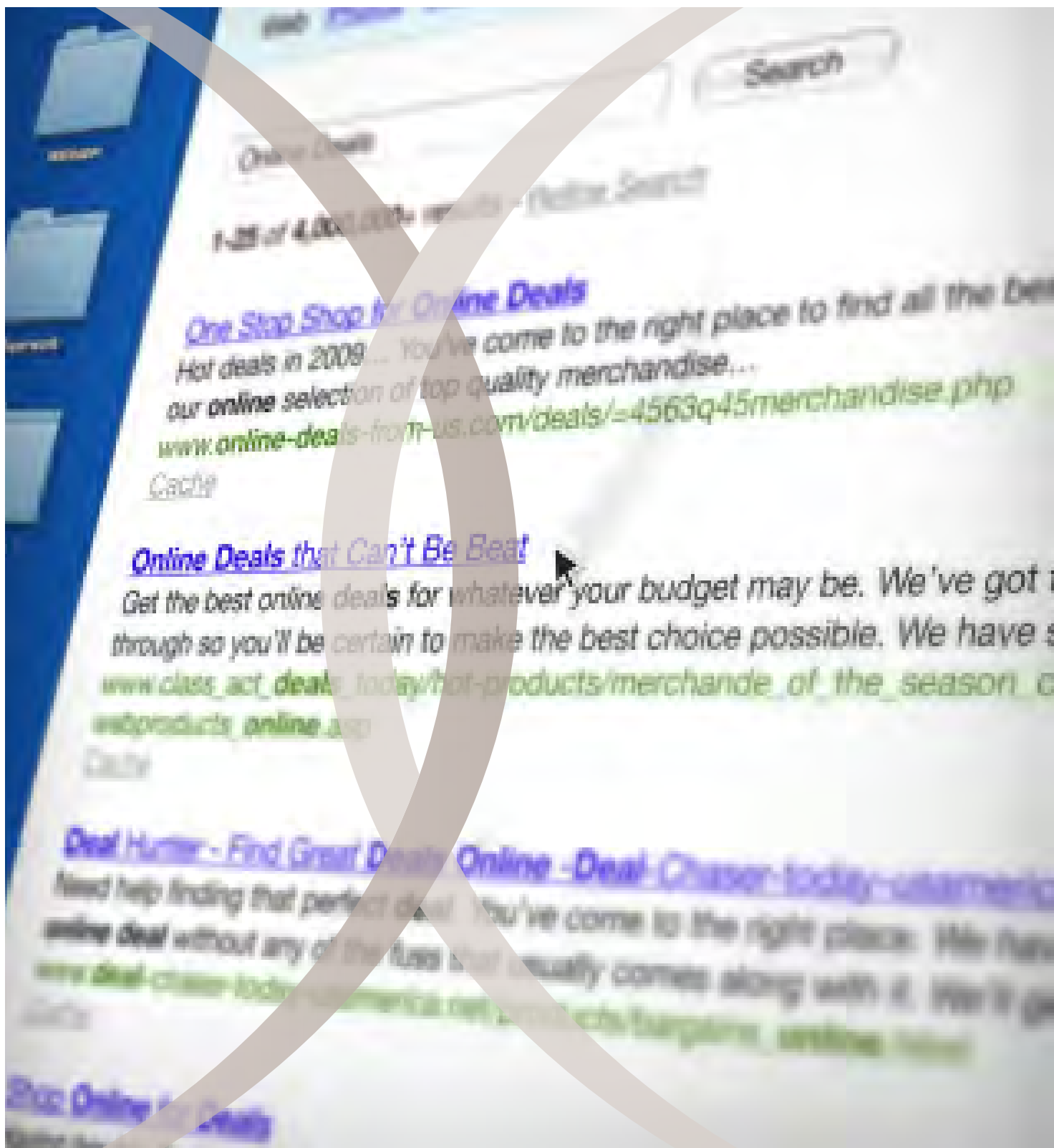


## The Impact of Search Engine Optimisation on Organisations' Websites

Canadian Heritage Information Network, November 2009

JISC Content





JISC, British Library, BBC, National Health Service, Becta, and Museums, Libraries and Archives Council working together to fully realise the potential of e-content for all users. For more information on the Strategic Content Alliance, please visit:

[www.jisc.ac.uk/contentalliance](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/contentalliance)

Produced and funded by JISC



Canadian Heritage Information Network

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# Recommendations

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JISC and CHIN have developed the following recommendations based on the results of the recent SEO case studies they undertook in conjunction with six organisations in the UK and Canada: the Archives Hub, the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning through Design (CETLD), Swansea University, the Musée Marguerite-Bourgeoys, the Wetaskawin District and Heritage Museum, as well as the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

## Immediate

### **Recommendation 1: Start analysing your web traffic**

Begin the process of analysing the traffic to your website.

To do this, you should:

- Register with Google Webmaster
- Register and install Google Analytics on your website
- Register with and set Google Alerts
- Undergo training on web analytics
- Undergo SEO training

Most of the organisations taking part in the study – particularly those in Canada – did not have a web analytics application set up or directly accessible for consultation. We therefore recommend that all organisations that have not yet done so acquire, set up, learn about and start using a web analytics application and brand monitoring tool.

Web analytics and brand monitoring are vital activities for all websites. They allow your organisation to establish the effectiveness of your business offerings and outreach activities, including SEO. Proper web activity follow-up will ensure a greater number of (and longer) visits to your websites, higher conversion rates and increased loyalty.

## Mid-term (within 3 months)

### **Recommendation 2: Conduct a SEO review of your websites**

Conduct a SEO review of your website (particularly the Canadian museums).

The UK organisations taking part in this study are generally in good shape in terms of website design and architecture. The participating Canadian organisations are notably worse off. We therefore highly recommend that Canadian museums undertake a website architecture review before they undertake any actual optimisation.

Every website should be the subject of a proper SEO review, and you should repeat this each time your site undergoes any kind of redesign. Such a review consists of validating the website's design and architecture against a SEO checklist. Your organisation's SEO lead should provide and enforce the requirements included in the SEO checklist, working in close collaboration with your information technologies personnel.



### Recommendation 3: Begin SEO

Begin optimising your website for search engines.

To improve the visibility of your website in terms of specific keywords or phrases, you should:

- Choose your keywords. Create a list of important keywords and keyword phrases, as they relate to the content found on your website
- Revise your website's key pages. Add chosen keywords and keyword phrases to the following elements of the key pages you have chosen:
  - Title tag elements
  - Header elements (H1, H2)
  - The first paragraphs of content pages
  - Meta-description texts
  - Alt text for images
- Add contextual links to other pages on your website. Use keywords or phrases relevant to the theme of your landing page as the contextual link's anchor text
- Undertake link building. Ask other websites to link to specific pages of your website. Suggest keywords or phrases relevant to the theme of your web page for the anchor text of the links that they will be adding
- 'Colonise' other websites. Add links to specific pages of your website to social media web pages to which you can contribute (eg, blogs, wikis, etc.). The anchor text of the links that you place should include keywords or phrases relevant to your web page's theme

We strongly recommend that each organisation's SEO lead allocate half an hour a day to the above activities. We also recommend that each organisation have the majority of its employees allocate 15 minutes a day to link building and colonisation, based on themes (three to five themes per employee for all media). If the organisation's website is large, few employees are available or a lot of remedial work is necessary, more resources will be required, especially for the SEO lead.

## Long term (within one year)

### Recommendation 4: Integrate SEO into your business model

Integrate all of the above search engine marketing activities and best practices into your organisation's business model.

Integrating SEO into your business model will affect several key areas of your organisation.

#### Staff skills

You will need staff who can carry out the many activities involved in SEO. To ensure your staff have the right skills, you should:

- Develop an upper-level management team that understands and supports SEO
- Provide SEO training to current staff
- Revise your human resources recruitment criteria for new staff
- Ensure that your marketing and communication staff are capable of initiating, leading and monitoring an organisation-wide Search Engine Marketing (SEM) strategy

#### Product

You will need a product that meets your audience's needs and can be easily found through search engines. To create such a product, you should:

- Complete the list of keywords (both single words and keyword phrases) that are used by your target audience, and develop a process to ensure that this list is updated regularly
- Revise the content of all your web pages, so that it is written, presented and packaged in a clear and thematic manner that focuses on these keywords and your target audience's needs

The above will help your organisation talk to the audience that comes to your site from search engines. However, it will not have any effect if your website design and architecture are not search engine friendly. Therefore, make sure that you have design and architecture policies in place that encourage best practices in website development and maintenance.

### **Client relations**

You will need to go where your audience is on the web, and to let them know that you can help answer their needs. To do this, you should:

- Increase the points of access to your content by undertaking link building, colonisation and multi-publishing/RSS
- Optimise your website for social media by networking, socialising and building a community around your offering
- Set web analytics and monitoring tools that allow you to understand your customers' behaviour, monitor your reputation, track your performance and understand the contribution of every single online activity

### **Resource allocation**

You will need to ensure that your organisation is set up to support an ongoing and sustained SEO process. The case studies highlighted the fact that SEO activities are beyond the normal daily activities of many organisations. One reason for this is that SEO work is often done for sites that already exist, thus redoing work that could have been done more easily when the sites were first created. Having SEO best practices included in your organisation's business model will allow you to do the job right the first time around, thus eliminating the need to redo the work, and will produce long-term savings. To ensure that you have allocated resources properly, you should:

- Revise procedures and staff task assignments as they directly relate to SEO (web design, writing and promotion)
- Allocate budget resources for SEO training
- Allocate 15 to 30 minutes per day for most employees to professionally and thematically colonise, network and socialise on the web, using three to five themes per employee
- Allocate extra time and resources to your SEO lead during the transition period. Remedial work requires extra time and resources. So does the process of developing and integrating into your business model policies and procedures that encourage SEO best practices in website architecture, writing and outreach. As soon as the remedial work is done and the best practices have been implemented, these extra resources will no longer be needed; at this point, employees will simply be doing their daily tasks differently and more efficiently, producing a positive SEO result without the extra resource allocation.

