

Glossary

A

Accessibility: In the context of a Web site this is the degree to which a Web site is usable by people with disabilities. Web pages often have access issues for the following groups of people:

- Visually impaired people using screen readers;
- Hearing impaired people using browsers with no sound;
- Physically impaired people; and
- Color blind people.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a short title of the official law signed by President George H. W. Bush on July 26, 1990; it was later amended with changes effective January 1, 2009. The ADA is a wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. It affords similar protections against discrimination to Americans with disabilities as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, and other characteristics illegal.

ADA Compliance: For Web design, this means a site that meets the minimum requirements which allow people with disabilities to access the information. See *Section 508* also.

AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML): *[pronounced: ay jacks]* A way of developing Web applications that combine Web technologies:

- XHTML and CSS standards based presentation;
- Interaction with the page through the DOM;
- Data interchange with XML and XSLT;
- Asynchronous data retrieval with XMLHttpRequest; and
- JavaScript to tie it all together.

Active Server Pages (ASP): A programming language that enables Web pages to be dynamically created using HTML, scripts and reusable ActiveX server components. ASP technology runs on Microsoft's Windows NT servers only.

Assistive Technology: A generic term that includes assistive, adaptive and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities.

Attribute: A part of an element that provides additional information about that element.

B

Backlinks: Links from another Web page to your Web page. The number and quality of backlinks that your site has can affect your SEO efforts, as some search engines provide significant weight to the backlinks of a site. Also know as: inbound links, incoming links and inward links.

Bad Neighborhood: Search engines define these as Web spammers. It's any Web site that uses any dirty tricks to try and increase their site's ranking or do harm to customers reading the site. These include:

- Cloaking,

- Spamming,
- Installing viruses and malware,
- Link farms, and
- Breaking other laws.

All of these things will get a site penalized or banned from search engines and if you link to these sites your site will be penalized.

How to Check if a Site is a Bad Neighborhood: Do a search for links to that site. If there are none, chances are the site has been banned. In the Google search engine, type: “site: URL” *URL is the address of the Web site in question.* If no results are found, it's not a good idea to link to that site, as it is probably considered a bad neighborhood. Also known as: link farms.

Below the Fold: In Web design this is the position on a Web page where the majority of browsers viewing the page will begin to scroll. Elements that are positioned “below the fold” are not seen when the page first loads. It’s important to design Web pages with less important information below the fold.

Bitmap: A graphic image that is composed of dots or pixels.

Blacklisted: To be removed from search engines for unethical practices. Also know as: sandboxed.

Blog: This is short for Weblog and is a Web page that has short, frequent updates made to it; similar to a Web Journal or online diary. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Bounce Rate: The percentage of visits that come to the site and only view one page. A good metric to have as you can then determine how popular your site is as well as how effective (or not effective) your navigation is. Also known as: exit rate and exit percentage.

Breadcrumb (Breadcrumb trail): The part of the navigation that shows you where you are, similar to the fairy tale “Hansel and Gretel”. Breadcrumb trails are often found near the top of Web pages and define both the current location within the site hierarchy as well as primary pages above the current page.

Browser: A computer program to view and interact with Internet Web pages. Examples of popular ones include but are not limited to: MS Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari and Opera.

Byte: A byte is a basic unit of measurement of information storage in computer science.

C

Cascading Style Sheet (CSS): A language for the Web to define the style (look and feel) of a Web page. The cascade part refers to the ability to have multiple styles from different sources merge together into one definitive style. Cascading Style Sheets can define: fonts, colors, layouts and more.

Case Sensitive: Computer programs and operating systems that are case-sensitive read names as different if the case of the name is different. For example, on a case-sensitive operating system (like UNIX) the following are three different files:

- myWebpage.html
- MYWEBPAGE.HTML

- myWebPage.html

It is especially important that Web designers on Windows machines pay attention to the case of their file names. Windows is not a case-sensitive operating system, but most Web servers run UNIX or Linux and both of these are case-sensitive. If you upload a file named "myWebPage.html" you will not be able to access it without the capital letters in your Web URL. Best practice is to use all lowercase and separate the name with a dash (-). Please note underscores (_) are acceptable as well but can be hard to see in web address, so we recommend only using a dash.

Click Rate: The number of times a link or ad is clicked on divided by the number of times that same link is displayed (called an impression). For example, if you have a link and only one in ten people who viewed the page clicked on the link, your click rate would be 10% for that link. Click rates are mostly used when dealing with Web advertising. Also known as: Click-through-rate.

Cloaking: A black hat search engine optimization (SEO) technique in which the content presented to the search engine spider is different than what is presented to the user's browser.

ColdFusion (CFM): An Adobe (formerly Macromedia) application server and software language used for Internet application development of dynamically-generated Web sites.

Content Management System (CMS): A tool for managing content, usually on a Web site, that separates that design, interactivity and content from one another to make it easier for content authors to provide content. Content management systems are deployed primarily for interactive use by a potentially large number of contributors.

Conversion Rate: In Internet marketing this is the percentage of unique visitors who take a desired action upon visiting the Web site. The desired action may be submitting a sales lead, making a purchase, viewing a key page of the site, downloading a white paper or some other measurable action.

