

# Increasing Your Company's Presence Through Link Building



**Ko**MARKETING  

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ASSOCIATES

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EXTENDING YOUR ONLINE MARKETING CAPABILITIES THROUGH OUR EXPERTISE

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## Overview

Link building is a critical component when it comes to building keyword visibility for search results in search engines like Google and Yahoo.

All search engines incorporate the quality of links, and the volume of quality links associated with a Website when assessing the site's "overall value" online. In addition, links to and from websites and within websites are the critical mechanism that allows search engine programs (spiders) to get all of the different pages on the Web. While search has and will always improve in its ability to index content without the necessity of links (a la Google Sitemaps, My Yahoo and My MSN, Delicious etc), inbound link relationships will always be a factor.

Most importantly, inbound links generate traffic and visitors, which ideally leads to more acknowledgement and visibility for the Website, and in turn, more inbound links.

In summary, no Website is an island. There must be inbound links pointing to it to not only foster search engine relevance, but also to foster overall online visibility and presence.

## Factors Involved in Establishing Quality Link Opportunities

It's important to note that factors help qualify how important a potential link building opportunity will be, but are not always black and white guidelines when creating link building strategies. The following factors should be considered when creating a link building strategy and identifying link opportunities. In addition, we have compiled factors that can create a negative impact in search presence when building inbound links.

### Link Building Factors Related To Search Engine Optimization:

- **The Text Used for the Link Itself and Immediately Around the Link**  
The use of keyword rich text within your links and around your links is critical for search engine optimization. Good links feature descriptive messages in and around the link information as well.
- **Volume of Links That Point to the Page Where You Want a Link**  
As link volume can positively effect your Website's search presence, it also affects the overall value of each inbound link. A link on a page which is also referenced by several hundred websites may have much greater value than a page with limited links pointing to it (of course, it also depends on the values and numbers of those links...)
- **Industry and Thematic Relationship**  
Obtaining links on websites with similar backgrounds, information and related subjects is important. In addition, similar to the factor previous, how the Website is "perceived" in its community is also highly weighted.
- **The Location of Link on Web Page**  
Links listed in the left-hand navigation, or clearly defined footer sections have less value than links found in the main copy section of a webpage. Links created in articles, used as cited sources or reference points in the main body of the page are much more valuable.
- **Age of Target Website/Web Page**  
The age of a Website and/or Web addresses can come into play, as older sites (generally speaking) tend to represent greater value, purely given the fact that they have been able to (for whatever reason) stay alive. This factor alone should not be used to determine if a link opportunity is of quality, but can be used in conjunction with other factors.
- **Additional Factors That Should Be Considered**

- The link should be expected or considered to bring quality traffic, outside of SEO purposes.
- One-way links are often better than reciprocal links. Links created purely for the purpose of SEO are not as valuable as they used to be for establishing keyword rankings. There are still reasons to create these types of links however, based on strategy objectives, i.e., partnerships, sponsorships etc.).
- Your link should not be in a long list of links. You should generally avoid link submissions where over 100 outbound links can be found on the page.
- The link should be on the page for a sustained period of time (buying links may be OK, but make sure there is longevity).
- The domain extension can be considered a factor when obtaining inbound links. Domain extensions that are .edu, .gov and .org's are usually considered more reliable in terms of organizational stability, reputation and quality, both online and offline.
  - In this same idea, .biz, .info and other new domain extensions can sometimes be seen as less authoritative.
- Similar to the last factor, the volume of .edu, .gov, .org websites pointing to a site you are targeting for a link can influence the over value of that link (as well as any of the other factors listed).
- Note the specific title and filename of the webpage that the link will be placed as the usage of terms such as "Links", "Useful Sites", "Interesting Sites" etc can be associated with lower value link relevance. While it is unlikely that these types of links would negatively affect a site's search presence, webmaster's historical misuse of these types of pages has ultimately led to their devaluing overall. Again, this is subjective based on additional factors of the Website and link opportunity.

## Link-Building Factors That Can Create Search Engine Penalties

In addition to factors that help establish the overall value of a link opportunity, it's important to consider the following factors that can have a negative impact on your search presence.

- **Linking to "Bad Neighborhoods"**

Bad neighborhoods contain links to adult sites, gambling, illegal content etc. Search engines may also flag sites as being in a bad neighborhood if they are not in compliance with the majority of factors as listed above.
- **Link Spamming**

It is important to always obey the terms of service or rules of etiquette when considering a link opportunity. You can receive a penalty in search if you violate these rules. Examples include:

  - Adding links in forum threads when they are not solicited
  - Adding links in guest books, message boards, etc. when not requested
  - Adding links to blog comments that are not related to the conversation at hand

## Components of a Link Building Submission

When submitting a link to a Website, here is a list of information that will usually be asked for or should be included in some form, in every link solicitation:

### Link Title

Titling will usually require you to input the company and/or Website name. If possible, adding keyword descriptive text is beneficial, but most legitimate Website linking opportunities will not allow for this.

#### Suggestions:

- **TITLE**

### Link URL

Traditionally, you will input the home page Web address – make sure to include the <http://www> which precedes the domain name. In some cases, especially if you are highlighting a specific service or promotion, you should add the direct link to that specific page.

#### Suggestions

- <http://www.domain.com/>
- If we were targeting “A SPECIFIC THEME”, and have a page describing that service, you should attempt to submit that specific page’s Web address.