## **Recommendation 5: JISC and CHIN should offer SEO training**

CHIN and JISC should help their members develop SEO skills by offering them the following training modules:

- Web analytics
- Web content writing
- Website design (possibly CHIN only, as website architecture and design practice is in better shape in the UK than in Canada)
- Social media optimisation

These courses should be made available both online and on-site at industry events. They should be developed at both beginner and advanced levels.

# Executive Summary

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## Background

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the process of making a website attractive to search engines. The better a website is optimised, the higher its ranking will be in 'organic' search result listings – that is, results in which sites are ranked according to the relevance of their content to the search terms used.

SEO works by:

- Editing the website's content to include commonly used search terms
- Editing the website's HTML code
- Removing barriers to indexation of the website by search engines
- Increasing link and social media popularity

To investigate whether a few simple and inexpensive SEO techniques can increase an organisation's web visibility and significantly increase traffic to the organisation's website, the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) undertook case studies with three organisations in the UK.

The case studies involved:

- A review of the existing websites
- The development of recommendations for SEO-related improvements
- The development of keyword phrases for each website
- The implementation of the recommendations, based on the keyword phrases developed
- The monitoring and evaluation of the effects of optimisation

## Findings

During the course of the study, the participating organisations were not able to complete all of the necessary tasks for their respective websites. The main reasons for this were:

- Website architecture changes for one of the participants were more significant than expected
- The initial SEO tasks (setting up and using web analytics software, choosing keywords, etc.) were well beyond the daily activities of most participants
- The participants' technical knowledge (particularly in regard to SEO) was very low, and they required more coaching than expected

Despite these facts, the study indicates that implementing SEO – even in a limited way – produces positive results.



Swansea University was never able to develop a final list of keyword phrases, but it did make other recommended changes to its website's architecture. The website's organic search traffic increased by 2.77% over the same period during the previous year.

During the study, organic search traffic as a percentage of the total traffic to the website of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning through Design (CETLD) rose from 57.02% to a peak of 61.06%.

The Archives Hub website suffered a server outage that kept it offline for several days during the monitoring period, which had a negative effect on search engines' indexing and ranking of its website. Nevertheless, the percentage of total traffic to the website from organic search increased from 34.33% to a high of 41.6% during the study.

Overall, after some of the changes recommended during the study were implemented, most searches carried out with Google using the chosen keywords produced results that placed the sites in question within the top three pages of the search results. Before this study, their websites had not appeared in the results at all for these particular keywords.

## Conclusions

Based on the data gathered during these case studies, we can conclude that:

- Minor adjustments to website text – especially page titles and description meta tags – improve both the quantity and quality of visits
- Selecting the appropriate keyword phrases is critical. It is important to have keyword phrases that reflect the pages' content, are used frequently by searchers, and have a strong likelihood of placing the website in the top ten search results
- SEO activities can be demanding. For the organisations studied, implementing SEO went well beyond their normal daily activities
- Resources must be committed to developing a linking strategy for the organisation, and staff must continually seek out new links to specific pages
- Search Engine Optimisation is a long-term strategy. SEO best practices must become part of the entire web team's everyday way of thinking
- Any future case study should focus on one organisation only for a period of 12 months. It should be mandatory that participants undertake SEO training before participating in such a case study

# Case Study Overview

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The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) wanted to investigate the hypothesis that implementing a few simple and inexpensive Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) techniques can increase an organisation's web visibility and significantly augment traffic to the organisation's website.

In support of this hypothesis it undertook case studies on SEO in collaboration with the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) and three UK organisations: Swansea University ([www.swansea.ac.uk](http://www.swansea.ac.uk)), the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning through Design (CETLD – <http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk>) and the Archives Hub ([www.archiveshub.ac.uk](http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk)). CHIN engaged K'nechtology Inc. to evaluate the case study participants' current websites and recommend changes to optimise them for search engines.

In all cases, Google Analytics was chosen as the web analytics tool for tracking and reporting on website traffic.

## The case study structure

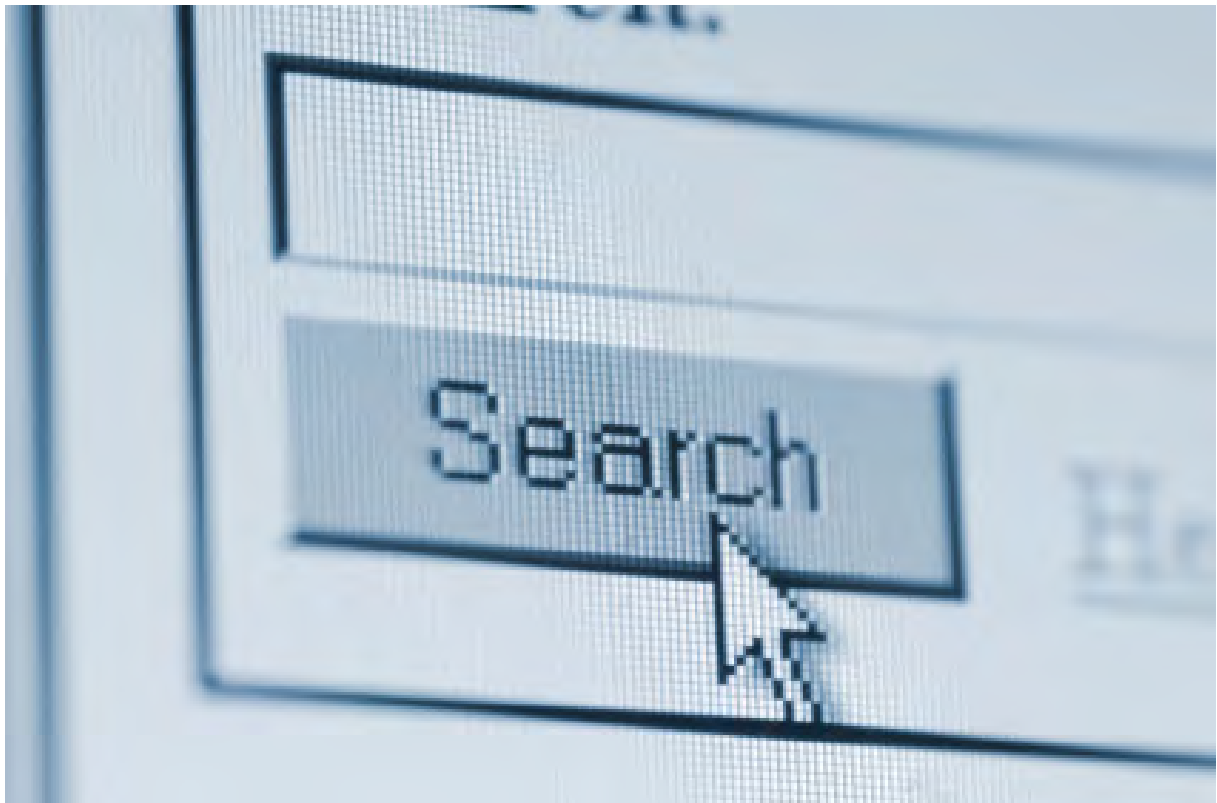
All three case studies included the following steps:

1. Website review and recommendations
  - a) Each website was reviewed from the perspective of search engine optimisation. Specific recommendations were then made that, when implemented, would make the website more search engine friendly and enable it to better comply with SEO best practices
  - b) The owners of the websites were to implement the recommended changes to the best of their ability within the limitations of time, resources and budget
2. Keyword evaluation
  - a) Cooperatively, the case study participants and the contractor developed a final list of five to ten keyword phrases. Each phrase contained a minimum of two to three words to target as part of this study
  - b) The primary criteria for the keyword phrase selection was the likelihood of achieving a top 10 or top 20 ranking in UK search results in Google.co.uk and provide a reasonable amount of monthly search volume
3. Web page optimisation
  - a) The participating organisations used the identified keyword phrases and either optimised existing pages to target these phrases or developed new website content that targeted the identified pages
4. On-going monitoring, evaluation and adjustment
  - a) The contractor monitored each site for the specific keyword phrases from the perspective of search engine ranking in the following search engines: Google.co.uk, Google.com and Yahoo.co.uk
  - b) Based on initial rankings, the contractor provided recommendations for the continual improvement of the existing content to further increase page ranking where necessary



## Project schedule

Activity	Responsibility	Start Date	End Date
Teleconference #1: Introduction	JISC and organisations	23 Feb 2009	23 Feb 2009
Prepare list of key phrases	Organisations	23 Feb 2009	6 March 2009
Review organisations' websites	JISC	23 Feb 2009	6 March 2009
Revise key phrases	JISC and organisations	9 March 2009	13 March 2008
Install Google Analytics	JISC and organisations	23 Feb 2009	6 March 2009
Track current activity and collect current stats	JISC	9 March 2009	22 March 2009
Teleconference #2: Recommendations	JISC and organisations	9 March 2009	9 March 2009
Optimise organisations' websites	Organisations	16 March 2009	22 June 2009
Track new activity and collect new stats	Organisations	23 March 2009	22 June 2009
Analyse results	JISC	16 March 2009	22 June 2009
Write up results	JISC	15 June 2009	21 June 2009
Final report and presentation	JISC	22 June 2009	22 June 2009



# The Case Studies

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## Methodology

The following three participating websites were identified as case study participants:

- **Swansea University** – [www.swansea.ac.uk](http://www.swansea.ac.uk)
- **Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning through Design (CETLD)** – <http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk>
- **Archives Hub** – [www.archiveshub.ac.uk](http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk)

The case studies were initiated with introductory phone meetings between representatives from CHIN, JISC and the individual participating organisations on 25 February 2008.