Content: This is the substance of Web pages. It is the text and graphics that make up the details of the page. Content is not the layout or the design of the pages. Nor is it the interactivity of the pages. It is the message your pages deliver.

Cookie: A small piece of text that is stored on a user's computer by a Web browser. A cookie consists of one or more name-value pairs containing bits of information such as user preferences, shopping cart contents and the identifier for a server-based session or other data used by Web sites.

Cost per Click (CPC): With this you are charged for every click your link on someone's Web site receives.

Crawler: A program used by search engines (Google, Yahoo, MSN etc) to "crawl" the Web sites by following links from page to page. This is how most search engines "find" the Web pages that they place in their index. Also known as: spider or robot.

Cross Linking: This is where the owner of two or more Web sites interlink the sites in order to boost their search engine rankings. If detected, cross linking often results in a search engine penalty.

D

Database: A collection of information that is organized into a common pool of data records that can provide data for many applications. This data is stored in a table format and is organized so that it can easily be accessed, managed and updated. The most common type used in Web applications is the relational database, a tabular database in which data is

defined so that it can be reorganized and accessed in a number of different ways. Joining the information in two (or more) tables produces more efficient results than storing all the information in one table.

Dedicated Server: This is a Web server that is leased or owned outright and provides exclusive use of the Web server resources for that business.

Deprecated: These are tags that are no longer part of the current specification. Example: the tag has been deprecated in XHTML 1.0.

Disability: As defined for the ADA "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity."

Document Object Model (DOM): The specification for how the HTML, JavaScript and CSS will interact to form Dynamic HTML. It defines the methods and objects available for Web Developers to use.

Domain Name: On the Internet or Web this is the name (human-recognizable identifier) by which a computer is identified. It is associated to a number called an IP address. Domains can be purchased in any combination of letters, numbers and hyphens and up to/between 26 to 63 characters long (not including the extension: .com, .net, .org, etc.) Some popular and reputable domain name registers are [Go Daddy](#), [Network Solutions](#) and [Register.com](#).

Domain Name Servers (DNS): These are special computers that translate human-friendly URLs into computer-friendly IP addresses. This process takes place every time a user requests a page from a Web site.

More Technical Definition: DNS is the TCP/IP stack that converts IP addresses into domain names. If you purchase a domain name, DNS servers are given the IP address of your Web server and the corresponding domain name. Then, when someone comes to your domain, the DNS server translates that to an IP so it knows where to send the request.

Domain Name Servers (DNS) Propagation: Every time a new domain name is registered (or an existing one is transferred to a new DNS), the information about the domain and the DNS that hosts it must make its way around the entire internet. This process usually takes around 24-72 hours, during which time the domain will be inaccessible to users.

Dynamic Content (Dynamic Pages): Dynamic pages are interactive Web pages that collate information on the fly each time a page is requested. These interactive Web pages that are often generated from database information based upon queries initiated by users. Dynamic pages often include the ? character in the URL. The URLs of dynamic pages often use these extensions: .asp, .aspx, .cgi, .cfm, or .php.

Dynamic IP Address: An IP address that changes every time a computer logs on to the internet. See *Static IP Address* also.

Dynamic HTML (DHTML): The fusion of XHTML, the Document Object Model (DOM), Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) and JavaScript to create dynamic and interactive Web document.

E

E-commerce: The buying and selling of goods and services on the Web. Also know as: shopping cart Web site, eCommerce, Electronic Commerce and e-business.

Element: The central building block of any XHTML document which includes the complete tag and all its contents is an element, e.g., <p>paragraph</p>.

Elastic/Fluid Layout: A Web layout design that use relative units of measure in order to create a fluid layout that adjusts when the reader changes the browser window size or font size. The layout flexes to accommodate the browser width and the reader's font preferences. Also Known As: liquid layout. See *fixed width layout* also.

Entry Page: In Web analytics an entry page is a Web page where the visitor arrives at your site from some other domain. These are pages where people are linking to or search engines have ranked highly on your site. When you know which pages are popular entry pages for your site, you can maximize their value by adding links and other information to those pages.

Errors: Browsers relay problems using the Web through error messages. The some common codes and messages you'll see on the Web:

- **400-Bad Request:** Web address (URL) is not entered correctly;
- **401-Unauthorized:** Information is password protected;
- **403-Forbidden:** The information is protected by password or the host does not want you to enter; and
- **404-Not Found:** Server cannot find the document at the Web address you entered. You may have mistyped, been given a bad URL or the document no longer exists.

Exit Page: In Web analytics an exit page is a Web page that readers leave your Web site from. Generally it is interpreted in Web analytics as a page where readers didn't find what they were looking for and so went elsewhere. It is important to evaluate exit pages to determine how you can improve your site and make it more valuable to your readers.

Extensible Markup Language (XML): A markup language for writing other markup languages. XML is sometimes called a "meta" language because it describes how to write new languages. It allows for the creation of applications that are streamlined for the use of the owner.