### Description

The description is a critical field which will allow you to add keyword descriptive text to support your Website. Under normal circumstances, it’s important to include the most valuable keywords for your Website but if the submission is related to a specific product line or theme, use appropriate descriptions as appropriate.

Note that you should always refrain from using excessive promotional jargon in your descriptions (such as “#1”, “The Best!” or “ALL CAPITAL LETTER DESCRIPTIONS”)

## Contact Information

We recommend using a dedicated email address for link building (such as [webmaster@CLIENT.com](mailto:webmaster@CLIENT.com)), because:

- This helps streamline communication and organization of efforts
- There is a possibility that the email address you submit will be put on mailing lists or other syndicated information. This helps prevent spam.

Only enter a real name if you feel completely confident in the Website's privacy policy. Entering something like "[YOUR COMPANY'S NAME]" or "[YOUR COMPANY'S NAME] Webmaster" is sufficient in most cases.

Always enter your city, state and postal code, especially when focusing on regional or local link opportunities.

## Keywords

Occasionally sites will offer the ability to place keywords as well. While this is rarely used for the benefit of external SEO, keywords may be used for the sites internal search engine, and/or for tagging specific information about the content. You should only use your primary keywords for this.

## Link Building Strategies

There are many different strategies for obtaining inbound links and these strategies can range from very easy and mechanical to long-term relationship building and technologically intricate. Here are the most common and practical forms of link building strategies.

### Directory Submissions

The most direct strategy for obtaining inbound links, directories are online catalogs of Website information organized in a hierarchal manner. In addition to general Web directories, there are specialty directories such as press release, article, regional, business-specific and technology-specific (such as blog, RSS, etc) directories.

Appendix B lists specific instructions for submitting to three major directories: DMOZ, Yahoo and Business.com

In addition, the standard link building criteria for submissions, located in the next section of this document, are typically required for general Web directory submissions.

### Competitive Link Building Research

Competitive link building involves analyzing the inbound links to your competitors' Websites, as well as Websites that appear at the top of search results for your main keywords.

The process of analyzing competitive inbound links is as follows:

- Note websites addresses that represent your competition and search results in the top 10-20 search rankings for keywords you want to rank favorably in Google, Yahoo or applicable search engine.
  - Note the domain name specifically (many search results will not be purely the domain name).
- Using [AlltheWeb.com](http://AlltheWeb.com), access the "Advanced Search" command and enter the following information:
  - link:www.domain.com (where "domain" represents the applicable domain we are searching)
  - Under "Domain Filters", exclude the domain we are searching with

Screenshot highlighting fields to fill out:



- Click "Search" at the bottom to obtain inbound links for the applicable competitor.
- Use the search results for competitive inbound links to identify link opportunities appropriate for your Website as well

## Keyword-Specific Link Building Research

Keyword specific link building involves entering specific keyword queries in Google or Yahoo's search fields designed to potentially pinpoint link opportunities through the identification of websites offering link submissions and resources already on their Website for your strategic keyword.

The process for identifying keyword-specific link building opportunities is as follows:

- Enter the following types of queries in Google or Yahoo (substitute "keyword" for the strategic term(s) for which you are trying to identify links):
  - Keyword directory
  - intitle:directory [Keyword]
  - inurl:directory [Keyword]
  - [Keyword] directory
  - [Keyword] \* directory
  - directory \* [Keyword]
  - [Keyword] catalog (this term ranges in value and may not have much here)
  - [Keyword] catalog
  - "list of [Keyword] sites"
  - "list \* [Keyword]"
  - "list \* [Keyword] \* sites"
  - [Keyword] websites
  - [Keyword] sites
  - "[Keyword] sites"
  - "[Keyword] websites"
  - "recommended links" [Keyword]
  - "recommended sites" [Keyword]
  - "favorite links" [Keyword]
  - "favorite sites" [Keyword]
  - [Keyword] "add url"
  - [Keyword] "add site"
  - [Keyword] "add website"
  - [Keyword] "add your site"
  - [Keyword] "add a url"
  - [Keyword] "add \* url"
  - [Keyword] "add \* site"
  - [Keyword] "add \* website"
  - [Keyword] "submit url"
  - [Keyword] "submit site"
  - [Keyword] "submit website"
  - [Keyword] "submit your site"
  - [Keyword] "submit a url"
  - [Keyword] "submit \* url"
  - [Keyword] "submit \* site"
  - [Keyword] "submit \* website"
  - [Keyword] "suggest url"
  - [Keyword] "suggest site"
  - [Keyword] "suggest website"
  - [Keyword] "suggest your site"
  - [Keyword] "suggest a url"
  - [Keyword] "suggest \* url"
  - [Keyword] "suggest \* site"
  - [Keyword] "suggest \* website"

## Commercial Link Acquisition

There are appropriate reasons to purchase inbound links for your Website. Specific criteria should be involved in the selection process however, such as:

- Will the link drive traffic outside of search engines?
- Is the site thematically related to your Website (will customers of the linking Website find value in your Website)?
- What factors make the Website a “quality online source” (factors may include Google PageRank, Alexa Rank, inbound links to the domain, etc.)? Consider the previous information provided for “Link Building Factors” above.