The goal established at that time was to complete the website reviews within ten days and recommend changes that could be implemented as quickly as possible thereafter.

Keyword analysis was broken down into the following steps:

1. Participants provided ten two- to three-word keyword phrases as starting points – 6 March
2. The contractor reviewed these words and provided a list of recommended keyword phrases – 10 March
3. A final list of keyword phrases were implemented within the participating sites by 15 March
4. Monitoring of search engine ranking began at the time when the final list of keyword phrases was agreed to and weekly reporting began the following week

It was the responsibility of the case study participants to implement specific recommendations where possible into the existing websites, followed by adjustment to existing pages and/or the creation of new pages that would target the identified keyword phrases. Once completed, the participants were responsible for soliciting links and developing links via social media (ie blogs, social bookmarking sites and social networks).

## Issues and structural changes

### Keyword phrases

The selections of keyword phrases presented the greatest stumbling block during the case studies. All participants were to provide a list of two- to three-word phrases that reflected specific themes within their websites. Instead, participants provided a list primarily composed of single words or very general/generic phrases. Since it is almost impossible to obtain meaningful results using a single word search term in such a short period of time (12 weeks), participants had to go back and develop a new list of keywords for evaluation, thereby delaying the deliverable of the final keyword recommendations.

Once a list of recommended keyword phrases was proposed and submitted, it took most participants longer to review these recommendations than anticipated. Swansea University was not able to get approval of the keyword phrases on time for the case study. As a consequence, they were eventually dropped from the case studies leaving just CETLD and the Archives Hub as participants.

### Website structures

The Archives Hub provided additional challenges, as their website is scheduled for a complete makeover that will address many of the issues identified during the evaluation. Because of the complexity of these changes, they could not implement all of them during the case study. However, a compromise was reached when it was determined that specific new pages would be created for the case study to target the identified keyword phrases and that these could be built as static pages (outside of the existing template structure) in a manner more consistent with SEO best practices.

# Case Study Individual Results

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## Swansea University

### Summary of evaluation findings

Swansea did not complete all the associated tasks, and therefore had to withdraw from the project. Despite this situation, Swansea was able to increase organic search traffic to the website by 2.77% (May 2009 compared to May 2008) while the overall traffic to the site only increased 0.12% during the same period.

### Website review and recommendations

Based on the initial website analysis, the following task list was compiled and provided to Swansea University.

Task specifications	Priority
Create XML site map and integrate it into robots.txt file	High
Review keyword research and provide requested feedback	High
Revise page title format to place brand at the end	High
Review pages with duplicate titles and correct with meaningful titles where possible	Medium
Review pages with duplicate meta tags and correct where appropriate	Medium
Review and correct errors in CSS file	Low
Investigate CMS to determine if issue of multiple H1 elements per page can be easily resolved and if so, make appropriate modifications	Low

### Implemented recommendations

Several of the above recommendations were implemented by Swansea. These included the implementation of the XML site map and the adjustment of the title tags.

### Initial keywords provided by Swansea

- Swansea
- excellence
- seafront
- research
- community
- university
- UK
- modern



- study
- degree

## Keyword evaluation

### Proposed list of keywords

No final list of keyword phrases was approved. The following list was the initial list provided for review and approval:

- online mba
- accredited online mba program
- uk universities
- top business schools
- uk university
- university in uk
- international business school
- top uk universities
- mba courses
- uk university ranking
- uk university rankings
- uk mba ranking
- uk mba
- top ranking uk universities in mba
- list of top mba universities in uk
- uk mba universities
- undergraduate courses uk

## Website ranking trend report

Since no keywords phrases were identified no tracking of search engine rank was possible.

## Impact on organic search generated traffic – Swansea University

The weekly website traffic during the case study period is as follows:

Date Range	Visits			Bounce Rate		Avg. Time On Site		
	Total	Organic Search	% from Search	Overall	Search	Site Avg.	Search	Diff.
15–21 Feb	133,988	63,029	47.04%	62.65%	58.22%	0:01:41	01:52	10.89%
<b>Project kick-off</b>								
22–28 Feb	139,478	65,722	47.12%	62.66%	58.37%	0:01:43	01:53	9.71%
1–7 Mar	142,377	67,088	47.12%	63.12%	58.65%	01:39	01:50	11.11%
<b>SEO recommendations provided</b>								
8–4 Mar	142,558	67,886	47.62%	62.97%	58.19%	01:44	01:57	12.50%
<b>XML site map implemented – minor website modifications made</b>								
15–21 Mar	133,744	63,983	47.84%	62.93%	58.94%	01:44	01:52	7.69%
22–28 Mar	104,408	50,711	48.57%	60.61%	56.04%	01:56	02:07	9.48%
28 Mar – 4 Apr	97,010	45,624	47.03%	60.99%	56.15%	01:54	02:08	12.28%
4–11 Apr	81,154	37,964	46.78%	61.85%	56.79%	01:52	02:04	10.71%
12–18 Apr	83,752	39,112	46.70%	62.38%	58.00%	01:47	01:56	8.41%
19–25 Apr	140,065	64,752	46.23%	63.70%	59.71%	01:46	01:54	7.55%
26 Apr – 2 May	137,283	63,507	46.26%	62.85%	59.08%	01:56	02:06	8.62%
3–9 May	134,545	62,375	46.36%	63.09%	59.44%	01:54	02:04	8.77%
10–16 May	136,603	64,026	46.87%	63.44%	59.91%	01:48	02:01	12.04%
17–23 May	129,528	59,505	45.94%	61.59%	58.13%	01:59	02:06	5.88%
24–30 May	102,256	47,784	46.73%	61.94%	58.34%	01:54	02:01	6.14%
31 May 31 – 6 June	100,738	47,619	47.27%	61.26%	58.57%	01:57	02:03	5.13%
7–13 June	95,721	46,310	48.38%	59.06%	55.73%	02:07	02:15	6.30%

From the above table, note that the spike in total search generated traffic (expressed as a percentage) occurred two weeks after some minor changes were made to the website. Thereafter, it appears to be in decline until the last week of the case study. The chart also shows that, while there was no significant change in the bounce rates (either total or organic search), overall there was a slight increase in the quality of the visits as measured by visit duration for both organic search and the site overall. This may or may not be related to some of the structural web page changes that were recommended and implemented.

What is not evident in the data gathered during the case study is if seasonality has any impact on visits coming from search engines. To account for possible seasonality, we compared traffic between May 2008 and May 2009. This comparison shows the following changes in overall traffic to the Swansea website.



## Comparison with same month of preceding year (2008–2009) – Swansea University

### Overall website traffic

Visits	Pages/Visit
<b>541,859</b> Previous: <b>541,203 (0.12%)</b>	<b>2.43</b> Previous: <b>2.39 (1.84%)</b>

### Organic search generated traffic

Visits	Pages/Visit
<b>251,466</b> Previous: <b>244,686 (2.77%)</b>	<b>2.76</b> Previous: <b>2.67 (3.69%)</b>

Based on the above data, it is evident that even with moderate changes to the website, Swansea was able to increase organic search traffic to the website by 2.77%, while the overall traffic to the site only increased by 0.12%. Furthermore, the quality of the visits (as measured by pages/visit) increased by 3.69%, also out-pacing the increase in quality across all traffic sources.

## CETLD

### Summary of evaluation findings

CETLD is a low traffic website, with highly targeted content. This made it difficult to identify keyword phrases that would be likely to be actually searched for by users during the study period and yet also rank high in search engines.

With some minor adjustments, CETLD was able to rank in the top ten in Google UK for most of its targeted phrases during the case study. While the identified phrases in themselves did not deliver significant increases in traffic, the impact of the overall modification to the site increased the percentage of traffic from organic search to a high of 60.51%, while at the same time having no impact on the quality of traffic.

Due to the assumed seasonality of this site and the lack of web analytic data, it was not possible to do a comparison with the same months from the previous year.

### Website review and recommendations

Based on the initial website analysis the following task list was compiled and provided to CETLD.

Task specifications	Priority
Create XML site map and integrate it into robots.txt file	High
Review keyword research and provide requested feedback	High
Revise page title format to place brand at the end	High
Review pages with duplicate titles and correct with meaningful titles	Medium
Review pages with duplicate meta tags and correct where appropriate	Medium
Correct XML validation errors in page template	Medium
Develop link building strategy	Medium
Enhance Wikipedia listing	Medium
Investigate reason for slowing website response speed to Google bot	Low
Increase word count on pages to minimum 300 words	Low

### Implemented recommendations

The majority of the recommendations were completed by late March 2009. This includes, to a limited degree:

- Increasing word content on important pages
- Reformatting page titles to put the brand last
- Rewriting description meta tags
- Creating new targeted web pages (where applicable)

The exception was the development and implementation of a link building strategy (link solicitation and social media colonisation).

### Keyword evaluation

CETLD provided a unique challenge for selecting which keyword phrases to target. Appropriate phrases for the site are generally searched on an infrequent basis and there is little data available to correctly ascertain if there would be sufficient search volume to make a significant impact on the site overall traffic. Regardless, selecting keyword phrases that have nothing to do with the site itself, but that merely provide high volumes of search traffic, is inappropriate. Based on a review of available data and discussions with CETLD, a keyword phrase list was developed. The following are the initial keywords that were identified by the museum and the final list of keywords that was utilised for the study.

