

V O L U M E 1 I S S U E 1 2 0 1 8



C L E A N P R O V E N S E O

AN SEO MAGAZINE



## EFFICIENT OUTREACH DOESN'T HAVE TO BE IMPERSONAL.

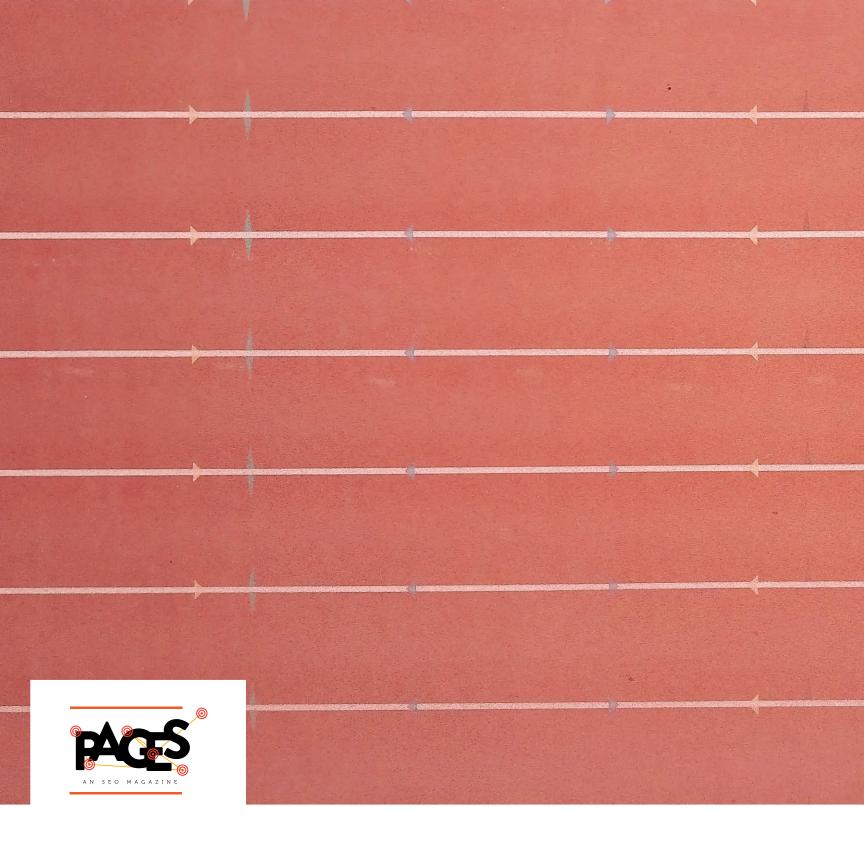




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## WHAT IS LINK BUILDING? A GUIDE.

Learn about link building, a niche SEO tactic that can produce powerful results.



## YOU'RE NOT READY FOR LINK BUILDING...YET.

Link building is crucial to online business success, but only if your website is ready for it.



## FORGOTTEN ASSETS.

Are you getting the most from your content? Reclaim value through promotion.

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## AN INTRODUCTION TO GUEST BLOGGING FOR LINK BUILDING.

A guide for aspiring guest bloggers, one of the most effective ways to build authority and links on the web.



## FIELD WORK: KEYWORD RESEARCH.

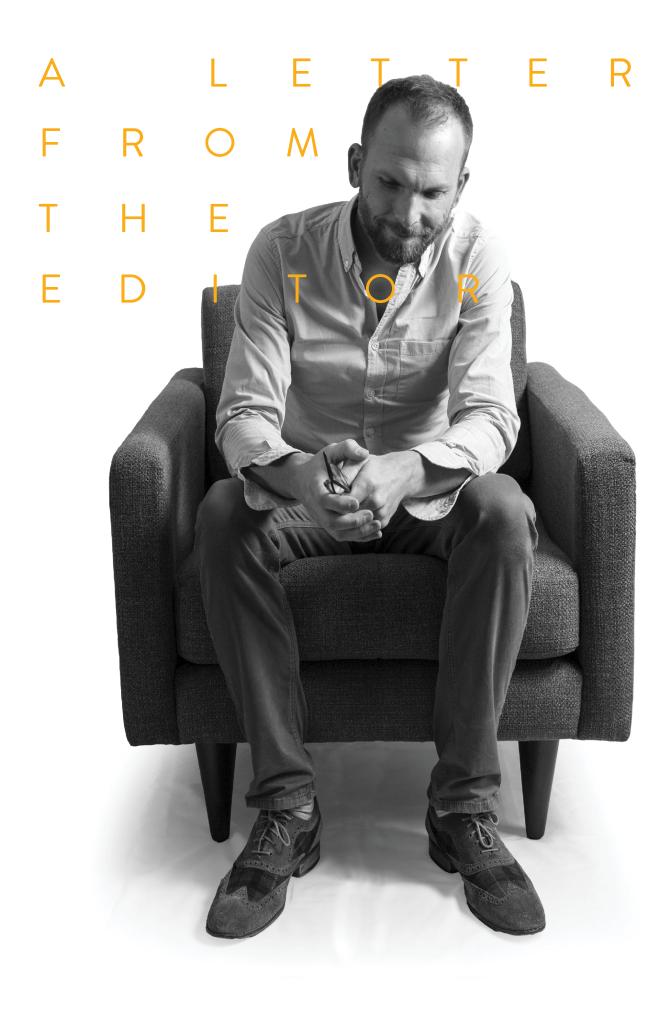
Your customers are already looking for you — Give them a hand.

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## I love SEO.

I love how technical and creative this industry is. But more than that, I quickly discovered SEO is filled with some of the most talented, creative, and passionate people I have ever met. I can't believe how incredibly supportive and open the SEO community is; people constantly share their knowledge, insight, experience, and even failed experiments. That's what we do in this community: we share, we challenge, we push each other forward.

This is the inaugural issue of *PAGES* - An SEO Magazine. We created this magazine because we wanted to give you a tangible item that would keep you connected to the SEO industry. Instead of making a newsletter or simply a digital magazine, we decided to create something that was both aesthetically interesting and informational. We wanted to make something that you could proudly place on your coffee table, a magazine you are excited to thumb through instead of one you skim over and throw away.

I hope the information contained within these pages helps inspire and educate. I hope the content proves both creative and actionable. Within, you'll find articles from leading voices in our industry — experts sharing their ideas and opinions on the subject matter they care for most. I hope that you learn and grow from their shared experience, helping in turn to improve the entire SEO industry.

Finally, I hope you enjoy this magazine as much as we enjoyed creating it. Thank you for reading.

-JOE OLIVER

Editor In Chief PAGES Magazine





## - THE BEGINNING

We don't often get to tell stories in the tech industry. We're often focused on the how — how to accomplish a goal, how to achieve a specific task, how it works, how to get it done. But when you're busy talking about "how," it can be easy to forget the "why."

## Why are we doing any of this?

With PAGES, we wanted to change the narrative. We wanted to build a link between SEO processes and the humans that implement them.

Because that's why SEO exists — for humans. SEO, at it's best, makes the web a better tool for people. Optimization enhances our experiences on the internet, makes our lives a little easier, and weaves the web of the internet tighter.

We hope that by the time you finish the stories in this magazine, you'll see SEO the same way we do: a tool with the power to help you better serve people.