## Press Release Syndication

Issuing online press releases as part of your overall marketing strategy also boosts your SEO presence because releases are picked up by other websites and find their way into archives where they sit and the content ages. As the content ages, any hyperlinks that are embedded in the release that point to your site can provide link popularity for your domain. This is especially true if your releases are picked up by websites that allow for keywords within the body of the release to be hyperlinked to pages on your site. Acquiring these keyword-based hyperlinks is typically a function of the press release service that you use and your purchase of this capability when you use the service.

See [Appendix C](#) for specific press-release guidelines and information.

## Event Sponsorships, Strategic Partnerships and Organizational Affiliations

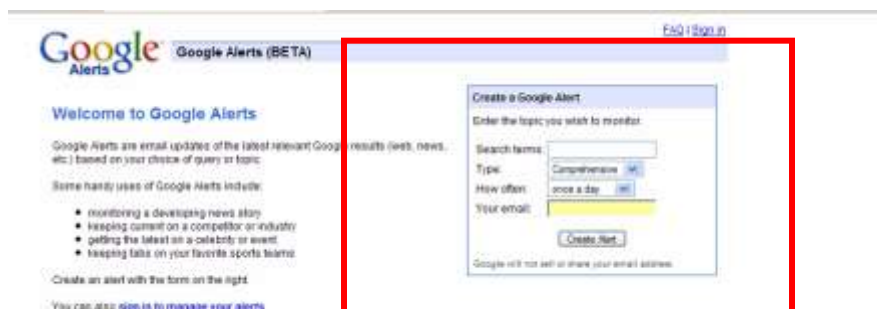
You should always look to receive inbound links when your company/business is involved in event sponsorships, organizational affiliations and strategic partnerships. In addition to the title of the Website/organization and home page Web address, always try to incorporate a keyword-rich description in the link information.

## Sign Up for Google and Yahoo Alerts to Identify Link Opportunities

Using Google and Yahoo Alerts allows for daily updates on where and whom is referencing strategic keywords. In addition to link opportunities, this type of strategy allows for identification of competitors, potential partners and news sources.

- **Signing Up for Google Alerts**

<http://www.google.com/alerts>



Signing up to receive Google Alerts is as easy as entering the following:

- Keywords (we recommend placing “” around the complete terms, so as to filter out non-relevant results)
- Type (You can choose Web, News, Blogs etc – initially, we recommend “comprehensive” in order to determine where the best information is coming from)
- How Often (Once a Day or Week is best, depending on availability)
- Email (email address to receive alerts)

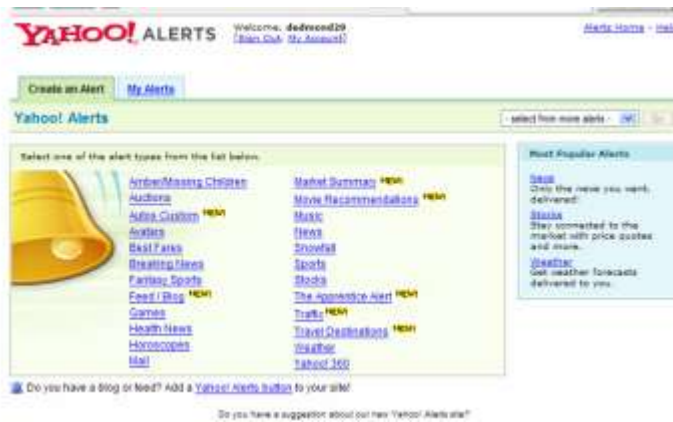
Once you create the alert, a verification email is sent to you for confirmation. Upon confirmation, you will begin receiving your alerts as often as selected. To Cancel, simply click the link in one of the emails

received.

NOTE: Google Account holders can manage all of their alerts on one page. You do not need an account to receive alerts though.

- **Signing Up for Yahoo Alerts**  
<http://alerts.yahoo.com>

NOTE: You need a (Free) Yahoo Account to register for Yahoo Alerts



- Yahoo allows users to subscribe to “Theme” specific alerts only.
- If you are already aware of RSS feeds, Industry Publications etc, which are related to your business, signing up for these alerts allows you email delivery of the news appropriate to you.

## User Contribution Based Outreach

Being recognized in the industry, through community outreach creates inbound traffic to your site with readers already interested in the products and services you are selling. In addition, effective user contribution creates industry credibility and also can create link building opportunities when users begin seeing a user (and user's Website) as an informative and valuable source.

Note: Always input your Website address in our user profile.

Search queries designed to help find user groups appropriate to a keyword strategy (replace “keyword” with strategic keyword opportunity):

- Keyword forum
- Keyword forum
- "Keyword forum"
- intitle:forum Keyword
- inurl:forum Keyword
- Keyword blog
- intitle:blog Keyword
- inurl:blog Keyword
- "add comment" Keyword
- "post comment" Keyword
- Keyword members
- Keyword join
- Keyword tag
- intitle:tag Keyword

- intitle:post Keyword
- Keyword group
- intitle:group Keyword

Note: Read the rules and terms of service for any user group before entering and initiating conversations. Many groups prohibit excessive selling or promotional messaging unless another user specifically asks for a reference or comparison.

## Social Media Integration

Social media Websites are a larger user-contribution type link building strategy, similar to forums and groups. There are two types of social media strategies, based on business objectives:

- **Blog Contribution Strategy**

Contributing to high-quality blogs related to your industry helps improve your overall Web presence and exposure. Blog comments allow for users to add their Web address to their signature. While most blogs disable the capability for users to take advantage of search engine indexing of these signatures, quality comments and contributions get your profile and your Website noticed by other users who are already interested in your industry.