#### Initial keywords identified

- learning Spaces
- practice-based learning
- object scholarship
- collections
- student-centred learning
- pedagogic research
- archives
- design
- museum
- teaching & learning



### Finalised list of keywords

- student centred learning strategies
- student centred learning environment
- student centred learning
- pedagogic
- pedagogical definition
- practice based learning
- learning spaces
- learning spaces design
- learning spaces framework
- student centered learning
- student centered learning environment
- student centered learning strategies

### Website ranking trend report – CETLD

A base line of tracking was established on 26 March 2008, corresponding with the confirmation of the keyword phrases.

Advanced Web Ranking Report					
Project: CETLD					
12 June 2009 (Compared to 26 March 2009)					
<b>learning spaces</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	82	-	+	9	32
Google UK (UK)	19	-	+	2	13
Yahoo UK (UK)	18	25	+7	2	17
<b>learning spaces design</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	-	-	?	-	42
Google UK (UK)	31	-	+	4	31
Yahoo UK (UK)	17	21	+4	2	17
<b>learning spaces framework</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	65	-	+	7	13
Google UK (UK)	19	-	+	2	5
Yahoo UK (UK)	4	-	+	1	4

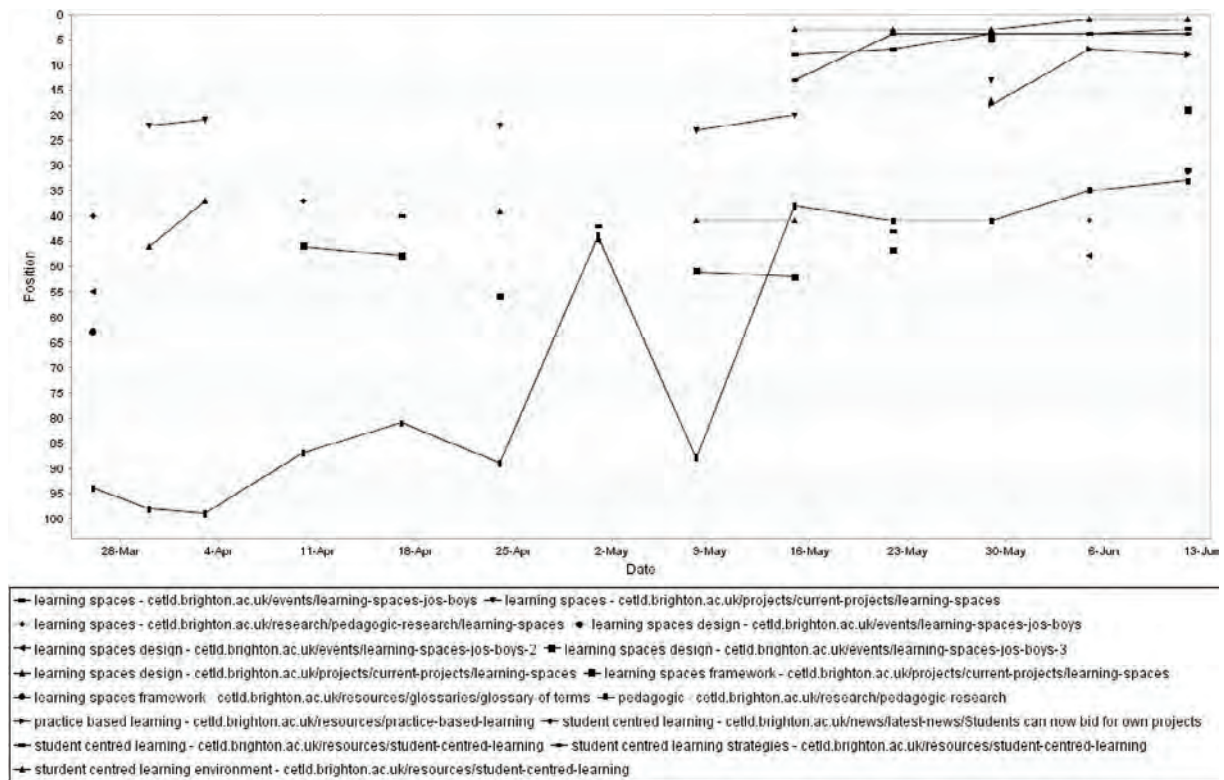


<b>Pedagogic</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	80	-	+	8	80
Google UK (UK)	33	94	+61	4	33
Yahoo UK (UK)	9	7	-2	1	5
<b>pedagogical definition</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	-	-	?	-	-
Google UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
<b>practice based learning</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	15	-	+	2	15
Google UK (UK)	8	-	+	1	7
Yahoo UK (UK)	12	-	+	2	10
<b>student centred learning</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	7	-	-	1	7
Google UK (UK)	3	-	-	1	3
Yahoo UK (UK)	1	-	-	1	1
<b>student centred learning strategies</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	14	-	-	2	14
Google UK (UK)	4	-	-	1	4
Yahoo UK (UK)	2	-	-	1	1
<b>student centred learning environment</b> <a href="http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk">http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	12	-	-	2	11
Google UK (UK)	1	-	-	1	1
Yahoo UK (UK)	1	-	-	1	1



## Keywords in Google.co.uk

The following chart shows the trend line of when specific keyword phrases started to appear in the top 100 search results in Google.co.uk, and their ranking behaviour.





## Impact on organic search generated traffic – CETLD

Weekly website traffic during the case study is as follows:

Date Range	Visits			Bounce Rate		Avg. Time On Site		
	Total	Organic Search	% from Search	Overall	Search	Site Avg.	Search	Diff.
15–21 Feb								
<b>Project kick-off</b>								
22–28 Feb								
<b>Google Analytics implemented 4 March</b>								
1–7 Mar	114	65	57.02%	66.67%	67.69%	02:24	02:34	6.94%
<b>SEO recommendations provided</b>								
8–14 Mar	359	153	42.62%	62.67%	68.63%	01:37	01:08	-29.90%
15–21 Mar	361	188	52.08%	65.37%	71.81%	01:59	01:18	-34.45%
<b>XML site map implemented 18 March. Start of implementation of minor website changes over next 2 weeks</b>								
22–28 Mar	368	204	55.43%	65.76%	70.59%	01:18	00:59	-24.36%
<b>Keyword phrase list finalised 26 March</b>								
28 Mar – 4 Apr	276	167	60.51%	63.77%	70.60%	02:36	02:02	-21.79%
<b>Changes to meta tag description and optimisation of website content to target keyword phrases made</b>								
5–11 Apr	260	147	56.54%	65.38%	69.39%	01:15	00:56	-25.33%
12–18 Apr	307	171	55.70%	60.91%	68.42%	02:08	01:16	-40.63%
19–25 Apr	359	172	47.91%	67.41%	68.60%	01:45	01:20	-23.81%
26 Apr 26 – 2 May	403	199	49.38%	62.28%	67.34%	02:34	02:27	-4.55%
3–9 May	292	150	51.37%	66.10%	70.67%	01:16	01:15	-1.32%
10–16 May	365	213	58.36%	64.38%	67.61%	02:14	02:28	10.45%
17–23 May	357	218	61.06%	60.78%	61.93%	02:14	02:44	22.39%
24–30 May	332	188	56.63%	61.14%	66.49%	01:52	01:32	-17.86%
31 May – 6 June	248	143	57.66%	55.65%	53.85%	02:47	03:30	25.75%
7–13 June	314	175	55.73%	63.69%	66.86%	02:34	02:08	-16.88%

A year-over-year analysis of traffic would have been ideal since traffic to the site is assumed to be seasonal. Since CETLD did not already have a quality analytics tool in place prior to Google Analytics being implemented on 5 March 2009, this year-over-year comparison was not possible. However, there is still sufficient data to provide a clear insight into the impact of the SEO effort on the website.

From the above table, there is a clear trend to organic search traffic increasing as a percentage of total traffic. It peaked in mid-May at 61.06%, seven weeks after changes to the site started being made.

From the above data, it would also appear that the quality of organic search engine traffic is not as high as that of overall traffic, due to a high bounce rate and an associated lower time on site. This may not be necessarily true, however. If search were working correctly, then searchers would be taken directly to (or perhaps just one click away from) the appropriate page on the website. If this is in fact the case, then a higher bounce rate should be expected. Site visitors coming to the site directly would have to navigate through several pages before finding the desired content.



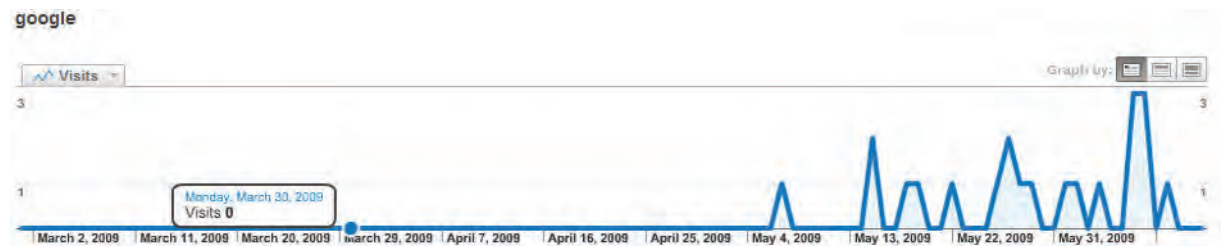
## Specific keyword traffic

The case study also examined groups of specific keywords that were targeted that showed significant improvement in search engine rankings and which did generate small amounts of traffic.

