Basics of Optimizing Images for Google Search

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With the introduction of a new search engine ranking page by Google, we have gotten more questions from clients related to optimizing their images for Google Image Search. Historically, we have seen very little conversion from Google Image Search or other image sites for any of our clients so we have typically placed a limited amount of emphasis in this area. Still, if you feel that optimizing images is going to be critical to your ongoing success, here are some **BASIC GUIDELINES** to follow:

1. Utilize your target keyword phrase in the Image Alt Text – My understanding is that the original purpose of image alt text was to provide visually impaired users with information about the images on a site. Image search engines now utilize this information, however, to help determine the relevance of images to a particular keyword search. As far as implementation, we have included a field in Empoweren's Image Editor (link to http://www.empoweren.com/built-in-image-editor.html) to encourage users to enter this information, but they are simple to add in HTML as well.

2. Utilize your target keyword phrase in the Image URL – The image URL is essentially the name or title of your picture. This is a problem for many sites as images are named things like image264.jpg. When you upload a picture in Empoweren, you have the ability to name the image so we suggest utilizing the keywords in them with dashes like this single-head-embroidery-machines.jpg

3. Place text related to your target keyword phrase near the image – The easiest way to do this may be to put a caption near your image, but simply having relevant keyword rich content near the image in some manner seems to help.

4. Align the image optimization with the overall page and site optimization – Images that rank well tend to do so because they are located on pages that share other on-page optimization techniques. So a page optimized for the phrase "single head embroidery machines" would probably help an image optimized for that same phrase rank well in Google Image search. Plus, it is pretty like that a page about single head embroidery machines would contain images with various single head embroidery machines.

5. Use Images as Outbound links – It's hard to tell if this has any huge benefit in regard to image optimization, but from a user navigation perspective, we know that many people click on images to try to navigate to a new page, so it is logical to link images. Theoretically, a link from a page about "single head embroidery machines" to a page about a particular "single head embroidery machine" should help the site show depth of content and aid in the inbound/outbound link factor of page ranking algorithms.

6. Link to the image directly from another page using the target phrase in the anchor text – This method is not really easy to integrate into standard web design, but if you really want to try to optimize a particular image, you can also link to it from a separate page in the site with a link like "image of a single head embroidery machine."

Once again, these are **BASIC GUIDELINES** for optimizing images on a site and do not represent everything possible one can do to optimize an image for Google image search. For more ideas, here were a couple of articles that you may find helpful.

Optimize your Photos for Google Images http://www.flickrtips.com/optimize-your-photos-for-google-images/

19 Ways to Get More Traffic to Your Site Using Google Images - http://www.doshdosh.com/how-to-optimize-for-google-images-for-more-traffic/