In addition, (similar to forums) consistent, quality contributions can offer an opportunity for users to submit links when appropriate. This should only be done when you are directly responding or answering a question, concern or discussion.

Finally, in the same way that quality contributions get noticed by the community, there is also the opportunity for users to add your resources and information to their blogs and discussions. This is of even greater value when the blog you are contributing to regularly, recognizes the quality of your content and comments.

- **Social Media Contribution**

The most popular social media strategy is in using websites which aggregate user-contributed information, providing high volumes of traffic and referrals to the best selections. These websites represent different industry verticals and types of content.

The most popular social media Websites today (and the general focus of information):

- <http://www.digg.com/> (Technology, Business-focused Content)
- <http://www.youtube.com/> (Video)
- <http://www.flickr.com/> (Photos, Images)
- <http://del.icio.us/> (Bookmarks, Favorites)
- <http://www.reddit.com/> (Bookmarks, Favorites)
- <http://www.stumbleupon.com/> (Bookmarks, Favorites)
- <http://answers.yahoo.com/> (Questions and Answers)
- <http://www.wikipedia.org> (Reference Material)
- <http://www.netscape.com/> (News, Articles and Mainstream Content)
- <http://www.squidoo.com/> (Business-focused Content)

Individuals and businesses interested in contributing to these resources have to register for accounts (usually free) and then follow the guidelines for contributing content.

See Appendix D for specific guidelines on social media Websites

## Natural Link Building Development

Natural link building involves building Website material and content superior than the competition and the industry, in order to provide a continued opportunity for obtaining inbound links as reference points and citations.

This strategy emphasizes strategic development of content, articles, resources and tools found on the Website that incites a visitor to link to the material, almost solely because of the value it provides.

We also incorporate industry specific resources, article syndication opportunities and places that offer byline submissions, editorial contributions or any long-term strategy that may require more than an initial submission or email into this strategy. Many high-value link opportunities are not created immediately and require multiple conversations and email responses to negotiate reasonable partnerships.

Finally, natural link building encompasses all additional strategies used to gain quality inbound links to a Website. This includes offline communication and requests. Website owners should be using continually looking for link-building opportunities whenever they are researching Website material and in typical business interaction.

## **Link-Building Strategies No Longer as Valuable as They Once Were:**

- **Link Farms and Link Aggregators**

Popular when link building originally became recognized, at one time, link farms were actually considered spam and you would be penalized for being a part of one. This is not always the case anymore, as small personal websites and niche topics often have their own network of connected Websites.

Link aggregators represent sites purely designed to facilitate reciprocal link exchanges (see below) or create automated links pages for Websites. Both of these tactics, while not necessarily indicated of penalties in search, are not recommended and have little value (if any) for search engine optimization.

- **Reciprocal Linking**

“Trading links” as purely a mechanism for obtaining search engine rankings is no longer a viable long-term strategy. Reciprocal linking involves two Websites setting up individual Web pages on their site with the sole objective of swapping or trading links with “relative” Websites. As Webmasters extended the meaning of a “relative” Website, or ignored this factor completely, reciprocal linking has become a less-than effective way to improve search presence.

Note that reciprocal linking, with the goal of being noticed on thematically relates sites can still be valuable for purposes of search engine indexing, but should not be a primary strategic focus.

- **Triangular Linking**

A slightly more complicated strategy is triangular linking, in which three websites exchange links with each other as follows:

- A Links to B; B Links to C; C Links to A  
Meaning, A never links back to C; B never links back to A; and C never links back to B

Like reciprocal linking, this usually involves Website setting up “link” pages on their Website. While difficult to detect, this strategy is not recommended as a primary link building initiative, especially if it involves some form of vendor relationship (example: linkvault.com) to facilitate the link exchanges.

## Checking Your Link Popularity

Checking link popularity is important in order to verify who and how websites are linking to your company.

First, it's important to make sure that the appropriate sites, both from an industry perspective and from a marketing perspective, are pointing to your site. Second, checking inbound links allows you to verify the information being written about you online, and to initiate changes to other sites as necessary (this includes updates to service offerings, product information, address, contact information etc).

The following commands allow you to view how many inbound links you have for specific search engines

### Yahoo Site Explorer

URL: <http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/>

This service from Yahoo is the most reliable in terms of total link presence for a site. We recommend using this tool when you want a comprehensive report on what sites are linking to you.

### AlltheWeb

AlltheWeb.com provides a comprehensive listing of Yahoo Link Results and also allows the searcher to filter out SAME-domain results (meaning, inbound links from internal pages of the primary domain).

- Using AlltheWeb.com, access the "Advanced Search" command and enter the following information:
  - link:www.domain.com (where "domain" represents the applicable domain we are searching)
  - Under "Domain Filters", exclude the domain we are searching with

Screenshot highlighting fields to fill out:



Click "Search" at the bottom to obtain inbound links for the applicable competitor.

