



Metadata and Search Engines

Introduction

This document shows how to find information on how search engines make use of metadata. The document has been produced for use by participants on the Metadata and Web Tools sessions at the **Institutional Web Management** workshop held at Newcastle University on 15-17 September 1998.

Aims of This Exercise

This document shows how to find information on how search engines make use of metadata. The aim of the exercises is to discover how many of the major search engines, such as AltaVista, make use of metadata and how they use the metadata.

Accessing the “SearchEngineWatch” Service

Task 1 Getting Started

In your web browser enter the address
<URL: <http://www.searchenginewatch.com/>>.

The web page shown in Figure 1 will be displayed.

Read the contents of this page.



Figure 1 The SearchEngineWatch Home Page

Task 2 Finding Out About Use of the Meta Element

Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose the **Choose Another Page** option. Scroll down and select the **Meta Tags** option. Then click on the **Go** button. Alternatively you can enter the address <URL: <http://www.searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/meta.html>>.

The screen shown in Figure 2 will be displayed.

Read the contents of the page.

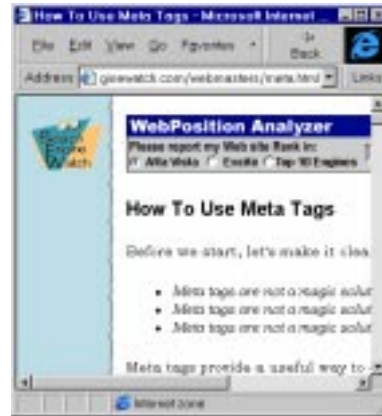


Figure 2 The Meta Tags Page

Task 3 Finding Out About Search Engine's Support

Scroll to the near the top of the page and click on the link to **Search Engine Features**. Scroll Alternatively you can enter the address <URL: <http://www.searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/features.html>>.

Scroll down to the table containing the list of features. Move to the (second) table containing details on Ranking order.

Which search engines support the <META> tag?

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Exploring Your Web Site's Position in Search Engines

Task 4 Getting Started

In your web browser enter the address <URL: <http://www.webposition.com/>>.

Click on the **See it In Action** link on the left of the window. Read the pages which describe the software.

Do you think WebPosition would be of interest to you?

Will you download an evaluation version of the software?



Figure 3 The WebPosition Home Page