

Link Building Notes of a SEO Kindergartner

Link Building Opportunities

Where to look for links:

1. Social News / Media Sites
2. Online Media Sites such as New York Times, Boston.com, and About.com
3. University Sites
4. Government Sites
5. The Blogosphere
6. Professional Contacts (Satisfied Customers, Suppliers, Business Groups, Regulatory Bodies, similar sites operating in different geographic area)
7. Personal Contacts
8. Directories

How to get links:

1. Link bait content
2. High quality exclusive content
3. Missing content on other authority websites
4. Article submission / Article Exchange
5. Your own blogs
6. Widgets
7. Through PR firms and offline marketing
8. Contests
9. Ask for a link (Directly / Indirectly)
10. Micro sites / Buying sites for links
11. Restructuring your website to make it more link-sexy

Below I have listed the link building tips, that I found on SEOMoz, under each of the above categories.

Social News / Media Sites

* **Profile Sites** - All those "Web 2.0" sites that allow for the creation of profiles with links, from Frappr and Newsvine to MySpace and Yahoo! 360 to Digg, Del.icio.us and StumbleUpon are goldmines for links.

* **Be on of the first users of a given social network**, and make sure to mention or include your URL in either your username or your account profile. Frequently, new services will blog about

who joined them just after launch.

* **Yahoo Answers.** There are a lot of people that don't know much about my industry (and few competitors to use all these other great ideas on) and ask questions that pertain to my product. When relevant only, I include a link back to our site.

Drawbacks:

1. Not all the time to keep my validity on yahoo answer
2. There can't be any anchor text

* **Points to consider when submitting articles on social news sites**

- i) demographic of the social news site
- ii) content that would appeal to audience of that particular social news site
- iii) will the resulting links will be relevant to your business.

* **PMS Social Suite:**

http://promote-my-site.com/index.php/component?option=com_pmsdiggmgr

To help get a ton of relevant similar interests friends on Digg so when you submit to digg all those new friends will generate a ton of up votes from relevant friends.

* **This link building technique is best achieved using long tail keywords** (5 or more keywords combined).

The technique is to create a blog post or web page with a less optimized page title. Then submit a digg article with your target long tail keyword pointing to the newly created page or post. That's it!

Just be sure the target long tail keyword used for the title in digg is completely different from your page/post title on your domain.

It is only a 5 minute task but will rank your website at spot #1 in less than 24 hours (mostly within 12 hours).

* **Try getting into Wikipedia Page** in section for RESOURCES or similar. This help in getting some handy quick links. As number of websites copy the wikipedia pages and that results in links to your website are also copied. So you get number of links from just entering into one wiki page.

Online Media Sites such as New York Times, Boston.com, and About.com

* **Points to consider when dealing with Online Media Sites**

- i) what media sites provide coverage relevant to your business?
- ii) what can you do to earn a place in these magazines? (write an article that they would be interested in publishing.)

* **On popular news sites that allow comments** and try to be one of, if not, the first comment and mention a URL on your site that better explains your point or offers more insight. This works particularly well with politically focused stories. The only caveat is that you need a repository of relevant material to draw on. Also note - if your URL is long, you can use tinyurl.com for this purpose (which also creates a sense of mystery as to what you might be linking to). The

comments themselves are nofollowed (or don't even allow hyperlinking), but even just the printed URL will get plenty of copy-and-paste traffic from big sites.

University Sites

* **Who gets .edu links**

Those who are

- A) generous with their time,
- B) generous with their talent,
- C) generous with their money, or
- D) know a lot about an academic subject and are very good at writing about it.

* **When to do .edu link building efforts**

Growth in links from .edu and the .us K-12 education domains are most rapid during August and the late December/early January timeframes. It is the time that professors and teachers are getting ready to start a new semester, plus it is a time when they can easily work on their websites. If you recruit .edu links these are the most fertile seasons for your efforts.

* **Write an article about a Chapter or Topic in a popular college course**, then notify professors about it.

- atleast one visit for each student enrolled in the course
- if the professors page is ranking in the SERPs - then you will get lots of traffic.

* **Look for places on university sites where it is possible to get an honest to goodness endorsement** for your quality web site. Example: job sites can approach the career center department of schools and seek to get listed there.

* **Put up a job posting for university graduates** and let universities know about it. Universities usually have some kind of public job board

* **Edu links on the admissions page of the school site** - such as "local lodging" or "local restaurants" can be golden.

* **If a professors page is not well optimized and you have a link on it**, chat it up a bit with her or her webmaster and give some friendly pointers to help them rank better. But in future this very page can be competition to your content.

