

# THE COMPLETE 6-MONTH LINK BUILDING GAME PLAN

THERE'S SO MANY LINK BUILDING TACTICS  
HERE'S WHERE YOU START

By Michael King (@ipullrank)



As a savvy Search Marketer or webmaster/owner of a long standing website you have seen and heard of a variety of link building tactics all with varying effectiveness. With so many viable and entertaining tactics, it is a wonder that so many opt to go the black hat route. For those of us who implement white hat tactics, it's really a question of *where* do we start? What structure of tactics will give the highest return on time and resources invested? The creative opportunities are overwhelming.

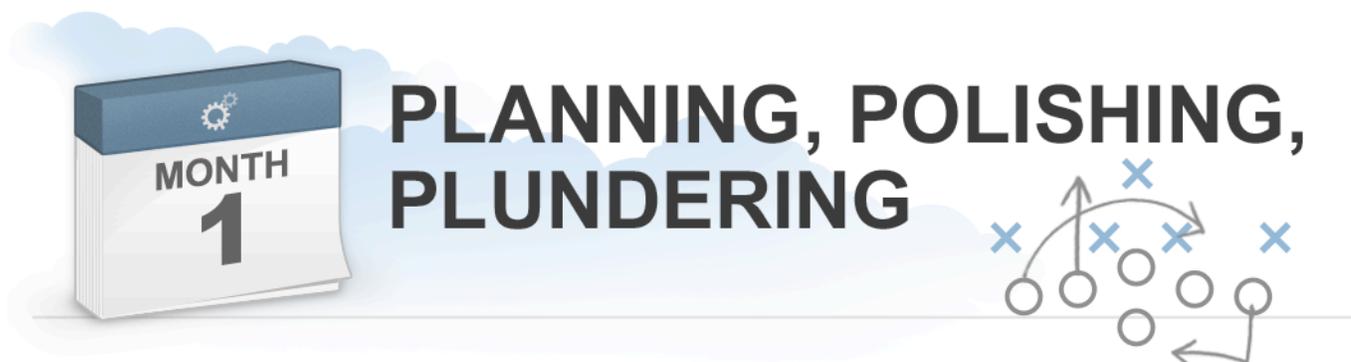
What follows is a six month content-driven action plan that can easily be leveraged for any existing site. This is not for sites that have just sprung up in the last two months, but a plan that requires a plethora of existing content and social engagement. This plan is also for marketers who get their hands dirty reaching out to people and know that remarkable content is required to grease the link building wheels. While we will be launching content, the majority of this guide will be encouraging other people to create the content that we need in order to build links at scale.

The tactics described herein mostly rely on social engagement combined with the standard metrics of site prospecting, but can also be applied solely using traditional email and site prospecting. The author believes that first-touch social link building is far more effective in the outreach process as it allows you to identify and converse with prospects with better context in a channel where people are less leery of unsolicited contact. Therefore, if you have been slow to consider using social media for outreach, it is encouraged that you keep an open mind and give it a chance for the duration of this six-month campaign or run the social outreach in parallel with the email outreach to see which one is more effective. Should you do so, iAcquire would love to hear from you and you can reach out to Director of Inbound Marketing Michael King ([mike@iacquire.com](mailto:mike@iacquire.com)) with your results.

This guide also expands on concepts presented in the [Noob Guide to Link Building](#) so, naturally, it is assumed you have already developed personas of your targets and influencers and are aware of the basic tactics employed to promote this content.

This guide also assumes the following people will be involved in this link building campaign:

- Outreach Specialist
- Community Manager
- Graphic Designer



## MONTH ONE – PLANNING, POLISHING, PLUNDERING

Month One is the most intense of the six. You must devise the plan of action then identify and understand the vertical and the key players. Content and context are kings in an alliance most often strained by budgets and time. Month One is about learning the context of the conversation around the content that you will launch, identifying people who are already interested in your content and successfully landing the quick hits to show movement until your new content is ready to ride valiantly into the day.

### PLANNING

At this stage you and/or your client should already know who your target audience is. You can either go with what has been predetermined or use social listening and quantitative analysis to identify your own segments. Since there are so many potential targets and influencers, either path will work. [The Noob Guide to Link Building](#) goes into the purpose of persona development for link building, but essentially you want to know who your target audience is in order to determine the type of content you will create and quickly prospect those users via social tools.

