

049 - What is Link Building?

Gert Mellak 0:00

Link Building is something you probably want to keep on doing. It's not something you just do for a couple of months and then stop, because this would mean to Google, that you are getting good signals from the web. Good relevance authority metrics from the web for a couple of months, and then it suddenly stops. It's definitely an unnatural pattern. So if you go into link building, be prepared to continue your link building as long as it brings results, obviously, because you want to keep those positive signals, those votes of confidence towards your brand coming over time.

SEO Leverage Podcast Intro Music 0:34

Welcome to the SEO Leverage Podcast, where we talk about search, marketing, and conversion.

Gert Mellak 0:44

Hello, and welcome this is Gert Mellak. And you're listening to Episode 49 of our SEO leverage podcast. Thank you so much for tuning in. Today we are talking about link building. What is link building? Is it really worth doing? How can you go about it? And a lot more. Before we jump in directly into this topic, I just want to give you a heads up that Seoleverage.com/podcast, you're going to find all our podcast episodes and written versions of it. if you want to check them out. And we also put any necessary references in all the interviews. Very often come with the additional links to additional tools and guides. So you might want to check this out Seoleverage.com/podcast. Link building is something that has been around for a long, long time. And the reason is because, Google really pays attention to links. If you want to rank in SEO, in Google, it's really important to have the content right and also get the link building right. So you want to make sure that links come from relevant places pointing to your website to your content, because ultimately, Google sees those as so called votes of confidence. Those links transfer little bit of authority from other sites to yours. So it obviously then also depends on how authoritative, how relevant those other pages are. As sources for links, the ideal ones are the ones that already rank on Google for a keyword you want to come up for. So if you want to come up for iPhone cases, for example, every page coming up on the first pages of Google for iPhone cases would be a very good and relevant page to get a link from. Because Google already thinks those are relevant. And then if they link to you, they somehow endorse you in this space, and essentially put you above their own sight when it comes to iPhone cases in this case. So you definitely want to have a good idea about the top pages on Google on the keyword you're interested in and spot them if there are some hidden opportunities to get a link from. You're going to find a lot of competitors, they're not going to link to your site. Let's be honest. In many cases, we had cases where they do, but there are going to be some blogs, forums, etc., that might be willing to publish a guest post or publish a content there that then links to your site, endorses your site in this context. I'm very often asked about the best link building strategy. And the best link building strategy for me is to keep it natural depending on a niche you're trying to

rank in. Every niche, every keyword essentially triggers a different set of algorithm layers at Google, and works a little bit differently. So you really need to know what is happening for a specific keyword or at least your industry, but also for a specific keyword. How much does a ranking depend on links, how many links would be natural, just checking out the top 10, top 20 pages? How many links do they usually get, and you want to emulate something similar. If everybody has 5 or 10 links, and you have 500, it's definitely raising a red flag. Link building per se, is against Google's guidelines. Everybody does it in order to compete, but officially, it's against Google's guidelines. So Google tries to make sure that manipulated link building cannot affect the rankings too much. And we as SEO agencies try to still find loopholes and make sure that we get our clients enough potential to actually rank and part of this is definitely link building. There are different link building tactics you might come across. One of the most common ones is the so called guest posting, which essentially consists in reaching out to a website that has a blog or a new section. So offer them some free content in exchange for a link from this content. So if we stick with the iPhone cases, any technology blog, for example, could be a good fit, or a blog about mobile phones or mobile technology, etc. or Apple product directly, would be relevant. And we could reach out to them and say, Look, I'm happy to write an article about 10 things a good iPhone case should have in terms of characteristics, and in exchange for a link back to my website that's about iPhone cases. And if they accept this content gets published, and you get a link. Another tactic is the broken link tactic for example. Many of your competitors are going to have links pointing to pages on their site that do not exist anymore. Maybe it had a guide some time or a PDF or something like this. And then if you follow those links where they come from, you might be able to reach out to those sites and say, look, you're linking to a page that doesn't exist anymore. I have a better option, a better alternative, you might want to correct this link, because for your visitors, it's a broken link. They're going to see a for a four page, which is not ideal, and they have a much better and much more updated content here. So maybe link to this one. It's called a broken link tactic. There are a lot of link tactics out there, and you probably want to look into link building as something you might want to outsource. Link building is really tough. Link building requires years of experience to do really, really well. And it's really easy to get link building wrong if you're not able to analyze the site you consider as potential prospects in an appropriate way. Also, if you don't have the necessary tools, in order to evaluate and conduct quite a few sites, we talked to a lot of sites in order to get a few links. So it's makes it really hard to do in house. So you might want to search for a trusted partner here. A link good link usually doesn't only convince Google of the quality and relevance of your website, but it's also going to bring referral traffic. What does this mean? It means that if I publish an article about iPhone cases, this article itself on this other website is also going to rank if it's written well. And it's also going to attract traffic. So apart from the link being a positive signal for Google, that link is also going to send traffic directly because people are going to click on this link when they come across that article and come to your site. So you can also check in the referral traffic and a Google Analytics, how much traffic comes through there, and how your link building efforts essentially performed when it comes to referral traffic. There are a lot of spammy link building techniques out there. You probably, if you have a blog, you definitely are getting comments spam. This was something that was around years ago. I haven't seen it working really lately. But still there are people thinking that spamming 5000 blogs does something. There are other spammy techniques where people even hack sites. We had a client once who got

hacked, for a link building, and people just added content to their site. And without him knowing and use it as a source of a link building campaign. So this is definitely something you want to take into account. There is a thing called negative SEO, it hardly ever happens, but it does happen. And this is when competitors probably built very irrelevant, useless, shady links from shady neighborhoods. Meaning they use the lowest quality of site, most unrelated maybe. Or it's just slightly related just to confuse Google enough and the link to your site. So if you're a plumber in Sydney, and you get links about being a plumber in Ottawa, Canada, it might be enough for Google in order to get a little bit confused and say I'm not sure if they're still in Sydney, or if they are now moved to Canada with this brand. So sometimes, spammers are really smart, you want to make sure that you're aware of the new links pointing to your site, which is why in our Erica program, we have interlinking, internal but also external linking is a part of what we check on a regular basis to make sure we are aware of any links that are pointing to our clients site. And this way can react as soon as possible. There is a tool called, the disavow tool. We want to mention in this context, which allows you to communicate to Google which links they should kindly ignore in their algorithm. Technically, it shouldn't be necessary anymore because Google is very advanced and refreshes and analyzes and devalues links on a regular basis on its own. But sometimes when there seems to be a correlation between negative links and ranking drops, for example, it might still be a good idea to file a disavow file a request. So summing up, link building is definitely important, an important part of every SEO campaign. My suggestion is always to check first what you can do on your site, what you can do on your content, and then bring the link building in. Link building is something you probably want to keep on doing. It's not something you just do for a couple of months, and then stop because this would mean to Google that you are getting good signals from the web and good relevance authority metrics from the web for a couple of months, and then it suddenly stops. It's definitely an unnatural pattern. So if you go into link building, be prepared to continue your link building as long as it brings results obviously, because you want to keep those positive signals, those votes of confidence towards your brand coming over time. Definitely something hard to do in house. If you want to have more information on how you could outsource this, head over to Seoleverage.com. Get in touch with us. My name is Gert Mellak. You're listening to SEO Leverage. Thank you.