

131 (Legitimate) Link Building Strategies . . .

By Robin Nobles

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Search Engine Workshops <http://www.searchengineworkshops.com/articles/leglinkpop.html>

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"The Definitive Source of Link Building Strategies
on the Internet"

Co-authored by Robin Nobles, Eric Ward, and John Alexander

In search engine optimization, "off page" factors have become more and more important as they relate to rankings. In particular, solid link popularity can literally make or break a site with the search engines.

Before we go any further, what is "link popularity"? In very simplistic terms, link popularity refers to the number and quality of the incoming links that are pointing to your site. These other sites consider your site important enough to link to. So, in the engine's view, your site is considered important as well. What is meant by "link popularity" can get much more complex, which is discussed further in this article.

However, one of the most difficult areas of SEO is building link popularity. Why? Because the engines don't want "artificially created" (or useless) links, so there are no easy ways to build link popularity. The days of link farms and huge link exchange programs are over. Try those strategies now and you can easily find yourself booted out of an engine.

Rather, the engines want links from authoritative sites, or links from sites that share the same focus as your site.

But besides the link popularity you gain by getting an authoritative site to link to you, you also gain additional visibility for your Web site. So, when working on building link popularity, don't forget those two basic reasons for requesting links.

The Purpose of this Article

Because building link popularity is one of the most difficult and time consuming aspects of search engine marketing, we decided to join forces with each other and with other search engine optimizers to create a list of legitimate ways you can build link popularity for your site.

When looking through this list, you may find strategies that are subject to abuse. If you use them as recommended in this article, you will have no problems. Abuse them, and you're treading in potentially dangerous waters.

Stephen Baker with Fast said one of the most memorable statements I've heard as it relates to what the engines like or don't like to see. He said:

"Our position is pretty straight forward...it's not the technique that we are concerned about, it's the intention."

So, always keep that statement in mind when you consider linking or any other strategies for your Web site. Analyze your intentions, and if you wouldn't mind an engine knowing what you're doing, your intentions are okay.

Now that we've gotten the preliminaries out of the way, let's get down to business: learning ways to increase the link popularity of our sites. To write this article, we went to professional search engine optimizers for their ideas. After each strategy, we briefly attributed it to the SEO who sent it to us, and then we provided a list of all contributors along with their companies and URL's at the end of the article.

Keep in mind that these strategies aren't in any particular order. Also, keep in mind that though it isn't always stated explicitly, we're always referring to "related" and "important" or "authoritative" sites as our targets.

Start with the Basics:

Before you begin link seeking, you might want to read the article, "A Linking-Campaign Primer":
<http://www.ericward.com/articles/primer.html> . (Eric Ward, President, NetPOST and URLwire) (<http://www.ericward.com>)

This is by far the oldest and best-known method of improving link popularity. Basically you e-mail or contact the Webmaster of a site that is complementary but generally not competitive to your own. You ask them to link to your site while outlining the benefits of doing so. You would generally offer to link back to them in exchange for this courtesy. Be sure you have developed genuine content on your Web site of interest to the trading

partner. Explain the advantages to them and to their visitors by providing a link to your content. Tell them where the link on your site will be or set the link up in advance with the stipulation that you'll be glad to leave it there if they'll add a link to you in kind. Take the time to look over their site and then suggest where a link to you might be appropriate. Most importantly, personalize your e-mails! You must distinguish yourself from all the spam they receive daily. If the link is particularly important to you, call them personally or write them a letter or send a fax to show them you're serious. (Brent Winters with First Place Software)(<http://www.webposition.com>)

(To view the rest of the article, which is over 12,000 words long, visit:

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you'd like to download the article in an ebook format, visit:

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Robin Nobles, Director of Training, Academy of Web Specialists, has trained several thousand people in her online search engine marketing (<http://www.academywebspecialists.com>) training programs. Visit the Academy's training site to learn more (<http://www.onlinewebtraining.com>). She also teaches 3-day hands-on search engine marketing workshops in locations across the globe with Search Engine Workshops (<http://www.searchengineworkshops.com>).

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