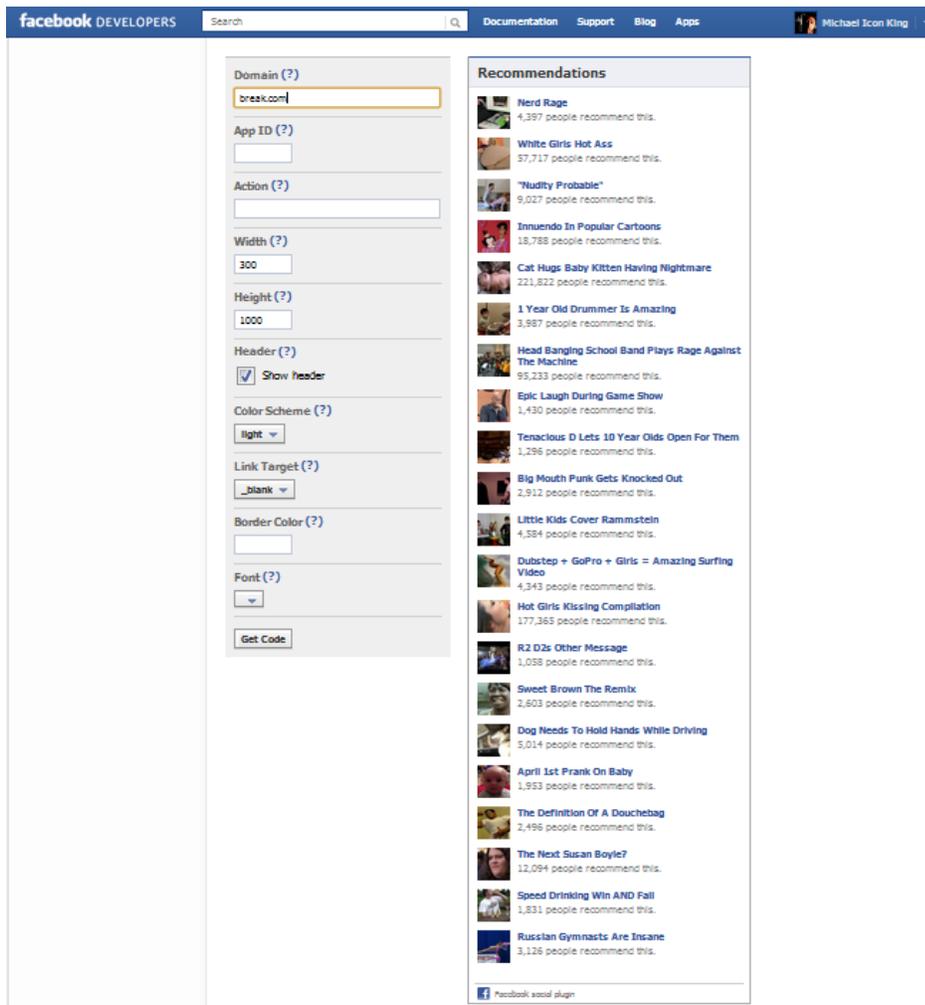
### CONTENT AUDITING

At this phase in planning you want to ask two very important questions:

- **Where does the site stand?** Catalog the content on a spreadsheet to understand what is there and what is not. Screaming Frog is a great tool to start with when indexing the site. Who is the target audience for a given piece of content? Is any content unclear or can it be repurposed for link building efforts? For example, is there a white paper that can be converted

to compelling data visualization? Is the content on the site clear and useful to your target audience? Does the existing content meet the business goals? Can this content be spruced up and relaunched?

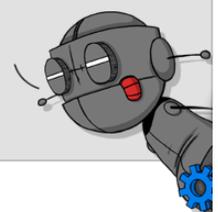
- **What existing content can be used as link bait?** Is there content on the blog that has performed well in social media? You can quickly determine this by using the [Facebook Recommendations tool demo](#).



This tool will display up to 20 pieces of popular content by number of recommendations for a given domain. Extend the height of the tool to 1000 pixels in order to see the full list of 20.

## GARY'S TIP: LOGOUT OF FACEBOOK

Be sure to log out of Facebook to use this tool, otherwise the results will be skewed to the shares by users in your personal Facebook network.



OPEN SITE EXPLORER

PRO Dashboard | Hello, iPullRank | Recent CSV Reports | Log Out

http://  Search

compare up to 5 sites

Link metrics for the page http://www.break.com/index/head-banging-school-band-plays-rage-against-the-machine-2010668

Page Authority	Domain Authority	Linking Root Domains	Total Links	Facebook Shares	Facebook Likes	Tweets	Google +1
68/100	91/100	47	164	44,073	54,304	777	27

Take all popular content to Open Site Explorer and determine how many links were naturally attracted. In most cases it will be easy to identify pages on the site that have performed well in Facebook, but could be used for link building efforts.

OPEN SITE EXPLORER

PRO Dashboard | Hello, iPullRank | Recent CSV Reports | Log Out

http://  Search

compare up to 5 sites

Link metrics for the page http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2172926/How-to-Maintain-Social-Shares-After-a-Site-Migration

Page Authority	Domain Authority	Linking Root Domains	Total Links	Facebook Shares	Facebook Likes	Tweets	Google +1
1/100	94/100	0	0	25	13	104	61

I suggest Open Site Explorer for this even for new URLs because you'll also get the share counts to then take to [Topsy](#) and quickly find people that have shared the content on both Twitter and Google+. You can then keep track of these people as prospects.

10 posts  
TOP +100  
tweet

+1 61

Network  
Google Plus  
Twitter

[How to Maintain Social Shares After a Site Migration](#)

searchenginewatch.com/article/2172926/How-to-Maintain-Social-Shares-After-a-Site-Migration - view page - cached page

All posts about this link

Show influential only (4)

Filter



Michael Puschmann shared this post. 23 hours ago



Glenn Gabe: Important for site migrations -> How to Maintain Social Shares After a Site Migration via +Michael King on +Search Engine Watch #seo #social 24 hours ago  
**Highly Influential**



iProspect Danmark shared this post. 2 days ago



Adam Sherk shared this post. 2 days ago **Influential**



Jim Watson shared this post. 2 days ago



John Britsios shared this post. 2 days ago



Cale Fischer shared this post. 2 days ago

## COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Competitive Analysis used to be lengthy process, now we have three very awesome and actionable tools called [SearchMetrics Essentials](#), [Link Research Tools](#) and [Link Detective](#) that can give you insights in seconds.

SearchMetrics Essentials is great because they are automatically tracking a wide swath of keywords for a plethora of domains. It can quickly be determined what sites are actually competing for the same keyword spread.

