SEO Search Engine Support (Google, Bing, Yahoo)

What is SEO?

By default, your ProProfs sites cannot be crawled by the search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo). However, you may want your site's pages to appear in the search results of the search engines. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a collection of processes that focus on getting a site indexed properly on search engines "organically" or through unpaid search results. Before you get started, here are some best practices for making your site SEO friendly.

- **Make page URLs descriptive:** Search engines prefer site URLs that are readable to humans. For example, if you have a page URL *docs.mysite.com/3revision* you can see this URL makes little sense and does not help humans or search engines know what the page is about. The better URL is *docs.mysite.com/an-article-about-revision-3* which is friendly because you can figure out what the page is about.

- **Make page titles descriptive:** When you create a page in ProProfs, you will provide a page title. The page title is also used by the search engines when listing the page in the search results. A desirable title is 50-60 characters long and contains keywords about the page's content.

- **Think about your keywords:** Keywords are an integral part of SEO. If you fail to include

relevant keywords in your content, the search engines may never find it. Keywords should be used in your page title, headings (h1-h6), main body content, URLs, and image names with ALT tags.

- **Page content:** Content is king and having good content is key to getting pages to appear in the search engines.

- **Page links:** Search engines use hyperlinks to crawl your entire site. Adding links pointing to other ProProfs pages makes it easy for each engine to crawl from one page to the next. Don't worry about links to pages that you don't want the index. ProProfs will automatically remove links to pages that have SEO disabled.

- **Canonical Tag:** A canonical tag is a way of telling search engines that a specific URL represents the master copy of the page. Using the canonical tag prevents problems caused by identical or duplicate content appearing on multiple URLs. Practically speaking, the canonical tag tells search engines which version of a URL you want to appear in search results.

- **CallOut Extensions:** Callout extensions let you include additional text so you can show more detailed information about your business, products, and services. Callout extensions can be added to search network campaigns and search network campaigns that have opted into the display network.

Guide to Getting Your Site Indexed

Once you have your content optimized and ready for search engines, follow these steps to get your site submitted to Google and Bing.

Step 1 - Enable SEO

By default, SEO is disabled for a site which means the content is not crawlable. To enable SEO for a site follow these steps:

1. First, make sure you have a custom domain setup such as *docs.mycompany.com.* Having a custom domain is required before you can enable SEO.

2. Go to **Settings** > **Add, Edit and Customize a Site** then choose the site you want to enable SEO.

3. Click on the **SEO** tab.

4. Select the **Turn On SEO** checkbox. If will be disabled if your current plan is not supported, private sites is enabled, or you are not using a custom domain.

5. Once enabled, additional options will be available as shown below. Don't worry about these settings for now.

6. Click **Save**.

Settings   **Branding**   **Mobile**   **Integrations**   **SEO**

☑ **Turn On SEO**
Make site crawlable by search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo)

Sitemap   http://help.mysite.com/sitemap.xml
Your sitemap was last built on **September 05, 2014 01:40:02 pm**. Regenerate
Sitemaps are a way to tell Google and other search engines about pages on your site. Since HelpIQ is an AJAX application, pages are not easily discoverable by search engines so the sitemap is used to share your site's structure. Search engines do not guarantee that they'll index all of your URLs.

Title Template   [   ]
Used on the browser title <title>. Available variables include {pagetitle} {sitename} {foldername} {tocname}

Sitemap Updates   After any change we can automatically notify search engines (no registration is required)
☑ Notify Google You can register at Google Webmaster Tools to check crawling statistics
☑ Notify Bing / Yahoo You can register at Bing Webmaster Tools to check crawling statistics

Webmaster   You can use the inputs below to verify your site with the different Webmaster Tools.
Google   [   ]
Following this guide to add and verify your site with Google
Bing/Yahoo [   ]
Following this guide to add and verify your site with Bing

[Save]   [Cancel]

A description of each field:

- **Sitemap** - A sitemap is automatically generated by ProProfs and is a file listing all the pages that you want the search engines to crawl.

- **Title Template** - This option allows you to alter how your HTML titles are displayed on the search engine results.
  - You can use variables and they will automatically be merged over. The available variables are: {pagetitle}, {sitename}, {tocname} and {folder}. If nothing is set, the default will be {pagetitle} - {sitename}.

