2 Ways the Wrong Off-site Search Engine Optimization Advice Can Kill Your Rankings

By: Rosemarie Makhmaltchi

If you run a website or blog, you’ve probably heard about search engine optimization (SEO) and how great it is for getting your site to the top of search results. However, there’s a dark side to SEO. Costly mistakes by discount SEO firms can absolutely demolish your rankings.

Here are just two ways bad SEO advice can hurt your site:

Getting Too Many In-bound Links Too Quickly

The search engines decide how to rank your site for a user’s search by accessing a version of your site stored on the search engine’s server. Every so often, the search engines “crawl” or “spider” your site or blog, and save your site’s newest version on their servers instead. However, the search engines also compare the stats of both versions at that time, to determine the relevancy of your site. One of the stats a search engine may examine is your in-bound links.

In-bound links are the one-way links pointing to your site from other web pages. For example, if www.CoolBlog.com links to your site, that is an in-bound link. Some search engines use the presence of in-bound links to determine the usefulness and relevancy of your site’s content. In general, it’s best to have as many in-bound links as possible. Unfortunately, this fact has led to tons of spammy links being slapped up all over the Internet in an attempt to raise the rankings of low-quality websites.

The people that manage popular search engines are aware of link spam and do what they can to combat it. So, when a search engine compares in-bound links to your site across multiple versions of your site, it closely examines those links for suspicious activity.

One sign of link spam is a huge increase in the number of in-bound links to a relatively new site, or to a slightly established site in a very short period of time. It may seem tempting to buy a 14,000 link bundle for your brand new blog, but if the search engines see all those in-bound links to your young blog, your site could suffer terribly. I’ve seen blogs go from page 1 to page 10 in the search engines in one week because of this mistake.

Getting Links from Low Quality or Irrelevant Sites

Some so-called professionals who dish out incorrect off-site search engine optimization advice claim you can get higher search engine rankings by getting in-bound links from absolutely any website. That’s not true. As a matter of fact, some sites can actually hurt your rankings if they link to you.

Low-quality websites, such as spammy link directories, can be detrimental to your site’s rankings. If such a site links to yours, the search engines may suspect you of link spamming. They may also suspect you of running a spam site. Your site’s rankings may drop significantly.

Getting in-bound links from irrelevant sites can be just as harmful. The search engines look at the subject matter being discussed on sites that link to you as a way to judge your site’s relevancy to search queries.

So, if your blog or site is about dog training, but most of your links are from sites that talk about other subjects, the search engines may think your site is useless to people who are interested in dog training. After all, if your dog training site was so great, other sites about dog training would link to it as a reference, wouldn’t they? That’s how the search engines see it.

As you can see, the wrong search engine optimization advice can devastate your site’s search rankings. There’s nothing wrong with purchasing inexpensive SEO services, but when you do, take caution. Follow the tips in this article, and hopefully you’ll avoid making a mistake that can take months of hard work to fix.