We want to help you learn how to benefit from SEO, always with the understanding that you're optimizing for humans.

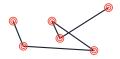
We know that SEO isn't always easy to understand, and that not everyone who can benefit from SEO is an expert. We're starting from the beginning to create a resource for anyone who wants to explore SEO. We hope you learn, laugh, and come to recognize the value SEO can have for you, and for everyone who uses the internet.

The web gets a little better each time we work together to improve it. When we invest in creating the network of connections that helps people get what they need from the web, we're all a little better for it. That's what SEO has the power to do.

WELCOME TO PAGES - AN SEO MAGAZINE.

V O L U M E 1 I S S U E 1 2 0 1 8

## THE LINK BUILDING ISSUE



# SEO IS NO LONGER JUST A JOB TITLE, IT HAS BECOME PART OF EVERYONE'S JOB DESCRIPTION.

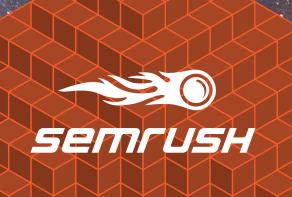




## SEOAN



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## **Dink Building**

/ ling k-bild-ing / verb.

Link building is the practice of promoting your website to other website owners with the primary goal of securing a link on their site to yours.



- CORY COLLINS -

## WHY BUILD LINKS?

If you have a website and want traffic from search, you need to consistently secure good links from relevant websites. That means link building.

## LINK BUILD

## Is Marketing

## THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS WHY A BUSINESS WOULD INCLUDE LINK BUILDING IN THEIR MARKETING PLAN:

- Links make it easier for the people who are looking for your website to find you. Link building can help your SEO and push you closer to the first page in search engine rankings.
- A link is a vote of confidence from one website to another. When the
  owner of a website agrees to link back to yours, they're offering to share
  their audience because they believe you have something worthwhile to
  offer to them. Each link creates a positive connection and develops a
  relationship.
- Links are vital to increasing traffic online. A website without links isn't going to get any traffic from search, or from other websites.



## WHY

Google search is based around links. The more links you have from relevant and authoritative websites, the better your site will perform in search for relevant queries.

## WHEN

Link building gained popularity with the rise of Google in 1998, and it's still vital today.

## HOW

SEOs use customized strategies with diverse tactics designed to convince another website it is in their, and their audience's, best interest to link to a page on your website.

## WHO

SEOs, marketers, and website owners use link building to increase traffic to their sites through organic search.











Links are fundamental to the existence of the web. In fact, it's called the web due to links — links are the "webbing" that combines the millions of websites into one entity, creating the interconnected web.

Links are the primary means of online navigation, directing humans from one webpage to another. Humans inherently associate links assignal of authority and trust. Search engines like Google similarly consider links a "vote of confidence" from one website to another.



## **NAVIGATING THE WEB**

Without links, it would be impossible to explore the web. There are essentially three ways to navigate the web: bookmark a page, type the full URL path into your browser, or (most commonly) click a link. Links account for the vast majority of web navigation. Whether you're on social media, conducting a search, or browsing a popular site like Reddit, odds are good that you're clicking links to move from one page to another. Memorizing URLs and creating thousands of bookmarks simply isn't practical.

Search is responsible for much of the internet's traffic — a study by SEO company Conductor reports more than 60 percent. When Google unexpectedly crashed in 2013, 40 percent of internet traffic dropped. Search is also the primary way most businesses receive online traffic. Customers recognize that search engines can help them find what they need, and they trust the websites that search engines return in their results.

The SEO industry exists around optimizing websites for search and improving their performance, which includes link acquisition. Without links, sites can't rank in competitive search queries. Humans and search engines both place considerable value on links, and securing links online requires sustained, focused effort.

## ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO THE EXISTENCE OF THE WORLD WIDE WEB.

## **BUILDING A LINK**

Quality links don't happen by accident. If you want a link, you need to provide something great that people will want to link to. Google often tells website owners to "create great content." What this really means is: create pages that provide real value to your audience.

But great content isn't always enough. There's a lot of quality content on the web, but links are what help people access it. According to a 2015 joint study by BuzzSumo and Moz, the majority of posts online have zero external links — links from other websites. If you want to secure the links your site deserves, you need to promote your pages. Otherwise, links don't happen.

SEOs know the impact a few natural links from quality, relevant websites can have. It no longer takes hundreds or thousands of links to rank. The commodity of a single link has vastly increased, giving quality websites even more power within their respective industries.

In order to secure a link, your page needs to provide real value. Equally important, you need to demonstrate the value of that link in a persuasive manner. There is no formula to create a winning link building strategy, and no secret shortcut to securing links online. But with the right resources, knowledge, and a healthy dose of creativity, you can earn the links you deserve.



AT THE END OF THE DAY, BUILDING THE RIGHT KIND OF LINKS IS SIMPLY ABOUT SPEEDING UP THAT WHICH COULD HAPPEN NATURALLY IF ALL CONTENT WAS KNOWN TO ALL PEOPLE.





KATIE WIESE IS AN ADVENTURER, WRITER, WORLD TRAVELER, AND LINK BUILDER. IF YOU'RE HEARING THE OLD SESAME STREET SONG, "ONE OF THOSE THINGS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHERS, ONE OF THESE THINGS DOESN'T BELONG," YOU'RE NOT ALONE. I FOUND MYSELF INTRIGUED BY THE TWO SEEMINGLY DIFFERENT WORLDS KATIE LIVES IN, AND WONDERED HOW HER PERSONAL EXPERIENCES HAVE SHAPED HER CAREER IN LINK BUILDING.

Recently, I sat down with Katie to discuss her thoughts, challenges, and successes with link building. What I found was that although Katie's personal and professional lives might seem quite different, it may be that very difference that makes her such a skilled link builder.

- Joe Oliver



LINKBUILDER SPOTLIGHT



## \* KATIEWIESE

KATIE WAS HIRED AS A CONTENT LINK BUILDER AT PAGE ONE POWER A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AGO. I ASKED HER WHAT LINK BUILDING WAS AND LOVED HER RESPONSE.

- J.O.

## WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU DO?

On a day-to-day basis, I write emails to people who run sites that I would like to see my face on. I do some site-finding, and then I send emails to the editors and tell them my ideas — things that I want to write for them, topics that they haven't covered already.

Or I look at their site, and I think, "Oh, you guys exist for SEO — and that's evident! [laughter] And you need something better, because the content on your site could be better for your visitors. If you actually want a readership, you need good content." I figure out a way to politely tell them that.

When they respond and say, "Yes, of course, we want you to write for us," I write an article, send it off to them, work through any edits, and then do a little happy dance when it goes live. [laughter]

## WHAT IS LINK BUILDING TO YOU?

I think of the internet as this big, flat plateau. It's our job to put up little stakes in the ground and then connect those so that people have a path.

At its heart, link building is finding an interesting, engaging way to get people to a client's website through subtle context. The thoughtful words in a good article naturally point the reader to the authoritative sources it cites — in this case, our client's awesome website. It's all a very organic process.

