Project 3/ SEO Plan
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Search Engine Optimization Plan

Thought Leadership Goals

Unlike most students enrolled in the ID and Adult Learning MA program, I am not currently working in the field of Instructional Design. My background consists of a previous career as a professional photographer and as a photographic educator. I have a passion for reaching adult learners through the most effective means possible. For the past six years I have been furthering my own education, finishing a BFA in Communication Design and completing thirty hours of coursework in UCD's Urban Education Alternative Licensure program. While in school I have been employed as a server/ server trainer at Applebee's in Castle Rock, Co. As I continue to train/educate adult learners, I have become aware of the differences in learning styles as well as the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of a Learning Management System. As an adult learner in the ILT program through CU Denver, I have begun to evaluate the Learning Management Systems I've been exposed to in my last six years of education at the undergraduate and graduate level.

My focus in thought leadership is around matching the most appropriate learning tools to the adult online learner. There is too much educational and training technology that does not work for all learners. Tailoring the learning environment to the needs and learning styles of an adult learner can result in a confident, prepared employee.

I hope to share the insights and resources I acquire with other adult education professionals. The two vehicles I plan to utilize to achieve this are my base camp website and my networked learning space.

Role of Base Camp Site and Personalized Learning Network (PLN)

I envision the two entities as playing complimentary roles. Visitors to each space will be able to contribute, interact with other professionals and encounter a rich repository of resources and materials. My hope is that they will use this access to

extend their knowledge, competencies and form meaningful new professional relationships.

The base camp website will be home to my portfolio, blog and professional resources. The blog will be an ongoing forum examining adult learning, trends, philosophies and the best tools to achieve the desired outcome. Initially the website will reflect my nascence as an adult learning professional as I am still a student. As I grow in the program and, eventually, the profession, my content and contributions will demonstrate growth and wisdom acquired through professional practice.

My PLN is embedded in LinkedIn and is focused specifically on LMS. By creating a niche learning space I can deeply explore a critical component of adult online learning. As an interactive space, I can expand my circles of influence by increasing the membership of my group and encourage discussion and create an atmosphere of community.

It is my hope that each space drives traffic to the other. This kind of crossover will be beneficial in terms of expanding readership and also lay the groundwork for future professional opportunities.

Strategic Plan for Establishing Web Presence

I plan to augment each space in the form of regular updates and content additions. Specifically, I will continue to create new blog posts on my website as well as add relevant coursework as completed to the portfolio area. Blog posts will be created bi-weekly at a minimum and monitored for comments and discussions.

I have installed the Google Analytics plug-in on my Wordpress based base camp site. This will allow me to see how many people are visiting and what they are reading. This data will also help to inform me as to what content is popular and allow me to fine tune the content I post. I am also setting up Google Alerts to flag me when my name has been mentioned online. This will inform me as to the measure of influence I am exerting within my professional arena. I can also tailor the alerts to inform me about areas of interest I have in research.

As I progress through the program and beyond, I intend to publish my work in open-access journals. Some sites that serve as a directory of open-access journals for education specifically are the Directory of Open Access Journals and the Journal of Interactive Online Learning.

Social media is another avenue for "getting the word out". Facebook is a personal means of social media for me, but LinkedIn is my preferred method of professional interaction. They have a feature, which allow members to create posts. This would be independent of my NLS group, and would position me as a thought leader in the industry. I am not a Twitter user and prefer to limit the number of social media venues I participate in to Google +, Pinterest, and as mentioned, LinkedIn. I do plan to join relevant interest groups to extend my presence professionally and to expose me to content that will help me to grow as a professional. LinkedIn has several groups focused on eLearning. Another opportunity for networking and live interaction with other eLearning professionals is to attend seminars and join local eLearning focused groups.

Throughout my coursework I will be creating several presentations. I plan to showcase them on the portfolio section on my basecamp site, but can also share them on Slideshare, which is affiliated with LinkedIn. By utilizing a forum (LinkedIn) with which I already have a significant content investment and contacts, I can maximize my exposure to my professional community.

Another strategy to maximize my web presence is to update all of my online profiles. The article published by Joanna Dunlap and Patrick Lowenthal informed me of all the above-mentioned strategies, but also made me aware of how connected I already am- but in a non-productive way. I belong to several sites that feature user profiles, but my bios have been either incomplete or inconsistent from one site to another. I am in the process of updating all my online profiles to reflect my professional affiliations and practices and reflect consistency across all sites. Additionally, I will create links to my sites in my profiles.

I have also registered my base camp site and PLN with Google for indexing.

Preliminary Assessment of Plan's Effectiveness

The actual work of maintaining the sites is not that extensive or difficult, it just needs to be done. I've put reminders on my calendar to force me to make regular blog posts, participate in discussions and aggregate content for posts.

I can measure the effectiveness of my base camp site by reviewing Google Analytics reports. This will guide me as to what content is popular, so that I may generate more content that is more likely to be read and interacted with. I have also set up Google Alerts for my name and the multiple ways it may appear. This allows me to track where I've been cited, and will prompt me to increase my presence on those sites as well as inform me as to who is reading work I've written and citing those works. Comments made to my blog posts will also allow

me track the viability of my blog. Attracting and retaining readers is the goal, by making timely replies to comments made I can assure readers that this is a dynamic site with continually updated content.

The greatest measure of effectiveness for the PLN is growth in membership. As my PLN is embedded in LinkedIn, I can invite members within LinkedIn to join as well as invite professionals outside of the network to join. Increased membership will mean increased content and discussion contributions. Cross-promotion between the base camp site and the PLN will stimulate readership on both sites. I will also promote both sites through my various presences online and include both links in my email signatures to maximize exposure.

Next Steps

To make these sites work for me and grow, I need to be diligent in their maintenance and upkeep. As I said, I have made "appointments" to do this work on my calendar. I will regularly collect relevant content to add to both sites as well as stay abreast of new trends and issues in the industry so as to be in touch with current events to further my web presence as a thought leader. I will moderate discussions and grow my professional network. As I complete coursework I will add these projects and papers to my base camp site and generate posts to both sites highlighting the work. I plan to join local face-to-face professional eLearning organizations to create a more personal presence. My business cards will have both sites listed. By monitoring Google Analytics I will be able to measure growth and focus on what areas are receiving the most attention, and create more content based on those findings. I will also refer back to this document to keep me on task, reinvigorating me when I may lose focus on the importance of maintaining and growing the sites. I want to think of them as living entities, which require regular attention and nurturing. Finally, I will seek out other, like-minded professionals and read and comment on their blogs, contribute content to their sites and engage in discussions, just as I hope they will for me.