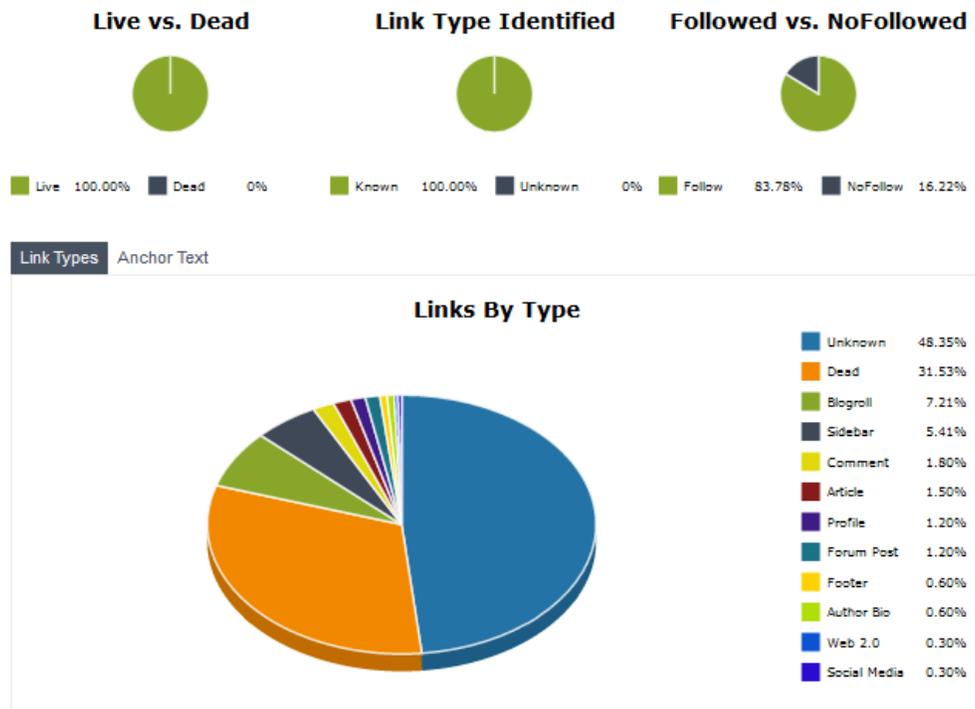
Organic Competitors (1 to 100 of 108) ?									Export	Report	Long Tail
Domain	Competitive Keywords	Other Keywords	Competitor Traffic Index	Traffic Index	∅ Traffic Value	Competitor ∅ Position	∅ Pos.				
linkedin.com	4	1,631,205	6	17	\$0.01	13	12				
wikipedia.org	4	5,097,142	374	60	\$8.17	3	11				
google.com	4	1,463,495	743	50	\$1.26	6	11				
searchengineland.com	3	20,391	6	45	n/a	16	11				
searchenginejournal.com	3	12,633	8	45	n/a	11	11				
smart-it-consulting.com	3	202	64	49	\$0.05	5	7				
siteground.com	2	14,442	1	5	n/a	13	8				
microstools.com	2	782	2	5	n/a	12	8				
siteopsys.com	2	176	2	5	n/a	12	8				
inspyder.com	2	337	2	5	n/a	9	8				
seomoz.org	2	10,633	3	1	n/a	12	14				
w3.org	2	27,024	6	5	n/a	7	8				
seochat.com	2	5,499	7	44	n/a	13	13				
sitemapxml.net	2	92	9	5	\$0.01	5	8				
automapit.com	2	163	17	5	\$0.02	3	8				
twitter.com	2	1,443,886	18	16	\$0.11	9	11				
xml-sitemaps.com	2	743	33	5	\$0.06	2	8				
blogspot.com	2	5,002,114	34	45	\$0.01	8	7				
facebook.com	2	4,917,577	44	4	\$0.55	3	11				
validome.org	2	383	66	5	\$0.13	2	8				
bloombera.com	1	165,361	0	1	n/a	20	7				

Put in your domain name and find out who your competitors are, then take them to your favorite backlink indexing tool to slice and dice their backlink profiles. SearchMetrics has its own link index as well, but at the time of this writing it is still in Beta and not as sizeable as that of SEOmoz, MajesticSEO, etc.

Alternatively, you can skip a step and go straight to Link Research Tools for a wealth of competitive intelligence determined programmatically. Their toolset showcases everything from competitive link velocity to semantic relevance in a fraction of the time it takes to compute by hand.

No.	Page	Travel	Blogs/ Personal Pages	Computers/ Internet
1	<a href="http://www.cheapflights.com/">http://www.cheapflights.com/</a>	22%		6%
2	<a href="http://www.cheapoair.com/">http://www.cheapoair.com/</a>	58%		2%
3	<a href="http://www.flights.com/">http://www.flights.com/</a>	56%		3%
4	<a href="http://www.lowfares.com/">http://www.lowfares.com/</a>	40%		10%
5	<a href="http://www.travelocity.com/">http://www.travelocity.com/</a>	23%		8%
6	<a href="http://www.fly.com/">http://www.fly.com/</a>	37%		5%
7	<a href="http://www.skyscanner.de/">http://www.skyscanner.de/</a>	50%		5%
8	<a href="http://www.cheaptickets.com/">http://www.cheaptickets.com/</a>	24%		12%
9	<a href="http://www.kayak.com/">http://www.kayak.com/</a>	17%		17%
10	<a href="http://www.flightnetwork.com/">http://www.flightnetwork.com/</a>	47%		3%
You	<a href="http://www.flylink.com/">http://www.flylink.com/</a>	17%		8%
	<b>Top 3 Average</b>	<b>48%</b>		<b>4%</b>
	<b>Top 5 Average</b>	<b>42%</b>		<b>6%</b>
	<b>Total Average</b>	<b>38%</b>		<b>7%</b>

If either of those tools is outside of scope, [Link Detective](#) is a respectable free alternative. Simply upload a CSV from Open Site Explorer and the tool will crawl every page and classify the links. Upon completion, the tool shows the percentage of links by type which gives you great competitive intelligence in deciding what types of links to pursue in order to beat your competitors.





