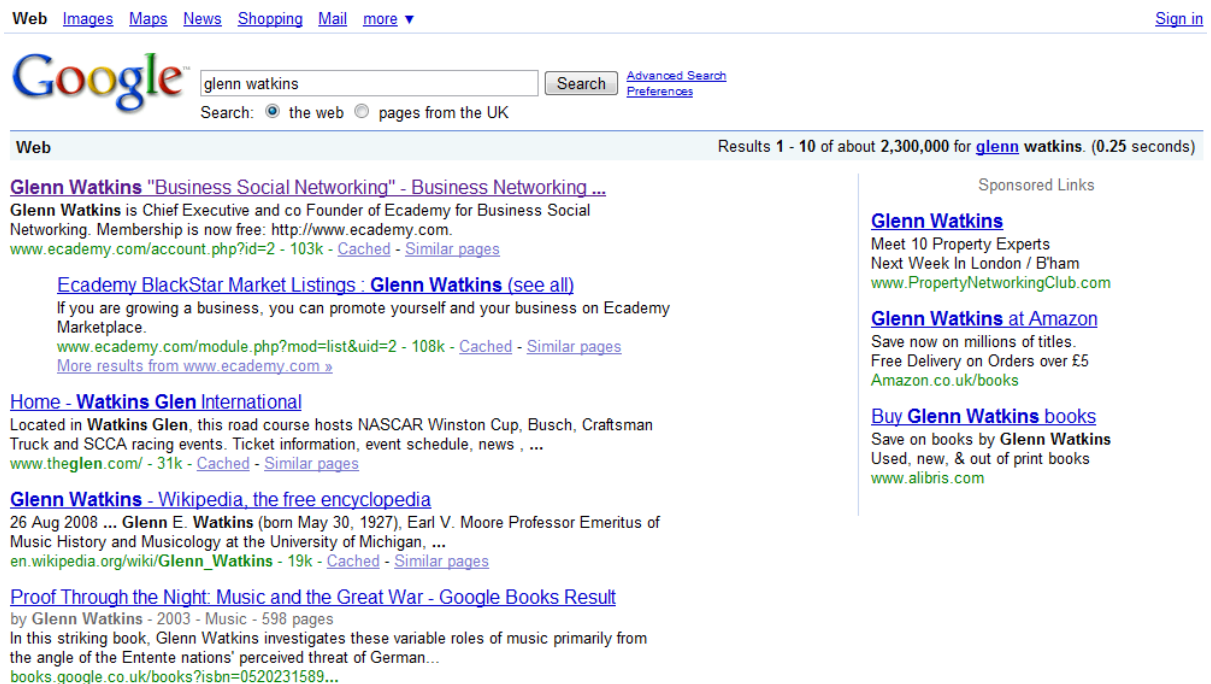
- Online tools
- KEI explained
- Introduction to HTML
- Recommended books
- Recommended SEO and SEM web sites

[About Ecademy](#)

What is Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

Put simply, SEO is giving you the best chance possible to be found when people search on Google or other search engines for phrases - known as “keywords” - that relate to you and your web pages.

If you go to Google and search, you will usually see two columns of results - a wide left hand column and a narrow right hand column:



The screenshot shows a Google search for "glenn watkins". The search bar is at the top with "glenn watkins" entered. Below the search bar, there are navigation links for "Web", "Images", "Maps", "News", "Shopping", "Mail", and "more". The search results are displayed in two columns. The left column contains organic search results, including links to "Glenn Watkins 'Business Social Networking' - Business Networking ...", "Ecademy BlackStar Market Listings : Glenn Watkins (see all)", "Home - Watkins Glen International", "Glenn Watkins - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia", and "Proof Through the Night. Music and the Great War - Google Books Result". The right column contains sponsored links, including "Glenn Watkins", "Glenn Watkins at Amazon", and "Buy Glenn Watkins books".

The right hand column contains “Google Ads”. *Sometimes, a block of adverts may also appear across the top of the results.* You pay to appear here. The skills that you use when you pay maybe referred to as Search Engine Marketing (SEM).

The main left column of search results contains “organic search results”. You cannot pay to appear here. Google places web pages in this area that it believes best matches what a person searched for.

Helping your Ecademy content and your own web pages appear in the left hand column is “SEO” and the topic of this guide. SEO should be a part of your business networking as it helps raise your profile.

This is not about spamming Google. It is about optimizing genuine content e.g. writing your Ecademy profile in the best way possible so search engines understand who you are and what you do.