- **Site Updates** - Search engine usually only re-crawl a site every few weeks and sometimes even less. So if you are making content changes such as adding or removing pages you probably want to let the search engines know about this instead of just waiting. Select this option and ProProfs will automatically notify Google and Bing of any changes.

- **Webmaster Verification** Google and Bing provide great tools that allow you to administer and control how your site is index. Before you can use these tools, you must first verify that you are the site owner. See more about this below.

Step 2 - Make Pages Crawlable

Now that you have enabled SEO, search engines are no longer blocked from your site. However, you will need to select which pages you want to be crawled.

1. Edit a page and click on **More Settings.**

2. An overlay will appear. Then select **Allow page to be crawled by search engines.**
Note: Once you have SEO enabled, all new pages will have "Allow page to be crawled by search engines" selected by default.

3. Click **Save** and the overlay will close. The either click **Publish** or **Update** for your settings to go live.
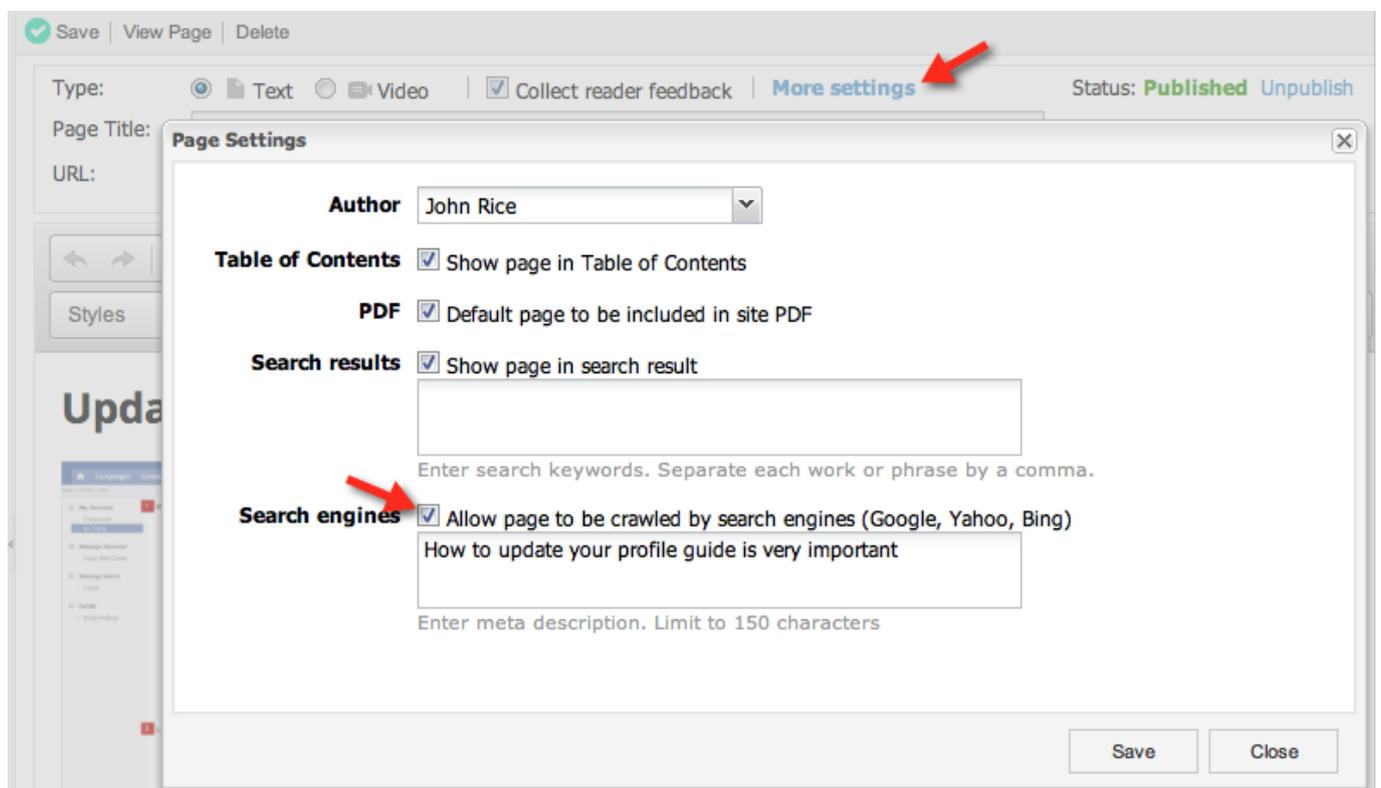

- Under the "Allow page to be crawled by search engines" checkbox is the Meta Description.

