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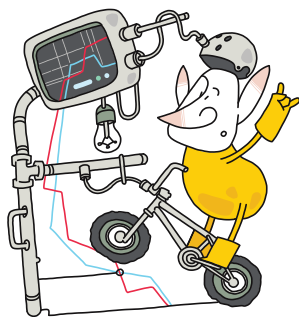
First, a very blunt disclaimer: There is nobody outside of Google that can give you concrete answers about what backlinks influence rankings. In fact, most digital professionals, including the owners of some link agencies, don't even get close. The best advice I can give you is to be careful where you get your advice.

HOW TO VALUE BACKLINKS PROPERLY

Jason Brooks



HOW TO VALUE BACKLINKS PROPERLY IN 2020



Follow me on twitter

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Jason has been practicing digital marketing since 2005. He is the founder of UK Linkology Limited, serving agencies and clients direct globally since 2012.

Jason has a Postgraduate Diploma in

Digital Marketing Communications from Manchester Metropolitan University (2014).

“I manage the marketing strategy for UK Linkology and our clients with a focus on developing cutting edge SEO and link building techniques.”

“Please feel free to get in touch and ask any questions about this guide which aims to help you make better link building decisions, free up your time and save you money.”

All the best,

Jason

Enjoy!

INTRODUCTION

This guide will help you get great results from backlink building without overpaying. There is a lot of junk out there. The skill you need is to be able to quantify levels of risk and potential benefit. Then compare the costs.

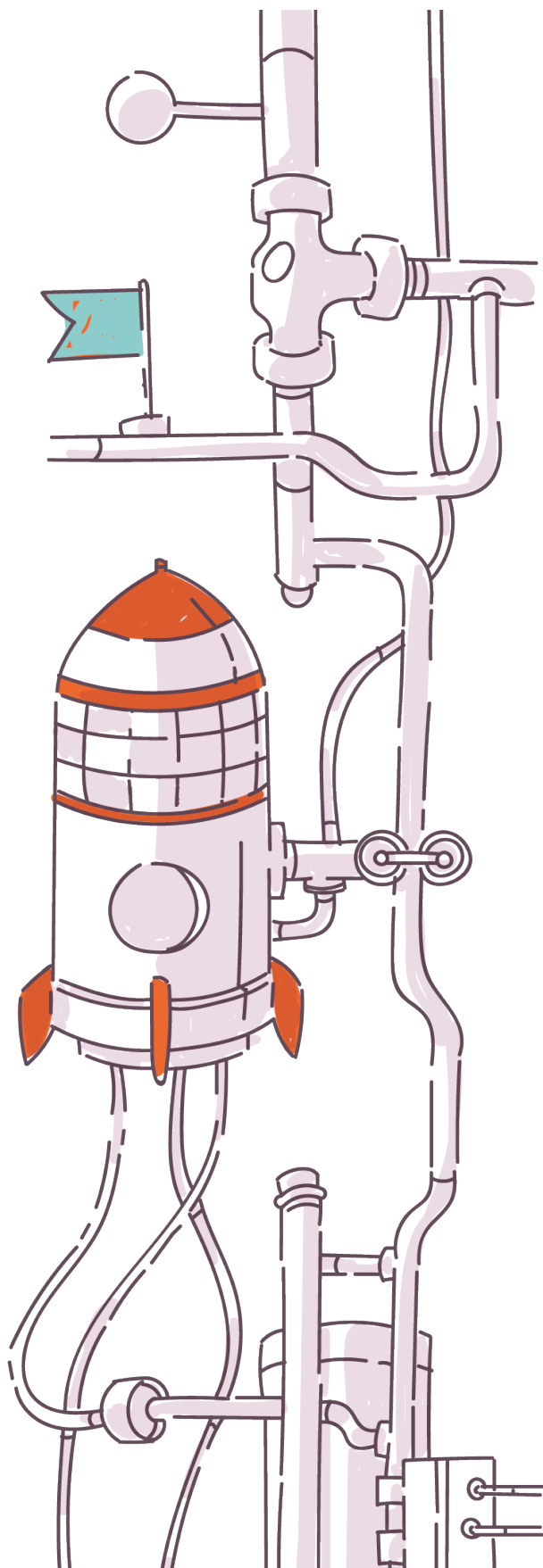
A rule of thumb is; the cheaper the backlink, the more likely it will have low SEO value, and potentially expose your site to more risk of a penalty.

Why would you listen to me or anyone from UK Linkology Ltd?

We've been around a long while and wore every colour hat (black, white, grey, cream, blue, etc.).

We rank at number one or two for virtually all our target keywords. Remember, those trying to beat us for those keywords are supposed to be 'SEO experts'. Some are, but many are not, and their lack of visibility in search is a useful signal. Be careful.

We've built links for 12 years (4 years as Brooks Digital Marketing, and 8 years as UK Linkology Limited).



We've tried and tested every type of backlink known to the SEO profession.

We've worked in hundreds of sectors. Some we have lots of experience in (finance, gambling, health, travel, eCommerce, fashion, home), and others we don't like metallurgy, electrical components and surgical gauze manufacture!

- We retain many of our happy clients for two years or more.
- We are ethical. That means we turn away companies that won't benefit from link building. Either because their budgets are too small to compete in their sector, or they want to compromise on quality and still expect great results.

So what value will you get from this guide?

1

Honesty from me. Our reputation is everything.

2

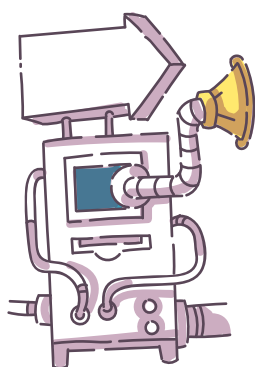
A better understanding of the positives and negatives of different types of backlinks.

3

The confidence to make better-informed decisions when buying backlinks.

4

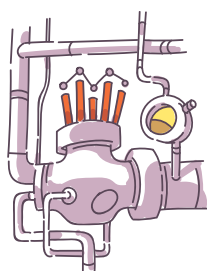
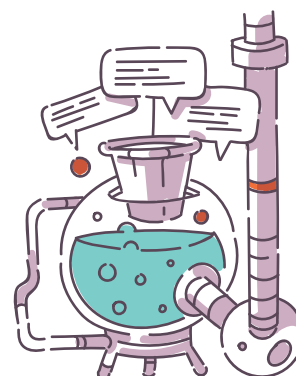
A discount code for our services :)



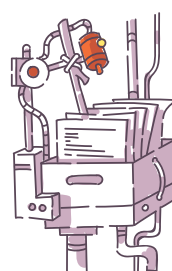
So let's get into it.

BACKLINK BUILDING CLASSIFICATIONS (HATS)

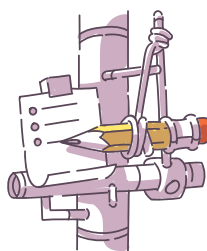
Most SEO's will still use the 'hat' analogy to describe their link building techniques; black, white, grey, blue and cream, so it's good to know what 'hat' is what. (Blue is advanced technical SEO and rarely mentioned, and I made cream up).



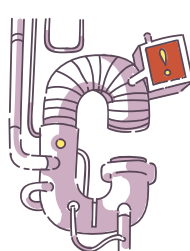
Google is the authority, and they give examples of link schemes that *"can negatively impact a site's ranking in search results"*. **In Google's world, there is no grey hat**, only black or white.



Link builders describe what their hats mean a little differently to Google so as not to alarm customers. Like I said, virtually all link building is black hat according to Google, and that description is not good for business.



In a link builders world, white hat usually means building backlinks as closely to how Google would like them to be – but still building them to manipulate PageRank.

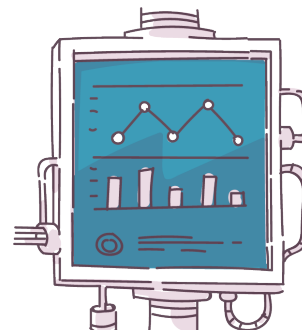


Grey hat is knowingly breaking Google's rules, but going under the radar by using more careful tactics. Black hat is often poorly executed spam using automation methods.

Hat types and their characteristics

Black hat link building

1. Buying or selling links that pass PageRank (i.e. without adding no-follow attributes)
2. Excessive link exchanges
3. Large-scale article marketing or guest posting campaigns with keyword-rich anchor text links
4. Using automated programs or services to create links to your site
5. Requiring a link as part of a Terms of Service

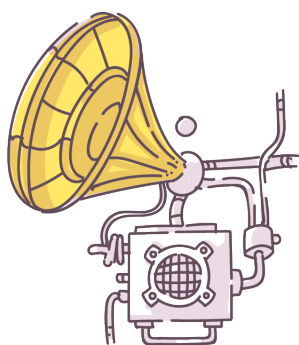


Grey hat link building

Using tactics 1-3 listed above, in ways more carefully than a black hat link builder and therefore less likely to cause a Google penalty. I exclude point 4 because any automation creates footprints so it's almost always going to be black hat.