Ecademy is one of the only top business and social networks that encourage blogging - as well as club discussions, Marketplace listings and meetings. There is always lots of genuine and useful content being posted. Because of this, Google loves our business content and visits Ecademy to check it many times a day. Whatever you post on Ecademy will get found fast.

This guide explains how to:

- Optimize your Ecademy content to ensure it gets found.
- Optimize your own website to help it get found.

You do not have to be technical to use this guide, but some basic HTML knowledge is needed. If you are new to HTML, don't worry, you will find links to primers in the “[SEO Tools and Further Reading](#)” section at this end of this guide.

Tip 1: Discover your keywords & key phrases

SEO is all about keywords and key phrases and what you do with them.

Think of these as the words that describe you, your Ecademy posts, the sections / pages on your website, your products or the services that you offer.

The first thing you need to do is identify your keywords.

Come up with a list of “seed” keywords that you feel are appropriate to you.

For example, if you are an accountant these maybe:

- Accounts
- Finance
- Cash flow management
- Accountants
- Accounting services in Brighton
- And more...

The next thing to do is refine these keywords.

There are a number of tools available to help you do this. These are listed in “[SEO Tools and Further Reading](#)” at the end of this guide.

With these tools, you simply enter your seed keywords, and they will offer related and alternative keywords that people are searching for.

Some will also tell you how many times a keyword or key phrase is searched for during a period of time e.g. searched for 132 times a day.

The number of times it is searched for is known as **Keyword Popularity**.

To quickly try this now, visit www.digitalpoint.com/tools/suggestion/ and type any keyword into the phrase box.

It is important that you use these tools so you know exactly what people are searching for, rather than what you would search for (everyone is different!).

Also, don't just use one word keywords as there are likely to be lots of sites optimized for them already; use two, three and four word combinations... or more! If you think people will search for your name or your company name, then these could also be important keywords for you also.



Learning point!

Once you have discovered your keywords, you can use them within your Ecademy content - including your profile and Marketplace listings - to help get you found on Google. The same approach will also work on your own web site.

Learning how to do this is covered and expanded upon as you work through this guide.

Tip 2: Now check your keyword attractiveness

Highly searched for keywords may not always be the best keywords to use.

For example, “Accountants” is likely to be searched for many more times a day than “Accountants in Brighton”.

So, it would be easy to think that you must use just “Accountants” to get as many visitors as possible.

But, if you are an accountant in Brighton, optimizing for the less searched for term would work well as you would get “qualified” visitors who are more likely to “convert” to customers as you are exactly what they are looking for.

You must check the competition.

If you complete a search on Google, you will see a count at the top right of the screen, showing the number of web pages it has in its database (*index*) for the keyword or key phrase that you have searched for.

At the time of writing this, there are around 25,000,000 pages for “Accountants” in Google, but only approximately 400,000 for “Accountants in Brighton”.

So, if you optimize for the less searched for term, you will also be competing against less web pages when trying to get high up in the search results.



There are several measures in the SEO world, with names such as “Keyword Effectiveness Index” (KEI) that mathematically measure keyword attractiveness. These build upon the basic ideas above and provide you with a scientific approach to deciding which keywords to use.

KEI is **popularity** (number of searches) **squared**, divided by the number of **competing sites / pages**. The higher the number, the better the keyword or key phrase.

If you put a table together showing your keywords, along with their KEI score, this will help you choose which keywords to use (*figures for illustration only*):

Keyword	Popularity (searches)	Competition	KEI
Accountants	12,234	25,000,000	5.987
Accountants in Brighton	3,123	400,000	24.383
FD Brighton	23	1,200,000	0.000

This introductory guide is not the place to go into more depth on this topic. If you want to learn more, “Get to the Top on Google by David Viney” is an excellent book that explains these concepts and also develops them further. We have also included a link to a free online guide explaining KEI.

See [“SEO Tools and Further Reading”](#) at this end of this guide for this information.

Tip 3: Always write for readers first, search engines second

Before we jump into how and where to use your keywords, the first rule of SEO, and this cannot be stressed enough, is to write for your readers “first”.

Reading a page that is just full of keywords is not going to be easy to read. It could be great for Google, but not for your “human” visitors.

There is no point getting people to your content if it reads so badly that none of them will get in touch or it has no calls to action so they don’t buy anything.

If people like what they read, it will create a buzz and they are more likely to come back for more.

Don’t be sneaky either or go over the top with the number of keywords used - for example, hiding keywords within page text that is really small so people cannot see it, but Google can.

Google will catch on and you are likely to suffer in search results if Google considers you a “keyword spammer”.

Right, now we can finally start using your keywords...

