

Bk2 Chapter 7 - Building Link Love B2C 7-1

235 Link Building - getting other sites to link to you
= critical for SEO efforts

I. Understanding Link Votes

To a SE, every pg. on Internet has a certain # of votes
it can hand to other pages thru links

Exact # of votes differs, based on site's SE strength
1998 - Google launched beta version of its SE

Page Rank = the voting system

Votes are worth more or less, depending on relevance

relevance of linking site > + dozens of other
text in link factors unknown to us

236 Link velocity = rate at which site acquires new links
so, every link you get = a vote

Each vote = weighed by SE + ranked for relevance

A. Links that don't count

Link helps only if it leads directly to your site
+ if it goes to an ad tracking server first!

1. Go to linking page + roll cursor over link
2. Look at browser status bar + see where it points
your pg address = a vote

redirection address or NONE ≠ a vote

B. Understanding noFollow

Webmasters can add rel="nofollow" inside link tag

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= command for SE to not follow the link

Detect them using ~~SEO~~ SEOquake - links have line through

Not all SE use same rules

≠ prevent SE from crawling content
≠ a security tool

II. Writing Link-Worthy Content

Best way to acquire links = attract them naturally

1. Be original
- 238 2. Write quality stuff - edit before posting
3. Write for easy scanning
4. Include images - make people ^{more} likely to link
5. Have punchy headline

III. Encouraging Links - by making it easy to link to site

- 239 1. Make your page URLs easy see Book VIII
2. Consider providing a way to bookmark site easily
3. Provide an easy way for customers to forward to friends

A. Using absolute URLs

Use absolute URL + relative!

If someone steals page, they inadvertently
link back to you

Likely + worth much, but may as well get benefit

B. Saying thanks

If folks link to you, send a note of thanks

IV. Getting Easy Links

≠ the highest value, but competitors have 'em, you should too

A. Submitting to directories

240 Thousands of directories exist, SE tracks links from them

1. DMOZ.org - submit site + be persistent
2. Chiff.com - free, good reputation, long history
3. Any + all local business directories
4. Industry associations

Paid directories: BOTW.org ; dir.yahoo.com ; JoeAnt.com
Best of the Web

- 240 B. Submitting to design galleries - be honest!
 If 100% XHTML compliant, submit to galleries that feature standards-compliant sites
 If striking design, submit to galleries that feature design

C. Commenting on blogs

Enter Web address when commenting

Most SE will not follow comment links

But some are again following links

software = better at filtering out

short, useless comments designed just for links

Comment when it makes sense

+ when you have a comment to make

241 May get additional benefit of a link

V. Severaging Your Partners for Links

Distribution partners or local retailers:

ask them to link to you!

provide an incentive - discount on merchandise
 additional training

If co. sell or distributes from another, larger co.

ask them to include link to you in their directory

VI. Asking for Links (though he never does!)

242 A. Building a contact list

= nec. to build a relationship

1. Start with folks you know

2. Find sites related to your industry - see if they allow you to contact Webmaster. If so, add to list

3. Find blogs related to industry - add to a 2nd list
 Market to them via social media & email

B. Being polite

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Send an email to each Webmaster - only once
if ≠ hear back, cross them off your list
Make email brief - not > 3 sentences

stuff fall
should do
↑

Ex. I'm the owner of Harrisonbikes.com. Since we'll sell the
bikes you review I'd greatly appreciate a link. Thanks!

VII. Building a Widget

↓ stuff
for the pros
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Give people a tool to put on their Website

Advantages - widgets can

1. provide latest headlines from another Website
2. Show weather info for your area
3. Show info about site on which widget = placed
4. Play video

If you include a link back to your Website, then
every one who uses widget gives you a 'link'!