F

Favicon: A small graphic that is associated with a page or Web site. The favicon allows the Web developer to customize the site in the Web browser, both in the tab bar that is displayed in many browsers as well as in the bookmarks when a site is saved. It was named the favicon because it was first developed in Internet Explorer, which calls bookmarked sites "favorites" and this icon was displayed in the favorites menu. Most site favicons are designed as a small rendition of their logo or other branding mechanism. Also known as: favorites icon.

File Transfer Protocol (FTP): A standard Internet protocol that is the simplest way to exchange files between computers. This is typically how files are placed on a Web site and is also commonly used to download files to your computer from other servers.

First Visit: A visit from someone who has never come to your site before.

Fixed Width Layout: These are Web page layouts that use a specific size as a unit of measure and do not adjust. They remain the size the designer intended, regardless of the size of the browser window or user preferences.

Focal Point: The point of the Web page where the eye is drawn to. This is the most important part of the page or the part of the page that is most dominant. It gives the eye a place to rest and allows the viewer to determine the point of a page very quickly.

Flash: Authoring software used to create vector-based animations programs in a small, compact format. Flash is good for the Web because it is speedy and renders graphics smoothly. The animation file is saved with a .SWF file name

extension (SWF stand for “Shockwave Flash”) for display on screen. Flash is one of the Web’s most available plug-in as the majority of Web users already have Flash Player installed. Flash can have accessibility problems and search engines have difficulties accessing the information in a SWF file. It is best to use HTML for your site and accent with Flash to add some interest to your pages.

G
Gigabyte (GB): A unit of measure describing the storage capacity of a computer. 1 GB = 1024 MB

Graphics Interchange Format (GIF): [*Pronounced: djif or gif with hard G*] This is one of the two most common file formats for graphic images on the Web but is patented. (The other is JPEG.) It is suited for images with flat colors (a limited number of colors) and drawings. It is also often used for animated images on the Web.

A patent-free replacement for the GIF, the Portable Network Graphics (PNG) format, has been developed by an Internet committee and major browsers support it. Meanwhile, many GIF downloader’s and Web site builders on the Web continue to be ignorant of or indifferent to the requirement to get a license from Unisys for the use of their algorithm. See *Portable Network Graphics (PNG)* and *Lossless* also.

H
Heuristic: An adjective for experience-based techniques that help in problem solving, learning and discovery. A heuristic method is particularly used to rapidly come to a solution that is hoped to be close to the best possible answer or 'optimal solution'. Heuristics are "rules of thumb", educated guesses, intuitive judgments or simply common sense. Often used when discussing Web usability. For more information see Jakob Nielsen article listing the [Ten Usability Heuristics for the Web](#). See *usability* also.

Hits: The term hits is commonly misused. Many people think of a hit as a visit to one of their Web pages. This is incorrect. A hit takes place every time a file is requested from a Web server. This includes every style sheet, JavaScript file and image on a Web page. A single Web page can generate dozens or possibly hundreds of hits to the server. Hits are a valuable metric for Web server administrators as it can tell them how hard the server is being worked and when it’s time to upgrade the hardware.

Home Page: (1) The first page that is displayed after starting a Web browser like Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Also known as: browser home page. (2) This term is also used when talking about the first page presented when a user enters a Web address. All pages would be built off of this page. The file name is typically index.html. Also known as: Web site home page.

Hosting: The business of housing, serving and maintaining files for one or more Web sites. Also known as Web hosting, Web site hosting

Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML): The set of markup symbols or codes inserted in a file intended for display on a World Wide Web browser page. The markup tells the Web browser how to display a Web page's words and images for the user. Each individual markup code is referred to as an element (but many people also refer to it as a tag).

Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP) (some say Hyper Text Transport Protocol): The set of rules used to exchange information on the Web. When seen as part of a URL, it tells the user-agent what protocol to use to gather the data for display/use.

Basically, when you see this in a URL, all it means is Web Page. However, it is officially the method that the “post office” uses to send your Web page from its home to your Web browser. It is the way the Web page information is transferred to your computer.

Hyper Text Transfer Protocol of SSL (Secure Socket Layer) (HTTPS): A TCP/IP protocol used by Web servers to transfer and display Web content securely. The data transferred is encrypted so that it cannot be read by anyone except the recipient. HTTPS is used by any Web site that is collecting sensitive customer data such as banking information or purchasing information. If you are making a transaction online, you should make sure that it is done over HTTPS so that the data remains secure. You can tell when a page is using HTTPS in two ways:

1. There will be a lock icon in the browser window pane (usually at the bottom).
2. The URL will say "https://"

Hyperlink: A way to connect information. An instance of such an association is called a link. This is the main concept that led to the invention of the World Wide Web, which is essentially an enormous amount of content connected by and massive number of hypertext links.

I

Indexing: Search engines determine what a Web page is about by looking at various components: <title>, <meta>, comment text, link titles, text in headings and body text.

Internet: A worldwide system of computer networks (networks of networks) in which any one computer can, if they have permission, get information from any other computer through cable and phone lines. The most widely used part of the Internet is the World Wide Web (WWW) and email is the most used application on the Net. Also known as: the Net.

Internet Service Provider (ISP): A company that provides individuals and other companies access to the Internet and other related services such as Web site building and hosting. They have the equipment and the telecommunication line access needed to give access to the Internet for the geographic area served.