### Google

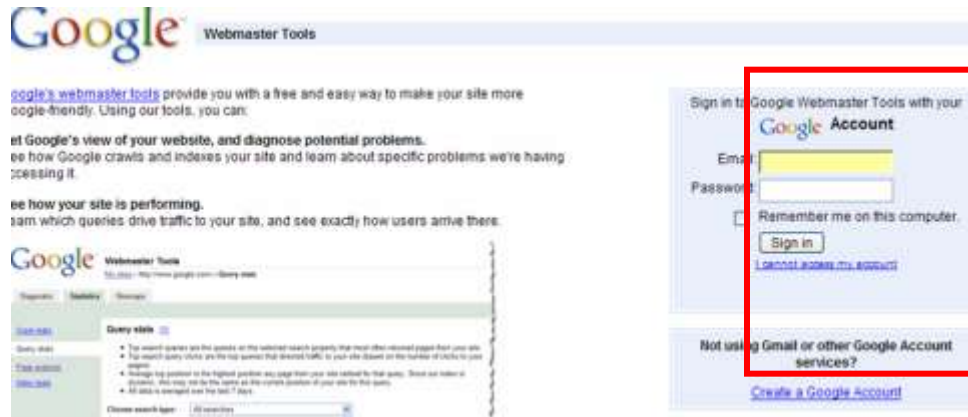
Use the command: "link:www.domain.com" to view links that Google lists records. Note that Google does not show a comprehensive list of links pointing to the site (as is the case for Yahoo), but they frequently show inbound links that are more valuable than others.

Links found in Google for: **19**

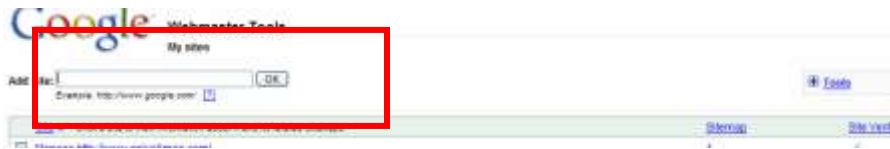
## Google Webmaster Tools Link Analysis

Users who register their websites with Google can obtain more in-depth inbound link results. In order to do so, you must register with Google as follows:

Link to Google Webmaster Tools Account (including Sitemaps): <https://www.google.com/webmasters/sitemaps>



- If you are a new user, click the “Create a Google Account” link at the bottom right. This will guide you through the steps to create an account. Note that you will need to have a valid email address for verification and access purposes.
- Once registered, login to your account and enter your Website in the top right field:



- When added, you will see some general information regarding your Website. In order to obtain up-to date information from Google, you need to verify your ownership of the domain being accessed.
- You will see a yellowish box asking you to verify the site. Click the link that states to “Verify your site”
- We recommend uploading a blank HTML file, which Google gives you a specific filename to use.
- Once created, simply upload the file and then “Verify” your Website using the appropriate button.
- The tab for “Links” is located third from the right:



## Specific Link Building Opportunities

KoMarketing Associates compiles link opportunities for our clients based on the following factors:

- General Online Presence
- Industry/Business Relativity
- Potential Traffic Generation

**We generally create a spreadsheet with the following data:**

- **Domain Name** – The name/home page of the resource
- **Type of Website** – The overall theme/type of Website being listed as a link opportunity. We traditionally try to categorize the types of Website by general, link building strategy.
  - **Google PR and Alexa Rank** – While not immediately necessary, these two factors can help establish some credibility to the Website listed, as it relates to search presence. Having low, or no information from either service should not be an immediate disqualifier for linking however.
- **Page to Add Link** – The Web address location on the Website where we feel a link to Tizor Systems is most appropriate
  - **Contact Name, URL and/or Email** – As much contact information as we could find in terms of requesting a link or communicating to the Website owner.
  - In some cases, there is a Web Address which points to a contact and/or submission form for entering information.
  - In other cases we have attached an email address and/or contact name for sending an email request for a link on a specific Web page.
- **Date Researched/Contacted/Link Added/Date Link Added** – These fields are for your internal purposes, in order to track and manage your efforts
  - **# of Links** – If multiple link opportunities (such as PR, blog posts etc) are listed
- **General Comments and Discussion** – Notes, issues, considerations appropriate to the link

## Appendix A: Link Requests by Email

In many cases, Websites will simply ask you to email them your link and/or Website information, or you will need to contact them directly to establish a professional relationship.

The critical components of well-crafted email correspondences for link requests are as follows:

- Make an attempt to address the recipient as direct as possible (ideally a specific contact name, versus “To Whom It May Concern”). NOTE: We recommend actually calling the company or organization to find out who to appropriately address a professional email in regards to online partnerships, Website content etc.
- Be as specific as possible in the Subject Line. Do not use a generic “hello” or state “link request” in your subject. The key is to get the recipient’s attention without being overly promotional or excessive.
- If you have not met the email recipient beforehand, make certain to identify how you found them (whether that be through search, article reference etc)
- Be specific as to why there is a good opportunity for adding your link (regional relevance, related customer base, industry partners etc). Make sure that this is immediately visible to the email recipient in the first 2 or 3 lines of the message.
- Explain the goal, the objective of DOMAIN
- Include relevant link information – Title, URL and Description as well as anything specifically requested in addition
- Make sure to be courteous, professional and succinct. Do not email more than a one page email in length when you first contact someone for a link request.

