The Basics On How Titles and Meta Tags Work In Etano

It's common HTML knowledge that Titles and Meta tags can only be added into the header section of a page. The header and footer of the Etano template system is dynamically added to ALL pages via the **frame.html** file, with the exception of the index.html file.

You can't add meta description tags into each html file because meta tags can only be added into the header and the header and footer are dynamically wrapped around each html page with the **frame.html** file, with the exception of the **index.html** file.

If you open the **frame.html** file, you'll notice the following meta code for the header ...

```
<title>{tplvars.title} - {tplvars.sitename}</title>
        <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="application/xhtml+xml; charset=utf-8" />
        <link rel="shortcut icon" href="{tplvars.baseurl}/favicon.ico" />
        <meta name="description" content="{tplvars.meta_diz}" />
        <meta name="keywords" content="{tplvars.meta_keywords}" />
```

The first thing you'll be asking yourself, what does all the "**tplvars**" stuff mean?

We'll explain the "tplvars.title" first. This gets dynamically added by the corresponding php file.

For example we'll take a look at the **login.php** file. We already know that the login.html page gets wrapped by the **frame.html** file which provides the header info with the meta tags. If you open the **login.php** file you'll notice a line of code that looks like this:
```
$tplvars['title']=$GLOBALS['_lang'][236];
```
This is technically what dynamically gets added to the following section of the header:
```
<title>{tplvars.title} - {tplvars.sitename}</title>
```

The page "**Title**" is the first and foremost important thing that search engines look for and the first thing that is displayed in the search engine results, therefore it's important that each page title be unique. For most all pages the Etano script takes care of this for you.

The **{tplvars.meta_diz}** is the code associated with the meta descriptions. In the **frame.html** file you'll notice this meta tag:
```
<meta name="description" content="{tplvars.meta_diz}" />
```

To add a description for a particular page you'll need to include the following code in the PHP files for the pages you want to add a description for:
```
$tplvars['meta_diz']='your page description';
```

You add this line of code where other **$tplvars** are listed in the PHP file, for example in the **login.php** file you'd add the above **meta-diz** code like this:

```
$tplvars['title']=$GLOBALS['_lang'][236];
$tplvars['page_title']=$GLOBALS['_lang'][237];
$tplvars['meta_diz']='your page description';
$tplvars['page']='login';
$tplvars['css']='login.css';
```

This dynamically adds the description for that page into the **frame.html** file as it gets pulled into and included in the **login.php** page. This allows each page that you want to include a meta description to have a unique description. You don't want all your pages to include the exact same meta description as search engines such as Google may look at your pages as being duplicates.

It's not necessary to go through all of your PHP files and add custom page descriptions. Pages that are for "Members Only" won't be crawled and indexed by the search engines so there's no point in adding custom meta descriptions or keywords. Some dynamically created pages also don't need to have meta descriptions added, because you have no idea what the actual content will be since it's created by the user, such as BLOGS or PROFILES for example. If the search engines don't find a meta description, they will typically grab content from the page to include a description for your search result. The main purpose of meta descriptions is to merely provide the search engines with a suggestion of what to include. Search engines don't always rely on meta descriptions and may go straight for the content within the page, therefore it's always a good idea to also include the description (or something similar) near the top of your page's body content, again, you don't need to worry about this for all pages as the body content is dynamically created, such as blogs or profile pages, etc. Mostly focus on your main index page for manually adding quality titles, meta descriptions and body content.

It's not realistic to expect or assume that the search engines will index all of your pages, therefore you mostly want to focus on a small handful of key pages, especially your index page as this will always be indexed by the search engines.

Since your main index page isn't wrapped by the frame.html file and is somewhat of a separate individual page from all other template driven pages, you can just open the "**index.html**" file and manually add your meta stuff directly to this page, like this:

```
<title>Your Main Page Title</title>
        <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="application/xhtml+xml; charset=utf-8" />
        <link rel="shortcut icon" href="{tplvars.baseurl}/favicon.ico" />
        <meta name="description" content="your page description" />
    <meta name="keywords" content="your list of keywords" />
```

Title Tips
In the pages where you may want to add more eleborate Titles for SEO, such as for your main index page, here's some important tips to consider:

   * Title should be appealing to the Web surfer.

   * Do not write titles that are longer than 67 characters (including spaces). 67 is the maximum number of characters Google will index and if your title is longer it will appear   truncated or cut off in the search results (see example below).

   * The title should contain a few of your most important keywords that are relevant to the content of the page, however, it should not be stuffed with keywords.

   * Your title should include targeted keywords or keyword phrases. Targeted keywords are words that surfers are likely to include in their queries when searching for sites such as yours (note the BOLD text shown in the example below).

   * DO NOT stuff your titles with keywords, this is considered an unethical black hat technique which could lead to your page either getting bumped out of the search engines or lose page ranking.

   * Avoid cluttering your title with needless characters and pointless words.

Texas Passions - 100% Free Texas **Dating** & **Social Networking**, Texas ...
A free online **dating** & **social networking** site specifically for Texas singles. Sign up now to
enjoy free Texas chat, message boards and email. ...
texaspassions.com/ - Cached

Description Tips

   * Follow the same basic rules used for writing page titles. Write naturally, let the text flow smoothly and make your message clear for the readers. Most importantly, summarize the content of the page for your visitors so they know exactly what they will get when they visit your page.

   * Do not write page descriptions that are longer than 156 characters (including spaces). 156 is the maximum number of characters Google will index and if your page description is longer it will appear truncated, or cut off in the search results (see example above).

   * DO NOT stuff your description with keywords. Use your main keywords as they occur naturally in the logic of the text.

   * It is in your best interest to try and write a good description that will appeal to the surfers, making them want to click on your link, perhaps even bypassing the higher ranked search results in favor of yours.

Keyword Tips
Actually this is the least important of all your meta tags. At one time the meta keywords tag was very useful for page rankings on search engines. Unfortunately, unscrupulous webmasters have abused the meta keywords tags and now most major search engine crawlers ignore the tag altogether. However, it's still recommended that you use the meta keywords tag for your pages, but just don't bother spending too much time on it since it has very little bearing, if any, on your SEO or page ranking. I'd only bother adding them in your main index page.

   * Just keep your list of keywords or keyword phrases to about 10 or so.
   * Separate the words or phrases using a comma (you do not need to leave a space between words separated by commas, but either way is acceptable).
   * Do Not repeat words or phrases.
   * Put your most important word or phrases at the beginning of your list.

Final Note
The purpose of these instructions is to point you in the right direction on how and where to add your page titles, descriptions and keywords, and give you a few basic SEO tips. There's plenty of tools and information available on the web to help you with SEO and selecting the right targeted keywords and phrases for your site. Don't just pick keywords off the top of your head, keywords are very competitive and picking the wrong ones could mean the difference between success and failure. Targeted keywords aren't just for the keyword meta tag, it's even more important that they are used in both your title and descriptions.