

## EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT META INFORMATION

### INTRODUCTION

Meta information is put into your web site by your web developer for machines to read. The sorts of information that is normally stored in your meta-data are things like the type of content, the author, the language it is written in and most importantly, at least from our perspective, the keywords and descriptions. The keywords and descriptions are what many search engines use to index a web site.

Search Engines "crawl" over web sites looking for information to index; they do this with a program called a "spider". Spiders often try to match the keywords and description of the site with the content of the site. This double checking helps the search engines to provide users with better results.

**Page titles, descriptions and keywords are a must for any commercial web site. If your web site does not incorporate keyword rich titles and descriptions your prospective customers will not be able to find you through a search engine.**

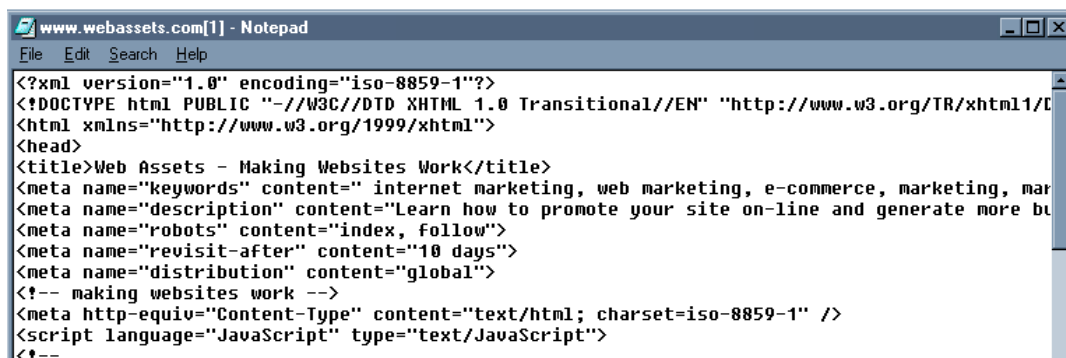
### VIEWING YOUR KEYWORDS AND DESCRIPTION

To view your keywords and description, or meta data go to your web site and while viewing your home page click on the "View" option of your browser toolbar. Select "Source".

A new notepad window will open up and you will see a page of very unattractive information. This is HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language).

Either browse through the text to find the word Meta or use the Search facility on the toolbar of the Notepad window. If you cannot find any Meta information you should discuss this with your developer.

A home page with good search engine meta information should look like this:



```
www.webassets.com[1] - Notepad
File Edit Search Help
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="iso-8859-1"?>
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
<head>
<title>Web Assets - Making Websites Work</title>
<meta name="keywords" content=" internet marketing, web marketing, e-commerce, marketing, mar
<meta name="description" content="Learn how to promote your site on-line and generate more bu
<meta name="robots" content="index, follow">
<meta name="revisit-after" content="10 days">
<meta name="distribution" content="global">
<!-- making websites work -->
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1" />
<script language="JavaScript" type="text/JavaScript">
<!--
```

Let us look at the important meta information in more detail. Note that this document does not provide a full explanation of all Meta information – just the things that you need to know to make your website work.

### **The Title Tag**

```
<title>Web Assets – SEO and Website Marketing Australia</title>
```

This is the most important meta tag of them all. The information in the title tag is what the user sees at the top of their browser when they view that page. Use this opportunity to succinctly tell your customers what this page is all about.

### **Keywords**

```
<meta name="keywords" content=" internet marketing, web marketing, e-commerce, marketing, market research, .....
```

Keywords are no longer used by Google, but are still used by Yahoo and other search engines. To work out what keywords you should have in your web site you can:

- look at your "Stats" to see what words are already working for you
- ask your staff and customers what words they would use to find the products and services you provide
- look at the source code of your best competitors and see what they have used
- use a tool such as "Good Keywords" to see what keywords are being entered in to search engines by users

### **Description**

```
<meta name="description" content="Learn how to promote your site on-line and generate more business. Work at your own pace with expert information that's easy to understand and implement.">
```

This is the second most important tag. It is your opportunity to sell your site and let your users know what they can expect to find when they visit your site or web page. Many, but not all search engines use this field to provide a summary of your site in their listing.

① According to w3c.org meta data was originally incorporated into a site to assist parents and teachers control what children can access on the Internet. As far as I know this fact has escaped every parent I've met who has tried to control their children's web surfing.