### Sample Link Solicitation Letter

Here is a sample draft outline for emailing potential link opportunities:

*Dear [CONTACT NAME] or To Whom It May Concern,*

*My name is [NAME] from COMPANY. We found your Website by [HOW YOU FOUND THE WEBSITE], and feel that our sites complement each other by [THE REASON THEY COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER].*

*OBJECTIVE:*

*Title: CLIENT*

*URL: <http://www.DOMAIN.com/>*

*Description: DESCRIPTION.*

*Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns, or require further information.*

*Best Regards,*

*Signature (as appropriate)*

## Appendix B: Web Directories

Web directories represent an opportunity for Websites to receive general online recognition, but recent updates in search technology have lessened the value of these types of links in determining overall link popularity. There are hundreds of directories available that offer various listings that are free, commercial or some combination of the two.

KoMarketing Associates finds specific business-based directories for each of our clients' sector. We do not feel that most "free directories" should be utilized by most clients.

While directory submissions will not hurt most companies' online presence, resource/industry related links, white papers, articles and press releases will ultimately have a much more positive impact.

For purposes of this document however, there are three major directories that businesses should consider:

- The Open Directory (DMOZ)
- The Yahoo Directory
- Business.com

### The Open Directory (DMOZ)

The Open Directory Project (DMOZ) is the largest, most comprehensive human-edited directory of the Web. It is constructed and maintained by a vast, global community of volunteer editors. This community is represented by Web users across the globe. Because it is a volunteer directory, and free, the time between submission and approval/rejection can take months, if not years based on the category, editor experience and volume.

As search engines like Google and Yahoo continue to de-emphasize the importance of general directory link relationships, it remains to be seen how valuable this inbound link will remain in the future. Given the fact that the submission process is free, there is no downside for a Website owner to attempt to submit to the directory.

### Reasons to Submit to DMOZ

1. The directory is used as the backbone for the Google Directory
2. Google will frequently pull directory titles and descriptions where it sees appropriate to better support its search index
3. DMOZ offers a free site feed to webmasters, allowing them to publish directory listings at no charge other than their time. These "Quasi-DMOZ" directories of information may become secondary sources of inbound links for indexed sites
4. Finally – It's free

### Submission Guidelines

General guidelines for submitting to DMOZ can be found here:

- <http://dmoz.org/add.html>
- With background information and FAQ's located here:
  - <http://dmoz.org/help/submit.html>
  - <http://dmoz.org/help/geninfo.html>
- Comprehensive Guidelines
  - <http://dmoz.org/guidelines/>

Be sure to read the guidelines in depth before submission. Strict adherence to the rules gives you the best chance of being indexed in the directory. Failure to do so may incur severe delays or permanent rejection from inclusion into the directory.

## Submission Recommendations

### **General Summary of Guidelines**

- 1.) Navigate to the most appropriate category for your Website.
- 2.) Click the “Suggest URL” link at the top left to get to the submission form. Note that submissions are category driven and you cannot successfully submit a Website using the wrong category.



- 3.) Follow the instructions for the submission process as accurately as possible
  - a. Important Rules
    - i. Titles should be relevant to company names, Website names etc
    - ii. Avoid excessive marketing speak, promotional language and the use of repetition
    - iii. **We recommend using our Guidelines (Page 4) for Link Syntax when creating your submission.**
- 4.) When you are satisfied with your submission click the “Submit” button at the bottom.

### Additional Comments on the Submission Process

As stated above, it may take months, if not years to receive approval or rejection of your listing in the directory. They also will NOT contact you to let you know that you have been approved or rejected.

We recommend that you check for your listing approximately two months after the submission completion. The search functionality in the site does not always pick up recent additions, so you may have to go directly to your desired category.

You should not repeatedly resubmit your Website based on it not being listed. If after six months the site is not listed, we recommend that you resubmit once. Continued repeat submissions, submissions to multiple categories etc will usually delay or block any listing opportunity.

### Modifying Your Listing in the Open Directory

Editors may alter your submission details as they see fit or to conform to guidelines. If you do not agree with the editor’s alteration, or if there is a specific reason that you need to edit your listing (change in business, location etc), you should send notification to DMOZ to edit your listing.

### **General Guidelines**

- 1.) Navigate to the category that your Website is listed in
- 2.) Click the “Update Listing” link at the top left of the webpage

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- 3.) Follow the instructions found therein
- 4.) Make sure to use a standard communication email address for the submission process and clearly state the reason(s) that the listing should be modified.
- 5.) Further information on modifying an existing Website listing may be found here:  
<http://dmoz.org/add.html>  
Under the section: "Updating Your Site"

NOTE: There is no guarantee that DMOZ will update your listing. This is completely at the editor's discretion.

## Business.com

We recommend that most businesses submit a listing here (estimated cost \$199/year):

- <http://www.business.com/directory/category/>
  - IN ADDITION to the main directory submission (The Home Page) you can submit 4 additional links to specific product lines with your category submission.

## Suggested (Example) Submission

This is what the final submission would look like to the visitor if Business.com, viewing your listing:

### HOME PAGE

Description

Sub-Link | Sub-Link | Sub-Link | Sub-Link

<http://www.domain.com/>

## Yahoo Directory

The Yahoo Directory is the largest commercial Web directory online. The original concept that started Yahoo, the Directory is a categorized listing of websites editor approved by Yahoo. Being a commercial directory, there is an annual fee of \$299.00 per submission, non-refundable (even if the submission is rejected – very rare). Submission approval/denial usually takes seven business days. Non-commercial websites can submit for free, but there is no guarantee on review time.

It remains to be seen how these types of listings (directory listings) affect the online presence of a Website in general, as search engines continue to devalue directory links.

