SEO: SEARCH RESULTS STARTING WITH THE END IN MIND

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What is SEO?

• Search Engine Optimization
• The art of making your sites readable by machines
• We are not SEO experts (but you should still listen)
• Constantly moving target
3 Neglected Areas

- Page titles
- Meta Description
- URLs
Page Titles

- According to Google, VERY IMPORTANT
- < 55 characters
- Appears in browser, search engine results, and external websites
Optimizing Page Titles

What is a good page title?
Building Good Page Titles

- Page Name or Task – Site Name
- Good: Contact Us – ROTC
- Better: Contact Us – ROTC at WKU
- Search engine query: Contact ROTC WKU
Meta Description

- Does not directly affect search ranking
- Very important for click-through success
- Shows up in search results
Optimizing Meta Description

- Plain english, readable
- 150-160 characters
- Be mindful of what you are already showing with page title

WKU Admissions' **Contact Us**
Feb 6, 2014 ... General contact information and social media outlets for the Office of Admissions at Western Kentucky University.
www.wku.edu/admissions/contactus.php

**Contact Us**
POWER OUTAGE AT IVAN WILSON FINE ARTS CENTER: Due to a significant electrical failure, the Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center will be closed through Tuesday ...
https://www.wku.edu/chhs/contact_us.php
Making this happen in OU Campus

- Page Properties
Making this happen in OU Campus
In practice...
What is in a URL?

- A lot!!
- Make your URLs readable
- http://www.wku.edu/it/conf/f/14/oucbeg.php
Readable URLs

- http://www.wku.edu/it/conf/f/14/oucbeg.php
- http://www.wku.edu/it/conference/fall/2014/ou-campus-for-beginners.php
- Remember – a machine is reading this!
Good Rules for URLs

- Use dashes instead of underscore or no divider
  - oucampusforbeginners.php
  - ou-campus-for-beginners.php

- Use keywords in your URL
  - http://www.wku.edu/it/conference/fall/2014/ou-campus-for-beginners.php
Other Compelling Reasons for Good URLs

- Search engines display them

> WKU Admissions' Contact Us
> Feb 6, 2014 ... General contact information and social media outlets for the Office of Admissions at Western Kentucky University.
> www.wku.edu/admissions/contactus.php

- They appear in browser

- Other people may use your URL as the anchor text (link)
Making this happen in OU Campus

- Rename and Move

- Dependency manager will handle renames and moves without breaking links
This takes time

- The looks of your search result will not change instantly
- Your ranking in search engines will take even longer to change
Summary

- Page Titles, Meta Descriptions, and URLs are all very important for SEO.
- The end result of these techniques is nicely formatted search results.