IP address: IP stands for Internet Protocol. It is a protocol for delivering data across networks, specifically the Internet. Simply stated, it's an address of an internet connection. IP addresses are a string of four numbers separated by dots. These numbers can then be translated into a domain name.

J

Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG or JPG): This is one of the two most common file formats for graphic images on the Web. (The other is GIF.) This lossy graphic format is best suited for photographs and images with a lot of colors. See *lossy* also.

JavaScript: An interpreted programming or script language. A script language is generally easier and faster to code than more structured and compiled languages like C and C++. On the Web it's used to make a page dynamic. It can do things like automatically change a formatted date on a page, open a link in a popup window, cause text or graphic images to change during a mouse rollover.

K

Keyword (Key Phrase): In SEO, the keywords or keyword phrase is the phrase that the author is trying to target for search engines. Most of the time, you should focus on one keyword or keyword phrase per page. Keywords should

represent the main point of a page. They are the words that someone would type into a search engine and find your page.

Kilobyte (KB): A unit of measure describing the storage capacity of a computer. 1 KB = 1,024 Bytes.

L

Local Area Network (LAN): A group of computers and associated devices that share a common communications line or wireless link.

Link Farm: A link farm is a Web site set up with the sole purpose of increasing the link popularity of other sites by increasing the number of incoming links to those sites. They are typically made up of long lists of unrelated links. Some link farms are created as networks of sites that contain numerous links to one another.

Nearly all search engines remove link farms from their directories when they find them. And many also penalize other sites that link to them. It is not a good idea to link to a link farm if you rely at all on organic search for pageviews. See *bad neighborhood* also.

Link Popularity: A measure of how “popular” a Web page is on the internet as measured by the number of inbound links pointing to your Web page. Link popularity is one of the main factors used to help determine search engine rankings.

Link: Simply stated, a connection between two points. Specifically, using hypertext, it’s a selectable connection from one word or picture to another. It’s what makes the World Wide Web a Web.

Link rot: The process by which links on a Web site gradually become irrelevant or broken as time goes on, because Web sites that they link to disappear, change their content or move to new locations. The effects of failing to update Web pages so they become out-of-date.

LinkedIn: LinkedIn is a social networking site designed specifically for the business community. The goal of the site is to allow registered members to establish and document networks of people they know and trust professionally.

Linearized: Something that has been made linear or been treated in a linear manner. This term is used when talking about accessibility, referring to how a screen reader would read the content.

Linux: A Unix-like operating system that was designed to provide personal computer users a free or very low-cost operating system comparable to traditional and usually more expensive Unix systems. Linux has a reputation as a very efficient and fast-performing system. Unlike Windows and other proprietary systems, Linux is publicly open and extendible by contributors

Liquid Layout: A Web layout design that use relative units of measure in order to create a fluid layout that adjusts when the reader changes the browser window size or font size. The layout flexes to accommodate the browser width and the reader’s font preferences. Also Known As: elastic/fluid layout. See *fixed width layout* also.

Living Document: A document that may be continually be edited and updated (always evolving) by either a limited or unrestricted group. Also known as: dynamic document or evergreen document.

Lossless: Lossless and lossy compression are terms that describe whether or not, in the compression of a file, all original data can be recovered when the file is uncompressed. With lossless compression, every single bit of data that was originally in the file remains after the file is uncompressed. All of the information is completely restored. This is generally

the technique of choice for text or spreadsheet files, where losing words or financial data could pose a problem. The Graphics Interchange File (GIF) and Portable Network Graphics (PNG) are image formats used on the Web that provides lossless compression. See *Graphics Interchange File (GIF)* and *Portable Network Graphics (PNG)* also.

Lossy: Lossless and lossy compression are terms that describe whether or not, in the compression of a file, all original data can be recovered when the file is uncompressed. Lossy compression reduces a file by permanently eliminating certain information, especially redundant information. When the file is uncompressed, only a part of the original information is still there (although the user may not notice it). Lossy compression is generally used for video and sound, where a certain amount of information loss will not be detected by most users. The JPEG image file, commonly used for photographs and other complex still images on the Web, is an image that has lossy compression. Using JPEG compression, the creator can decide how much loss to introduce and make a trade-off between file size and image quality. See *Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG or JPG)* also.

M

Malware: Any program or file that is harmful to a computer user. It includes computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses and also spyware. Also known as: malicious software. See *spyware, Trojan horse, virus* and *worms* also.

Masthead: On the Internet, a masthead is a graphic image or text title at the top of a Web page that identifies the Web site and sometimes the particular section of the site. In addition to the name of the Web site, a masthead could include other elements such as images, text or navigational links. The Web site masthead was named after a similar feature of newspapers and magazines, which in turn got its name from the top of a mast on a ship.

Markup: This refers to the sequence of characters or other symbols that you insert at certain places in a text or word processing file to indicate how the file should look when it is printed or displayed or to describe the document's logical structure. The markup indicators are often called "tags."

