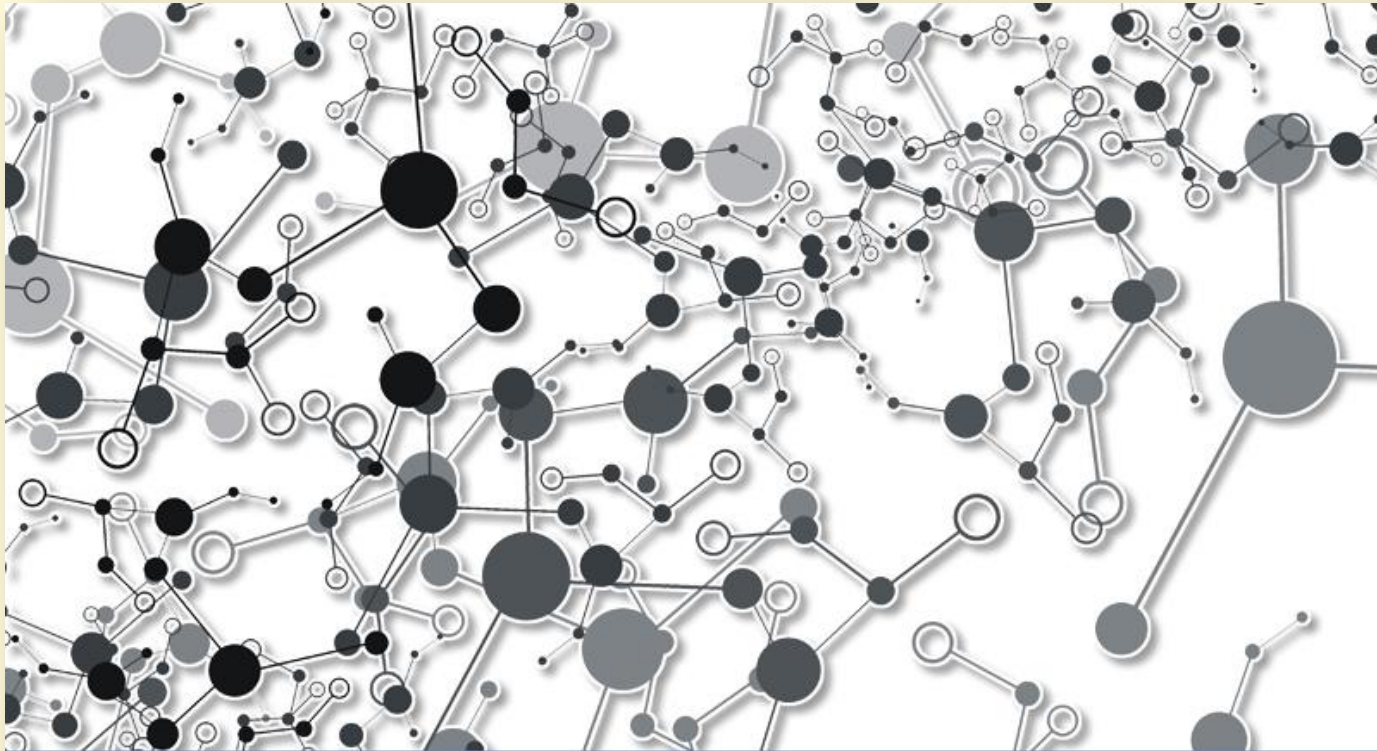# Link building Fundamentals

TOP RANKED!
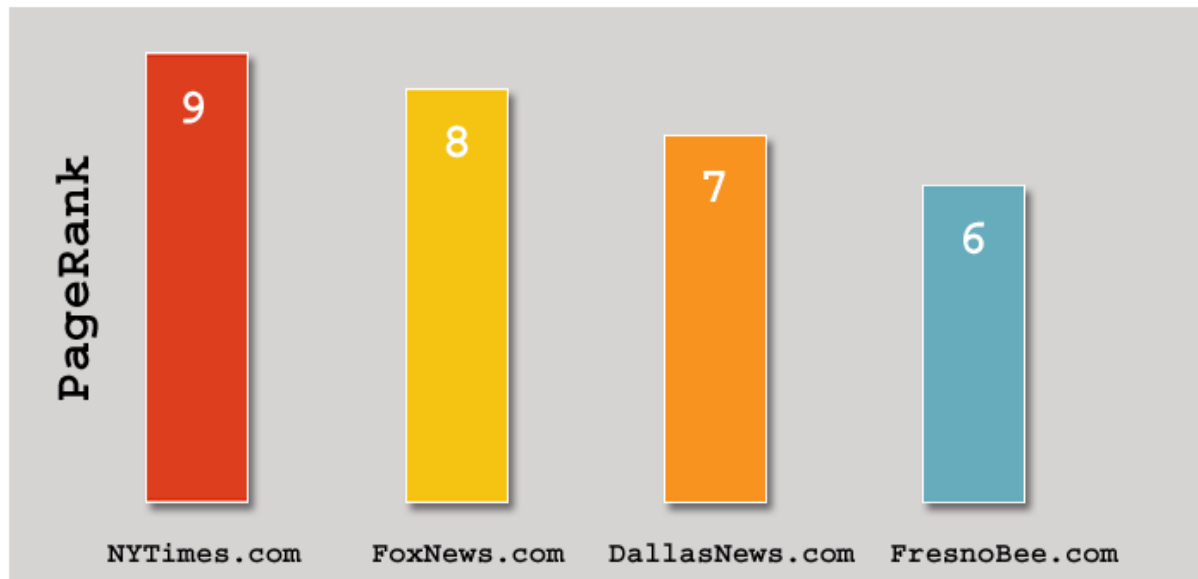

The Internet consists of web pages interconnected by links.

