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Web Developer Tutorial: SEO with Drupal: Excerpt Module

By [Tyme](#)

A key advantage to a content management system is that it places content creation in the hands of the client. However, the downside to having the [Web](#) developer removed from the process is that search engine optimization (SEO) can suffer. Several Drupal contributed modules make SEO easy for content producers: [Page Title](#), [Excerpt](#), [Nodewords](#), [XML Sitemap](#).

The purpose of a search engine crawler is to deliver to a Web user the best possible results for a searched term or phrase. Make that easier for the search engines and your organic search standings are likely to improve. Search engines give more weight to front page content and content above the fold, presuming that you will feature your best content first.

Because Drupal, like most content management systems, by default publishes teasers to the home page with a "read more" link, you want to be sure those summaries are keyword rich. By default, Drupal grabs the first X number of characters (configured on the Post Settings page) of the body text to create this content summary.

The Drupal [Excerpt](#) module adds an [additional](#) textarea field to the node add/edit form that allows content creators to write a unique teaser. If nothing is entered in this field, a teaser will be created automatically from the body, using the post setting policy.

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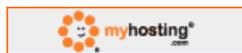
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Create Story

Page title:

 Provide a description of this node to appear in the <title> tag which search engines can use in search result listings (optional). It is generally accepted this field should be less than 70 characters.

Story Title: *

Teaser:


Path: p
[Disable rich-text](#)
 Enter an excerpt for this item. It will be shown on listing pages along with a *read more* link which leads to the full view. Leave empty to auto-generate one from the body.

- > [Input format](#)

Story Body:


Path: p
[Disable rich-text](#)
 - > [Input format](#)

Configuring the Module

Just install this puppy and go! No fuss, no muss. The module draws from the Post Settings, so nothing more is needed.

Why Do I Want Unique Teasers?

There are several reasons to display unique teasers.

Better SEO

Let's face it. We writers like our adjectives/adverbs, metaphors, and obscure word gems. But, this creative writing doesn't always lend itself well to search engine optimization (SEO). Being forced to forgo an eloquent introductory paragraph and pack sentences with a repetition of the same boring keyword(s) is just plain offensive to an author. A custom summary can be a nice compromise. Using the Excerpt module, you can craft a teaser that appeals to the search engines, while retaining the integrity of your writing for the full article. Need an example? See this article's teaser. Yawn.

Another faux pas would be including references to competitors or links to other websites in your teaser. No need to promote them on your time. Use the Excerpt module to write a teaser that is free of detractions to your own keyword [promotion](#).

Teaser Cliff Hanger

Tease your audience with your teaser. Make them want to click the "read more" link. By customizing the teaser, you can create a "cliff hanger" in the article summary to encourage the reader to view the full article. If your site serves advertising, the additional page views have [great value](#). And, if this content is distributed by RSS feed, it could mean the difference between a Web user visiting your site or not.

Here is an example of a full blog post, which offers tips from an expert:

Ask the Fantasy Expert- Who is your sleeper running back this year?

Submitted by [redacted] on Sat, 2010-08-14 14:27



I got an email from Bill in Princeton.

I have a draft coming up this Sunday. Who is a sleeper running back I can target in the late rounds?

Bill, I like a few guys. First I will tell you my idea of a sleeper here is someone who you draft as a 3rd or 4th RB that at the end of the year will finish in the top 20 in production. Of course you would like to have a guy you draft in the 14th round who finishes 3rd in points, but let's be realistic.

First off, I don't like Joseph Addai a little bit. I think he is soft and he plays on that nasty turf so I figure him for an injury that hampers him all season starting about week 5.

Now, here is a look at an optimized teaser. Subtle, but with this bit of editing, (hopefully) the visitor is compelled to read more. If left to Drupal's default [devices](#), the article summary might have provided the punchline along with the joke.

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Submitted by [redacted] on Sat, 2010-08-14 14:27



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Bill, I like a few guys...

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Summary

Providing a keyword-rich home page will improve your site's search engine rankings. The Excerpt module will make it easier for you to deliver that competitive edge. Alternatively, you could achieve the same with a custom CCK field. But, for those not comfortable with CCK, the Excerpt module provides a good option. It is not customizable, but it gets the job done. As with all SEO tools, the key is getting your content creators to use it! The module can be a bit flaky with input formats and WYSIWYGs, but it is a useful [tool](#) and stable enough. Shout out to several contributors for keeping this module going.

NOTE: A unique node teaser field is a part of [Drupal 7 core](#)!

Tyme is a freelance writer and multimedia specialist of many years. She likes walks in the park, cotton candy, and baby ducks. To learn more: [MultimediaByTyme.com](#).

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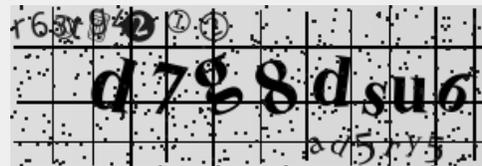
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