## WHAT ABOUT YOUR TALENTS AND SKILLS MAKES YOU A SUCCESSFUL LINK BUILDER?

I had this teacher in high school, freshman year, who told me that the best use of intelligence is when you can draw connections where no one else sees them. Apparently, I took that to heart because that's one of my favorite things to do — to relate things together, which works really well for link building.

## YOU RECENTLY TRAVELED ABROAD. WHAT WAS THAT LIKE?

My partner and I went to Norway. We chose Norway because we like mountains. We also chose Norway because we're both in a point in our lives where we have a little bit of extra money. Norway is crazy expensive to visit.

We climbed a lot of mountains. We went up to the Lofoten Islands, way up in the Arctic Circle, and climbed. We did more hiking on this trip than — well, we did steeper hiking than I've ever done before.

## DO YOU DO A LOT OF HIKING?

A decent amount, just because here in Idaho we're so close to really nice places.

When I was a little kid, my dad took me out a lot. He's kind of one of those mountain men. He basically lives in the woods. Through college I always wanted to do more of it; so, when I got back here, I was like "Oh, wow, I can! I can go play, because the foothills are in my backyard."

## DO YOU SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN THE MOUNTAINS?

It's funny you ask, because I just bought skis. [laughter] Because hiking in the snow gets pretty rough. We've tried a little bit, and I like to think I'm tough, but I'm not that tough. So skate skiing is the next big endeavor. I might even ski to work.



KATIE HAS A GIFT FOR MAKING CONNECTIONS AND IT DEFINITELY SHOWS IN HER WORK, BUT I ALSO FOUND THAT KATIE SEES THE WORLD WITH A MUCH BIGGER LENSE THAN MOST. MAYBE THAT'S WHY SHE CAN SO EASILY MAKE CONNECTIONS WHEN LINK BUILDING.



## DO YOU HAVE A BUCKET LIST OF PLACES WHERE YOU WANT TO TRAVEL AND GO MOUNTAIN CLIMBING?

I don't really have a bucket list. I like to just go with the flow.

## FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO LINK BUILDING — HOW'S THAT TRANSITION?

At first, it was really hard on my back, sitting all day. I was like, "What is this?!" [laughter]

But what I found is they relate really well. I like the creative space and the challenge. I can engage my mind by taking two or three separate entities and whipping them up into one idea that makes coherent sense and satisfies all of these different requirements. And then make it interesting enough for people to want to read.

## WHAT DO YOU WISH CLIENTS KNEW WHEN YOU'RE BUILDING LINKS FOR THEIR WEBSITE?

That link building isn't advertising, and that their advertorial content just doesn't work for link building. If the quality of the content that link builders are given is really advertorial, then I think link building is just going to go down a black hole.

I like it when there is a lot of good content to work with, and when there aren't restrictions put on my creative process, because it's a wild process. There's really no defining how someone creates a piece of content. When I have a lot of good content to choose from, I can make people something that they wouldn't expect.

If someone has the idea that link building is advertising, they think they can just pay money for links. Not only does that go against Google's guidelines, it just doesn't work in the long run. The only way to succeed is by linking valuable content across the web in meaningful ways.

## CAN YOU TELL US WHAT MAKES A WEBSITE LINK-WORTHY?

Every website should offer something meaningful. When you surf the web, you assess the value of each page you discover. You ask yourself: is this website relevant to what I'm looking for? Is it authoritative, with research or statistics backing up claims? Is it easy to navigate — and at least somewhat aesthetically pleasing?

When you're building links from one page to another, a webmaster is going to look for those same things before determining whether or not to link to a piece of content. Successful link building is the result of successfully managing relationships with webmasters; so, you need to offer them something that makes sense for their site, and also accomplishes your own objectives.

## WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU SEE WITH LINK BUILDING IN THE FUTURE?

Figuring out how to bridge the gap between what clients are doing for their advertising versus what they're doing with their link building.

I first started thinking about this a few months ago when a coworker and I were out for drinks. She said, "Yeah, bad link building is kind of like when you watch a movie from the '60's, and you see someone drinking a Coca-Cola. And they have the label facing the camera and they're like, 'Mmm, Coke!' It's so obvious." That's bad link building.

Our job is to represent our clients in the work we do for them without that being the focus of what you're doing, because overly advertorial work can be off-putting. Today, people are sensitive to being sold to, and justifiably so.

## BACK TO YOUR ADVENTURES, WHAT'S YOUR NEXT TRAVEL DESTINATION?

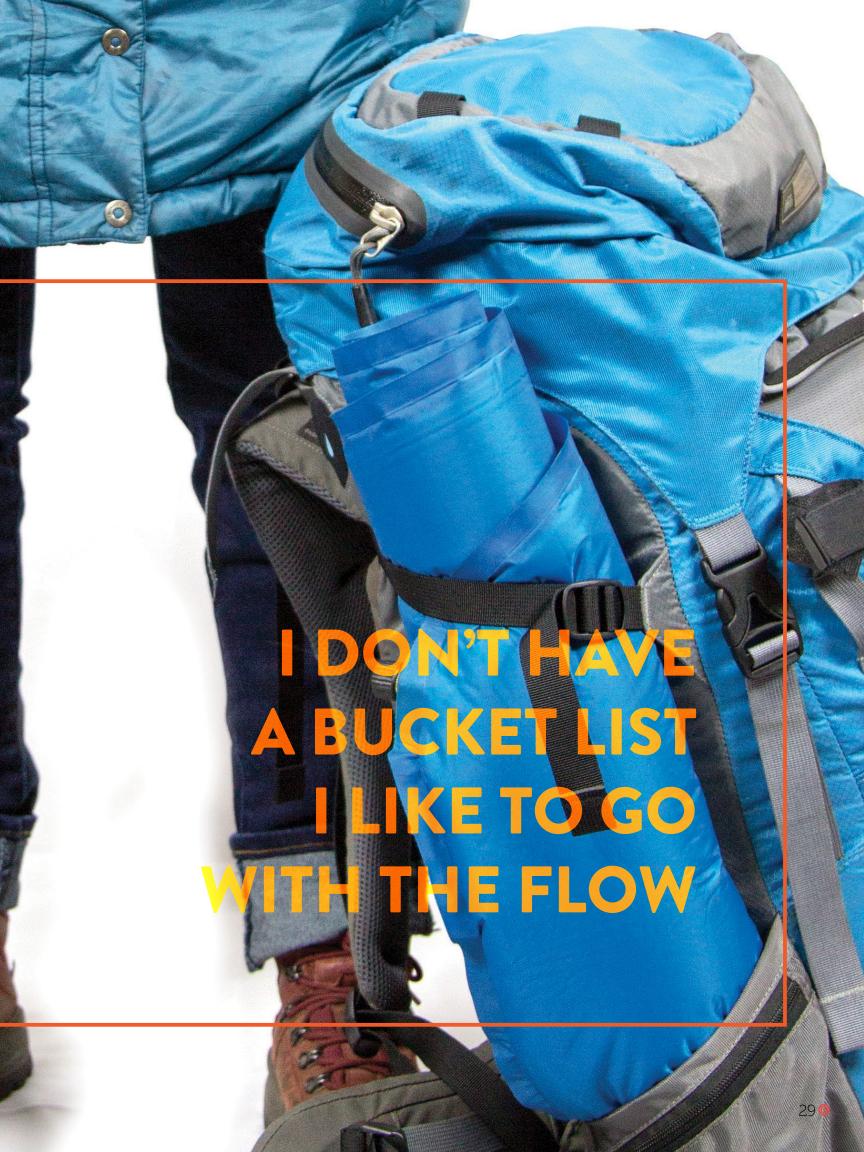
Columbia, 2018. There's a meditation retreat there. I have some friends who live in an ecovillage, so I'm going to go spend a week with them.



