



## Snippets Matter

### *Rankings Alone Aren't Enough*

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Are you ranking well with Google and the other search engines and still not realizing an increase in traffic to your website? A number of factors can cause this, but one that may be overlooked is the snippet.

The snippet is the brief caption of a website's titles and description that appears on the search engine results page or SERP. The snippet takes into account the content of a page as well as its references that appear on the web. These important words should establish a positive first impression.

#### **A fictitious example of a poor snippet:**

[Fairmont Private Schools | Orange County Private School | Splash Page](#)

With this in mind, Fairmont has made significant improvements in the food service offerings that are going to be available to our students. This includes partnering...

[www.fairmontschools.com/](http://www.fairmontschools.com/) - 52k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

In this case, I'm assuming that the searcher is looking for a Private School in Orange County for their kids. It's important to meet web searchers where they are. A parent evaluating private schools may be more interested in hearing about the key merits of the school rather than significant improvements made to the food service.

This snippet might miss the mark for parents more interested in enrollment as it may cause them to wonder what was wrong with the prior food service and what else needs improving.

#### **A more effective snippet:**

[Fairmont Private Schools | Orange County Private School | Splash Page](#)

Fairmont **Private Schools** is one of Orange County's premiere academics institutions. With over 50 years of experience, Fairmont provides a world-class ...

[www.fairmontschools.com/](http://www.fairmontschools.com/) - 52k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

The above is an actual snippet that appeared on Google on November 28, 2008. It provides a good first impression and leads the searcher into clicking onto the Fairmont Private Schools website, which is what the snippet should do.

#### **How to change your site's snippets in the search engine results**

Search engines, such as Google, use a number of different sources for snippet information, including the description in the meta tag for each page. In cases where this information isn't listed, they may use information from DMOZ\*.

Many search engines prefer to use meta descriptions of pages because they can provide a clearer idea of the URL's content. We recommend you write descriptions that clearly describe the content on each page, whenever possible. Well-written descriptions can go a long way to improving the quality and quantity of your search traffic, while minimizing web searcher frustration.

This valuable information is entered into the "description" field of the source code on the web page. It's important to note that it may take some time for the changes to your snippets to appear on the search engines results pages.

It's also important to note that it's best not to use identical descriptions on every page of a site when individual pages appear in the web results. Wherever possible, create descriptions that accurately describe each specific page.

Snippets may appear to be a small thing for many website owners, but they can impact your bottom line. Though website rankings are important, conversions should be the ultimate goal. The snippet can help you accomplish that goal by leading potential customers to your website so that you have the opportunity to generate new sales leads or sell your products once prospects arrive.

\*DMOZ open directory project is considered to be the largest, most comprehensive human-edited directory of the Web.

DLC&A Internet Marketing is a Twin Cities-based Internet marketing firm. They develop and implement search engine friendly Internet marketing strategies that generate sales leads and revenue for small and medium-sized businesses.

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