A link builder's interpretation of white hat

1. Guest posting using quality content
2. Natural linking patterns i.e. speed of link building and site selection is in line with Google's expectations in a niche
3. Close attention to anchor text and natural link placement
4. Digital public relations (PR) to acquire backlinks (do-follow or no-follow)
5. Content marketing with quality assets on your site and outreach focused on 'earning links' to those assets



True white hat link building (Google's way)

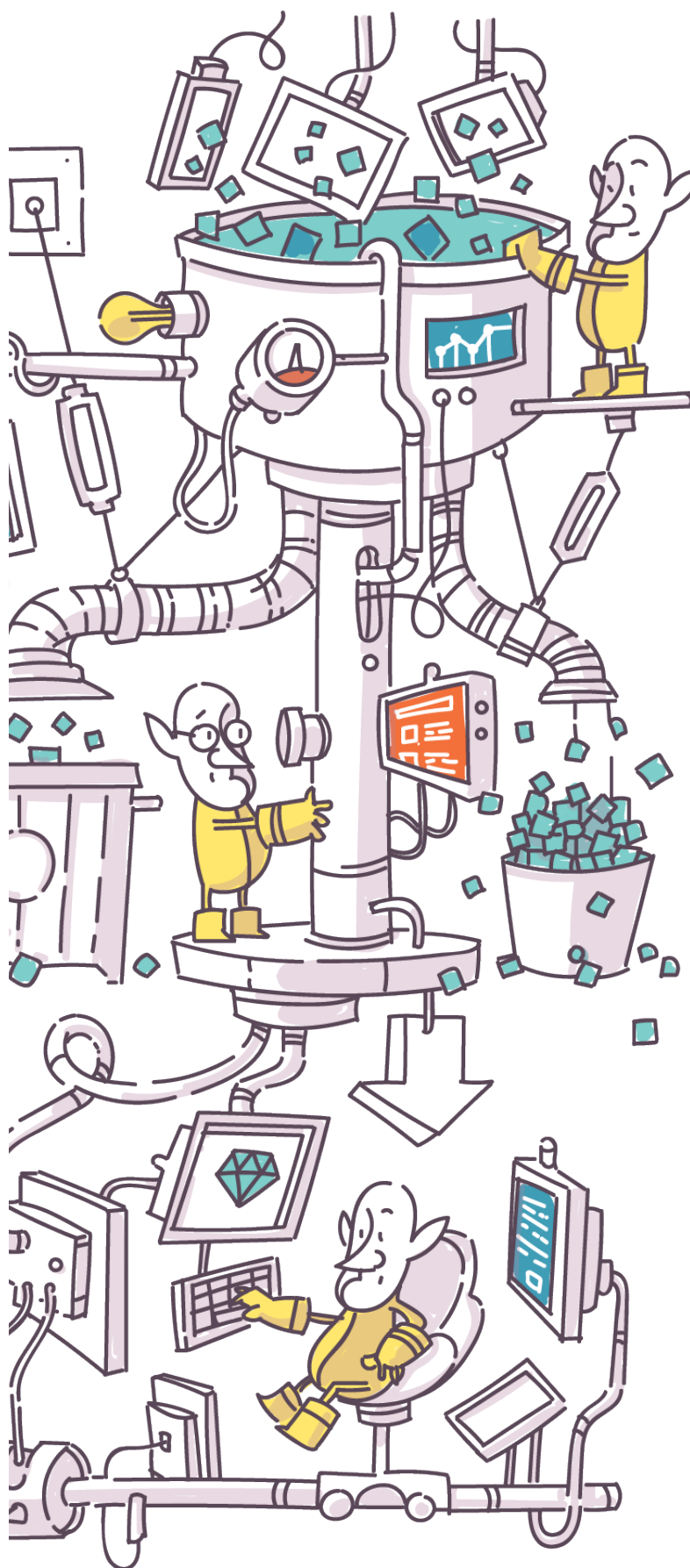
Creating the best website you can for the user and using outreach and advertising to encourage people to admire your content (with the desperate hope that they will link to it).

This "sit back and wait" approach works best for the top 0.5% of businesses, including big brands, famous people, well-known authority figures and anyone with a massive budget. (To get that kind of attention, the rest of us need to be very lucky, very smart or both).

Here's how Google describes it...

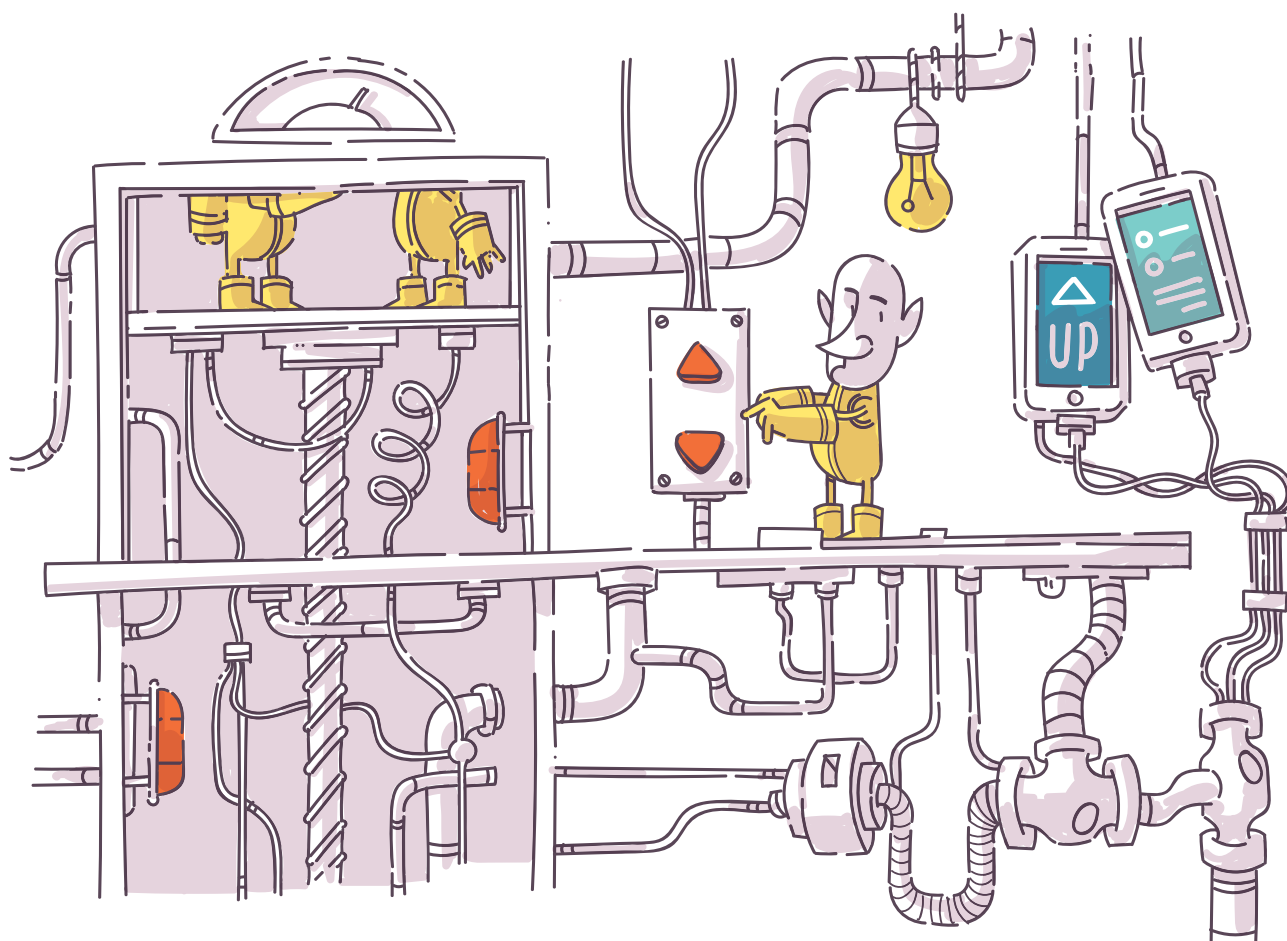
..."The best way to get other sites to create high-quality, relevant links to yours is to create unique, relevant content that can naturally gain popularity in the Internet community. Creating good content pays off: Links are usually editorial votes given by choice, and the more useful content you have, the greater the chances someone else will find that content valuable to their readers and link to it."

Good luck!

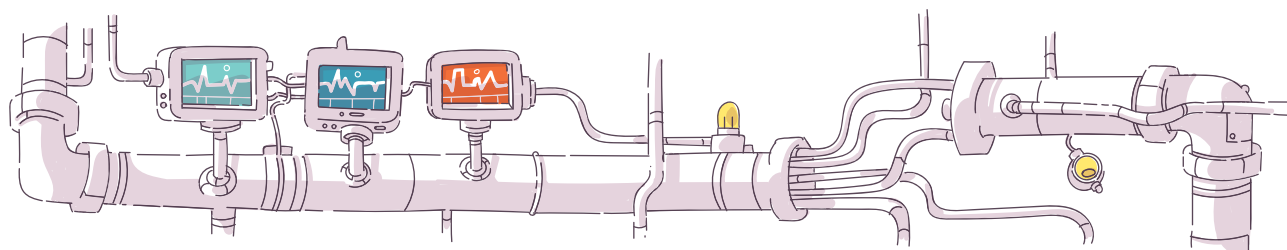


For most marketers, the reality is that they need backlinks and don't have the time/skills/resources or the luxury of a highly visible brand to do that. Fortunately, there are many ways to achieve the results you want, assuming you don't mind being proactive and accepting a certain amount of risk. Building backlinks is always risky. The trick is to find the right balance between risk, benefit and cost.

Lets' go deeper.



COMMONLY USED METRICS AND WHAT THEY MEAN



First you might need a metrics primer. Sorry, I know it's boring, but if you don't know your DR from your DA, how are you supposed to know how they might benefit you and what to pay for a link? Even if you do know them, maybe there's something here that might offer a different perspective.

Laziness and an unwillingness to look deeply at what SEO metrics mean, allows you to be duped into thinking that one site is better than another due to one or two selected metrics scores.

If you want to get value for money and better results, you need to know this stuff and stop being conned by people that don't deserve your time or money.

All the metrics discussed here are helpful when used correctly. SEO software developers are smart people that are trying to provide marketers with more clarity when planning SEO campaigns. Still, they aren't pretending to be Google either.

"So much about search engines is shrouded in mystery. These scores are an attempt to pull back the curtain and uncover how search engines view your website (with as much accuracy as we can)" Source: Moz.com.

Takeaway from this section - All of the metrics providers suggest that their metrics used best in conjunction with other metrics.

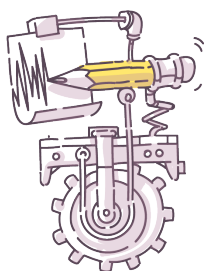
Domain level metrics

These are numbers that reflect the overall score of a website and all its pages (not just the home page). Each tool measures and calculates this number in unique ways, and each metric means something different. DA is not the same as DR and so on, as you will see.

Ahrefs Domain Rating (DR)

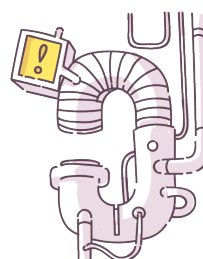


WHAT DOES AHREFS DR MEASURE?



"Domain Rating is NOT a measure of a website's quality and legitimacy"

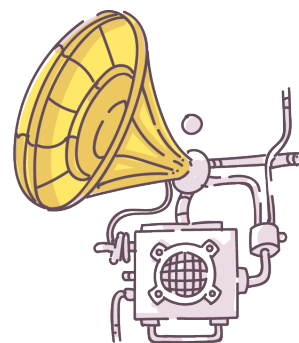
Source <https://ahrefs.com/blog/domain-rating/> - that's all you need to know if you are using it solely for buying backlinks. Low DR sites can be excellent and high DR bad, so it needs to be used in context. Despite being one dimensional, it does have its uses so stay with me.



