



The Premier Event for Search Engine Marketing & Optimization

December 4-7, 2006 • Hilton Chicago • Chicago, IL



## Link Building Basics

(Tuesday - Day 2) 10:15am – 11:45am

Eric Ward - [EricWard.com](http://EricWard.com)

If we were to distill all the SEM expertise about linking down to one truth that every single person would agree on, it would be this...

*Without links, less people will end up on your web site*

But of course it's not that simple is it?

The complexity starts because some types of links also have other effects, purposes, and outcomes

- You now have two core audiences for your links

- 1). People who can click them
- 2). Bots that can count and judge them

Currently, most people seek links hoping the search engines will reward them for those links with higher rankings. While this is potentially true, not every site should approach link seeking in the same way.

Let's discuss some of the types of links, their value, how each is obtained, and how each can impact your site.

- **Types of links**

1. A link that helps with direct click traffic but does not help your search rank
2. A link that helps your search rank
3. A link that does both
4. A link that does neither
5. A link that gets you banned by the search engines

Links that improve search engine rankings will be those that the engines feel are a trustworthy indicator of quality. These can/will be different for every site.

Links that help in other ways are those that generate temporary buzz, like [Yahoo Picks](#) or [FORBES BOTW](#), links from the social or [bookmarking services](#) and tools like [Furl](#) or [Digg](#), [affiliate](#) or other paid links.

If you base all link seeking on SEO and rankings factors, you will miss out on a huge number of possible links and publicity since not all links can be found and counted.

- **Search Engine Terms and Examples Related to Linking:**

### [Pagerank](#)



### Web

Results 1 - 100 of about 71,100

#### [Google Technology](#)

**PageRank Explained.** PageRank relies on the uniquely democratic nature of the web by using its vast link structure as an indicator of an individual page's ...

[www.google.com/technology/](#) - 7k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

#### [Pagerank Explained. Google's PageRank and how to make the most of it.](#)

**Pagerank explained,** and what you can do with it. PageRank calculator.

[www.webworkshop.net/pagerank.html](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

#### [Search engine optimization services and articles, inc. PageRank ...](#)

**PageRank explained,** and how you can make the most of it as a search engine optimization technique to improve your website's PageRank. ...

[www.webworkshop.net/](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

[ [More results from www.webworkshop.net](#) ]

#### [Pagerank Explained Correctly with Examples](#)

Ian Rogers attempts to explain how Google PR is calculated with example to illustrate his arguments.

[www.iprcom.com/papers/pagerank/](#) - 71k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

#### [Google's PageRank Explained](#)

search-this.com - search engine optimization (SEO) articles and website marketing advice, tips, information on web site promotion, search engine positioning ...

[www.search-this.com/google/google\\_pagerank\\_explained.aspx](#) - 22k -

[Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

Pagerank according to [Google](#)  
authority site  
hub site

organic link

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## Quality Links?

- **Quality link** can mean different things for different sites

What is a quality link for a content/commerce site like [stormwaterauthority.org](http://stormwaterauthority.org) ?

These are quality links <http://www.epa.gov/ne/assistance/ceitts/stormwater/links.html>  
<http://erf.org/links.html>

What is a quality link for the swimming pool ecommerce store [InTheSwim](http://InTheSwim.com)?

Is it a [paid link](#)? Is it a link from a [online article](#) ?

Is it an [editorial link](#) from a news site ? (notice lack of clickability)

Is it a link from a themed [pool links page](#) ?

What is a quality link for the new site for the movie [Spider-Man 3](#)

Is it a link in a ...

[Yahoo fan/discussion list for Tobey Maguire](#) ?

[Wikipedia Article](#) ?

[movie fan site](#) ?

If you ask Google "what is a quality link" they might say...

Quality links come from a trusted site/source

Quality links are not always reciprocated

Quality links have descriptive anchor text *but not the same* descriptive anchor text

Quality links appear to be passively obtained/organic

Quality links are not all found on the same IP block

Quality links are not all found on the same top level domain (.com .org .edu etc.)

So the answer to the question "What is a quality link?" is that it depends on the site and the search engine. All of the above are quality links for that particular content creator.

- Don't let any search engine dictate or rule over your linking strategy. Links can appear in many venues that Google and other search engines [will never know about](#). It's fine to use Google for link building research, but don't stop there.

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## Tools that can be used to identify link targets

Your brain

When it needs a jump start...

[seomoz's amazing "Long List of Link Searches"](#)

[Hubfinder](#)

[Software](#)

[Clusty](#)

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## Link Popularity flaws

## 1 - Link Depth

The deeper into a site a link exists, the less likely it is search engines will know about.

Do this: <http://www.urlwire.com/news/>

Not This: <http://www.urlwire.com/2005/july/week1/story.html>

## 2 - Undiscovered links

The search engines don't find all your links. Why? Many reasons. Password based sites are one example.

Rad Chris Sherman's outstanding article [All Music, All But Invisible](#)

## 3 - Non web-based links

Some of the most valuable links don't appear on web sites, they appear in email based communication (newsletters, discussion posts, zines, etc.). Many have over 100K subscribers, like [FORBES Best of the Web](#), [Lockergnome](#) and [Yahoo Picks of the Week](#). Others, such as the highly regarded [LII.org](#), have fewer readers, with thousands more visiting the online [companion site](#). Search engines can't count email based links, but they are fabulous links to get and will send thousands of quality visitors to your site. BONUS: If the email based pub is archived on the web, the link will help you with the bots.

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## Linking for publicity versus linking for rank- Where public relations and link building converge

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of trustworthy editors who write about and link to web sites. You cannot reach them by using a mass wire service. If your site is featured/linked, the benefits are great. You can try to contact them yourself, or pay for a [service that specializes in this exact niche](#) (disclosure)

### Example editorial link venues

[Yahoo Picks of the Day/Week](#) -

[Forbes Best of The Web](#) -

[USA Today Web Guide/Hot Sites](#) -

[NY Public Library Best of the Web](#) -

[The Scout Report](#) -

[Education World](#) -

[NetGuide](#) -

[Child & Family WebGuide from Tufts University](#) -

[Exploratorium's Web Picks](#) -

[Librarians Internet Index](#) -

[Guardian Web Watch](#) -

[Berit's Best Sites for Kids](#) -

[Busy Educator's Guide to the Web](#) -

[Netsurfer Digest](#) -

[Surfing the Net With Kids](#) -

[Parents Best Web Sites](#) -

[BestHistorySites](#) -

[Best of PhysicsWeb](#) -

[Classroom Earth Best of the Web](#) -

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## Linking articles and training

[Social Link Spam and Cigarette Butts](#)

[Google's New Custom Search Engine Service and Links](#)

[Linking's Holy Grail: The Passively-Obtained Backlink](#)

[Looking for Links In All The Wrong Places?](#)

[The Link That Can Make You A Star](#)

## [THE WARD REPORT](#)

The screenshot shows the homepage of 'THE WARD REPORT™'. At the top, it says '2008 Building and Content Marketing Tactics by Eric Ward' and 'September 17, 2008'. There is a small photo of a man in the top right corner. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- In This Issue:** A list of featured articles with brief descriptions.
- Trend Watch:** A section titled 'Social Linking and Tweeping' discussing search engine trends.
- What Works, What Doesn't and Why:** A section titled 'Linking for Search Spots' about increasing search traffic.
- Clear for the Road:** A section titled 'Linking and Publicity Opportunities' about linking strategies.
- Right Now:** A section titled 'This Week's Tools and Resources' listing various tools and resources.

There are also several links and buttons, including 'Subscribe Now' and 'Contact Us'.