

# **5** SEO Tips: **Things Every WordPress Owner MUST Know**

**(Quick and Powerful Techniques  
You Can Start Using Today)**

**BONUS: 5 Common  
SEO Mistakes to Avoid**

By Michael Torbert  
of All in One SEO Pack - Pro Version



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# About the Author

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**Michael Torbert** established [Semper Fi Web Design](#) in 2007 after working as an engineer at several leading IT companies in the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. As the author of [All in One SEO Pack](#), which is the most downloaded plugin at over 37 million downloads, and the co-author of *All in One WordPress Desk Reference for Dummies*, Michael is a leader in the WordPress community. He expanded his company by launching [Semper Plugins](#) in December 2011. Michael also sponsors several WordCamps around the world, and organizes the monthly Raleigh WordPress Meetup Group and WordCamp Raleigh.

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Because search engine algorithms are constantly changing, the world of SEO has a constantly changing landscape. It is essential to stay up-to-date with the latest information and tools to help you achieve the best results possible. Obviously we cannot make any guarantees about where your site will rank on any given search engine. What we can say is that if you implement these 5 strategies consistently, and avoid the 5 mistakes, your site will be more search engine friendly, and therefore more easily recognized by both search engines and human beings.

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# Why SEO Is Important

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Most website owners know that search engine optimization (SEO) is important because it drives a lot of web traffic, but aren't quite sure what to do, or not do, to get the desired results. That's in part because there is a fair amount of misinformation about SEO, and also because once you do start learning about it, it can seem like a daunting process.

This ebook consists of tips you need to know to maximize your search engine ranking. This is a foundation of tips, which when implemented, can make a significant difference. We intentionally selected easy tips to start with because you're more likely to implement them and start seeing results. *Then* you can get into the more complex elements.

The key is that SEO refers to search engine rankings that people actually click on. Just getting on page 1 of a Google search isn't enough. The information displayed on the search engine results page needs to be compelling and useful enough for a human being to want to follow the link to your site.

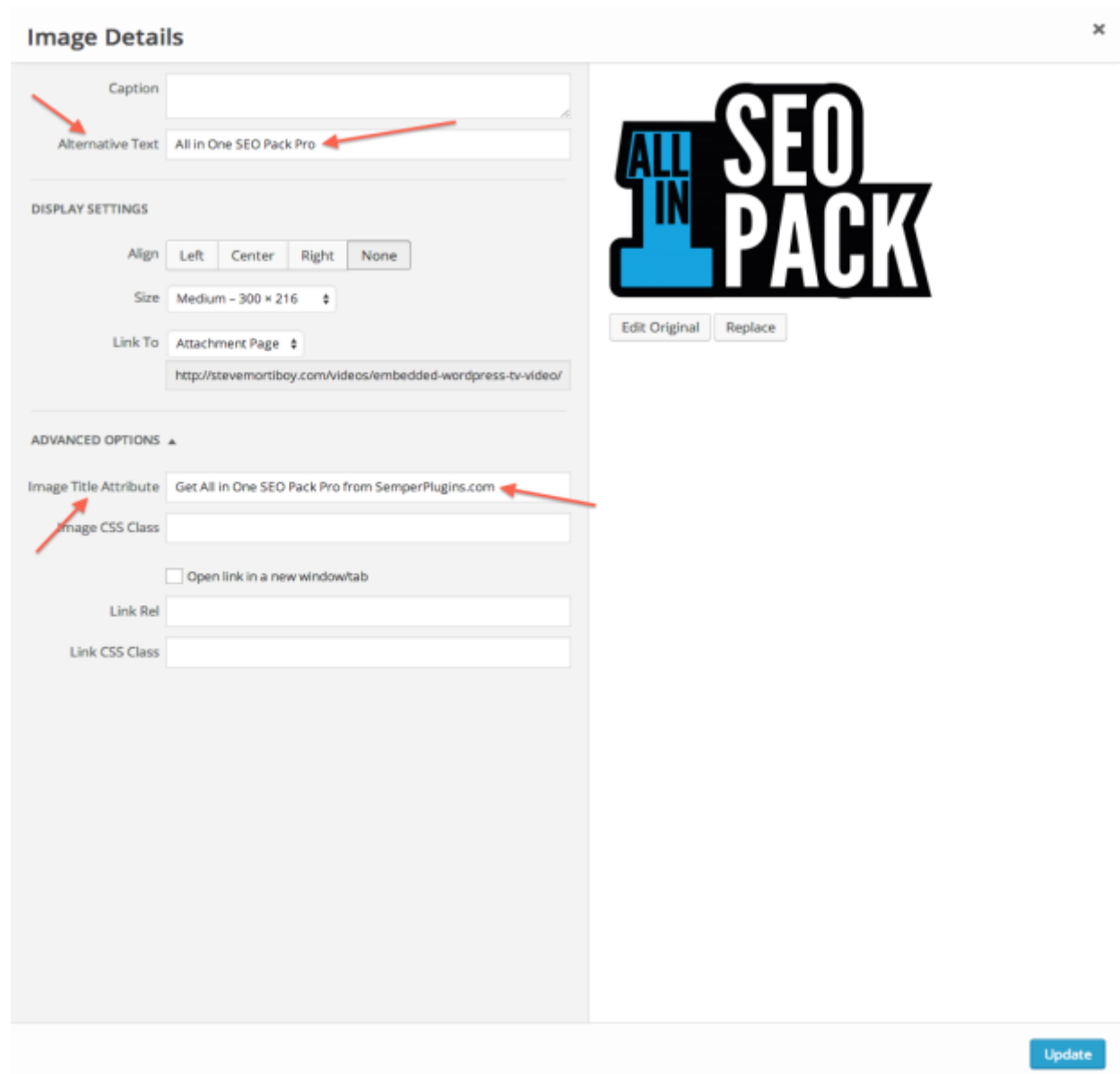
High quality SEO efforts aren't about gaming the system, but rather are about consistently applying proven techniques and strategies that have the greatest likelihood of withstanding changes to the search engines' algorithms.