Traffic for:

- 'student centred learning'
  - 0 visits prior to May 2009
  - 2 visits after May 2009
- 'learning spaces'
  - 1 visit prior to May 2009
  - 2 visits after May 2009
- 'practice based learning'
  - 0 visits prior to May 2009
  - 2 visits after May 2009

The following chart displays the number of visits for the keyword phrase that contains the keywords *student centred*.



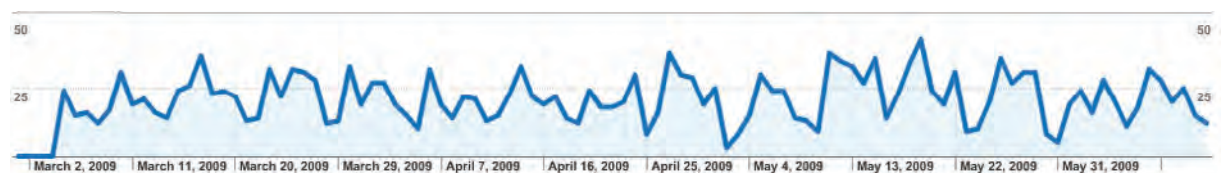
From this chart, a clear growth in the volume of organic search traffic is seen, peaking during the month of May.

The following trend line shows the number of visits from organic traffic to the site, which peaked in May and corresponds to the period with the highest search engine rankings for the targeted keyword phrases. It is also assumed that overall traffic to this site should be lowest during the summer months.



While the above data is somewhat circumstantial, it does indicate that by implementing a SEO strategy, measurable improvements can be achieved.

We further examined total organic search traffic to the CETLD site excluding phrases that contained the word 'CETLD' (because we assume that the site should rank number one for these without the SEO effort) and produced the following chart:



From this chart, a clear growth in the volume of organic search traffic is seen, peaking during the month of May.

## Archives Hub

### Summary of evaluation findings

The Archives Hub started in an advantageous position in this case study, with thousands of links to the site's home page. However, the website was in need of improvement to update its architecture and make it more user friendly. The Archives Hub had already identified this problem and was planning the improvements, but at the time of the case study it had not yet been able to address these issues.

During the recommendation phase of the case study, numerous recommendations were made about the current design. At that time, there was neither budget nor manpower available to completely overhaul the website design and it was deemed beyond the scope of this project. There is currently a plan in place to address these issues, but the new design was not implemented in time to be a factor in this case study.

As a compromise, and to test the theory of the impact of design on SEO, new pages were created that mimic to a certain degree the proposed new look and HTML structure that is being planned.

An unexpected server outage in May caused a minor setback in the SEO case study. The Archives Hub site was down for four days. During this time, we can assume that the search engine bots came to the site and determined that pages were no longer available. This resulted in most pages being dropped from the top of the rankings for several weeks, which impacted the percentage of traffic to the site from organic search results.

Complicating the ability to measure the impact of SEO on the site itself is the nature of the Archives Hub website. The Archives Hub, by its mandate, highlights specific collections at different times through on-site and off-site promotions. The effectiveness of these external campaigns (impact on news coverage, etc.), and public interest in the subject, affect the number of searches being done on specific subjects at any given time. This makes it difficult to accurately determine the success of specific search engine optimisation efforts. Through the efforts of search engine optimisation the goal is to make sure that the search engines can find and index the various collections and in turn rank them high in the search results. Even with these issues, during the case study, the percentage of total traffic to the site from organic search increased from 34.33% to a high of 41.6%. Also, the Archives Hub saw positive effects on older featured content that leapt up in popularity.

While the site overall has a sufficient number of external websites linking to it, once the new pages were created that targeted the identified keyword phrases, not enough resources were deployed to solicit links and use social networking or social bookmarking sites to generate external links to the specific pages. The Archives Hub was able to promote these new pages on Twitter, Digg, Stumble Upon and on their blog. Ideally, with a longer timeframe for the case study, the Archives Hub would also have been able to undertake a link-building campaign for the new pages to recruit links from other websites, and engage in a wider colonisation campaign on social medias. Despite this issue, the SEO case study was able to achieve significant improvements in search engine ranking for all the identified keyword phrases.

### Website review and recommendations – Archives Hub

Based on the initial website analysis, the following task list was compiled and provided to the Archives Hub.



Task specifications	Priority
Create XML site map and integrate it into robots.txt file	High
Review keyword research and provide requested feedback	High
Review pages with duplicate titles and correct with meaningful titles	Medium
Review pages with duplicate meta tags and correct where appropriate	Medium
Correct XML validation errors in page template	Medium
Investigate possibility of implementing new page template that is table free (table free design will be required for test pages)	Medium
Investigate reason for slowing website response speed to Google bot	Low
Investigate possibility of renaming directories to include meaningful terms	Low

### Implemented recommendations

The following tasks were completed as part of this case study:

- Create and implement a XML site map
- Resolve issues on why web server is responding slowly to the Google bot
- Fix (where appropriate) issue with duplicate page titles
- Improve the quality of page titles for critical pages
- Fix (where appropriate) issue with duplicate description meta tags

### Keyword evaluation

#### Initial keywords identified

- university archives
- college archives
- archive descriptions
- primary sources
- archive standards
- (uk) archives
- research archives
- ead training
- archive catalogues
- archives online

#### Finalised list of keywords

- fairground history
- history of fairgrounds
- fairs history
- textiles history
- history of the textile industry
- history of textiles
- history british railways
- railway history uk
- british railway history

## Website ranking trend report – Archives Hub

Website tracking began on 6 April 2009, one week after the final approval of keyword phrase list.

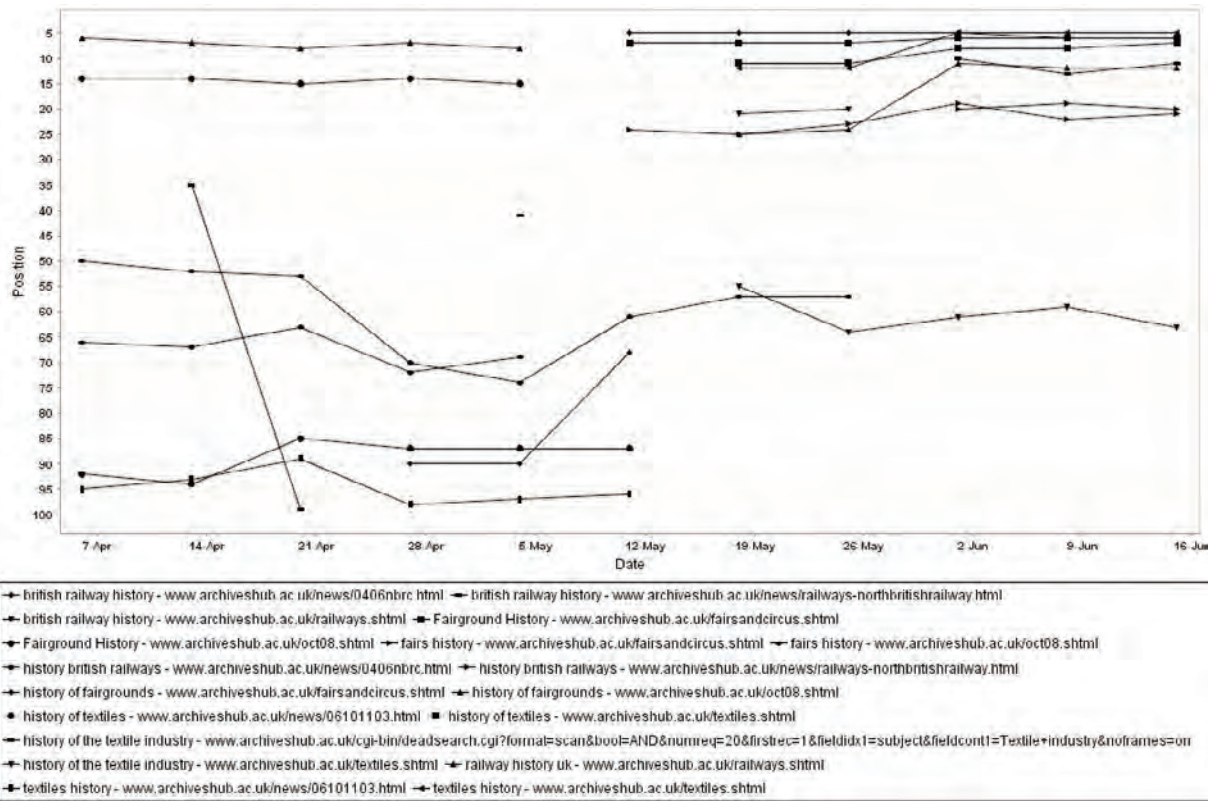
Advanced Web Ranking Report					
Project: Archives Hub					
8 June 2009 (Compared to 6 April 2009)					
british railway history			<a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>		
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	15	-	+	2	14
Google UK (UK)	13	-	+	2	10
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
fairground history			<a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>		
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	6	-	+	1	5
Google UK (UK)	6	-	+	1	6
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
fairs history			<a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>		
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	65	-	+	7	65
Google UK (UK)	22	-	+	3	19
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
history british railways			<a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>		
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	25	-	+	3	25
Google UK (UK)	19	-	+	2	19
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
history of fairgrounds			<a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>		
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best
Google	6	-	+	1	5
Google UK (UK)	6	-	+	1	5
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
history of textiles			<a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>		
Search Engine	Position	Previous	Change	Page	Best



Google	13	-	+	2	13
Google UK (UK)	8	-	+	1	8
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
<b>history of the textile industry</b> <a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	-	-	?	-	-
Google UK (UK)	59	-	+	6	55
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
<b>railway history uk</b> <a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	14	-	+	2	13
Google UK (UK)	12	-	+	2	11
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-
<b>textiles history</b> <a href="http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk">www.archiveshub.ac.uk</a>					
<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Best</b>
Google	11	-	+	2	11
Google UK (UK)	5	-	+	1	5
Yahoo UK (UK)	-	-	?	-	-

## Keywords in Google.co.uk – Archives Hub

The following chart shows the trend line of when specific keyword phrases started to appear in the top 100 search results in Google.co.uk, and their ranking behaviour.



