SEO Campaign Management Basics

Tips on Link Building, Keyword Strategy, Free Reports and Gaining Landing Page Visibility

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Helping Publishers Make Money Online

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Introduction

Successful SEO Campaign Management will bring more visibility to your landing pages.

This complimentary white paper discusses the topic of SEO Campaign Management and shows specific strategies that utilize free white papers, link building and proper keywords to drive more targeted traffic and increase your email subscriber file.

Why is SEO Important?

Chris "Silver" Smith of NetConcepts explains why ignoring search engine optimization means that you're "leaving money on the table"

It really shouldn't need to be said that SEO is important. If you've been listening to what anyone in the industry is saying, now including Smith, you know:

     -SEO is 6 times more effective than a banner ads
     -SEO delivers qualified leads
     -80% of internet user sessions begin at search engines
     -55% of online purchases are made on sites found through search engine listings

Smith called Google listings "your personal sales force" and noted that if you're not doing SEO, you're "leaving money on the table". Here is the great chart he gave to show "how to calculate the missed opportunity cost of not ranking well for products and services that you offer":

# OF PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR YOUR KEYWORDS	X	SEARCH ENGINE SHARE (GOOGLE - 71%)	X	EXPECTED CLICK-THROUGH RATE	X	AVERAGE CONVERSION RATE	X	AVERAGE TRANSACTION AMOUNT

EG. 10,000/day x 71% x 10% x 5% x $100 = $3,000/day

Smith called SEO "a moving target". In the world of search engine optimization, a lot is changing, from personalized results, to image and video results.

Fortunately, says Smith, the tried–and-true tactics still work. Google still loves:

  -Topically relevant links from important sites
  -Anchor text
  -Keyword-rich title tags
  -Keyword-rich content
  -Internal hierarchical linking structure

Smith noted, "The whole is greater than the sum of the parts". In other words, you might not get ranked on every keyword that you put forth. The point is to do the best you can.

"The right keywords are relevant to your business and popular with searchers" Smith noted.

Smith talked about the difference between taking initiative in search engine optimization and not. Using generic two-word keywords that are common in your industry are not likely going to get you on page one in Google, especially if you have many competitors.

Choosing niche keywords that are relevant to your audience is key. Smith told people to ask themselves, "What are they [your audience] typing into search engines to find your products and services?"

7 Step SEO Guide

Getting Inbound Links to a Free Report or Product

Use these seven steps to launch new free products that get found in search engines for months and years to come

So, you've got this new free report, and you want people to know about it. What are the steps for launching your own SEO campaign that will not only get your report (or other free product) found in search engines, but will also generate inbound links and build email subscribers?

The outline we provide below will explain the process, step-by-step. Plus, the greatest thing about launching an effective SEO campaign is that, if done right, it can generate traffic for an indefinite amount of time, rather than for just a surge of traffic you might get from a blog reference or Twitter re-tweet.

Here is our seven step SEO guide for launching your own SEO campaign

1. Create a Free Report or Product.

Free products can be easily created by releasing your archives and recycling content. You might bundle together related blog posts and turn them into a special report, or you could work backwards and create the product that will then be turned into several blog posts. Either way, you are recycling content, and your free product may always be something that can be found on your website, just not bundled as effectively and conveniently.

Your free product should be titled using niche keywords that you are looking to target in Google. KnittingDaily.com offers free knitting patterns to those who sign up for their email newsletter. Targeting the terms "knitted lace" and "knitting lace", the title of their report is "Seven FREE Knitted Lace Patterns".

According to the Google Keyword tool, 360 people per month (4,320 per year) search for that term, and you can find the link to Knitting Daily's landing page as listing #5 for the term.

2. Create a Rapid Conversion Landing Page.

Job #1 for an effective website is building your database — adding names and email addresses to your list. This is true for both B2B and B2C publishers, both ad-driven and product-driven.

