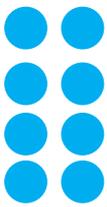


9.1 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION

9.2 WEBSITE PROMOTION TECHNIQUES



WEBSITE PROMOTION

Web is a medium of mass information dissemination. With the exponential growth in the number of websites, which has even crossed the one billion mark, the question of visibility on the Net has assumed critical significance.

The ultimate aim of any Government website should be to provide information and services to as many citizens as possible. The existence of any Government site lying inaccessible on the web is meaningless. For this purpose a conscious and concentrated effort has to be made to increase the reach of the website.

Therefore, the importance of website promotion, especially in the context of Government websites which aim to reach the largest possible number of citizens and stakeholders cannot be emphasised over.

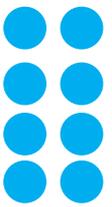
9.1

Search Engine Optimisation

People usually search for a website through search engines. Therefore searching for a site in a search engine by using the Department name or the services offered by it as keywords MUST bring the website in the first five results on major search engines.

In order to achieve this, the following guidelines may be followed

- 9.1.1** The Page Title should include useful and distinctive indication of the contents and should be self-explanatory. The HTML title should be chosen carefully considering its role in search engine indexing, query responses, window title bar and in bookmark labels.
- 9.1.2** Department name, services offered, schemes, location etc. should form a part of the Meta information (metatags) of the HTML page. The important metatags that MUST be included are the title tag, keywords tag and the description. These tags are present in the <head> portion of the html page and while they are not displayed as part of the page content in web, search engines can read them.
- 9.1.3** Search engines often display the first few lines of a Web page to help searchers to identify the sites they want to visit. The description metatag should be used to provide guidance to search engines on what to present to the users in the search response.



- 9.1.4 Search engines only consider some limited number of keywords when indexing pages. Government websites should present keywords in priority order and without duplication.
- 9.1.5 As far as possible, the content of the web page should be in textual form, including hyperlinks. Important points/programmes/schemes etc. should be highlighted as bold or form a part of the page / paragraph heading.
- 9.1.6 HTML links should be specific. Instead of just 'Our Programmes' a link saying 'The Programmes of *Department name*' will be more favourable for a search engine.
- 9.1.7 Link exchange with related Government sites increases the weightage of the site for search engines, thus improving its ranking in search results. It will also bring more visitors, who are looking for similar schemes, services or information, to the site.

9.2

Website Promotion Techniques

Apart from search engines the website may be promoted through other media like print, television etc. This will prompt casual visitors to browse the website and if they find the information useful may visit the site more often.

- 9.2.1 All the advertisements/public messages including Press Releases, Tender Notifications etc. issued in the Newspapers/Audio-visual media by the concerned Department MUST prominently mention the URL of the web site clearly in order to give it due publicity. It should be directed that no press release or advertisement of any Government Department shall be issued to the press without checking the presence of the URL of the website and necessary steps should also be taken to ensure the presence of relevant corresponding information on the website.
- 9.2.2 All the stationery items of the Department such as Letterheads, Visiting Cards Publicity material such as Brochures, Pamphlets and documents such as the Annual Report etc. MUST display the URL of the web site.
- 9.2.3 The website URL may become a part of the mail signature for all the outgoing mails from the Departments and its employees.
- 9.2.4 The website should also be promoted by link exchange with other Government websites as well as international websites.



- 9.2.5** Providing regular and updated news on various issues related to the Government, citizens etc. are very important tools of promotion. Regular revised updates on all important issues related to Government and in interest of the citizens should be given on the website. Frequent updates and change in contents will bring the visitors back to the portal and will keep the readers hooked to the website.
- 9.2.6** Sending regular updates on the websites to registered and interested users through an electronic newsletter should constitute an important means of promotion.