KATIE LOVES WHAT SHE DOES. SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT MAKING CONNECTIONS, AND THAT'S WHAT LINK BUILDING IS AT ITS CORE: THE ABILITY TO MAKE CONNECTIONS ON THE WEB FOR THE BENEFIT OF EVERYONE.

LINK BUILDING IS A CREATIVE PROCESS, ONE THAT IS BEST SUITED FOR THOSE WHO ARE ABLE TO SEE CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE INTERNET THAT HAVEN'T YET BEEN MADE. IF MORE LINK BUILDING WAS DONE THE WAY KATIE DOES IT, IT WOULD LEAD TO A BETTER WEB EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE.

YOU CAN FIND KATIE ON TWITTER @KAPRO101 AND LEARN MORE ABOUT PAGE ONE POWER'S LINK BUILDING PROCESS AND TECHNIQUES AT WWW.PAGEONEPOWER.COM

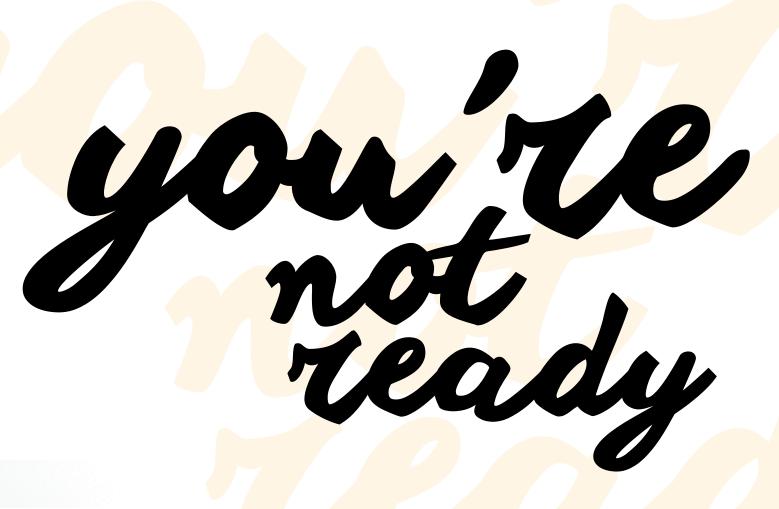


# A GOOD SEO WILL TRY TO PRIORITIZE WHAT IDEAS CAN BRING YOUR BUSINESS THE MOST IMPROVEMENT FOR THE LEAST INVESTMENT.

And what improvements might take more time, but help growth in the long term.

- MAILEOHYE
Google





## Why you shouldn't be link building...yet.

Not so fast, speedy. Before you jump into anything new, it's important to be prepared. We built this checklist to help you get your website in shape and ready for the link building marathon ahead.

- Nicholas Chimonas -





IF YOUR SITE ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR PEOPLE, IT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR LINKS EITHER.

Links are an essential part of a strong website, but links alone won't ensure success. It's true that whether your goals include a higher ranking in Google or more visitors to your website, links can help you reach them. But the links you get will only be as good as your website.

To earn a worthwhile link, you've got to deserve it: your website needs to provide real value to visitors. Why would anyone want to link to an ecommerce page that's filled purely with products and their prices? Would you give out free advertising for nothing in return?

People want to link to pages that spark their interest — something that holds value for them or the people who visit their site. In the SEO industry, we call these pages linkable assets. Product pages are rarely a linkable asset, unless you provide a truly unique or rare set of products, like hoverboards or lightsabers. Think about what makes your business unique, common questions people have about your industry or company, or information that's new and exciting, then build content based on those ideas.

If you don't have anything special or unique to offer, it's easy to get lost in the noise of the web. The websites that rank on the first page of Google are special because they've invested work into creating worthwhile content and brands that people want to see — there's no shortcut to that. To join their high ranks, you'll need to do the same.

Links are connections between people and ideas. When you connect the right people with the right ideas, everybody wins.

## THE LINKS YOU GET WILL ONLY BE AS GOOD AS YOUR WEBSITE.

## Patt Two - The Technical Stuff -

LINKS CAN ACT AS A SIGNAL OF AUTHORITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS. THEY TELL PEOPLE AND GOOGLE THAT IF THE LINK IS FOLLOWED, IT WILL TAKE THEM TO SOMETHING WORTH SEEING. THE MORE QUALITY LINKS THAT A DOMAIN HAS, THE MORE LIKELY IT IS THAT GOOGLE WILL SEE THAT WEBSITE AS VALUABLE AND TRUSTWORTHY.

Links also help boost the exposure that Google's crawlers — the robots that run the search engine — have with your website. Links help guide those crawlers to your site; the more links that lead to your website, the more opportunities you have to be discovered by Google, and in turn, Google's users.

If these crawlers show up on your page and discover content that no human would ever read, awful technical SEO, and poor design, the golden link that brought them there turns to lead. That great link has lost its potential value.

But if a site is bad, the likelihood of obtaining good links in the first place is very low. People are willing to endorse pages on the web which they find valuable. Making a single quality page that offers something new or helpful is more worthwhile than creating many pages of mediocre content.

Worse yet, if you have to force a link to be created or use dubious link building tactics, that link won't help improve your rankings for very long. All the links in the world won't turn trash into treasure.

Making it to the first page of Google's search results is about much more than links, and links are about so much more than search engine results. If you want to sustainably improve your search engine rankings and help your customers find you more easily on the web, run through the checklist on the following page. To win, you've got to train.

SEO IS ABOUT FIXING CURRENT PROBLEMS AS MUCH AS IT IS ABOUT PREVENTATIVE MEASURES AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT. ONCE YOUR TREATMENT OF SHORT-TERM SEO TASKS IS DONE, YOUR SITE SHOULD NEVER STOP PRACTICING SEO.

-Stephan Spencer
The Optimized Geek

## Part THREE - Training Checklist -

LINK BUILDING IS A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT. WANT TO FIND OUT IF YOU'RE PREPARED? HERE'S A COMPREHENSIVE CHECKLIST TO HELP.



O DO YOU HAVE A WEBSITE?

You can't build links without a website to link to.

O HAVE YOU IMPLEMENTED WEBMASTER TOOLS AND CHECKED IF YOU HAVE A MANUAL PENALTY?

Whether your site's rankings are held back by an algorithm or a manual penalty (that's a penalty given to you by a person, not a robot), these issues need to be addressed before you worry about links.

O IS YOUR TECHNICAL/ON-PAGE SEO TIGHT OR A BLIGHT?

Before you start working on SEO outside of your website, leverage the potential your site already has.

HAS YOUR ROBOTS.TXT FILE BEEN CONFIGURED PROPERLY?

Get this right so that Google and other search engines can crawl the correct pages on your site in order to rank.

O DO YOU HAVE AN XML SITEMAP?