Ultimately, your site has to be useful for actual human beings. If you keep that in mind as you apply search engine techniques, it will be easier on you and will create better results in the long run.

# Tip #1: SEO Friendly Images

Search engine traffic from images is extremely underrated. WordPress has some great tools built in for optimizing the use of images for search engines, but they often go unused. The thing to remember is that search engines cannot “read” images. They can only read the descriptions, tags, and titles you give your images.

■ All images should have ALT and TITLE attributes defined. This is the image equivalent of the doc title or Meta Description for the page.



The screenshot shows the 'Image Details' modal in WordPress. On the left, the 'Alternative Text' field is filled with 'All in One SEO Pack Pro' and the 'Image Title Attribute' field is filled with 'Get All in One SEO Pack Pro from SemperPlugins.com'. Red arrows point to these fields. The 'Image Title Attribute' field also has a red arrow pointing to it from the left. The 'Image CSS Class' field is empty. The 'Link Rel' and 'Link CSS Class' fields are also empty. The 'Open link in a new window/tab' checkbox is unchecked. The 'Image' field on the right shows a logo for 'ALL IN ONE SEO PACK' with 'Edit Original' and 'Replace' buttons. The 'Update' button is at the bottom right.

■ Use the built in functionality in WordPress for attachment pages, rather than having images open in a lightbox or in their own page. Attachment pages combined with the [All in One SEO Pack](#) create excellent SEO for images.

■ Image filenames should have a relevant name, ideally with a keyword in it. (More on keywords later.) For example, an image filename of "obam435.jpg" might make sense to you, the website owner, but won't mean anything to a search engine. "obamastateoftheunionspeech.jpg" is a much more descriptive, and relevant, filename.

## Tip #2: SEO Plugins

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Using additional tools, such as SEO plugins, can help you maximize your search engine rankings as well as your site's usability for human visitors.

