

"There's Major Power In Submitting Your Website To Web Directories!"

Webmasters like you and me are always on the lookout to enhance the **link popularity** of their sites. One method of doing so is to seek out **authority sites** in your niche – sites that are widely known on the Internet (through the sheer number of back links) and have been around for some time (think more in terms of several years). Unfortunately, such websites are often at a Page Rank of 6+ and as such, link exchange or text link ad placement is very, **very expensive**.

Luckily, there is a cheaper alternative. You can use **web directories** to not only enhance your **search engine visibility** (through increased link popularity), but by targeting niche categories and using sponsored listings where necessary, you can get a big jump in your traffic as well.

So, let's get started.

What is a Web Directory?

A web directory is a **collection of links** broken down into relevant categories. Think Yahoo! and their directory, the Open Directory Project or even the Google Directory (which, incidentally, is pulled from the ODP). At its most basic level, a web directory is a collection of bookmarks made available to the public. In other cases, like Yahoo, it is a professional resource for people actively looking for information.

To get listed in such a directory, you can either get listed for free (which might take a while), or in many cases, pay a **one-time fee** to have your website reviewed and entered in the directory. One major exception is Yahoo, which charges a recurring fee for its commercial listings, and we'll look at that later.

The Benefits of Being Listed in a Web Directory

In theory, there are two main benefits of being listed in a web directory:

- **Increased link-popularity** due to a one-way link from a highly-respected resource.
- **Increased traffic** due to being listed in a directory that is searched by many people every day.

In reality though, these benefits are directly related to how popular the directory is itself, and how much money you have paid for your listing. Of course, if the link is for free, there is nothing to worry about.

But if you are paying for submission, you need to know some very **important** facts.

Link Popularity

As far as link-popularity is concerned, you need to factor in several variables:

- The Page Rank of the directory
 - The Page Rank of the category page on which you are listed
 - **Where you are listed** on the page
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- The number of competing websites on that page
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- If there are other websites **in your niche** that can offer you the same conditions for the same price or less (very, very important).

The last point is very important from the **cost/benefit** angle. A web directory, while being a hub itself, is NOT a niche website or an authority site. Even within categories and sub-categories, the lack of valuable content means that web directories are, at the end of the day, link pages and nothing more.

Where directories win out is the fact that they require one-time fees. In contrast, authority sites (or most websites with a Page Rank greater than 5 or 6) tend to use text links as a source for revenue, and thus charge **monthly fees**. A directory listing then becomes a much better option (but only for link popularity).

More Traffic

Directory listings are also used as **traffic building opportunities**. How this works is that many directories are searchable for their visitors, so that users can look for information. In theory this is great – you can get **lifetime traffic** for just a nominal payment, but you should not expect a sudden deluge of traffic from just one directory listing. Here's why:

- Most directories, apart from the top twenty or so, are usually used for **link-building** and not pure searching. This means that while people may use GoGuides or Yahoo for regular searches, you should expect that the smaller directories are mainly for link-popularity, and plan your investment as such.
- Many directories offer listings based on an **alphabetical ordering**, or a first-come, first-serve ordering. In both cases, your website has quite a big chance of being lost out in the noise.
- Directory-search algorithms **differ** greatly. Some directories, like JoeAnt, base their search on keyword relevancy (which makes it more of an exercise of stuffing your directory listing with keywords rather than making a good website), while others take a more “editorial” approach by factoring in editor ratings. And still, many directories **display sponsored listings first**, reinforcing the adage that even on the Internet, it's your advertising budget that talks, and not necessarily the quality of your website.

After you factor in the above points, you realize that there are only a handful of web directories where it is a definite benefit to “pay” to be listed. And even then, you cannot just rely on just being listed – sponsor listings get much **more exposure**. But before we discuss these dozen or so web directories, I'd like to tell you how you can make sure your website is accepted.

How to get Listed – An Overview

Getting listed in a web directory is a function of three things:

Time

It takes a certain amount of time before an editor can **review your website** and approve

(or reject) your request. This is usually anywhere between a week to almost never (in huge web directories like Yahoo and Dmoz). You can reduce this to within a week by using the paid listing option.