* **Early each year, go to all of the cool places before college students get there** for spring break and take lots of pics, post reviews and details and photos for the whole tour. You will get links from student pages.

* **Offer free help with design** and development of an .edu website.

* **Make a big donation** in the name of your biz to their scholarship fund.

* **Give free talks and training sessions** which will be useful to students. The announcement of your event could include a link to your website. Schedule several sessions in advance and that

will keep your page on their website and linked to.

* **Become an adjunct faculty member** or teach a non-credit in your area of specialty. Adjunct faculty usually can get a folder on the .edu domain.

* **Offer financial sponsorship** to community events organized by the universities.

* **Offer a few guest lectures.** The syllabus or lecture schedule might include a link to your site if it is relevant to the topic that you are lecturing on.

Government Sites

* **Determine if you have a match in terms of content** to the audience that the government site is trying to reach with a particular web page. Then figure out who to contact. But before that be sure to check out the linking policy of that site.

* **You see some nice info on a .gov site** or in a .gov publication that matches the theme of your website, think about writing a review and letting them know that you appreciate their work.

The email should contain the URL of the review and a positive note about their work. This usually does not generate a link but it frequently does - especially if they have a "News" or "PR" page on their website.

* **Look around at your city, county, state gov sites** to see if they have a small business section. Many of these sites will list local businesses (i know of one in particular in nyc). If yours doesn't, consider getting a PO Box or two in cities that do.

* **Search google for "sponsor list" site:.gov**

* **Join programs like Adopt-a-Highway.** It is good exposure anyway, plus if you play your cards right you could get a link or two. Think Press Release: "Information Superhighway Adopts Local Highway"

* **Offer to redesign the local mayor / county commissioner / etc. websites for free** (as long as you get a designed-by link or seven.)

* **Offer government websites, universities, schools etc free website re-design** as trial service and insert hidden back link to your website with desired anchor text.

The Blogosphere

* **Links through analytics**

Identify 20-30 influential bloggers who blog on similar topics as you do. Then link to their posts from your blog and make sure you send atleast 20-30 referral visitors from your blog to their blog. Eventually 5-10 of the bloggers will notice your blog in their referral logs and will either link you back or mention you on their blog.

* **I'll contact the webmasters of other sites**, and tell them that I used their sites and was so happy about it, that I have decided to add them on my links. 1 out of 4 times, they do the same back, because they are glad about the comments.

* **Participate in blogs related to the subject/website** and writing the url in an incomplete and non formal way

* **Take advantage of threaded comments** to get your comment in early, even though you're late. Other commenters who took their turn in line and left a comment at the bottom will appreciate you for it and link to you repeatedly, and with desirable anchor text.

* **Ask other prominent bloggers to respond to a question** and post a collection of responses.

* **Make a list of bloggers in your industry.** This one is a really simple way of linkbait. Everybody likes lists, so make a list of all the big and small blogs from the industry you're in. What happens is that they see your website in their referrers/backlinks/technorati stats. They visit the page and see the blogpost about the list of bloggers, make sure to also include the really small blogs who don't have much visitors. By doing that the small blogs are going to write a post about your list of blogs because they're in it. And a small blog can become a big blog later on! Also your list becomes a reference to people on the web on forums, blogs and other websites.

* **Interviews**, it makes people feel important.

* **Be the first to jump on a political controversy** with an irresistibly humorous comment or video and point it back to a blog post.

* **Controversy becomes viral, and spreads quickly.** The quicker you get your opinion online the more likely it is to become part of the "argument" and referenced when others talk about the subject.

The next time you read something a little controversial, a little light should go off that you need to go post about it NOW and let everyone know you posted about it.

* **Find an online community blog** (any of the -ists, mashable, etc.) and comment like crazy. Make sure your comments actually say something though, but become the number 1 commentor. It makes your name a presence and make sure your profile links to your site.

* **Track the buzz about your brand** (Google Alerts or, easier to manage, ahem) and comment when people mention you (whether they link or not). You build some great relationships, people love to get noticed and you often get links back from that post or the next one.

* **Find relevant Blogs that allow comments** with URLs (preferably with an <a href> tag) and give a valuable comment. One way to find these relevant posts is to see where your competition is being mentioned and get a "mention" yourself. Try this:

<http://technorati.com/search/http://www.yourcompetitionsite.com/>

* **I pick the top 50 bloggers in their space**, send them the client's product with a handwritten note from the client inviting them to review it.

Simple, old, I know. But it works. The A-listers review - the B-Z listers pick it up too. Instant snowball effect.

