

Beginners S.E.O

Lesson 4: THE ART OF LINK BUILDING

What is the value of links?

Links can be valuable enhancers to your Seo campaign, as your organic ranking can be boosted by the number of incoming links to your site. There is a difference between the kind of linking you do though.

INCOMING LINKS- These links are the optimum. Locate businesses, industry experts and players, or any credible website willing to link to you as a resource. If you are a Association Management Company, you want to get links from relevant related businesses such as a construction company, a chamber of commerce, a business review site, an HOA lawyer or CAI chapter. If you can convince them to link to you without you having to link back to them, you've struck SEO gold. Sometimes this can be tricky, but often times, other sites need credibility, so the more you can convince them that their users will benefit from seeing you as a resource, the easier it will be to get a link. **(Bring up CIDGAB & HOA BUILDERS for our example)**

LINK EXCHANGES- So let's say a local real estate company likes your property management services. They agree to swap links with you, placing a link to you on their website under their "Preferred Associates" section, and you place a link to theirs on your page as well. Well this can have value in the eyes of your customers, in the world of S.E.O; these links kind of cancel each other out. We don't want to discourage these mutual link exchanges, but know that this will not help you organically, but more so just may build you some good online karma, and may attract a few more potential clients or web surfers to your site. When you request a link from someone else, if they want to exchange, try suggesting an alternative...citing the fact that it is more helpful to both of you if you have another site you can link from to and from for SEO purposes. A good example is if you have more than one website, or if you have a MySpace or Facebook page. Offer to link to their business from your MySpace in exchange for them linking to you from their Facebook or whatever other site they may have.

OUTGOING LINKS- You don't want to use too many of these unless you find a pertinent resource that you feel your potential customers just have to have...such as if you are a PM company and you set up an out going link to a utility company or something. Outgoing links have no SEO value to you, and essentially hand it to someone else. Also, the last thing you want to do is drive anyone away from your site. If you find resources such as info from a chamber of commerce, see if you can use the material on your site if it's not copyrighted, or re-write it yourself and create a module. A lot of times any public information out there that is useful, you can find a way to incorporate it into your site without having to link away.

GIVE OTHER WEBSITES A REASON TO LINK TO YOU

Link bait is very important. If you are a Association Management Company in San Francisco, Sometimes it's a matter of creating a module called "San Francisco- All about

the city and the People”. You could research from chamber of commerce, Wikipedia, write up an article or two. If you create areas of your site that other people will want or need to use as a resource, you just created a big reason for other sites to want to link to you. Business directories, Legal resource guides, anything at all that will attract people to view your site as an information or services center is good. Make sure that whatever modules or pages you set up to serve as link bait, have a clear link back to your home page or whatever your goal is for those visiting your site. Create pages that get people who otherwise would not come to your site, to land there and spend some time.

Be Patient but Diligent

Link building is a time consuming and occasionally frustrating process. Allow yourself a degree of patience. Allocate an hour or two a week specifically for finding sites you want to link to you, and trying to build a relationship with them.