

Indexing Web Pages

U3A Bendigo Prospectus Page

Indexing Web Pages

Background and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Webmasters and content providers began optimizing websites for search engines in the mid-1990s, as the first search engines were cataloging the early web. Initially all webmasters only needed to submit the address of a page, or **URL**, to the various search engines which would send a "**spider**" to "crawl" that page, extract links to other pages from it, and return information found on the page to be **indexed**.

Early versions of search engine **algorithms** relied on webmaster-provided information such as the keyword **meta tag** or index files in search engines. These early versions over time were easy to manipulate, so search engines responded by developing more complex ranking algorithms. By 2004, search engines had incorporated a wide range of undisclosed factors in their ranking algorithms to reduce the impact of link manipulation.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is the process of affecting the online **visibility** of a **website** or a **web page** in a **web search engine**'s unpaid results—often referred to as "natural", "**organic**", or "earned" results. In general, the earlier (or higher ranked on the search results page), and more frequently a website appears in the search results list, the more visitors it will receive from the search engine's users; these visitors can then be converted into customers.

The changes that came about in search engine development in the mid-2000s, had webmasters talking about how they could make their websites "sticky", meaning how could they provide the internet surfer with an experience that would "make 'em stay" on the site?

In the case of the U3A Bendigo website we want to be found in searches by as many people as possible as this is how we potentially attract new members. We not only want people to find us in searches, but we want them to stay on our website, not drift off with external links.

As an **Internet marketing** strategy, SEO considers how search engines work, the computer programmed **algorithms** which dictate search engine behaviour, what people search for, the actual search terms or **keywords** typed into search engines, and which search engines are preferred by their targeted audience. Optimizing a website may involve editing its content, adding content, doing **HTML**, and associated coding to both increase its relevance to specific keywords and to remove barriers to the **indexing activities** of search engines.

How Google Search Works

Every time you search on Google, there are thousands, sometimes millions, of web pages with helpful information. How Google figures out which results to show starts long before you even type, and is guided by a commitment to you to provide the best information. Google discovers, crawls and "serves" web pages. Google gets information from many different sources, including:

- Web pages
- User-submitted content such as Google My Business and Maps user submissions
- Book scanning
- Public databases on the Internet
- and many other sources

We're focusing on web pages and Google follows 3 basic steps to generate search results.

Crawling

The first step is finding out what pages exist on the web. There isn't a central registry of all web pages, so Google must constantly search for new pages and add them to its list of known pages. This process of discovery is called **crawling**.

Some pages are known because Google has already crawled them before. Other pages are discovered when Google follows a link from a known page to a new page. Still other pages are discovered when a website owner submits a list of pages (**a sitemap**) for Google to crawl. If you're using a managed web host, such as Wix or Blogger, they might tell Google to crawl any updated or new pages that you make.

To improve your site crawling:

- For changes to a single page, you can **submit an individual URL to Google**.
- Get your page linked to by another page that Google already knows about. However, be warned that links in advertisements, links that you pay for in other sites, links in comments, or other links that don't follow the **Google Webmaster Guidelines** won't be followed.
- If you ask Google to crawl only one page, make it your home page. Your home page is the most important page on your site, as far as Google is concerned. To encourage a complete site crawl, be sure that your home page (and all pages) contain a good site navigation system that links to all the important sections and pages on your site; this helps users (and Google) find their way around your site.

Although it varies, it seems to take as little as 4 days and up to 6 months for a site to be crawled by Google and attribute authority to the domain.

Indexing

After a page is discovered, Google tries to understand what the page is about. This process is called **indexing**. Google analyzes the content of the page, catalogues images and video files embedded on the page, and otherwise tries to understand the page. This information is stored in the **Google index**, a huge database stored in many, many (many!) computers.

To improve your page indexing:

- Create short, meaningful page titles
- Use page headings that convey the subject of the page.
- Use text rather than images to convey content. (Google can understand some image and video, but not as well as it can understand text. At minimum, annotate your **video** and **images** with alt text and other attributes as appropriate.)