The Rapid Conversion Landing Page (RCLP) initiates an online relationship. It always requests an email address from the user in exchange for permission to send additional offers. You may also know it as a squeeze page or a name capture page.

In order for your RCLP to be effective, it should target specific keyword phrases that you'd like to found in Google with. For more on designing your RCLPs, download Rapid Conversion Landing Page Optimization Guidelines.

3. Create a Website Post.

Create a blog post on your website separate from your RCLP that informs your current subscribers about the new product that you are giving away. Your RSS subscribers who may not already be on your email list will see this blog post. This also gives exposure to casual readers of your blog who haven't yet subscribed.

Creating a website post also allows you to link internally to the product, which tells Google that this page you are linking to is highly regarded and more important than the page you are linking from.

4. Create an Email Newsletter.

Every other week, we have "Free Report Friday" where we launch a new special report, or otherwise put together a bundle that we think will help our readers solve a specific problem. You might be asking why, if the purpose is to collect email addresses, we'd be promoting the products to people who are already on our list.

First, you shouldn't create a product for only one goal. Of course if we're launching a new white paper that has information in it that will help our users, we want to let them know. Second, you always want to encourage pass-alongs so that perhaps your existing users will forward the email to their own contacts.

5. Distribute a Press Release.

A great way to get immediate inbound links is to distribute a press release each and every time you launch a new product. Your press release should link back to the RCLP and by doing this you will generate multiple inbound links to the page, which also tells Google that other sites appreciate the content on this page. Read our Online Press Release Guidelines for more.

6. Tweet About it.

Here's where social networks come in. Once you've gotten your product up, optimized and distributed, it's time to tell your social networks about the product. Make sure you have your analytics set up properly so that you can track these efforts, or try using the Google Analytics URL Builder for an easier approach.

In general, when we tweet about a new product, we get several re-tweets where people pass along our link to their own follower list. Read our Twitter Advice For (and From) Content Marketers white paper for more Twitter tips.

7. Distribute to your Contacts on LinkedIn.

Like any social network where you've established a network of colleagues and friends, you can use your own judgment on how you market. For example, I tried sending an email to my contacts on LinkedIn once, telling them about the upcoming Mequoda Summit, but letting them know that the email was merely a test for response, and I would likely not be using my personal contacts to send promotional email again.

Luckily, I didn't loose any contacts though this approach, but I did receive several emails that said they were glad to hear I wouldn't be using LinkedIn mail as a new marketing channel. Clearly, sending a promotional email through LinkedIn is not the best way to keep solid connections with your personal and professional network.

However, what you can do is update your status with a link to the new product, you can add the link in response to forums, and otherwise add it into any crevice that LinkedIn allows. When you update your status and groups, your network will still see your promotional efforts, but it's not so off-putting.

SEO Link Building

"If Content is King, Links are Queen"

Start building links to your articles and landing pages by implementing a "10 links a day" policy

In an article called <u>55 Quick SEO Tips Even Your Mother Would Love</u> in Search Engine Journal, Richard Burckhardt says "If content is king, then links are queen".

This is one of the most important things that many publishers miss the boat on, when they are developing their own SEO Campaigns. It's just as important to write content that is pleasing to your readers and to search engines, as it is to make sure that people are linking to it.

At <u>PodCamp Boston 4 back September</u> 09', speaker Chris Penn told the audience "If your goal is to build incoming links, you should set yourself a goal of generating 10 inbound links a day. It can be your own links that you drive from third-party websites or social networks, but they should encourage re-posting and links back".

If your goal is to build 10 inbound links a day, it might seem like a daunting task, but it's not impossible. It's easy to leave a valuable comment on a blog that links back to a free white paper or article on a relevant subject.

If you're answering a question that the blogger is asking, you're giving yourself a valuable inbound link back to your site.