According to Ahrefs, Domain rating claims to show (or measure) the 'strength' of a backlink profile. What 'strength' means in an SEO context and how that is proved is unclear. Sites with high DR regularly get outranked by sites with lower DR. I take it to mean that the backlink profile alone is strong. Therefore you need to look at other factors aside from DR to make a good decision. Some link sellers won't tell you this stuff.

HOW IS AHREFS DR CALCULATED?

DR is calculated by looking at the DR of the unique links coming from one site to another. The amount of DR passed from a site depends on the number (and DR) of the sites that links to it and the number it links to; the more it links to, the less it can pass as DR dilutes. How that makes sense is unclear because it's saying that a link from a page on the BBC (DR93) could be worth less than a link from a one page site with a DR of 10, if that site only links out to yours. Weird.



HOW USEFUL IS AHREFS DR FOR VALUING LINKS?

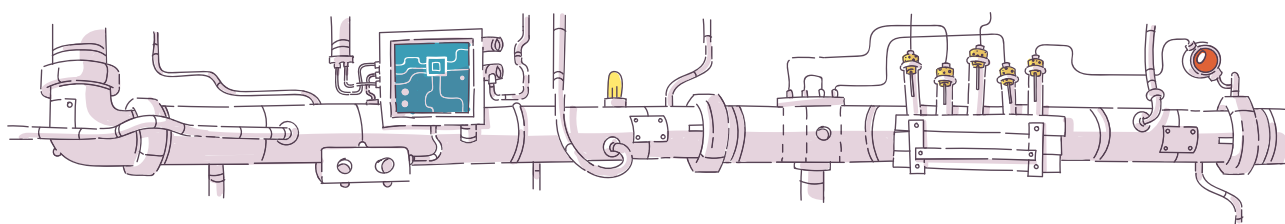
It's just another way to score backlinks in a way that potentially emulates some aspect of Google's algorithm like PageRank does. A page passes a share of it's PageRank to the other pages it links to and the more pages it links to the smaller that share, (but the way link value is calculated at Google has transcended that simple mathematical formula a long time ago and DR kind of ignores those other factors).

DR is useful to get some indication of how hard it might be to rank for a keyword in a certain niche and it

correlates quite well to the search engine results pages (UR is more useful than DR for that purpose, but we will come to that). Comparing DR between similar sites is how Ahrefs suggest using it.

DR forms a minor part of our metrics based formula to value a link opportunity, and we do not recommend it solely for that purpose.

For anyone wanting to get any degree of clarity rather than none, a quick glance at DR scores can provide that.

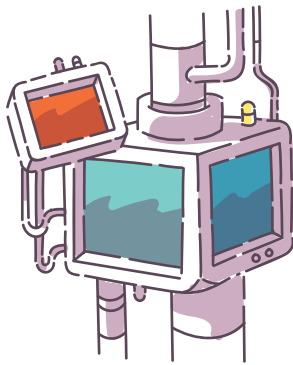


Moz.com Domain Authority (DA)



WHAT DOES MOZ DA MEASURE?

"Domain Authority (DA) has been viewed by the SEO industry as a leading metric to predict a site's organic ranking ability" Source: https://moz-static.s3.amazonaws.com/products/landing-pages/announcements/Authority_Scoring_Guide.pdf. DA is a helpful guess at how a site will perform in search relative to other similar sites trying to rank in the same niche. It is not a direct replacement for PageRank and Moz fo not pretend that.



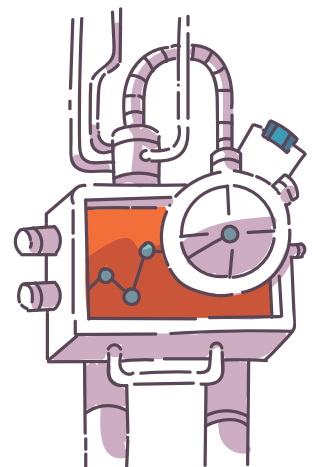
HOW IS DOMAIN AUTHORITY CALCULATED?

Moz uses link counts, known factors related to link manipulation, spam and link quality and traffic estimates. And others, which they are not clear about (probably for commercial reasons).

Overall, they try a lot harder for DA to be a complete solution to measuring the quality of a domain than the other metrics. They also say that they adjust DA *"relative to all the changes that Google makes"* so it's supposedly very current with algorithmic changes.

HOW USEFUL IS MOZ DA FOR VALUING LINKS?

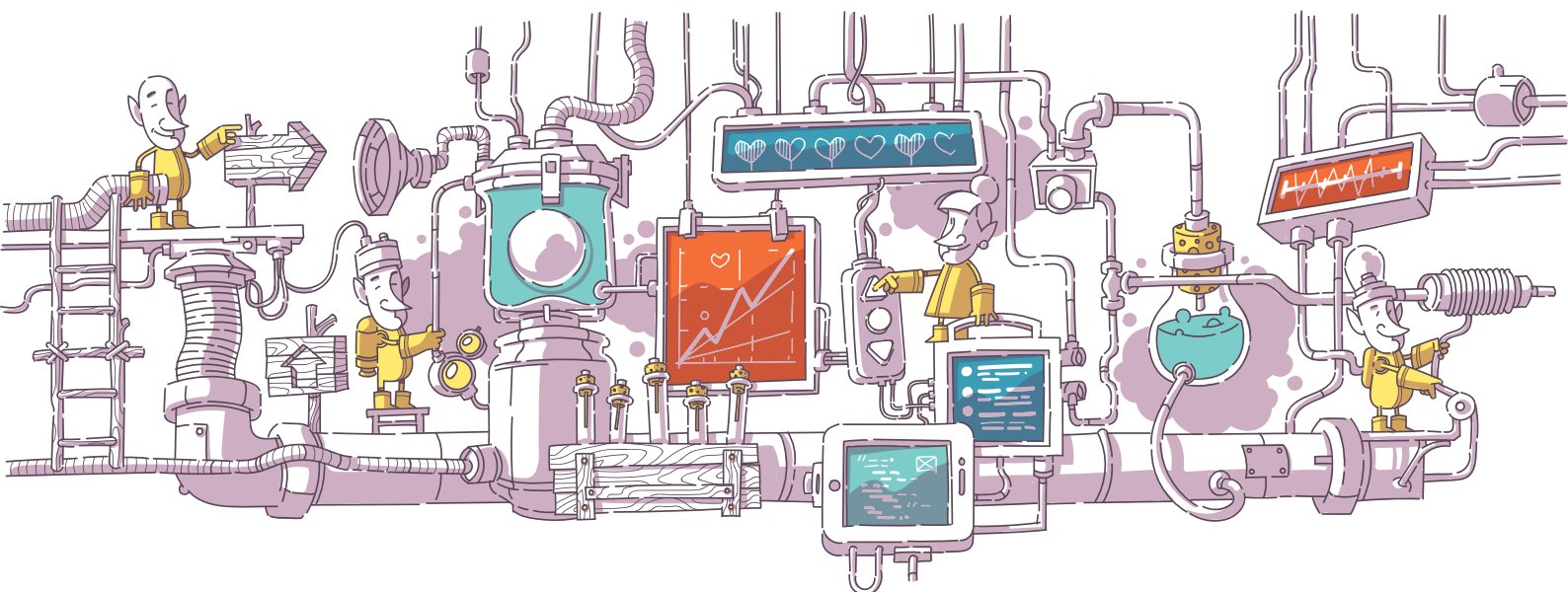
Of all the typical SEO metrics, DA correlates better to SERPs. So there's some confidence to be gained from that. But because it is a relative metric, a site in the yoga niche with a lower DA could be a higher authority site than a news site relative to its competitors. This is because the news niche is more competitive than yoga and sites need a higher DA to rank well (again this is an example of how DA is relative).



So is a DA40 worth more than a DA20? That depends on many things and why we don't use DA alone in our M-Flux formula (more about that later).

Moz have said themselves *"The first tip, never use Domain Authority in isolation. You always want to use it with other metrics and in context, because it can only tell you so much"*. Source: <https://moz.com/blog/domain-authority-seo>

DA is a great starting point. Combined with other metrics like traffic and a human review it can save time. **If I were forced to use one metric, DA would probably be it, so it has a leading role in our M-Flux formula.**



Majestic Trust Flow (TF)



WHAT DOES TF MEASURE?

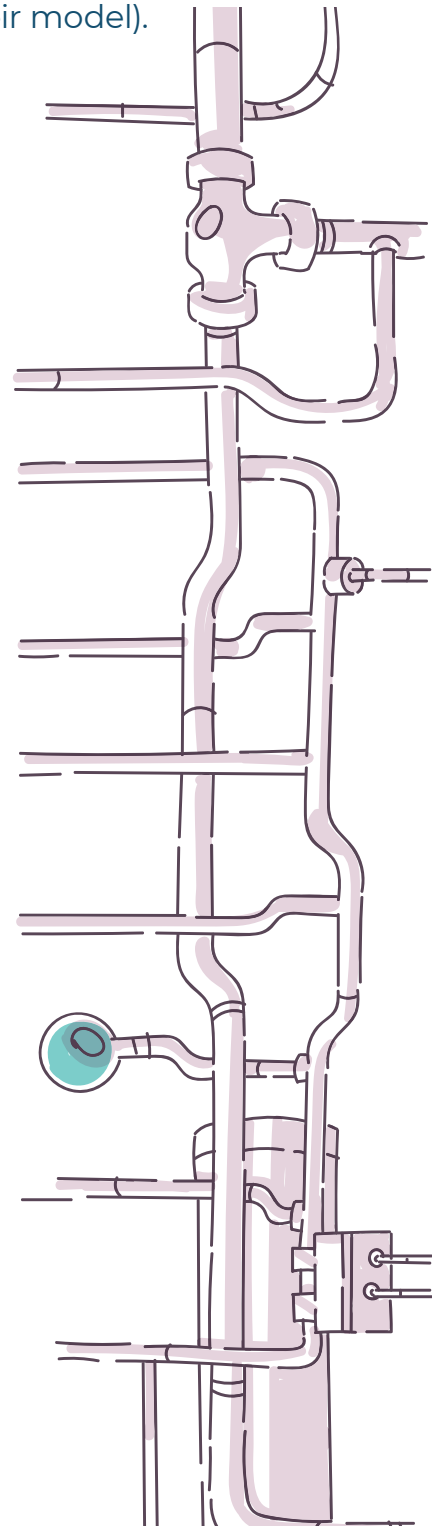
The amount of trust you can have in a website due to the 'quality' of its backlink profile. Quality in this context means authority, which is arguably a proxy for trust. A trusted site could be CNN.com or the BBC (again debatable, but it's Google we are dealing with and they cater for the masses so we follow their model).