XML sitemaps help search engines understand what your website is about.

HAVE YOU OPTIMIZED YOUR PAGES?

This includes the URL structures, plus title tags, meta tags, internal linking, and everything else related to technical site elements or code.

O IS YOUR DUPLICATE CONTENT 301 REDIRECTED OR CANONICALIZED? Duplicate content is bad for SEO. Tidy up your site.
O DOES YOUR WEBSITE LOAD QUICKLY? If we can send a telegram faster than your site loads, we've got a problem.
O ARE YOU 200 OK OR 404 DEAD? Slightly alive is not good enough when it comes to link building.
O HAVE YOU OPTIMIZED THE SITE FOR MOBILE USERS?  Search engines know why this is important, and so should you: as of 2016,  Stat Counter found that over 50 percent of internet usage is now on mobile devices.
O IS YOUR SITE SERVING INTERNATIONAL REGIONS? SEO for international websites has some extra considerations, so some extra reading about international SEO will be required. Study up.
DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE IS?  Whether you're developing your marketing strategy, working on your website, or researching target sites for link building opportunities, you must be performing marketing research. Don't trust your gut. Understanding your target audience is essential.
O DO YOU KNOW HOW TO CONNECT WITH YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE? What's important to the people in your target audience? Understand who their influencers are and what topics resonate with them.
CAN HUMANS EASILY NAVIGATE YOUR WEBSITE?  Don't just say yes to this. Test, test, test with real humans.
WILL PEOPLE FIND VALUE IN YOUR SITE?  We're not talking about your products. When it comes to link building, you need to have content on your website that offers real value. When you're outreaching to strangers in the wilds of the web, the value of the page you're hoping to link to is usually all you have to offer in exchange for a link.



# CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PATIENCE

The way search engines help users navigate the web changes all the time. If you want to be an effective link builder, continuing education will be a major key to your success. Even pro link builders are always learning. Start by mastering the basics, then branch out into new techniques.

Take it slow and start by learning what makes a good link, how to discover trustworthy sites, and the core elements of outreach and communication. These are the three basic principles that will guide all of your link building.

And remember — link building takes patience. Don't just abandon a link building tactic because it's not bringing you overnight success.

# GOOGLE OPERATORS AND SEARCH STRINGS

To build a link, you'll need to find a relevant website and ask for one.

Sometimes, the websites that are most valuable to your own website aren't always on the first page of Google's search results. To find those websites, you'll have to learn how to use Google to search for them correctly.

Here's where advanced search operators can come in handy. Search operators are commands that you can use to refine your search results. There are an almost infinite number of search operators you can use to help you discover what you're looking for. Experiment freely with different searches to find the results you need.

# AN AUTHORITATIVE EMAIL ADDRESS

Next to finding relevant websites, effective outreach is the most important part of link building.

Webmasters frequently receive spam email from all sorts of random Gmail, Yahoo, and Hotmail addresses. If they can see that your email is associated with your website or business, you already look more credible than most of the people they're hearing from.

It's a simple switch to use a domain email address.

YOURNAME@YOURSITE.COM INSTEAD OF YOURNAME@GMAIL.COM

# DON'T JUST DIVE INTO THE DEEP END OF THE POOL; START WITH THE BASICS, MASTER THEM, AND THEN BRANCH OUT.

# OUTREACH TRACKING AND ORGANIZATION TOOLS

You need a way to keep track of all the sites you discover and contact. This will help you avoid making embarrassing mistakes — like accidentally emailing the same person as if you've never tried to make contact before. You can use a simple spreadsheet to keep track of who you've contacted and when you did it.

Make sure to include the website you contacted, the date, any relevant contact info, the action you took (whether you sent an email, made a phone call, filled out a web form, etc.), and, if you secured a link, the linking page URL.

You can also organize this spreadsheet into communication stages. This allows you to see which sites have already linked to you, which ones you're communicating with, the ones you're attempting to reach, and which ones you still need to reach out to.

## **SEO TOOLS**

If you're just beginning to build links, there are only a couple basic SEO tools from Moz that you'll need.

Mozbar - This browser extension will show you a site's domain authority, how many links are going in and out, and relevant keyword information, all while you browse the web.

Moz's Open Site Explorer - Open Site Explorer (OSE) can show you a site's Domain Authority, detailed link reports, inbound links, and a decent spam score for any given URL. If you don't inherently trust a target site, run it through OSE. You can use this tool free for the first month, but there's a small fee after that. Even without an account, you can check a few URLs per day at no charge.

## **LINKABLE ASSETS**

Last but definitely not least, to build links, you need something worth linking to.

No one wants to link to your product page, or even to your homepage. If you ask for a link, your site needs to provide some value. Your content can be educational, entertaining, or interesting, but it has to be something people want to see. If you need to create that content, do it before you start building links. It's hard to build great links without great content.

# FINDING KNOWLEDGE GAPS FOR AUDIENCES IS ESSENTIAL TO CONTENT DESIGN.

Approach every prospecting project with one question in mind: "What information is missing?"

- GARRETTFRENCH
Citation Labs







# SOMETIMES YOU INVEST IN CREATING A LINKABLE ASSET, BUT FAIL TO STRATEGICALLY PROMOTE IT—LEAVING VALUE (AND LINKS) ON THE TABLE.

# EVEN THE MOST VALUABLE PIECE OF CONTENT CAN REMAIN HIDDEN FROM THE AUDIENCE THAT WOULD APPRECIATE IT WITHOUT THE PROPER PROMOTION.

Link building can reclaim that value. Link building is the process of discovering relevant audiences for your content and securing the links you deserve. Building links helps your page perform better in search engine result pages, generating consistent traffic and breathing new life into your undervalued asset.

Linkable assets can come in many forms — articles, videos, infographics, and quizzes, to name a few. No matter what, the key ingredient to a linkable asset is unique value. A link-worthy asset is often something that many sites would be happy to link to if they only knew it existed.

Linkable assets are different from other types of content because they are inherently link-worthy, which is different from being share-worthy.

Many pieces of content receive plenty of social shares but little to no links, simply because social sharing is easier. Some content is also better-suited and designed for social sharing rather than linking. Because securing links is more difficult than obtaining social shares, identifying link-worthy assets can be challenging.

Fortunately, there's a process you can follow for finding and promoting undervalued resources.



THERE HAS TO BE REAL VALUE FOR THE SITE LINKING AND THEIR AUDIENCE.



## SEARCH FOR LINK OPPORTUNITIES

Using Google and your content analysis tools, find prospects worth reaching out to for potential link opportunities and partnerships.

## STEP THREE:

### **ONE-TO-ONE OUTREACH**

Once you've found a prospect, reach out to the website owner with a clear, concise email requesting a link to your page.

> **LINK-WORTHY IS DIFFERENT THAN SHARE-WORHTY.**



# STEP ONE

## FIND UNDERPROMOTED ASSETS

To begin identifying link building opportunities, you'll need to discover which assets on your site are underpromoted. There a few ways you can find undervalued assets.

Linkable assets may already exist on your site, but they may not be obvious. It will take some digging and analysis to identify the underpromoted assets. The best place to find linkable assets on most websites is the site's blog. Resources that have already proven to be popular in terms of social shares might also attract links.