If your goal is to distribute a free report and build your email subscriber list, make sure that you've written and distributed an <u>online press release</u> for every report you launch. This builds inbound links back to your website in no time with less effort than writing compelling and persuasive blog comments.

Other places you can build links include: your LinkedIn or Facebook profile status, in book reviews on external websites (only in books you've read and only if your report is directly relevant), on Twitter, on related social networks and forums—the list goes on.

Try compiling your own list of link hotspots. Don't partner with those spammers who will contact you for a link-exchange. Or if you do, make sure to check out their website and find some kind of reference of legitimacy. Google will dock you points if they think you're exchanging links with a "link farm".

Where Do Great Ideas for Free Reports Come From?

Anything that you can do to help determine what your customers are interested in — although not necessarily willing to pay for — will suggest a free report topic.

Let's make a list:

-Research audience interest and keywords using the Google Keyword Tool.

-Review the most frequently asked questions posted to your online forum.

-Determine which of your paid products are the best sellers.

-Examine your magazine cover stories to determine which have the best sell-through.

-Review your direct mail results to determine which teaser lines create the most sales.

-Review the subject lines of your most successful email marketing campaigns to determine which create the highest open rates.

-Determine which sessions at your live events are the most popular.

The Best SEO Keyword Strategy

Picking SEO Keyword Fights You Can Win

All SEO keywords are *not* equally important—volume and competition matter!

True or false?

The most effective SEO keyword strategy is to compete vigorously for top placement for the most popular keyword suggestions returned by the Google Keyword Tool for a given root keyword phrase (Primary Keyword Phrase).

If you answered "true," you might want to reconsider.

On the surface, aiming for the most popular SEO keywords seems like a good strategy. But in reality, it can be like trying to slay a dragon with a pea-shooter. The big guys with the bazookas may have you outgunned.

The little-known fact is, if your SEO keyword strategy is targeting only highly popular and competitive terms, your odds of SEO success are minimal. Alternatively, you might want to settle for aiming at smaller targets… and succeeding.

Here's how to decide what's a reasonable SEO keyword strategy for your website.

An effective SEO strategy begins with extensive research. Sure, you need to know the keyword phrases searched most frequently by customers in your market. But that information alone is not enough to guide your SEO efforts and create the right keyword-rich editorial content.

Additionally, you need to know how many searches are done each month on each individual keyword phrase in your keyword universe.

The simple but often overlooked truth is this: There's a popularity contest going on within your keyword universe, and some keyword phrases are used much more often than others. That can create an intense competition — and often your website won't have the gravitas to win.

You need to pick keyword fights you can win

If you do the math, you'll realize that there is a keyword risk ranking inside each keyword cluster in your keyword universe, and this information can help prioritize your choices. You may discover that it is unwise to target the most popular keyword phrases, if there is a lot of competition for those phrases.

The best SEO keyword strategy might be to target keyword phrases that are more modest in popularity, and for which there is little competition.

To use an economic metaphor, you're looking for modest demand and low supply.

The Google Keyword Tool can tell you the demand. The Keyword Competitive Index (KCI) reveals the relationship of demand to competition.

The KCI is your estimated annual search impressions (monthly average searches taken from the GKT times 12 months) divided by the number of exact match search engine results (the competition) at a point in time. Read more about using the Google Search Phrase Match command to find exact match search results.

Using the Keyword Competitive Index (KCI)

The "sweet spot" for your SEO efforts is often a keyword phrase with a high KCI. At Mequoda Daily, we generally consider any keyword phrase with a KCI of "1" or better to be a high value, low-risk target. Any keyword phrase with a KCI of .50 to .999 is a B-grade target. A keyword phrase with a KCI of .1 to .49 is a C-grade target. Anything with a lower KCI is not a reasonable target for Mequoda Daily and most of our consulting clients.

Here's an example from Mequoda Daily.