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PageRank

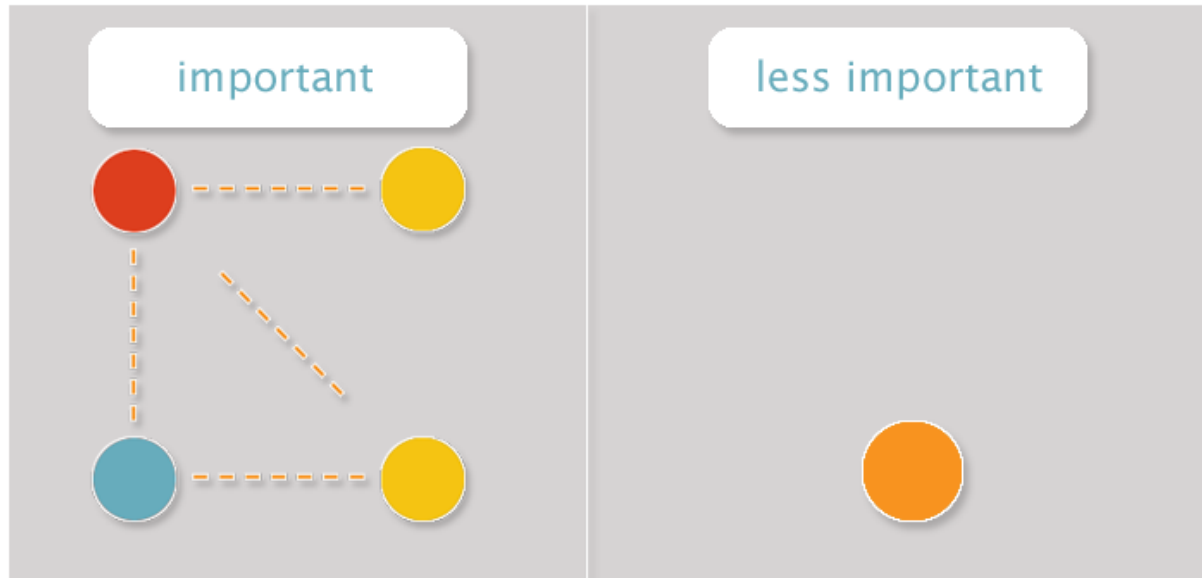|			
9			
	8		
		7	
			6
NYTimes.com	FoxNews.com	DallasNews.com	FresnoBee.com

The number of links to a site is a measure of its importance.