HOW IS TF CALCULATED?

Majestic SEO compiled a list of what they deem to be highly trusted sites. To give a website a Trust Flow score, they measure the distance from these trusted sites using hyperlinks. The closer your site is to their set of trusted authority sites, the higher the Trust Flow (TF) your page gets. TF also flows through internal links so that inner pages get individual TF scores. Inner pages that are linked to from external sites will get more TF than those without links.

PageRank (still used by Google in its algorithm) uses links to help determine the relevance and quality of a page. The number and quality of these links form part of that calculation, so if a site is a long way from a quality site, the amount of PageRank passed will reduce. In this way, **Trust Flow is similar to PR because the further away a site is from a trusted source, the less TF is passed.**

(note: there is also Topical Trust Flow which breaks down the amount of TF passed through sites in varying niches. The usefulness of Topical Trust Flow has not been proved to me in any campaigns).

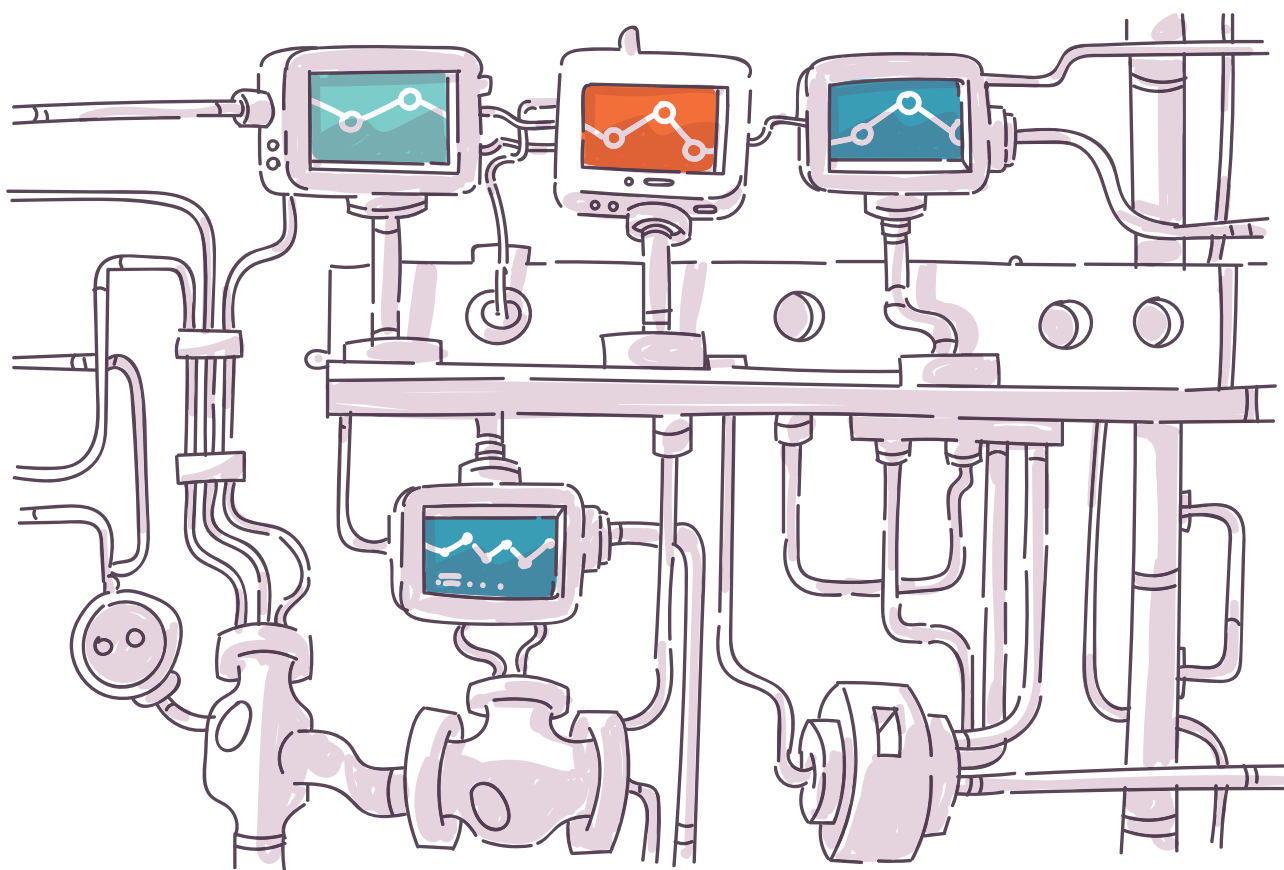


HOW USEFUL IS TF FOR VALUING LINKS?

Due to its vague similarities to Google's PageRank, it offers a more 'trust-based' method of evaluation. We have found it useful when investigating why a site might have a high DR or DA but isn't ranking well. You'll often find that a lower Trust Flow is lurking behind the high scores.

Trust Flow seems useful for sniffing out good backlinks and often reveals spammy backlink profiles that have a lot of referring domains (unique sites linking to your site). People that select sites based only on the number of referring domains are asking for trouble, but we'll get to that.

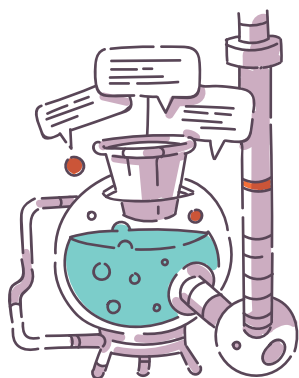
Again, using Trust Flow in isolation to value a link would not be advised.



Ahrefs / SEMrush Organic Traffic Estimates

WHAT DOES AHREFS / SEMRUSH ORGANIC TRAFFIC MEASURE

The amount of traffic a website gets from organic traffic sources.



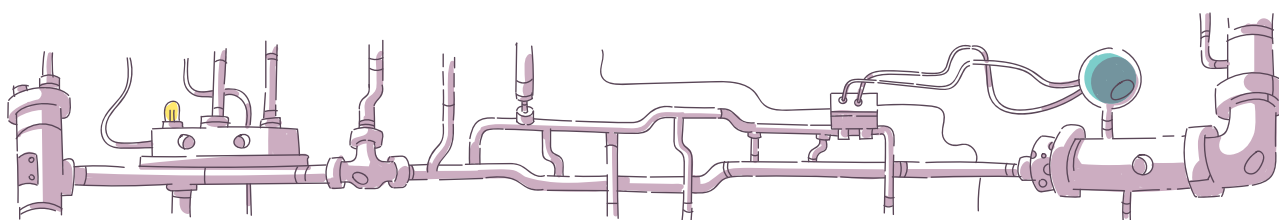
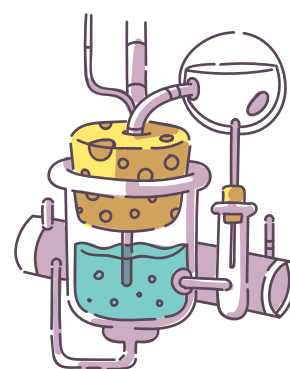
HOW IS TRAFFIC CALCULATED?

These tools look at the visibility of a site for its keywords in Google. They then use a formula to estimate the amount of traffic the site could get in each of the positions. E.g. Keyword gets 1000 estimated visits per month and the site ranks at number 1. The click-through rate at number one for this niche is 35%, so the site is assigned 350 organic traffic.

HOW USEFUL ARE AHREFS / SEMRUSH ESTIMATE ORGANIC TRAFFIC SCORES FOR VALUING LINKS?

The traffic formula has many possible flaws. SEMrush are using estimates to understand click-through rates and actual traffic. And since user behaviour is not always predictable, assumptions will return incorrect data.

However, the point is to compare 'apples with apples', and we aim to understand how much traffic a site gets relative to others. For that purpose, it is ideal, and we use it as a significant part of our site assessment formula (M-Flux).



Referring domain counts (Ahrefs/Moz/SEMrush etc.)



HOW ARE REFERRING DOMAINS CALCULATED?

Their software crawls the internet and counts up the number of unique sites linking to a website. Each site is counted once. For example, you may have 20 backlinks in total but from only five websites, so that would be 'five referring domains'.

WHAT DOES 'REFERRING DOMAINS' MEASURE?

As above. What it measures outside of that is open to interpretation. For example, older websites could have more referring domains and be deemed more popular and trusted (but that's a dangerous assumption).

HOW USEFUL ARE REFERRING DOMAINS FOR VALUING LINKS?

