Get PHP pages indexed in the Search engines

A simple method to convert files from Php to Html Extensions, on an Apache Server

Most will agree Php has become the common language for creating dynamic Websites. Although the language is simple and efficient, developers are finding trouble getting traffic to their Php site. It is believed by many educated Search Engine Optimization Specialists that spiders do not read beyond the, ?.php,? on a URL. Therefore, dynamic pages that pass a variable will be overlooked. For example, on a PHP directory, variables may be passed to a file as, ?index.php?category=x?. In this instance, the category specified as ?x? will not be read or indexed by Search Engines. Spiders will open the parent page (index.php). This is supported by the belief that nothing is read beyond the ???, thus making all category links, ?index.php?.

While many dynamic Websites still receive modest traffic, it may be in a developers? best interest to allow some, or all, dynamic pages to be seen as well. Having two pages indexed may not double a sites? traffic, but it will ensure a noticeable increase. Developers? can easily overcome this problem, if their Site resides on an Apache Server.

This simple fix will satisfy the problem for a simple script, as in the example above, where one or more Php files are passed variables to perform different functions. Bare in mind, if a Php file only performs one task, this is not required. Files that perform a task without the ??variable=x? being required will be indexed. Therefore, it would be useless to transform them to a Static URL (HTML File).

Identify the Php File Needing to be changed to an Html

First, identify the desired file, or files, that require the change, along with the variables that generate a common page. Generally, this may be, ?index.php?. To help readers follow along, I am going to utilize the above Directory example. On our Directory program, we have a main page, ?index.php,? which always displays links to Subdirectories. The subdirectories are opened by passing a variable to the index file. For example, a subcategory called, ?Arts and Crafts,? is displayed with, ?index.php?category=1?. Additional subcategories are displayed with an identical syntax, but the end variable changes. Because of this, we need to modify the way our server opens the index.php file, when a variable is attached.

Next, we need to place a simple .htaccess file in the directory where, ?index.php,? is located on the server. The .htaccess file is a simple text file that we name .htaccess. Vdeck users may need to create a file named something.txt, and then rename the file to .htaccess, from the admin panel. Now we need to specify some variables to the server. For this example, I am going to change the, ??category=x,? variable to, ?directory-x.html?. This step will eliminate our problem of having the subcategories noticed by Search Engine Spiders.

To start our server variables, we need to create a rewrite engine in the .htaccess file. Simply put our first line will read, ?RewriteEngine On?. This tells the server we are changing the way certain files are to be handled. No we need to specify our Rewrite rule. On the next line, ?RewriteRule ^directory-([0-9]*).* index.php?category=$1 [L,NC],?. This is delegating, ?requests to this directory, where the file is named, ?directory-,? followed by a range of 0 to 9, followed by anything (* = Wildcard) and, ?dot,? anything (* = Wildcard), we are going to display, ?index.php,? file with the variable attached. We can create another rewrite rule on another line of our .htaccess file. However, a meticulous developer likes to test things out before making changes to the actual Php file, or progressing ahead of oneself. We can test our, ?RewriteRule,? by opening another browser window and entering, ?directory-1.htm or directory-1.html,? into the address bar. We should see the same page displayed as, ?index.php?category=1,? is called.

Finally, we want the Search Engine spiders to be able to see our shinning new readable URL that can be indexed. Rather than scurrying around to every search engine and submitting the URL, we are going to open up our Php file for editing. Before this is done, make a copy of each script that is going to be modified. Save the copy to the hard drive in a memorable location. Then identify the different areas of the program that create the links being changed. We don?t want to change things on the back-end, just the front-end. The Php file will still be getting the information as, ?index.php?category=x,? from the .htaccess file. We want to change the display part that users to

the site see. This is where links are dynamically created on the Php Script. We need to replace, ?index.php?category=,? to read, ?directory-,? where, ?index.php?category=X,? is found and follow behind the variable (x) with, ?.html?.

Once the area to be modified is found, check the modification following your changes. If you make a mistake on a script and get ahead of yourself, it may be difficult to fix the problem.

To see this exact modification in action, visit http://links.mjmls.com/index.html. Follow any of the category links on the page. Then change, ?directory-,? to, ?index.php?cat=,? and drop the html extension.

Short note about the author

Michael Medeiros is the founder of http://www.Mjmls.com an independently owned Internet domain. He has obtained a Bachelors Degree in Business, and works as an Independent Real Estate Agent in New Jersey. With the development of Mjmls.com, Michael has performed extensive research into Website Development. Mjmls.com is a Beta released free marketplace for businesses and individuals, allowing consumers to browse nationally or locally by individual state.

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