Tip 4: Understand what a <title> is

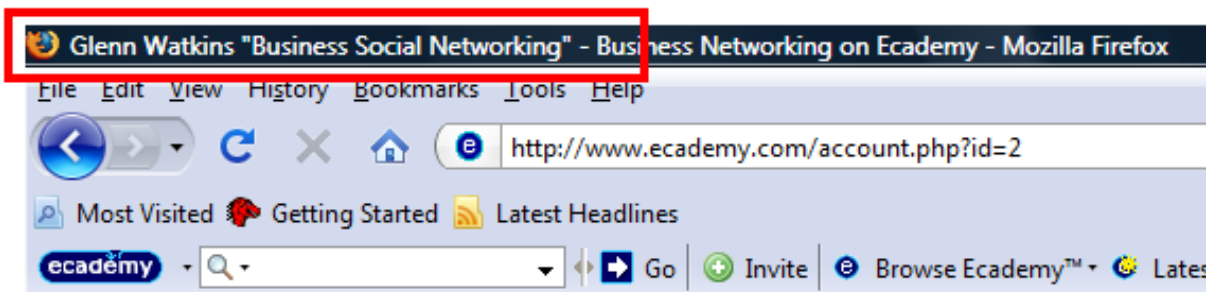
The first place to use your keywords on Ecademy is within <title>s.

At the top of most web pages, you will see some code like this (to see this code - you need to select the "View Page Source" or "View Source" option in your web browser - refer to the help section of your web browser if you do not know how to do this):