If you don't have luck with a manual site search, the next option for finding link-worthy pages is using a content analysis tool like BuzzSumo.

BuzzSumo reports social share metrics on your site's individual pages, which can help you determine the popularity of a page. Often, social popularity can also translate to link popularity.

Once you've discovered a potential asset, check how many backlinks the page has to determine if it's truly underpromoted.

One of the best options for doing this is the tool Majestic. Majestic will report how many unique domains are linking to your page — a low number of backlinks will show that an asset hasn't been successfully promoted.





# STEP TWO

## **SEARCH FOR LINK OPPORTUNITIES**

With an asset in hand, it's time to find link opportunities. This is also sometimes called "link prospecting."

To find link opportunities, you need to identify websites relevant to your content. You also need to discover the unique value your content has to different audiences.

A simple search is the best way to reveal potential link opportunities if you have a good grasp of how to use Google and search modifiers. BuzzSumo can also help you find content that's similar to yours that has already proven popular with relevant audiences.

Once you've identified a potential link prospect, it's time for outreach.







## ONE-TO-ONE OUTREACH

The final step in the content promotion process is outreach — contacting the webmaster of the potential link prospect. Human-to-human communication is the core of manual link building, and a fundamental pillar in all marketing.

Start by finding the right contact information. Email is the most ideal way to reach out to webmasters, but contact forms work too. You can use tools like Findthat to find email addresses that might not be obviously displayed on the website.

Webmasters are busy, so your outreach message should be as concise as possible while also explaining why your asset presents unique value.

INCLUDE THESE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE OUTREACH MESSAGE:

**DEMONSTRATION OF VALUE** – Explain why a link to your asset adds value to their website or content.

**CLEAR CALL TO ACTION** – Explain what you would like the webmaster to do with your asset.

**SECONDARY CALL TO ACTION** – Use language in your message to imply you expect a response from the webmaster.

In any link building campaign, your goal should always be to secure more than just one link. If a webmaster doesn't immediately agree to link to your page, that's okay. It's a fact of link building — not every prospect will lead to a link. But building relationships with webmasters can lead to other marketing opportunities, so focus on creating positive connections through your outreach no matter the outcome.



HEY, HI, HELLO, HOW ARE YA?



Linkable assets are crucial to securing relevant, worthwhile links. However, you don't necessarily need to create new content if there are hidden gems already living on your site. Finding and promoting these forgotten assets can help you secure the links you deserve.

Start your link building campaign by discovering the underpromoted assets on your site, then search for potential opportunities to gain links back to them. Reach out to site owners by creating an effective outreach message, and deliver it using the appropriate contact information.

With these three steps, you'll be on your way to securing links and building valuable relationships.



# FROM REAL LINK BUILDERS



UNDERSTANDING EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT OUT OF YOUR LINK BUILDING CAMPAIGN HELPS TO FORMULATE A WORKABLE STRATEGY TO ATTAIN THAT GOAL. BUILDING LINKS WILLY-NILLY, WITH NO PLAN IN PLACE WILL LIKELY NOT GET YOU WHERE YOU WANT TO GO, UNLESS YOU ARE WILLING TO COMMIT TO AN EXTREMELY LONG-TERM CAMPAIGN. TARGETING YOUR EFFORTS SHOULD GET YOU THE RESULTS YOU WANT MORE QUICKLY.

THE SITE'S BLOG SHOULD BE HOSTED ON THE ACTUAL SITE, AND A SINGLE PIECE OF GOOD WRITING OR CONTENT ON THE SITE DOES NOT WARRANT THE 'LINKABLE ASSET' BOX BEING CHECKED. FOR EXAMPLE, JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PENALIZED BY PANDA DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD SKATE BY ON THIN CONTENT AND EXPECT HIGH AUTHORITY SITES TO WANT TOLINK TO YOU.

KEEP IN MIND THAT THE DESIRED RESULTS OF YOUR LINK BUILDING CAMPAIGN CAN TAKE WEEKS OR EVEN MONTHS TO BE PROCESSED BY SEARCH ENGINES. IF YOU START A LINK BUILDING CAMPAIGN TO RANK UP YOUR E-COMMERCE SITE FOR CHRISTMAS SEASON IN DECEMBER, YOU'LL BE DISAPPOINTED BY THE RESULT YOU GET.

LINK BUILDING IS ONE PIECE OF A MUCH LARGER INTERNET MARKETING CAMPAIGN. TO BE TRULY EFFECTIVE IT NEEDS A STRONG FOUNDATION (WEBSITE) TO BUILD ON WITH WIDE RELEVANCY AND GENUINE USER APPEAL. WITHOUT THAT, BOTH THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF LINKS ACQUIRED ARE NECESSARILY DIMINISHED. LINK BUILDING NEEDS TO BE VIEWED AS A FORCE-MULTIPLIER FOR MARKETING, NOT A REPLACEMENT.









# EVEN A LITTLE MARKET RESEARCH CAN HELP SHAPE AN EXISTING IDEA, AND HELP YOUR ASSETS GO VIRAL.

In some niches, even the smallest idea (and investment) can have some power if you can determine it's something your audience really wants.

- BILLSEBALD

Greenlane SEO



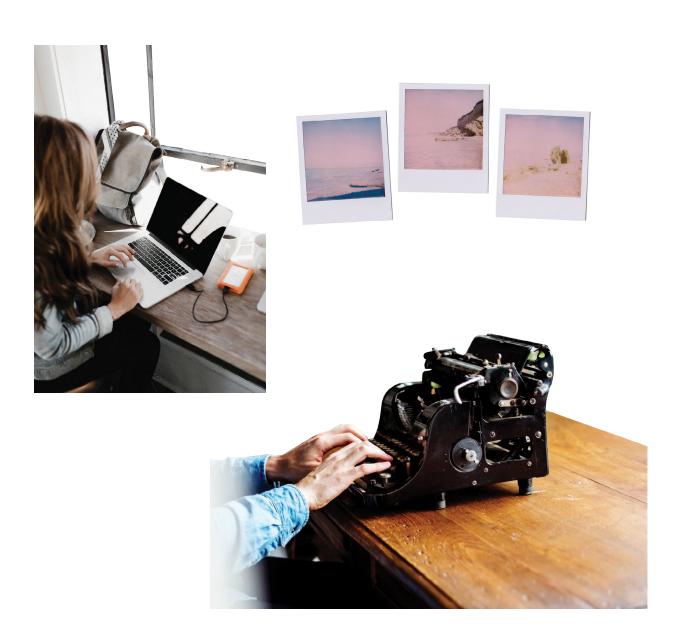


# AN INTRODUCTION TO GUEST BLOGGING FOR LINK BUILDING

By Alex Omelchenko

# What is guest blogging?

Guest blogging — also called guest posting — is the practice of contributing a post to another person's blog. The concept is simple: you write an article as a guest for another blog and gain a link back to your own site within the post.





No matter how you create content for your blog or website, if there are others who would benefit from seeing it, guest blogging is a great way to get your creative offerings in front of them.

GUEST BLOGGING ALLOWS YOU TO ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE BLOGGERS HOSTING YOUR POSTS AND TAP INTO THEIR AUDIENCE FOR ADDITIONAL EXPOSURE. IT'S ALSO A METHOD TO ESTABLISH YOURSELF AS AN AUTHORITY TO YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE, AND THE BLOG OWNER BENEFITS FROM THE FRESH, HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT YOU PROVIDE THEIR READERS.