## PROTIP: USE THE OPEN SITE EXPLORER API

As of this writing Open Site Explorer only allows the export of the top 10,000 links. So unless you use the Mozscape (fka Linkscape) API to pull links you won't be analyzing a site from the full picture that SEOMoz's tools provide. [Find out how to pull Moz data into Google Docs.](#)

Now, more than ever, it is incredibly easy to quickly discover exactly what your competition is doing. Use these tools to determine which tactics in this plan should have the most muscle allocated.

## CONTENT CALENDAR

Once you've determined what's on the site and who your competitors are it's time to determine what content you will be rolling out to support your link building efforts. While content should already be developed on a daily basis to further facilitate engagement with users we will be launching the following under this plan:

- Data Visualization (Month 2)
- Blog Posts (Month 3)
- Unbranded Microsite (Month 4)
- Curated Guide (Month 5)
- Remixed Content (Month 6)

Plan exactly what content you're rolling out. Do the required research and delegate tasks to the required team members so all that is left is the actual content creation and promotion.

These initiatives may require substantial development, so it is important in this month to identify all the stakeholders and processes required to make them happen, get buy-in and align them to the overall content calendar. Implementing this content calendar will keep all those involved on task.

## IDENTIFY PROSPECTS

- **Social Prospecting** – Using data from social media you will identify prospects based on the interests outlined in your persona development. You will then cross-check those users with metrics from Mozscape. So for the keyword “3d tv” your prospects in FollowerWonk would look like:

**followerwonk** Sign in with Twitter

Search Twitter bios Compare users Analyze followers Track followers Sort followers

Looking for prospects? Whether it's new talent, customers, or just friends, we help find whom you're after. Login with Twitter and we'll overlay your follow status. Want precise tracking of new/lost followers?

Search bios for:  Do it

examples: lovers & haters, CEOs, SEO, social media, actors, journalists, NYC architects, vampires?, most followers, oldest accounts

Showing 1 - 50 of 428 results (order by relevance) Tweet! download

follow	screen name	real name	location	influence	tweets	following	followers	days old
	3DF33D	3DF33D	New York	48.54	2,050	16,909	16,879	545
	3D Webcam • point your Chrome or Firefox at http://3DF33D.tv • share your 3D photos and videos * #teamfollowback • 3DF33D.tv							
	3DTVCentral	3D TV Central	Boston, MA	37.40	296	10,622	10,288	99
	Discover Top Rated 2012 3D TV Reviews & Educate Yourself on breakthrough 3D technology! 3dtv-central.com							
	follow_ok_sexy	i follow back you ok		28.85	193	7,870	7,192	983
	I'll follow back you twitter Please wait anime sexy manga Follow Friday 3d music manga フォロー返しあり windows computer TV							
	Teacher501	오영일 (501)	Korea	34.39	468	7,829	7,155	701
	현) 최초 3D 애니메이션 학습앱 '하루세이' 개발자, 재능인글리쉬TV '501의 추리문법, YBM, 마이캘키지(최연소 대표강사), 베스트셀러 저자, 바리스타, 501영어 프로젝트 운영자, NAVER[오영일]검색 club.cyworld.com/t501							
	REDmystiqueMP	REDmystique	London	43.14	76	231	6,529	134
	Video marketing services, TV advertisements, Royalty free After Effects templates, 3D visualization, Videhive fastest growing company & much more. redmystique.com							

Then take those to Excel [using Niels Bosma's tools for Excel](#) or [use ImportXML with Google Spreadsheets](#) and pull the link metrics for each user's sites. Now you can prioritize prospects by both social & link metrics.

Users	URL	Persona	MozRa	External Lin	Domain Author
Raspberrypilm	http://www.wix.com/ramonserratos/rams	3D TV Enthusiasts	7.87	25619	96.91
Chrisbcox	http://is.gd/Free3dHDTV	3D TV Enthusiasts	6.7	13901	91.76
follow_ok_sexy	http://club.cyworld.com/t501	3D TV Enthusiasts	6.55	2154	83.65
CheapOhNetwork	http://www.islandpacket.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	6	402	82.75
SafetyGeeks3D	http://magazine.creativecow.net	3D TV Enthusiasts	6.06	5920	74.09
Visual_Post	http://www.mitsubishi-tv.com/	3D TV Enthusiasts	5.43	95	72.04
3DGuy_tv	http://www.rapidnews.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	5.55	93	61.89
OnurErgen	http://www.solidsmack.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.92	23659	58.76
iCronos4	http://www.bigstage.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.56	121	45.12
LG_Thailand	http://twitaddons.com/TT_PangPang	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.34	510	43.24
TT_PangPang	http://www.answr.jp	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.32	2720	42.19
PaoloDy	http://www.bluefx.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.44	23	39.96
Dipoweb	http://www.aatmastudio.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.03	477	39.64
jpgoldfin_adsk	http://www.3dtworldforum.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.42	0	38.59
3DF33D	http://3DF33D.tv	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.06	58	38.54
enxak	http://store.yabazam.com/Safety_Geeks_SV1_Season_1_p/dc115100.htm	3D TV Enthusiasts	3.99	76	37.95
RapidTVNews	http://www.phinolan3d.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.73	1493	37.81
harigai_ANSWR	http://laverysbelfast.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	4.05	3	34.1
XanPhillips	http://www.sarahsansblog.com/	3D TV Enthusiasts	3.57	21	33.1
Laverysbelfast	http://www.dinamofilmes.com.br	3D TV Enthusiasts	3.6	0	30.14
REDmystiqueMP	http://www.LindaLaRue.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	3.49	175	30.13
BigStage	http://www.lowpricehotdeals.com	3D TV Enthusiasts	2.09	0	28.18