One of our primary keyword clusters is **membership websites**. We publish a free report, *Five Deadly Membership Website Mistakes,* on a Rapid Conversion Landing Page (RCLP). Our keyword cluster for **membership website** includes 110 keyword phrases. The **membership website** cluster of 110 keyword phrases gets more than 968,532 searches annually.

On a simple broad match search (the type of search most users do), Google ranks Mequoda Daily 16th among the 71,800,000 exact match pages it has indexed for the phrase **membership website** (singular). Google ranks Mequoda Daily 2nd out of 7,590,000 pages indexed for the phrase **membership websites** (plural).

Both phrases were successfully targeted (the RCLP plus 86 optimized posts on the topic of membership websites) based on the good but not great KCIs of .25 and .37. We have

achieved a much higher rank for the plural version where both search volume and competition are much lower.

The subtle power of "how to"

Here's a tip that every online editor and copywriter should know.

Many people start their search by typing the words "how to" and a verb in the query box. Adding "how to" and verbs to your primary keyword phrases can result in optimal rankings.

The full Mequoda Daily GVR (Google Visibility Report) reveals a KCI of 37.71 for the phrase **how to make a membership website**, and a KCI of 1.42 for the phrase **how to build a membership website**. Mequoda Daily currently holds top 30 search results listings on more than a dozen variations of these two phrases that have enough volume to be tracked by Google and the GVR.

Takeaway: If you don't consider volume and competition, your SEO success will be random.

The Google Visibility Report enables you to target, track and manage your SEO efforts and results. Over time, it will reveal whether your have correctly evaluated the risk of a particular SEO keyword target.

Perhaps most important, the GVR will enable you and your online publishing team to discover the best SEO keyword phrases to target for attracting the most high quality organic traffic to your website.

Little-Known Ways to Get 100% Google Visibility for Your Landing Pages

Here are a few methods that are getting online publishers at 100% Google visibility by targeting niche terms with smaller search volume

When your website or landing page turns up on page one in Google, you're getting 100% visibility. But making it to page one is only half the battle. You must also make it enticing for the user to actually click on your result. And the way you do that is by writing a compelling and relevant title tag and description tag.

At the Mequoda Summit recently, we talked with other publishers who agreed that if you're giving away a free special report, it's important to add those words into your title description because those magic words draw attention and get clicks.

Even more importantly, once you've gotten attention to your Google listing, and because what you are offering on your landing page is free, you will generate unsolicited inbound links to these pages from whoever thinks your report or product is relevant to their audience.

But what happens when your landing page ends up on page two or three? We estimate that you're getting about 32% Google visibility on page two, meaning only about 32% of users ever click through to page two, and a meager 7% visibility on page three. If you're on page four or beyond, you simply don't have a chance of being seen by your potential customers.

Here is a list of quick tips that you can use to start boosting your position in Google for landing pages that you want to be found on:

Google Visibility tip #1: Do your keyword research and be picky about it.

Don't pick a one-word keyword unless your brand has the power to easily land on page one (and it probably doesn't). Choose a two-word or three-word phrase that you have researched using the Google Keyword Tool.

Google Visibility tip #2: Find out if you even have a chance of getting ranked on those keywords.

Once you find keywords that have a good search volume, go into Google and search for those keyword phrases with quotes around them to figure out your competition. For example, say you want to write an article or a handbook on making apple pies. Take a look at the competition below, depending on how specific you make your title.

Now of course, the shorter you make your keyword, the more people will be searching for it, but the less traffic you will get from it. Do you have a chance of getting ranked on "apple pie"? Probably not, there are 6.1 million other apple pie pages out there.

"Apple pie recipe from scratch" gets 46 searches a month according to the Google Keyword Tool. That's 552 searches happening on that phrase per year. The golden jewel here is that there are only seven pages in Google that target that exact keyword. Which means, if you write that report, you're going to end up on page one, and you're going to get the opportunity to have those 552 searches see your Google result.

It might seem like a small niche to target, but this is only one recipe. You could create a hundred different recipe handbooks like this and get found on page on in Google for all of them.

