



Adobe® Marketing Cloud

How Adobe Scene7 Publishing System Supports SEO

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Introduction

A common way to use SPS (Scene7 Publishing System) is to manage the product imagery on e-commerce sites. Website managers are constantly trying to improve their ranking in search engine results.

Search engines are still a primary traffic generator for most e-commerce sites. They even complement other methods of guiding users to a website, such as banner ads and third-party advertising.

Search engines today enable search for websites and images. SPS supports efforts to make images more search-engine friendly so that more traffic is driven to the Scene7 user's website. This document gives you the background and implementation recommendations to make that happen.

Additional links to SEO information:

[Rank in Image Searches and Get Valuable, Untapped Traffic](#)

[Google Image Optimization](#)

Indexing of images by search engines

Search engines index images within their context. The context that describes the image consists of numerous values. Some of these values include the following:

- Image name.
- Alt tag.
- Folder of the image on a web server.
- Surrounding text/web site topic, and so on.
- Image size and quality.
- Keywords used to link the image.

The importance of these values differs from (image) search engine to (image) search engine. However, SPS helps with one of the most important values: the image name.

Name your images with relevant keywords included. And, higher resolution images are more important than lower resolution images.

The following code example shows how images from your SPS account are embedded into your site:

```
<div class="productListBox" id="mc_div_330014007">
  <div class="left floatLeft">
    <a href="/de/electronics/prod/MEDION%C2%AE+25%2C4cm+%2810%22%29+LIFETAB
%C2%AE+P9514+%28MD+98052%29+inkl.+HD+Camcorder+%2B+32+GB+SDHC+Karte/330014007?category=tablet_34"
id="mc_img_330014007"></a>
```

In HTML 5, the `img` tag can carry the following attributes:

Attribute	Specified value	Description
alt	Text	A short description of the image.

Attribute	Specified value	Description
width	Percent of pixels	Width of an image.
height	Percent of pixels	Height of an image.
src	URL	URL path to the image.
ismap	URL	URL path to the image as a server-side image map.
usemap	URL	URL path to the image as a client-side image map. See <code>map</code> and <code>area</code> tags to understand how it works.

The following standard attributes are also relevant for images:

- `class`
- `contenteditable`
- `contextmenu`
- `dir`
- `draggable`
- `id`
- `irrelevant`
- `lang` (See also [Using templates with the rule set example](#))
- `ref`
- `registrationmark`
- `tabindex`
- `template`
- `title`

Maintaining the `alt` attribute

The `alt` attribute is of high importance to search engines. Configure the CMS/e-Commerce system in a way that a proper description of the image is contained in the `alt` attribute.

The `alt` tag is visible to the user, as browsers reveal it during loading time. Another strong use of the `alt` tag is for obstacle-free web design. That is, browser extensions that support disabled users to browser extensions using the `alt` tag to describe the content to the user.

The CMS/e-Commerce system maintains the `alt` attribute of images to describe the image or product. Search engine-friendly images are important. However, the use of additional keywords in the `alt` attribute is limited.

Maintaining the name of the image

A well-chosen name for an image can deliver a higher ranking for that image.

A typical Scene7 image call looks like the following example:

```
http://s7server.scene7.com/is/image/mycompany/imageID?parameters
```

However, in terms of search engine friendliness, there are two major disadvantages:

- The `imageID` is simply an ID for most Scene7 users. For example, the product ID or SKU.
- The question mark introduces the parameters. The search engine interprets this as dynamic content.

An ideal URL path looks like the following:

```
http://image.mycompany.com/folder1/folder2/spoken_image_name.jpg
```

The following steps explain how to leverage Scene7 to create optimized image URLs.

Changing the Scene7 image host server name

First, as an SPS customer you can use the platform when your user credentials are issued to you. You get a Scene7 server—such as `S7xx.scene7.com`—as your image host.

If you want to use a server name that includes your domain—such as `images.mycompany.com`—as Scene7 Technical Support to initiate the required steps. Scene7 configures the appropriate steps. When this configuration is complete, you are given all the information necessary to pass to your DNS provider, to enter a CNAME that maps the server name of your domain to Scene7 servers.



Note: *The server name is designed exclusively for Scene7 content.*

Your image URLs will look similar to the following example:

```
http://images.mycompany.com/is/image/companyname/imageID?parameters
```

Using https with a custom Scene7 image host server name

Even less SEO relevant this is an often asked question.

Scene7 provides `https` support for the `scene7.com` domain-based servers. However, this support is different for domains within your own company.

To support `https` traffic from your customer server you can contact Scene7 Technical Support. They can provide appropriate guidance on how to enable such a domain. Additional custom domains that are supported by way of `https` are charged.

The best practice is to use the custom domain in `https` context and to use the Scene7 domain in `http` context.

