Link Building for SEO: Scaling Your Backlink Strategy

Why is link building important for SEO?

Google cares about how interesting other people think your content is.

Google measures primarily through backlinks.

What are backlinks?

A signal to Google that your site is a high-quality resource that people want to reference

Backlink quantity and quality are essential

More backlinks + higher quality backlinks = higher ranking in search

“In general, webmasters can improve the rank of their sites by increasing the number of high-quality sites that link to their pages.”

-Google support

What is link building?

The process of manually encouraging people to link to your website from theirs

Getting other websites to link to your website has been getting more and more difficult.

It’s important to proactively build links.

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17 Blogging Mistakes to Avoid in 2021, According to HubSpot Bloggers

Written by Lindsay Kolowich Cox @lkolow

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Sometimes, when I tell people that I blog for a living, they roll their eyes. "That's so easy," they say. "You get a paycheck for sitting on the internet all day and writing. A monkey could do your job!"

That's when *I* roll my eyes. See, people are quick to deem blogging as a no-brainer job. But when they actually sit down to write their first couple of posts, it hits them: *This is way harder than I thought.* Like any person starting a new job, they mess things up.

That's okay -- it happens to pretty much every new blogger. Luckily, it's pretty easy to avoid these roadblocks if you know they're coming.

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So for all of you beginner bloggers out there who are looking to get up-to-speed quickly, keep on reading. Below are common mistakes most beginners make and some tips on how to avoid them.

What Is a Blog?

Informational content

People are more likely to organically link to informational content like blog posts.

Product pages

It's far less natural for people to link to something like a product page.

The key to effective link building is to complement creating great content with manually building links.

How many links does your content need to rank on page one?

How many links does it take to rank high in search results?

To rank highly, you need as many links as other ranked results.

How many links does this web page have?

Here is an example of a link-checking tool.

Moz Link Explorer tells you how many root domains (websites) link to that URL.

How to calculate a baseline target for how many links you'll need:

1. Choose a broad topic that you want to be known for.
2. Plug that topic into Google and run a search.
3. Run the URLs for the top 10 results through a link-checking tool.
4. Calculate the average number of root domains linking to these sites.

Let’s calculate the average number of root domains.

# in Search Results	URL	How many root domains link to this URL?
1	https://www.muscleands	74
2	https://www.muscleandf	5
3	https://www.muscleandf	4
4	https://www.mensfitness	60
5	https://www.nerdfitness.	87
6	https://www.fitnessmag	24
7	https://www.muscleforlif	5
8	https://www.bodybuildi	22
9	https://www.bodybuildi	2
10	https://www.self.com/st	17

How do I identify which piece of content should contain all those links?

What are the common themes and elements in ranked pages?

# in Search Results	URL
1	https://www.muscleands
2	https://www.muscleandf
3	https://www.muscleandf
4	https://www.mensfitness
5	https://www.nerdfitness.
6	https://www.fitnessmag
7	https://www.muscleforlif
8	https://www.bodybuildi
9	https://www.bodybuildi
10	https://www.self.com/st

Don’t try to be different.

Do not try to stand out in search by creating a piece of content that’s really different and unique.

Ask yourself:

Does your website already have a piece of content that contains those common themes and elements?

If not, your first step will be to create a new piece of content that has a similar structure and feel to the results on page one.

Why relationships are the key to link building at scale

How do I scale my link building efforts?

Relationships have everything to do with building links.

Link building is about carefully and tactfully building meaningful relationships with the right people who can and want to link to your website.

Link building tactic rewards versus resources required

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All tactics require you to build a relationship in order to work.

HubSpot Academy

The only way to scale low-risk, low-reward link building tactics is by building lasting relationships.

Journalists

Freelance journalists are great resources for link building.

Relationship building should always start with you delivering value to the person you want a link from.

Here’s an example of initiating a symbiotic relationship.

YOU:

Hi there! I’m a long-time admirer of your blog. Are you looking for content on a certain topic that I can write a guest post for you on?

THEM:

Sure! I’m always looking for great content. Could you write a guest post on this specific topic for me?

How are you currently doing relationship-building?

- What relationships does your organization already have with journalists, bloggers, influencers, and others who might link to your site?
- Whom do you wish your organization had a relationship with?
- What value can you offer them to initiate a relationship?

How to scale link building using press request alerts

Working with big publications and influencers can offer high-quality links and help you reach new audiences.

Here is an example of a press request alert.

Media outlet: **Metro** (Review products)
Media outlet website: www.metro.co.uk
Freelance journalist: [redacted]
Media type: National newspaper / Current affairs
Deadline for leads: [redacted]

Enquiry Short Summary
Affordable Luxury

Query
Hi,

I'm doing a buying guide on affordable luxury - if you have any products that fit the bill please send over a pic and description!

Also, any interior designers or experts happy to talk about it too, I have space for a 'Masterclass' sidebox.

Thanks, [redacted]

How To Reply
Email: [redacted]
Twitter: [redacted]

Press request alerts

Requests that journalists send out asking for sources of information (like quotes on a certain topic from an industry expert)

Respond quickly and specifically to press request alerts.

If you …

- Respond quickly enough
- Give the journalist exactly the information they want

… then you could get a backlink from a high-quality publication.

Here is a list of press request alert services:

Free services:

- HARO
- Source Bottle
- NARO PR
- #JournoRequest / #PRrequest (Twitter hashtags used by journalists)

Paid services:

- Muck Rack
- Gorkana

You'll receive lots of requests

Prepare to get hundreds of requests every day.

Pro Tip:

Use your email client's filters to surface the requests that have specific keywords and phrases that are relevant to you.

Here is how to respond effectively to press request alerts:

1. Sign up for one press request alert service only to start.
2. Browse these requests without responding for 1–2 weeks.
3. Make a list of thought leaders in your organization who might offer quotes on relevant topics.
4. Email them asking for quotes across those topics.

Here is an example of an effective press request alert response.

Subject: HARO **{{Insert the subject that the reporter has asked you to comment on}}**

Body: Hi **{{First Name}}**,

My name is **{{Your name}}**, **{{Your job title and company, linked to your company website}}**. Here are my answers to your questions:

- One or two sentences [max] with a comment related directly to the reporter's question.
- One or two sentences [max] with a comment related directly to the reporter's question.
- One or two sentences [max] with a comment related directly to the reporter's question.
- One or two sentences [max] with a comment related directly to the reporter's question.

Let me know if you need anything else.

{{Signature}}

Press request alerts are great for getting quality backlinks from high-authority websites.

It’s also a great way to start building relationships with journalists.