



Link Building Clinic Week 7: Getting Technical

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Keyword Analysis & Link Targeting

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What Is A Link Anyway?

- Direct text hyperlink, in anchor tag
- Redirect text hyperlink, in anchor tag
- Bare URL exposed in HTML or Javascript code
- Image link with ALT text
- Image link without ALT text

- These are all “links” to spiders
- Some won’t pass reputation



Understanding Redirects

- 301 Moved Permanently
 - Should be seen as a link
- 302 Found / Moved Temporarily
 - Might be seen as a link
 - Google likes shorter URLs
 - Canonical URLs
- META Refresh
 - Quick refresh likely seen as 302
 - HTTP Status Codes respected
- JavaScript



Spider Control

- Robots.txt
 - Works for URLs & scripts that fit the limits
 - Whenever possible, drive solution to robots.txt
 - Use robots META tag as a BACKUP, for stupid spiders
- Robots META Tag
 - 3 directives: noindex, nofollow, noarchive
 - Downside? Spider must fetch the page!
 - <HEAD> is NOT the HTTP Header!
- Robots.txt can block links & address duplicate content
- Example – affiliate tracking scripts can be blocked via robots.txt
 - Disallow: /afftrack.cgi



.htaccess for redirect to www

ReWriteEngine on

ReWriteCond %{HTTP_HOST} !^www\.example\.com

ReWriteRule ^(.*)\$ http://www.example.com/\$1 [R=permanent,L]

- Should not affect subdomains at all
- Redirection can be applied to many duplicate content problems & other link issues
- Redirection can make links untrackable
 - Links pointing through multiple redirects MAY NOT show up as links to the target URL



Google's "nofollow"

- "Might" be honored by other search engines
- Not interpreted as "don't index"
- What is it good for?



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Link Recovery

- Pages move
- Sites move
- People link to the wrong page
- People put up broken links
- Link recovery is about fixing these problems
- Contact & Update
- Redirection



Monitoring & Handling 404s

- Check logs for 404 errors
- Redirect broken links to content
- Custom 404 error page/script should return 404 HTTP status code
- Recommendations
 - Return 404 Error
 - SHOW SOME CONTENT
 - Search results / search box
 - Site map
 - Home page
- Fix broken links within the site



Mapping & Implementing Redirects

- Lots of .htaccess entries can create a performance hit, so manage by exception
- Consider a custom 404 error script
- Lookup tables – map old/broken URLs to new URLs
- If requested URL is found, send 301 redirect
- If requested URL is not found, log/notify and return 404



Affiliate Tracking Systems

- Affiliate programs can generate significant revenue, if recruiting, management, support, and terms are good
- Tracking the sale to an affiliate usually means setting a cookie
- Cookie set on site entry
- Cookie retrieved at checkout
- Using 3rd party cookies
- Using the HTTP-referrer



Natural & Unnatural Affiliate Links

- Unnatural – same text, run of site, ...
- Natural – contextual, varying text, added value
- Don't think penalty, think filtering
- Can we avoid the filtering?
- What does the affiliate get?



The Perfect Affiliate Program

- Copy & Paste code
- Server Side code offered
- 3rd Party Cookies
- Referrer As Backup
- 301 Redirect
- Support affiliates with advertorials, articles, plug-in content, rotating content, multiple creatives
- The “perfect” program would require server side code, and fetch the creative on the fly – allows for testing, adjustment of copy / offer, unique / persistent links on static URLs
- As a backup, Javascript & RSS
- Rotate the creatives to vary link text



Adjusting The External Profile

- Oops my rankings are slipping...
- Better fire more links in!
- Where can I get them?
 - From affiliates
 - Directory submissions / edits
 - Articles
 - Content distribution partners
 - Etc.
- The perfect world is one where you can do this immediately



Plug-In Content Pseudo-Code +

(red = Javascript)

```
<table><tr><td width=150>
```

```
<p><b>Getting Back Your Old Windows Control Panel in XP:</b> If you've used Windows for a while, and have just upgraded to XP, you may be a little confused about what happened to your control panel. To bring back the classic look, and make it easy to find the controls you're looking for, just...</p>
```

```
<p>Free Computer Tip Of The Day supplied by <a href="www.your-url-goes-here.com">Bob's Discount Computer Hardware</a></p>
```

```
</td></tr></table>
```

- Easy to script – your “cousin who knows PHP” can help
- Copy & paste Javascript code exists for RSS feeds
- Include images, text
- Wrap this up as server-side code, and YOU can control links in real time



RSS Feed Part 1

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="ISO-8859-1" ?><rss version="0.91">
<channel>
  <title>Interesting Blog</title>
  <link>http://www.example.com/blog.htm</link>
  <description>News items of interest for everyone in the world</description>
  <image>
    <title>Search Engine News Blog</title>
    <url>http://www.example.com/blogbutton.png</url>
    <link>http://www.example.com/blog.htm</link>
    <width>90</width>
    <height>52</height>
    <description>Search Engine News Blog</description>
  </image>
  <item>
    <title>Title of Post</title>
    <link>http://www.example.com/title-of-post.htm</link>
  </item>
</channel>
</rss>
```



RSS Versions

- RSS 1.0 & earlier allow images for channel, but limited <item> to title / description / URL
- RSS 2.0 allows images, media etc. as enclosures in an item (URL link)
- RSS vs. Atom what do we care?
- XML as a swiss army knife



RSS For Affiliates

- RSS is just a way to package information
- Open Source JavaScript can be modified for presentation
- Open Source code / scripts exist for all server side scripting languages, and can be modified
- Why use RSS? Because it's easier than rolling your own protocol
- Disadvantage – competitors can monitor
- A zillion applications, limited by your creativity



Q & A

- Next Week – Planning Workshop
- Conference Calls – Monday & Tuesday



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