Helping SPS understand other image URLs

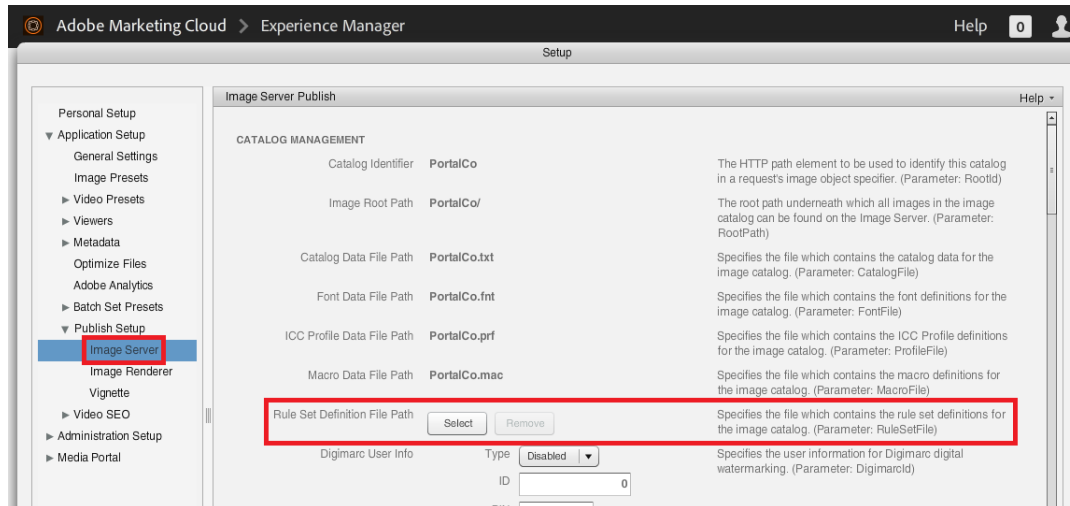
Second, use the Scene7 rule sets. Rule sets are similar to the URL-rewrite method that is widely used in the context of search engine friendliness of websites.

You can find details of rule sets in the [Image Serving API reference](#).

The following example of a rule set assumes that images are called using a preset:

`http://s7server.scene7.com/is/image/companyname/imageID?$presetname$`

A rule set is an XML file you can upload into your SPS. You can make the XML file the rule set in SPS by clicking **Setup > Application Setup > Image Server > Rule Set Definition File Path**.



A rule set example

The following XML code shows a complete rule set example:

```
<!DOCTYPE ruleset SYSTEM "RuleSet.dtd">
<ruleset>
  <rule Name="Removepart of the ID before the minus">
    <expression>^(.*)/(.*)-(.*)\.jpg$</expression>
    <substitution>$3?\$1\$</substitution>
  </rule>
</ruleset>
```

The regular expression in the rule is used to identify the URLs that are rewritten. Every URL that ends with `.jpg` and matching the rest of the expression, fires off the rule. The rule rearranges the incoming URL.

For example, the rule translates `/presetname/SomeText-ImageID.jpg` into `imageID?$presetName$`.

Scene7 Image Server ignores `SomeText` and the minus character (`-`) acts as a delimiter. For this rule to work, the image ID cannot contain a minus in the ID.

Now the Scene7 account understands both variations of the URL:

`http://s7server.scene7.com/is/image/mycompany/imageID?$presetname$`

and

`http://s7server.scene7.com/is/image/mycompany/presetname/any_text-ImageID.jpg`

The second URL simply looks like a static file on a web server's file system. It has no dynamic nature by parameters. As this point, you can start calling Scene7 images using this new URL structure.

This rule set example delivers the following results:

- You can use descriptive text in the filename of the image.
- You can differentiate filenames by such things as language.
- You can use additional keywords in the image name, such as a product category.
- Enables traditional Scene7 protocol so that migration is easy. An exception is when a URL ends with `.jpg`.

Using the rule set example

The rule set example earlier works fine with any image preset name. To provide the search engine with high-quality images, use a preset for large images like on the product detail page.

The previously used website called this image with an image preset:



.com site (English)	
.de site (German)	
.fr site (French)	

New websites use the information of the Alt attribute along with any additional information that the CMS/eCommerce system can deliver. This enriches the description of the image when the search engine performs an index crawl.

The same image is used and indexed with three different image names as each language requires its own keywords.

.com site (English)	
------------------------	---

.de site (German)	
.fr site (French)	

Using templates with the rule set example

The template functionality of SPS is powerful for auto generating images. For example, overlaying these images. It is often used with parameters in the template call. This use contradicts the search engine friendliness mentioned earlier. Templating is a conversation-driving topic and therefore important for traffic already on your site. It is typically seen as more valuable than the potential of traffic from a search engine.

The following are solutions for this.