Media: Streaming video is content sent in compressed form over the Internet and displayed by the viewer in real time. With streaming video or streaming media a Web user does not have to wait to download a file to play it. Instead, the media is sent in a continuous stream of data and is played as it arrives. The user needs a player, which is a special program that uncompresses and sends video data to the display and audio data to speakers. A player can be either an integral part of a browser or downloaded from the software maker's Web site.

Megabyte (MB): A unit of measure describing the storage capacity of a computer. 1 MB = 1024 KB

META Data: Meta data describes facts about data or information about the active Web page. Meta data is usually information that is more useful to programs and scripts than to the users reading the page. It is stored in meta tags that are hidden in the <head> of the HTML document.

Meta data is most often used for search engine optimization (SEO). The two most critical meta tags used in SEO are: description and keywords. These are sometimes used by search engines to place the pages in the search directory and they are used to provide a short description of the Web page in the search results.

Merchant Account: An account opened through a bank that is a member of the Visa, MasterCard or other credit card network which allows merchants to accept credit cards from purchasers. The funds are then transferred electronically to the merchant's bank account.

Mouseover: A JavaScript technique that lets you change a page element (usually a graphic image) when the user rolls the mouse over something on a page. Opposite would be the mouseout. Also know as: rollover.

Multimedia: The use of different media to convey information; text together with audio, graphics and animation. It is often packaged on CD-ROM or viewed on a Web site. Flash is a popular program used to create multimedia.

MySQL: Pronounced either “My S-Q-L” or “My Sequel,” is an open source relational database management system. It is based on the structure query language (SQL), which is used for adding, removing and modifying information in the database. Standard SQL commands, such as ADD, DROP, INSERT and UPDATE can be used with MySQL.

N

Name Servers: The name servers are the machines that provide the mapping of the domain names to the IP address. Name servers are like telephone books but for Web addresses.

Natural Search: An organic search is a search that generates results that were not paid advertisements. Many customers feel that these results are a more accurate reflection of what they might want when searching for a specific phrase, because they are generated by popularity and common usage. Most search engines offer two types of search results to their customers: paid results (typically at the top or on the side) and organic or natural results. While paid results can get your Web site to rank higher for a specific keyword phrase (because you've paid to be high in the results), most customers consider these results to be little better than advertising and will often skip over them in favor of the natural or organic search results.

When you do SEO or search engine optimization you are attempting to adjust the content of your Web pages to rank well in the organic search results. Also Known As: organic search.

Network: In information technology this is a series of points (computers) interconnected. Networks can also be characterized in terms of spatial distance as local area networks (LANs), metropolitan area networks (MANs) and wide area networks (WANs). A network can also be characterized by the type of data it transmits; by whether it carries voice, data or both kinds of signals; and by who can use the network (public or private).

New Visitor: A visit from someone who has never come to your site before. It is important to make a good impression on new visitors so that they become a repeat visitor

O

Open Source: In general, open source refers to any program whose source code is made available for use or modification as users or other developers see fit. Open source software is usually developed as a public collaboration and made freely available.

Optimization: (1) Fine tuning a Web site or Web page with the ultimate goal of achieving a higher position in all or a specific search engine's results. (2) The process of image slicing and resolution reduction to make file sizes smaller so the image will load faster.

Oracle: Oracle's relational database was the world's first to support the Structured Query Language (SQL), now an industry standard. This is used for adding, removing and modifying information in the database. Standard SQL commands, such as ADD, DROP, INSERT and UPDATE can be used.

Organic Search: An organic search is a search that generates results that were not paid advertisements. Many customers feel that these results are a more accurate reflection of what they might want when searching for a specific

phrase, because they are generated by popularity and common usage. Most search engines offer two types of search results to their customers: paid results (typically at the top or on the side) and organic or natural results. While paid results can get your Web site to rank higher for a specific keyword phrase (because you've paid to be high in the results), most customers consider these results to be little better than advertising and will often skip over them in favor of the natural or organic search results.

When you do SEO or search engine optimization you are attempting to adjust the content of your Web pages to rank well in the organic search results. Also Known As: natural search.

P

Page: On the Web, this is a file notated with HTML. Usually, it contains text and instructions about where image or other multimedia files are to be placed when the content is displayed. On most Web sites, each page has an individual HTML file with its own Web address. The first page you usually request at a site is called the home page.

Pageview: A pageview is a request for an item called a page in Web analytics. A page is loosely defined as all the requests required to build one Web page. A pageview can include many hits, as the page is built with CSS, scripts and images. Pageviews are a good unit of measure in Web analytics. The number of pageviews a Web site gets is a measure of how popular it is and how attractive it will be to advertisers. Most Web analytics tools will show you pageviews.

Page Rank (PR): A proprietary numerical score that is assigned by a search engine to every Web page in their index. PR for each page is calculated by search engines using a special mathematical algorithm, based on the number and quality (determined by the search engine) of the inbound links to the page.