Money

Apart from Dmoz, the big directories usually require a nominal **payment** for your website to be listed. While you can calculate the benefit of such a listing from reading the previous section, know that usually there are several listing options, which the **better services** (that give your website more directory visibility) obviously **costing more**.

Quality

In some cases (very rarely nowadays), directory inclusions can be **rejected** due to the poor quality of a website. Maybe the editor considered that your website was not **'useful'** enough (meaning it had little or no useful / original / any content), or sometimes, there may be moral issues (although editors are urged to abide by directory guidelines and not personal beliefs). If rejected, you will almost always receive **feedback** (you might have to ask for it) on how to improve your website.

In earlier days, quality was a big issue. Today, it is still a major concern for top directories like Yahoo, but this is more to separate the truly atrocious from the rest rather than to separate the best from the rest.

Each web directory has their personalized criteria, but there are two crucial elements to getting listed:

- **Paid Inclusions** – Apart from Dmoz, and some directories where you can sign-up to be an editor, the top directories require payment – anywhere from \$15 to \$299.
- **Website Quality** – By this I don't mean design; I'm talking about having truly useful information – even if your website is a commercial website, simply putting up a bunch of affiliate links will not count as a **quality website** .

The Big Guns

Yahoo and Dmoz are the two biggest directories on the Internet, and it's only fair that I talk about how to get listed on them individually.

Yahoo

A listing in Yahoo's directory has direct benefits:

- Google – and perhaps other search engines as well – give your website an **added importance** if your website is listed in the Yahoo directory.
- Yahoo is the portal of choice for **millions of users**. This makes your potential target market at least in the hundreds of thousands, even for obscure niches.

To get listed in the Yahoo directory, you have to access [Yahoo Directory Submit](#) and work from there. You will be required to open a Yahoo account, if you don't have one already. The review process will cost \$299, and is **no guarantee** that your website will be listed.

However, if you have a useful website, and follow the guidelines detailed by Yahoo, there is no reason for your website to be rejected.

The Open Directory Project

Dmoz, or the open directory project, is a directory that rivals the reach of Yahoo. Why? Because directories like the **Google Directory** and many others are powered by the results from Dmoz. This gives a listing in the ODP a very high premium.

However, because a listing in Dmoz is essentially free, there is very little you can do about the time factor. Many websites that are submitted are never indexed, and that happens mainly due to a **lack of time**.

On the other hand, quality websites that are added into their relevant categories are almost always accepted, so make sure you **follow their guidelines**.

Instructions for submitting the Open Directory Project can be found [here](#).

Resources

Getting listed in Yahoo and Dmoz is the **bare minimum** for any website looking to establish themselves at the top of their niche. And if you're looking to move beyond the big two and move on to second-tier directories, here's a quick list.

Directories

[Find Web Designers](#)

multiple paid options

[Portal Boost Directory](#)

non-profit website – free, commercial website - \$15

[Around The Web](#)

\$15

[Index Unlimited](#)

multiple paid options from free to \$99.

[GoGuides](#)

\$39.99 or \$69.95

[Data Spear](#)

\$39.99

[This Is Our Year](#)

\$19.95

[Browse8](#)

\$35

[Uncover The Net](#)

Multiple paid options, \$39 one-time to \$29/month

[Rubber Stamped](#)

\$25

[Joe Ant](#)

\$39.99

[Best Of The Web](#)

\$39.95

Directories of Directories

In addition, there are several directories that are focused completely on directories (you can find similar listings by looking through Yahoo or Dmoz).

[Directory Archives](#)

[Complete Planet](#)

A directory listing is, in most cases, useful only for the **link popularity**. In such scenarios, if you can find better deals on authority sites in your niche, then you should go for them. However, a directory listing is **cheaper** (one-time versus monthly payment), and with the big directories like Yahoo, Dmoz and GoGuides, it can also bring you reasonable traffic.

As always, remember that directory listings form a **small part** of your overall online marketing strategy. If you don't have the budget for a Yahoo listing, don't sweat it – focus on other forms of marketing, and come back to it when you can afford it. Directory listings are important, but only when you are looking to **squeeze** every possible drop of search engine placement out of your links and your website.

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