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important | less important

Lack of links is viewed as a sign of less importance.

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search engines use links to determine:

search engines use links to determine:

1 | importance

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Link building Fundamentals

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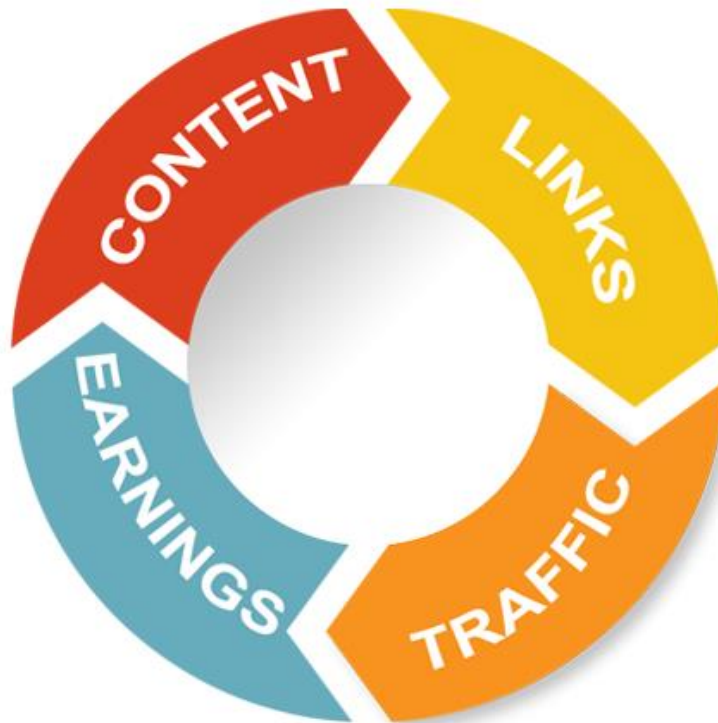## search engines use links to determine:

1 importance

2 relevance

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Link building Fundamentals TOP RANKED!

CONTENT · LINKS · TRAFFIC · EARNINGS

Links are essential.

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Definition of Web Spam

"Web spamming refers to actions intended to mislead search engines and give some pages higher ranking than they deserve."

"*Web spam taxonomy*" by Zoltan Gyöngyi, PhD (Research Scientist at Google) and Hector Garcia-Molina (Professor of Computer Science, Stanford)

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Definition of SEO

"...make it easier for search engines to crawl, index and understand your content... you should base your optimization decisions first and foremost on what's best for the visitors of your site."

Google Search Engine Optimization Guide

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1. Businesses want as much traffic as possible.

2. Search engines want to answer questions.

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Link building Fundamentals TOP RANKED!

Q: How do we reconcile business needs with Google's goals?

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Q: How do we reconcile business needs with Google's goals?

A: Bend with the wind. Align with Google's goals.

Link building Fundamentals

TOP RANKED!

1. link strategy overview
2. don't try this at home
3. algorithm overview
4. penalty bait
5. success factors

Link building fundamentals

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Part 1. Link Building Overview

Content Marketing

a. Content creation for the purpose of cultivating traffic.
- Similar to link bait
- Suitable for social media promotion
- Can support with a link outreach campaign

b. Can also refer to Guest Posting on other sites with a link in the footer

Caveat: Guest posting, particularly with links embedded in content or keyword optimized anchor text can cause an unnatural links warning from Google Webmaster Tools (GWT).

Caveat: Publishing articles on sites that publish articles from spammy sites may cause those links to trigger an unnatural links warning.

Caveat: Google has penalized sites that matched publishers with guest article publishers.