* **Build relationships with influential bloggers**

i) Identify the influential bloggers in your space.

ii) Focus on the more influential bloggers, other bloggers will follow their lead.

iii) Just remember, this starts by building a relationship.

Examples how to build relationship with a blogger

Example 1:

There is a prominent blog that I was salivating for a link from. Unfortunately, I couldn't locate a single shred of contact info...anywhere. Since the blog owner's name is published after each post, I Googled it and found him on LinkedIn. From there I invited him to join my network, telling him I was a big fan. (A fan of getting a link, that is! Shhhh!) It took roughly 2 weeks, but he finally obliged. After a few emails back and forth, he included my site within a related blog post. Mission accomplished! Even better is that I now have the ear (and personal email) of someone who is an icon within my industry. He's actually emailed me a few times requesting verification about data he was about to post!

Example 2:

Another time, I was tracking a blog and patiently waiting for my chance when the blog owner posted about basically "disliking" my entire industry (news/media). She felt very strongly that the news wasn't worth watching anymore because it all had a negative spin. Where most would see a lost cause, I immediately saw opportunity. My approach included contacting her regarding her thoughts and, for the most part, agreeing with her opinions. I then asked if she might have a look at our site and offer a review of how we could improve our coverage. I didn't ask her to post the review to her blog, but she did anyway (everyone needs fresh content). Once again, mission accomplished.

Professional Contacts

*** How to find potential link partners?**

Ask yourself following questions:

1. What regulatory bodies monitor your industry?
2. What business groups do you belong to?
3. Who refers business to you?
4. Who do you refer business to?
5. Do you know your regular clients or customers?
6. Who provides complementary services to you?
7. Who are the key manufacturers that you deal with?
8. Who are your key suppliers / subcontractors?
9. Do you know any contemporaries that you don't compete with because they are in a different geographical location?

*** For e-commerce sites:**

Add a small request at the end of the order confirmation emails asking the buyer for a link in case the buyer has a blog or he owns a website.

*** Let others publish your "testimonial" quote**

Whenever you make use of several vendors in an industry or have a depth of experience with

them, create a blog post, article or content page with a list of your "favorites" ranked in a particular order, then email each of the mentioned sites and tell them that they're welcome to use a "testimonial" quote you've written about them and also link to the "rankings" page. Companies love to link to anything ego-boosting.

* **Every time you send out a new customer email**, send a snippet of code they can paste into the "partners" section of their website that will display your logo and a link back to your site (this works particularly well for B2B companies who like to show off their "partnerships").

Personal Contacts

* **Friends and family** - Ask friends and family to link to you. These are the same people who'd recommend you at a party to their friends, so why not ask for the equivalent online.

* **How to find potential link partners?**

Ask yourself following questions:

1. Do any of your relatives and friends run businesses?
2. What professional groups do you belong to?
3. What local businesses do you have more than casual acquaintances with?
4. Are there any websites that you visit frequently as a contributor?
5. Are there any hobbies or activities that you excel in or are known for?
6. Do you belong to any community projects or do any charity work?
7. Do you have a web profile anywhere?

Directories

* **Sites from Citysearch & Yellow Pages** to Google Maps (though that link doesn't count) provide global, local links if you sign up with them, but in nearly every mid-large metropolitan area, there are literally hundreds of directories and lists of local companies in every possible category.

Try searches like `seattle inurl:directory` or `"new york" intitle:marketing intitle:firms`

* **To build general links:** Submit to rss directories and (if you have video content) TV channel websites. They drive some good traffic too. Don't forget to embed a link - with anchor text - within your video code ;)

Link bait content

* **Embed popular media with your brand** in hilariously irresistible ways - Rick Astley + your logo doing karaoke FTW! Check out Shoemoney's genius McLovin ID cards (<http://www.mclovinidmaker.com/>) as an example.

* **April's fools!** Make an announcement to the world that creates an immense buzz in the industry. The best thing is to cooperate with another big blog/site.

This will create one hell of a buzz in the online marketing industry and everyone is going to blog about it. That makes links. When you say it was a joke everyone is going to blog about it again, that makes more links.

*** If you see some linkbait hopping by, bite it!** The website will notice you're linking to them, the owner of that website/blog will then see your great content and will bite the linkbait in return.

*** Make a top 100 list of whatever interest you,** and encourage your visitors to add something to the list. People love to link to such things.