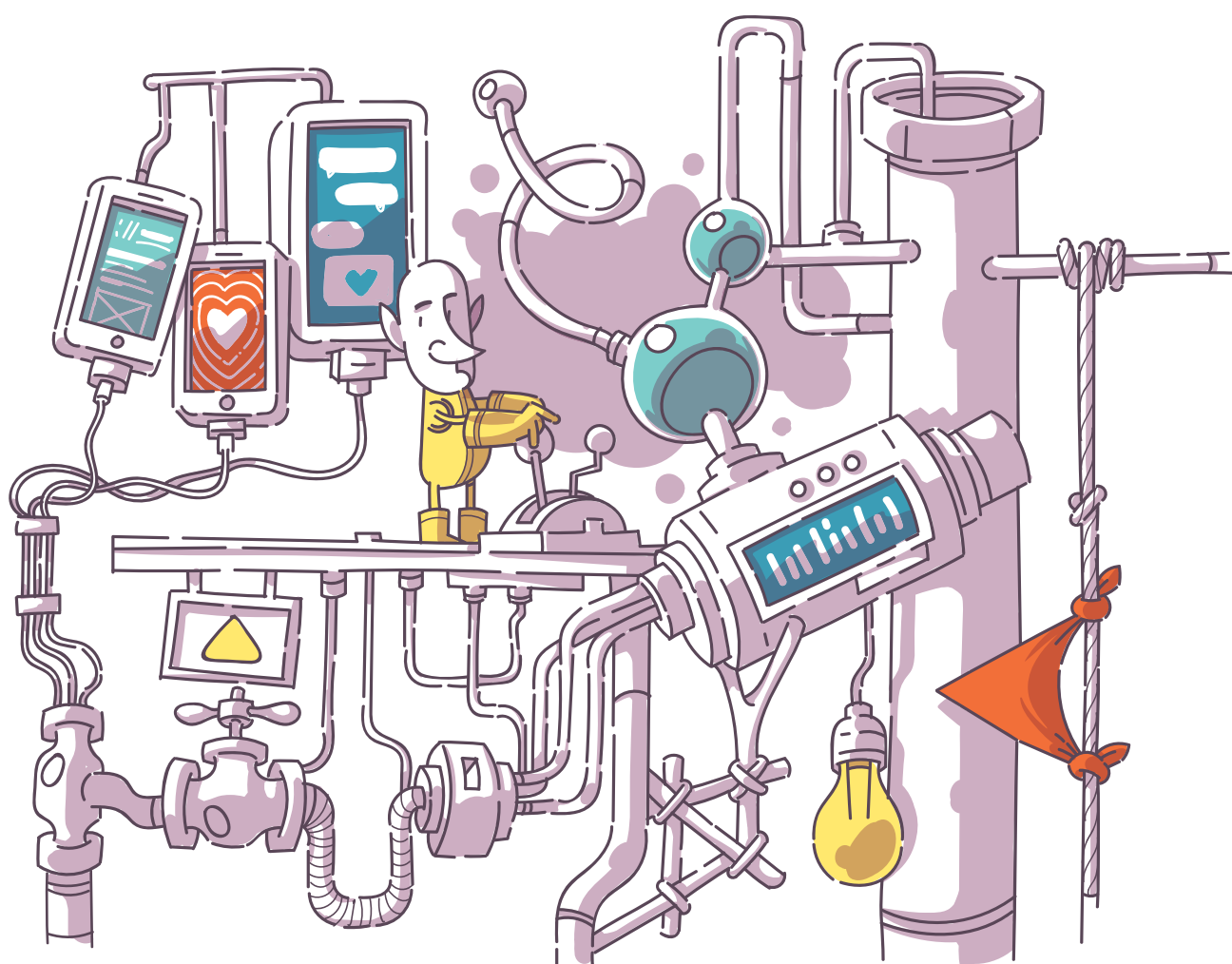
This one is interesting. Google uses links to assess the quality and relevance of a page. If a site has a lot of links, then at least some of them may pass some PageRank (PR). The problem is that a small number of links can pass more PageRank than a lot, so less can be more.

Another issue is not all links are indexed or taken into account by Google. Many webmasters use disavow tools in Google to null and void many of their bad backlinks.

Unless the disavow file is uploaded to the software you are using to analyse the backlink profile, the backlink metrics scores may be skewed.

This is the challenge that software like Moz and Ahrefs try to deal with and why referring domains is possibly the most useless method of valuing sites.

Anyone that puts a value to a backlink, whether it be monetary or otherwise using referring domains is potentially making a costly mistake.



Page-level metrics

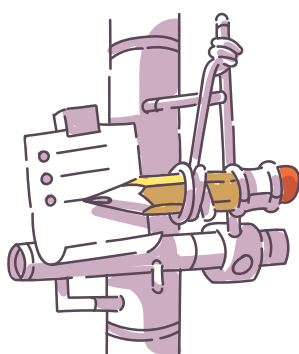
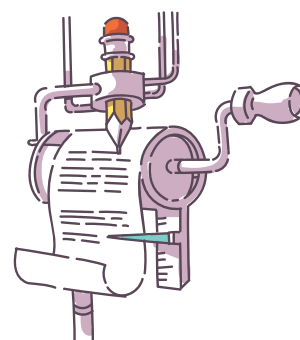
Moz Page Authority (PA)

WHAT DOES PA MEASURE?

Page Authority offers similar insights to DA but predicts how well a page might rank in Google rather than a domain.

HOW IS PA CALCULATED?

PA uses DA as part of its algorithm, so there is an aspect of how PageRank flows included here. However, it is virtually calculated in the same way as DA. It does not take into consideration keyword data or content optimisation.



HOW USEFUL IS PA FOR VALUING LINKS?

Again, it's a comparative metric, so you need to look at the pages around it to understand if it is scoring well. There are times when PA can be handy, such as when placing links on aged pages. It can also be used to predict the PA a new page may gain. Tip: This latter method is useful for selecting sites for guest posting.

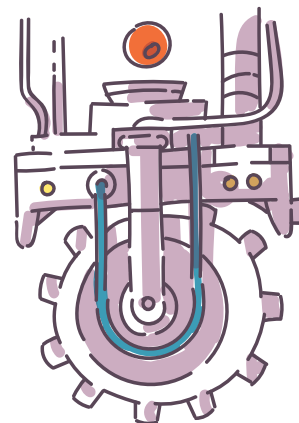
Ahref URL Rating (UR)

WHAT DOES AHREFS UR MEASURE?

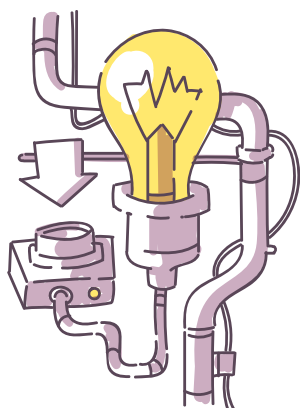
Ahrefs URL Rating (UR) works similarly to Ahrefs Domain Rating (DR) but by measuring the strength of a backlink profile of a page rather than a domain.

HOW IS AHREFS UR CALCULATED?

UR takes into consideration internal links. According to Ahrefs, the UR score passes from one page to another. DR splits equally between the pages it links to. Ahrefs say it follows the same "*basic principles*" as PageRank. I take that to mean they use a mathematical formula to share values, but do not incorporate other more complex aspects. It is widely speculated that Google gives different weights to different types of links, where they are placed, the anchor text, the attribute and proximity to relevant keywords and Ahrefs do not.



HOW USEFUL IS AHREFS UR FOR VALUING LINKS?



UR correlates well to SERPs and is useful for the same reasons as Moz Page Authority. Sites that have pages with good UR are good options for guest posting and link insertions (more on those later). Also, when looking at SERPs, UR can show you which pages are well linked. If all other factors are equal, UR can give you clues that a link from an internal page on a target site could improve the ranking of your pages.

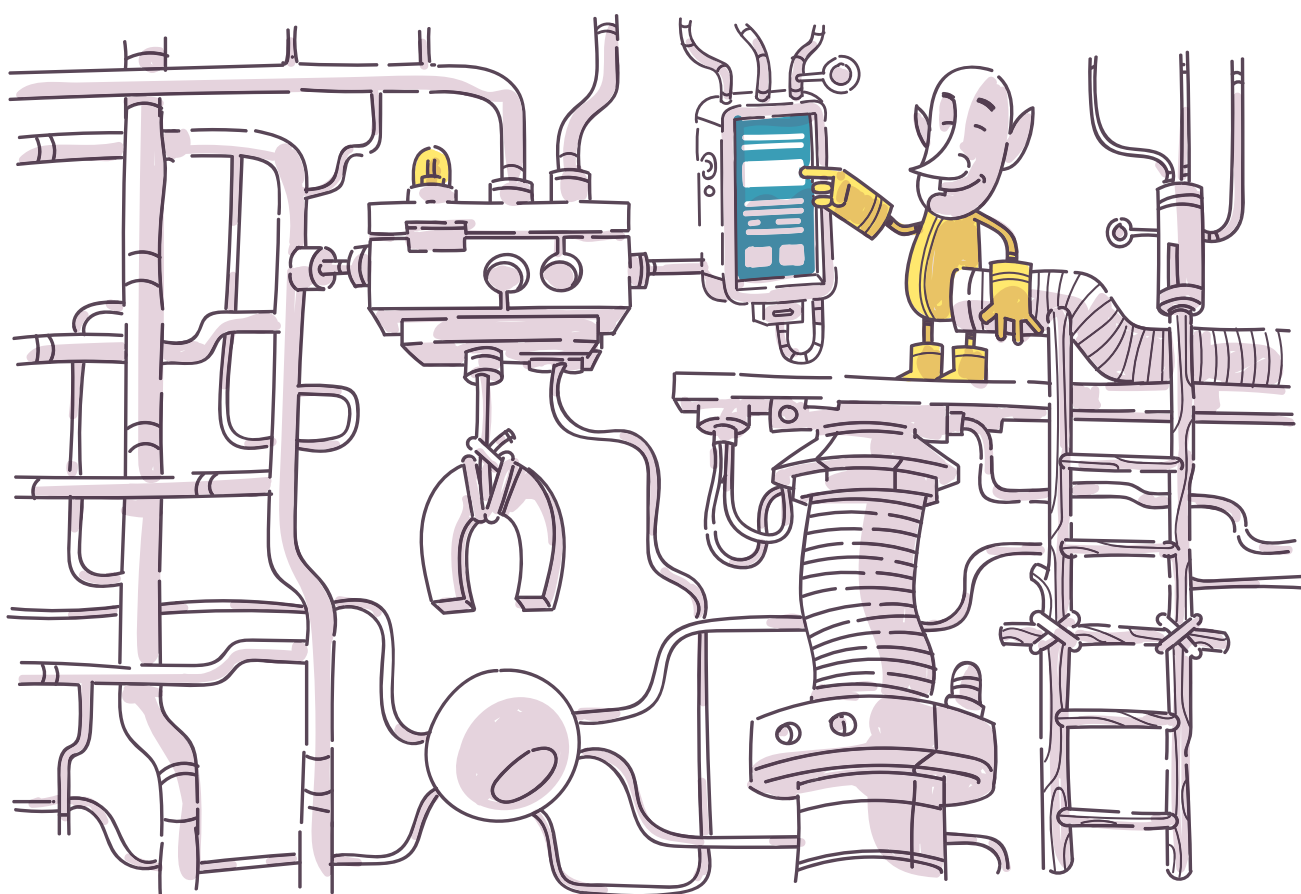
Summary of how to use metrics effectively for valuing websites

For a guide on what is needed to rank better, you need to look at the page and domain level scores that the competing websites have in the SERPs. You should aim to do everything better than these sites; including building better domain and page-level metrics.

