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Controversy Lends a Helping Hand to Search Engine Optimization

It is always wonderful to hear good news. Hearing good news makes us feel good about ourselves, the people around, our dog... heck the world is a better place when we have good news.

Good news might make us feel good about ourselves and the world but there is something deliciously appealing about bad news, especially if it is about someone other then ourselves.

Bad news makes good news copy. Celebrities know that. I once watched an interview with a well known, highly controversial, singer/songwriter, and performer. The newspapers are always full of articles and stories about his exploits (he and I share the same home state so I think the papers I read have probably double what papers in the rest of the country print). The interviewer asked this singer about one of his recent escapades. The singer kind of chuckled and shyly admitted that while the episode had happened it had been blown out of proportion. When the interviewer asked why the singer did nothing to correct the allegations the singer bluntly replied...money. Each time someone accused him of doing something awful kids started to rush to the stores to buy his CD's, partly because his name was being splashed all over the airwaves and was fresh in their minds when the perused the music department, but also partly because their parents were trying to ban his music from the house. When he was on his best behavior he didn't get any media attention and his record sales plummeted. So, since the singer is anything but stupid and he has a deep appreciation for the things money can buy, he goes a little bit out of his way to perpetuate his bad boy image.

Bloggers are another group of people who understand how swiftly controversy spreads. They know that if they write about something that is controversial there will be a flood of readers reading their bogs and leaving feed back. Before you know it a dialogue has started, sometimes it isn't a peaceful dialogue but it's a dialogue just the same.

The same thing can be true about websites and search engine optimization. Search engine optimization is the art and science of making a web site appealing to search engines. Search engines determine the attractiveness of a website by sending out web crawlers that look for algorithms placed throughout the website. The more algorithms a website has the higher it gets ranked during a search.

A second thing several search engines look for is something called link analysis. Web crawlers look for how many links lead back to the website. The more links leading back to a website the higher that website will rank.

Controversy is a way to get a lot of links to your website fast. For example a breeder of Ball-headed pythons went to an exotic pet show to purchase some more snakes for his store. While he was at the show the police stormed the pet show, using excessive force to remove several of the exhibitors. You snapped several graphic pictures of the event, photos you later post on your website where you sell the snakes you breed. Others see the controversial photos posted on your site, they tell their friends and customers. To simplify things the owner of the second pet store posts a link on his site that attaches directly to yours. As more and more people hear about your photos, more and more links to your site are created. The next thing you know you are ranked on the very first page of the search engines hits.

In addition tot the boost in your ranking you have also sold nearly all of your saleable snakes. Controversy really does sell.