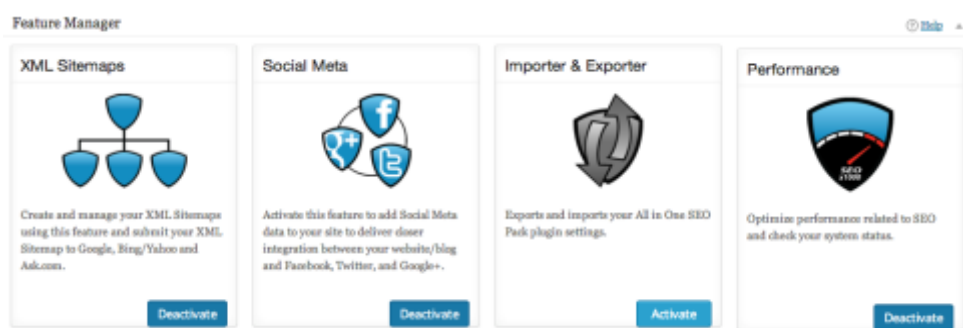
### ■ All In One SEO Pack

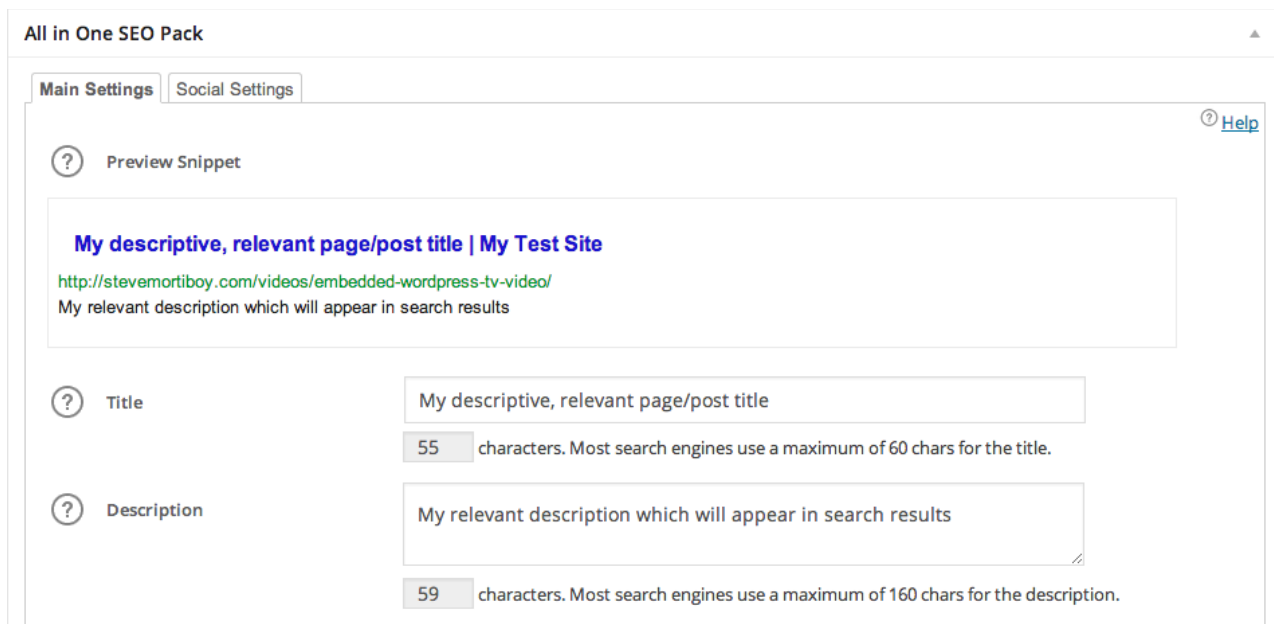
[All in One SEO Pack](#) is the most downloaded SEO plugin from the WordPress repository. I'm not just saying that because I created it, but because it's the truth. Being able to control your search engine data without having to know anything about code is a huge time (and money) saver.

All in One SEO Pack allows you to control all your meta data on individual pages and posts, as well as having site-wide default settings.

Among other things, All in One SEO Pack automatically optimizes titles for search engines, generates meta tags automatically, uses canonical URLs and supports custom post types and taxonomies. For beginners it works "out of the box", so you can simply install and go. For advanced users you have the ability to fine-tune everything.

We have added and continue to add new feature modules, which you can enable via the Feature Manager in All in One SEO Pack. These feature modules include useful tools such as an XML Sitemap Generator, Video XML Sitemap Generator, Robots.txt Generator, and Social Meta Module.