PayPal: A Web-based application for the secure transfer of funds between member accounts. It doesn't cost the user anything to join PayPal or to send money through the service, but there is a fee structure in place for those members who wish to receive money. PayPal relies on the existing infrastructure used by financial institutions and credit card companies and uses advanced fraud prevention technologies to enhance the security of transactions.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC): Ads on the right side of the screen. Google titles this section, "sponsored links." These have nothing to do with the actual search engine results. They are based upon the keyword that was entered into the search box and how much the Web site is willing to pay to appear. Prices can vary between 5 cents and \$100 per every time they are clicked on.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Search Engines: A traffic generating method where a search engine or directory places your link in their searchable database and charges you a fee every time your URL comes up in a search and it gets clicked on.

Portable Network Graphics (PNG): A patent-free replacement for the GIF format. This graphic format has been developed by an Internet committee and major browsers support it. It is suited for images with flat colors (a limited number of colors) and drawings (line art). It's a graphics format for lossless, highly compressed restored images. See *Graphics Interchange Format (GIF)* and *lossless* also.

Personal Home Page (PHP): A scripting language designed for producing dynamic Web pages, similar to JavaScript. It's freely available under an open source license and is available primarily on Linux Web servers. PHP is use mainly in server-side scripting, but can be used from a command line interface or in standalone graphical applications. It was originally developed as an alternative to Microsoft's Active Server Page (ASP) technology.

Pixel: The basic unit of space on screen. The physical size of a pixel depends on how you've set the resolution for the display screen. If you've set the display to its maximum resolution, the physical size of a pixel will equal the physical size of the dot pitch (let's just call it the dot size) of the display. If, however, you've set the resolution to something less than the maximum resolution, a pixel will be larger than the physical size of the screen's dot (that is, a pixel will use more than one dot).

Propagation: Every time a new domain name is registered (or an existing one is transferred to a new DNS), the information about the domain and the DNS that hosts it must make its way around the entire internet. This process usually takes around 24-72 hours, during which time the domain will be inaccessible to users.

Proprietary: In information technology, proprietary describes a technology or product that is owned exclusively by a single company that carefully guards knowledge about the technology or the product's inner workings. An example of a proprietary product is Adobe Acrobat, whose Portable Document Format (PDF) files can only be read with the Acrobat Reader.

Pop-up: Usually a small window that appears (pops up) in the foreground for the user. A pop-up window must be smaller than the background window or interface; otherwise, it's a replacement interface. When these windows suddenly appear without action from the user (typically done with JavaScript) they are annoying and should be avoided. In addition, they are not ADA compliant.

Podcast: A podcast is a digital recording that is sent to subscribers over the Internet through an RSS feed. A podcast can be sent as audio or video files. The term was developed by combining the words "iPod" and "broadcast". There are many ways to promote your podcast, including direct from the Apple iTunes store.

Q

Query: In computer terms this is what a user (of a search engine or database) enters when they are seeking information.

R

Ranking: Where a Web site appears on a search engine result page (SERP).

Relational Database: The most common database type used in Web applications. It is a tabular database in which data is defined so that it can be reorganized and accessed in a number of different ways. Joining the information in two (or more) tables produces more efficient results than storing all the information in one table.

Repeat Visitor: This is someone who comes to your Web site more than once. Repeat visitors are important as it means that your site keeps its value for your customers.

Resolution: The number of dots per inch (pixels) on a display monitor, expressed in terms of the number of pixels on the horizontal and vertical axis. The sharpness of the image on a display depends on the resolution and the size of the monitor. The same pixel resolution will be sharper on a smaller monitor and gradually lose sharpness on larger monitors because the same number of pixels are being spread out over a larger number of inches.

When designing Web sites you want to ensure you build your site so as many people as possible can view it. You should build your site for a minimum resolution of 800x600 but the standard is moving towards 1024x768. This means a user can view the Web site at that size without getting a horizontal scrollbar at the bottom of the browser window.

Robot: A program used by a search engine to crawl the Web in order to find, rank and index new Web pages. Also known as: crawler and spider.

Robot.txt: A text file found in the root directory of the Web site that provides instructions to robots/spiders/crawlers on what pages it should index.

Rollover: A JavaScript technique that lets you change a page element (usually a graphic image) when the user rolls the mouse over something on a page. Opposite would be the rollout. Also know as: mouseover.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication): An XML-based vocabulary for publishing frequently updated content such as blog entries, news headlines or podcasts. An RSS document, which is called a “feed”, “Web feed” or “channel”, contains either a summary of content from an associated Web site or the full text. RSS makes it possible for people to keep up with their favorite Web sites in an automated manner that’s easier than checking them manually. It is an opt-in feed.

S

Sandboxed: To be removed from search engines for unethical practices. Also know as: blacklisted.

Screen Reader: A software application that attempts to identify and interpret what is being displayed on the screen. Screen readers are a form of assistive technology (AT) potentially useful to people who are blind, visually impaired, illiterate or learning disabled, often used in combination with other AT (such as screen magnifiers).

Script: A program or sequence of instructions that is carried out by another program rather than by a computer processor.

Search Engine: On the Internet, this is a coordinated set of programs that includes a spider to crawl the Web, a program to create a huge index from the pages that have been read and a program that receives your search request, compares it to the entries in the index and returns results. Every search engine has their own special formula on how to index and rank pages. Popular examples are Yahoo!, Google and MSN/ Bing. These are the three main search engines and you will want to submit your site to at least these sites when you make major changes to your site.