If you don't want to bother with ImportXML or SEOTools you can use [Outreachr's Bulk Domain Checker](#) as well.

- o [FollowerWonk](#)
- o [Zerply](#)
- o [About.Me](#)

- **Site Prospecting** – As always you can do this in reverse and prospect sites using the following tools or Google itself. Once you have the URLs you can [use Jeff Nappi's Twitter Handle scraper tool](#) to pull twitter user names off of the sites quickly and prioritize the prospects.
  - Citation Labs
  - Ontolo
  - Advanced Search Queries
    - inurl – inurl: [keyword]
    - intitle – [keyword] intitle: blog
    - Wildcard – [keyword] “Guest \*” blog
    - Exact phrase – [keyword] “guest post guidelines”
    - Allintitle

## STALK YOUR PROSPECTS

Once social prospects are prioritized research the top prospects, create dashboards and set up alerts to be aware of when these prospects may be in need of something that you can help with. This will quickly allow you to create an online relationship with that prospect.

- **Do Your Research** – Use [KnowEm.com](#) to investigate the prospect by checking out all of their social media profiles. Also use [Screaming Frog](#) with [SharedCount](#) or just head back to the Facebook Recommendation demo tool to crawl the site and identify what page or posts have been shared the most and read them. This will allow you to communicate with context.
- **Use IFTTT** – Create a recipe that sends you a text message or email whenever a given user tweets a question or a keyword where you can possibly add something.
- **Create a Dashboard** – Use Excel or Google Docs to pull in all of a given user’s social feeds and RSS feeds so you know what they are up to at a glance and can reach out at the best possible moment.
- **Use MentionMapp** – Identify who else these prospects talk to regularly to potentially identify more prospects or create a relationship in order to ultimately get a warm introduction to a prospect.

## POLISHING

Now that you have an inventory of all the content on the site, the next step is to figure out what content could just use a once over. Essentially you want to find content on the site that underperformed in social sharing and attracting links then polish it up and launch it again. These and

the other existing link bait that you have identified in your content audit represent the low hanging fruit that you will arm yourself with to plunder your quick hits.



### **LINK BUILDING PRO TIP: RELAUNCHING OLD CONTENT**

Work with you graphic designers and copywriters to make an existing piece of content is more engaging. Take posts with little structure and no images and restructure them following Cyrus Shepard's guide to Copywriting for Link Building and fire away at your influencers.

## **PLUNDERING**

The planning phase is realistically a week's worth of work so you should come out of it with three pieces of pre-existing and/or newly polished content will be pushed for the remained of Month One. For double effect combine your re-launch outreach with your pre-contacting outreach, offering your re-launch content as just a valuable resource rather than linkbait.

## **PRE-CONTACTING**

For the content that you will be building, you will reach out to key influencers to get their buy-in, input and insight so once it launches they will promote it and link to it.

## **QUICK HITS**

- **Brand Fans** – Since you already have a social following this is a great time to take inventory of your followers and determine which ones link to you and which ones do not. Both sets of people are very likely to link to your upcoming content. Use [SimplyMeasured](#) with your favorite Link Index, but be sure to expand any url shorteners using SEOTools for Excel's `DownloadString` function and the following URL expander tool ([http://www.ipullrank.com/tools/expandurl/?url=\[INSERT SHORTENED URL HERE\]](http://www.ipullrank.com/tools/expandurl/?url=[INSERT SHORTENED URL HERE])).
- **Quora** – Does your content answer a question? Jump into the threads on Quora and answer people's questions then follow up with the people asking those questions and upvoting to request a link.
- **Contact Competitor Linkers** – Pull your competitions links and reach out to the people who have linked to relevant content and encourage them to link to yours as well.
- **Join the Conversation** – Use Google's discussion search to find blogs in your vertical and join in the conversation. Only post links after accruing enough points and the end of the grace period.

- **Social Profiles** – Cover all the bases and instantiate employer profiles on the site and encourage them to link to the specific pages for added links from social profiles.
- **RSS directories** – Submit the blog to RSS directories so would-be scraper sites can easily find it. When a site is scraped the links therein will then be pointing back to you from another site. Be sure to use absolute (<http://www.yoursite.com/page-name>) URLs rather than relative (/page-name) to ensure that your pages get those links.



## MONTH TWO – COAL MINING

Month two is very data intense because not only are you launching a piece of data visualized content, but you will be mining social data to discover people that have shared your content and not linked to it.

Every industry has data. For example, if you or your client is a trash collector see if there is data available concerning what type of trash gets thrown out where and create an interactive map or launch a survey that gets people involved to confirm or deny those findings.

