



Description

In this age of digitalization, published journal articles are impactful only if they are easily discoverable on the web. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) of published journal articles is important for researchers to increase their [research paper discoverability](#). Here, we shall discuss five important ways in which researchers can increase their article discoverability online.

Indexing in General and Scholarly Search Engines

Indexing plays a vital role in online discoverability of scholarly articles. Publishing in journals that are indexed in general search engines, or in discipline-specific scholarly search engines increases the chances of your article being discovered. Free online search engines and indexes enable maximum article accessibility, particularly for open access journals. Based on your discovery goals and the criteria of different indexes, researchers must start mapping out an indexing strategy before publishing their articles. Indexes that accept more article information, or full-text articles provide a greater potential of discovery.

Researchers intend to index their articles in general search engines such as Google, Bing, etc., or in mainstream scholarly search engines such as Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic that are easily accessible to peers and the general public. Other popular databases that cover multiple disciplines are [Ulrichsweb](#), [Directory of Open Access Journal](#) (DOAJ), [Scopus](#), [Web of Science](#), and [Academic Search](#) (EBSCO). Researchers should remember that indexing in general search engines does not evaluate journals based on its publication history, citation count, or any other specification required by academic databases. On the other hand, scholarly search engines perform certain quality control exercises to ensure that the websites indexed are indeed academic sources. Journals that have “no-index” tags on their website pages have restricted content crawling access by search engines.

The Key to Research Paper Discoverability is in Keywords!

Keywords are the fundamental tools in SEO. Selection of the most salient keywords acts as a preliminary step for finding data on the web. It increases the probability of the research paper content being retrieved by its target audience. This leads to promotion of the article based on its visibility on the web.

As a research author, you must begin with identifying relevant words, terminologies, methodologies, and concepts that highlight the main topic of your article. Different groups of readers may often use various terms to describe the same information. Therefore, you must consider using such terms as keywords to tap into maximum potential readers. To target larger readership for your article, you must [use keyword tools](#) that help in finding the most efficient keywords. Based on the results derived from such tools, you can work on using these keywords throughout your manuscript. Furthermore, it is recommended to use one or more relevant keywords in the title, abstract, and several times in the main text of the article. Keywords are ideally included in the first 50–60 characters, as this is what search engines will display as metadata.

You must avoid using newly created terminology, abbreviations, and slangs to describe any concept. Some journals in medicine follow a standard practice that authors must select keywords from a list of terms, such as the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). To negate duplicity of words and to increase the chances of retrieval of articles in future, some journals prohibit the use of keywords that also appear in the title of the article.

Structuring Your Data

[Well-structured manuscripts](#) elucidate contextual information within a website and increases content crawling by search engines. A properly structured article majorly includes a title, abstract, aim, introduction, methodology, results and discussions, and conclusion. The structure of each article may vary depending upon its category. Distribution of keywords throughout the structure of the article is important. This maintains “keyword density” that promotes visibility of the article online.

It is important to optimize your article title, as in many cases, this is the only information the readers may have whilst searching for literature online. Be critical in ensuring that the title is relevant, concise, and contains a key phrase that accurately describes your paper. It should clearly, yet briefly announce the objective of the article, and the content that will be addressed in the main text. The use of provocative titles helps in gathering the reader’s interest. But using puns, humorous or ironic tones in titles, may not be well accepted in some knowledge areas.

Following the title, the abstract is perhaps the most frequently read part of a scientific article. They synthesize an article’s main points and describe them for ease of reading within approximately 100 to 250 words. In conclusion, the usage of keywords in the abstract increases the chances of article discoverability online.

The aim of the article must fairly justify the title, to enable easier crawling of content. Follow a structured path to describe the procedures, methodologies, and data of the research.

In addition, while summarizing the results, ensure that you do not deviate from the focus of your research as stated in the article’s title.

Presenting the conclusions with context to the aim of the article. This improves the visibility of the article and leads to more citations in the future.

Interlinking Similar Content

The internet is often the first platform of call for people trying to find information on any given topic. Search discovery reveals related concepts and recommendations that help in establishing a user's search history. Similarly, it is advisable to include a reference link to your work in the related research area that has been previously published. This helps academic readers to discover your articles on search engines. Hence [interlinking of similar data and previously published works](#) in the same domain increases your **research paper discoverability**.

Analyzing search discoveries allows you to connect related concepts and leads you to other content based on a simple search query. Furthermore, use Google's features such as Neural Matching, and Activity Cards to understand diverse search results. Neural Matching is an algorithm that understands and analyzes language to generate better and diverse search results of similar queries. Whereas, Activity Cards provides a list of the user's previous search queries, along with recommendations based on the same query.

Promotion Post-Publication

After publishing your paper, you should practice certain social media activities to make sure your research is more discoverable.

- Publicize your data by adding more links from other sites and social networks to your article. This will improve your search engine rankings.
- [Link your research](#) on your LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Mendeley, and Kudos profiles.
- [Update your blog](#) or websites that you contribute to
- Upload a link of your research on your academic institution's website

Follow these tips to enhance your **research paper discoverability** online. Let us know your experience in the comments section below! You can also visit our [Q&A forum](#) for frequently asked questions related to different aspects of research writing and publishing answered by our team that comprises subject-matter experts, eminent researchers, and publication experts.

Category

1. Promoting Research
2. Using Online Media

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