



## Articles: Generating Inbound Links

For most websites, the most critical aspect of gaining more visitors is to increase the number of Inbound Links (IBLs). Sounds easy, but how do you convince the owners of other websites to link to you? This article will give you some ideas on generating inbound links.

### Content

One of the best ways to encourage website owners to link to your website is to provide good quality, relevant content on your website. As the content contained within your website grows, more and more website owners will consider your website a good source of information. As they add content to their own sites they may refer to related information on your site and therefore create an Outbound Link (OBL) to your website.

But what content should you add? It is important to keep the content relevant to the overall concept of the website. Most websites however have a core subject matter about which the website owner should have a certain level of expertise.

- Writing short articles explaining the basics of the core subject is often a good starting place.
- How To? Articles are often easy to write and useful.
- You could write 'review' articles.

And the list goes on. Once you have some good quality content, you then need to encourage other website owners to link to you. The first thing you could do, although it sounds counter-productive, is to allow other websites to publish your article.

### Publishing Articles on other Websites

Writing good quality articles and getting them published on other websites can be a good way of generating inbound links and increased traffic. There are many websites dedicated to publishing articles on all manner of topics. Almost all of them allow you to include a brief biography about the author or the authors' business which also allows for a link to your website.



Publishing articles in this way is good for your website for many reasons:

- Good quality articles will establish you or your business as a expert in your field.
- The article pages usually have few other links on them so the IBL to your website is better for your Page Rank than a link from 'links' page.
- Websites publishing articles often have high levels of traffic so publishing articles on them is a good advertising method.

## **Provide a Service**

Providing a useful service on your website is not only a good way of encouraging repeat visits to your website but is also a way of encouraging other website owners to link to that service.

## **Getting Reciprocal Links.**

If you have followed the advice above and provide quality, relevant content and services then encouraging website owners to link to your website should be relatively easy. You will find that many website owners link to your website without any encouragement, but a little pro-activity will go a long way.

E-mail webmasters of websites which compliment your website and ask to exchange links with them. Most webmasters will agree to exchange links as it will be mutually beneficial. It is often useful to add a link to their site before e-mailing them and then in the e-mail you can direct them to the page that contains their link. You should also mention the connections between the two sites and the mutual benefits of reciprocal linking.

Generating, adding and checking reciprocal links can be time-consuming. It is however possible to add automatic reciprocal link pages to your website. These programs allow other webmasters to automatically add their link to your website. A good reciprocal link manager will allow you to verify the links before adding them to your site, will check that the website has included a link back to your site and will also periodically check the links to ensure that they remain active.



## **Submit your Website to Web Directories.**

There are literally thousands of web directories out there, some like Yahoo and DMOZ are very generic in their coverage, others may be small and very specific. You will be able to find directories related to your websites particular subject as well as regional directories. Most allow you to submit your website free of charge, although some will require you to add a reciprocal link to their directory from your site.

## **Post in relevant forums**

One really good way of generating traffic and inbound links is to become a member of and contribute to web based forums. Once again there are forums on almost every subject imaginable. Some forums are very specific in their subject matter others more generic. Find some that are relevant to your website and post in them. You may even find you enjoy the online 'banter'. Most forums will allow you to enter a 'signature' that will be shown at the bottom of every post you make. Make sure that you include your website address in this signature to create an inbound link on every post you make to the forums.

## **Post in relevant Newsgroups**

As with forums, there are newsgroups on every subject imaginable. Many newsgroups are also published on the web and can therefore be used to generate IBL if you include your web address in your signature file.

## **Use your e-mail Signature File**

Use your e-mail program to set up a signature file that includes a link to your website. Whenever you send an e-mail the recipient will then be able to click on the link to access your website. This won't increase your Page Rank, but is a useful way of encouraging real visitors to your website.

## **Webrings.**

The importance of IBLs means that there are now many websites dedicated to nothing other than the sharing of links between websites. Webrings work by connecting relevant websites. Each member of a webring displays a small banner on their site which includes a link to



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another relevant site. In return for displaying this banner a banner directed to your website will be displayed on the websites of the other webring members. If you can't find a webring relevant to your particular subject, it is possible to start your own.

These are just a few ideas to help your website receive the traffic it deserves. Pixelwave Design can help you in all aspects of website promotion, so if you would like more information on any of these techniques, please feel free to contact me.