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Some text here</title>
<meta name="description" content="Some text here">
<meta name="keywords" content="keyword,keyword,keyword,keyword">
</head>
<body>
    More stuff here...
```

The page <title> is the element highlighted in red above. <title>s are generally considered to be one of the, if not the most important things for SEO.

This is not a title within your content or on a web page. This is the title that appears in the "bar" at the very top of your web browser:



This title is also used as the linked text in search results:

Web Images Maps News Shopping Mail more ▾ [Sign in](#)

Google [Advanced Search](#)
Search: the web pages from the UK [Preferences](#)

Web Results 1 - 10 of about 2,300,000 for [glenn watkins](#). (0.25 seconds)

Glenn Watkins "Business Social Networking" - Business Networking ...
 Glenn Watkins is Chief Executive and co-Founder of Ecademy for Business Social Networking. Membership is now free: <http://www.ecademy.com>.
www.ecademy.com/account.php?id=2 - 103k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Ecademy BlackStar Market Listings - Glenn Watkins \(see all\)](#)
 If you are growing a business, you can promote yourself and your business on Ecademy Marketplace.
www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=list&uid=2 - 108k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)
[More results from www.ecademy.com »](#)

[Home - Watkins Glen International](#)
 Located in **Watkins Glen**, this road course hosts NASCAR Winston Cup, Busch, Craftsman Truck and SCCA racing events. Ticket information, event schedule, news, ...
www.theglen.com/ - 31k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Glenn Watkins - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)
 26 Aug 2008 ... **Glenn E. Watkins** (born May 30, 1927), Earl V. Moore Professor Emeritus of Music History and Musicology at the University of Michigan, ...
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Watkins - 19k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Proof Through the Night, Music and the Great War - Google Books Result](#)
 by Glenn Watkins - 2003 - Music - 598 pages
 In this striking book, Glenn Watkins investigates these variable roles of music primarily from the angle of the Entente nations' perceived threat of German...
books.google.co.uk/books?isbn=0520231589...

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Tip 5: Where to use <title>s on Ecademy



Learning point!

When you post content, some of the information you enter will be automatically placed in the page <title>s on Ecademy. The great news is Ecademy makes it really easy to contribute to these <title>s.

So, consider using your keywords and key phrases in the following places:

Your Ecademy Profile:

Your name is automatically added to your profile <title> tag.



You can also add a key phrase to your title by using this box on the Ecademy SEO page:



<http://www.ecademy.com/seo#profile>



Your Ecademy Profile

Google SEO Keywords:

Keywords to be added to your name and used for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - Available to  BlackStars and  PowerNetworkers >

This feature is only available to Ecademy  PowerNetworkers and  BlackStars.

Upgrade here: <http://www.ecademy.com/membership.php>

Blog subject:

When posting a blog, at the start of the post form is "Subject":

<http://www.ecademy.com/submit.php?mod=blog>

Subject:

This populates both the title in your blog and the <title>.

Marketplace listing title:

When posting a marketplace listing, the first option on the form is "Title":

<http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=list&op=add&tag>

Marketplace : Add Listing

Title:

This populates the title in your listing and the <title>.

Meeting subject:

When posting a meeting, at the start of the post form is "Meeting Subject":
<http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=meeting&op=add>

Meeting Subject:

This populates both the name of your meeting and, again, the <title>.

If you run a regular meeting with the same name, you could maybe add the date or a speaker name to the <title> to help make each of your meeting <title>s different.

Club names:

When creating a club, on the create form, under settings, is "Club Name":
<http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=club&op=newclub>

Club Name:

Note, punctuation and spaces will be stripped from the start of the name. The club name is used in your club URL.

This populates both the name of your club and also a part of the <title>.

You can also edit this from within the "Club Administration" area of each club.

Tip 6: How to write effective <title>s

For Ecademy (and your own website)

Again, <title>s are generally considered to be one of the, if not the most important things for SEO. Invest time in getting them right.

The following guidelines are useful for both your Ecademy content and your own web site:

- Make sure each page on your website, and everything you post on Ecademy, uses a different and unique title.
- Keep it brief - approximately 66 characters including spaces will be ideal. If you do need to use a longer <title>, never exceed 120 characters including spaces.
- Don't load your title with lots of different keywords just for the sake of it. Do use keywords in each title, but make sure it accurately describes the content (again - write for the user first!). Remember, if all your content uses a unique title, you will have plenty of opportunity to use keywords elsewhere.
- Use titles that have a meaning - don't use vague titles such as "Page 129" or "My blog".
- Write in plain English. Avoid marketing "waffle" but do write in a way that will catch attention.

Tip 7: Understand what a <meta> description tag is

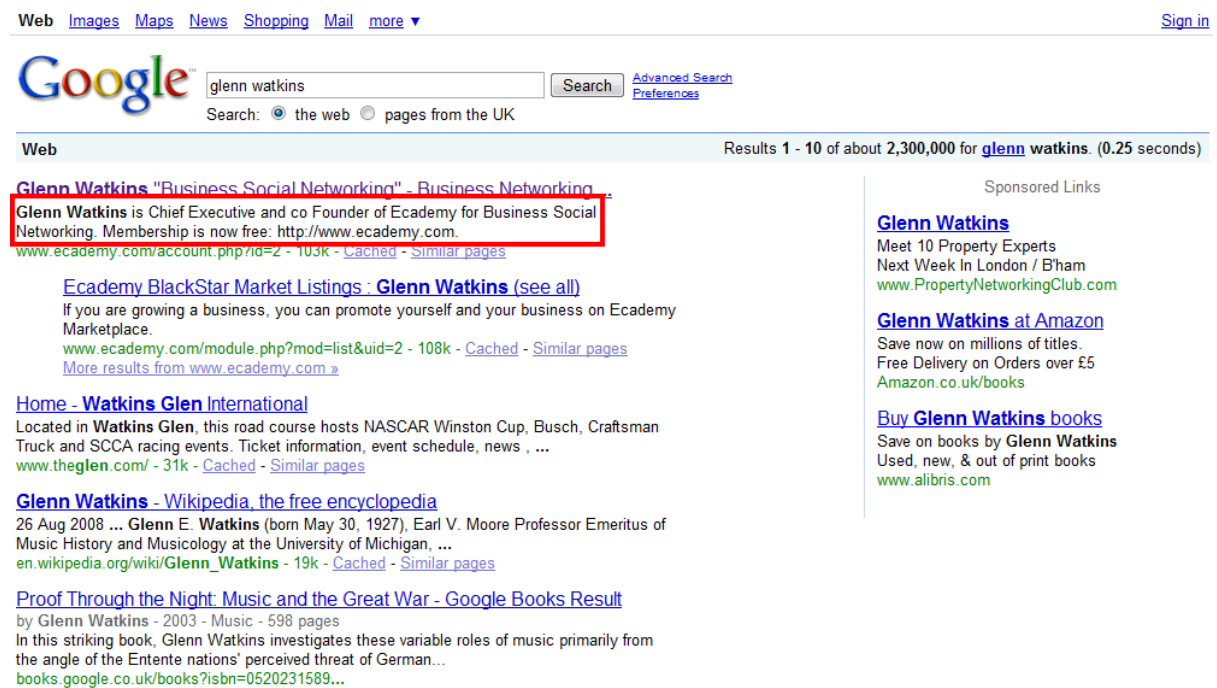
So, you have completed your <title>s, now it is time to look at your meta tags:

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Some text here</title>
<meta name="description" content="Some text here">
<meta name="keywords" content="keyword,keyword,keyword,keyword">
</head>
<body>
    More stuff here...
```

The first of these meta tags is the "Description" tag - highlighted in red above.

Inside this description should appear a short sentence / paragraph about the related web page / content.