The above chart demonstrates that search engine ranking results are not always consistent and change regularly. Despite being dropped from the top 100 for several weeks (during early May), all keywords returned to the top 100 and were generally ranked in the top 25 positions in Google UK.

## Impact on organic search generated traffic – Archives Hub

Weekly website traffic during the case study is as follows:

Date Range	Visits			Bounce Rate		Avg. Time On Site		
	Total	Organic Search	% from Search	Overall	Search	Site Avg.	Search	Diff.
15–21 Feb	2,686	949	35.33%	50.19%	63.12%	02:22	01:31	-35.92%
<b>Project kick-off</b>								
22–28 Feb	2,923	1,112	38.04%	52.82%	66.37%	02:07	01:38	-22.83%
1–7 Mar	3,526	1,492	42.31%	50.26%	60.99%	02:01	01:52	-7.44%
<b>SEO recommendations provided</b>								
8–14 Mar	2,735	1,052	38.46%	50.86%	63.50%	02:05	01:29	-28.80%
15–21 Mar	2,810	1,079	38.40%	52.17%	65.62%	03:36	01:49	-49.54%
22–28 Mar	2,794	947	33.89%	49.68%	63.89%	02:02	01:25	-30.33%
<b>XML site map created and implemented, started implementing site changes where possible, examined server load speed, HTML validation and cleanup of homepage, missing title tags, modified default page title tag form. Changes implemented over a two-week period</b>								
28 Mar – 4 Apr	2,371	857	36.15%	53.02%	65.11%	01:53	01:47	-5.31%



Keyword phrases finalised								
4–11 Apr	2,063	826	40.04%	54.39%	62.71%	02:03	02:11	6.50%
1--8 Apr	2,219	888	40.02%	52.19%	62.16%	01:52	01:33	-16.96%
19–25 Apr	2,437	868	35.62%	50.84%	62.90%	02:19	01:43	-25.90%
26 Apr – 2 May	2,632	910	34.57%	52.58%	67.03%	02:17	01:11	-48.18%
Created keyword phrase targeted pages and published to website 29 April Minor changes to pages based on page review 1 May								
3–9 May	2,320	918	39.57%	54.18%	63.94%	01:50	01:29	-19.09%
Created new pages according to SEO best practices with internal links to new pages								
10–16 May	1,775	740	41.68%	54.98%	65.14%	01:55	01:28	-23.48%
17–23 May	1,711	605	35.36%	53.89%	62.48%	01:56	01:18	-32.76%
24–30 May	2,014	780	38.73%	54.72%	63.08%	01:53	01:34	-16.81%
31 May – 6 June	2,309	824	35.69%	54.57%	64.81%	02:03	01:31	-26.02%
Use of Digg and Twitter to promote new pages Drafting of blog post about pages, should be posted week of 21 June								
7–13 June	2,494	934	37.45%	54.01%	62.10%	02:06	01:58	-6.35%

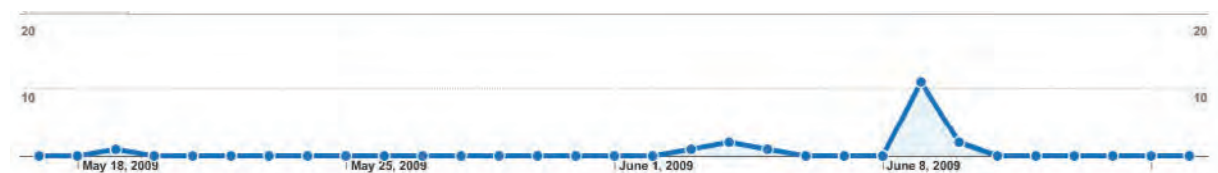
The nature of the Archives Hub website requires it to promote specific collections at different times. Also, the public's desire to search on specific subjects may be impacted by external marketing efforts and news items. It is therefore impractical to derive specific and irrefutable data from the limited time period of this case study.

However, what is evident in the above data is that, with each implementation of changes, there were improvements in the percentage of total traffic coming to the Archives Hub from organic traffic.

During the month of May (15–18 May), the Archives Hub experienced a technical problem that required the site to be down for four days. This explains the low volume of total traffic during this period. The impact of the site not being available to the search engine bots is also evident in the above data. Prior to this technical problem, the percentage of organic search traffic to the site was slowly increasing and remaining steady at approximately 40%. Within two weeks, this percentage dropped to 35.69% and started rebounding only after 7 June. The reason website down time can have this impact, is that search engine bots will try several times to access specific pages. If this page is not available after several attempts, the search engines are likely to de-list it, or at least reduce its page rank.

The Archives Hub started to promote the new pages and build links to them through Twitter and the social bookmarking site Digg after 1 June. The impact of this may explain the slight increase in both organic search and overall traffic during the week of 7–13 June. Twitter tweets contain links directly to the site, which can increase visitor traffic and page awareness. Social bookmarking sites such as Digg, on the other hand, help with search engine rankings and have the potential to generate other referrer traffic.

### Referring Traffic from Twitter





To minimise the impact of the server down time and to allow for possible seasonal differences, comparison of traffic between May 2009 and May 2008 shows the following changes in overall traffic to the Archives Hub website.

## Comparison with Same Month of Preceding Year (2008–2009) – Archives Hub

### Overall Website Traffic

Visits	Pages/Visit
<b>8,689</b>	<b>2.82</b>
Previous: <b>9,402 (-7.58%)</b>	Previous: <b>2.95 (-4.51%)</b>

### Organic Search Engine Traffic

Visits	Pages/Visit
<b>3,345</b>	<b>2.30</b>
Previous: <b>3,611 (-7.37%)</b>	Previous: <b>2.26 (1.59%)</b>

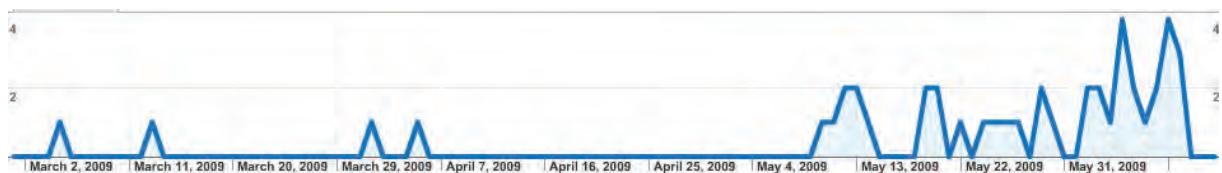
It appears that there was a decrease in organic search traffic. However, as previously stated, during May 2009, the Archives Hub experienced a technical problem that required the site to be down for four days. If the average number of visits per day is calculated and compared, there would be an average of 123.8 during May 2009, compared to 116.5 during May 2008. This equates to an increase in organic search engine traffic of 6.2%, while overall traffic increased 6.1%. A modest gain at best, but the impact on organic search traffic of down time is evident from 17–23 May; the percentage of total traffic was the second lowest observed during the case study (35.36%). Only the first week prior to any changes to the site had a lower percentage.

One factor affecting overall search traffic is subject matter. The Archives Hub promotes new and different subject matters at different times. Depending on the overall public interest in these items, this might affect the overall number of targeted searches appropriate for the content on the Archives Hub's website.

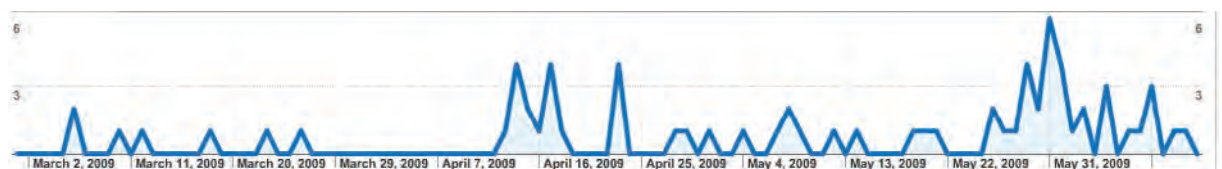
### Specific keyword traffic

The following charts display the number of visits by keyword phrases that contain generic keywords. For the purpose of this case study, the generic keywords that formed the key part of the identified keyword phrases were used.

#### Railway



#### Fairgrounds

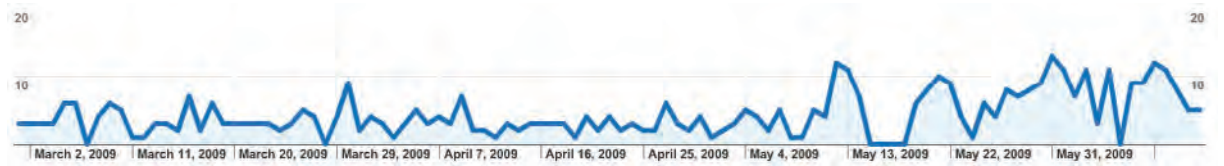




## Textiles



## History



# Conclusions

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Based on the data gathered during these case studies, the following conclusions regarding organic search traffic can be generated and applied to all websites.

