



Search Engine Optimization for Band Websites

Presented by **Jay Moonah**

at **The Big Schmooze**

Third Floor Reilly's

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My Experience...

- ...as a **musician**
 - Playing in Toronto clubs **since the late 80s**
 - Member of **Uncle Seth** (musicface.com/uncleseth)
 - Created **first band website in 1995**



My Experience...

- ...as an **Internet professional**
 - **More than 10 years experience** teaching and consulting
 - Previously worked full-time at **Ryerson, U of T and CBC**
 - Currently **Senior Internet Technology Analyst** at **CANOE**, the most popular fully-Canadian web network (over 6.3 million visitors per month)

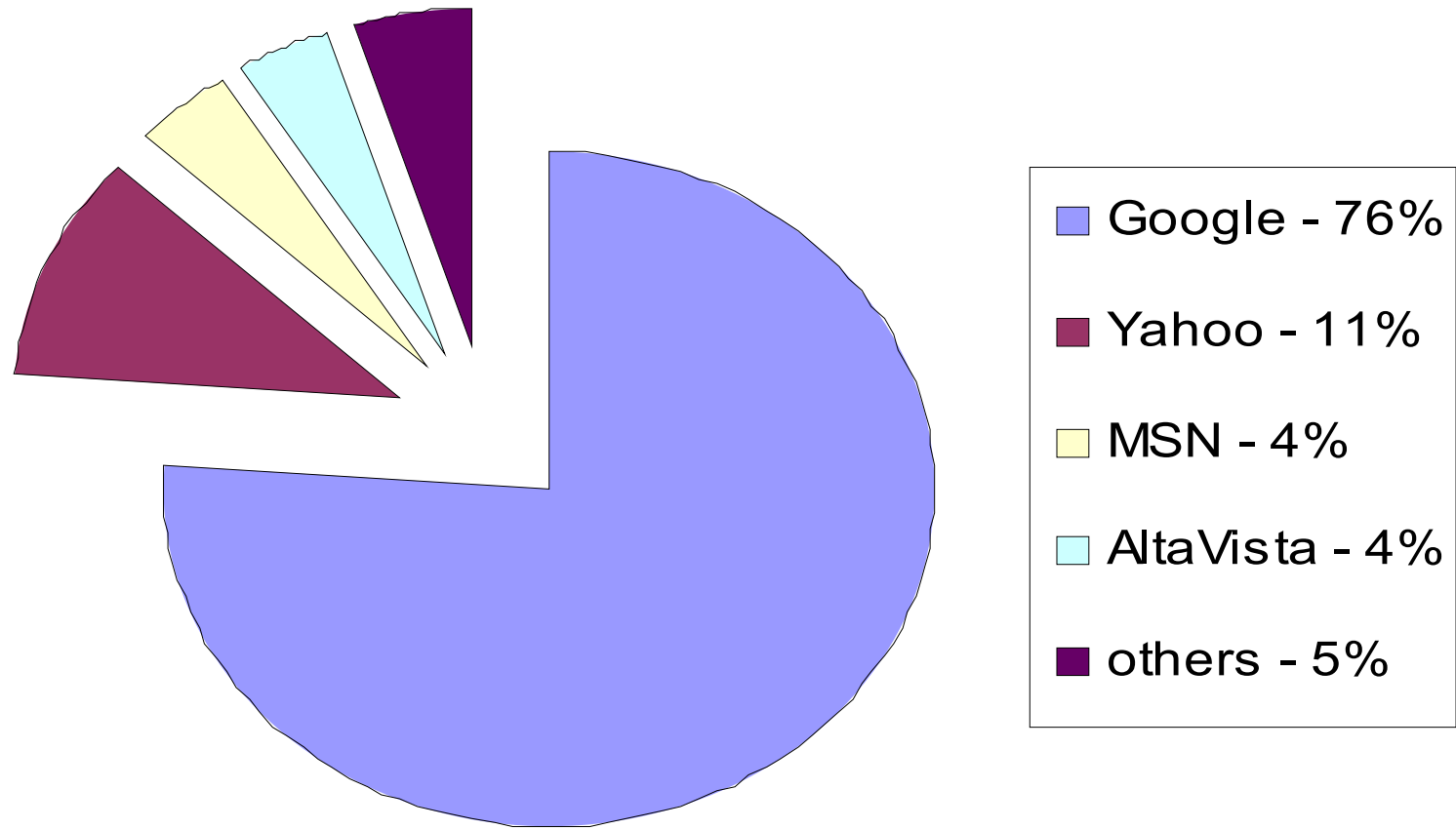
The screenshot shows the Canoe network website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for 'Canoe' and 'Google'. The main header features the 'canoe' logo and 'QUEBECOR MEDIA'. Below the header, there are several navigation menus: 'CNEWS', 'LIFEWISE', 'SLAM! Sports', 'C-HEALTH', 'JAM! Showbiz', 'HOME&GARDEN', 'MONEY', 'TRAVEL', 'AUTONET', 'SHOP.CANOE', and 'JOBBOOM'. A sidebar on the left contains search tools: 'FIND A BUSINESS' (with fields for Type, Name, City, and Province), 'Find A Person', and 'FIND IT FOR LESS!' (powered by eBay.ca). The main content area displays a date 'Saturday, March 26, 2005' and a featured article titled 'Final hours for Schiavo' with a photo of a person on a beach chair. Below this is another article titled 'Coast of many colours' and 'Michigan State knocks off Duke'. The bottom of the page features an 'AUTONET' logo and a 'Find an auto' dropdown menu.

