

Designing Your Outbound Links Pages - Directory For Link Popularity

By Billy Fullerton

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As the www grows at the astonishing rate that it does today, it is not surprising that the main Search Engines have begun to rank websites by the number and quality of links they have.

Achieving that front page ranking requires not only the ideal mix of Title, Meta Tags, Keywords and Content, but also a site that is deemed "popular" in the eyes of the search engines. Link popularity, i.e. the number of sites linking to your site, is an increasingly important factor as far as search engine placement is concerned the bigger the number of links to your site, the higher the ranking.

What is important is not only the number of links to your site, but also the types of sites linking to you. A link from a site related to yours, is more valuable than a link from an unrelated site, so stay within your related field. The quality of the sites that you link to are also of significance, the better the site the better the ranking.

In order to implement an effective link building strategy and gain link popularity a reciprocal links page/s has got to be developed within the site and a link to this from the index / home page should always be the first consideration.

It is equally important to divide these outbound links into subject relevance to remain on-topic with the subject that they concern. This can result in a large number of pages being developed for your website.

These pages should always remain part of the website and developed within to avoid dynamic or asp pages as these pages hinder more than help link popularity for two reasons:

- Not all Spiders can read them
- It is of no benefit to webmasters to give a reciprocal link if it can't be found easily.

Naming your links page or directory is a subject that is open to discussion at the present. It is important to try and distance yourself from appearing to have anything to do with link farms or programs. For that reason you should avoid calling your page or directory "links". To avoid the 'links' word there is nothing wrong with using your imagination when it comes to placing the terminology within your navigation for this, failing that the "site title" directory will be fine.

The links directory / pages, these should never exceed two clicks to get the information, any more and the spiders pay less attention. So in order to get the full benefit from link popularity keep it simple, domain.com / directory index / links.

When this is clicked you should then be presented with a main links topic / subject index , again for ease of navigation. A second click will bring the exact information that is required and this will benefit you, your readers and the search engines.

These pages should always contain some content which covers the subject that the links apply to, and the links should be broken down further and categorized under specific headings, in doing this they appear as information pages rather than just a 'links' page.

The most important thing is to keep it simple for everyone and treat your links directory as part of the sites information structure.

Billy Fullerton is the author of the new book, Link Popularity Made Easy which is due to be Published in the New Year,. Billy is the Link Strategy Manager with Summit Media, a UK based customer Internet Solutions company and consulting firm, <http://www.summitmedia.co.uk> He can be reached at <mailto:bfullerton@summitmedia.co.uk>

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