Doing backlink building like a ninja: Six best techniques

As SEOs we know outreach for backlinks has to be done in order to give the websites we are working on the backlink authority it needs. With backlinks being one of the top three ranking factors (depending on which study you're reading) there is definite value in doing outreach.

Although this is made a lot harder thanks to the mysterious world of black hat SEO. Webmasters out there are savvier to the tactics of sending a generic feeling email, and on our part, it's a lot of work for usually not much return.

This is why I've collated a list of some of the ninja backlink outreach tactics I've found which work great for most sites. At the heart of most of these techniques is some good exciting content to make your website stand out, as backlinks and content work hand in hand.

So let's get going and earn our black belt in building backlinks. (Apologies, there will be a few more bad ninja related jokes in this post.)

Six of the best ways to build backlinks

1. Sponsoring a college or university team

Ok so before we get into this first one it does involve a bit of money on yours or your clients part to get the backlink. Although this would usually cost a few hundred pounds to sponsor the team and all you're asking in return is a backlink from their team page which hopefully if you've done the research right will be on a .ac.uk or .edu domain which will naturally have high authority.

2. Skyscraper technique

This one is borrowed from Brian Dean from Backlinko, and you can get more details from him on this here. In essence, this approach involves finding the top piece of ranking linkable content you can find for a search term you're trying to rank for. Then you build on that idea to make a better version of the piece and reach out to the right people to gain the right exposure.

If someone has created content on the "best top 10 ways to be a ninja" you can go and make a post of the "top 11 ways to be a ninja". It is key to this technique to make sure that you find the right area and do the correct research, so if you're working on behalf of a client get their input then do your own research to back up their knowledge.

3. Interview with someone on your website

Yes, this is a way to get backlinks by doing the bulk of the work on your own website. Find an influential person in your industry and convince them to give you an interview for your website. Unless you're running a website all about celebs, most people within any industry will be flattered that you would want to interview them.

The only stipulation to this is that they will need to have

some type of following on social media. This is as it will be as much in their interest to share the content as yours. So once you have the interview share it with your PR and social team, and allow them to share the piece as much as they can, hopefully, you will get some valuable industry related backlinks from this.

4. Create a free tool

Free tools are a great way to gain backlinks, all you have to do is look at the SEO industry for this and find “top free SEO tools” posts to see a list of free tools, some of which have only been created to build authoritative backlinks naturally. These do not need to be anything fancy only something that serves the user. For examples, a mortgage broker creating a mortgage calculator is a simple solution to get targeted traffic on their site and gain backlinks from sites related to mortgages.

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5. Create your own data

There is a lot to be said about the impact of data and how this can be used to gain backlinks. Although, what if you have no interesting data you can share to get out into the news? Well, there are ways you can create your own data. There are great sites like Google Surveys where you can ask a set questions to a specified number of people and get back true related data based on your own parameters.

Although – it is what you do with data that counts in gaining backlinks for this technique, once you have completed the post on your website with a snappy clickbait headline. Head over to

Reddit and find the most relevant subreddits you can and post your content anonymously to see if it gets picked up. In case it fails to get picked up by any sites, get on Twitter and start contacting local and industry press journalists. Soon enough someone will pick it up.

6. Video transcripts

So this final technique takes its inspiration from Moz's whiteboard Fridays we all know and love. On every video, it is accompanied by a transcript of the video. As Moz knows, Google finds it very difficult to understand the context of videos, so they provide HTML text that gives a much clearer indicator to Google. This makes their life much easier.

How can you use this to your advantage exactly? Well, all you have to do is find some recent video content from an expert or influencer in your field. Check their site to see if the content is accompanied with a transcript of the video, if not then jackpot! From there create a transcript for the video which is on your own or client's website.

The last steps involve a quick buttering up of the influencer on Twitter. It could be something along the lines of "Loved the last video, you're amazing. I have created a transcript for the video if it is useful for anyone, the link is here." Hopefully, they'll give a retweet and with the shares of their content comes some shares and backlinks for you.

Conclusion

Hope the whole ninja theme wasn't too cringy. The main point is that, yes link building is much harder than it used to be a few years ago. And everyone is so tuned out to an email asking for a backlink that they're just going to ignore them. Still, backlink building can be done. Just think outside the box, be a bit sneaky like a ninja, get creative, and make the best quality content you can for your users.

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