Part 1. Link Building Overview

Link Bait

A document published on your site that inspires link because it stimulates emotional triggers (humor, outrage, etc.) or is useful (infographic, free download, tool).

Infographics

An illustration. Typically a dry set of statistics or scientific studies published on a government or educational website are illustrated in a witty and/or useful manner that makes the dry material more accessible. A subset of link bait.

Tip: Contact all influencers with which you have cultivated a positive relationship with. Not just influencers with blogs, but also those who are active in social media as well.

Tip: A press release can be useful

Tip: Infographics tied to special events or holidays can have an extra bit of link attraction

Part 1. Link Building Overview

Resource Link Campaign (aka Link Beg Campaign)

A technique for finding sites that list sites like yours then asking them to link to you.

Tip: Contact a person, not webmaster@

Tip: Use the contact's name

Tip: Include a brief statement (one sentence) that demonstrates your authority (winner of awards etc.)

Tip: Include a URL that is most likely to be suitable (not always your "money" page)

Typical searches:
Links + name of your niche site:.org (.edu/.gov/.etc)
Links + name of a competitor + site:.org (.edu/.gov/.etc)

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Part 1. Link Building Overview

Consider creating a blog

- Flexibility as to what can be published
- Puts awareness of your store in the minds of those likely to make a purchase
- When people need your product they will remember your site name
- A useful blog builds trust with potential clients
- Links!

Become the site you want a link from

- Want links from an influential blog? Be one.
- Want links from a community of enthusiasts, pros and hobbyists? Create your own community.

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Part 1. Link Building Overview

Top Link Building Suggestions

1. Conservative outreach
Think about ways to make your site worthy of a link, such as resources, *relevant articles, product sections, reviews, tests, photos, community

2. Build awareness
Outreach to tell others can be fine. But be aware of caveats in Part 2.
Awareness building doesn't necessarily mean obtaining do-follow links

3. Seek authority: you are defined by the links you obtain
Contact industry associations and organizations to suggest a link to your resources or participation in their newsletters, blogs, and magazines (both online/offline, with or without a hyperlink, regardless if do-follow or no-follow).

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Part 2. Don't try this at home

1. Reciprocal links

2. Directories

3. Paid Links

4. Secret/boutique/exclusive paid link arrangements

- Honeypots (Hosting copied content from other sites then inviting links)
- Link wheels (attempting to piggyback link equity from sites like Squidoo to link back to target sites)
- Comment spam (embedding links within comments on blog posts)
- Forum spam (dropping links within forum posts or on member profile pages)
- "Powered By" links (from tools, Wordpress widgets, templates, etc.)

Part 3. Algorithm overview

PageRank

Building on previous research, PageRank explored:

a. How links can describe what a page is about
b. That outbound links can help describe what a page is about
c. How anchor text is useful for identifying the web page most relevant to a search query
d. Involves assigning a score, with a high score denoting importance

Read:
The Anatomy of a Large-Scale Hypertextual Web Search Engine
Authors: Sergey Brin and Lawrence Page
http://ilpubs.stanford.edu:8090/361/1/1998-8.pdf

Part 3. Algorithm overview

Link Graph Analysis

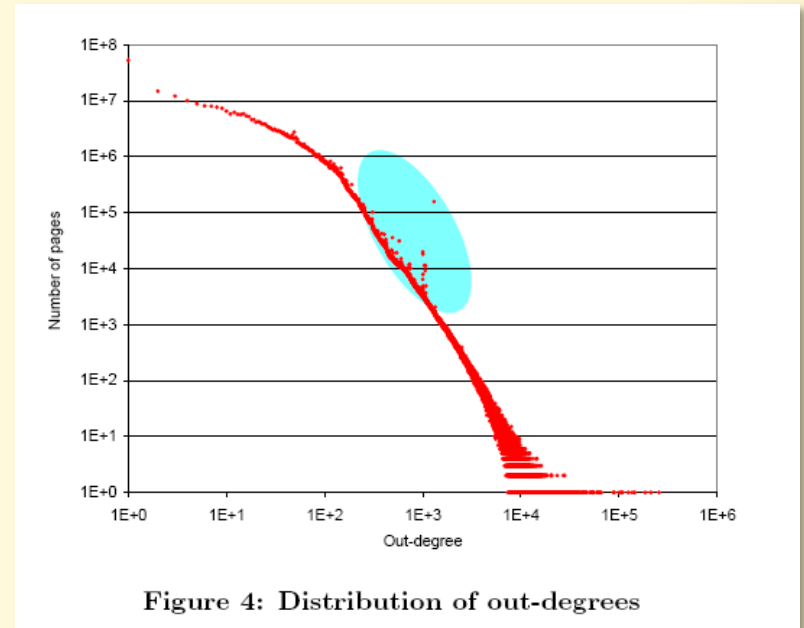Using features related to links, Link Graph Analysis can create a statistical report that discovers websites likely to be spam.