Serving (and ranking)

When a user types a query, Google tries to find the most relevant answer from its index based on many factors. Google tries to determine the highest quality answers, and factor in other considerations that will provide the best user experience and most appropriate answer, by considering things such as the user's location, language, and device (desktop or phone). For example, searching for "bicycle repair shops" would show different answers to a user in Paris than it would to a user in Hong Kong.

Google doesn't accept payment to rank pages higher, and ranking is done programmatically.

To improve your serving and ranking:

Make your page fast to load, and mobile-friendly.

Put useful content on your page and keep it up to date.

Follow the **Google Webmaster Guidelines**, which help ensure a good user experience.

Read more tips and best practices in our **SEO starter guide**.

You can find [more information here](#), including **the guidelines that we provide to our quality raters to ensure that we're providing good results**

Using "Fetch"

Using **Fetch** as Google is a Google Search Console feature that lets you simulate how a published web page looks to Google. It also lets you manually submit pages to Google's search index, so you can quickly and efficiently let Google know about changes to your site.

For Mac Users:

Open up your Search engine. Mac downloads can be found at:
https://download.cnet.com/Fetch/3000-2160_4-10000919.html

Install Fetch within Chrome and follow all instructions closely and accurately

Running Fetch

Fetch inserted code into the Prospectus HTML page to make the page more prominent in Google searches after the site had been verified and a file that had been emailed to me had been inserted into the root Index page. In this case our Prospectus page.

If you haven't already, add and verify the site with the "Add a Site" button.

Click on the site name for the one you want to manage.

Click Crawl -> Fetch as Google.

Optional: if you want to do a specific page only, type in the URL.

Click Fetch.

Click Submit to Index.

Select either "URL" or "URL and its direct links"

There are alternatives to Fetch for both Windows and Mac:

FileZilla

Cyberduck

Yummy FTP Lite

See next page for more information.

Voting would suggest that more people downloaded and voted for Cyberduck the most.

Filter by: Free Platform: Mac

 FileZilla 3.36.0 FREE DOWNLOAD Windows Mac Secure and fast FTP transfers Is this a good alternative for Fetch?  	 187 votes
 Cyberduck 6.6.2 FREE DOWNLOAD Mac Windows Elegant and efficient free FTP client Is this a good alternative for Fetch?  	 477 votes
 Yummy FTP Lite 1.2.9 FREE DOWNLOAD Mac Yummy FTP Lite is an FTP + SFTP + FTPS file transfer client which focuses on speed, reliability and productivity.	 2 votes

For Windows Users:

Open up Chrome and go to <https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/googlebot-fetch>. This opens the Google Search Console

You're asked to choose a verified property, so choose a website that you have control over. Google will then "verify" the property you entered so it needs to be accurate.

Search Console

Choose a verified property

After selecting a verified property, you will be routed to the proper page or report.