Sometimes Google may use something else, but much of the time, this description tag will appear under the "title link" in search results:



Web Images Maps News Shopping Mail more ▾ Sign in

Google [Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)

Search: the web pages from the UK

Web Results 1 - 10 of about 2,300,000 for **glenn watkins**. (0.25 seconds)

Glenn Watkins "Business Social Networking" - Business Networking
Glenn Watkins is Chief Executive and co Founder of Ecademy for Business Social Networking. Membership is now free: <http://www.ecademy.com>.
www.ecademy.com/account.php?id=2-103k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Ecademy BlackStar Market Listings : Glenn Watkins \(see all\)](#)
 If you are growing a business, you can promote yourself and your business on Ecademy Marketplace.
www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=list&uid=2-108k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)
[More results from www.ecademy.com »](#)

[Home - Watkins Glen International](#)
 Located in **Watkins Glen**, this road course hosts NASCAR Winston Cup, Busch, Craftsman Truck and SCCA racing events. Ticket information, event schedule, news , ...
www.theglen.com/ - 31k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Glenn Watkins - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)
 26 Aug 2008 ... **Glenn E. Watkins** (born May 30, 1927), Earl V. Moore Professor Emeritus of Music History and Musicology at the University of Michigan, ...
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Watkins - 19k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Proof Through the Night: Music and the Great War - Google Books Result](#)
 by Glenn Watkins - 2003 - Music - 598 pages
 In this striking book, Glenn Watkins investigates these variable roles of music primarily from the angle of the Entente nations' perceived threat of German...
books.google.co.uk/books?isbn=0520231589...

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 Next Week In London / B'ham
www.PropertyNetworkingClub.com

Glenn Watkins at Amazon
 Save now on millions of titles.
 Free Delivery on Orders over £5
Amazon.co.uk/books

Buy Glenn Watkins books
 Save on books by **Glenn Watkins**
 Used, new, & out of print books
www.alibris.com

Tip 8: Where to use <meta> description tags on Ecademy



Learning point!

Ecademy makes it really easy to create meta description tags for your Ecademy content:



Your Ecademy Profile:

It is possible to edit the description on your profile by using the second box below on the Ecademy SEO page: <http://www.ecademy.com/seo#profile>







Your Ecademy Profile

Google SEO Keywords:

Keywords to be added to your name and used for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - Available to  BlackStars and  PowerNetworkers >

Google SEO Description:

A short abstract (255 characters) of your profile used for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - Available to  BlackStars and  PowerNetworkers >

This feature is only available to Ecademy  PowerNetworkers and  BlackStars.

Upgrade here: <http://www.ecademy.com/membership.php>

Blogs:

It is possible to set a default description for your blogs via this form on the Ecademy SEO page: <http://www.ecademy.com/seo#blog>





Default Blog Description - Post a blog >

Google SEO Description:

Default SEO Description on your blogs. This can be over-ridden when posting a blog.

When posting each individual blog, you can change this from within the blog post form. We would recommend you always do this, using your default text as a starting point to help speed things up: <http://www.ecademy.com/submit.php?mod=blog>

This feature is only available to Ecademy  PowerNetworkers and  BlackStars.

Upgrade here: <http://www.ecademy.com/membership.php>

Marketplace listings:



You can set a default description for your Marketplace posts via this form on the Ecademy SEO page: <http://www.ecademy.com/seo#list>

 [Default Marketplace Description - Post a listing >](#)

Google SEO Description:

Default SEO Description on your Marketplace Listings. This can be over-riden when posting a listing.

When posting each individual listing, you can change this from within the post form. We would recommend you always do this, using your default text as a starting point to help speed things up: <http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=list&op=add&tag>

This feature is only available to Ecademy PowerNetworkers and BlackStars.

Upgrade here: <http://www.ecademy.com/membership.php>

Meetings:



It is possible to set a default description for your meetings as well via this form on the Ecademy SEO page: <http://www.ecademy.com/seo#meeting>

 [Default Meeting Description - Post a meeting >](#)

Google SEO Description:

Default SEO Description on your Meetings. This can be over-riden when posting a meeting.

When submitting each individual meeting, you can change this if you want from within the meeting post form. We would recommend you always do this if you can, again, using your default text as a starting point. If you run a regular meeting with the same description, you could maybe add the venue, date, an agenda highlight or a speaker name to the description to help make it different: <http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=meeting&op=add>

This feature is only available to Ecademy PowerNetworkers and BlackStars.