### DATA VISUALIZATION

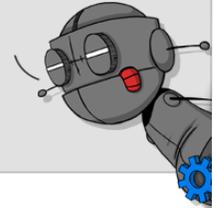
When people read “data visualization” they immediately think of infographics. Stop. Instead think of about co-relevance and how to maximize the data that is available. What pieces of the data can be made individually sharable and linked back to a central comprehensive content hub?

There are a variety of ways to visualize data and depending on your niche it may perform better as an interactive timeline than an infographic so understand the vertical and create accordingly.

Again, as noted in the Noob Guide to Link Building data visualization should always be employed as a maximum viable product by exhausting the possible digital assets to encourage people to link to and share your content.

## GARY'S TIP: THE INFOGRAPHIC INDEX

Distilled's Paddy Moogan ([@paddymoogan](#)) has developed a [Google Custom Search Engine for infographics](#). Perform keyword searches to determine what has already been made as an infographic. If your idea already exists but was undercooked, consider creating a better version in a different data visualization format.



## TACTICS

- **FOLLOW UP ON PRE-CONTACTS**

Presumably the prospects you have pre-contacted leading up to this data visualization will have given you feedback and insight throughout the creation process and will be eager to see the final product. Follow up with these people and encourage them to link to and share the new content.

- **WATCH THE SHARES**

I hum “If you liked it then you shoulda put a link on it” to the melody of Beyonce’s “Single Ladies” as I monitor the Twitter stream for people that have shared my content. Set up an IFTTT recipe to monitor the URL of your content and then check if that user has a blog or website. Run a Screaming Frog crawl with to see if the URL to your content is mentioned anywhere on the site. If not, reach out to that person and convince them that if it was worth sharing it’s worth linking to.

- **GUEST POST(S)**

Data can be sliced and diced in a variety of ways and there is always room for additional analysis. Once you’ve launched your data visualization save something additional and remarkable for a guest post on a leading industry site. In that post include a call to action or the data viz itself to kickstart the sharing and linking.



## LINK BUILDING PRO TIP: MULTIPLE GUEST POSTS

Depending on the amount of data available, you may be able to do this on numerous sites at once. Do not duplicate content across these sites nor let the quality slip.

- **INFOGRAPHIC GALLERIES**

The following is a list of sites that catalog infographics and represent quick hits for any static data visualization. The links from these sites are a good reason to create an infographic as well even if a different form of data visualization is the main attraction.

<http://dailyinfographic.com/>

<http://fuckyeahinfographics.tumblr.com/>

<http://iheartinfographics.tumblr.com/>

<http://iinfographic.com/>

<http://infographic.co.za/>

<http://infographicsbin.tumblr.com/>

<http://infographicsite.com/>

<http://infographipedia.com/>

<http://infographr.tumblr.com>

<http://submitinfographics.com/>

<http://theinfographics.blogspot.com/>

<http://videoinfographic.com/submit-infographic/>

<http://visual.ly/>

<http://www.bestinfographics.co.uk/>

<http://www.bestinfographics.info/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

<http://www.pureinfographics.com>

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

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

<http://chartporn.org/>

<http://www.fastcompany.com/tag/infographic>

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

<http://infographicdatabase.com/>

- **PITCH JOURNALISTS**

Journalists love cutting edge information and being able to include it in their articles. If journalists were not on your list of initial prospects reach out to them shortly before the data viz goes live. Identify them with search queries “writes for [publication]” and tools like [Muckrack](#).



## **MONTH THREE – CARROT DANGLING**

Month three is about using your incentives to get a one-to-many return in links on your investment and getting your brand acolytes to create content on your behalf.

### **THE BLOG CONTEST**

Since paying bloggers for links or giving a substantial give to each of the thousands of people you want to get a link from is not an option, it is time for a blog contest. This blog contest is very similar to the one suggested in the Noob Guide to Link Building however the main difference is that bloggers will not be creating posts for your site, they will be creating posts for their own site and linking to you. Once these posts are live, these users will be competing in social media to win. This works best if there is an array of prizes that way people believe they have a good shot at winning. So take that \$50,000 paid link budget and give away a trip, your service, electronics and other goodies your audience is interested in instead.

This contest is also a great way to generate content for your site. You can potentially build a community out of participants and encourage them to create more content or engage with your existing content. Also, make it easy for them to create an account by using Facebook or Twitter as the sign-in.

### **LET THEM KNOW IT'S REAL**

The first thing you should do is reach out to a group of the most influential people in your space and just give them a prize right away. Part of the process will be to convince them to write about their experience and link to a landing page with information on how to enter the contest. For example if you're in the consumer electronics space, reach out to the top 20 influencers and give them a Blu-

Ray player. Your audience values the authenticity of their thought leaders and if they are saying that this contest is a real thing and they've had a real experience the bloggers you are targeting will be compelled to join in.

## **PROSPECTING BLOGGERS**

The prospects you have previously identified are your most relevant, but you can also reach out to people that are specifically interested in the prizes that you have to offer and get them to enter the contest. Specifically invite them to enter your blogging contest and cite the posts of influencers in your space to convince them.

Naturally, there will be more people interested in this contest than actual bloggers so empower them. Introduce them to the different site hosting and blogging platforms (Google Sites is my personal favorite). Tell them where to go, encourage them to [install the Zemanta plugin](#) to make building their blog post easier and give them potential topics. You can potentially go as far as to build a Wordpress plugin that double checks their posts to make sure that they have linked to you properly. In efforts to not litter the web with thin blogs you should also make it a stipulation that their blog must contain a certain amount of quality content to be considered for eligibility.

