

Google's John Mueller: Keywords in Domain Name Aren't Needed

A keyword in a domain name will not help a website rank for that keyword, says Google's John Mueller.



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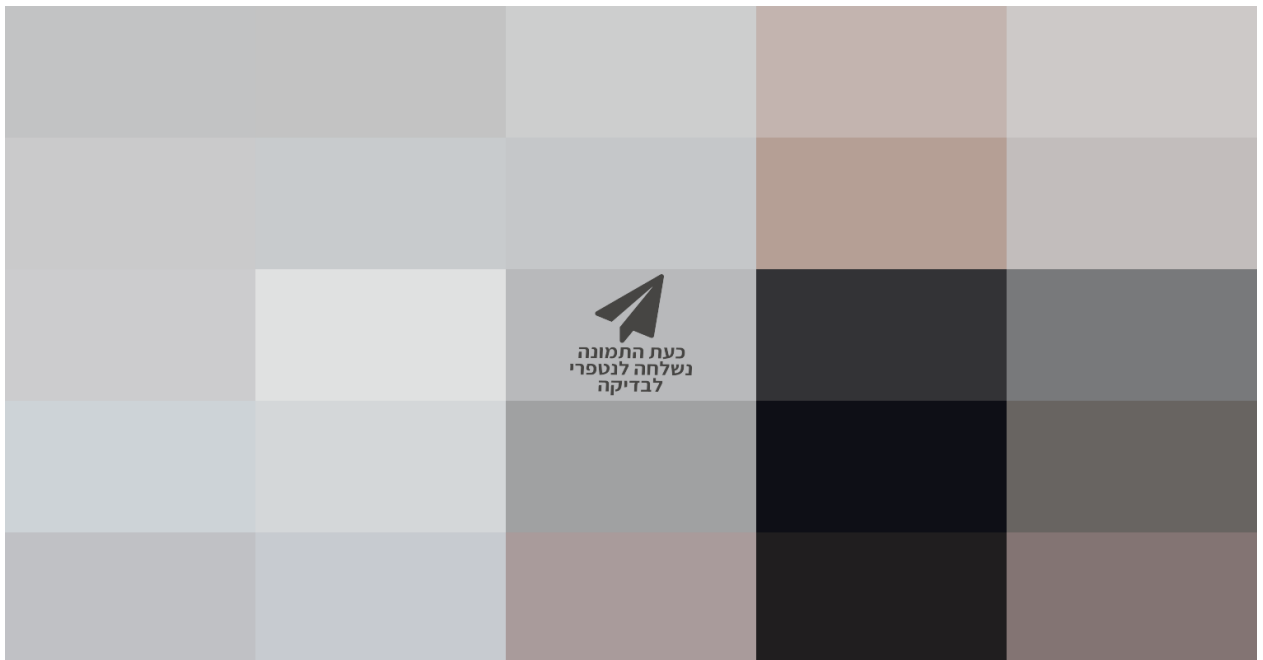
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Google's John Mueller advises SEOs and site owners there's no ranking benefit associated with having keywords in a domain name.

This subject was addressed in the latest *Ask Google Webmasters* video which features a question about keyword-based domain extensions (also referred to as top-level domains).

Here is the question that was sent in:

Does a .jobs domain improve ranking in Google for jobs?

In response, Mueller addressed keywords in top-level domains (TLDs) as well as keywords in the domain in general.

First, here's what Mueller has to say about .jobs TLDs:

"This is a really common question that comes up for the new top-level domains.

In short, no. You don't get a special bonus like that from having a keyword in your top-level domain.

Anecdotally you can see that by searching naturally for anything that interests you.

I'd venture a guess that the top results don't have those keywords as a domain ending. Often it's not even in the URL at all. That's by design."

So keywords in TLDs offer no ranking benefit, but what about keywords anywhere in the URL?

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No Ranking Benefit to Keywords in Domains

Mueller goes on to say that a keyword in a domain name will not make a site rank better for that keyword.

“Just because a website has a keyword in its domain name doesn't mean that it's more relevant than others for that keyword.

In short, you don't need to put keywords in the domain name.”

This contradicts what some ranking factor studies will say about keywords in a domain.

But Google's official messaging is a keyword in a domain will not increase a site's relevancy for searches containing that keyword.

That messaging has been consistent for at least a few years now.

Mueller even suggests using a keyword in a domain may put the site at a *disadvantage*.

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It would be difficult for a site to pivot to a different niche if they're stuck with a specific keyword in their domain, Mueller says.

“From a practical point of view, it’s worth also keeping in mind that businesses evolve over time, and moving domains is hard.

So it often makes sense to pick a domain name that you can use for the long run and not necessarily one that just matches what you’re offering today.

For example, if you focus on making awesome blue widgets, and build your website on BestBlueWidgets.com, what do you do when you start offering red widgets?”

Instead of stressing about your site’s domain name, and whether it will help you rank for a particular keyword, focus on whether it will stand the test of time.

A domain name that can be used long-term, regardless of how the business itself changes, is more valuable than a domain with a keyword in it.

Here’s how Mueller puts it:

“So instead of spending too much time on the domain name, or the top-level domain name, focus instead on building a site that you can continue to use for the long run.”

See the full video below: