

# Getting Your Site Ranked Quickly

A “Common Sense Marketing” Report by Sarah Russell

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## A Brief Introduction

Sometimes, we internet marketers have a habit of getting bogged down in our own jargon, so I wanted to use the first section in this report to get any newbies out there up to speed on the concept of ranking a website and why it's so important. Experienced marketers – or anyone who knows what I mean when I talk about the importance of having a website rank well – can go ahead and skip to the next section.

If you aren't familiar with the concept of getting a site ranked, think for a second about how you interact with internet search engines in your regular lives. Suppose you need to find a plumber to take care of a leaky kitchen faucet. You visit your search engine of choice, type in the phrase "plumber + your area" and review the results the search engine sends you. Typically, a search engine results page is comprised of two different types of results – natural search results (private sites that the search engines feel best match your search query) and sponsored search results (paid ads).

What you may not be aware of is the complicated set of algorithms that are working behind the scenes to make sure that only the most relevant results are brought back for you. Search engines want to give you the best possible results, because they generate ad revenue through the "Sponsored Links" you see in key places on the search results page. The more people that use their site – thinking that it provides the best results – the more ad revenue they generate when users click on sponsored search results.

It's because of this reason that Google has become as large as it has – many people use it because they feel it returns the most relevant results for their search terms. Unfortunately, the exact factors that Google uses to generate these results aren't clear, as their search algorithms are highly guarded secrets. Through experimentation and years of experience, however, internet marketers have figured out which elements Google values when it comes to ranking a site. These include (among many, many others):

- Keyword density and specific keyword placement (ie – in headlines, meta tags, etc)
- Volume of information on the site
- Age of the site
- Site extension (Google seems to value .com, .org and .net over newer extensions)

All of these observations and speculations have given rise to what's known as Search Engine Optimization (SEO) – that is, the process of designing sites in a way that specifically appeals to the search engines. More thorough discussions of current SEO practice can be found elsewhere – for now, it's enough for you to know that there are certain things you can do to help the search engines notice your site faster and rank higher in their natural search results.

As internet marketers, we want our sites to appear as high as possible in the natural search results. To understand why, think again to your personal experiences with the search engines. When you searched for a plumber in your area, did you read every single result that the search engine turned up? Probably not. In fact, in most cases, people rarely read beyond the first two pages of search results, meaning that if your page isn't in the top 20 results for a given search term, it won't be seen by most people. No traffic means no visitors, which means no money for you.

(Note – for the purposes of this report, I'm focusing on achieving high rankings through SEO alone. Please seek out additional resources if you're interested in learning how to drive traffic through paid search engine ads.)

So now that you know why it's so important to achieve high rankings with your sites, let's look at two different ways to do it:

## **The Absolute, Fastest Way I've Found to Get a Site Ranked in Google**

For those of you who don't know that much about me, I've been building websites and working online successfully for about three years now. Sure – that's not very long in people years, but in internet years, it's enough that I've seen some pretty significant changes in terms of how Google reads and ranks websites.

Now, far be it for me to wax nostalgic about the good old days of 2006 (yikes!), but the truth is that it just isn't as easy to rank online as it was even a few years ago. The search engines and the internet marketers tend to have a synergistic effect on one another. Every time the marketers think they've "one-upped" the search engines with some new trick, the search engines turn around and incorporate it into their algorithms, effectively neutralizing the impact of the trick.

It's crazy to think that we're only a few years out from stuffing meta tags with hundreds of keywords or including them as white text against a white background (by the way, if for some reason you're still doing these things, stop now!). Even a year or two ago, making use of simple tools – like social bookmarking tools or RSS submission sites – was enough to earn top rankings. Of course, these tools are still useful today, but I've found that their impact on site rankings is much smaller than it used to be.

So while these tools are still very much a part of my arsenal, they just don't work fast enough for me to rely solely on them. When I'm building a new site, I want it to rank as quickly as

possible for my target keywords – after all, the more quickly people can find my site, the more money I stand to make.

For this reason, I've started using a tool called Linkvana, which is, in my opinion, the absolute best backlinking service available online today. Basically, the service allows you to post on authority blogs (posts to Linkvana's sites are all content-relevant, and are made on aged, high PR sites) and generate one-way links back to your site. Google loves these links – in fact, this is often the fastest ways to get ranked. Google indexes high PR blogs frequently – sometimes even several times a day – and when it sees your link on these blogs, it will discover your site much more quickly.

I should mention here that Linkvana isn't cheap – but believe me, when it comes to backlinking services, you get what you pay for. However, I look at it as an investment in my internet marketing career – and it's one I've seen pay off time and time again when my sites rank faster and begin generating income sooner. If you're serious about making money online, check it out here – <http://www.common sense marketing.net/linkvana/> (aff link) / <http://www.Linkvana.com> (direct link).

A note on affiliate promotions – I only ever promote products I use that have given me consistently good results. I don't recommend internet marketing products just because they're "the next big thing" or because some guru says they're a "must have." Everything I promote, I use and I love – and I think you will too!

