

WORDS OF WARNING ON SEO

Information to alert you to some of the unethical methods you may come across



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01 Introduction

The search engine marketing industry is relatively new and as a consequence the market is still developing. However, be warned, there are some unethical companies out there hoping to prosper due to client ignorance.

It is hoped that the information contained in this guide will alert you to some of the unethical methods you may come across.

To further help you, Acumenology has produced a series of Business Guides on a range of relevant topics. You can find these at: www.acumenology.co.uk/business-guides

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What to be wary of

Be wary of 'Search Engine Spam'.

This is when the search engine algorithms are manipulated so that content is visible to search engines but hidden to regular users.

This and other illegitimate methods carry penalties that ban your site from search engines.

Outlined below are some of the more common unethical techniques that are considered to be spam:



- Increasing keyword density beyond a readability point in meta tags, titles and description, through out the text, etc.
- Keyword spamming through comment tags which are hidden to users.
- Hidden text and image links - These are normally visible to search engine spiders but not visitors.
- Delivering different pages to search engines than users.
- Creating spam doorway pages just for search engines and not for users.

Some other practices that may be used by SEO companies.

- Promote websites by joining link farms and free-for-all links.
- Place hidden links back to their site from their clients' site without the owner's expressed consent.
- Cross-link client sites among themselves.

- Guarantee top rankings in major search engines. In most instances they will get you top rankings for obscure keywords that don't bring any traffic and are of no use
- Use their own network of shadow domains to boost rankings and traffic for your own.
- Will add valueless content to your website that may work for search engines but will put off users.
- Offer exclusive rights over certain keyword guaranteed to bring in traffic.
- Sending traffic to your website from other sites for a fee.
- Offering a guaranteed position. No one can or should offer a guaranteed position.



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Conclusion

We recognise that you may be unfamiliar or simply do not understand some of the information presented.

However, when you are in the initial stages of negotiations you may wish to mention some of these practices, so they know you are aware of unethical methods used in the industry.

Acumenology has produced a series of Business Guides on a variety of topics relevant to starting and running a business.

These can be found at:

www.acumenology.co.uk/business-guides