Stop being a link snob and saying no to certain links



If there’s one thing that bugs me about link-building work, it’s the idea that only one type of link is going to work, and anything else is going to cripple the site. Or…

- The client won’t accept a nofollow or an image link or the anchor text isn’t what they specified.
- Guest posts will get you penalized.
- Directory links are useless.

It goes on and on.

Most of the time, I go along with it after explaining risks and rewards, but I need to be a better educator and advocate for a broad link profile.

Why?

When I look at healthy link profiles for sites ranking well, the first thing I notice is the wide array of link types there. Link variety is good!



Every webmaster has a different opinion how links should be built:

- Some won't take links below the top fold.
- Some do not want to be on the same page with a competitor.
- Almost everyone dislikes links using nofollow attributes.
- Some hate links on a page with more than three outbound links.
- Some love being on pages with 50+ other links.

Ask 25 different webmasters that question and you'll get 25 different answers; that's the nature of link building.

Link education has come a long way from a few years ago, with so many articles written about links that most people have a good deal of knowledge on the subject.

But people still have a certain type of link they want and

even more specific types of links they don’t want. This can easily become an issue if webmasters don’t open their minds to different types of links.



Wash, rinse, repeat

If you look at a link profile comprised of mostly guest posts, you might think, “Well, there’s one asking for a hit.” The same would hold true for a link profile of nothing but social bookmarks or directory sites.

There really aren’t many ways to build links that haven’t had a hit of some sort when the tactic is overdone. As search engine optimization specialists (SEOs), one of our biggest problems is that once we find something that works, we do it to death and ruin it for everyone.

Don’t discount a tactic just because you haven’t done it before. If a good opportunity comes around, consider it.

To give you an example, if you have not searched for resource pages to host your links but find a strong one, consider saying yes and putting your link there. If it’s a good page, on-topic and indexed, I would absolutely say yes! Don’t discount the link source just because you haven’t used the tactic in the past.

So many types of links go in and out of fashion; one day we love guest posts, the next day we hate them. A guest post might just be your best bet for getting a link on a desirable website, so keep an open mind.

Here come the don’ts

Don’t rely on just one type of link or linking tactic for your entire link profile. Having a profile with just one type of link or links from certain pages may look spammy.

Don’t discount nofollows. This is one of my biggest pet peeves in link building.

Websites that naturally attract inbound links also attract links using nofollow. Review the sites they are coming from, and if the opportunity comes up to ask for a nofollow link from a popular site, do it. The traffic they generate is well worth the effort.



Don’t hate on sites with lots of links, image links, directory links, links on new sites, links on Cold Fusion sites (that’s mostly a joke), links on sites that look like they were designed in 2000 and so on.

Not all websites are going to adhere to the guidelines you have, and that doesn’t mean they’re bad opportunities.

I’m not saying you should actively pursue getting an image link or participate in a roundup just because you don’t have those types of links. If the link will not sit on a valuable page, I wouldn’t make a huge effort for it.

Healthy link profiles

Having different types of links and mentions are part of a natural link profile and shouldn’t terrify you. Here’s a list of link types (in no particular order) that I regularly find in healthy link profiles:

- Guest posts.

- Links using nofollow attributes.
- Image links.
- Mentions without a link.
- Local citations based on an address.
- Local citations based on universal resource locators (URLs).
- Directory links.
- Social links.
- Sponsored posts.
- Reviews.
- Regular weekly or monthly columns.
- Pingbacks.
- Negative mentions.
- Positive mentions.
- Redirects.
- Roundups.
- Interviews.
- Quotes.
- Forums.
- Comments.
- Widgets.

I think we're all terrified of being penalized by bad links, and I get that, but I recommend not turning down a link just because it's not something you've gotten in the past.

Opinions expressed in this article are those of the guest author and not necessarily Search Engine Land. Staff authors are listed here.

About The Author



Julie Joyce owns the link development firm Link Fish Media and is one of the founding members of the SEO Chicks blog. Julie began working in search marketing in 2002 and soon became head of search for a small IT firm. Eventually, she started Link Fish Media, where she now serves as Director Of Operations, focusing on working with clients in ultra-competitive niches all over the world.

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