## Broken Link Checker

[Broken Link Checker](#) is a great plugin that is extremely useful for SEO. It crawls your site looking for broken links and broken images and notifies you when it finds the. It checks both internal links within your own site as well as external links to other peoples sites. It provides a very easy interface for correcting broken links and will even prevent search engines from following broken links. Broken links and images are bad for SEO. Google will alert you to broken links in the Crawl Errors section of Google Webmaster Tools, so using this plugin will reduce the crawl errors and improve your reputation with search engines

## Redirection

There are a number of plugins that handle 301 redirections, we use and recommend [Redirection](#). We find this to be the most powerful and best developed plugin for handling redirects. Using this plugin can help you resolve crawl errors reported by Google and Bing.

A perfect combination is to use [All in One SEO Pack](#), [Broken Link Checker](#) and [Redirection](#) to manage your SEO.

# Tip #3: Meta Descriptions


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We have found that most people are confused about how to use Meta Descriptions.


Basically, meta data serves two purposes:

- tells search engines what your site is about
- shows up in search results, which tells people what your site is about

Your Meta Description, specifically, doesn't actually affect your placement or ranking in the search engine results, but it is extremely important for what appears on the Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs). The Meta Description is what people see and helps them determine whether or not to click through to your site. As mentioned before, high rankings are meaningless if nobody clicks on the links because the description isn't appropriate for humans.

[How to Train Cats - learn how to train cats from cat training experts](#)  
[www.traincats.net/](http://www.traincats.net/) 

Yes you can **train cats** because cat training is easy. If you want your cat meowing out songs you might be mistaken. I'll teach you some cat training secrets.

 **meta description**

A couple of key points to keep in mind when crafting your Meta Description:

■ You are limited to 160 characters. If you do not specify a Meta Description, the search engine will either automatically use the first 160 characters of your page or post for the description, or will examine the on-page content for what it thinks is the best description to use. This isn't always a good thing.

■ You want to have a naturally worded Meta Description. This is where [All in One SEO Pack](#) comes in handy by making it super easy to create this for each page and post, without having to do any coding. Remember, it will be a *person* reading the description, so make sure it makes sense to a human, not a robot.

■ Don't over use keywords in your Meta Description. Not that keywords should be over used anywhere, of course, but this is an exceptionally bad place for it.



# Tip #4: Keyword Placement

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Content is the most powerful tool you have in your search engine optimization strategy. Relevant content, optimized for keywords or terms, and published frequently can shoot your website to the top of the search engine results.

■ Keywords are not just for your meta data, which is what many people erroneously believe. Keywords are part of how search engines determine the relevance of your site for a particular search. And just as important...they help the searcher know if your site is a match for what they are searching.

■ The term "keywords" does not refer to Meta Keywords, which are obsolete and no longer used by search engines. Keywords or terms are the subjects you want to rank for, for example, "WordPress SEO plugins" is a term that we would want to rank for. It's important to remember that these days people don't search by keywords these days, they search by terms or phrases so bear this in mind when writing and optimizing your content.

■ There are different opinions on how often you should use keywords or terms in your content. As a general rule, keywords should be used naturally, not forced into the content so that it reads awkwardly or unnaturally to a human being.

Many beginners are tempted to place their keywords in every single sentence. That generally creates an article or page that's extremely difficult to read. Instead, write your content and then go back and position your keywords. Make sure to sprinkle other relevant keywords throughout your content as well. A good test is to read the content out loud. If it sounds awkward, you've probably over done it.

■ Use your keywords strategically. There are a few prominent places to position your keywords so they're recognized by the search engines. These locations include:

- Your headline
- Any headings or subheadings in your content
- The first and last paragraphs of your content

■ Consider using one primary keyword or term per page. You can keep it simple and optimize each webpage for one primary keyword. You could include a couple of secondary keywords that might be extensions of the primary keyword. However, trying to incorporate too many keywords into one page diffuses the results.

## Tip #5: Linking Strategy

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You'll start with creating two different types of links – Internal and External. One thing to know is that every time you link to a page, post or other site, you are passing "SEO juice" from *every single page or post you are linking from*. If a page or post isn't important to your SEO strategy, don't link to them. Or, if you must, use the "no follow" code so the search engines will know not to follow the link. (A "no follow" link can be followed by a person, but not a search engine.)

An example of using the "no follow" attribute in html code:

```
<a href="http://address.com" rel="nofollow">My Site</a>
```

■ Internal Links are cross links within your own site. For example, one blog post may contain a link to another blog post or page on the same topic. Developing internal links is a great way to teach the search engines of the relevancy of your site, as well as assist the human reader in finding valuable information. Just make sure that you are linking to related posts and pages. You may want to select a few pages to focus on to start with.