Rules of widget link-building

1. Don't overdo it - Google = sensitive to widget bait
2. Make it original - & relevant to business
3. Make it simple - simple chunk of code so

Webmasters can copy & past: one-step process

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4. Make it fast - don't slow the loading of the page!
5. Include a link - & make sure it's direct

VIII. Creating Quality Links

A. Including keywords - keyword rich ^{links} works best

ex. Seattle's Bicycle Repair - better than Harrison's Bikes

SE will assume it's relevant & count towards ranking

Branded link is still helpful. Even image with no text

B. Varying link text

Use at least 5 diff. versions of link text

C. Getting relevant links

245 Link from relevant site - more useful

IV. Staying Out of Trouble

Link building has been abused as an SEO tactic

SE engineers & editors check for

1. sudden, unexplained link growth
2. links from bad neighborhoods - sleazy sites
3. signs that you're selling links
4. signs that you're getting links purely to improve your ranking

A. Link buying & selling

2007 - Google cracked down

If you sell links → severe penalties

246 If you buy links, you risk

1. Acquiring a lot of links suddenly → tripping the SE spam alarms → temp. but automatic drop in rankings
2. Getting caught up in mess if link broker = discovered + his web sites = banned.
3. Spending a lot of \$ on links that → worthless

B. Link exchanges

= probably won't hurt - but ≠ help either

SEs ignore reciprocal links

Can hurt if you end up in bad neighborhood
They may take you down with them if get caught

246 C. Link networks

+ join!

ask you to provide link text + URL

they add your URL among many sites

in exchange you post a few links = network

Makes inclusion in bad neighborhood - likely

X. Creating Great Link Bait

link building

Link bait = most misunderstood, worst-employed strategy

Few = good at using it

By def. - any piece of content written or created in such a way that → it attracts a lot of links

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1. almost all great link bait = in form of a list

"Top 10 ways to ..." = formula that works

2. Great link bait typically inc. images

3. Great link bait = easy to scan

A. Brainstorming link bait

Starts with a really compelling idea. Use strategies:

1. Cracking up the readers

Check out Digg.com - funny or ironic

But + cross line into tasteless

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2. Making the reader angry - risky

Might get links from blogs, forums, online groups

May alienate your readers

Recommendation - use only after a few successes

+ use only if have dedicated audience

more likely to forgive

more likely to defend you

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3. Puzzling your readers

Need a large audience who's patient

Ex. bloggers who say they're quitting (but don't)
 pundits apparently reversing their opinions - not
 require April Fools Day announcements

4. Offering great content

Ex. 30 sec. t-shirt fold

Using photoshop to...

Instructions to fix common car problem

Best way to enjoy popular theme park

Bizarre facts about animal invention,

country, famous person

Should be fun to write!

B. Using images in link bait

Images = core of any successful link bait

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May just be supporting material - use as props to jokes
 Host images on own Web site & on Flickr.

Want links pointing to your Web site

C. Using video in link bait

Typically requires a lot of work or a lucky break.

More likely - carefully prepare & produce great video

High quality 30-sec YouTube may take 10 hrs.

Ex. How to using 1 of your products

Interview with leader in industry

10 ridiculous things you can do with product

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Host it on your own site

Otherwise, you'll build traffic for YouTube

250 D. Managing expectations

1. For every 10 great link bait creations, only 1 = likely to succeed
2. By def, link bait needs to be attention-getting
3. Link baiting = long-term investment

XI. Researching your competitors links

See who links to your competitors

1. Use LinkDiagnosis.com - add Firefox add-on
Visit Web site - see who links to them
2. Use Yahoo! Site Explorer to generate a list of all links to your competitors' sites
3. Do Blog search on Yahoo! Google, or Live Search for competitors brand names
May reveal blogs that reviewed their sites
Might be willing to review yours too
4. Do a Google News search to find out which news wires your competitors use
after you build a list, check each link
Contact the bloggers
Buy space in same Website directories
Figure out how you can attract links from other sites
Read what competitor wrote on pg. that attracted mfs
Look at what linking site said about it
Gives clue as to what will attract similar links