*** Use onlywire.com** when you have relevant and interesting link bait to get links on a bunch of bookmarking sites.

*** Linkbait : Pros and Cons**

It's great for:

- i) Inbound links (if you have an effective piece)
- ii) Search engine rankings (if you can achieve the aforementioned links)
- iii) Publicity (people will start to know who you are and remember your brand after seeing your site several times through social media)
- iv) Branding (growing awareness and a reputation)
- v) Getting the Attention of Influencers

Linkbait has limitations, though - it's no good for:

- i) ICTR-based ads
- ii) Conversions
- iii) Supportive, emotionally sensitive comments
- iv) Positive re-inforcement (in most cases)
- v) Instant subscribers

*** Brainstorming LinkBait: A Four Step Approach**

1. Write Down Everything

Don't censor or edit yourself during this phase; take down every idea.

2. Breakdown Your Ideas

Breakdown each idea (no censoring or editing yet) into its Concept and Content components. That is, what is the format (Concept) for the suggested LinkBait (tool, widget, top ten list, how to guide, blog post, etc.) versus what is the subject (Content) of the suggested LinkBait (Wii, iPod, PPC ads, pigs, celebrity weddings, etc.). Separate these into two lists.

3. Evaluate Content

Are there time-sensitive ideas?

Are there some that can wait for a relevant piece of news to complement them?

Are there ideas you'd really like to write about?

Are there ideas that can go into storage for a dry-spell?

4. Mix and Match

Now mix and match content with your Concept list. Example: Can it be interactive? Perhaps a tool or poll Concept would be effective. By marrying your priority Content to the most appropriate Concept, you can optimize the effectiveness, reach and novelty to your intended audience.

High quality exclusive content

* **To get links from competitors:** Be the first to create a resource for your industry that your competitors can't help but link to.

* **Create a Free informational resource** on your website e.g. PDF guide about your area or Free Informational Video. Then ask other people in your industry about reviewing this resource and if they find it interesting they will link to it.

Missing content on other authority websites

* **Visit authority sites in your theme** and decide what is missing from their content or missing from their collections of links to outside sites. Then build content that fills the gaps in their topic coverage and when its ready make a specific link request. Works almost every time.

* **Search for competitor pages resulting in 404 errors** that people are still linking to & notify the linking sites (with a mention of a replacement page from your site, of course).

* No longer available Pages

Do a search to find out pages that show "discontinued service" message on sites who offer similar goods, services or content as yours.

Then find to who is linking to these pages and contact them pointing out the dead links and request them to link to your page which offers the same service.

To find out "discontinued service" pages, you can use following searches -

For finding sites which no longer offer a service or have expired:

- "service no longer available"
- "service no longer available" [keyword]
- "service no longer available" inurl:.ac.uk (or inurl:.edu for all you foreigners)
- "no longer available [keyphrase]"
- "site no longer available"
- "site no longer available" [keyphrase]
- "site has been taken down"

- "site has been taken down" [keyphrase]

For finding sites which no longer sell a specific product:

- "no longer offer [keyword]"
- "no longer sell [keyword]"
- "stopped selling [keyword]"
- "stopped offering [keyword]"

Article Submission / Article Exchange

*** Collaborative articles**

1) We write an article about an industry related topic. For this example, let's say it's a site that sells baby products. We might write an article called "important baby care tips." The article has a couple of opening paragraphs and a closing paragraph. The Bulk of the article will be written by sites we wish to exchange links with, under a section headed as "Here are some tips and ideas to assist you in your baby-care needs:". To start things off, we also write the first tip. We then invite related sites to write a 50 (plus or minus) word tip that also links to their site however they want. After we get about 10 tips, we then start the process over again with a new article, or even have several articles covering multiple topics at the same time.

2) In exchange we write a completely original article and ask them to place it on their site. Of course, we give them the option of having a full article of their own (with no other outgoing links) on our site should they choose to write one up.

*** Advice on Article Syndication**

1. If you are a person who can write really good articles you should, first, put them exclusively on your own site.
2. After that you can write a very small number of very high quality articles and distribute them selectively to a small number of powerful sites. These articles should provide premium and complete information about a specific topic and make the reader drool to learn more. Then the article closes with an invitation to your site where The Complete Gospel on the same topic can be viewed for free or small fee.

*** Guest blogging**

Your own blogs

* **Place an "about the author" link** to your site on every single blog post you write (even on your own blog). This way, when the scrapers steal your work and post it on their own sites, they'll be linking back to you.

* **Go onto PRweb.com** if you have a blog find an article that is relevant to your blog. Then write a post related to that article on PRWeb. Get a free link on PRWeb.com by going to the bottom of the article and adding the trackback URL to your blog post and then you will get a trackback URL to your post if approved.