GET IT RIGHT

Good guest authors and bloggers recognize that relevant, well-placed links within a blog post benefit readers by providing them with further information and additional resources. With the right application, guest blogging is a powerful online marketing tactic and one of the best ways to build valuable links.

In the past, SEOs who were interested only in gaining links took advantage of blogs that were open to guest posts, requesting that blog owners publish poorly written articles full of irrelevant links. Because of this, reply rates can be low to guest post requests. But don't worry — there are a few things you can do to increase your chances of making a connection with the managers of a blog.

The first is to start with the blog posts you write. If you wouldn't want to read it, don't assume anyone else will. Don't worry about perfectly optimized anchor text or advertorial content — that won't work here. Put people first and stop worrying about the robots.

Next, remember that building relationships should be the primary goal of your outreach to blog owners. Your emails should be personalized, and as concise as possible. They also need to show the webmaster why your guest post is valuable to them.

Some bloggers may ask for money in exchange for publishing your content. It's best to avoid this activity, as it's directly against Google's guidelines to pay for links. It can also result in a manual penalty, which works against your rankings in the search engine result pages (SERPs).



BACKLINKS —LINKS FROM ANOTHER WEBSITE BACK TO YOUR OWN — ARE THE PRIMARY VALUE OF GUEST BLOGGING TO YOUR SITE'S SEO.

Backlinks remain one of the most important ranking factors in search engine optimization. But not every backlink to your page has the same value to Google. There are a few ways Google gauges the value of a link.

One is by the domain and the page the link is on. You gain the most value by posting on high quality websites. Another is the placement of the link on the page: where on the page the link is located. Links located in the body of an article, like a blog, tend to be most natural, since they should be added to support the content of the article.

The anchor text is also an indicator of value — it helps search engines and readers understand what the page being linked to is about. The anchor text is the hyperlinked words that a reader is able to click on.

If you write an SEO optimized article, your guest post can also provide value by ranking in search, giving you or your brand some extra awareness and potentially increasing traffic.

S E O
B E N E F I T S
O F G U E S T
B L O G G I N G

HOW TO FIND GUEST POSTING OPPORTUNITIES

Here are a few examples of search strings you can use to find blogs searching for writers:

## **EXAMPLE SEARCH STRINGS:**

- "write for us" "keyword"
- "keyword" inurl:contributors
- "keyword" inurl:authors
- intitle: "guestpost" "keyword"
- inurl: "keyword" "contributor"

Google

alex omelchneko guest post

Q

# HOW TO SPOT LOW QUALITY WEBSITES

Posting on a low-quality site can do more harm than good. Not only can it hurt your reputation, but it can also result in penalties, sending you further back in the SERPs. It's important to audit the sites you discover while prospecting. Keep your eye out for the following red flags.

If a webmaster replies to a pitch for a blog post with a large list of other domains that they control, it's a good sign that they're running a private blog network or a dropped domain site, which are both things you want to avoid.

An unnatural link profile can also indicate a low quality site. You can use tools like Majestic's Site Explorer to view the link portfolio of a site and identify signs that a site might be using linking practices that violate Google's guidelines.

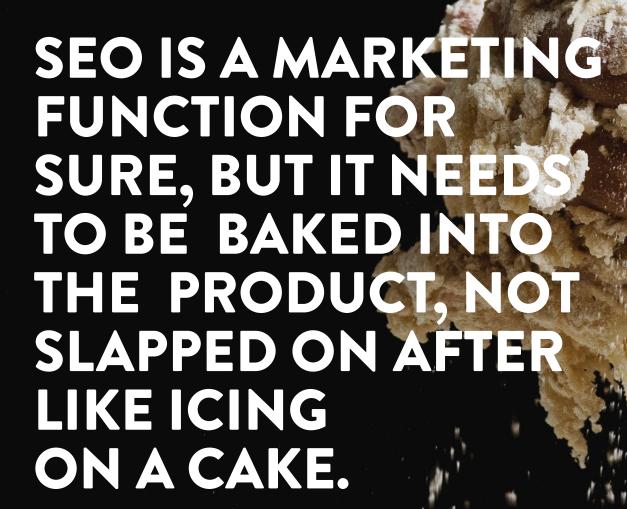
Low traffic might also show that a blog isn't a good spot for your guest post — you want links from websites that cater to an actual audience. You can use a tool like SEMrush or Ahrefs to monitor traffic on potential target sites. Good websites will also be visible in SERPs.

WITH TIME, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO EASILY IDENTIFY WEBSITES THAT PRESENT GOOD GUEST POSTING OPPORTUNITIES. IT TAKES TIME TO ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS WITH WEBMASTERS IN YOUR INDUSTRY, BUT BY DOING SO, YOU'LL BUILD AUTHORITY, GAIN VALUABLE LINKS, AND OPEN UP NEW MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES.

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# PAGEONEPOWER.COM/LINKARATI

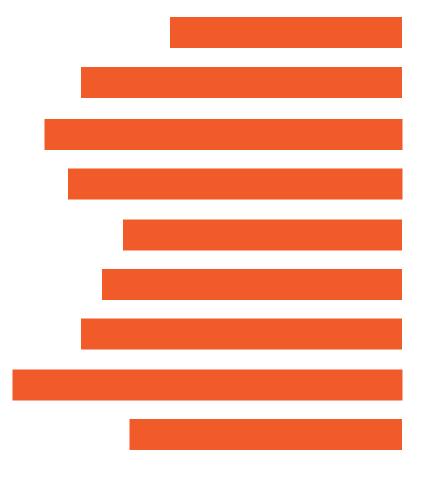
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Learn to Link.

# KRYWORD RESEARCH

Corv Collins

KEYWORD RESEARCH IS SEO 101 —
IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES VIA KEYWORD
RESEARCH THAT WILL DRIVE TRAFFIC TO
PAGES YOU'VE CREATED. THESE PAGES
REPRESENT SEO OPPORTUNITIES. IF YOU
CAN FURTHER OPTIMIZE THESE PAGES WITH
KEYWORDS AND SECURE A FEW GOOD
LINKS, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DRIVE
CONSIDERABLY MORE RELEVANT AND
QUALIFIED TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE —
AND MAKE MORE MONEY FROM SEARCH.



Keyword research is the process of discovering how people — your customers — discover the things they're looking for when they use search engines. By learning how your target market searches for what you're offering, you can better optimize your site to help them discover you. Your customers are already looking for you — give them a hand.

There are a variety of tools available that can help you with keyword research. In this four step tutorial, we'll look into finding SEO opportunities using the tool SEMrush. We'll explain all the steps of keyword research, from first entering the site URL into SEMrush, all the way through using filters to identify keyword opportunities. Let's jump in.

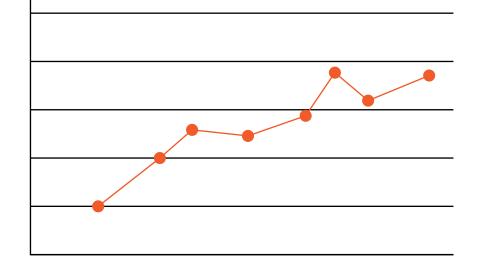


To get started, head into SEMrush's dashboard. In the left hand column, click overview. To the right, you should see a text box where you'll enter your domain URL.