1. Making minor adjustments to website copy – especially page titles and description meta tags – can and does improve both the quantity and quality of visits
2. Selecting the appropriate two- to three-word phrase that reflects the page’s content is critical. This is not a resource intensive exercise, but requires commitment and the understanding that the phrase to target might not reflect the organisation’s internal lexicon. It is critical to select phrases that are both searched on frequently and have a strong likelihood of achieving a top ten result
3. Resources must be committed to develop a linking strategy for the organisation and to continually seek out new links to specific pages. Merely creating a single link in a social bookmarking site, weeks after a page has been released, should not be the norm. Site visitors should be encouraged to add these pages to their own social bookmarking account. This can be accomplished by placing icons on the bottom of pages for the different bookmarking services with the appropriate links
4. Engaging in a SEO strategy is not a single event, but a long-term strategy consisting of a series of best practices. These best practices must become part of the entire web team’s everyday way of thinking

# Annex 1: Organisations' websites review

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# 1 Architecture

The architecture of a website has a considerable incidence on search engine optimization efforts. A poor architecture will limit the number of pages found and indexed by robots, regardless of all the optimization efforts

## Response time (Speed)

- Speed is marginally acceptable. Average page download speed for past 3 months was 796 milliseconds and a maximum of 996 milliseconds was experienced by the Google bot.

## Server location

- Manchester GB

## CSS coding validation ( 0 error)

- No errors detected

## HTML coding validation (Home page=7 errors)

- Home page failed W3C test: 7Errors

## Search Engine Sitemap

- No sitemap.xml

## Robots.txt

- Valid robots.txt file

✓ Observations



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	<p><b>Page design (Frame, table, CSS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a global link CSS</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using Tables: Two level of tables in use on home page.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use Table in CSS.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using Header elements on navigation items (H1 element duplication)</li> </ul> <p><b>URL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Simple, clear and keyword rich URL – could be improved by not using contractions</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No session ID</li> </ul> <p><b>Parameter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Parameter</li> </ul> <p><b>Title element</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Website mainly uses unique and relevant Title elements.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brand is before the Theme in the Title element: should be the reverse</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duplicate titles: 4,897 pages have duplicate titles with at least one other page</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7 pages missing title tags</li> </ul> <p><b>Indexation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All pages are indexed: Google indexed 32,500 pages</li> </ul> <p><b>Header elements (H1, H2...)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Most pages correctly using H1 and H2 tags with good use of keywords within tags</li> </ul> <p><b>Meta tags</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 519 pages have a duplicate description meta tag with at least one other page</li> </ul>
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 41 pages have short or blank description meta tags</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No pages have long description meta tags</li></ul> <p><b>File and folder name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HTML page file name contain keywords</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Folder name do not have keywords in it – use contraction (i.e. arch for Archivist)</li></ul> <p><b>File size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> File sizes are of appropriate size (under 100 KB)</li></ul> <p><b>Java script</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inline Java scripts (better if link file, but OK for Google Analytics) - Google analytics</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Page displays correctly when java script is disabled</li></ul> <p><b>Image Alt text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Picture are using appropriate Alt text</li></ul> <p><b>Image File Size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image files size are appropriate</li></ul> <p><b>Image File Name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minimum use of images on site – no benefit or harm to SEO.</li></ul> <p><b>Internal link</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On average every page has less than 9 internal link (top navigation link).</li></ul>
--	--



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	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Important pages are (1) Home, (2) Notices and Disclaimers</p> <p><b>External link</b></p> <p>✓ Relevant and mainly group in the footer or in contextual references</p>
<p>✓ Recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate why page load times are low for bots</li> <li>2. Revise page titles and where appropriate put branding "Ad Hub" as secondary point</li> <li>3. Write unique page titles</li> <li>4. Write unique description meta tags</li> <li>5. Modify directory names to contain meaningful words and not contractions</li> <li>6. Revise HTML and CSS code with W3C tool to ensure error free</li> <li>7. Create a search engine sitemap</li> </ol>

## 2 Content



Using specific writing technique will maximize the visibility of your pages on the Web and the ease with which Internet users can access and scan the content.

### Text/code ratio

Home page: 29.9%: Web Page Size : 14955 bytes,

### Word count

Pages have on average 300 words (should be between 250 and 500).  
 Have some pages that have less than 200 words.

### Contextual linking

Site uses of contextual links

### Header

Main header (H1) is used most of the time.  
 Header generally contains the theme of the page keywords.  
 Header generally summarize the page (Journalistic style)

### Readability

Does use a sub-header (H2 or H3)  
 Paragraph are mainly OK (100 words per paragraph)  
 Average words per phrase is also OK (Sentences should be around 17 to 20 words)  
 Many 4 syllables word used

✓ Observations



**K'nechtology Inc.**      **SEO Evaluation Report**      **Archives Hub**

	<p><b>Theme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme keyword is in the Title element, mostly in the URL, not in the H1 and most of the time, not in the first sentence.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme keywords not use enough within the picture Alt element. Site contains limited graphics to take advantage of this feature</li> </ul> <p><b>Current Theme keywords (Title element)</b>                  Archives Hub – Home Page                  Archive Hub: Creating and Managing Spokes – An introduction to the Hub Distributed Version</p>
<p>✓ Recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More closely align page title with page heading (h1)</li> <li>2. Reinforce theme pages with use of theme in h2 tags</li> <li>3. Apply SEO writing on the current and new pages (consistency with the Title, file name, meta description element, H1 element, first sentence of a paragraph...)</li> <li>4. Where appropriate add pictures to pages and make sure it supports the theme content. These pictures shall all have Alt text element with the keyword when relevant.</li> <li>5. Continue to leverage the contextual link. Sub pages should link back to their upper level page.</li> <li>6. Ensure that every page H1 are relevant and filled.</li> <li>7. Facilitate page scanning: paragraph of 100 words + header (H2)</li> <li>8. Try to increase the text to code ratio to above 30% with a goal of 35% or higher</li> </ol>



**3 Popularity**

A link leading to your webpage is also a vote for your page and for your website. All search engines consider the number of inbound links to a website in their algorithms. Solicitation, colonization and socialization will increase your popularity therefore your ranking.

**Inbound Links**

- 14,715 links reported by Google Web Master, 13,100 Yahoo, Home Page – 9,799
- <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/blog/> - 1,171
- <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/feb04.shtml> - 195
- <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/mar04.shtml> - 246
- <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/about.shtml> - 43

Links to home page according to Linkscape  
Home page – 2,081 from 718 unique domains

**Page rank**

- Home Page=8, Blog=6, secondary page=7, Average internal page=5

**Social media**

- Links on Google blogs
- Links on Technorati
- Links on Wikipedia
- Some links on any major social bookmarking sites (digg, delicious,Furl...)
- No News links (Google News)

✓ Observations



***K'nechtology Inc.***      **SEO Evaluation Report**      **Archives Hub**

	<p><b>Most Common Anchor Text in External links to site</b>                  Archives hub                  about                  sobre                  acerca de                  archives hub blog</p>
<p>✓ Recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a navigation link from the Archive Hub blog to the site</li> <li>2. Encourage external sites to link to the site using specific subject related phrases</li> <li>3. Issue a minimum quarterly on-line (seo targeted) press releases</li> </ol>






<p><b>Page design (Frame, table, CSS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a global link CSS</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No use of tables on home page.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using Header elements on navigation items (H1 element duplication)</li> </ul> <p><b>URL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Simple, clear and keyword rich URL – could be improved by not using contractions</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No session ID</li> </ul> <p><b>Parameter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Parameter</li> </ul> <p><b>Title element</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Website uses unique and relevant Title elements.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Page Theme before branding</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duplicate titles: 129 pages have duplicate titles with at least one other page</li> </ul> <p><b>Indexation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All pages are indexed (with exception of those blocked by robots.txt) : Google indexed 1,700 pages</li> </ul> <p><b>Header elements (H1, H2...)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Most pages correctly using H1 and H2 tags with good use of keywords within tags Most pages contains multiple h1</li> </ul> <p><b>Meta tags</b></p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 129 pages have a duplicate description meta tag with at least one other page</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No pages have long description meta tags</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No pages have short description meta tags</li></ul> <p><b>File and folder name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HTML page file name contain keywords</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Folder name have keywords in it</li></ul> <p><b>File size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> File sizes are of appropriate size (under 100 KB)</li></ul> <p><b>Java script</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inline Java scripts (better if link file, but OK for Google Analytics) - Google analytics</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Page displays correctly when java script is disabled</li></ul> <p><b>Image Alt text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Picture are using Alt text</li></ul> <p><b>Image File Size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image files size are appropriate</li></ul> <p><b>Image File Name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image names do not reflect the content of the image (ListingImage_small for Bridging the Gap in Moving Image).</li></ul>
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***K'nechtology Inc.*** **SEO Evaluation Report** **CETLD**



	<p><b>Internal link</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On average every page has more than 9 internal links (top navigation link).</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Important pages are (1) Home, (2) Is Design Good for You</li> </ul> <p><b>External link</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External links are present in contained within the content</li> </ul>
<p> Recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate and resolve reason page download speed by Google bot is increasing</li> <li>2. Modify image file names to include theme and keywords</li> <li>3. Write unique page titles for pages where duplicate titles now exists</li> <li>4. Write unique description meta tags</li> <li>5. Correct HTML code with W3C tool to ensure error free</li> <li>6. Create an XML site map to ensure important pages are given appropriate priority.</li> </ol>



2 Content

<p>Using specific writing technique will maximize the visibility of your pages on the Web and the ease with which Internet users can access and scan the content.</p>	
<p><b>Text/code ratio</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home page: 32.3%: Web Page Size : 13.9 KB, Museum Research 28.3%: Web Page Size: 11KB</li> </ul> <p><b>Word count</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pages don't have on average 300 words (should be between 250 and 500).</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Most pages that have less than 200 words.</li> </ul> <p><b>Contextual linking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site uses of contextual links</li> </ul> <p><b>Header</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main header (H1) is used most of the time.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Header generally contains the theme of the page keywords.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Header generally summarize the page (Journalistic style)</li> </ul> <p><b>Readability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does use a sub-header (H2 or H3)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paragraph are mainly OK (under 100 words per paragraph)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Average words per phrase is also OK (Sentences should be around 17 to 20 words)</li> </ul>	<p>Observations</p>



	<p><b>Theme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme keyword is in the Title element, mostly in the URL, not in the H1 and most of the time, not in the first sentence.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme keywords not use enough within the picture Alt element. frequent use of blank Alt tags when used describe </li> </ul> <p><b>Current Theme keywords (Title element)</b>                  CETLD – Home Page                  Links to Archives &amp; Resources – Resources page                  Downloads CETLD – Downloads Page</p>
<p> Recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the about of descriptive/themed content on pages to a total work count of over 300</li> <li>2. Rewrite page titles to reflect theme more accurately</li> <li>3. Ensure all alt tags are completed for all images include “visual cues” - excellent opportunity to emphasize the of associated link.</li> </ul>



**3 Popularity**

A link leading to your webpage is also a vote for your page and for your website. All search engines consider the number of inbound links to a website in their algorithms. Solicitation, colonization and socialization will increase your popularity therefore your ranking.

