

# PENGUIN- PROOFING *Your Site*



*Links act as votes from one site to another, and they largely determine PageRank and SEO.*

*Publishing unique and targeted content from Brafton puts you on the path to successful white hat link building – and we can also help you recover and regain search presence if you get hit.*

# 01

## **PENGUIN RECOVERY AND LINK BUILDING**

Google Penguin targets websites engaging in webspam techniques to boost PageRank, primarily shallow link schemes. Affected site might see:

- Lower rankings for specific keywords.
- Lost organic search traffic (overall and for specific keywords).
- Deindexing of specific pages or sites.

It's important for business owners to understand what types of links are considered spammy and what votes are viewed as favorable and worthwhile.



## 02

### IDENTIFYING AND REMOVING BAD LINKS

Links generated through online directories are often of low quality and come from websites that don't offer any value. Just because a website has thousands of links, these aren't necessarily counting as positive votes (and if the linking sites are low quality, it may be a sign the content doesn't have much worth to internet users).

To find the spam links on your site, we help clients use free tools, including:

- Moz Open Site Explorer.
- ahrefs Site Explorer.
- Majestic site Explorer.

You'll want to use these tools to review your backlink portfolio, and you should focus on your top-linking pages. Some hallmark signs of spammy links, include:

- Non-English domains.
- .info domains.
- Pages that are "/links" or "/directory" pages.
- Page authority <20.

Using these and other link standards, we can pinpoint links hurting your search standing.

## 03

### TIPS FOR REMOVING LOW-GRADE LINKS

Removing undesirable inbound links requires some research. Webmasters must identify low-grade votes and reach out to site owners to request removal. Here's how:

- 1 | Set up a new Terms of Use section
  - Outline a strict inbound linking protocol that third-party sources must follow when referencing your site.
- 2 | Reach out to third-party webmasters
  - Send webmasters of low-grade sites cease-and-desist letters and ask them to remove inbound links leading to your site within 24 hours.
  - Reference your "Terms of Use" section.
- 3 | Disavow the entire domain
  - This tool should be used when you've followed the previous steps and links continue to lead back to your page, affecting search visibility.
  - Disavow the entire linking domain.  
(<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/disavow-links-main?pli=1>)
- 4 | Report to Google
  - If you have reached out to third-party sites, and they have neglected to follow through with your request, contact Google by submitting a Reconsideration Request.
  - (<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/paidlinks?pli=1>).

These tips will help any site hit by Google's Penguin rebound and become discoverable through search.

## 04

April 24, 2012

V 1.0



May 25, 2012

V 1.1



October 5, 2012

V 1.2



May 22, 2013

V 2.0



October 4, 2013

V 2.1



## STRENGTHENING YOUR LINK BUILDING TO PENGUIN-PROOF YOUR SITE

So, how can webmasters build favorable inbound links? Quality, custom content.

- 1 | Build out the homepage with more content: Adding fresh headlines to homepages keeps crawlers coming back, no external links needed.
- 2 | Create more landing pages: Better organizes the website, creates new opportunities to win organic links and shows internet users where to go next on the site.
- 3 | Develop a site map: Improves crawlability and ensures all pages are indexed.
- 4 | Begin varied and dynamic organic linking: For every two internal links on a page, there must be one external link. Also, internal links should use a mix of exact- and partial-match anchor text.
- 5 | Enhance social media presence: Builds social link bait, promoting high-quality content and driving niche, social links.
- 6 | Add high-quality, relevant and engaging content to the website: Expert content writers create custom content to help populate your website with high-quality blog posts, landing pages and rich content.

Webmasters looking to boost PageRank through quality inbound links should continue to monitor links for four basic quality signals.

- 1 | A healthy link portfolio includes diverse domains - a site with too many inbound links from one source looks spammy.
- 2 | Inbound links must come from relevant domains - it doesn't help an airline company to have inbound links from a plumbing site.
- 3 | Links should have exact- and partial-match anchor text, ensuring they're editorially driven.
- 4 | Links should be from trustworthy and credible sites.

Proactively monitor websites for poor inbound links and keep an eye out for new ones that may surface down the line. More, adapt a content strategy with a mind for which formats and subjects bring the most valuable editorial-driven links to your site.

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## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Non-English domains
- .info domains
- Pages that are "/links" or "/directory" pages
- Page authority <20

## HOW TO CLEAN UP

- Setup a new Terms of Use section
- Reach out to third-party webmasters
- Disavow the entire domain
- Report to Google and submit a Reconsideration Request

1.0

April 2012



1.1

May 2012



1.2

October 2012



2.0

May 2013



2.1

October 2013



<http://www.brafton.com/glossary/google-penguin>

<http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/2008/10/good-times-with-inbound-links.html>

<http://insidesearch.blogspot.com/2012/04/another-step-to-reward-high-quality.html>