Google Visibility tip #3: Write a title for your book that includes the keywords, and then optimize the landing page for those keywords. *A good title for this book is How to Make an Apple Pie Recipe from Scratch.*

Other places to use this keyword phrase:

- **Alt tag.** Use the keywords in your image "alt" text and even in the image filename**.
Example:** apple-pie-recipe-from-scratch.gif.

- **Email ask.** Every time you ask the person for their email address, use those keywords.
Example: Yes, I would like to download my copy of How to Make an Apple Pie Recipe from Scratch right now. Use HTML or CSS buttons so that you can easily include the text in the button rather than with graphic images that Google can't read.

- **Make a List**. Very often on our landing pages, we make a list of "take-aways" from the report we are giving away. For your apple pie handbook, you might go with "Apple Pie Recipe from Scratch Tip #1: Pick your own apples, don't buy them, and don't use canned apples".

Of course, once you've picked your main keyword and report title, you can also research other keywords to target in your report title (perhaps as the descriptive subhead) which you can pepper your landing page with. The moral of the story here is to pick keyword fights that you can win—and win big!

Do You Want A Few Thousand New Email Subscribers This Month?

'To Free' or 'Not to Free'? Ask Mrs. Fields What She Thinks About Freemiums

Your website is your chance at delivering a powerful first impression. If you've been playing your cards right, you have landing pages set up that are driving traffic into your website that offer something for free.

The reason why we stand so strongly behind "the power of free" is because simply… it works.

[Entrepreneur.com](http://www.Entrepreneur.com) agrees:

If you think it won't work with your product, consider Debbie Fields. When nobody came into her first store in Palo Alto, Calif., she put her product on a tray and walked around the mall handing out free samples. What happened? You've heard of Mrs. Field's, I assume — more than 30 years later, they've got nearly 400 stores.

We just had a client report that they released two "freemiums" in the last three weeks. Together, these two freemiums have already resulted in 6200 new email subscribers.

To put more emphasis on the fact that they've done their job with SEO, they're reporting that they have five pre-existing eBooks that have only been downloaded a combined total of 2100 times. The difference? These two new ones have search engine optimized landing pages and the other five do not.

Not that often, but often enough, we're asked why an email list is so important and why we don't spend more of our time optimizing landing pages for paid products and PPC rather than free products and organic SEO.

Here's why: driving traffic into a paid product is either black or white. Either a person buys or they don't. If they don't, they're gone and you say farewell, maybe forever.

However, when you're giving something away, you can have a conversion rate of 30-60% simply because the product is free.

Obtaining an email address means that you will have plenty of opportunities in the future to sell a product, while the alternative—paying for PPC traffic to a paid product—only gives you one shot. And you're paying for it whether the person buys or not.

How are you doing converting visitors into email subscribers?

Most publishers we've studied are only implementing one basic email capture on their website. They use a box on their homepage that says "Sign up for our email newsletter" or "Stay updated". Thus, they are only seeing a 0.1 to 0.2% conversion rate.

Find out your site-wide and landing page conversion rates:

Divide the total number of new email subscribers you acquired via your website in one month by the total number of unique visitors you received in that month. This will give you your site-wide conversion rate.

If your landing pages are up, you can discover those conversion rates by setting up goals in your analytics program to see exactly how many people hit your landing pages vs. how many hit the thank you page after submitting their email address.

I can tell you with 100% certainty that your landing pages will get a better conversion rate than a vague box on your homepage that asks for an email address. Nobody wakes up in the morning and says "I need more email newsletters!"

Your website and email newsletter are the free products in your Digital Media Pyramid. Call it Karma, but it's OK to give away things for free. If you're delivering something valuable, your subscribers will trust you enough to buy something from you in the future and move further up your product pyramid into more expensive products.

