


 beyond expectations

Improving Your Center or Institute Website


Michael Powers
Director of Electronic Communications
November 15, 2012

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

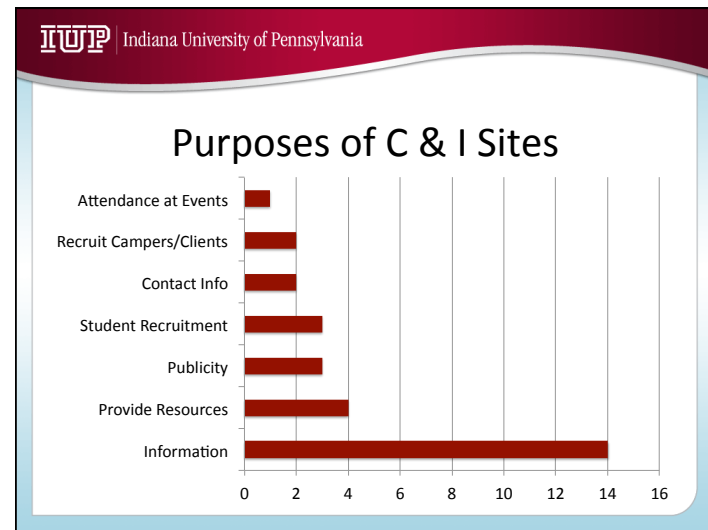
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

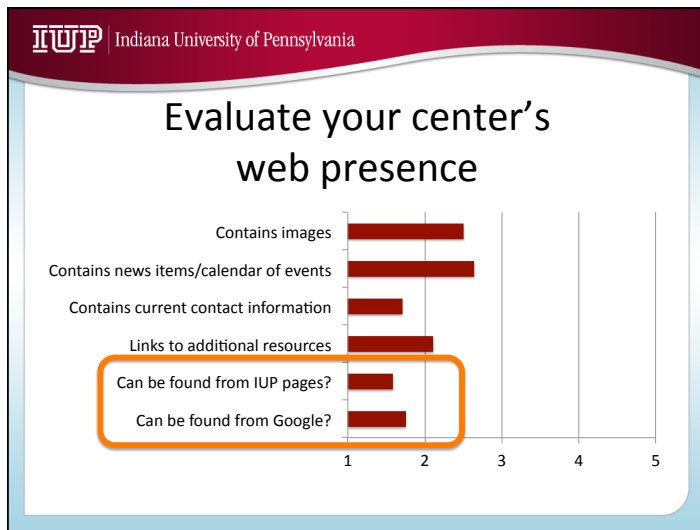
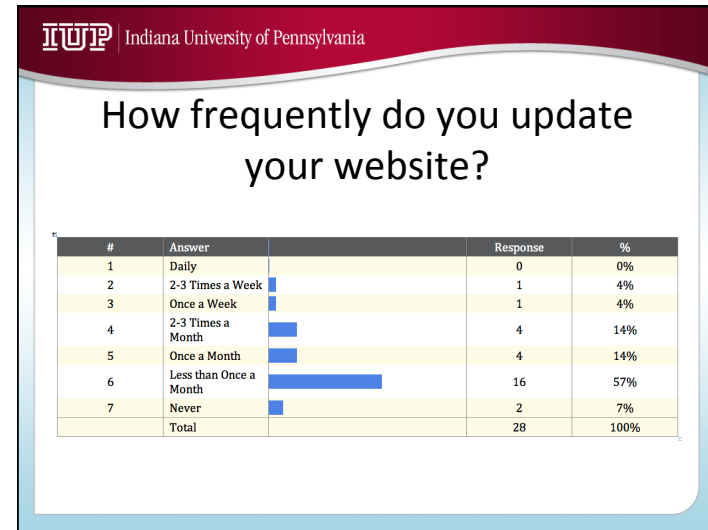
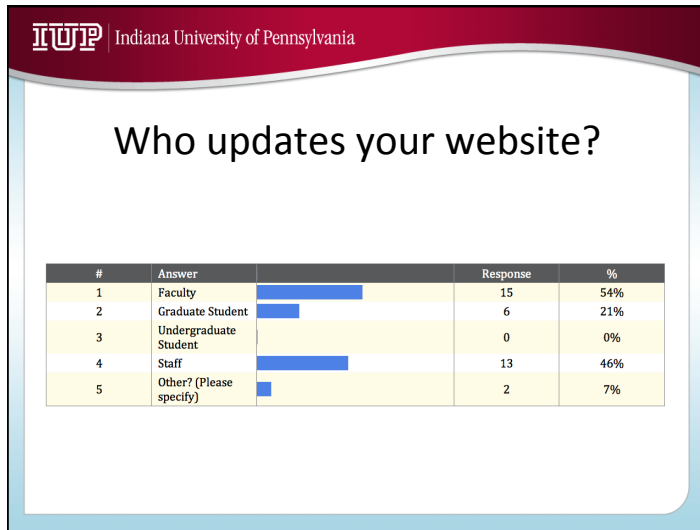
Charge