* **Upload pictures to your flickr** and use them in your blog post. Link to them in the photos description. Nearly 30% of my traffic comes from this. (note: the cooler the picture, the better)

Widgets

* Types of widgets

- Blog themes
- Lightbox scripts for products
- Develop a contact forms in exchange of a link for smaller websites (especially one that posts to a Google Spreadsheet or Google Calendar for subscriber / customer management).
- A mashup using Javascript and a Google Spreadsheet or Google Calendar API.
- Offer to integrate Google Checkout / Paypal for donations or purchases in return for a link
- Content syndication widgets which embed valuable content that others will want to put on their website.
- A free and unrestricted application that is designed to go viral. (applications that work better with multiple participants, or things that the user wants to show off.)
- Screen savers and Wallpapers
- RSS, W3C validation, powered by buttons.
- A free calculator that's related to your niche - technical calculations, total cost of ownership, energy efficiency saving\$, cost to construct, return on investment
- Shoutboxes

* Tips to make widget strategies successful

- Non-tech savvy people need to be understand the benefit.
- If it's code, it's gotta be easy to install.
- When marketing, search for businesses in the same industry as your client but outside their geographic area.
- Rotate the anchor text in your embedded links.
- Train your clients on how to find potential adopters of your widget.
- Create a wallpaper and screen saver with your company's brand and submit it to all the free wallpaper/screen saver galleries. The vast majority allow you to link back to your original source (or a profile site).
- Develop simple windows applications that relate to the niche you want links for and make them free to download from the site you are promoting - e.g. calculators, organizers, etc.

Then create a PAD (Portable Application Description) file and submit it to all the software download sites. This creates a fair amount of links, traffic from the download sites and sign ups to email lists.

Through PR firms and offline marketing

* **Stay engaged with your PR firm.** The more active you are in setting direction, the more value you will get. Have some ideas at the beginning of the engagement, and continue to feed them ideas throughout your engagement with them. You know your business better than they do, and they know media better than you do.

* **Massive media campaigns:**

Massive media campaigns are great ways to get lots of links, and major brands launch these things without even blinking an eye.

* **If you're a big brand launching websites** to go along with offline media campaigns, 301 that site back to a subfolder on your main domain.

* **When you do advertising, mostly those companies** have websites and also resources page or links page. Ask them for a link. They will not add it themselves, you have to ask. Believe me they will never say NO.

Contests

* **Start some contest for the best blog comments** and give away cards or a t-shirt.

* **Make a link contest.** Find something of value that you don't use anymore, and make it the prize for your link contest. everyone who links to you participate in the contest. And the site that has the highest rank in a link:yourdomain.com search is the winner.

* **Run a contest where you give away** a high value prize (iPod, etc.) where the contest rules are the following -

1. You must have a website on your own domain
2. You must write a useful content post on their own website (motivates the reader to write content for their site) which uses words "x", "y" and "z" where x, y and z are TITLE and keywords on a page you want links for.
3. They must link to your content page which you are trying to build links for.

Ask for a link (Directly / Indirectly)

* **Mentioned without a Link** - Identify sites/pages that already mention your brand/product/service/website but have failed to provide the direct HTML link. Just shoot them a pleasant, personal email and request the link - success rates can be very high.

* **Write a news article with some legitimacy and request a quote** from the company/individual you want a link from. Once they know you're writing about them, make sure to send them a copy of the press release or story once it hits and let them know they're welcome to copy portions of the article for their own site if they'd like to reference it (with a link of course).

* **Some big trusted sites have a "see us in the press"** - find out what they like linking to and write about them and let them know

* **Shoot a friendly email to a site you'd like a link from.** After obtaining their IP address from

the email, serve up a special version of your homepage (just to their IP address) that shows a homepage link to them or, (less shady) links to a story about them deeper in your site. Then ask them for a link or encourage them to link to the story.

*** Review products and/or services and be sure to include a logo or badge for the winner.** A classic example of this is an "editor's choice" award button.

*** Write an angry email to pages that do website reviews** (like reviews of dating sites). Write them that it is unfair that your site hasn't been reviewed yet and that you suspect that their review is a fake and the articles are paid.

*** Make use of the reciprocity concept.** If you do something good to somebody, they will feel inclined from the underbelly to do something back. Thus: put their link on your site first, and simply tell them you did so and would appreciate it if they returned the favor.