Don't

Ad

Go to

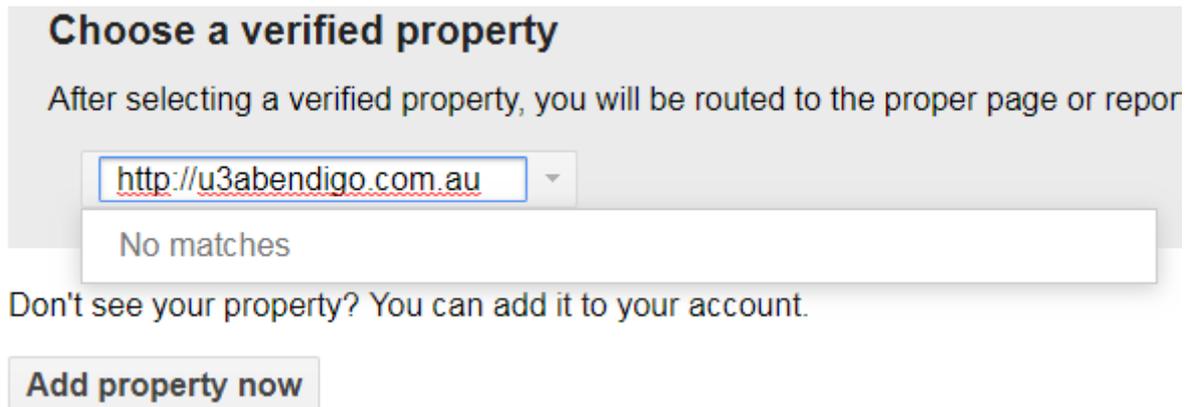
Recent

-  <http://u3abendigo.com/> Website
-  <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/> Website

All

-  <http://u3abendigo.com/> Website
-  <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/> Website

Note: If you enter an incorrect URL you may see this message:



Choose a verified property

After selecting a verified property, you will be routed to the proper page or report

No matches

Don't see your property? You can add it to your account.

Add property now

Add another property now if your web page isn't in the drop down menu. Your web page will be verified (or not) and you will receive notification as to the outcome.

You will be emailed a file that you need to copy in your page "directory" eg:

 google721244cdd0932f1b.html 53 02/06/19 15:16 -rw-r--r--

This file enables Google to verify, index and crawl the webpage.

Once the site is verified you will see a line of coding something like this within the "Header" of your webpage:

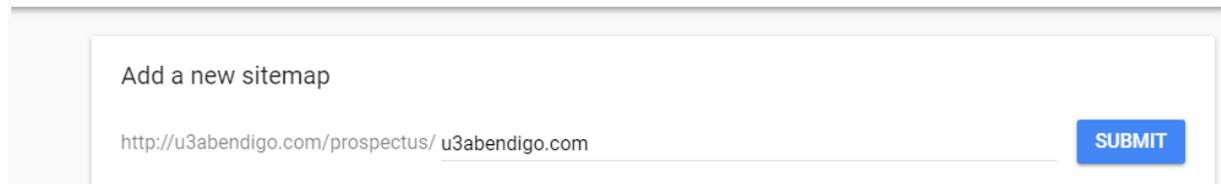
```
<meta name="google-site-verification" content="Uv0sDS3Xh2QKbHwSyjIZb50onWuRY3-TFYXZFsKxC2U" />
```

This line of code is generated by Google and it enables Google to verify, index and crawl the webpage. Any updates to the page are found from this baseline.

Sitemaps

A *sitemap* is a file on your site that tells Google which pages we should know about. If you have a small site (fewer than 100 pages), it might be easier simply to **request indexing of the homepage**; as long as all pages on your site are linked from the homepage (or linked from a page that is linked from the homepage, or linked from a page that is linked from a page that... you get the idea), your site should get indexed.

Sitemaps



Add a new sitemap

SUBMIT

Add a new sitemap if necessary and click to Submit. Hopefully the Sitemap will be submitted successfully.

Our main U3A index page will be indexed by Google and checked for changes.

Sitemap submitted successfully

Google will periodically process it and look for changes. You will be notified if anything goes wrong with it in the future.

GOT IT

At this point you may be asked to "Use new Search Console" as Google has updated their Console. Just click the button.

[Use new Search Console](#)

As you get into using the new Search Console, you need to check your inbox for messages. In this example we can see there are 4 new messages. Click on Messages link in the Search Console.

Search Console

Dashboard	Fetch as Google
Messages (4)	

Each message can be read as you would a normal email inbox.

We can see from the messages list below, that a number of issues have been fixed.

Ensure that you read all Messages in the Inbox. Take action where necessary.

Messages

[Delete](#) View [All](#) [Starred](#) Show [25 rows](#) ▾

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	Mobile Usability issues successfully fixed for site http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/
<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	Monitor the Google Search traffic to http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/
<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	We're validating your Mobile Usability issue fixes for site http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/
<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	New Mobile Usability issues detected for site http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/
<input type="checkbox"/>	★	Improve the search presence of http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/

Mobile Usability issues successfully fixed for site <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/>

To owner of <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/>,

Google has validated your fix of Mobile Usability issues on site <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/>. The specific issue validated was 'Viewport not set'.