- Bing/ MSN: <http://www.bing.com/docs/submit.aspx>
- Google: <http://www.google.com/submityourcontent/index.html>
- Yahoo!: <http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>

Searching: This is how most people use the Web and the reason you need to consistently work on Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Simply stated, this is the optimizing a Web site within the results page of a search engine. More specifically, this is the process of improving the volume and quality of traffic to a Web site from search engines via natural (organic) search results. Typically, the higher the ranking the more searchers will visit that site. SEO can also target different kinds of search, including image search, local search and industry-specific vertical search engines.

Search Engines Result Page (SERP): A listing of Web pages returned by a search engine in response to a query.

Section 508: In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Inaccessible technology interferes with an individual's ability to obtain and use information quickly and easily. Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, to make available new opportunities for people with disabilities and to encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. Federal, state and local agencies (anyone who receives federal money)

are required to comply. Specifically for the Web you are concerned with 1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications. <http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=content&ID=12#Web>

Semantic Markup: Semantic markup is code that is written to define the structure of the content. This means that headers would be defined by <h1> through <h6> elements, paragraphs with <p> elements, lists with and elements and so on. Tags that only have a meaning referring to style, such as and <i> should be avoided in favor of tags that provide a semantic meaning along with their standard styles, such as and

Server: In Information Technology, this is a computer program that provides services to other computer programs (and their users). Specific to the Web, this is a computer program that serves requested HTML pages or files. The Web browser is a client that requests HTML files from Web servers.

Shopping Cart Web site: This is the buying and selling of goods and services on the Web. Also known as: eCommerce, Electronic Commerce and e-business.

Sitemap: A Web page that displays all the pages in a Web site. This should be an outline of the entire site. If you have a very large site with many pages, a site map would not include a link to every page but links to the main sections of the site. Search engines really like to crawl these pages because it should give them access to the entire site (or main sections).

Social Networking: This is the practice of expanding the number of one's individual connections (business or social). Popular examples include Friendster, Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace and Twitter.

Source Code: Any collection of statements or declarations written in some human-readable computer programming language. It allows the programmer to communicate with the computer using a reserved number of instructions.

SPAM: This is unsolicited e-mail on the Internet. From the sender's point-of-view, spam is a form of bulk mail, often sent to a list obtained from a spambot or to a list obtained by companies that specialize in creating e-mail distribution lists. To the receiver, it usually seems like junk e-mail.

Spider: A program or automated script which browses the World Wide Web in a methodical, automated manner in order to rank them. Also known as: Web spider, crawler or robot.

Splash Page: An initial Web site page used to capture the user's attention for a short time as a promotion or lead-in to the site home page or to tell the user what kind of browser and other software they need to view the site. Splash pages have many usability and accessibility issues. They are no longer acceptable and should be avoided. You should use other methods to capture attention or notify the user of something.

Spyware: Computer programs that sneakily monitor and report the actions of a computer user.

Secure Sockets Layer (SSL): A protocol designed to enable secure communications on an insecure network such as the Internet. SSL provides encryption and integrity of communications along with strong authentication using digital certificates.

Static Web site: A Web site that doesn't change. It has Web pages stored on the server in the same form as the user will view them. Typically these sites are Informational and used for marketing purposes link an online brochure. See *dynamic Web site* also.

Statistics: In regards to the Web, this is the process of analyzing the behavior of visitors to a Web site. The use of Web stats enables one to understand how their Web site is being used and in turn allows them to take appropriate actions (make updates). Also known as: stats, Web stats and Web analytics.

Stickiness: Anything about a Web site that encourages a visitor to stay longer. A Web site is sticky if a visitor tends to stay for a long time and return.

Streaming: On the Web, this is multimedia that is constantly being received and presented to the user.

Style Sheet: A definition of a document's appearance in terms of layout, font, spacing, margin, etc. A term extended from print publishing to online media. See *Cascading Style Sheet (CSS)* also.

T

TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol): This is the basic communication language or protocol of the Internet. It can also be used as a communications protocol in a private network like an intranet or an extranet.

Tag: The markup characters that indicate the start or end of an element - but not the element content itself. Examples <a>, , <html>. Also Known As: element, markup

Template: A tool used to separate content from presentation in Web design for mass-production of web documents. A template can be developed from scratch, downloaded or purchased. Once you have a template you personalize it with your information.

Terabyte (TB): A unit of measure describing the storage capacity of a computer. 1 TB = 1024 GB

Text Editor: In Web development, this computer program is used to write and update source code to be viewed in a browser. You must know and understand HTML in order to use this method. See *WYSIWYG* also.

Trojan horse: In computers, this is a program in which malicious or harmful code is contained inside an apparently harmless programming or data. Once inside the system it can get control and do its damage. Trojan horses are typically redistributed as part of computer viruses.

U

UNIX: UNIX became the first open or standard operating system that could be improved or enhanced by anyone. The UNIX environment and the client/server program model were important elements in the development of the Internet and the reshaping of computing as centered in networks rather than in individual computers. Linux, a UNIX derivative available in both "free software" and commercial versions, is increasing in popularity as an alternative to proprietary operating systems.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): This is the unique address for a file that is available on the Internet. Any file within a Web site usually has a specific URL (Web pages, images, PDF files, Flash files, etc.). Also know as: Web address.

