

Check To See If You Have Been Hit By Penguin For Page Over Optimization

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Hit By Penguin for Over Optimization?

There is a lot of talk lately after Penguin came out, as well as several updates to the Penguin algorithm on what exactly is affecting a site to make it drop off for a single keyword. I have written a little about my experiences with Penguin, but often get requests from new customers to look into why they are no longer ranking #1 for X keyword. Each case is slightly different but have a common thread.

I have developed a little test to check to see if they might have been hit by penguin because of on page over-optimization issues. I get the question a lot that goes something like "What is over optimization? Does this mean we can't put the keyword on the page?" And my answer is usually something like "If the keyword is on the page more often than it needs to be to get the customer to A) Figure out where they are, B) Find what they are looking for, or C) figure out where to go next, than it is probably over optimized."

The following test probably does not work 100% of the time, but works for me often enough that I use it right out of the gate to see if the shoe fits. If so, i don't research much further.

Here is how the process goes:

Real world experience...but this will probably be fixed by the time you read this, so you won't be able to see it for yourself because I'm going to fix this right away...so I'm going to include screen shots.

Initial Information you need to get started:

- 1) Domain Name: Example: www.ekpass.com
- 2) Keyword that got nuked by Penguin: Example: "[Heavy Equipment Operator Training](#)"

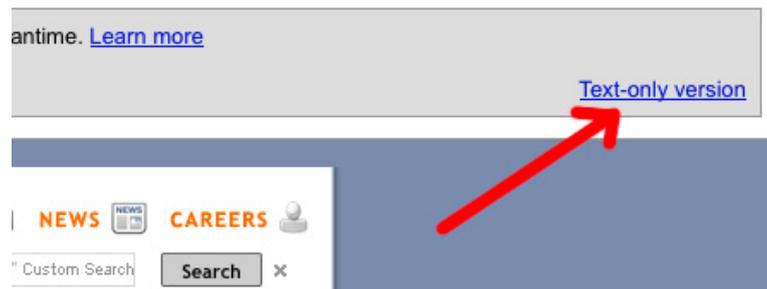
Steps to Check

1. Use Safari browser if possible (highlights in colors nicely later on but not critical).
2. Do a quick search on Google to see if the website shows up in the top 100 listings when you search on the keyword. (I usually never see the listing in the top 100, but did see it once in the 80's)
3. Now, perform a search on google exactly like this:
 1. <http://www.google.com>
 2. **Type in your keyword with -asdf** at the end Example "[Heavy Equipment Operator Training -asdf](#)" (without the quotes). This can be any negative term...i

- just randomly chose "asdf". I usually use "yomamma" because it cracks me up....sad life I know. Any negative term will work though.
- You should now see your listing in the top 2 pages or so.** I never see it back at the #1 spot, but most often at the bottom of page 1 or top of page 2. If you do see this, this is a strong indication that you have been hit by the Penguin update.
 - Now comes the real test... roll over the listing until you see the link for "cached".
(click image below for full size)

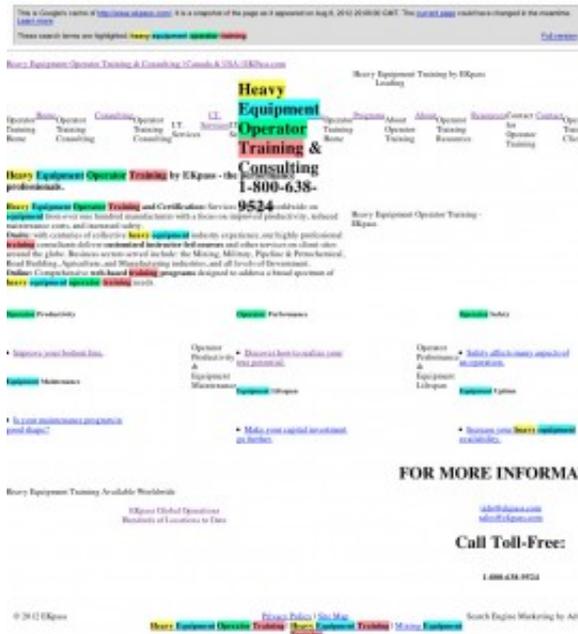


- This is where Google will show you highlighted where it saw the keyword on the page...but wait...there's more!
- Now click on the "cached" link on the top right side of the flyout window and then on the "text Only" link at the top right of the next screen. Here is the next screen.
(click image below for full size)



- Now you will see a screen that highlights what Google really sees. See image below from my Safari browser.

[caption id="attachment_744" align="alignnone" width="271"]



You will want to click on this to see full sized version[/[caption](#)]

Se all that color..that is why I suspect they got hit by Penguin. Looks like keyword stuffing to me eh? Fix this, and on the next pass (usually in a month or two) the algorithm won't match and you should be back in business. Remember, this isn't a penalty, just an algorithm match so as soon as you don't match it, you should rank for your keyword again.

Like I said earlier, this probably won't work all the time, but it's a quick check to see if it is totally obvious that there is some on-page optimization issues that got them in trouble for Penguin.

Hope this helps....and leave me a comment if you have any other things that might help us all out.