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**Links and link building with Google.**

**By Clare Lawrence**

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By Clare Lawrence 1st June 2003. Clare is the CEO of Discount Domains Ltd a leading UK provider of domain names and web hosting services

Google is the leading search engine, so having the right strategy for optimisation on Google is essential.

FFA sites

Having a link on your website to an FFA (free for all) otherwise known as a links farm will not damage your PR. What will harm your site and your Google Page rank is outbound links from your site TO FFA sites.

Page rank is Google's own measure of the links and their quality to your site. Page Rank is an important factor, but not the only factor in Google's algorithm.

FFA links must be avoided to protect your site, it is very important therefore to screen carefully each site you link to. Using Google's PR tool (a free download from: – [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) ) can give you clues as to how Google rates sites. FFA sites are usually fairly easy to spot, as they contain lots of links to site that have no common theme or thread and the site itself appears to serve no purpose other than the provision of links.

A greyed out PR usually means a site with a penalty a PR of 10/10 is a perfect score (only Google has one) 0/10 means little or no useful links etc.

The reason for this is straightforward: – Google recognises that you do Not have control over who links to you, but you do have control of which sites you LINK TO.

Once Google has blacklisted you - it is very hard to get re-listed the only options being to persuade Google you have "reformed" or move your site to another domain name and start again!

### Google's algorithm

If you're a mathematical whiz you might also find the following article of interest <http://www.iprcom.com/papers/pagerank/>.

What it says is that the average page rank of a group of pages always remains as 1.0. So for every highly ranked page there must be lower ranked ones. Page rank passes from page to page after the application of a dampening factor (usually 0.85).

The point being that pages with outward links reduce page ranks whilst those with inward links gain it. The higher the ranking of the source and the lower the number of other outward links the more

valuable it will be to you.

### Link dilution

The number of links on a page dilutes the Page rank transferred. If a page has 100 links. The page rank transferred is worth only 1/100th of the value a single link would have. There are other factors such as the sites theme in comparison to your own.

For this reason link web masters often see exchanging links as hard work!

Link location - some SEO writers also believe there is an advantage to being towards the top of the page containing your link (or backlinks as links from external sites are known), this may be correct as Google does treat headers and title as being of more importance than footers etc. The logic being that in the same way as a newspaper reader will often scan headlines and the first couple of lines of copy so do user of websites.

### Using SEO copywriting

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) copywriting is the process of writing web friendly text. This means for example using your keywords in the right "density" and using words in the tense and combination that a user may enter them into a search engine.

By developing text in this way, it is also possible to incorporate text that will allow you to link directly from the body of your text.

This means your site is providing relevant content and at the same time your giving yourself more pages on your site the potential to contain links, which can be used for promotional purposes.

Interesting in seeing how your site is currently optimised? We have a number of SEO tools , which you might find interesting.

### Anchor text

This is becoming ever more important- some say THE most important feature. The use of anchor text is one the biggest boosters to keyword searches.

Consider the following: –

A) To visit our partner Domain names partner click here

B) Click here: Domain Names to visit our partner.

Which is the best? Assuming the pages are otherwise the same Page Rank wise?

B) Is clearly better because the search engine now associates [www.discountdomainsuk.com](http://www.discountdomainsuk.com) with the phrase domain names (the top phrase in the domain name market) with the site rather than the word "here".

Summary

Embedding text links is the most valuable method of linking. It keeps the links at a pretty low number,

so dilution is not a problem. It also will award a bonus for keywords used in the anchor text. If anyone offers you a link and asks how you would like it to shown up you now know how to reply!

Clare Lawrence is CEO of Discount Domains Ltd - A leading UK provider of Domain name registration and Web Hosting services. Please feel free to re-publish this article provided this reference box remains together with a hyperlink to <http://www.discountdomainsuk.com> Clare can also be contacted on [clare@discountdomainsuk.com](mailto:clare@discountdomainsuk.com).

## **A Tip for Finding Willing, Quality Links**

**By TC Thorn**

Google might not dominate the search engine world like it did last year, but it's still a big player and can account for a lot of your traffic. It's no secret that acquiring PageRank is a big part of doing well with Google. I've personally seen my own pages receive huge jumps in traffic after PageRank updates. By now, you probably know PageRank comes from the number of incoming links to your web site; the higher the PageRank of the incoming links, the more PageRank your site will receive.

The problem with link building campaigns is you rarely get out of them what you put in. You're doing pretty good if you get responses from one in four people you contact. In order to make things simpler, people often join traffic exchange programs, or simply post forms on their page and wait for link partners to come to them.

The problem with these methods is you often get offers from sites you don't particularly want to link with. Maybe they're selling something you'd rather not be associated with, or their site is brand-new and sloppily put together, and it's not going to be much of a boost to your PageRank. Now, I'm not saying you should never link to a new site, because today's PR—nothing could be tomorrow's PR 6 or 7.

Rather, I just want to offer a tip to help you capitalize on your link hunting time.

Step 1: Do a Google search for your target keywords.

Step 2: Visit the highest ranking sites, and use Google Toolbar to check their back links.

Step 3: Ask for links from the sites that appear in the back links.

Simple, hunh? What this does for you is thus: gets you in contact with people who are willing to exchange links with sites in your keyword area, and perhaps more importantly, gets you in contact with sites that have a high enough PageRank to appear in Google's back links (typically, only PageRank 4 sites and above appear here).

This should help you find the links that can truly help you, and it should cut down on your wasted link hunting time. Now, don't you have some links to find?

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