- A **Meta Description** allows you to give meaningful description to your page which is usually used by search engines in their search results as shown in the image below. It allows maximum of 150 characters.
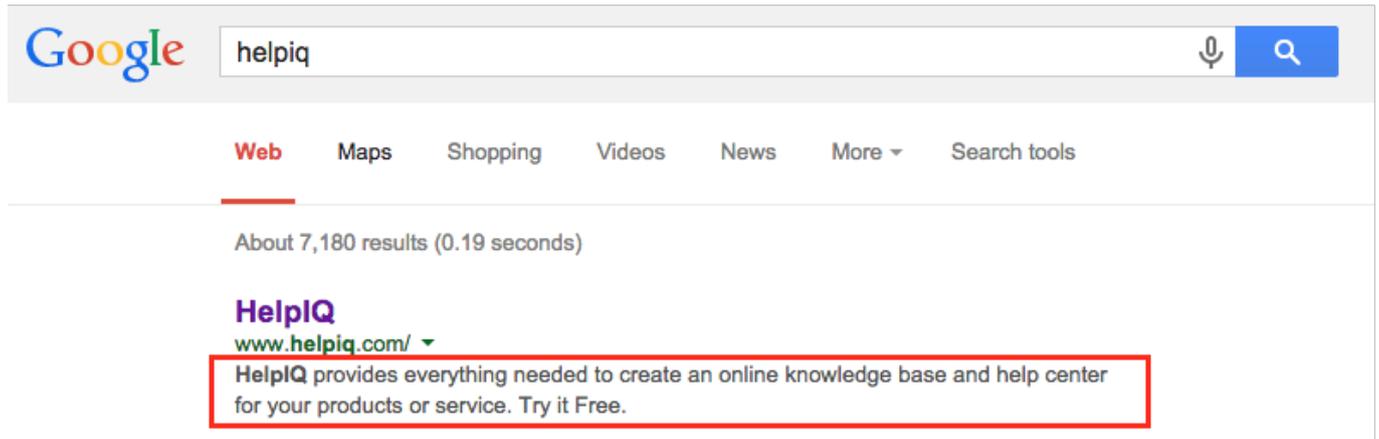
Bulk Enable SEO

- If you have many pages you want to enable SEO you can do this in bulk using the bulk update feature. **SEO** is one of the columns that can be shown in your **View All pages** grid to easily spot if a page is SEO crawlable.

- From the toolbar click **View All > All Pages**

- To select a page, click the check box at the left-hand side of that page. To select multiple pages, keep selecting more pages by checking their respective check boxes. Then click **Bulk Edit**.

