

Writing Content for Search-ability

The key to writing meta content for your page is understand who your users are and why they should come to your page. Think of it as a question and answer scenario. The user has a question and you are providing the answer.

1. The Title

- a. This is what will display as the link when users when they do a search.
- b. Titles tags will be in the following format *SEO TITLE* - *DEPARTMENT* | Lewis-Clark State. Eg. Tuition & Aid – Admissions | Lewis-Clark State. You are only responsible for the *SEO TITLE* section.
- c. If your page is a deeply nested page or you cannot think of what to put, the easiest and safest solution is to put your page title.
- d. However, if your page is one of importance and you are trying to optimize clicks, you should think more deeply about the question the users are asking when looking for your page and word your title accordingly. Eg. Instead of **Scholarships & Waivers – Financial Aid | Lewis-Clark State**, you might consider **How to Apply for Scholarships – Financial Aid | Lewis-Clark State**.

2. The Description

- a. This the body text in search results that display below the link.
- b. Be aware that users only briefly skim this content, so it is important to make sure to include keywords that you believe users will search for. Words that were in the user search term will display as bold. Remember, however, that you are not writing for a robot. You are writing for humans.
- c. Search engines reserve the right to alter or replace your description, so do not be surprised if what you enter is not displayed.
- d. Keep the length to around 280 characters. The CMS will want your around 140, because that was the recommended a few years ago. Recently, however, many search engines have increased the limit to around 300.
- e. The goal is to write a description that will entice a user to click by answering their question.
 - i. Start with action oriented language like “Learn”, “Discover”, “Explore”, “Find”, etc. Then include page specifics.
 - ii. Provide a solution or benefit. Write a sentence letting users know what to expect or why the page is worth their time.
 - iii. Don’t deceive users. Avoid word stuffing or irrelevant information. Do not use the same description for every page.
 - iv. Be specific and relevant. Avoid fluffy language.
- f. Google’s description “Search the world's information, including webpages, images, videos and more. Google has many special features to help you find exactly what you're looking for.”

Helpful Links:

- (Preview tool) <https://metatags.io/>
- <https://themeisle.com/blog/meta-description-examples/>
- <https://exposureninja.com/blog/how-to-write-meta-titles-and-descriptions/>

- <https://moz.com/blog/the-ultimate-guide-to-seo-meta-tags>
- <http://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>
- <https://themeisle.com/blog/meta-description-examples/>
- <https://ahrefs.com/blog/title-tag-seo/>
- <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/35624?hl=en>
- <http://www.momeomagazine.com/seo-explained-setting-up-effective-meta-tags-on-your-pages-by-seocopy/>
- <https://www.wpromote.com/blog/seo/seo-advice-meta-descriptions-page-titles>
- <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/how-to-use-effective-title-tags-for-better-ranking.html>