I'm also going to be upfront with you when I promote a product – I'll give you the option of choosing between my affiliate link and a direct link to the product. If you want to give me credit for this referral (and I certainly hope you do!), click the link above labeled "aff link". If not – and I promise you won't hurt my feelings! – click the link labeled "direct link."

But back to how I use Linkvana to get my sites ranked quickly...

Linkvana uses a four-step system to automate your link building process. I'll briefly outline the steps here, but for more details, click the link above and watch the video introduction posted near the top of the Linkvana landing page.

### **Step 1 – Create and setup your first project**

You'll want to setup a project for each site you promote through Linkvana, and you'll find that this process is very easy. Simply enter a name for the project on your Dashboard, then add your URL, the category your site is in and how often you want Linkvana to create links for you. Personally, I go with 1-2 links per day, as this most closely resembles the kind of natural linkbuilding that Google likes to see.

## **Step 2 – Add keyword rich links to your project**

In this second step, you'll click over to the Links area of your project, where you'll have the option of including as many keyword phrase + URL combinations you like. Try to include plenty of related keywords to be used as anchor text for the same link – again, this looks more natural (and less scammy) to the search engines. Click submit and move on to Step 3.

## **Step 3 – Write your posts**

With Linkvana, you have two options – writing and uploading your own posts or outsourcing them to Linkvana's team of writers. There is an extra fee to outsource your articles, and because I tend to write my own, I can't comment on the quality of their work. However, if you're really pressed for time, this is a great option as there are certain settings within this feature that will allow you to completely automate the process of linkbuilding.

If you write your own posts, as I do, keep in mind a few general guidelines. First, posts here should be completely original (or, if you're using PLR articles, at least 40% different from the original article) and they should be at least 350 words. This is generally considered to be the minimum number of words Google needs to establish what your article is about and what keywords it should rank for.

In addition, Linkvana offers a pretty standard set of formatting tools, including text formatting and link creation buttons. Remember, the basic standards of article marketing apply here – remember to bold any subtitles in your article, keep the paragraphs a reasonable length (3-5 sentences at most) and format your links correctly so that your target keywords are structured as the anchor text.

## **Step 4 – Review your posts and submit them**

Once your post is completed, you'll be able to review it before it enters the queue to be published. After you hit submit, the process is pretty much automated according to the options you selected when you set up the project. You won't need to worry about setting up accounts on each separate blog, formatting your posts and submitting them by hand – all of these processes will occur automatically, creating high quality, one way backlinks to your site with almost no effort on your part.

## **A Completely Free, Step-by-Step Marketing Plan to High Rankings**

So, we've talked about the benefits of building backlinks through Linkvana and why this is one of the fastest and easiest ways to get your site ranked today. However, if your choice is

between turning off the heat in your home and investing in Linkvana, don't worry! It is possible to achieve high rankings for free, using the strategies I'll describe in this section.

However, let me preface this section by saying that this strategy for ranking high is more complicated and time-consuming, but it is completely free. At any given point in your marketing career – whether you're a newbie or a top guru – you'll have to make the trade-off between time and money. If you don't have any money, you've got to be willing to put in a little more time. Or, visa versa, if you don't have a lot of time to commit to marketing, you may want to invest in the tools that will get you the same results in less than half the time.

That said, the following items make up my one-month plan to get a site ranked for free. There are plenty of great ways to generate backlinks and drive traffic, so I'm not necessarily knocking the ones that aren't listed here (such as press releases, forum commenting, etc). I'm just saying that these are the things that have worked for me in the past.

- 10-15 Yahoo Answers posts
- 5-7 unique, keyword-rich 350-500 word articles
- 13 Web 2.0 site posts

Let's look at each of these in more detail –

## **Yahoo Answers**

My first Common Sense Marketing report was dedicated to the subject of driving traffic with Yahoo Answers, so I'm not going to spend a lot of time going into it in depth here. If you haven't read it yet, download it at the following link to get up to speed on the best ways to use this fantastic resource:

<http://www.commonsemarketing.net/YAReport.pdf>

Now, when I say 10-15 posts to Yahoo Answers, I'm not doing them all at once. When I establish a new site, I print off a calendar and schedule activities from each of the three strategies listed above so that they're scattered throughout the month. For example, I might decide to post 2 Yahoo Answers every Tuesday and Friday. Keep in mind that the search engines like to see natural growth. Spamming up 100 new backlinks all at once is one of the fastest ways to tip them off to your true intentions – making money!

## **5-7 Unique, Keyword-Rich 350-500 Word Articles**

Again, I want to highlight that there's no exact science here. Posting 5-7 original articles in the first month of site promotion has worked for me – you may be able to achieve the same results

with fewer articles, or you may need to post more to get ranked if you're working in a more competitive niche.

I do, however, want to make a few notes about the content of the articles that I do believe are mandatory to have them looked upon favorably by the search engines. First of all, they need to be unique. We're going to be submitting these to the biggest article directories, and they won't accept content that's already been posted. And whether or not you believe in the duplicate content penalty, remember that our goal here is to get ranked well, quickly, so there's no reason to try to compete with content that's already been published.