*** Make use of the commitment and consistency concept.** Start small, for example by asking them to mention the name of your site on a far-from-the-main-page blog. Mention then, how greatly you appreciate them writing about you. Maybe repeat the trick in a different way again, but remember to keep it amazingly small. After a couple requests, ask them bluntly to put your link on their site. Since people use their own behavior as a primary source of their own beliefs, and are sub-consciously motivated to be consistent, they are now much more likely to put up your link.

*** Make use of the social proof concept.** People view a behavior as correct in a given situation to the degree that we see others performing it. Tell them that Big Company X and Large Company X also put up your link, and ask them to do the same.

*** It's generally much easier to get in touch with someone when you're trying to help them** address a possible SEO issue (maybe it's just a 301 rewrite, a dead link, missing alt txt, etc...) and then getting a link after you've helped them identify something to improve the overall quality of their site.

Security Analyst -

- Identify your site
- Choose your favorite scanning tool (Retina seems to work well)
- Compile a report and send it over, POLITELY addressing their issues
- Make a suggestion for improvement
- Get them to add your badge of approval with a link back to your site

*** Steps of Link building through Emails**

1. Determine the value of the link

Some links are worth an incredible amount of time, money and effort.

a) If the site's pages are consistently ranking in the top 3-5 results for the target terms. 6-20 is also good enough.

b) Based on the value of the link decide time/money you should spend acquiring the link.

2. What kind of content you need to have on your site to get the link?

If the entity from which you are seeking a link from is a

a) directory or takes paid submissions, linking directly to several of your competitors' homepages - no special content considerations

b) a research or informational site - you need a resource that provides value to their readers. Oftentimes, a tool, multimedia piece or collection of data/research unavailable elsewhere.

c) a direct (or indirect) competitor or a commercial entity - a compelling piece of content may need to be accompanied by a reciprocal link

d) a government, non-profit or educational site - free content that looks and feels non-commercial

e) sometime all you need to get a link is money.

3. Establishing Contact

Establish a relationship, and oftentimes, the link will come to you without even asking - if it doesn't, that relationship is at least enough to separate you in the future from the morons who send email spam and those who send the one-off link request.

Example email of approach:

Dear folks behind website.com,

I have to say it - I'm a fan. I came to your site through Google (who doesn't, right?) and was immediately impressed with what you've built. I've recently joined the ranks of site owners in the ultra-soft cotton bedding world myself, so I've been looking around and researching who else is on the web.

I'm sure you're busy, but I was wondering if you had a minute for two short questions - #1 - For your article on Indian fabrics (URL), did you actually travel to India to buy those or do you have connections? and #2 - Have you found a good resource online on sewing silk? (NOTE: Obviously, you need to make the questions relevant to your industry, and the second should plant the seeds for a piece of content you plan to write and have them link to)

Much appreciate your time - I hope all's well in Kansas City (I'm out here in Seattle and it's pouring, as usual).

Best wishes,

John Such-and-Such

The rapport you've built through this contact should continue for at least one more back and forth before you go the link acquisition route.

4. The Link Request

a) Direct request, you literally ask if the party will link to your content. Works best if the site already links out to others in your space. You can also take the financial angle and ask if a paid link is available - many times the answer is yes.

b) Indirect method asks the site owner to merely look at your content, and possibly provide their feedback. Perfect for educational/resource focused sites that you think are a long shot. Remember that even if your request meets with no link, you can always refer back to the direct method afterwards, particularly the financial incentive.

The key is to have a connection between your link, their site, and the users who'll visit both.

*** How to Request Links From Picky Sites?**

You get a link from somebody by showing them:

1. who you are,
2. what you have that is relevant to linkers audience,
3. where he can find that relevant content, and
4. why your content is relevant to his visitors.

If you're going to put time into asking someone for a link, make it worth his time to read your request.

A real example email that got Michael Martinez's attention :

Dear Michael,

I am writing to introduce you to the new [organization], and we would greatly appreciate your assistance in kindly linking to our web site:

The enormous success of the recent Academy Award-winning film version of [author and book], has grossed more [a lot of money and sparked interest in the author].

[The author] has reached record highs. Indeed, his books sell at an astounding rate worldwide, and in his massive work, he very effectively championed [various causes].

The [organization] is an educational and cultural organization of people interested in events, publications, and other developments that advance deeper understanding of the life, works, and ideas of [the author] and others who address the enduring philosophical, cultural, historical, literary, theological, social, and economic issues of mankind.

Hence, as a reminder, we are very interested in the opportunity to work with you and others who might share our interest in the ideas of [the author], and with your superb work, we would greatly appreciate your assistance in linking to our new site. Visitors to our site will find a growing wealth of information on [the author] and other important writers, articles, interviews, upcoming events, etc., which we believe will be of value to people everywhere.