In short, *create* bloggers if you're not able to attract enough existing bloggers to be effective.

## **MAKE BLOGGERS COME TO YOU**

While press releases and advertising are a great way to attract people to this blog contest, you may not want to go that route as it will tip off your competitors. Target those people very specifically with Facebook Ads.

You've already identified the demographics of your influencers so plug them into the Facebook Ad Creator and then put in the interests of those users but add "blogging."

**Location**

Country: [?]

Everywhere  
 By State/Province [?]  
 By City [?]  
 By Zip Code [?]

**Demographics**

Age: [?]  -

Require exact age match [?]

Sex: [?]  All  Men  Women

**Interests**

Precise Interests: [?]  +

**Suggested Likes & Interests**

<input type="checkbox"/> #Samsung Electronics	<input type="checkbox"/> Lg
<input type="checkbox"/> #Grand Duchy of Lithuania	<input type="checkbox"/> #Panasonic Corporation
<input type="checkbox"/> #Acer Inc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Les Forfaits Mtv De Sfr

[Switch to Broad Category Targeting \[?\]](#)

**Connections on Facebook**

Connections: [?]  Anyone  Advanced connection targeting

Estimated Reach [?]

**481,740** people

- who live in the **United States**
- age **18** and older
- who like **3d tv, #LG Electronics** or **blogging**

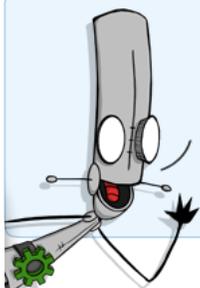
Once you have plugged in the audience make a simple branded ad that invites them to join the contest. Keep in mind that you will get a better value out of Facebook ads by using CPC rather than CPM.

**Love 3DTV and Blogging?**



Love 3D Television and blogging? Enter the LG 3D TV contest and win a free 3D TV Today!

Michael Icon King likes LG Mobile.



## KNOW FACEBOOK'S RULES FOR CONTESTS

If you use Facebook Ads to attract bloggers, it is against Facebook's policy to use the Like functionality for voting to judge the contest. Therefore you will have to limit the social voting to Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn if it's relevant.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

Since this is a contest, it will be fairly easy to control the level of quality of the posts entrants create. Simply make it clear what the specifications of an entry are and require that at least one link back to you be included. If a user doesn't comply simply inform them that their entry is not eligible and they will either make improvements or delete their entry altogether.

## MAKE THOUGHT LEADERS OUT OF WINNERS

Once the winners are determined, hire the great ones to guest post on your blog. The opportunity to be involved with a leader in the vertical may prove to be invaluable to them and your brand or client will be able to leverage their commitment to creating awesome content as well as their social networks.



## MONTH FOUR – TRICK YOUR COMPETITORS

Month four is second tier link building at its finest. You will convince your client's competitors to give up their link equity in the form of links to an unbranded microsite that passes link equity back to the client's site.

### UNBRANDED MICROSITE

Launch a comprehensive resource for your vertical with remarkable content of its own. Follow the Noob Guide to Online Marketing and also hire the best entrants from your blog contest to create compelling industry-specific content for this microsite and then link back to your main site.

The key to this site is that it must be one completely standalone resource that gives value to the user.

A great example of one such site is Tampax's BeingGirl.com.

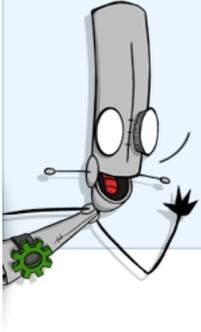


Build remarkable content as well as a community around it allows you to create a hub that is more lacks than the main site and trick your competitors into linking to you.

## TACTICS

- **Second Tier Link Building** – Follow the Noob Guide to Link Building for this site in order to build links to it and give it a formidable presence of its own in the SERPs.
- **Build Community** – Building a community with game mechanics to kickstart the site and encourage user-generated content will facilitate the creation and the spread of the content. Also, since many brands don't want communities on their main site this is a great opportunity to capitalize on a community that is otherwise ignored by the main site or relegated to social media.
- **Promote Content from the Main Site and Social Properties** – Since the site is unbranded, only specific content should be promoted from the main brand properties to give the impression that the two entities are not connected. This isn't to fool Google, it's to fool competitors.
- **Align with Influencers** – Through influencers in the space the competitors will take notice and naturally link to the resources therein.

- **Reach out to Competitors Directly** – This will typically only work when link building as a third party, but you can reach out to competitors directly and encourage them to link to you. These people are usually quite easy to identify using LinkedIn, FollowerWonk or the competitor's website.



### **301 REDIRECT THE MICROSITE**

In the long term (think a year or more) the main site can potentially absorb the content of the microsite and the link equity can be 301 redirected to the main site which means ultimately your competitors will be linking to you.



## MONTH FIVE – AGGREGATE

In the past four months you and your users have created a large amount of content. You also have identified the best content on your site; take the best of it release an aggregation.

### RELEASE A GUIDE

Who has time to write an E-Book? You do. Curate the relevant content from your site and add new sought-after content that can't be found anywhere else, but also go the extra mile to make it beautiful and comprehensive. It is worth investing resources to hire a great writer and graphic designer to further illustrate concepts from your existing content simply because there's a value add to the user.

### TACTICS

- **REACH OUT TO INFLUENCERS**

Contact influencers and encourage their contributions to your guide. Whether it's just a quote, interview, a review or another piece of content they are willing to part ways with. Having them involved creates a reason for these people to share, link to and write about your guide. Can't find a great writer? By now you should at least have a handful of influencers and blog contestants that are happy to create content for your brand.