If you've never written your own articles before, don't get overwhelmed – it's not as scary as it sounds. A minimum of 350 words is only a few paragraphs, and you've got plenty of source material at your fingertips to help get you started. If you're having trouble getting started, go to Ezine Articles and look for the articles that are the most read in your niche. Read them and try to get an understanding of both the subject material and writing style. Then, close out of your browser and put what you've learned down in your own words (just be sure not to outright plagiarize!).

The last element of your articles is that they should be keyword rich. For a 350-500 word article, I like to use my target keyword in the headline and 1-2 times in the body, and then incorporate related keywords between 3-5 times throughout the article. If you need help coming up with related keywords (also known as Latent Semantic Indexing, or LSI), run a search for related keywords inside the Google Adwords tool – this is one of the best ways to see what keywords Google thinks are related to your main search term.

Once the articles are ready, I like to post them to 1 or 2 of the major article directories, including Ezine Articles, Go Articles, or Article Dashboard. Again, I try to spread these postings out throughout the month – maybe 1 article every Monday and Thursday, for example. Remember to include a good call to action and a link to your site in your resource box!

## **13 Web 2.0 Site Posts**

Web 2.0 sites are web properties that enable users to quickly and easily create online content. The search engines LOVE them and they're almost always free to use. Best of all – many of these sites still have "DOFOLLOW" links enabled, which will help to build up the PageRank of your website. You've probably heard of many of these sites before – a few examples include Weebly, Vox, Blogger and Squidoo (more complete lists can be found by searching online for Web 2.0 site lists).

Most of the same rules that I use for articles apply here as well – I still want my posts to be about 350-500 words long and I want them to be rich in the keywords I want to rank for. However, I don't necessarily want to put in the time to come up with 13 unique articles. For this method, I typically write one seed article and then run them through a spinner so that they're at least 40% different from each other. I use Power Article Rewriter and Incansoft's Content Mania (both paid programs), although it's possible to do this by hand, for free, as well.

So, why 13 posts? Well, I use a particular linkwheel design that involves 13 pieces, that's why ☺ (If you aren't familiar with linkwheels, go here - <http://lemonarian.com/linkwheel>.) The key here is to interlink several of the Web 2.0 properties so that their shared strength benefits my site. Of course, if you've been following internet marketing news, you probably know that Google is on to the basic, perfectly circular linkwheel design, so take the time to create your own. Again, try to space out your postings so that you're creating your linkwheel over time, as this looks the most natural to the search engines.

## **The Top 3 Things that Will Kill Your Chances of Ranking Well**

After all that work, you've put a lot of effort into getting your site ranked – don't blow it by making any of the following mistakes!

### **Adding Monetization Too Quickly**

Yes, I know that the point of your website is to make money. I know that and you know that – the key is that we don't want Google or any of the other search engines to know that quite yet. As we've discussed, Google likes to reward sites that look natural. So take a minute and imagine you're putting up your site simply for the benefit of the hundreds or thousands of dedicated readers you're about to attract. What would that site look like?

Chances are it'd be heavy on the helpful information and light on the monetization strategies (whether you're doing affiliate promotions, AdSense displays, or CPA blocks) – if you even had any at all. In fact, I prefer to keep all promotional methods off of my site for the first month of its life. In many cases, I've found that it takes Google at least this long to determine where it wants to rank your site, so don't tip them off to your true intentions too early.

### **Being Too Skinny – Good for Models, Bad for Websites**

Skinny, in this context, doesn't mean your website's width or the kind of layout you use – it refers to a site that lacks significant content. For example, consider an opt-in page. In general, there's not a lot of content there, as the purpose is to funnel a user directly to the opt-in form.

However, when the search engines look at this kind of site, they see that it provides very little content and assume that it won't be useful to many visitors. And down the rankings you go!

So how can we combat this? One way to increase the content on your website is to create a separate page of content-rich articles to appeal to the search engines. We won't make it very visible from the opt-in page (as this could potentially lead visitors away from your funnel), but we will make it obvious enough that the search engines notice it and give us the benefit of being a "fat" site.

To set this up on a standard HTML site, I'll include a link labeled "Articles" in the footer section of my opt-in page. This link takes us to a separate articles page ([www.SiteURL.com/Articles.html](http://www.SiteURL.com/Articles.html)), where I've linked to several additional pages, each of which contains one article. If I'm feeling ambitious, these will be unique articles, 350-500 words in length, but oftentimes, simple PLR articles will work for this purpose.

### **Shooting Yourself in the Foot with Scripts and Graphics**

This goes back to SEO 101, but for some reason, I still see new sites being launched that are so clogged with graphics and scripts that it must be nearly impossible for Google and the other search engines to figure out what's going on! Remember, when search engines are indexing a site, they read all of the words on the site to gauge what the site is about and how much relevant content it provides.

If all of the content on your site is included by way of graphic files (pictures with text included) or if it's dynamically generated by script files, the search engines aren't going to have a clue about what's on your site – and they won't be able to tell how to rank it. Do yourself a favor – use graphics and scripts sparingly, include alt text on the graphics you must use and add plenty of additional content to help balance out any graphics or scripts used throughout your site. This will help the search engines find you, figure out what you're talking about and give you the rankings you deserve.