You will also have to offer a better user experience. Without this extra crucial work, it is unlikely your page will rank in the top three against useful pages regardless of your backlink profile.

Blatant pitch: We use a site assessment formula we named **M-Flux**. It uses five different metrics, including DA/DR/TF/traffic/keywords plus a final human 22-point quality review. M-Flux provides a balanced score for a website by using a mix of metrics that measure different qualities of a website.

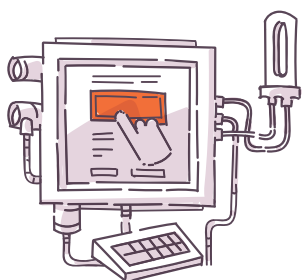
M-Flux supports the expert view that more metrics are better than one. It is trusted by SEO agencies that take a long-term view of building clients backlink profiles and are risk-averse. You can **buy M-Flux backlinks** on our site.



Backlink types and their value

Here you'll learn about the value of different backlink types, how they are built and how to use them correctly. Plus I'll show you the risks, benefits and costs associated with each type based on our experience.

Niche edits / curated links / link insertions

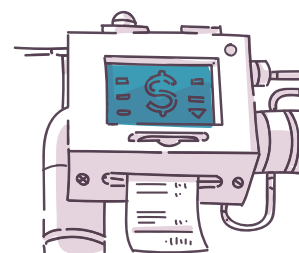


WHAT ARE THEY?

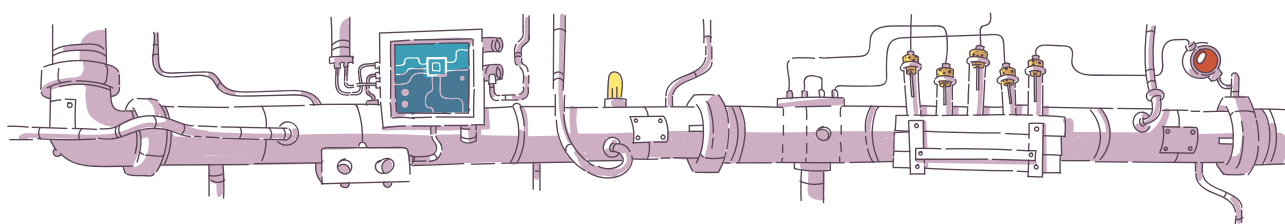
Backlinks that are placed within web pages that are already published. These are usually old blog posts or resources pages.

HOW ARE THEY SUPPOSED TO HELP WITH RANKINGS?

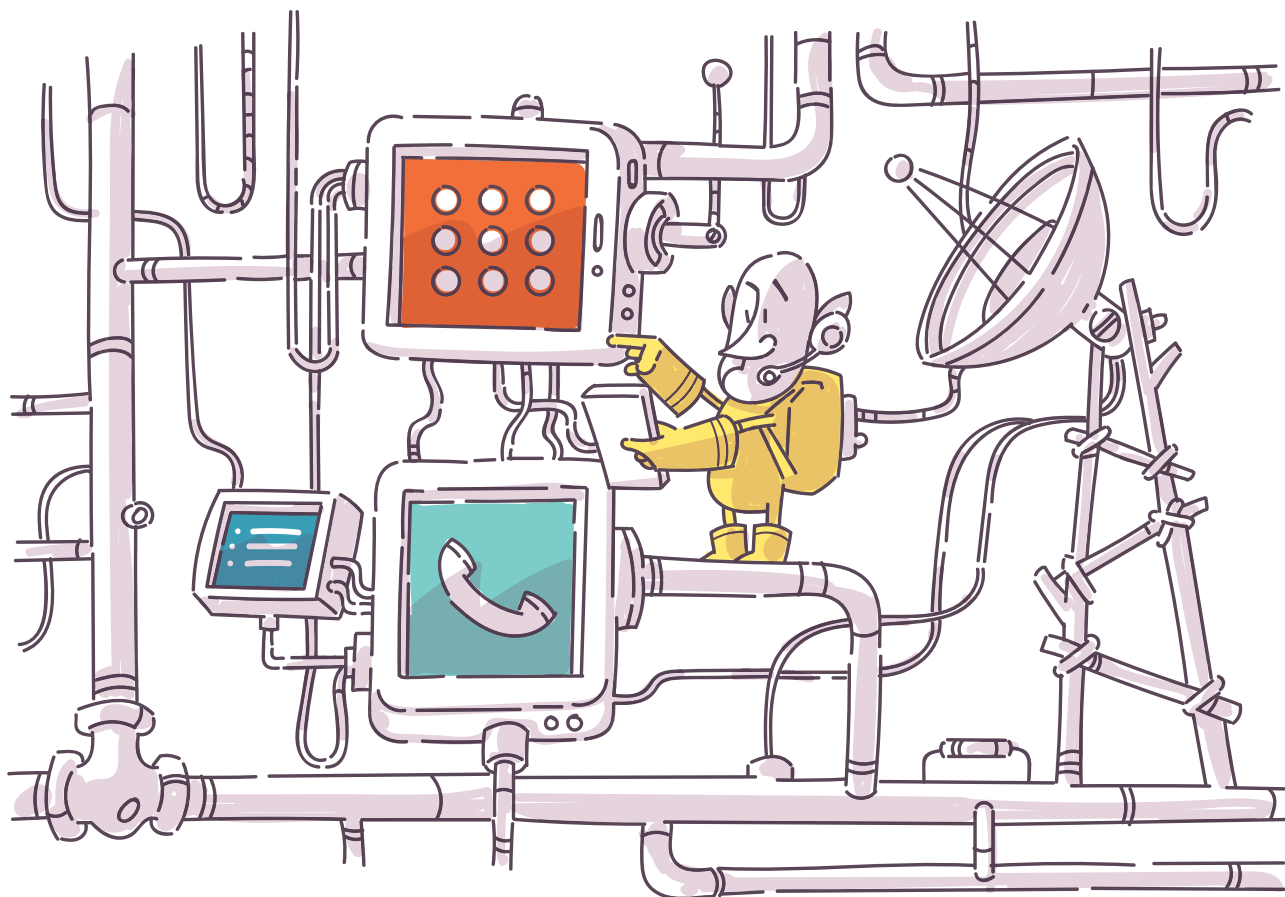
The backlink is added to an existing page that is relevant in some way to your target webpage. The theory is that an aged page will already have accrued some authority with Google. So any new links on the page will pass that authority to your page as soon as they are indexed.



Page strength should be measured by Moz Page Authority (PA) or Ahrefs URL Rating (UR) as discussed earlier. The sales pitch is that if a web page is updated with a new link, it will improve the content and Google will reward it, and the backlink will carry more weight.



WHAT COULD BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS METHOD?



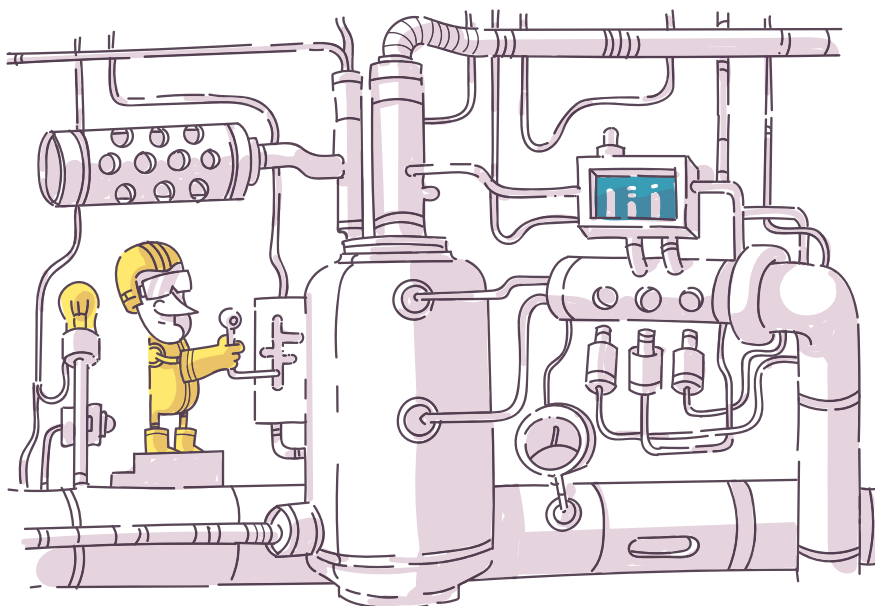
Aged pages may have garnered more PageRank than newer ones as that is how Google works. But a backlink on a site with high trust will pass more PR straight away. An old page on a low authority site will still be a low authority page and will probably stay that way.

Carefully chosen pages can be great for acquiring links. These could be pages that rank well for your target keywords or that get relevant traffic. Examples would be resources pages such as lists or comparisons that are regularly updated and therefore crawled by Google regularly. Other useful pages

for link insertions could be those with evergreen content such as 'how-to guides', glossaries and definitions pages or statistics.

To execute this type of backlink strategy correctly, you should carefully compile a list of targets using metrics and relevance as a guide. Then approach them with a suggestion to update the page that interests you. Over time you will build a portfolio of well-placed links that pass authority and maybe even drive a little traffic.

WHAT COULD BE WRONG ABOUT THIS METHOD



Unfortunately a lot. First of all, Google values links based on the context it finds them in. Old content may be indexed and have PageRank, but whether that link passes any value depends on the quality of the content and if it still has any use. A new backlink placed in an old news article or blog post that is out of date and deeply buried in a blog archive may be useless, even if it is on high-quality site.

Unfortunately, there is widespread abuse of this strategy because it can be easily automated. Packages of 20 or even 50 links placed a month are available that go against all the rules of SEO and common sense. Would it look unnatural for links to your site to suddenly appear on 20,30 or 50 old,

random webpages? Yes, it would. You have to ask the question “why would that many webmasters decide that your website deserves a link in the same month on an old page?”.

Placing a backlink in an old article that is out of date and deep within a weak website is probably pointless. A flurry of these links would be spotted easily by Google and ignored,

wasting precious budget. However, Google has stated that unnatural backlink patterns that are persistent, will be hit with penalties.