Two Free SEO Tools

Test targeted keywords and content optimization for free

Everybody is on a budget. That's why we're mentioning two free search-engine marketing tools today that can help you boost search rankings without boosting spending.

The first is the Google Keyword Tool. This tool will help generate keyword ideas for your website.

This tool can help all levels of search marketers. If you're just starting SEO, it can help you discover your target phrases. If you're neck deep in search marketing, it can help you find more keywords that have little competition.

Take a minute and try entering your business' keywords. You might be surprised at the phrases and numbers that appear.

The second tool is for after you have targeted keywords. By entering a URL in Motoricerca's free keyword density calculator, you'll receive a list of all the repeated phrases on the page and their frequency.

Content that frequently mentions a keyword usually has a higher ranking than content that does not (holding all other factors constant). Since this tool reveals how often a keyword appears on a page, it's very useful for SEOing content.

After running a scan on a Mequoda Daily post, the calculator estimated that the term "online publishing strategy" had a density of 7.25 percent for three word phrases, and "online publishing" had a density of 4 percent for two word phrases.

Good keyword density for an article webpage is about 2 to 4 percent, and those percentages should be higher for landing pages, according to Mequoda's Managing Director Don Nicholas.

Motoricerca's tool also lists every set of one, two and three word phrases that appear on the given URL. This makes for a lot of erroneous information, but it also reveals other phrases that could become targeted keywords.

Anyway, take a look at those free tools and see if they reveal anything about your current SEO campaign. It will only cost you a little time and it may help you rank higher for more keywords.

Google's Real-Time Search

How it will Affect Your SEO

Google is rolling out Real-Time Search, which means it's time to put your game face on if you want to stay at the top of your search engine rankings

Real-Time Search is getting ready to be rolled out by Google, and we can't say it's going to impact your current landing page rankings, but it's certainly going to push you down the list unless you start producing more newsworthy content.

In this new feature, searchers will see "real-time" results, coming from social networks like Twitter and Facebook, plus blogs and news services.

Amit Singhal says on the Google Blog, "Our real-time search features are based on more than a dozen new search technologies that enable us to monitor more than a billion documents and process hundreds of millions of real-time changes each day. Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of our new partners that we're announcing today: Facebook, MySpace, FriendFeed, Jaiku and Identi.ca — along with Twitter, which we announced a few weeks ago."

What this really means for online publishers and content marketers is that it's time to put your game face on.

It means that before any listings that you've conquered on Google will be shown, you may be soon be getting trumped by the new real-time results.

Singhal writes, "First, we're introducing new features that bring your search results to life with a dynamic stream of real-time content from across the web. Now, immediately after conducting a search, you can see live updates from people on popular sites like Twitter and FriendFeed, as well as headlines from news and blog posts published just seconds before."

As for when and how these results will display, Singhal says, "When they are relevant, we'll rank these latest results to show the freshest information right on the search results page. Whether it's an eyewitness tweet, a breaking news story or a fresh blog post, you can find it on Google right after it's published on the web."

Unlike Bing, that has already rolled out this feature and gives real-time results for any search on their search engine, Google is more selective of the keywords that will display real-time results. That means that if you're targeting "Christmas Cookie Recipes" in the middle of July, there may not be many real-time newsworthy results competing above you.

Also unlike Bing, it disrupts the original results by dropping them below the real-time results. Bing gives searchers a separate page for real-time results.

If you want to see what Google's Real-Time results look like, try this link.

The moral of the story is that having current, newsworthy content is more important than ever, if you're in an industry that is constantly changing. Get on Twitter and tweet your brains out. Get your blog into Google News and keep your blog constantly updated. Be the leader in your industry.

Conclusion

Use these SEO Campaign Management tips to help increase visibility and traffic to your website's landing page. Following these tips will also potentially bring you thousands of new email subscribers. Remember to practice the strategies discussed in this free report to stay ahead of your competition.

For more free white papers, visit:
http:www.MequodaFree.com