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## SEO with Drupal for Web Developers: XML Sitemap 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. The easier that you make that for the search engines, the more likely that your site will perform well in organic search results. Use of an XML sitemap (sometimes referred to as a Google Sitemap) lets you declare a value for the importance of each page of your site, and to inform the search engines how often those pages change. ([Learn](#) more about the [sitemap protocol](#).)

It isn't necessarily a good strategy to include every page of your site in an XML sitemap -- it depends on the type of site. If your site targets specific keywords, listing all of your content pages in the XML sitemap -- even those with few of your keywords -- can draw focus away from your keyword-rich content. Say, for example, that a search engine crawler commits to indexing X number of your site's pages. You don't want to waste one of those pages on your Contact Us page or other "weaker" page. But instead, prioritize the pages that best represent the activities of your company or organization. On the other hand, if you run a news site with original content, declaring all your news pages can be advantageous because you want to drive traffic to your site for any reason. Your appeal is broader than a few keywords.

Fortunately, [XML Sitemap](#) will automate this process for you,

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no matter your SEO strategy.

(Learn about [Google News Sitemaps](#). The Drupal [Google News Sitemap module](#) soon will be integrated into the XML Sitemap module.)

## Configuring the XML Sitemap Module

### Sitemap Tab

On the Sitemap tab, you establish some general defaults for how the sitemap is produced. The automation of the sitemap creation is performed with the help of a "cron job" (recurring server task), which you will need to set up on your [Web server](#). You can specify how many rows to update with each cron run. Unless you experience performance issues, just leave this set to the module default.

The next two sections of this options tab allow you to set a default value for page importance and of the front-page content and the individual stories that appear on it.

- [Web Developer Tutorial: SEO v Title Module](#)
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## XML sitemap

Sitemap

Search engines

Tools

The sitemap is located at <http://dev.opcofamerica.org/sitemap.xml>.

### Settings

Add all the links to the default language sitemap

This option will be used only when the language negotiation uses a path prefix mechanism.

Cron limit:

100 rows

The number of links that are updated in each pass of a [cron maintenance task](#).

Cache directory:

sites/default/files/xmlsitemap

The directory where the cache files are created; change it only if you are having problems with the default setting

Use stylesheet

Specify a xml stylesheet for the sitemap?

### Front page

Front page change frequency:

Hourly

The change frequency associated with the front page.

Front page priority:

1.0

The absolute priority for the front page.

### Node settings

The settings for the nodes to include in the sitemap.

Promotion priority adjustment:

0.3

This number will be added to the priority of each post that is promoted to the front page. This setting doesn't app

Comment ratio priority adjustment:

0.0

This number will be added to the priority of the post with the highest number of comments; for the other posts, th the maximum number of comments is one, nor for the nodes for which the priority is overridden.

Save configuration

Reset to defaults

### Search Engines Tab

The slickest feature of XML Sitemap is an option to automatically [submit](#) an updated sitemap to t search engines. You can specify the frequency for which to do this, and which search engines to i schedule submission.

## XML sitemap

Sitemap

Search engines

Tools

The sitemap is located at <http://dev.opcofamerica.org/sitemap.xml>.

[more h

### Submission settings

Submit the sitemap when content changes

If enabled, the search engines will only be notified of changes to the sitemap whenever the sitemap content is chan

Frequency of sitemap submission:

Hourly

The rate at which the sitemap is submitted to the search engines.

Ask.com

### Google

Submit the sitemap to Google

Submission URL:

[http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/ping?sitemap=\[sitemap\]](http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/ping?sitemap=[sitemap])

The URL to submit the sitemap to. Use `[sitemap]` like placeholder for the sitemap URL.

Moreover.com

Bing (formerly Live Search)

Yahoo!

Save configuration

Reset to defaults

### Tools Tab

The [Tools](#) tab lets you perform some manual operations: delete a sitemap cache file; flag the file the next cron maintenance task; or manually submit a sitemap update.

## XML sitemap

Sitemap

Search engines

Tools

Operations

Delete the sitemap cache files

Apply

Delete the sitemap cache files

Flag the sitemap as requiring update

Submit the sitemap to all the active search engines

Submit the sitemap to Ask.com

Submit the sitemap to Bing

Submit the sitemap to Google

Submit the sitemap to Moreover.com

Submit the sitemap to Yahoo!

Foundat

### Rating Web Pages

With your sitemap defaults in place, it is now up to your content creators to rate each content ite

easily done through the node add/edit form by selecting a numeric value or "not in sitemap" to e  
That's it!

▼ XML sitemap

Priority:  
 Default ▼  
 1.0  
 0.9  
 0.8  
 0.7  
 0.6  
 0.5  
 0.4  
 0.3  
 0.2  
 0.1  
 0.0  
 Not in sitemap  
 Default

57:42 -0400. Leave blank to use the time of form submission.

► Publishing options

Save Preview

## Summary

The best way to gain great search engine (SERP) rankings is to create great content. Once you ha  
need to alert the search engine crawlers to it. For small organizations without SEO teams, unfortu  
sitemap can get overlooked. The XML Sitemap module can automate this process for you, with a  
participation from content creators, in rating the content pages. And, that is just a simple, one-st  
to module [developer](#) Dave Reid for this fine contribution.

*Note: To generate a content sitemap (table of contents page), see the [Site Map](#) module.*

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

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