**Inbound Links**

- 158 links reported by Google Web Master; 591 reported by Yahoo
- Home Page – 84
- <http://www.swan.ac.uk/accommodation/> - 1,927
- <http://cetld.brighton.ac.uk/events/is-design-good-for-you> - 33

Links to home page according to Linkscape  
Home page – 54 from 20 unique domains

**Page rank**

- Home Page=5, About Us=N/A, secondary page=N/A, Average internal page=0

**Social media**

- Links on Google blogs
- Links on Wikipedia
- News links (Google News)
- Links on Technorati
- No links could be found on any major social bookmarking sites (digg, delicious,Furl...)

✓ Observations



## K'nechtology Inc. SEO Evaluation Report CETLD

<p><b>Most Common Anchor Text in External links to site</b>                  http cetid brighton ac uk events is design                  CETLD                  http cetid brighton ac uk                  view the website                  Home</p>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 20px;"> <b>Recommendations</b> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a link strategy to obtain links for a more unique domains (ratio of links to unique domains is low)</li> <li>2. Enhance Wikipedia listing and have warning removed</li> <li>3. Attempt to obtain links from pages with a PR value greater than 7 (site's PR value is 6 despite over 100,000 inbound links.</li> <li>4. Review sites with external links to CETLD and try to encourage them to use more themed phrases in their link text</li> <li>5. When appropriate issue SEO'd press releases to obtain links back to the site from Yahoo News and Google News. A minimum of one monthly press release is recommended.</li> <li>6. Have permanent link back to main site from the CETLD blog rewritten to be more themed then "here"</li> </ol>
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<p><b>1 Architecture</b></p>	<p>The architecture of a website has a considerable incidence on search engine optimization efforts. A poor architecture will limit the number of pages found and indexed by robots, regardless of all the optimization efforts</p>
<p>✓ Observations</p>	<p><b>Response time (Speed)</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speed is acceptable. Average page download speed for past 3 months was 353 milliseconds and a maximum of 1,091 (in December) milliseconds was experienced by the Google bot.</p> <p><b>Server location</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Swansea GB</p> <p><b>CSS coding validation ( 0 error)</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 27 errors detected and 61 warnings on the home page</p> <p><b>HTML coding validation (Home page=0 errors)</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home page passed W3C validation test</p> <p><b>Search Engine Sitemap</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No sitemap.xml</p> <p><b>Robots.txt</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valid robots.txt file</p>




	<p><b>Page design (Frame, table, CSS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a global link CSS</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using Tables: Two levels of tables in use on home page.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use Table in CSS.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using Header elements on navigation items (<b>H1 element duplication</b>)</li> </ul> <p><b>URL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Simple, clear and keyword rich URL</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No session ID</li> </ul> <p><b>Parameter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Parameter</li> </ul> <p><b>Title element</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Website mainly uses unique and relevant Title elements.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brand is before the Theme in the Title element: should be the reverse</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duplicate titles: 1,862 pages have duplicate titles with at least one other page</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 23 pages missing title tags</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 24 pages have non-informative titles (i.e. "New Page 1 - www.swan.ac.uk/AU/surfing/calendar")</li> </ul> <p><b>Indexation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All pages are indexed: Google indexed 20,000 pages</li> </ul> <p><b>Header elements (H1, H2...)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Most pages correctly using H1 and H2 tags with good use of keywords within tags</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Most pages contains multiple h1</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Meta tags</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 56 pages have a duplicate description meta tag with at least one other page</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 pages have short or blank description meta tags</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No pages have long description meta tags</li></ul> <p><b>File and folder name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HTML page file name contain keywords</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Folder name have keywords in it</li></ul> <p><b>File size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> File sizes are of appropriate size (under 100 KB)</li></ul> <p><b>Java script</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No inline Java scripts (better if link file, but OK for Google Analytics) - Google analytics</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Page displays correctly when java script is disabled</li></ul> <p><b>Image Alt text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Picture are using Alt text</li></ul> <p><b>Image File Size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image files size are appropriate</li></ul> <p><b>Image File Name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image names do not reflect the content of the image (Media_4986.en.png for School of Engineering).</li></ul>	
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	<p><b>Internal link</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On average every page has more than 9 internal link (top navigation link).</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Important pages are (1) Home, (2) Residential Services</li> </ul> <p><b>External link</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No clear location or concentration for external links</li> </ul>
<p> Recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revise page titles and where appropriate put branding "Swansea University" as secondary point where appropriate</li> <li>2. Write unique page titles for pages where duplicate titles now exists</li> <li>3. Write unique description meta tags</li> <li>4. Correct CSS code with W3C tool to ensure error free</li> <li>5. Create an XML site map to ensure important pages are given appropriate priority.</li> </ol>



 <p><b>2 Content</b></p>	<p>Using specific writing technique will maximize the visibility of your pages on the Web and the ease with which Internet users can access and scan the content.</p>
<p><b>Text/code ratio</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home page: 23.2%: Web Page Size : 13.4 KB, Study @ Swansea 28.1%: Web Page Size: 13.4KB</li> </ul> <p><b>Word count</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pages have on average 300 words (should be between 250 and 500).</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some pages that have less than 200 words.</li> </ul> <p><b>Contextual linking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site uses of contextual links</li> </ul> <p><b>Header</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main header (H1) is used most of the time.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Header generally contains the theme of the page keywords.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Header generally summarize the page (Journalistic style)</li> </ul> <p><b>Readability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does use a sub-header (H2 or H3)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paragraph are mainly OK (100 words per paragraph)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Average words per phrase is also OK (Sentences should be around 17 to 20 words)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Many 4 syllables word used</li> </ul>	<p>Observations</p>



**SEO Evaluation Report** **Swansea**



	<p><b>Theme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme keyword is in the Title element, mostly in the URL, not in the H1 and most of the time, not in the first sentence.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme keywords not use enough within the picture Alt element. Site contains limited graphics to take advantage of this feature</li> </ul> <p><b>Current Theme keywords (Title element)</b>                  Swansea University – Home Page                  Swansea University - Studying @ Swansea – Studying at Swansea</p>
<p> <b>Recommendations</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All pages contain at least 2 H1 tags (1 for primary navigation and for content) pages should be changed to use only a single H1 tag</li> <li>2. Reinforce theme pages with use of theme in h2 tags</li> <li>3. File names for images on the site should be named to be consistent with the theme of the page on where they appear. These pictures shall all have Alt text element with the keyword when relevant.</li> <li>4. Continue to leverage the contextual link. Sub pages should link back to their upper level page.</li> <li>5. Facilitate page scanning: paragraph of 100 words + header (H2)</li> <li>6. On various sub-section intro pages and more SEO style content to increase word count to a minimum of 300 words</li> </ol>

### 3 Popularity

A link leading to your webpage is also a vote for your page and for your website. All search engines consider the number of inbound links to a website in their algorithms. Solicitation, colonization and socialization will increase your popularity therefore your ranking.

#### Inbound Links

129,013 links reported by Google Web Master; 3,980,000 reported by Yahoo

Home Page – 14,205

<http://www.swan.ac.uk/accommodation/> - 1,927

<http://www.swan.ac.uk/alumniandvisitors/> - 1,884

<http://www.swan.ac.uk/businessandcareers/> - 1,876

<http://www.swan.ac.uk/businessinnovation/> - 1,877

Links to home page according to Linkscape

Home page – 2,309 from 1,077 unique domains

#### Page rank

Home Page=7, Study@Swansea=6, secondary page=6, Average internal page=6

#### Social media

Links on Google blogs

Links on Technorati

Links on Wikipedia

Some links on any major social bookmarking sites (digg, delicious,Furl...)

News links (Google News)

Observations



**SEO Evaluation Report** **Swansea**

*K'nechtology Inc.*

	<p><b>Most Common Anchor Text in External links to site</b>                  University of Wales Swansea                  Swansea University                  Friedrich Nietzsche Society                  Blank (indicates link from image)                  www.swan.ac.uk</p>
<p>✓ Recommendations</p>	<p>1. Develop a link strategy to obtain links for a more unique domains (ratio of links to unique domains is low)                  2. Attempt to obtain links from pages with a PR value greater than 7 (site's PR value is 7 despite over 100,000 inbound links).</p>

## The Impact of Search Engine Optimisation on Organisations' Websites

Canadian Heritage Information Network, November 2009

Further information about JISC:

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