“give the directors and their web maintainers a chance to learn a few best practices to make their sites more searchable (and findable) and to improve the overall quality of their sites.”

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

SURVEY





- IUP** Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- ### Getting Found
- Linked from www.iup.edu/research/centers?
 - Linked from www.iup.edu/az?
 - Linked from sponsoring dept's pages?
 - Good SEO?

IUP Indiana University of Pennsylvania

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

IUP Indiana University of Pennsylvania

How does Google work?

- It's a secret. And it's always changing.
- But we know a few things about it.

IUP Indiana University of Pennsylvania

How Google works

Category	Percentage
Page Level Link Metrics	21%
Domain Level Link Authority Features	21%
Page Level Keyword Usage	15%
Domain Level Keyword Usage	11%
Page Level Social Metrics	7%
Domain Level Brand Metrics	7%
Page Level Keyword Agnostic Features	7%
Page Level Traffic/Query Data	6%
Domain Level Keyword Agnostic Features	5%

<http://www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors>

IUP Indiana University of Pennsylvania

SEO Strategy for Centers and Institutes

1. Get linked
2. Use good keywords
3. Follow website best practices

IUP | Indiana University of Pennsylvania

1. Get Linked

IUP | Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Inbound Links Are Key

- Inbound link = link from outside iup.edu
- Inbound links function like votes
- This is the key idea that has made Google billions of dollars.

IUP | Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Getting Links

- The more authoritative the source of the link, the better.
 - Link from your personal website: OK
 - Link from professional association website: better
 - Link from *NY Times*: really good
 - Link from *Huffington Post*: ??
- So: be worth linking to.

IUP | Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Getting Links: Social Media Edition

- Getting links on social media accounts counts.
- So: share your content
 - On Facebook
 - On Twitter
 - On LinkedIn
- News items have share buttons on them.
- Or, paste in the URL

IUPUI Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Getting Links: Social Media Edition

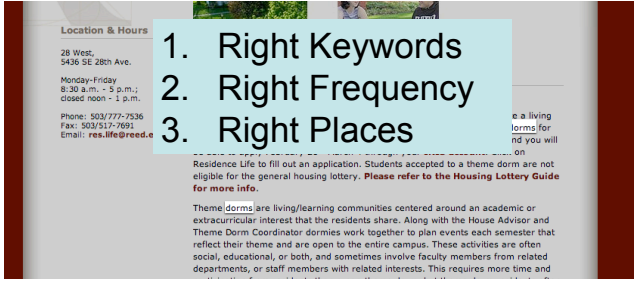
- Pictures mean a lot for sharing.
- No picture, no clicks.
- So: include pictures when you can.

IUPUI Indiana University of Pennsylvania

2. Use Good Keywords

IUPUI Indiana University of Pennsylvania

On-page keyword usage



The screenshot shows a webpage with a blue callout box containing the following text:

1. Right Keywords
2. Right Frequency
3. Right Places

The background text in the screenshot includes:

Location & Hours
 28 West,
 5436 SE 28th Ave.
 Monday-Friday
 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.;
 closed noon - 1 p.m.
 Phone: 503/777-7536
 Fax: 503/517-7691
 Email: res.life@reed.edu

...e a living
 ...orms) for
 ...nd you will
 ...on
 Residence Life to fill out an application. Students accepted to a theme dorm are not
 eligible for the general housing lottery. Please refer to the **Housing Lottery Guide**
 for more info.