Usability: This is the process of making a Web site easy for customers to use. It encompasses the heuristics of the site as well as the methods that people use to manipulate the site. A great book on this subject is "[Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability](#)" by Steve Krug (New Riders Publishing, copyright 2000). See *heuristics* also.

User Agent: The client or application which initiates a request to a Web server or other Internet application. Typically, the user-agent is a general term for a Web browser, but can include screen readers, spiders, Web editors or programs that access Web pages.

V

Variable: In programming, a variable is a value that can change, depending on conditions or on information passed to the program.

Vector Graphics: This is the creation of digital images through a sequence of mathematical statements that draws lines and shapes based on a number and direction of points.

Virus: A program or programming code that replicates by being copied or initiating its copying to another program, computer boot sector or document. Viruses can be transmitted as attachments to an e-mail note, a downloaded file or present on a storage device like a USB drive, diskette or CD.

Visit: A series of requests from the same uniquely identified individual (a visitor) in a set period of time. A visit is made up of several hits and pageviews and often shows a track through a site.

Visits are usually defined as a set period of time, typically 24 hours or 1 hour. For example, if you go to a certain site 3 times in the same day, if their visit period is 24 hours, your 3 pageviews will be ascribed to 1 visit. But if their visit period is 1 hour and you visited in 3 different hours, your pageviews will be logged as 3 different visits. It's important to know what the log analysis software defines as a visit period.

Visits are calculated by setting a cookie or Web bug on the customer. Some Web analytics packages will calculate visits based on Web logs, without setting a cookie, but these, while useful, are not going to be as accurate as the cookie method. Because of dynamic IP and other anonymous techniques non-cookies visits are based on educated guesses. Also Known As: session.

Visitor: A visitor is a unique individual coming to a Web site. The best way to identify a visitor is with a cookie that identifies that unique system. But many Web analytics packages try to identify visitors through IP address and browser/OS information. It is possible to get decent information without a cookie, but cookies are more accurate.

The number of visitors to your Web site is an excellent metric regarding how popular your site is. The more visitors your site has, the more attractive your site will be. Also Known As: unique visitors and unique users.

W

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C): An industry consortium which seeks to promote standards for the evolution of the Web and interoperability between WWW products by producing specifications and reference software. Although W3C is funded by industrial members, it is vendor-neutral and its products are freely available to all. w3c.org

Web 2.0: A popular term used to describe advanced Internet technology (AJAX) and applications like blogs, RSS feeds and social networking. This term is also used in the design community to describe the new trend in Web design of simple layouts with lots of whitespace and large text. Some other characteristics are a rich user interfaces, 3D effects, gradients, icons, neutral background colors and strong accent colors to grab attention.

Web Analytics: This is the process of analyzing the behavior of visitors to a Web site. The use of Web analytics enables one to understand how their Web site is being used and in turn allows them to take appropriate actions (make updates). Also known as: Web statistics

Web Browser: This is a program that allows you to view Web sites. Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari and Opera are the more popular ones. It is important to ensure your site works in as many browsers as possible so the most people can access your information. (Review your Web stats to know what browsers are most popular for you.)

Web Design: This is the graphics and esthetics of how a Web page looks and is used to establish a mood that relates to the subject.

Web Site: Collections of Web files (HTML pages, images, multimedia, documents, etc.) on a particular subject that is available from the same URL and typically reside on the same server. It includes a beginning file called a home page and additional pages that are linked together.

Web Server: This is a computer that is set up with software and networking capabilities to deliver Web pages on the Internet or an Intranet. Web servers use programs such as Apache or IIS to deliver Web pages over the http protocol.

World Wide Web (WWW): A technical definition is all the resources and users on the Internet that are using the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP). The W3C has a broader definition which comes from the inventor of the Web, Tim Berners-Lee: "The World Wide Web is the universe of network-accessible information, an embodiment of human knowledge." Also known as: WWW, the Web

Worm: A self-replicating computer program that uses a network to send copies of itself to other computers on the network and it may do so without any user intervention. Unlike a virus, it does not need to attach itself to an existing program. See *malware* also.

WYSIWYG: [*Pronounced wiz-ee-wig*] An acronym for "What You See Is What You Get." An editor or program is one that allows a developer to see what the end result will look like while the document is being created. Popular examples include Dreamweaver and FrontPage (now Web Expressions). This is mode generates the HTML for the users, which can be helpful for novices; but for advanced users this is an annoyance because it generates bloated code and uses unnecessary markup. See *text editor* also.

X

XHTML (Extensible HTML): HTML 4.0 rewritten to be compliant with XML rules.

XML (eXtensible Markup Language): A markup language for writing other markup languages. XML is sometimes called a "meta" language because it describes how to write new languages. It allows for the creation of applications that are streamlined for the use of the owner.

Resources:

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>
- <http://Webdesign.about.com/od/Webdesignhtmlatoz/a/blglossary.htm>
- <http://www.seotreo.com/tag/search-engine-glossary/>