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## 10 Mistakes To Avoid When Setting Up A Link Directory

By Tony Simpson

When adding a link directory to a web site there are a few important guidelines to observe. Ignore them and it could affect your ability to build traffic through reciprocal links and ranking with the search engines. I know, because I made some of these mistakes and didn't have anyone to offer any advice or tell me what I'm about to tell you.

1. Don't create a directory page with all your links on one page You should have no more than 30 – 40 links to a page. The reason is that some sites will not link to you if a page you put their link on has too many links, because it dilutes the value of the link to them. To understand why, you need to know about Google Page Rank and how it's passed to another site from your link page. That's a subject too lengthy for this topic.

2. Plan your link directory on paper first Decide what names you are going to give each category in your link directory. Make the names fit with the theme of your site and try to avoid adding categories which are nothing to do with what your site is about.

For example if your site is about Making Candles and Candle Accessories, don't have link categories for Computers & Games, or Search Engine Optimization etc. The reason is that if you want your site to achieve a good ranking with the search engines your site should be built tightly around your theme, in this example Candles.

3. Only link to web sites that relate to your site theme Make sure other sites have something to offer your visitors. This refers to item 2. If you don't have categories for unrelated topics, you'll be less tempted to link to them because you don't have a category to put them in.

4. Choose names for link categories that you want to use now and in the future This is because you can't easily change them later on. Once the pages are created by your link manager software, it will use the category names you give it. So if you have a category called "Candle Power" it will create an html page called Candle-Power.html or something similar, using your category name. Once this page is found and indexed by the search engines, in time it will gain Page Rank.

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If later, you change the category name to "Candle Lights" the link manager software will create a new page called Candle-Lights.html and you will lose the page rank you had gained for the earlier page. If your link partners linked to you because the page you put them on had a good page rank, renaming the page will cause this page rank to fall to zero. As a result your link partners may drop the link they have back to you, which is not what you ever want to happen.

5. Avoid having sub-categories or sub sub-categories in your directory The reason for this is again to do with how search engines will rank your directory pages. If your directory pages are more than two levels or two clicks away from your main index or home page they will either not be indexed by some search engines, or if they are indexed they will achieve a lower ranking. Some web sites will not link to you if the page you are to put the link on is more than 2 clicks away from your home page because these webmasters know what I've just told you.

6. Ensure each page of your link directory has a link back to your home page Once again the reason

for this is to do with how search engines will rank your directory pages, so make sure these links are in place.

7. Don't be obsessed at linking only to websites with a good search engine ranking Look first at whether the site has anything to offer your visitors. If it has poor or unrelated content don't link to it. If it has good related content that compliments your own content but has zero or low page rank, consider linking to it. Later on you may be glad you provided a link, when it's page rank improves.

8. Don't use link directory software that doesn't automatically check links Link directory software must be able to check links to your web site are still present on other sites. Doing link checking manually can be tedious and you have to remember to do it. Software that you can set a schedule to check links and automatically send out emails to webmasters when links are not found will save you a lot of time. Link management software that will automatically suspend links and delete them if they are repeatedly not found is an added bonus.

9. Don't use standard templates that come with any link manager Link directory management software comes with standard templates that you must modify to match the look and design of your own web site. This requires you know something about editing a web page using an HTML editor. Also don't use the standard email templates, personalize them in some way, even if it's only to add your name.

10. Don't assume you're finished once you've set up your link directory Once you've done all the things I've suggested, you must test and retest every aspect to ensure everything is working properly, before visitors arrive.

This means making an add a link request, as if you were a visitor to your own web site. Setting up test links and making sure these links are being checked by the software so it detects when links are removed or defective. Making sure it sends out email notices correctly and check the formatting is correct when they are received. You should also check you can make backups of your link directory database and be able to restore it in the event of a problem.

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Web Page Add

ons, Making Automation of Your Web Site Work for You.

### **How to Make Your Site Attractive to Potential Link Partners**

**By TC Thron**

Every now and then, I receive a link exchange request from someone who wants a link from my directory (my high-ranking directory directly accessible from the index page), and in exchange, they're willing to link to my page from one of their zillions of link pages about 18 jumps away from the home page. Needless to say, the proffered page has a Google PageRank of 0, and chances are it's not even indexed by any search engines.

What an enticing offer.

If you want people to trade links with you, thus increasing your PageRank and traffic, you must offer them a valuable link in return. Not all links are created equally. Here are some tips for making your site attractive to potential link partners:

Build a directory of links pages sorted by categories that relate to your web site. Avoid putting all of your links on a single page. Avoid putting tons of links on any one page in your directory. Avoid naming your links page "links.htm(1)".

Put a link to your directory on your index page. Every page in your subdirectory should have a link from that directory page and in turn link to that directory page. This helps spread Google PageRank more evenly to all your links pages and your directory page. Link pages with high PR will attract more link offers.

Avoid impersonal link managing services; give your links directory a personal touch and manage link exchanges in-house. If cutting and pasting a link onto one of your directory pages takes more than 30 seconds, you need to go back to webmaster school anyway.

Avoid tricks meant to keep from transferring PageRank to other people's sites.

Don't hide the link to your directory page.

Don't force links to open in a new window. Most surfers have pop-up blockers that make this a pain to work around. I know you want to keep visitors from leaving completely, but let's face it, if they're

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browsing a links page, they're already bored with your site. Get over it. Someone else will come.

That's it. Follow these steps, and not only will people be more willing to link to you, but you'll get a lot of offers as well. It's more time efficient if people come to you than to hunt links on your own.

TC Thorn w makes a living from affiliate marketing and advertising. This article first appeared at

Webmaster Articles.

How to Make Your Site Attractive to Potential Link Partners

Link Directory Tools

Building A Link Exchange Directory

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