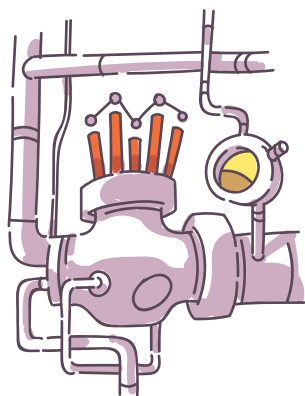
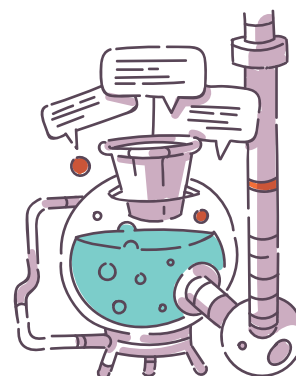
Even when the relevance is achieved, and the content is useful, the speed and randomness of the backlinks is still your enemy. Tread very carefully.

Guest posts (contextual links)

WHAT ARE THEY?

Guest posts provide users with similar value to guest features in magazines. They can be used to offer readers a fresh perspective or expertise that is not ordinarily published.

There is a very important differentiation to make with guest posts that could affect how Google values the links within them. The first type is content that is written by authors who do not own or work for the website and where the author is identified. The second is more like a site hiring a freelance writer and the author is not identified. Many websites need content but cannot afford to pay for writers, so free content is often welcomed from trusted sources. We call these "ghost posts".



HOW ARE THEY SUPPOSED TO HELP WITH RANKINGS?

Google loves content. It is what the search engine is built for, and it needs the world to provide it with new content every hour. No content = no Google. Websites are rewarded with rankings on Google for relevant keywords if their content meets the needs of Google's users.

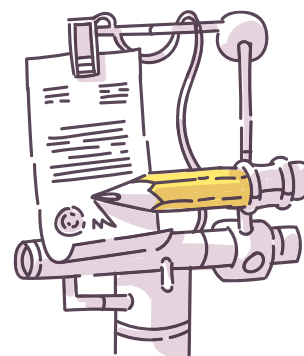
Guest posts add value to a website, and the links within them are votes for the linked sites. Google follows those links and rewards the linked page with PageRank and other scores unconfirmed outside Google. That flow of trust/authority/value/juice or whatever you call it is what helps the linked site content rank for its keywords better.

WHAT COULD BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS METHOD?

If used correctly, guest posting is excellent for branding, reputation building, generating traffic and higher rankings in SERPs.

To be effective, backlinks must be placed in contextually relevant content and link naturally to content that supports the article it is within (and be non-promotional).

An author can build a name for themselves as an expert in a specific niche or a brand could gain more visibility and trust by being associated with quality writing.



WHAT COULD BE WRONG ABOUT THIS METHOD?

All SEO practices are abused. That's a fact. Guest posting services have different levels of quality ('spamminess'). At the low end, the target sites are poor and usually part of a private network of sites. These sites are built purely for posting content with backlinks to manipulate Google.

Bad guest posting services will allow clients to select their anchor text without offering any advice. (UK Linkology always question anchor text selection once submitted by a customer to ensure it is not over-optimised).

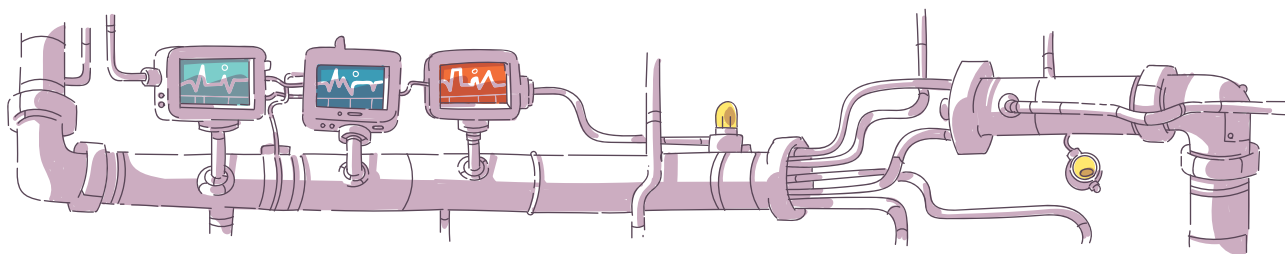
Bad guest posting will have no strategy behind it. This means backlinks will be published in random clumps with no concern for the correct link velocity required.

The content will be weak, offering little to no new perspectives and offer nothing to the users of the site where it is published.

The pages linked to from the guest post will not make sense or be weak themselves, like a product page for example.

Websites selected will be obvious link sellers. For example, the domain has content ranging from “How to find a plumber in Dakota” to “Why Switzerland makes the best watches” and everything in between.

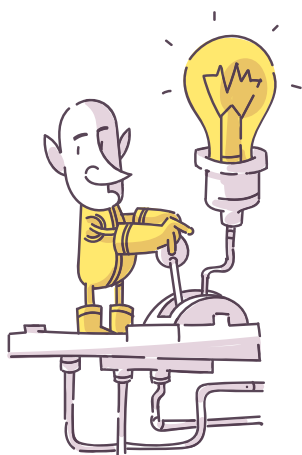
Pro tip: Guest posts where the author is identified can land you in trouble if you place do-follow links in the body of the article. In May 2020 John Mueller of Google confirmed that they have algorithms in place to detect this. His comments implied that the backlinks are ignored. We have not seen any evidence of penalties for using an approach where the author is credited but recommend that it is used with caution. 'Ghost posting' with no author credit is your safest option as Google struggles to identify them as paid posts.



Tiered link building (stacked backlinks)

WHAT ARE THEY?

They are backlinks to other pages that have your backlinks on them.

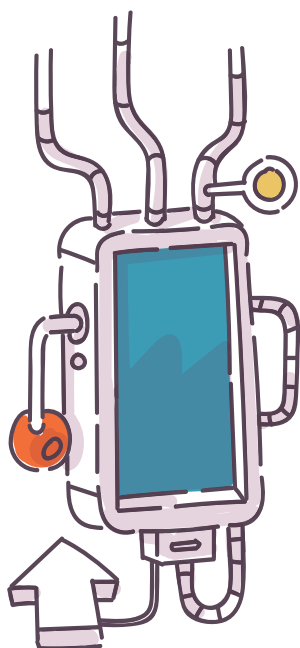
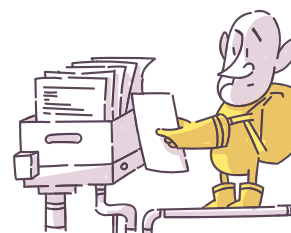


HOW ARE THEY SUPPOSED TO HELP WITH RANKINGS?

The theory is that by adding power to backlinks that are 'upstream' of your primary links, more PageRank will flow down to your website. Sellers say that it is a safe way to use lower quality sites to boost the flow of PR (which implies that the second tier backlinks are garbage in the first place).

WHAT COULD BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS METHOD?

If using the cheap services that are touted by some experts, I have to say nothing is right (see below). The alternative would be to use good quality sites but there's reasons why using them as tiered backlink locations is pointless too.



WHAT COULD BE WRONG ABOUT THIS METHOD?

The logic that using sites such as web 2.0 and blog comments or just weak blogs to increase PageRank is highly questionable. Google **stated in 2013 that they go 'upstream' long ago** so it's unlikely that you would get away with distancing your site from any second-tier backlinks you build. *"We're also looking at some ways to go upstream to deny the value to links spammers, so people who, you know, spam links in various ways, we've got some nice ideas on trying to make sure that that becomes less effective, and so we expect that that will roll out over the next few months as well."* Source: **Matt Cutts Video**

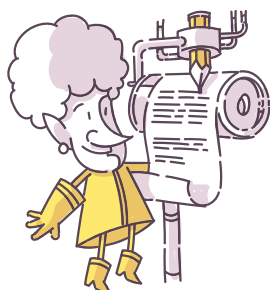
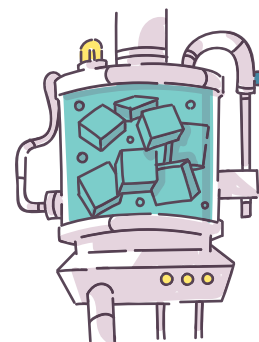
The second argument against them is if they are good for SEO, then why not link directly to your website? Linking from two or three tiers up just dilutes any power they have so why bother?

In summary, these backlinks are a product manufactured by SEO guys. Some think they know what they are doing, due to being misled by their results or follow some other deluded 'guru'. Others are consciously pulling the wool over your eyes. A bad link at any tier is a bad link and will be discounted so avoid this crap at all costs.

Private blog networks (PBNs)

WHAT ARE THEY?

A PBN is a collection of sites owned by one person or business. They are set up to avoid detection, using multiple servers and varying I.P. addresses (and much more).

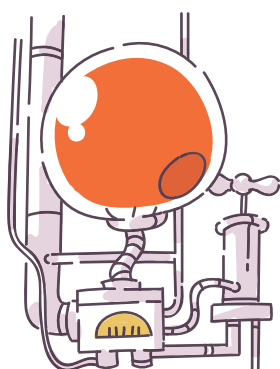
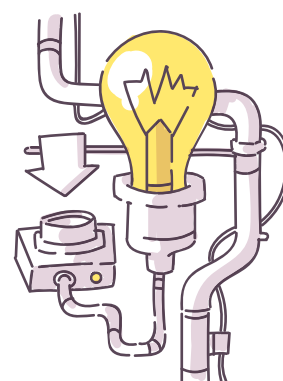


HOW ARE THEY SUPPOSED TO HELP WITH RANKINGS?

In the same way as genuine guest posting and contextual link building does. Google will index the page, assess it and follow the backlinks and pass PageRank.

WHAT COULD BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS METHOD?

This is one of the most dangerous black hat methods, but if done skilfully, you have complete control over your backlinks. Content can be published quickly with backlinks and pulled down if there is a problem. It is also very cheap.



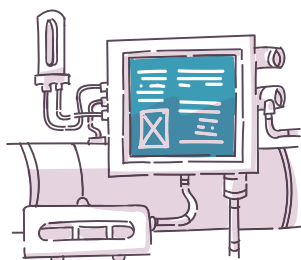
WHAT COULD BE WRONG ABOUT THIS METHOD?

There are many PBN sellers and choosing one that does it safely (if that is possible) is very tricky. The only way is to test multiple networks or go with a recommendation. Testing will require multiple domains that you are not bothered about burning. Proceed with extreme caution.

Broken backlink Building

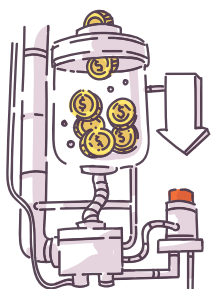
WHAT ARE THEY?