- **The sample rule set explained above.**

Making templates and the typical parameters part of the image preset. (&template)

- **Different languages for the image name**

The example above with different languages also requires maintaining the lang attribute of the img tag.

- **SPS Reporting and Rule Sets**

The use of image URLs not according to the standard syntax for image presets results in a failure of correct image content reporting. See **Setup > Application Setup > Bandwidth & Storage > Image Content**.

SPS lets you combine the use of search-engine-friendly URLs and preset-based image content reporting under the following conditions:

- The preset name is used as the first folder. For example, `is/image/company/presetname/.....`
- The URL ends on an image suffix such as `.jpg` or `.png`. For example, `.../company/preset/....jpg`.

Asset-based reporting is correct when the asset is separated with two hyphens from the inserted text and the URL ends on an image suffix as in `.../SomeText--ImageID.jpg`

Sample rule to avoid indexing using an HTTP header attribute

Some customers are required to limit the indexing of images by search engines to a dedicated format while other images, such as thumbnails, are not indexed. Because SPS is a SaaS solution certain web techniques, such as using robots.txt to define this, are not usable.

Another approach is to influence the http-header of the image response. You can achieve this with the following rule example:

```
<rule OnMatch="break" Name="No Index">
  <expression>^thumbs/(.*)--(.*)\.jpg$</expression>
  <substitution>$2?\$thumbs\$</substitution>
  <header Name="X-Robots-Tag">noindex</header>
</rule>
```

This rule example adds an http-header to each image that is called from `is/image/company/thumbs/anytext--imageID.jpg`.

See [Robots meta tag and X-Robots-Tag HTTP header specifications](#).

Adding a link attribute to the HTTP header

Adding a `link` attribute to the HTTP header can help increase search engine friendliness. The canonical link tells Google that the image is connected to a specific page. It is useful when you do an image search in Google.

If the HTTP header is assembled dynamically and takes over information from the original URL, it becomes tricky for the static HTTP header tags discussed previously. Rather than transforming the URL directly you can define a variable in the substitution and use it in the header tag. You cannot use `$1` or similar syntax in the header tag.

Rule example:

```
<rule RequestType="is" OnMatch="break">
  <expression>^(.*?)/(.*?)--(.*?)\.jpg$</expression>
  <substitution>$3?\$\$1\$\&amp;\$link=$3?\$\$1\$</substitution>
  <header
    Name="Link">http://images.customer.com/is/image/customer/$link$ rel="canonical"
  </header>
</rule>
```

This rule links back such image URLs

`http://server.scene7.com/is/image/customer/preset/sometext--assetID.jpg`

to

`http://images.customer.com/is/image/customer/assetID?$preset$`

The benefit is that even when you use different SEO text, such as text in different languages, the SEO benefit is collected under the canonical URL. However, this method is not supported for Image Search yet.

See [Use Canonical URLs](#).

Scene7 Viewer SEO Best Practices

Supply a default image placeholder and `alt` text for images.

To ensure that Scene7 viewers do not detract from your image search results, always supply a default image placeholder and `alt` text for that image. This image then gets replaced when the viewer loads.

Do not put just the viewer on your page. If you do, it becomes invisible to search engines because it does not initialize until the page loads; it requires JavaScript. For SEO, construct your pages so that they are SEO-friendly without any JavaScript enabled.

If you look at Verizon Wireless' PDP, especially if you disable JavaScript, at

<http://www.verizonwireless.com/smartphones/galaxy-s-5/>, you will see an image with an `alt` tag load first:

```
<div class="viewer-placeholder-image">
  </img>
</div>
```

After the viewer loads, the image is hidden. However, SEO sees this image and its tag and uses it for indexing. This page even has fallback content for video as well, along with compliant Schema.org metadata tags. No one encounters the video unless they have disabled JavaScript. But, it is perfect for search engines:

```
<div id="pdpVideoFallback">
  <div class="o-video-player" itemType="http://schema.org/VideoObject" itemscope="" itemprop="video"
  >
    <meta content="Galaxy S@ 5" itemprop="name"></meta>
    <meta content="Galaxy S@ 5" itemprop="caption"></meta>
    <meta content="11M18S" itemprop="duration"></meta>
    <meta content="true" itemprop="isFamilyFriendly"></meta>
    <meta content="http://s7.vzw.com/is/image/VerizonWireless/Samsung Galaxy S5 Black-vid"
    itemprop="thumbnail"></meta>
    <meta content="http://s7.vzw.com/is/content/VerizonWireless/Samsung Galaxy S5 Black-vid"
    itemprop="contentUrl"></meta>
    <video width="488" height="281" controls=""></video>
```

So, why does SPS not insert all of this page coding for you? Remember that SPS does not generate your HTML and it has no access to your data. SPS does not know the `alt` tag of the image or the metadata (title/description) of the video.