

How Do Search Engines Locate My Website?

(And What Can I Do to Attract Them?)



It is important for every online business to be 'found' by search engines. Even household name businesses need their websites to rank well on Search Engine Results Pages (S.E.R.P.s) to attract every possible prospect to their online store. The purpose of this white paper is to explain the how and why of this process. This way online business owners will be better informed as they seek to partner with a digital marketing agency to manage and maintain the success of their online enterprise.

How *DO* Search Engines Find My Website?

In three words: via software programs. Search engines have programs called *crawlers*, *web spiders*, and *robots ('bots)*. Here's a capsule definition for each:

- **Spider** - similar to a browser, a spider *downloads web pages* for closer examination by search engine algorithms. It's an application program that scans individual web pages.
- **Crawler** - a program that *'crawls'/follows links on individual web pages*, instrumental in indexing pages for S.E.R.P.s.
- **Robots** - Unlike spiders and crawlers, once on site, 'bots perform several different tasks to assist to index and rank the website on a given search engine, i.e. Google, or Bing.

In short, these programs read the contents of web pages and feed it to other programs that try to understand and analyze all the elements on these pages. Pages are made up of different components; the template, navigation, content, links, and images are just some of them. Search engines consider the different elements of multiple pages and try to determine the template properties, the location of the navigation, and the differences between a link, an image, or content. While search engines do pay attention to template and navigation, it will never be as important as the actual page content.

How Do I Attract Search Engines To My Website?

S.E.R.P.s ranking factors include the frequency of site visits by spiders, crawlers and 'bots. So one of the first challenges online business owners face is how to attract search engines to their site. When search engine spiders crawl the web, they are seeking new links to websites or new web pages. When a new link is found, it's scheduled to be crawled. The more times a new link is presented, the parent site gains more 'importance' to search engines. Link placement is also considered, links that appear on prominent sites such as government sites, news websites, or other trustworthy or authoritative websites are considered to be more *important*. Search engines are most likely to notice when a link frequently appears on an authoritative site and will crawl that page quickly. For example, the home page of the New York Times is considered important and therefore it is crawled several times per day, while pages such as a local auto repair shop may only be crawled once every week or two.

How Do I Get More Links to My Website?

If links are shown to be the primary way search engines find and crawl your site, how do you get more links to your website? Link-building is a long and difficult task, but it's an important one if you want to rank well on search engines. And not all links are created equal. There are quality links and those every online business owner should avoid. When looking to attract quality links here are some of the strategies involved:

- **Post Something Link Worthy Onsite:** Offer a new product or service that's proprietary or new to your industry- it will get people talking about you.
- **Create Great Content:** Add website content that's helpful, insightful, informational, fun or noteworthy, making people want to link to you.
- **Press and Self Promotion:** Engage in advertising and/or promotional press activities that link, list, or mention your website. Tread carefully here, it is easy to block indexing if not handled correctly.

The ideas noted above are basic concepts to start you thinking about link building. It needs to be stressed that the internet is not the Wild West where 'anything goes'. Unless well-versed in online marketing strategies, it is easy to go awry and actually perform online tasks that prove detrimental to ranking and linking prospects. You should be aware Google has guidelines on link building you don't want to violate or you will get yourself, and your website, in trouble.

[Improve your ranks with AWG](#)

How Do I Know If Google Is Visiting My Site?

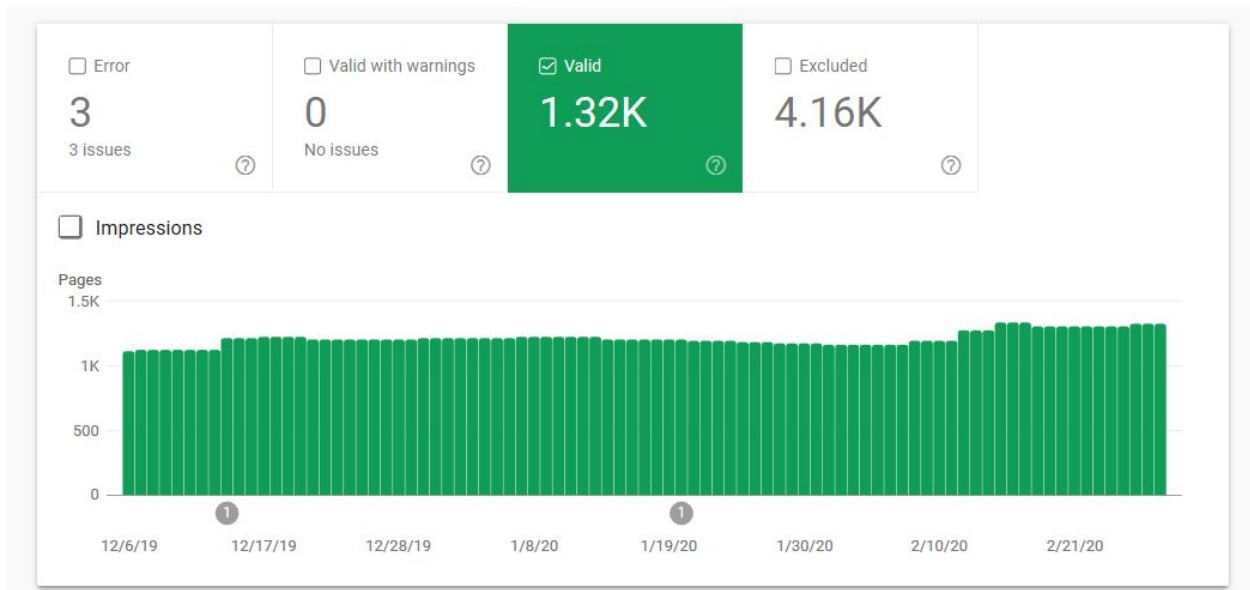
Google's Search Console is one of the best tools you can use to tell how often search engines are coming to your website. Once you set up an account and verify that you are authorized to

view information about your website Google will tell you how often they visit your site, and how many pages they are crawling during each visit.

Crawl Stats

Googlebot activity in the last 90 days

Pages crawled per day



There's a lot of information in Search Console, so it's worth taking the time to sign up. If you see Google is indexing the same amount of pages or more from your website that's usually a good thing. If you see the number of pages dropping, it's usually a sign of trouble. Before this happens, we recommend that you work with a full-service, digital marketing agency to assess your site and develop campaigns and initiatives designed to achieve your business goals - Active Web Group. For almost two decades we've assisted thousands of online business owners of every size and across many industries to 'move the needle' towards increased business success. For more information, speak with our professionals at (800) 978-3417.