There are plugins for this, but manually choosing which pages to link to is best since algorithms that automatically determine this can, and will, make mistakes, wasting valuable "SEO juice".

Insert/edit link

Enter the destination URL

URL

Title

Open link in a new window/tab

▼ Or link to existing content

Search

No search term specified. Showing recent items.

Some other post	
Another Post	
sdfsdfdsf	
Hello world!	
Sample Page	PAGE

[Cancel](#) [Add Link](#)

- ✓ Don't link to a bunch of posts, pages, etc. (particularly archive pages) from your sidebar.

- ✓ DO use a keyword as your link. Having a link that says “click here” does nothing for your search engine efforts.

■ External links are when you link from your site to another site. While there are lots of sites you like, don't link to all of them from your sidebar. This just gives away your SEO juice to the other site. Use external links sparingly and strategically.

\*A note about Social Media and Linking..

While the links back to your site from Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn may not do anything for your official search engine results, they can do a lot for sharing useful information and driving traffic by bringing people to your site. The more useful your information, the more likely people are to pass it on to others. There's nothing like word of mouth advertising.

If you use your full domain name in the link, as opposed to a URL shortener, these links can also serve a branding purpose.

Just remember to use social media as a place you can “give back” as well. Don't think only of driving people to your site. Share useful links and helpful information from other people and sites. You'll be seen as a true contributor of value, and therefore be considered more trustworthy.

# BONUS: 5 SEO Mistakes to Avoid

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Whether you've been optimizing your web pages for quite some time or are new to the strategy, everyone makes mistakes. While the bad news is that these mistakes can have a significant effect on your page ranking, the good news is, they're reversible. Here are five SEO mistakes to avoid (And if you've already made them, not to worry, you can make changes and move forward with your SEO strategy).

## ■ **SEO Mistake #1: Not using keywords correctly.**

Many webmasters are concerned about being banned from the search engines for keyword spamming or stuffing so they limit the use of keywords on their web pages. As long as your content sounds natural and reads easily, the chances are you have not overused your keywords.

Make sure your keywords are included in the first and last paragraphs, in your headings and in your title and meta tags.

## ■ **SEO Mistake #2: Trying to fool search engine spiders.**

Search engines are a lot more sophisticated than most of us realize. They recognize - and penalize - hidden text, keyword spamming, and cloaking, which is showing different content to the search engine spiders than to your visitors. All of these practices only serve to hurt your page ranking and can in fact cause your website to be banned by the search engines, which means no one will find you - and no traffic means no profits.

## ■ **SEO Mistake #3: Using Flash**

Flash is a great presentation tool and can be dramatic and effective if used sparingly. It's particularly appropriate if you have a media related website and want to demonstrate your industry savvy. However for most website owners it's just not necessary and can harm your page ranking. Search engine spiders cannot read content embedded in Flash files, which means they're not recognized or indexed.

## ■ **SEO Mistake #4: Using Your Company Name (and Only Your Company Name) As a Title Tag**

Unless you're branding your company name, your company name shouldn't be the only element in your title tag. Feel free to include it, however it's also important to use your primary keyword for each webpage title tag. This is more useful for your customers and helps the search engines identify the various pages on your site.

## ■ **SEO Mistake #5: Using A Splash Page**

A splash page is a web page with a large graphic or company logo, and a link to enter the site. This is an ineffective strategy for a number of reasons:

\* No keyword rich text on the page, nothing for the spiders to index.

- \* Only one internal link on the page
- \* These pages often have a redirect which often causes spiders to ignore them

If search engine optimization is important to your business, you may need to forgo the splash page. Your home page should be easy to navigate, content rich, and link visitors and spiders to other main web pages.

In general, unless you're trying to outsmart the search engines and using nefarious tactics, the majority of search engine mistakes are reversible. If you've committed a few of these mistakes, simply correcting them can increase your page ranking almost immediately. Take some time to evaluate your SEO strategy and eliminate these SEO mistakes.

Visit [SemperPlugins.com](http://SemperPlugins.com) to get your copy of All in One SEO Pack Pro.