1 pages on your site were validated as fixed.

To examine full details on the validation progress and to learn if there are other Mobile Usability related issues to fix, please follow this link.

[View issue details](#)

Issues Found and Fixed

Viewport not set

First detected: 2/15/19 Status: Error

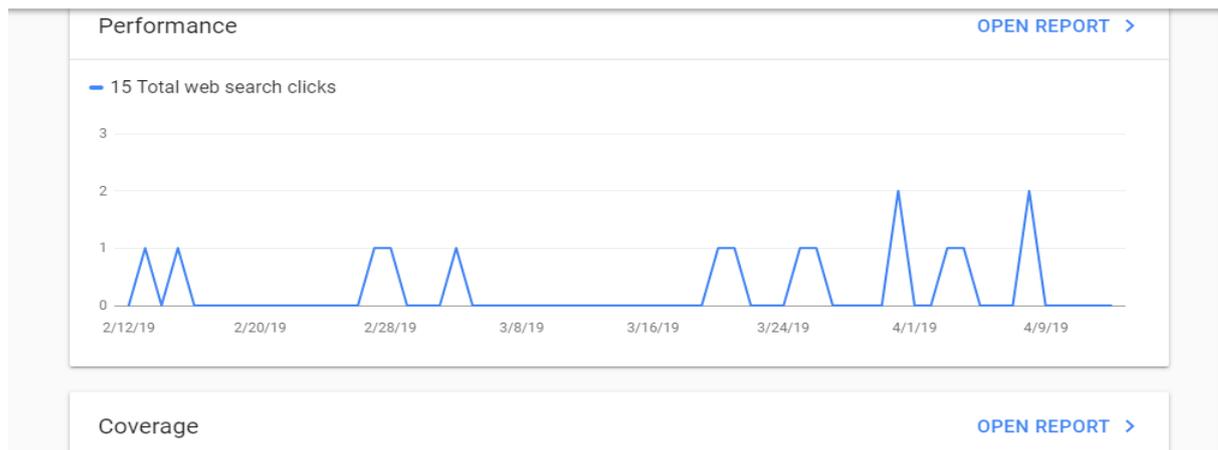
[LEARN MORE](#)

 **Validation passed** Started: 2/16/19 Passed: 2/18/19

[SEE DETAILS](#)

Check the available reports.

Overview



Report on Queries made by Searchers

Query	↓ Clicks	Impressions
u3a bendigo	3	48
rugs bendigo	0	27
bssic	0	9
tai chi bendigo	0	7
eucalyptus distillery museum	0	3
bendigo futsal	0	2
monthly book club	0	2

We can see in the report above, what people have been querying / clicking on most.

What is an impression?

A link URL records an impression when it appears in a search result for a user. Whether or not the link must actually be scrolled into view or otherwise visible depends on the type of search element that contains the link.

E.G. here's a very basic search result that includes only one link: the title "The Compleat Guide to Daffodils - Example.com".

The Compleat Guide to Daffodils - Example.com

www.example.com/flowers/daffodils ▾ Example.com ▾

The complete guide to choosing and growing daffodils in your home garden.

The URL pointed to by this link records an impression when the user opens the page containing this result (even if the result is not scrolled into view). Note that the visible link URL below the title is not a hyperlink and so it is not recorded as impression. (Also note that the visible URL is not necessarily the same as the hyperlink URL of the title).

The next time your page is indexed by Google, in the html file you will see a single line of text has been added by Google to the "<head>" of the web page, something like this:

```
<meta name="google-site-verification" content="Uv0sDS3Xh2QKbHwSyjIZb50onWuRY3-TFYXZFsKxC2U" /> </head>.
```

It's important to the future indexing of the web page by Google.

