

## Link Popularity

Building link popularity is one of those classic chicken and egg situations. If you want to improve the popularity of your web site then one of the most effective methods is to generate inward pointing links. The difficulty is that most Webmasters are only interested in linking to popular web sites!

Research indicates that most Search Engines' algorithms contain some measure of link popularity when ranking a website. Theoretically those websites that have the most links pointing to them must be important and thus worth indexing. It can be tempting to use FFA (Free for all) link programmes to "boost" your popularity artificially. Unfortunately the search engines and directories can view links to such site as "spamming". Indiscriminate use of these programmes may lead to having your web site de-listed.

When making a request for a link exchange, you should only contact the owners of web sites that offer a good match with the content and theme of your web site. The website's theme or topic and general layout is the first thing to review. Sites with themes or topics that are related to or compliment yours should be considered as your main link partners. There are a couple of useful tools that can help you to identify target sites, the Google Toolbar will help you to identify the "importance" of a web site.

Ideally, the target site will have a links page or resource area. If the site does have a links page it should be easy to find, be well designed and contain good quality links. Some sites may have instructions for linking to them and they may even publish a links policy.

Remember that establishing a link from another site will form an association with them and, therefore, it is important that you only associate with credible organisations. And, you should always ensure that links to your web site originate from well designed, content rich web sites that are attractive to both potential customers and search engine spiders.

When identifying your potential main linking sites, it is worth undertaking a bit more detailed research. If possible, examine the source code and the backend of the web site. Check for the proper use of frames, headers, titles, meta tags, alt tags. Do you think that keyword locations and density seem appropriate and "optimised"? A good quality web site will be attractive to the search engines and, therefore, the web searcher should find it.

Web searches are responsible for a high percentage of your traffic. So when you are designing or redesigning your site, make sure you take the critical optimisation factors into account. Do contact Web-Optimisation for professional assistance with your web site.

The most important element of any website is content. People will visit, stay, and return if your content is relevant to their needs. It seems everyone has put a website together but not everyone has put together a website that adds value to the Internet community. The most popular web sites are the ones that have valuable information or resources for their audience. The best web sites fill a niche in their market, the design and content is themed and the site provides the information that their potential customers are looking for. Review your content. If you website is set up to sell a specific product, don't simply try to sell to your visitors, give your visitors some history or interesting facts about your product, set up links to companies that supply you and who provide additional information, discuss different uses of your product, have information on accessories, etc. Give them something (related to what the site is about) to read and digest. You want to be a resource for your customer!

Successful web sites need to be popular, you need good quality links, and to get links, you need to demonstrate to other webmasters that your site is worthy of a link. Take the time to design your website properly and optimise it for both potential customers and search engines.



Make sure your website has content that people want and that the website is easy to navigate and user friendly. It might take a little more time to get it up and running, but it will be worth it, ten times over.