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Joomla search engine friendly patch

Get more out of Joo Joo Joo Joo Joo Joo Joo

Joomla

The out of the box installation of Joomla is in our opinion not fully optimized for search engine optimising features. Although Joomla offers a lot we discovered that some extra functionalities are needed to get the best out of the Joomla installation. Before installing the patch please read further about the changes we have made to the Joomla installation. You can **download the patch from the download page** Please select the correct Joomla version that you have installed. If you want to redo the patch you can **download the redo file** from the download page as well.

Patch is available for the following Joomla releases:
 1.0.7
 1.0.8
 1.0.9
 1.0.10
1.0.11
1.012
1.013
1.014

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Joomla 1.5 SEO extended version

The SEF patch extended version is a full Joomla component that extends the standard free SEF Patch. With the SEF patch extended version you will have full control over the META tags and other settings in regards of search engine optimization with Joomla.
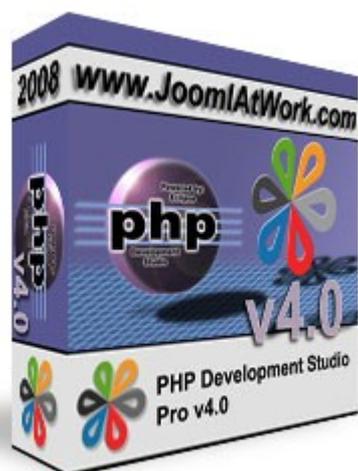
It's easy to install and easy to get full control over your META tags and other tags within the HTML head section in relation to Joomla content and menu items.

Joomla Caching Engine

Standard out of the box Joomla and Mambo websites dynamically generates web-pages on the user request. This means that for each request the specific page must be composed by executing PHP code and SQL queries. On normal "hosting" environment the generation of a Joomla pages can take up to 0,4 - 1,4 seconds depending on the hosting environment and the number of components used. For large volume visitor sites this can result into slow performance of the website. When enabled this component can "generates" pages within 0,02 - 0,001 seconds (depending on your hosting environment)

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1.015

We have also a SEF patch extended version available. Read more about the functionality of the **SEF Patch extended edition**.

Why you should apply the free patch or install the SEF patch extended version:

Presenting the correct HTML title in Joomla

One of the most import tag within a web page in regards of search engine optimization is the html title tag within the head section of the HTML document. In the default Joomla installation the html title tag for the frontpage, blogsection/blogcategory is the same as the title which is displayed within the menu. For example within the default Joomla installation most of the time the frontpage is called frontpage or home within the menu link. This results also that the html title contains frontpage or home . From search engine optimization perspective this is not preferred since this doesn t add anything to the reflection of the content of the specific page. You just want to add specific keywords that reflects the content of the web page.

Correct title for the menu items:

When you install the Joomlatwork SEO patch you will be able to apply your own title s at the frontpage and other menu items. Therefore check the parameters at the menu object (edit the menu item) and place a correct title within the page title parameter. Please notice that if the page title field is left empty the menu title will be used instead (this is the current Joomla setting).

Correct title for the content items:

Each HTML title for a content item within Joomla contains your site name within the default installation. An alternative is to leave your site name (global settings) empty but this is not the correct solution since the site parameter is used within other places in Joomla as well. We therefore made an adjustment at the Joomla code that only the title is represented that you have assigned to the document. In case you want to add the site name to your html title you must add this at the specific title field.

Full control over the meta tag robots

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The default installation of Joomla inserts in every page the meta tag robot . E.q.: . Although this is a correct setting (since every page will be crawled by search engine spiders) some times you want to adjust the setting. For example a specific page may not be spidered or included within the index of a search engine. The patch allows you to control the robot meta setting for Joomla content items as well for most of the Joomla menu items.
 Within a menu item you can apply this setting at the parameters list (edit the specific menu item) and at the content items you will find this setting at the META info tab (when you edit a specific content item). Please notice that within intranet environments with an own search engine installed the ability to apply this setting is on the requirements list.

The ability to add META keywords and META description at menu items

The patch also gives the ability to assign META keywords and META description tag for menu items such as the frontpage or the blog s and other menu link items. Within the parameters of a menu item you will find the additional field for the META tag keywords and description.