These are backlinks that are fixed or upgraded. The link builder finds broken links and offers a new page to link to or tries to get the webmaster to upgrade the link.



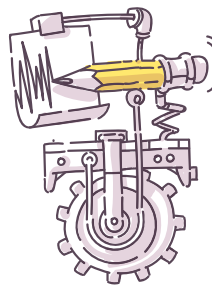
HOW ARE THEY SUPPOSED TO HELP WITH RANKINGS?

These are supposed to help like link insertions. The assumptions are that Google will recrawl the page and find the backlink and pass PageRank.



WHAT COULD BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS METHOD?

You need to find good pages, not just any old page you find. A page that gets traffic and has some authority, measured by DA/DR/TF, may pass PageRank. In some cases, you may even get some web traffic. Building links like this is not quick as some will suggest, but it can be effective if done with skill.



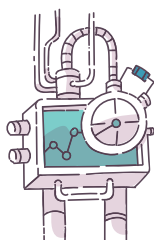
WHAT COULD BE WRONG ABOUT THIS METHOD?

Basically, everything that is wrong with bad link insertions applies here. Old pages with no authority are a waste of effort and money. **Unfortunately, the majority of broken link services, like link insertion sellers are using automation, and this exposes you to well-documented risks.**

Resource page backlink building

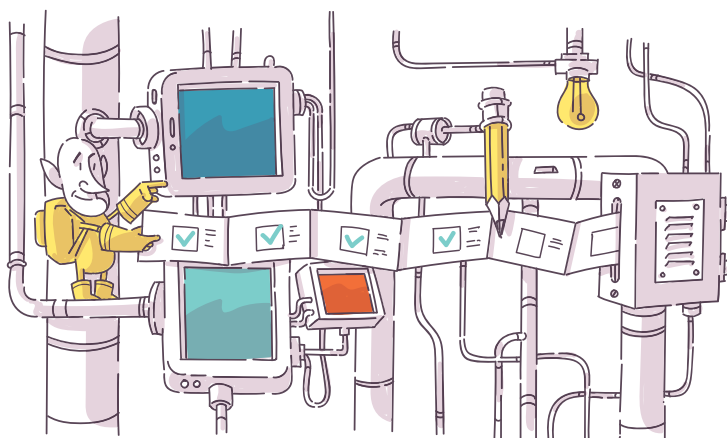
WHAT ARE THEY?

Any backlink that points to a resource on your website. The resource could be a free download, ebook, list, directory or similar.



HOW ARE THEY SUPPOSED TO HELP WITH RANKINGS?

They can help in the same way as any other contextually relevant backlink by passing PageRank and other signals.



WHAT COULD BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS METHOD?

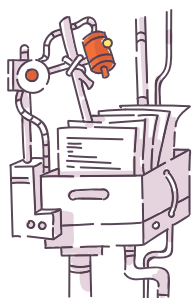
The good thing about this method is that it has content at its heart. To create a good resource requires creativity and skill. Having a resource to link to helps link builders secure good publishing and backlink insertion opportunities. Site owners can see the resource and feel confident that a backlink will be beneficial to their visitors.

WHAT COULD BE WRONG ABOUT THIS METHOD?

If you use a poor resource and source weak sites, then the result will be the same as any other low-quality backlink building technique.

Other low-value techniques that you should try to avoid doing at scale or at all.

Link building with website profiles

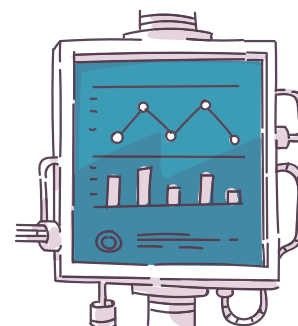


This is where a link builder signs up to a website and creates a user profile. In some cases, a link to a website can be added in the profile. These are incredibly weak links and to build any more than you need is pointless. Google can see these a mile away and you will be asking for a penalty

Press Release backlink building

Press releases are great for alerting the web that you have something new to say. Backlinks can be built quickly across many press releases sites; however, their ability to pass PageRank is low if not zero.

Google is aware of this practice and abusing it will have consequences, so setting backlinks to no follow is advised. A genuinely exciting press release may generate interest from good bloggers and other journalists and may lead to backlinks indirectly – that is how we would recommend using them.



Directories

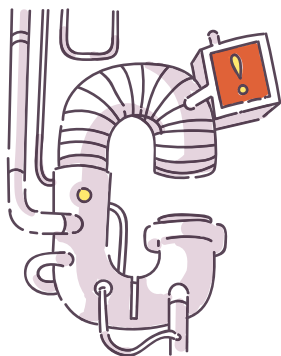
Build backlinks from directories relevant to your industry. Everything else is pointless and looking for trouble. Spend your \$99 on a family meal.

Blog and forum comments

Using blog comments for passing PageRank is useless. They are often set to no-follow by site owners to prevent abuse. Use them to build relationships and grow your reputation.

What backlink building approach is right for you?

Pure white hat?



Backlinks are considered to be a necessary evil for success in Google. It's easy to sit in a high tower and pontificate about white hat SEO and 'earning backlinks', but it's not a viable approach for many businesses. I agree, building a website with a fantastic user experience and amazing content should be the goal of any business. But to lie back and wait for the 'backlink fairy' to visit is naïve. If all marketers did that, there wouldn't be an SEO industry because so many would fail to achieve results. **Secret: Most 'pure' white hat SEO's talk about SEO but don't do it.**

Or measured risk?

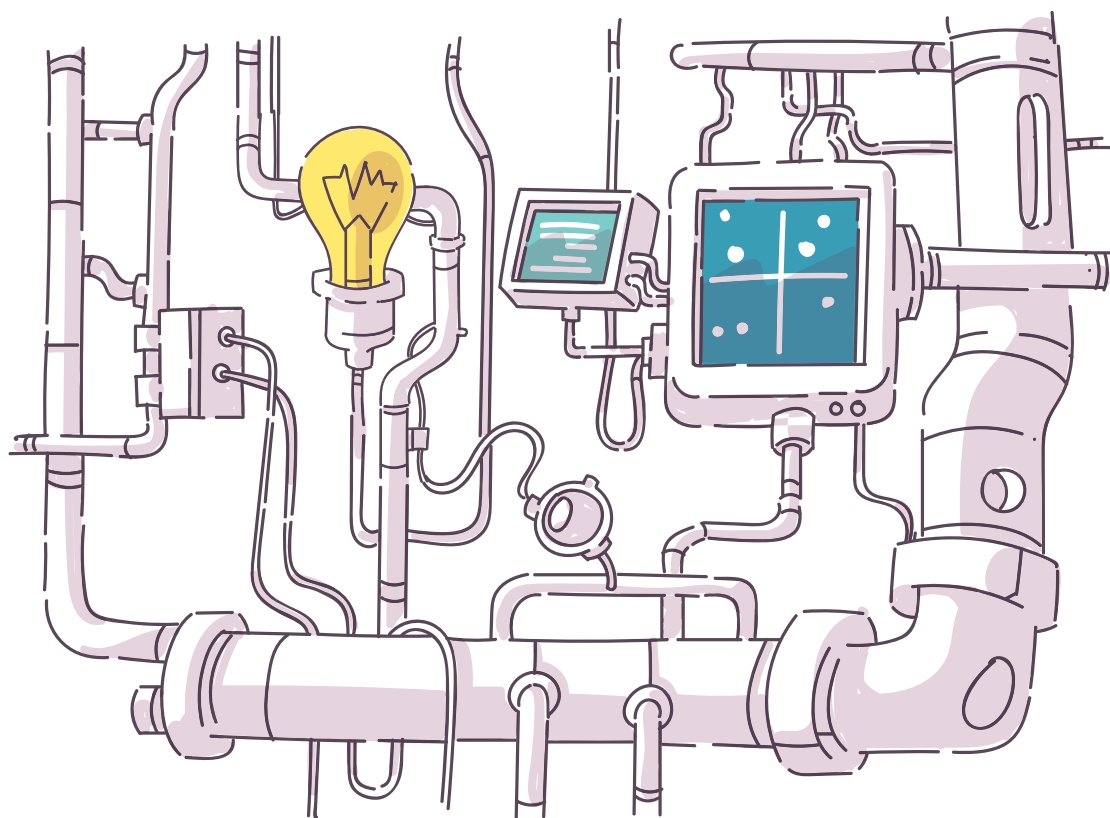
Most marketers prefer to be proactive, so the 'would be backlink builder' must decide where along the line of risk they operate. Often this is a commercial decision, thinking very little about the consequences for customers. Cheap backlink services attract many customers. A simple look at financial data will show you it can be a lucrative business so it is tempting. However, burning client sites and constantly hunting for new business by promoting risky, outdated practices is not what

we do. I made a disclaimer at the beginning of this ebook which I will repeat.

"There is nobody outside of Google that can give you concrete answers about what backlinks influence rankings. In fact, most digital professionals, including the owners of some link agencies, don't even get close. The best advice I can give you is to be careful where you get your advice."

Jason Brooks, Founder and Director

Shameless pitch (plus discount code)



To add to the points above, I will say that UK Linkology offers a service that attempts to lower the risks and increase the benefits. We use guest (ghost) posting and contextually placed links alongside some high-quality link insertions and digital PR.

None of these strategies are true 'white hat' because they aim to manipulate Google's SERPs to get results. Google has been clear about what it considers to be link schemes so there is no hiding if you are going by the book.

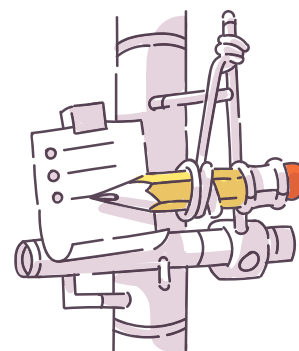
We also have an 'as close to white hat as you can get' digital public relations service. This service combines SEO techniques with public relations to acquire backlinks from high-end sites.

We use journalists to build relationships with high authority sites using eye-catching storylines and engaging content. We also ensure that backlinks are included in the content but do not always concern ourselves with the no-follow/do-follow status.

Discount code

If you got this far I hope you learned something and as a reward for staying with me, here's your code that will get you 10% off your first order of a minimum value \$200.

You can use it on the shopping cart or quote it in an email or call to our sales team.



VALUE10