## Reasons to Submit to the Yahoo Directory

- Yahoo as a Website property, is heavily crawled and indexed, and Yahoo Directory listings can serve as a valuable directory link.
- The category information can offer additional weight to industry/topical relevance in search

- Webmasters have some flexibility with the information being listed
- Non-Commercial sites list for free

## Submission Guidelines

General guidelines for submitting to The Yahoo Directory can be found here:

- <https://ecom.yahoo.com/dir/submit/intro>
- With background information and FAQ's located here:
  - <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/submit/>
  - <https://ecom.yahoo.com/dir/reference/submit>
- We specifically recommend a submission to this category:  
<http://dir.yahoo.com/>

Be sure to read the guidelines in depth before submission. Strict adherence to the rules gives you the best chance of being indexed in the directory. Failure to do so may incur rejection from inclusion into the directory, which is non-refundable.

## **General Summary of Guidelines**

- Navigate to the appropriate category within the Yahoo Directory and click the upper-right link "Suggest a Site"



- You need to be signed into a Yahoo Account in order to submit a Website. It is ideal that the account be tied to the specific business/Website information.
  - From the Yahoo Directory Submit Home Page (<https://ecom.yahoo.com/dir/submit/intro>), click the link on the bottom that says "Get Started"
  - Yahoo will ask you to agree to a list of Terms and Information
- Important Note:  
Make sure that the Website is not already listed (use Yahoo Site Explorer to verify this). There may be cases where the site was originally listed as an old domain (as in the case of mergers). If this is the case, please follow the **Modifying Your Listing in the Yahoo Directory** instructions.
- Follow the form submission requirements in order to submit the most accurate listing possible. We recommend using the standard Yahoo email address for submission information.

## Additional Comments on the Submission Process

The complete submission approval process should take no longer than seven business days. Yahoo editors may alter the Title and Description for your Website submission. If you do not agree with the information, you are allowed one request for modification after submission approval. The Yahoo Directory asks that you wait two weeks after inclusion to send this request however.

### Modifying Your Listing in the Yahoo Directory

Webmasters are allowed to modify their listings for various reasons, but there is no guarantee that the information will be approved and changed. The most appropriate scenarios for requesting changes to submissions are for new Website information and acquired domains/Web properties that add/change the description of the business. Also, new URLs are important reasons to send a change notice.

### **General Guidelines**

- The Information for changing Website directory submissions can be found here:  
<http://add.yahoo.com/fast/change?chLMC>

**NOTE:** You must be logged into the same Yahoo account that submitted the original listing in order to send a change notice. If you no longer have that information, it is important that you include this information in the "additional information" form field of the modification form.

**NOTE:** You can request that multiple information be changed at the same time.

**NOTE:** Please wait two weeks after an initial submission approval before requesting any modifications.

## Appendix C: Press Releases to Boost Link Popularity

### Press Release SEO Guidelines

- Use keyword-rich titles for your press releases
- Titles should be no longer than 80 characters (including spaces)
- Abstracts and/or summaries should be three to four sentences long, illustrating the main points of the release, and contain specific keywords. They should not be a repositioning of the first paragraph of the press release.
- Utilize trackback URLs if offered by the press-release service.
- Always contain the company summary and URL to the home page at the bottom of the press release. The URL should be formatted as <http://www.domain.com>

### Press Release Resources

Two of the largest business press release services are:

- [www.businesswire.com](http://www.businesswire.com)
- [www.prnewswire.com](http://www.prnewswire.com)

Marketwire is another resource which offers distribution for press releases and a fee-based structure for add-ons and additional functionality (additional links, keyword optimization, social media integration etc)

- <http://www.marketwire.com>

The following press release services do not have as wide a distribution network, but offer free or cheap press releases:

- [www.prweb.com](http://www.prweb.com)
- <http://www.24-7pressrelease.com/>
- <http://www.prleap.com/>
- <http://www.addpr.com/>
- <http://www.free-press-release.com/>
- <http://i-newswire.com/>

## Sample Press Release

### HEADLINE

**Headline Announces News in Title Case, Ideally Under 80 Characters (use target keywords in the headline).**

- Use title case in the headline only, capitalizing every word except for prepositions and articles of three characters or less.

### Summary Paragraph

The summary paragraph is a little longer synopsis of the news, elaborating on the news in the headline in one to four sentences. The summary uses sentence case, with standard capitalization and punctuation. (Use target keywords in the summary paragraph)

### Body

City, State (RELEASE SERVICE) Month 1, YEAR -- The lead sentence contains the most important information in 25 words or less. Grab your reader's attention here by simply stating the news you have to announce. Do not assume that your reader has read your headline or summary paragraph; the lead should stand on its own.

A news release, like a news story, keeps sentences and paragraphs short, about three or four lines per paragraph. The first couple of paragraphs should answer the "who, what, when, where, why and how" questions. The news media may take information from a news release to craft a news or feature article or may use information in the release word-for-word, but a news release is not, itself, an article or a reprint.

The standard press release is 300 to 800 words and written in a word processing program that checks spelling and grammar before submission. Typically, you will be charged a fixed rate for the first 400 words, and then for each 100-word increment thereafter.

Many press-release services allow you to embed hyperlinks around [specific keywords](#). This typically carries an additional charge. Hyperlinking keywords to your site, especially a page beyond the homepage, can provide an SEO boost when a press release is picked up on another site, maintains the hyperlink, and sits in the archives.