- Change the SEO Crawlable option to **Yes** and click **Update.**
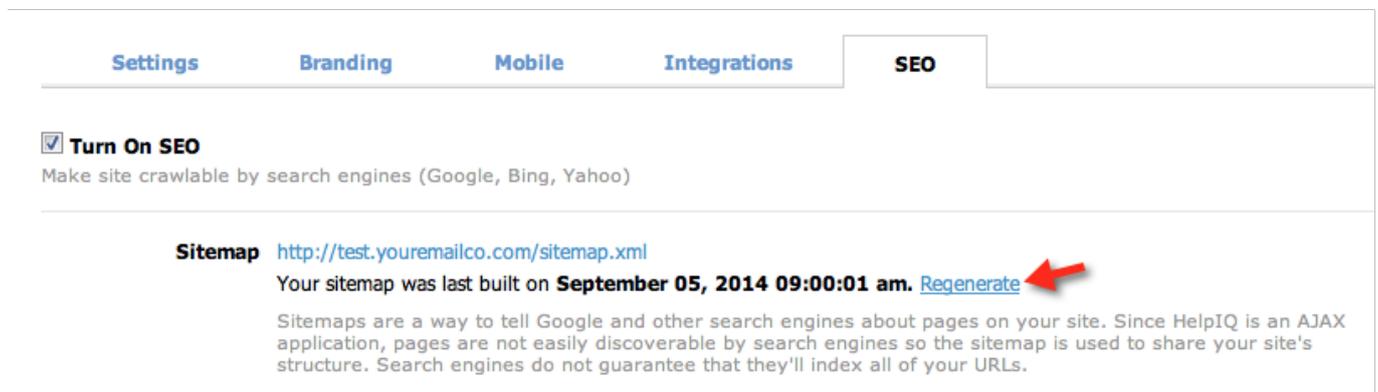
- Bulk-publish these changes.
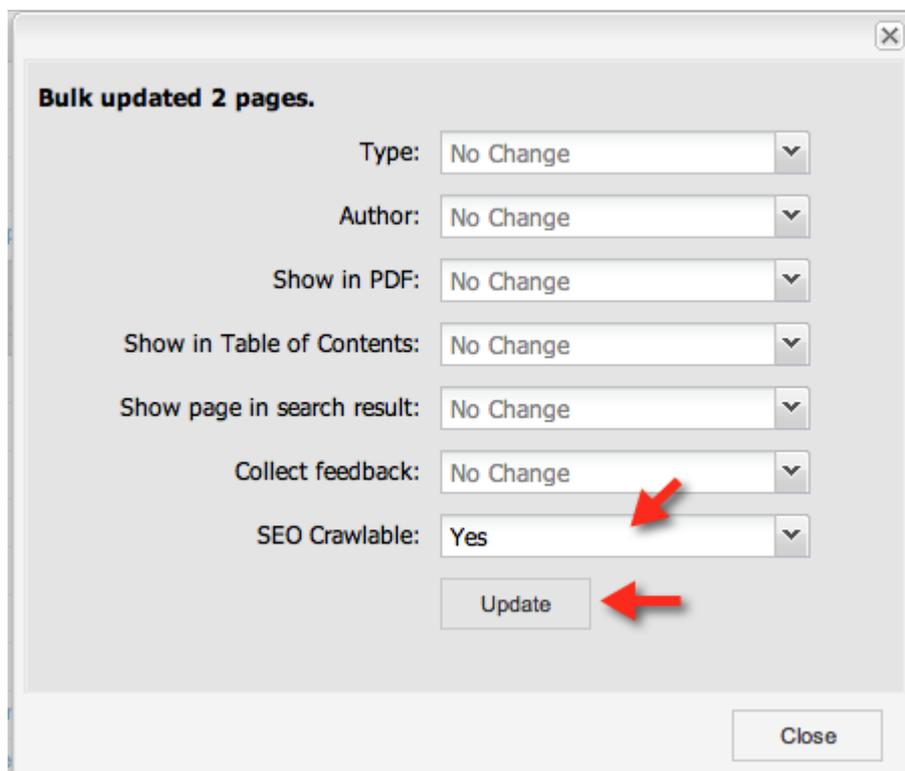
Step 3 - Working with the Sitemap

A sitemap is a file that tells Google and other search engines about available pages on your site. ProProfs will automatically generate the sitemap and include pages that are published and have SEO enabled. Draft, hidden, or deleted pages will be excluded from the sitemap.

ProProfs will automatically regenerate your sitemap each night. However, to manually regenerate your sitemap:

- Go to **Settings** > **Add, Edit, and Customize a site**.

- Choose your site then click the **SEO tab**.

- Click on the **Regenerate** link in the **Sitemap** section.

The next step is to submit your sitemap to Google and Bing.

Step 4 - Submitting to Google

Popular search engine providers give site owners several tools for managing how their pages should be crawled and indexed. This collection of tools is called Webmaster. You will use the Webmaster tools to submit your site to be index.