Read:

Spam, Damn Spam, and Statistics
Using statistical analysis to locate spam web pages
http://research.microsoft.com/pubs/59848/webdb2004.pdf

Figure 4: Distribution of out-degrees

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Part 3. Algorithm overview

Penguin (and Panda)

Penguin is Google's algorithm for off-page signals (the link signal).
- Many claims as to what Penguin is

- Panda examines on-page factors. Presumably this cleans the Link Signal by identifying spam sites, thus removing or diminishing their link influence.

- Penguin rollout coincided with unnatural links warnings associated with:
a. Keyword optimized anchor text
b. Keyword optimized anchor text in the context of guest articles
c. Links that are in some way under the control of the business that is benefiting from those links
d. Links that originate on poor quality sites

Part 4. Penalty bait

Statistical patterns that may cause penalties

- Manipulative anchor text
- Interlinking between sites under your control
- Excessive guest articles (*see note below*)
- Acquiring links from sites that link to low quality sites
- Acquiring links from sites that engage in link spam
- Acquiring a preponderance of links from the same kind of sources (directories, charity donations, press releases, interviews, news links)

Read:

The decay and fall of guest blogging for SEO by Matt Cutts
https://www.mattcutts.com/blog/guest-blogging/

Part 5. Success factors

1. Cultivate the circumstances that lead to links

a. Focus on site visitors

b. Focused User Interface

c. Appropriate style & design for site visitors (font size, download speed, devices)

d. Offer information, experience, functionality and most importantly the USEFULNESS that site visitors crave

e. Distinguish your site from other sites. In your link building outreach make that the selling point and reason why others should link to you

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Part 5. Success factors
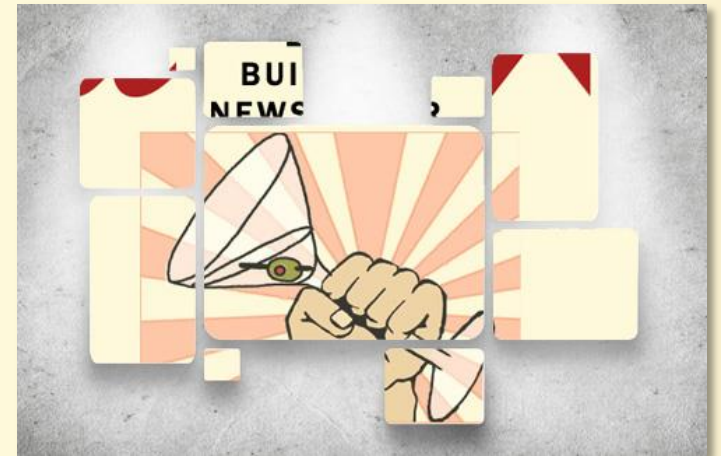
2. Cultivate authority

- Everyone links to authority

- Publish articles on authoritative websites.
Interview authoritative personalities

- Cultivate relationships with online influencers,
reporters, consultants and personalities

Part 5. Success factors

HARO (Help a Reporter Out)

