

5 WAYS TO INCREASE WEB VISITS

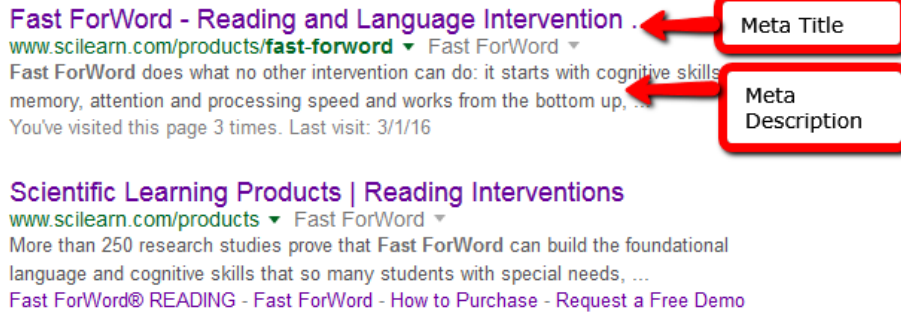
There are a few quick and easy steps that you can take that will enhance your ranking in Google, drive more traffic to your website, therefore increasing the number of inquiries you get. Getting more people to your website is called “Search Engine Optimization” (SEO). If you need help with these, contact your web developer and walk through what changes to make. These can make a big difference!

Here’s a quick primer on the way that Google works: it crawls your web pages, one at a time, with “robots” or “spiders”. It tries to determine what your page is about by looking at a number of factors, including your URL, your meta tags, the H1 (main header) on your page, the alt tags on your images, and most importantly - your content.

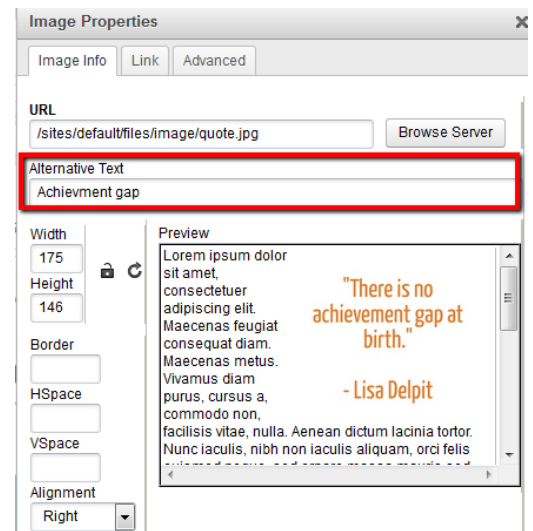
Here are 5 quick tips that can help you increase your Google Rankings:

- 1. Start with the content.** In the world of SEO, content is king. You want to write great content, with the goal that people will link to it because it’s *that* good. SEO is a popularity contest, and the search engines really like to see a lot of people linking back because that proves that it’s relevant and interesting content. One of the best ways to do this is to create a blog (if you don’t already have one). Having new and fresh content is also factored in – you don’t want your website to sit stagnant. This is another way that a blog comes in handy.
- 2. Determine your keywords for each web page.** You’ll want to align all of your elements to the keyword phrase you select. Most content management systems (CMS) have a field where you enter your keywords, but most search engines don’t read this field anymore. My recommendation would be that you don’t need to fill that out, but you DO need to know what you’re optimizing for. Keywords would likely be your city/town, the populations you serve, the service you offer, etc., e.g. “San Diego, speech therapy, dyslexia”
- 3. Check your URLs.** You’ll want to create friendly, easy to read URLs that include your keyword phrase. If you have a page on your website for Fast ForWord, the URL should be www.yourwebsite.com/fast-forword, not www.yourwebsite.com/intervention/reading-programs/scroll.aspx?id=37814. Your CMS may have a field to determine what the URL will be. One word of warning here – if you have a page that’s been performing well without a friendly URL, you’ll want to set up a redirect if you change the URL.
- 4. Write great meta tags.** Meta tags are your chance to grab someone’s attention on the Search Engine Results Page (SERP). This is your marketing copy, enticing someone to click through to your website vs. someone else’s. Keep in mind, this is a strong suggestion for Google, but ultimately Google will determine what a page is about and fill that into the meta tags that are

displayed. This meta title and description is not what we have entered for our meta tags, it's what Google thinks is relevant.



5. **Enter ALT tags for all images.** Search engine spiders can't "see" what your image is, so it relies on something called "alt tags" to determine how relevant an image is to the keyword you're optimizing for. Get in the habit of filling out the alt tag field every time you upload a new image with the terms you are focusing on. We use Drupal as our CMS, here's what our field looks like when we upload an image. Whatever CMS you use, there should be a field to fill out the alt tag.



Ultimately, the end goal of optimizing or updating your website should always be your website visitors. When a website makes sense for people in terms of flow, navigation, content, how to fill out a form, etc. – it's halfway there to being optimized for search engines. These 5 tips will simply help the search engines understand and rank your web pages better. It's worth passing this information along to your website administrator. Have them go through and optimize each page. It will even help if you're only able to do this moving forward – it will only take a few extra minutes per page and it can have a big impact.

One last word of advice, if you aren't currently using Google Analytics on your website, you need to set that up right away! You'll get all kinds of interesting data such as how many people are coming to your site, where they're coming from geographically, how they got to your site, and much more – plus it's free!