Brass Dogs – SEO in action

- In mid-2004, Uncle Seth decided to form a cover-band side project called “**Brass Dogs**”
- Created a site with:
 - carefully written **titles & text**,
 - **links** placed on a few sites
- **Brass Dogs soon placed number one in Google** for “**toronto cover band**” and high on other searches
- Has **translated directly to two gigs and a dozen inquires** in about 8 months



Search Engine Page Traffic



All stats based on traffic to musicface.com for February 2005 unless otherwise stated

Traffic from External Sites

- **Most traffic** (~80 – 90%) on websites is:
 - “**direct**” (typed URLs, bookmarks, etc.)
 - “**internal**” (from pages on the same site)
- Page traffic from external links:
 - **Search Engines *** **72%**
 - **Other Sites** **28%**
- * Therefore, **Google brought in 55%** of external page traffic

Google Indexing Principles

- Indexed sites have to be **linked *FROM*** an already indexed site
 - The **more pages that point to you, the better your rank**
- Google **copies *COMPLETE TEXT*** of page
 - Google indexes based **where and how often text appears in the page**

Title Tags

- What you put in **<title> </title>** very important
- **Main page title tag** should contain **band name & brief description**
- Make sure **every page has a unique title tag**:
 - **Uncle Seth: A Toronto-area Independent Band**
 - **Uncle Seth Bio**
 - **Uncle Seth Contact Information**
 - **Uncle Seth: 03/05/2005 set list**
- Approximately **50 characters** max

What's in a name?

- New bands: **check Google and other searches first**
- Existing bands: **be extra sure to include key words like:**
 - “**music**”
 - “**band**”
 - **genre(s)** of music
 - your **location**
(city, country, region, whatever is applicable)

Keywords are Key

- Most engines **read the text on the page**
- Google either **ignores metadata "keywords"** or uses them to re-enforce text
 - However, **other search engines** do still use them
- **Use variations on terms**
 - on one page use **"80s cover band"**
 - on another use **"eighties cover band"**
- **Use heading (<h1>, <h2>, etc.) tags** and proper HTML formatting

Don't overdo your keywords!

- If you **repeat one word or phrase too many times**, Google and other search engines will assume they're being “spammed” and may reject your page.
- Use your common sense – **if it reads fine, search engines are unlikely to reject it**

The Importance of Being Linked

- **Google doesn't index anything that isn't linked!**
- Find **directories and other sites where you can submit** links
- Create **link pages** and **exchange links** with bands, clubs, etc.
 - also helps findability - people searching for a club might look at bands that have played there, etc
- A trick: when your page gets linked from a site, **submit *that* site to Google**
 - Submission linked from “About Google” page

Examples from musicface.com

TOP 25 of 349 keywords used on search engines

Keyword	Search	Percent
uncle seth	39	6.8 %
matt osborne	27	4.7 %
chris patheiger	14	2.4 %
matt osbourne	12	2.1 %
matthew osborne	9	1.5 %
la luna hamilton	7	1.2 %
jenn kee	6	1 %
michael murtanovski	6	1 %
matthew osborne, waterloo, ontario	6	1 %
toronto cover bands	5	0.8 %
rock cover band toronto	5	0.8 %
tara thompson pics	5	0.8 %
anthony del col	5	0.8 %
www.musicface.com	4	0.7 %
matt osborne toronto	4	0.7 %
uncle seth my eyes	4	0.7 %
orange monkey	4	0.7 %
matt osborne band	4	0.7 %
the reverb toronto ontario	3	0.5 %
uncleseth links.html lindi.org	3	0.5 %
matthew osbourne	3	0.5 %
mp3	3	0.5 %
reillys bar toronto	3	0.5 %
www.mattosborne.com	3	0.5 %
uncleseth wwwboard messages 1250.html ?intitle:index.of? avi white noise	3	0.5 %
Other words	382	67.1 %

Graphics are Good, but Letters are Better

- Make sure there is **regular text** on your site, **not** just graphics, Flash or PDFs
 - Flash and PDFs can be read by some engines, but things are often missed
- Very important to include HTML “**alt**” (**alternative**) **text for any graphics** or other non-text elements, particularly graphic headers

How are we doing so far?

- Use **googlerankings.com** to check your rating on certain keywords



Check the ranking of a web page in Google™
A free search engine optimization tool

Keyword(s) to list the sites for:
Domain or URL of your website:
eg.: google.com or geocities.com/mysite

For faster results, You may limit your search to the

The process may take up to 15 seconds



Check the ranking of a web page in Google™
A free search engine optimization tool

Keyword: 80s cover band URL Pattern: musicface.com
Position 47. [Brass Dogs - a Toronto cover band playing rock and pop from the ...](#)
Full url: <http://www.musicface.com/brassdogs/>
[Check Google™](#)

In case you are not satisfied with the position of your website
visit our [Recommended SEOs Page](#) for further reports and professional help.

Make sure that your web site is **googlefriendly**^{New!}
by requesting free consultation and professional assistance.

Google Fight!

- For comparison to other sites (and fun) try **googlefight.com**



So remember...

- Make sure **your site is linked** from sites already in the index
- Make sure **the terms you want to be searched by are in your titles and text**

Thanks!

Questions?