- **Warning:** Never do an anonymous HARO
- **Warning:** Do not make HARO cornerstone of link building. It's a supplement
- **Warning:** Do not request anchor text

a. Research author prior to answering a HARO request
- search author + name of online periodical

b. Review previously published articles (look for signs of spam)

c. If articles pass review then answer the HARO request
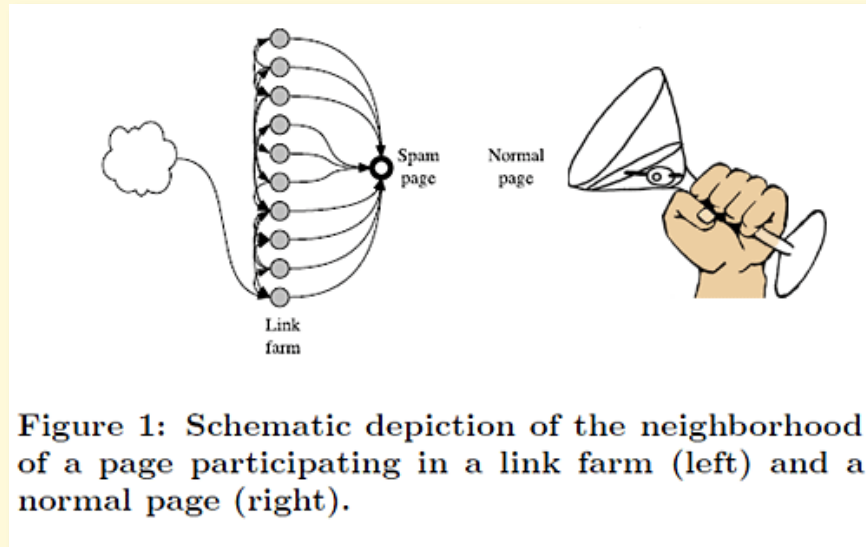
d. Goal is the *occasional* high quality project

Q: What is Link Building?

Figure 1: Schematic depiction of the neighborhood of a page participating in a link farm (left) and a normal page (right).

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Q: What is Link Building?

A: Create something useful and tell others about it.
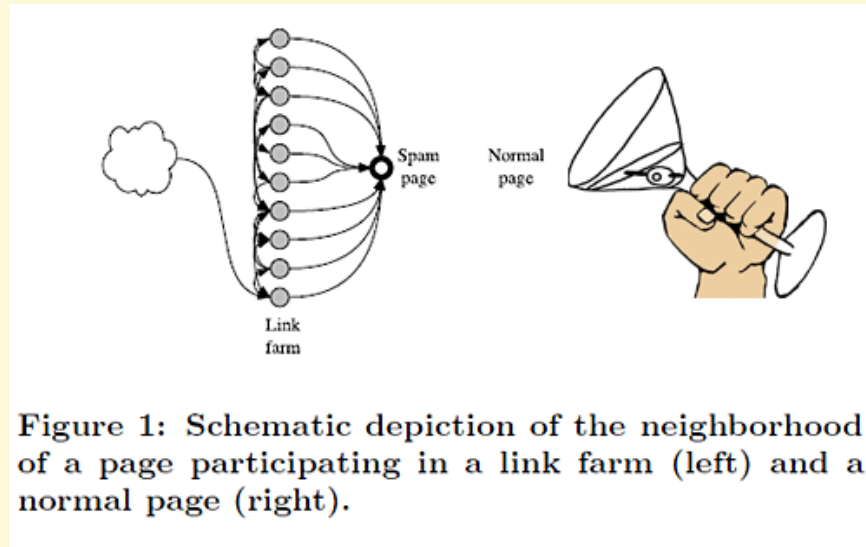
Figure 1: Schematic depiction of the neighborhood of a page participating in a link farm (left) and a normal page (right).

Link building Fundamentals
TOP RANKED!

Roger Montti

- independent consultant & web publisher
- moderator at webmasterworld.com
- BusinessWeek Best of the Web Award
- publishes a link building newsletter

Link building fundamentals

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