*** Perfect Example of How to Email a Blogger**

Rand,

I just wanted to write you and say that I have been an admirer of yours for about six months now, maybe more. I first got turned on to your web site for the tools. I soon started reading your blog and I was really impressed with your opinions and ideas. I now read your blog everyday and you have become a sort of role model for me in the SEO community over all the other well known SEO commentators out there.

Now a little bit about myself, I have been doing internet marketing since 2000, so about 6 years give or take. I don't spend very much time at all in forums or go to conferences so I never became known as a commentator. I did try my hand at writing several years ago and really liked it. I was actually out of the game for a few years but started freelancing again in 2004. I got hired by another company last year to do SEO full time so thats what I am doing now.

I recently created a new site called SEO Profile. I did all the design, programming and writing myself. I have been working on it for about 2 months and now I feel it is ready for people in the community to start looking at and judging it. It may seem remedial for some people but I created it out of a desire to educate webmasters and siteowners about the confusing world we deal with everyday in SEO.

I also want to talk about more advanced SEO and marketing principles but at the same time I don't want to cover the same thing everyone else is covering over and over again. I want to make myself stand out and talk about areas of Internet marketing that may not get as much attention.

Well, if you wouldn't mind looking at my site and giving me your opinions. I really like the redesign of your site. Hope you are having fun in New York right now. Thanks.

Jon

What does the email do right?

- * It shows that Jon knows who I am and that his intent is personal
- * It gives a relatively compelling background story
- * It doesn't outright ask for a link - but, it does request a review and input

*** Good Link Request E-Mail**

Hi, Nate here from the Veteran's Loan Center and I wanted to drop you a line and just compliment your site. Nice layout, good info, good resources. I was looking around at a few different sites for realty information and I definitely thought your's was one of the best.

That being said, I also noticed you guys have some great content related to homes. I currently work for a company that maintains a website that offers home financing, www.veteranloancenter.com. We are a nationally recognized, reliable source for VA loans on the web and I was wondering if you'd be interested in us paying to advertise via text links on your site. I realize that there are sometimes set rates/fees involved in such placement of text links so feel free to name your price.

If not, thanks for the time and keep up the good work!

Thanks,

Nate

Micro sites / Buying sites for links

* **Use a brand name that is the same as a much larger company.** The company I work for shares the same company name as a MUCH larger one and we're always getting link from 3rd parties thinking they are pointing to our much larger namesake.

* **Buy an exact match domain and get 100 crappy links** - you only need one or two to come off and Google will love you for it (for the time being at least) :) After a couple of months 301 the exact match to your main site.

* **1 - Create a new wholly owned LLC.** You may want to setup the company as a nominee company in a state that allows (such as Nevada or Wyoming) for legal and financial protection. Name it something like "[Industry] Professionals Association" (make sure the name isn't trademarked first).

Next, hand out "Certified [Keyword] Professional" badges to display on their homepage and link back to your site.

2 - The more legit you appear, the more effective this is. Ask a few prominent industry professionals to be part of the "certification" council that will "authorize" websites to be certified (you may need to pay them to use their name, but most will be honored to be asked and will do it for free). List them on a "board members" or bio page, with their photo and bio they wrote themselves. The double benefit of this is they will most likely include this in their resume, online profiles, and supply a link back from their website.

3 - Create a public relations strategy. Announce the new company. Announce the new website. Quote professionals in your industry. Get mentions in major papers. Get mentions on edu's and gov's. Start building major authority to the website.

When all is said and done, you have an extremely valuable tool to be used to influence your entire niche. That website can sway and influence many rankings for your other sites as well as your competitors (for good and bad, if you understand the interconnectedness of your industry you'll know what moves to make). Not only can you use it to create links to your site (since you're obviously in the directory you created), but you can also recommend, partner with, congratulate, or otherwise mention your other business through press releases and "news section" on the page.

Register a domain using the nominee's address and create a mini site for your new company on a host/IP that is not related to any of your other websites. Then create an micro-directory of "Certified Websites" for the site. The directory can be one page or many. Each listing can have their own hosted page, or not. The structure is entirely up to you. Obviously, link to your other site as one of the top listings. But also, to keep the appearance of legitimacy, list other competitors in the space.