You don't have to do anything else. Google indexes regularly to keep it's search engine current and ensure the person undertaking the query has a good internet experience.

Immediately Google undertakes the verification and sends you an email with a text file attached. eg

You are asked to copy the file into the index of the web URL you have had verified.

The next time your page is indexed by Google, in the html

Validation Details

Mobile Usability > Viewport not set > Validation details

EXPORT 

 **Validation passed** Started: 2/16/19 Passed: 2/18/19

PENDING 	PASSED 	FAILED 	OTHER 
0	1	0	0
Examples 			
URL			Last crawled
http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/index.html			Feb 8, 2019

Monitoring Google Search Traffic for U3A Bendigo Prospectus

Monitor the Google Search traffic to <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/>

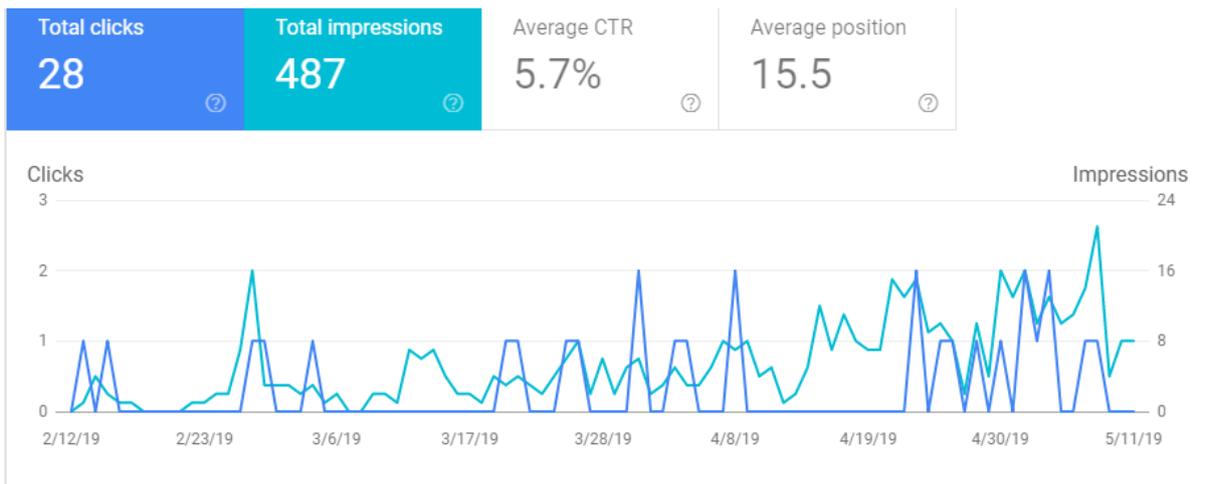
To: Owner of <http://u3abendigo.com/prospectus/>,

Google systems confirm that on Feb 12, 2019 we started collecting Google Search impressions for your website in Search Console. This means that pages from your website are now appearing in Google search results for some queries. Here's how you can monitor your site's performance in search using Search Console.

Track your website's performance:

- 1** Check your top pages on Google Search
Check your top pages in the Performance Report to monitor how many impressions they get. [See top pages](#)
- 2** See which queries trigger your site
See which queries show your website's pages in Google search results. [See top queries](#)
- 3** Monitor errors on your pages
Pages with errors may not appear in search results or provide a bad experience to your users. Make sure to check the crawl errors report and fix any issues you find. [See errors](#)

Top Queries Report:



Clicks and Searches Report

QUERIES	PAGES	COUNTRIES	DEVICES	SEARCH APPEARANCE
				☰ ↓
Query				↓ Clicks Impressions
u3a bendigo				10 181
rugs bendigo				0 65
bendigo u3a				0 13
tai chi bendigo				0 12
bssic				0 10
u3a bendigo buzz				0 6
eucalyptus distillery museum				0 4
monthly book club				0 4
bendigo futsal				0 3
eucalyptus distillery				0 2