Upgrade here: <http://www.ecademy.com/membership.php>

Clubs:

You can give each of your clubs their own description via the “Your Clubs” section on the Ecademy SEO page: <http://www.ecademy.com/seo#club>

Your Clubs

You can also set this description when creating a club (on the create form: <http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=club&op=newclub>) and also from within the “Club Administration” area of each club.

This feature is only available to Ecademy PowerNetworkers and BlackStars.

Upgrade here: <http://www.ecademy.com/membership.php>

Tip 9: How to write effective <meta> description tags

For Ecademy (and your own website)

Search engines may show this text in search results (underneath the linked title / text), so again, write for the visitor first by being informative and interesting.

The guidelines for this are much the same as the <title> tag:

- Make sure each page on your website, and everything you post on Ecademy, uses a different and unique description.
- It is difficult to get confirmation from the search engines on the best length for these, but approximately 150 to 160 characters including spaces seems to work well.
- Don't load it with different keywords that are not relevant. Do use keyword/s and phrases, but make sure it accurately describes what the content is.
- Write in plain English. Avoid marketing "waffle" but do write in a way that will catch attention.
- Use the keyword/s that you are using in your <title> within this description as well.

Tip 10: Understand what a <meta> keyword tag is

The second meta tag is the “Keyword” tag highlighted in red below:

