

Discover the Secrets of Link Popularity

By Patrick OBrien

Discover the Secrets of Link Popularity

Patrick OBrien
patrick@jpowered.com

Advanced Web Counter <http://www.trafficfile.com>

On the face of it Link Popularity would seem pretty straight forward. Simply get as many pages as possible to link to yours and you will achieve a High Link Popularity. For a long time I thought this to be true - however I was wrong.

The real truth behind link popularity is far more complex, but once understood, can be more powerful than page optimization.

So why do some search engines place such high weighting on link popularity ? This is best answered by Google themselves, they call it 'Page Rank' and here is a paragraph from their site,

"PageRank relies on the uniquely democratic nature of the web by using its vast link structure as an indicator of an individual page's value. In essence, Google interprets a link from page A to page B as a vote, by page A, for page B. But, Google looks at more than the sheer volume of votes, or links a page receives;

It also analyzes the page that casts the vote. Votes cast by pages that are themselves "important" weigh more heavily and help to make other pages important."

In essence this is saying that a high quality page linking to yours is worth far more than a link from a low quality page. Where quality is judged by that page's own Page Rank Score.

And there's another thing, where they talk about a link casting a vote for a page, it's not as simple as one link one vote. No, as I understand, it works like this,

Page A links only to Page B - then the value of the link will be Page A's own page rank score.

Page A links to both Page B and C - then the value of the link to page B will be Page A's score divided by 2.

i.e. The value of the vote is the linking page's score divided by the total number links on that page.

This is a very important point and tells you exactly why Free For All links pages (FFA's) are not worth bothering with. (An FFA is not going to have a very high score anyway and the small score will be shared amongst many).

Although all this is very valuable information it doesn't give us all the answers, in fact it raises more questions,

Is the content of the linking page important ?

Is there any benefit in linking back to pages that link to you ?

Is a Page Rank Score 'fixed' for a page, or does it vary depending on the search being conducted ?

Is Page Rank just calculated for an individual page or does a Site (domain) get assigned a Page Rank ?

What's the effect of linking to your own pages ?

and it goes on, the more you think about it the more questions come up. I have spent a long time looking for the answers to these and many other questions only to discover more questions.

Only by knowing the exact algorithms that each search engine uses will you be able to get the complete picture. These are a closely guarded secret - and even if you did get them, they tend to change every month anyway.

After all the research I have come to the following conclusion. Obtaining the exact formula isn't really that important anyway and could possibly leave you always playing catch-up.

If you discovered the formula used today then by the time you get your pages changed and indexed - the formula will have changed. No, it is far better to stick with the base principles on which the engines work and to understand what they are trying to encourage in the Web.

All search engines attempt to deliver the most relevant pages in response to a search phrase.

- Links to similar or related material are to be encouraged.
- Links to unrelated material are to be discouraged.
- Quality content is to be encouraged.

Now your linking strategy becomes much simpler,

- 1) Strive to get links from sites with similar or related material.
- 2) Link to other sites which contain similar or related material.
- 3) Create Quality content.
(over time people will link to quality content).

Link Popularity takes time to build, but keep these 3 rules in mind and rest assured your link popularity will grow.

All you need to do now is find those quality sites which will link to you. One of the best places to start is by looking at who is linking to your direct competition. We describe how on the following page,

http://www.trafficfile.com/internet_marketing/link_exchange.htm

Good Luck!

One last thing the full Google article on Page Rank can be found at,

<http://www.google.com/technology/>

Have a read it's good stuff.

This article may be re-published as long as the following is included at the end of the article and as long as you link to the URLs mentioned:

Article by Pat OBrien. Pat operates three of the most valuable sites on the Internet today,

<http://www.trafficfile.com> - Advanced Web Counter.

<http://www.jpowered.com> - Web Site Components

<http://www.graph-chart.com> - Advanced Graph and Chart Services

[Get-Articles.com](http://www.get-articles.com) : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)