- **GUEST POST AGAIN**

Releasing a guide is a great reason to launch a series of guest posts on sites with content that may not have made it into the guide or is tangential and allows you to link back to the guide. Align with influential websites, write stellar content and of course link back to yourself.



## LINK BUILDING PRO TIP: POST TOPICS

People gravitate strongly to success stories, new ideas, tutorial and “10 Tips to...” posts. Write several of these and tie it back directly to the content in your guide.

- **LEVERAGE THE COMMUNITY**

The microsite community would love to be involved with the creation of the guide. Have users vote for what content should be included and suggest what should be added to they feel compelled to link to and share it once it’s released. This tactic can be rinsed and repeated over time with different volumes or editions of the guide.

- **HOST A WEBINAR SERIES**

Create a presentation series that walks people through your guide or research and offers extra insights that are not otherwise featured in the guide. Since the guide has multiple authors encourage the best of them to put together decks around their posts and then post these webinars once recorded on your site.

- **CREATE HOW-TO VIDEO SERIES**

If the guide contains specific tutorials on how to accomplish something, create short videos with walk-throughs.



# IF YOU LIKED IT, THEN YOU SHOULDA PUT A LINK ON IT

(REMIX)



## MONTH SIX – IF YOU LIKED IT, THEN YOU SHOULD PUT A LINK ON IT (REMIX)

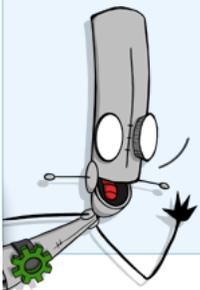
At this point in the campaign you are likely to be at the end of your budget, but you want to end strong with as little effort as possible. Find popular and/or expired content and make a **better** version of it then find the users that shared and linked the original and convince them to link to you.

### STEAL CONTENT IDEAS

Remember the Facebook Recommendation tool? Throw your competitor's domains in there and find out what their best performing content is — then make a better version. Failing that, identify resources that underperformed like white papers and other pages with great data that wasn't presented properly and make a more engaging version.

#### Things to remember:

- Cite your data sources
- Steal from many sources
- Always add significantly to the content you've stolen



### IS STEALING CONTENT WRONG?

Don't confuse this approach with duplicate content. In this case you are creating your own unique version of the same content. While you may use the same data sources, the final product will completely different than the source content.

## • **BROKEN LINK BUILDING**

Broken Link Building in this case refers to identifying resources that no longer exist on the web, but still have many links, recreating and then re-launching them.

At iAcquire, we are currently working on tools to easily identify these resources, but until then the best methodology to employ is:

- Keep track of resource or link pages
- Install the Broken Links Plugin
- Identify broken links on Pages
- Take broken link URLs to a link index to identify sites linking to them. These will be your link prospects.
- Take broken link URLs to the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine and see what that page used to be

## • **IDENTIFY PEOPLE WHO LINKED**

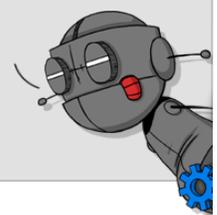
Pull your backlink profile and identify the people that linked to you previously. These are easy targets for getting new links since they are already acquainted with your content.

## • **IDENTIFY PEOPLE WHO SHARED**

Similar to how we identified prospects in Month 2, we can use Topsy to identify users that shared content we have previously released and invite them to link to it.

### **GARY'S TIP: KEEP A RUNNING SPREADSHEET OR USE IFTTT**

It's best to regularly monitor Twitter and keep a spreadsheet of these people, because tools like Topsy and Social Mention do not index tweets for an indefinite period of time. You can also set up an IFTTT recipe that sends you an email or text message whenever someone tweets your link.



- **BRAND FANS AGAIN**

At this point both your link profile and social following will have grown due to all your efforts. Use the method Ethan Lyon invented and Wil Reynolds made popular one more time to quickly figure out who is following you but not linking to you.

## **CONGRATS!**

You've made it to the end of the Complete 6 Month Link Building Game Plan. If you've done this right you should be hundreds if not thousands of links richer. We would love to hear your success stories either via email to [mike@iacquire.com](mailto:mike@iacquire.com) or via twitter [@iacquire](https://twitter.com/iacquire).

Follow us to get the latest news on the re-launch of our link intelligence tool LinkDiagnosis and other link building tools we will be soon rolling out.

If you have any difficulty implementing any of the tactics in this guide due to bandwidth or lack of personnel, consider reaching out to iAcquire for all you off-page optimization needs. We are the extension of your team.

# PROFESSIONAL OFF-PAGE SEO FOR THE ENTERPRISE

## DIGITAL PR



IDENTIFY/ENGAGE TREND SETTER OUTLETS

## TARGETED CONTENT MARKETING



DIGITAL ASSET DISTRIBUTION

## MANAGED LINK DEVELOPMENT

### NEW APPLE IPAD RELEASED

Apple's "new" iPad is officially here – but what does everybody think? We take a look at some initial reactions to the company's third-generation iPad.

<b>86</b> IBL	<b>52</b> R-IBL	<b>6</b> OBL	<b>3</b> M-OBL	<b>3</b> Page Rank	<b>5</b> Root PR
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NATURAL LINK INTEGRATION

## LINK RECLAMATION



BACKLINK AUDIT AND OPTIMIZATION

## CRAFT YOUR INFLUENCE

At iAcquire we help you **CRAFT** your Influence.

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