- Follow this guide for setting up Google Webmaster

- Follow this guide for setting up Bing Webmaster

Step 5 - Wait for Results

After your site has been submitted to Google and Bing, wait patiently. Unfortunately, it is up to Google and Bing how fast it takes for your pages to show up in the search results. Also, search engines do not guarantee that they will index all of your pages either.

A few helpful tests:

- Go to Google or Bing and type: *site:docs.mysite.com* (replace with the real URL to your site).

This will list all the pages indexed.

- Fetch Google Bot. A trick to getting pages to appear quicker in Google. See http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2326164/Index-Your-Content-Faster-With-the-Fetch-as-Google-Tool

Google Analytics

Once your ProProfs site is indexed with Google you will want to know what people are searching for to find your pages and what pages are appearing in Google search results. You can connect Google Analytics to your ProProfs site and have access to such reports. The key reports include:

- **The SEO Queries Report** - The Queries report shows the Google search queries that generated the most impressions for your website. These are queries for which your pages get attention, so improved content could lead to more traffic.

- **The SEO Landing Pages Report** - The Landing Pages report shows the URLs to your website that have generated the most impressions in Google Web search results. With this report, you can identify landing pages on your site that have good click through rates (CTR)

- More about Google Analytics https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1308626?hl=en&ref_topic=1308589

Frequently asked questions

Here are some frequently asked questions:

I submitted my site to Google and Bing and it is still not showing up, what is wrong?

Crawling and indexing are processes which can take some time and which rely on many factors. In general, Google cannot make predictions or guarantees about when or if your URLs will be crawled or indexed. It can take 1 week to 3 months to have a site crawled. Make sure you sign up for a Google Webmaster or Bing Webmaster Account and submit your sitemap. Also make sure your pages contain enough relevant content.

My site is indexed, but not showing up for keywords?

Once you have established that your site has been crawled and indexed, getting the search results you want is the next big step and something that takes time and consistent effort, even for the most experienced SEO experts.

Is Bing or Yahoo supported?

At this time only Google is fully supported. We are working with Bing (which powers Yahoo) now to get ProProfs indexable.

How can I see what pages Google has indexed?

To quickly determine whether your site is indexed, just perform a Google or Bing search for its entire URL. A search for *site:ProProfs.com* (no spaces), for instance returns the following results: http://www.google.com/search?num=100&q=site:ProProfs.com

Do I need to do anything with the robots.txt file?

A robots exclusion file tells search engines what they can and cannot crawl. You do not need to worry about this file as ProProfs will automatically manage it for your site once you enable SEO.

Why is the wrong title appearing in the search results?

The first line of any search result is the title of the web page. This text is generally taken from the contents of the
 tag for that page (which is also the text that appears in the title bar of your browser). If the title tag is not meaningful, Google will pull the title from the page content or headings.

How do I keep my site out of Google and Bing?

By default all sites will have SEO disabled. Having SEO disabled means that Google and Bing will not be able to read your site. ProProfs uses a combination of Robots, meta, and AJAX to make a site completely blocked from the search engines.

If I make one site crawlable, will my other sites also be crawled?

If you enable SEO for one site, your other sites will not be crawled. You have to enable SEO for each site you want to be crawlable.

What if I have links to a page I don't want crawled?

ProProfs will automatically remove the links to pages that are not set to be crawlable so the search engine cannot follow them.

How do I remove a page from Google?

You can use the Webmaster tools. Follow this for Google

support.google.com/webmasters/answer/1663419?hl=en

Why am I getting an error about Sitemap containing urls which are blocked by robots.txt?

Google most likely still has the cached version of your robots.txt. It may take 24 hours to update.

Multiple Languages and SEO

In ProProfs a site for each language is created and managed independently. For example, if you have a product called ABC Widget and need documentation in English and Spanish, you would need to create two sites in ProProfs (one in English and one in Spanish). Then you can link these sites together with a language drop down. Then domain url is also shared such as: *site.helpdocsonline.com* - for English and *site.helpdocsonline.com/es/* for Spanish site. Since each language is managed as a separate site in ProProfs you will need to submit each site separately in the Webmaster tools. For example, you would add a site

"*site.helpdocsonline.com*" and then add another site for each language you have such as

"*site.helpdocsonline.com/es/* "