



**Your Website Coach**



## ***How Do I Make It Better? – 12/22/05***

Website owners always have questions about their website: “How do I make it better?”, “How long is too long for a page?”, “What must I do to rank higher in search engines?” Although the last question is clearly about search engines, the truth is, so are the preceding questions. Just about any question that can be asked about a website has a response that, in part, affects a site’s ranking on search engines.

For example, Pam Drake, [www.dfcards.com](http://www.dfcards.com) asks:

“Is using Flash on a website a good or bad thing? Is it true that the more ‘links’ you have on your site, the higher up on the search engine you’ll go? Do more people like a ‘clean’ uncluttered web page, opposed to ‘lots of stuff going on’?”

Before I can answer Pam’s first questions I must first define a static and a dynamic page. A **static** web page is your typical HTML page that is stored on your web host server (computer), where it now waits for a visitor to come and visit. Your metatags, descriptions and keywords are embedded in that page as regular, readable text. A **dynamic** web page is one in which the whole page or parts of it are created “on the fly”. This means that the page as you see doesn’t exist until you have asked to see it. These pages can be built in PHP, ASP, JSP, Java, Flash and even more languages. Some of these methods result in actual code (not readable text).

This means; be careful when using Flash, Java applets and other types of dynamic programming. Search engines are looking for readable key words on your pages and they can’t find those words if they are encoded in a Flash file or in Java code or sitting on your web host server waiting to be generated.

It is not so much the quantity of your links, but the *quality* of your links. If the company you keep (link-wise) is reputable and ranks high – that reflects favorably on your site. Having numerous links to your site and on your site (most of which aren’t related to your business) is bordering on link farming and search engines frown on that activity.

The rule of thumb is that if your visitors feel your site is clear and filled with the information for which they were seeking, the search engines will think so too. And yes, the majority of visitors prefer uncluttered sites. Lots of animation and moving text detracts from your site’s primary purpose: information dissemination. Did you know that really long pages can affect your search engine ranking? On pages that exceed 100K in size, Google generally does not retrieve the page content past that 100K mark.

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