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## How To Improve Your Rankings

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It's the number one question everybody wants answered how do I move to the top of the search results? Well unfortunately there is no silver bullet for this one, but there are many legitimate and effective ways to increase your ranking.

### Lost in Cyberspace

A popular way to find information on the Web is by using a search engine. Search engines typically use a number of methods to collect and retrieve their results. These include:

- Crawler databases. The search engine sends out many 'crawlers' which trawl the Web randomly, follow links and indexing page content as they go. Some common crawlers are the GoogleBot and MSNBot which power Google search and MSN search.
- Human-edited directories. Directories are human-maintained indexes of websites organised into a comprehensive hierarchy. To add your site to a directory you must submit it to an editor who reviews it. Many directories charge a fee for inclusion, but the Open Directory Project is a popular free service.
- Sponsored links. Sponsored links give you a way to pay to have your site included in search results. When a user searches for one of your chosen keywords, your site will appear usually in a separate section from the main results. The main providers of sponsored links are Google Adwords and Yahoo! Search Marketing.

### Search Engine Rankings

Google pioneered a method for ranking search results which positioned them as the leading search provider in the world. Their method works by allocating a rank to each page based on the number of people linking to that page. The more links to your site, the higher your ranking. Additionally, the ranking of the linker is taken into account. If the site which links to yours has a high ranking, your own rank is increased proportionally.

### Tips to Improve your Ranking

1. Build a good website. Your number one priority should always be a website that is targeted to your audience. Don't get hung up with search engine results they will come.
2. Get mentioned by the online media. News sites, community sites and blogs form the popular media on the Internet. Send them information about your special events or product releases!
3. Participate in an online community. Whenever you post advice, articles or opinions to a high traffic site, include a signature linking back to your own, you are getting a good referrer and ranking boost for free.

4. Add your site to as many free directories as possible. Whenever you are browsing the web, keep an eye for sites offering to link to yours for free. You'd be surprised how many there are.
5. Give them something for free. Does your business have any articles, booklets or other useful resources you could offer as a free download? Free downloads attract links to your website and keep your visitors browsing longer.
6. Read your webstats carefully. Particularly, your web statistics will include a list of referrers who have linked to your website and keywords which your visitors are using in searches. The keywords can be included as metadata on your web pages to improve the chances of these searches producing a hit, and it is helpful to visit your referrers' sites to understand how your visitors are finding your site.

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