Website Wizards

Guide To Sitemaps .xml & .html

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Introduction

Sitemaps (xml & html)

In short, a sitemap is a file that helps both search engine robots and human visitors figure out what webpages are on a particular website and provides an easy way of accessing them. There are two types of sitemaps that are commonly used on websites today:

1: Sitemap.xml

2: Sitemap.html

We will discuss the two types of sitemaps and how to create and implement them into your website.

Sitemap.xml

Important For SEO

Used By Search Engine Spiders

Must Be Uploaded To Hosting

Lists Page Path & Other Data

Must Be .XML Extension

Have Us Implement It For You

REQUEST QUOTE

This type of sitemap is used by search engines to locate pages and other useful page information such as last modification dates and times along with the importance of the page. An XML sitemap is formatted in html with basic coding that lists every page contained within your website.

An XML sitemap is important for search engine optimization reasons along with ensuring search engines have a list of what they should be crawling. Creating a sitemap.xml file is a fairly simple process and can be done from several websites online who will crawl and create a list of known pages for you. Once completed, you can download the file for upload to your hosting environment.

Me careful not to change the sitemap.xml file from it's native .xml extension to something else like .doc or it will not be found by search engines. You can check if you already have a sitemap.xml by entering your website address followed by /sitemap.xml. Example: https://www.website-wizards.com/sitemap.xml

If your website returns a 404 error, you do not currently have a sitemap.xml in place and should get one created and uploaded. The sitemap.xml file must be FTP uploaded to the public_html directory of your hosting environment. In cases where your website is hosted as a sub-domain, the file will need to be placed into the root folder that contains the website in question. If you are unsure if you are hosted as a sub-domain, contact your host provider and they will be able to answer this for you.

Sitemap.html

Important For SEO

Used By Human Visitors

Must Be Linked Into The Website

Lists All Website Pages

Must Be .XML Extension

Have Us Implement It For You

REQUEST QUOTE

This type of sitemap is there to help website visitors who wish to see a complete list of available pages on your website rather than hunting for links found in different areas of the website. Although most helpful for websites that contain more than 10 pages, we recommend anyone with a website that has 5 pages to also include a sitemap page along with a link in the footer area of your website to maintain the best practices in web development.

Creating a sitemap page will depend on the platform of your website however if you are familiar with creating webpages for your website then the process is the same. Simply create a new page with the name sitemap and populate it with all the pages and links found within your website. Once you have the page created, make sure to add it as a link in the footer of your website or wherever you have other utility pages such as privacy policy or terms and conditions pages.

The sitemap page doesn't have to be overly fancy however should match the style and feel of the rest of your website to keep with your current design harmony. To see an example of our sitemap please visit: https://www.website-wizards.com/our-site-map/
In our case, due to the volume of pages, we have separated the pages into primary, secondary and other categories to help visitors navigate our tree structure with ease. Depending on the number of pages you have, you may want to do something similar. You can also choose to add a brief description next to each link and page name to give visitors a better understanding of what that page will be about.

The idea with sitemaps and really a website in general is to make it as easy as can be for visitors to find the information they are looking for in the shortest time possible. This results in improved conversion rates and more lead generation.

Helpful Reminders

.XML Sitemap

- You can find several websites that will create the .xml version of your sitemap for free by searching the words "sitemap generator" online.

- Once you have the sitemap.xml take care to not change the file format from .xml as it will need to have this extension in order to be found by search engine spiders.

- You will need an FTP program like FileZilla to upload your sitemap to the proper directory on your hosting. You should have an FTP path, username and password that was provided when you originally signed up for hosting. If you do not have this, contact your host provider and asking for it or see if they will upload the file for you.

- Once you have a proper sitemap.xml file in place, be sure to add it to your Bing and Google webmaster dashboards so they are aware of the new file and can crawl it.

.HTML Sitemap

- Creating the page version of your sitemap will be identical to creating a new web page.

- Be sure to add a link to the new sitemap page which should be located in the footer of your website or in the same area as other utility pages.

- Adding description text can help visitors identify the pages they are looking for.

- For websites that have a good number of pages, separating pages into categories can help maintain an orderly appeal to the sitemap.

- Be sure to keep the sitemap updated with any new pages created over time.

Need Assistance?

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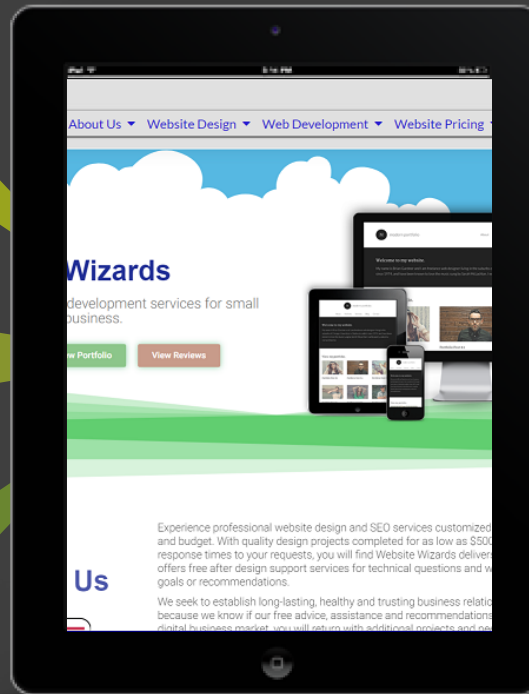Your project completed in days, not weeks.

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