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Some text here</title>
<meta name="description" content="Some text here">
<meta name="keywords" content="keyword,key phrase,keyword,key phrase">
</head>
<body>
  More stuff here...
```

It is widely considered that Google ignores the keyword tag altogether.

There are other search engines out there though, not just Google, and it is rumoured that Yahoo! may still review this tag.

So, don't expect search engines to pay a lot of attention, but do use it still.

Separate each keyword with a comma (see above).

Never exceed 50 words and only use those that relate to the web page in which they are included.

Tip 11: Where <meta> keyword tags are used on Ecademy



Learning point!

Your Ecademy Profile:

On Ecademy, you can add 50 words about yourself:

<http://www.ecademy.com/account.php?op=settings>

When adding your 50 words, you will see a form field like this:

50 Words:

Enter up to 50 words about yourself. Don't write sentences. Use spaces and/or a comma between each word. If one comma is used, all tags must be comma separated.

These 50 words are used in the keyword tag of your profile automatically (as well as in a list towards the top of your profile page content).

Marketplace listings:

When posting Marketplace listings, you will see this form field on the post form:

<http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=list&op=add&tag>

Keywords/Tags:

Keywords/Tags that describe the listing - note these will automatically appear on your profile page. Keywords/Tags are comma separated with a maximum of 10 tags per listing. You should only need 2 or 3. Click on the words below to copy them in.

Any keywords you enter into here will automatically be added to the keyword tag of the listing.

Tip 12: Use your keywords in your Ecademy content

When posting on Ecademy, always use your keywords within your Ecademy content to help it get found - where relevant. Don't spam!

Text which is linked, in *italics* or is **bold** is usually given more weight in the mind of a search engine, than normal text on a web page.

For example, instead of writing this in your profile:

I work in Brighton.

Use something like:

I am an **accountant in Brighton** providing Small Business Accountancy Services.



Learning point!

You can make text bold, use italics and add links as required using this toolbar in all post and editing forms on Ecademy:



Just select (highlight) the text that you want to format and click on the "B" button to make it bold or the "I" button to make it italic. Clicking the "Link" icon will make a pop-up box appear on screen. In this pop-up box, type the full web address of the page or site you are linking to including the http://.

Tip 13: Bringing it all together!

An example post with all Ecademy SEO elements

Your head maybe spinning now with so much to take in and you must be wondering what goes where. <titles> are what, where did descriptions go, do I link words, ahhhh!

So, let's bring it altogether by posting the perfect Marketplace listing for our fictitious accountant.

All keywords are for illustration only. If you are an accountant, you will have to discover your own keywords. Sorry.

So, we go to the Marketplace post form:

<http://www.ecademy.com/module.php?mod=list&op=add&tag>

The form loads and in the title at the top of the form we add a catchy phrase which also happens to be one of our key phrases:

Marketplace : Add Listing

Title:

Accounting services in Brighton

You could maybe include a company name here as well if it is one of your important keywords. This phrase also happens to be a soft "call to action" as it will get someone's attention if they are looking for an accountant in Brighton. The title does not exceed 66 characters.

This will appear:

- On the Marketplace listing itself when viewed on Ecademy
- In the title "bar" at the top of a person's web browser - [see tip 4](#)
- As the linked title text on Google's and other search engines search results pages - [see tip 4](#)

Next, we fill in the description:

Google SEO Description:

Accounting services in Brighton from Accounting Partners Ltd. We specialise in helping small businesses.

A short abstract of your listing used for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - Available to ★BlackStars and ★PowerNetworkers >

This uses two key phrases as well as the company name. We have put a key phrase before the company name as we are hoping this will catch someone's eye when they read it on a search engine. The second sentence is designed to be a soft call to action as well as including a key phrase. This is also less than 150 characters long.

This should appear:

- Below the linked title text on Google's and other search engines search results pages - [see tip 7](#)

Now we create the main body copy.

This is a short advert in the interest of easy reading within this document, but the same approach can be applied to longer content, with reuse of key phrases, if and as required.

It has been written for the reader, not Google, but we have made a key phrase bold with SEO in mind.

Some limited HTML knowledge is needed to read this (if you are new to HTML, don't forget the [primers at the end of this guide](#)).

Listing:

B I U ↶ ↷ ☰ ☷ ☰☷ ☰☷☰ pre — 🖼️ 🌐

Accounting Partners was established in 1982.

Our small and friendly team help small businesses in Brighton grow.

We provide cashflow management, **payroll services for SMEs**, financial reporting and [financial director services](http://www.madeupfirm.com/accounting-services/financial-director-services.html).

Find out about our [accounting services in Brighton](http://www.madeupfirm.com/accounting-services/accounting-services-in-brighton.html).

This will be read by Google and visitors to Ecademy.

Next we fill in the URL:

URL:

<http://www.madeupfirm.com/accounting-services/account>

A URL link to associate with this listing. Please include http://

We have used a link to the web page which is the most relevant page on our web site if a “person” clicks on this link.

We fill in a few other items on the form and then come to the keyword section:

Keywords/Tags:

cashflow, payroll services, SMEs, FD, financial director, Accounting services in Brighton, Accounting Partn

Keywords/Tags that describe the listing - note these will automatically appear on your profile page. Keywords/Tags are comma separated with a maximum of 10 tags per listing. You should only need 2 or 3. Click on the words below to copy them in.

We enter the keywords and phrases from the listing.

We complete the rest of the form and submit it - knowing that this will not only help promote us to Ecademy members, but it will also help the listing to get found on Google. If people visit this listing via Google, then they will find a link to your website as well!

Tip 14: Additional things to do on your own website

To ensure your SEO is a success, your own web site needs to be reviewed as well, using the techniques mentioned so far. In addition to these, you should also do the following:

Make sure your web site is easy to use... not just for people, but for search engine spiders too!

Make sure your website is easy to use. This is for two reasons:

- 1) There is no point working hard to get people to your website, via Marketplace listings for example, if they are going to leave as soon as they get to it as they can't work out what to click on!
- 2) Google uses little programs known as “spiders” that crawl across your web pages. These read (*known as indexing*) your content. What they read is then used on Google when people search. Generally, if people can find things on your website easily, the spiders will too.

One of the main things is to make sure that your navigation is consistent.

For example, this may mean always having a horizontal navigation bar that is across the top of all of your web pages so people don't get lost.

If you don't want to hire a professional web designer, sitting down with a couple of family members or clients while they use your site is a great way to see how easy your web site is (or isn't!) to use. If they get stuck, ask why, and use these learning points to improve your site.

Creating a site map is also a good idea.

This is a single web page that links to all pages on your web site - or the key areas of your website if your site is very large and has lots of pages.

Both people and spiders can scan this quickly to read and access everything on your web site.

You can also create a more technical “XML sitemap” which is just for search engines. Visit and sign up for Google Webmaster tools to learn how to do this. A link to this is included in the “[SEO Tools and Further Reading](#)” section at this end of this guide.

Use meaningful web page names and directory names

Web page URLs and names can be shown in search results:

[Volkswagen Golf | Long Term Tests | Car Reviews | Auto Express](#)

Road test editor Oliver Marriage has handed on custody of the long-term Volkswagen Golf GTI And I am certainly happy with this state of affairs - not only ...

www.autoexpress.co.uk/carreviews/longtermtests/203105/volkswagen_golf.html - 40k

[Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

So, use meaningful page and directory names that users will understand.

Include keywords in them to help with your SEO.

For example, instead of:

<http://www.someaccountingfirm.com/123456/page78jj77866.html>

Use:

<http://www.someaccountingfirm.com/accounting-services/financial-director-services-brighton.html>

Use web page names that make sense and are relevant, but include a keyword or phrase.

There is some debate in the SEO world about whether you use a dash (-) or an underscore (_) between words.

Up until recently it was always thought that you must use a dash as Google recognised this as a space between words and that it ignored underscores. However, some SEO specialists are starting to question if this is still the case, so watch this space!

However, the general consensus is that a dash is still best, so for now, you should do the following:

- Use a dash for all new pages you create
- If you have pages that have underscores and they are already in Google or existed for some time, don't lose any sleep, just leave them as they are (you will see in the previous image that Auto Express has an underscore)
- Never use an underscore in a domain name

Structure web page content correctly

Some basic HTML knowledge is needed for this Tip - links to primers are included at [the end of this guide](#).

It is important that you structure your web page content correctly.

This is the content that people read on your web pages (*not the <title> or meta tags mentioned earlier*).

Firstly, always use heading tags.

Use <h1> tags for main titles and make sure you have an <h1> on **every** page:

```
<h1>Main page title</h1>
```

Use <h2> to <h6> tags for all following subtitles:

```
<h2>Subtitle text here</h2>
```

Make sure you include keywords in these titles and subtitles (usually the ones you have used within the <title> and <meta> description tag). Again, ensure they accurately describe page content and that they are useful for readers.

Avoid redundant phrases if they are not needed:

```
<h1>Accounting services and much more</h1>
```

In this example, remove the "and much more" and maybe have the "much more" items in their own subtitle tags using keywords later on within the page (or on their own page).

Finally make sure all images use "alt tags" and use relevant keywords that describe the image within the alt tag. Ensure images have file names that include keywords that accurately describe the image and store all images together in their own folder called "images" or similar.

Text which is linked, in a heading tag, is bold or is italic, is usually given more weight by search engines than normal text on a web page.

Tip 15: You are not finished yet (or ever, really...)

So, you have done all this. Now you can just sit back, relax, have a nice drink and never worry about it ever again.

Sorry, but no!

It is very important (as important as everything else in this guide!) to get quality links pointing at your web content. Swap links with relevant “authoritative” sites and do other things that will get people to link to you if your SEO is going to be a success.

This topic is a guide in itself. “Get to the Top on Google by David Viney” and “The Search Engine Marketing Kit by Dan Thies & Dave Davies” are both excellent guides that explain how to go about this. See “[SEO Tools and Further Reading](#)” at this end of this guide for more advanced tools and topics.

Ongoing work

You will find that some keywords work better than others, so you will need to make constant tweaks and updates to get the most out of SEO.

Nothing in this guide is a magic pill that will get you to the top of Google overnight.

You must work hard at SEO and always be looking at ways to improve.

Post new and fresh content all the time. Search engines like new content.

Measure your success

Finally, you must monitor your visitors to know how well your SEO is doing.

Look for the “Views” figure at the bottom of Marketplace listings and Blogs on Ecademy to know how many times they have been looked at. On profiles, look at “Profile Hits”, in the blue bar towards the top of your profile to know how many times it has been visited.

Google provide a free tool known as “Analytics”, that helps you track visitor numbers on your own website. It also shows where visitors come from (e.g. did they click on an Ecademy blog or Marketplace listing) and, if they used a search engine, what keywords they used to find you and more. A link to this is included in the [section that follows](#).

GOOD LUCK!

SEO Tools and Further Reading

The various tools and books mentioned in this guide can be found below:

Online tools

- Digital Point (free keyword suggestion tool): www.digitalpoint.com/tools/suggestion/
- Google Analytics (free website statistics and visitor tracking): www.google.com/analytics/
- Google Keyword Tool (keyword research and discovery): <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>
- Google Webmaster Tools (site visibility, keyword density, tips and XML sitemap help): www.google.com/webmasters/tools/
- Keyword Density Checker: <http://tools.seobook.com/general/keyword-density/>
- Microsoft Keyword Forecast (keyword research and discovery): <http://adlab.msn.com/Keyword-Forecast/>
- Wordtracker (keyword research and discovery):
 - Paid for services: www.wordtracker.com
 - Free service: <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/>
- Yahoo! Site Explorer (link discovery, page popularity and site maps): <https://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/>

KEI explained

- www.wordtracker.com/database_help/keihelp.html

Introduction to HTML

- General HTML: <http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/Guide/>
- HTML Head / Meta Tags: <http://searchenginewatch.com/2167931>

Recommended books

- Get to the Top on Google by David Viney: ISBN 978-1857885026
- The Search Engine Marketing Kit (SEO and SEM) by Dan Thies & Dave Davies: www.sitepoint.com/kits/sem2/

Recommended SEO and SEM web sites

- Search Engine Guide: www.searchengineguide.com
- Search Engine Watch: www.searchenginewatch.com

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- make new business contacts & find work
- advertise services worldwide and get found on Google
- get business support & advice

Thanks to Simon Graham for producing this SEO Guide:

<http://www.ecademy.com/user/simon.graham>

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