After you enter your website's URL, you'll arrive at the dashboard. The dashboard will show a variety of relevant information about your website's performance in search. You'll see information about organic and paid traffic growth, top organic keywords, competitors, top paid keywords, backlinks, and more.

If you're just beginning your site assessment, take time in SEMrush to familiarize yourself with the performance and history of your website.





# STRP TWO





KEYWOR

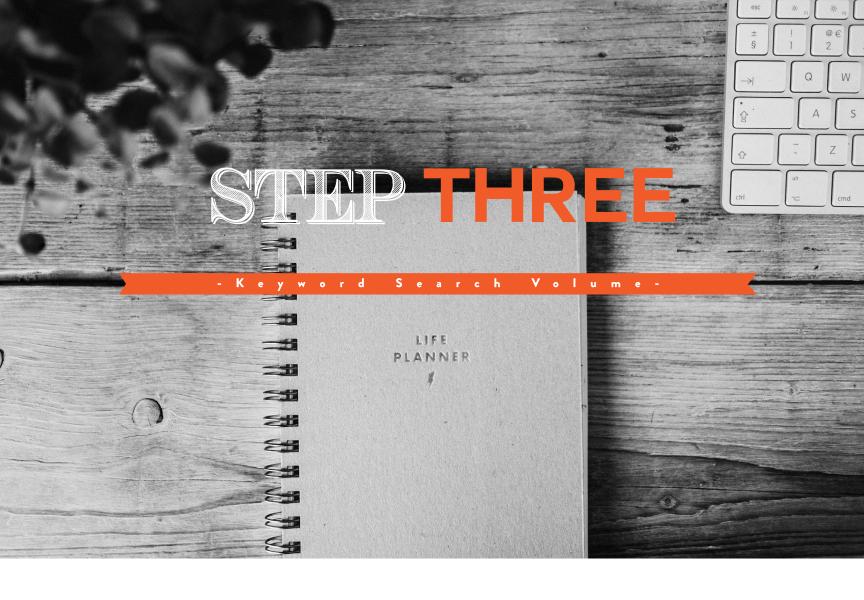
Now it's time to identify your top organic keywords. These are the keywords people use in search to find your site.

In the main SEMrush dashboard, click into the "Top Organic Keywords" dashboard — either by clicking in the general dashboard or by choosing "Organic Research" from the left menu navigation bar. This will take you into the positions tab of the Organic Research dashboard.

Here, you'll find a list of the keywords and phrases your website ranks for in search. SEMrush automatically filters these by the percentage of traffic the keyword accounts for — keywords that are driving the most traffic to your website appear at the top of the list.

Branded traffic — traffic generated by the brand name of your company — might make up a good portion of the top keywords. If your company already has a healthy reputation and great product, your audience will be seeking you out by brand.

You'll also find other search terms that you rank for in this list. A quick scan of the list will help you find out which product- or industry-related keywords your customers are using to find your website. Look for the highest volume keywords that your page is currently ranking for. If you're close to ranking on page one, these could represent huge traffic and revenue opportunities.



Step three begins with sorting your keyword list by volume. Volume represents the amount of times people search a given keyword each month.

In SEMrush, click the down arrow next to the word "Volume." This will sort the list by top-searched keywords in Google US, per month.

It's important to disregard the irrelevant or overly competitive keywords that show up in this list. While these keywords can present good opportunities for increased traffic to your website, don't forget your actual goal: revenue.

You want the people who arrive on your website to be searching for

what you have to offer. If you rank for overly competitive or irrelevant keywords, it can create a bad experience for users searching for those keywords, and it won't result in new sales for you. You'll have a much better result if you target search terms that match what you have to offer your customers.

This list might show that you currently rank for a variety of keywords that are broader than the ones you're already targeting on your site. These keywords represent SEO opportunity to improve your page rankings and traffic, and therefore the revenue of your website. It starts with recognizing the opportunity.

Using this list of organic search keywords, you'll find opportunities where you deserve to rank, but haven't quite reached the first page in the search results. These opportunities can lead to more search traffic, but to get that traffic, you'll need to invest in further keyword optimization.

# IT STARTS WITH RECOGNIZING OPPORTUNITY.





To complete your keyword research, you'll use advanced filters in order to find keywords that match a specific criteria — keywords that have high search volume with current rankings on page two or beyond. This process will help you discover keywords that have both tremendous search volume and that your site already ranks for.

At the top of the organic keyword list, you'll see a "Filter by keyword" search bar. Locate and click the "Advanced filters" link next to this search bar. Once the advanced filters appear, click the middle button "Keyword" and select "Pos.," which stands for position.

You'll want the first button to be "Include" and the third to be "Greater than." Go ahead and enter "7" into the textbox in the form — this will return keywords and pages where your website ranks lower than position seven. Now click "+Add one more." In this next filter, select "Pos." in the center button again and choose "Less than" for the third button. Enter "50" in the text box.

Using these filters, you'll ensure you're finding important keywords that your website is already ranking for, but not as well as it could.

As simple as that, you now have a list of the most opportune keywords for your website. If you can improve any of these pages using keyword optimization to rank on page one, there's a significant chance of increased traffic from

web searches that is directly relevant to your website.

While you're analyzing the results of your keyword research and finding opportunities, you'll also want to explore whether these ranking pages have the opportunity to further improve using targeted on-page SEO and proper internal link structure. You should also assess whether these pages could serve as a linkable asset that another website would be willing to link to. If any of these conditions are met, you've successfully found a page with SEO opportunities to improve rankings, traffic, and revenue.

# AS A WEBSITE ADDS MORE AND MORE CONTENT ON A PARTICULAR SUBJECT, THE AUDIENCE STARTS PAYING ATTENTION TO IT.

Do it at the right level for that particular community, and people will start remembering the brand.

# - BRUCECLAY

Bruce Clay, Inc.





LeadsCon March 5 - 7 | Las Vegas, NV

SMX West March 15 - 15 | San Jose, CA

Digital Summit May 22 - 23 | Atlanta, GA

IRCE June 5 - 8 | Chleage, IL



Pubcon November | Las Vegas, NV Internet Summit November 14 - 15 | Ralelgh, NC

Digital Summit December 4 - 5 Dallas, TX

## **SMX Shows**

We love the SMX shows. They're built from the ground up by search marketers. Search engine marketing is such a unique niche that it takes a special kind of show to cater to our industry's needs. SMX is a great place to network, learn, and remain on the cutting edge of all things search.



## MozCon

What can we say? It's Moz. If the Search Industry had a Sundance festival, this would be it. While not the biggest in the industry, it is certainly where you will find top brands, top speakers, and of course, the best swag. Yeah swag, who doesn't like free stuff?



## **Digital Summit Shows**

This is a favorite because its huge size and scope attracts a lot of businesses from every industry. If MozCon is the Sundance of our industry, Digital Summit is the Oscars my friends. Digital Summit is the perfect place to raise awareness of your brand while networking and bringing actionable leads from big brands around the world.





# RESEARCH OUTREACH LINK REPEAT











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