

Search Engines

Basically there are three different types of search engines; indexed directories, web crawlers, and paid placement (advertising).

- Indexed directories:

There are three major search engines of this type...

- Yahoo
- Looksmart (MSN)
- Open directory (AOL)

Each one of these engines has a free submission and a paid submission policy. The difference between paying and not paying is reflected in the difference in the time it takes for the submission to be accepted. The general rule is that there is no guarantee as to how long it will take your site to be reviewed and accepted, if at all, with the free submission. The paid submission guarantees that you will receive a notice of acceptance or rejection in 2 to 7 business days. The vast majority of decent sites are accepted. The paid submission price for both Yahoo and Looksmart is \$299.00. Open directory is free, however, as with the free submission for Yahoo and Looksmart, there is no guaranteed turnaround time on acceptance or rejection. Also, being accepted by these engines does not guarantee a high placement in their rankings. That still depends on the relevancy of the search being conducted, to the content of the web site. The good news, however, is that being listed in these engines helps the rankings for most of the web crawler engines.

- Web crawlers:

There are 5 major engines of this type...

- Google (service partners: Yahoo and Netscape)
- Alta Vista
- Excite
- Fast search (service partner: Lycos)
- Inktomi (service partners: MSN, AOL, Lycos)

Crawler-based search engines create their listings automatically. They "crawl" or "spider" the web, going from link to link, page to page, web site to web site. Each page or link encountered is catalogued and eventually indexed into their database. These crawlers send out their spiders every two to four weeks to update their data. Each of these engines offer a web address submission, for usually 1 to 4 pages of a site, for free. But, as with the free submission offered for the indexed directories, there is no guarantee that a page submitted this way will be included in that crawlers

results. The absolute best way to get listed for free with all the major crawlers listed on this page, is to build links to your web site. Crawlers follow links, so if you have good links pointing at your web site, the crawlers are more likely to find and include your pages. Here's the good news: if you submitted your site to the major directories and got listed with one or more of them, then the crawlers will almost certainly pick up the URL that was listed. The more links to your site, the more popular your site appears, and the higher your ranking will be. This is especially true for Google, their search algorithm puts a lot of weight on the number of links to your site.

- Paid placement:

There are three major players in this category...

- Overture
- FindWhat
- Google

Every major search engine with significant traffic accepts paid listings. This unique form of search engine advertising means that you can be guaranteed to appear in the top results for the terms you are interested in within a day or less. Given this, paid listings are an option that should be explored by site owners who wish to quickly build visibility. They may also be a long-term advertising option for some.

Overture, formerly known as GoTo (as of mid-Oct 2001), allows sites to "bid" on the terms they wish to appear for. You agree to pay a certain amount each time someone clicks on your listing. This is why it is sometimes called a "pay-per-click search engine." For instance, let's say we wanted to appear in the top listings for "web site development". We might agree to pay 25 cents per click. If no one agrees to pay more than this, then we would be in the number one spot. If someone else later decides to pay 26 cents, then we slip into the number two position. We could then bid 27 cents and move back on top, if we wanted to. A full list of Overture's wide-ranging partnerships can be found on the [Buying Your Way In](#) page of the Search Engine Watch web site. An account requires a \$50 minimum deposit, and you must spend at least \$20 per month in "bids".

FindWhat is similar to Overture with a few exceptions. It lacks the listing distribution that Overture has in other search engines and, even though it requires an initial deposit of \$50, there is no monthly minimum to spend. A list of partnerships can be found in the table on the [Buying Your Way In](#) page of the Search Engine Watch web site.

Google sells paid listings that appear above and to the side of its regular results. Since it may take time for a new site to appear within Google, these advertising opportunities offer a fast way to get listed with the service. Google's self-service "AdWords" program requires no initial deposit. Unlike the pay-per-click search engines, Google's paid listings program operates on a "CPM" or "cost per impression" basis. That means you pay a small amount for each time your ad appears, rather than for how often someone clicks on it.

Other forms of paid listings include banner ads, content deals, paid inclusion, and paid submission. These terms are defined and more detailed links may be found on the [Buying Your Way In](#) page of the Search Engine Watch web site.

Lastly, a word about relevancy. It is still critical to your ranking in any search, how relevant your site is to that search. This relevancy is determined by what are known as META tags in the HTML code. The META tags, along with the page title and the body text are the key to this.

Sources for this report came from www.selfpromotion.com and www.searchenginewatch.com.