Theme dorms are living/learning communities centered around an academic or
 extracurricular interest that the residents share. Along with the House Advisor and
 Theme Dorm Coordinator dormies work together to plan events each semester that
 reflect their theme and are open to the entire campus. These activities are often
 social, educational, or both, and sometimes involve faculty members from related
 departments, or staff members with related interests. This requires more time and

IUPUI Indiana University of Pennsylvania

1. Right Keywords: Keyword Research

- What would *you* use?
- Google Keyword Tool
- Google Trends



**The result of keyword research:
a list of keywords to use on
your website.**

- ## 2. Right Frequency
- This doesn't work:

Geology geology geology geology geology geology geology
 geology geology geology geology geology geology geology
 geology geology geology geology geology geology geology
 geology geology geology geology geology geology geology
 geology geology geology geology geology geology geology
 - A keyword shouldn't be more than 7% of the words on the page.



3. Right Placement

Annotations on the screenshot:

- URL:** http://www.reed.edu/res_life/on_campus/theme_dorms.html
- Page Title:** Reed College | Residence Life | Theme Dorms
- Also Place Keywords In:**
 - Link text
 - Bold
 - Lists
- H2:** Residence Life Theme Dorms
- H3:** 2011-2012 Theme Dorms
- Image alt text:** (points to a photo of a dorm building)
- Naturally in Text:** (points to the text: "Theme Dorms are living/learning communities centered around an academic or extracurricular interest that the residents share. Along with the Theme Dorm Coordinators work together to plan events each semester that reflect their theme and are open to the entire campus. These activities are often social, educational, or both, and sometimes involve faculty members from related departments, or staff members with related interests. This requires more time and participation from residents than a non-theme dorm but theme dorm residents often cite a more close-knit and involved community as a great benefit.")

Why does this work?


- Google tries to read the page as a human would
- Puts more emphasis on the things that stand out
- But...

Remember: Use real headings

```
<font size=5>
  <b>2011-2012 Theme Dorms</b>
</font>
```


is not the same as

```
<h2>2011-2012 Theme Dorms</h2>
```

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Meta tags


- Meta tags are part of the <head> of your page
- Not seen by readers
- But they are seen by Google
- So a lot of (sometimes misplaced) emphasis has been put on them

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Sample meta tags

```

<html class="js">
<!--[endif]-->
<head>
<title>
  Lafayette College · Lafayette College
</title>
<meta charset="utf-8">
<meta name="robots" content="all">
<meta name="copyright" content="(c) Lafayette College">
<meta name="description" content="Lafayette has built a strong reputation in the liberal arts, sciences, and engineering because of its focus on the student. This unusual combination of strengths continues to define Lafayette's special role among the top liberal arts colleges in the nation">
<meta name="keywords" content="lafayette, liberal arts, engineering, college, easton, pennsylvania, college hill, students engaging leaders, global connections, active learning, lafayette college, leopards, marquis de lafayette, active learning, students, natural sciences, humanities, engineering, social sciences, lehigh valley, undergraduate
  
```

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

For SEO, think about


- Title: Use keywords
 Reed College | Residence Life | Theme Dorms
- Description (This is our Ektron “Summary”):
 Use keywords

▶ [Lafayette College · Lafayette College](#) 🔍

Apr 5, 2011 ... Lafayette has built a strong reputation in the liberal arts, sciences, and engineering because of its focus on the student.


www.lafayette.edu/ - Cached - Similar

Admissions	Human Resources
Academics	About the College
Webmail	Campus Life
Tuition & Aid	Directory

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania


But

- Keywords: Ignore
- No major search engine looks at them anymore

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania


3. Follow Website Best Practices

- Templates have been (re)designed for SEO
- Adding pages to the menu gets you a repeat of your keywords (if they are in the page title)
- Using headings instead of bold (and put keywords there)
- Include alt tags for images (and use keywords)

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

3. Follow Website Best Practices

- Update often (Google favors updated sites)
- Avoid duplicate content (Google punishes it)

 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

More Best Practices

www.iup.edu/web/bestpractices