The rest of the news release expounds on the information provided in the lead paragraph. It includes quotes from key staff, customers or subject matter experts. It contains more details about the news you have to tell, which can be about something unique or controversial or about a prominent person, place or thing.

Typical topics for a news release include announcements of new products or of a strategic partnership, the receipt of an award, the publishing of a book, the release of new software or the launch of a new Web site. The tone is neutral and objective, not full of hype or text that is typically found in an advertisement. Avoid directly addressing the consumer or your target audience. The use of "I," "we" and "you" outside of a direct quotation is a flag that your copy is an advertisement rather than a news release.

Do not include an e-mail address in the body of the release. If you do, it will be protected from spambots with a notice to that effect, which will overwrite your e-mail address.

### Summary Paragraph

The final paragraph of a traditional news release contains the least newsworthy material, but for an online release, it's typical to restate and summarize the key points with a paragraph like the next one.

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For additional information on the news that is the subject of this release (or for a sample, copy or demo), contact Mary Smith or visit [www.domain.com](http://www.domain.com). You can also include details on product availability, trademark acknowledgment, etc. here.

## Boilerplate

About XYZ Company:

Include a short corporate backgrounder, or "boilerplate," about the company or the person who is newsworthy before you list the contact person's name and phone number. **Include your domain here, formatted as <http://www.domain.com>. Use your company's primary target keywords in the boilerplate. If releases go out from multiple departments, create boilerplates for each department, and use the target keywords for that department/business unit.**

## Contact Information

Contact:

Mary Smith, director of public relations  
XYZ Company  
555-555-5555  
<http://www.domain.com>

###

## Appendix D: Social Media Websites and Strategies

Social media Websites are a larger user-contribution type link building strategy, similar to forums and groups. The most popular social media strategy is in using Websites which aggregate user-contributed information, providing high volumes of traffic and referrals to the best selections. These websites represent different industry verticals and types of content.

### Social Media Contribution Etiquette

There are rules and basic guidelines you should follow when taking on a social media initiative:

- You should not post your own content directly – someone other than a representative from the business being submitted should contribute your information.
- Only post content relevant to the community interest.
- Contribute a variety of material, varying websites and information as much as possible (daily perhaps, depending on the service in reference – i.e., it would be much more difficult to contribute daily YouTube videos, whereas bookmarking quality resources in Reddit may only take 15 minutes per day).
- You should not post overtly commercial Web pages, or information purely designed to sell a product or service.

### Social Media Introduction

Here are brief introductory statements regarding some of the three of largest social media networks:

- **Digg** (<http://www.digg.com/>)  
Digg allows users to submit articles, videos and stories that they find of interest. Digg is mostly tailored to the following main topics or community material:
  - Technology
  - Science
  - World/Business
  - Sports
  - Entertainment
  - Gaming

While there are sub-categories for each topic, the greatest opportunity is for contribution based in these sections of information. Your reputation matters in Digg – meaning new users must develop their profile over the course of months before achieving consistent success in submissions.

### Registration

Registration takes seconds and is free

- Click the “Join Digg” link at the top right



- Enter in the registration information as required. Note that you will need a valid email address to verify your membership information.
- Important Note: You cannot have everyone in your office “digg” what you've submitted. The site's editors will notice that a lot of traffic is coming from the same IP address, and their most likely

course of action will be to ban you and your workmates' accounts. The same can be said with creating dozens of usernames and "Digging" yourself as well

- **Reddit** (<http://reddit.com/>)

The great thing about Reddit is that there is no preference to the type of information you can submit, but that also means that there is a greater chance you will not be seen (and good content is still good content). It's also best to submit new material, so keeping track of what is going on online "right now" is important for submission success.

Similar to Digg, if you abuse your profile, it is unlikely new submissions will receive quality referrals, regardless of content.

### Registration

Registration takes seconds and is free

- Simply click the "Register" link located at the top right and then create a username and password for access. Unlike many social bookmarking websites, you do not need a registered email address for submissions.



- **del.icio.us** (<http://del.icio.us/>)

Delicious is purely a social bookmarking Website, which allows users to save and "tag" Web addresses that they find of interest. Tagging refers to assigning specific keywords to various websites and Web addresses saved in your account.

As you begin adding bookmarks and saving information, take note of the people that are saving the same information as you. Browse through their bookmarks and if it makes sense, add them to your Delicious Network. As your network grows, you can begin adding bookmarks and sharing them with the people in your network.

In addition, pay attention to the "Popular" tags and make sure that whenever possible, your bookmarks reflect the most popular tags of information. That way, you have a better opportunity of becoming visible to the community.

### Registration

Registration takes seconds and is free

- To register, simply click the "Register" link in the top right and enter the information required. NOTE that you will need a valid email address and there is a verification email required to complete your registration.

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The image shows a screenshot of the del.icio.us registration page. The page title is "del.icio.us / register". In the top right corner, there are links for "login", "register", and "help", which are enclosed in a red rectangular box. Below the navigation bar, there are three tabs: "Enter Details" (active), "Install Buttons", and "Button Tutorial". The "Enter Details" tab contains a registration form with the following fields: "username", "full name", "password", "password again", and "email". The "password" and "password again" fields are highlighted with a red rectangular box. To the right of the form, there is a "register" button. The page also features several promotional messages, such as "Keep all your bookmarks...", "Share your bookmarks with...", and "Discover new sites from the...".