*** Getting links for p*rn sites from quality sources must be a tedious task.** So I think what can be done is - make a list of keywords with double meanings forge animal names like pussy cat, instruments like sex-a-phone. No need to use word tracker here, just watch TV for a while and I am sure that you will find many nasty words that we use in our daily life conversation that have sloppy double meanings. Now make atleast 5 viral worthy websites while targeting these key phrases do conventional link building stuff. Now after 6 months of rigorous link building, you will have quite some websites linking to these animal, instruments, doctors, professor's etc. Now just 301 redirect these sites to the subject p*rn/boring site. (Here note that 301 may not carry the full effect if the content of the new page is not the same.)

Restructuring your website to make it more link-sexy

*** If you have content that people will link to naturally** then plant a seed in the mind of your visitors with a "link to us" button or banner.

*** Create this site has every thing feeling by adding links** to all the possible sections of the website on the homepage. This can increase your natural link acquisition rate, also increases the average "time-on-site" and page-views per visitor.

*** Have a code with our URL ready to be placed directly into the HTML,** in the "contact us" page

*** Create an area on my website that customers can update** (effectively a micro-site) and manage themselves. They can then tell their customers to visit their micro-site on my website.

*** Make a links page on your website, randomly rotate a bunch of links.** Make some iframes/redirect to one of the links on the links page. Then use a autohitter to visit that page for about 30 times, that way the website you link to has had 30 referrers from your website in it's stats. Then you upload a links page file without the redirects/frames. Make sure to mention that links randomly rotate and if you want a permanent position you have to link back and use some form to sign up. The owner of the website wants to know what your site is about and he sees the page you made. He doesn't mind getting some 30 extra visitors and signs up.

Make sure not to overdo it. You must be a small referrer to the site you're targetting, big enough for the owner to notice he's getting visitors from you and link back for more visitors. But small enough for the owner NOT to notice that after he links back no more visitors come to his site

*** One strategy to build links has been totally forgotten here.** The strategy to translate your site into other languages and then to get more links from the local directories etc.

Miscellaneous

*** Getting anchor text you want:**

Can be done by using proper naming conventions and providing articles and widgets to third party websites.

Naming Conventions:

1. Pick a good business name with important keywords in it.
2. Use URLs with critical keywords in them.
3. Using a keyword-rich title header on your home page.

Off Page:

1. Write articles for distribution to third party sites.
2. Distribute (highly relevant) widgets or tools in return for links
3. Promote articles through Social Bookmarking Networks

*** How to get a link when you can't buy it?**

1. It pays to know in advance whether your target is likely to accept \$\$ or not.
2. You can build exactly the type of content a site is already linking to with a new twist.
3. Send a handwritten letter with the right message.
4. Get on the phone and make a call. Make friends and build a relationship. Relationships with webmasters are more valuable than you might think - it often comes back to you in the form of business in the future.
5. In trying to get a link, we often send out sample product that can be used for photos for the persons site or even just for their personal enjoyment.
6. If you have a link from an authority page. Try to get the target website to link to that page. It's not as powerful as a direct link, but it does provide value.
7. If you've scored a great link from another high-profile site in the industry, and think you've got a shot of doing it again (especially for the nice non-profit, directory or edu sites), let the owner know you can do this. Sometimes the promise of a link from a highly respected competitor or colleague is exactly the incentive you need.
8. It's not always necessary to say - "I work for company X and I'm trying to buy/build links". Just tell them you're an aspiring writer in the field, a student or just a junky for this stuff and you're wondering if they'd be interested in having you write an article or column for them. Then let them know you've got a line on an interview with the CEO of a big firm in the industry. Do the interview (with your client), write up a great article, attach the link (as it clearly belongs there), and away you go.

*** Which types of links are devalued by Google?**

1. Sitewide Links - Links that point to a specific site from every (or many of the) page(s) on the

site.

2. Multiple Links to the Same Domain

3. Matching C-Block IP Address Links

* **Instead of buying links**, why not hire well-connected-veterans and experts in the field? They can tap into their network immediately and build links much faster!

* **Get a premium account on USFreeAds.com.** Again, you can use anchor text and you can post unlimited ads (they do have restrictions on posting the same item over-and-over though). You'll get search engine love in addition to click-thru love. I've seen my site jump from obscurity to prominence in a matter of days using this technique.

* **Same as above but use Backpage.com.**

* **Automate the generation of customer reviews**, SYLTs, and Listmanias on Amazon.com. Then put your URL (use spaces or whatever to get past the Amazon filter) in the post or reviewer name.

* **Get ideas on where to get links:** Pilfer your competitors history by performing a wildcard search on them (http://*sitename.com). This not only gives you their BL's but also where they're being mentioned and talked about.

About This Document

'Link Building Notes of a SEO Kindergartner' was prepared by [Pritam Barhate](#) for his [YOUmoz](#) article with the same title.

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