The ability to add a META tag author

 The patch allows you to add a META tag author into the HTML head section. Note: this is not the value of the joomla author / editor field. You must fill in the text of the author of the document. In the content items we use the author alias field (under the publishing tab). Leave this field empty if you don't want to add an author META tag in the HTML head section

Adjustment of the presentation of the META fields keywords and description

The Joomla default setting is that the META tags description and keywords on a document content level are presented with inclusion of the global configuration settings for these meta fields. However from search engine optimization perspective you only want to use META information that reflects the content of the specific page. The Joomlatwork patch only display the META content information that is assigned to the specific content item. If no META information is added to a content item the global META settings are used.
 Advice: leave the global settings empty and remove the default values from the field. It has no added value to add these values to all the documents meta settings.

Removed the generator META tag

The Joomlatwork patch will also remove the default generator tag that is included within each HTML page that is generated by Joomla:

<meta name="Generator" content="Joomla! - Copyright (C) 2005 Open Source Matters. All rights reserved." />

Although we are a big fan of the Joomla CMS and the organisation itself we encourage you to

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remove this meta name by installing the patch. First of all it will not have any effect in improving your search engine rankings and it will add content to all of your pages that is not in line of the content of your webpages self. Therefore it can have a negative effect on your rankings within search engines.

Beside this we believe that you must not advertise on this way that your site is realized with the Joomla framework. This in case security issues are discovered within the Joomla environment: it s easy for others to find your website with the search engines available: Google, msn, yahoo

Notice: the latest release of joomla (1.08) contains several patches related to security issues!

Changed the robots.txt file

The robots.txt file determines which directories may be indexed. In the default robots.txt setting it's not allowed to index the images directory. We find this a strange setting because for example Google images search is very popular and can drive traffic to your website. Beside this all uploads (attachments like added pdf and office documents) are placed within the images directory and included within the documents. Notice that within the default setting these files are not included within the indexes of the search engines

Other adjustments for search engine optimization

Within Joomla it's possible to have a dynamic website and present the website like it's static website (even for the components). This apply also on the way the pages are generated with the Joomla engine self:

First if you look into the generated html code of a Joomla webpage you will see that each HTML generated page contains at the bottom a 'time' stamp something like:

This is done from the index.php file within the root directory of Joomla in the index.php file. At the end of the code you will see that a time stamp is added every time a document is generated. Since this line have no added value (either a more negative value) we have removed this time stamp in the patch.

On step further is the generation of the physical http header of each webpage. You can check your http response header at http://www.network-tools.com/ (select response header) or with the firefox browser with the developers toolbar installed. The Joomla index.php includes the following code for generating the http header:

header('Expires: Mon, 26 Jul 1997 05:00:00 GMT');
header('Last-Modified: ' . gmdate('D, d M Y H:i:s') . ' GMT');
header('Cache-Control: no-store, no-cache, must-revalidate');
header('Cache-Control: post-check=0, pre-check=0', false);
header('Pragma: no-cache');

Please notice that these lines adjust the settings within HTML 'physical header' . As you see your page is expired before it's even retrieved, the last modified date is the date that the page is retrieved and the pages may not be cached. Mmm strange setting, even if you consider that the Joomla framework has it's own cache solution....Ever thought what Google may think about this (a page within it's index that is already expired?)

We have removed this http response header generation (they don't have any advantage at all in our opion). In some cases we have made adjustments into the core of Joomla that within

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this header information the correct dates and settings of the mambo documents are included.

How to install this patch?

Installation of the pach is simple. Download the patch from the download page (select the correct version of Joomla). Extract the patch zip file within a directory and you can upload the files to the specific directories (for example with FTP). Please notice that if you have made any adjustments to the listed files below these changes will be lost (notice that these are standard Joomla files). If you are not happy with the patch you can download the redo patch file, which contains the joomla standard files and will bring your joomla installation back into the default Joomla installation setting.

You can check your current version at the bottom of the administrator panel, under the text: Joomla!is Free Software released under the GNU/GPL License.

If you upgrade your version from Joomla 1.0.8 to 1.0.9 please install first the Joomla update patch and after that you can install the Joomla_1.09_patch from the download page.

== end of document ==

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