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Most Things Google Said About Good SEO

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At [Search Engine Land](#), find Google's announcement about ranking boost if a site opts for HTTPS:

Google has announced that going HTTPS — adding a SSL 2048-bit key certificate on your site — will give you a minor ranking boost.

Google says this gives websites a small ranking benefit, only counting as a “very lightweight signal” within the overall ranking algorithm. In fact, Google said this carries “less weight than other signals such as high-quality content.” Based on their tests, Google says it has an impact on “fewer than 1% of global queries” but said they “may decide to strengthen” the signal because they want to “encourage all website owners to switch from HTTP to HTTPS to keep everyone safe on the web.”

Responding to someone asking if they need their keyword in their domain name, Google's John Mueller said:

“You don't need your keywords in your domain name. Websites without them in there rank just fine. Instead of focusing on that specific keyword, I'd recommend spending the time to make your site the absolute best of its kind.”

How Google determines the quality of a page? Google's Matt Cutts said in a recent video:

“You have to go to pre-Google days, how search engines worked before links, and look at the words on the page. you need to judge the content based on the words on the page and the more often the words are on the page, in a diminishing scales type of way, the more likely the page is about that word. Google also uses a factor to see if the domain itself has value, but that brings in links. Without links, Google simply needs to look at the quality of the content on the page, which may or may not be enough depending on the competitive nature of the keyword phrase.”

Google's John Mueller said about the length of article content:

“There's no minimum length, and there's no minimum number of articles a day that you have to post, nor even a minimum number of pages on a website. In most cases, quality is better than quantity. Our algorithms explicitly try to find and recommend websites that provide content that's of high quality, unique, and compelling to users. Don't fill your site with low-quality content, instead work on making sure that your site is the absolute best of its kind.”

Google [pointed out](#) clarity about sneaky redirects on their blog as follows:

“Using sneaky redirects through mobile site detection and redirection, is not allowed if the content is not the same. Desktop users receive a normal page, while mobile users are redirected to a completely different spam domain. With any violation of our quality guidelines, we may take manual action, including removal from our index, in order to maintain the quality of the search results.”

In a recent video, Google’s Matt Cutts pointed out there is importance of content in the body of a page. If the title tag and metadata do not match the content in the body of the page on some level, that can confuse Google.

“Make sure the stuff in the header is unique and great but make sure you pay attention to the body of your content ensuring it has unique and great content, as well.”

In his [video](#), Google’s Matt Cutts answers about why and when Google may ignore a site’s title tag and use something else for the snippet title in the search results:

“Google really wants the title of the snippets to match on some level the query of the searcher. This logic often results in a higher click through rate on the URL and thus should be better for both the searcher and the web site owner.”

Google may show up the original page title when:

1. It is “relatively” short
2. It is a good description of the page.
3. It is relevant to the query.

If not, Google may use content on the page, anchor text links pointing to the page or may also use the Open Directory Project.

“How can we check to see if a domain (bought from a registrar) was previously in trouble with Google? I recently bought, and unbeknownst to me the domain isn’t being indexed and I’ve had to do a reconsideration request. How could I have prevented?” Google’s Matt Cutts, in his video, responded about quick tips to avoid purchasing a domain name destroyed by a spammer as follows:

“Doing a site-colon search on the domain name (site: domain name), “If there’s no results at all from that domain, even if there’s content on that domain, that’s a pretty bad sign.

Performing a simple search on the [domain name](#) – excluding .com or its extension – to research the site’s reputation.

At Archive.org, you can view previous versions of the site to see if it contained spammy, auto-generated content. If you are purchasing a site from a current owner, ask to see the site’s traffic analytics so that you can identify any unusual trends.

Overall, if you do a site-colon search, or you search for the domain name, or you look for it in internet archive, that’s a really fast, quick way to get an idea of whether it was

owned by someone that used it for ill, or whether they were doing some good stuff with it.”

In a recent [video](#), Google’s Matt Cutts talks about the biggest SEO myths. He says:

“By far, the biggest myth is how people think Google makes changes to their search results with the only intent of making more money. Buying or not buying ads has no positive or negative impact on your rankings. In addition, Google does not make changes to their organic algorithms based on encouraging people to buy ads.

The other large myth is more of an SEO pattern often in the SEO forums and black hat SEO forums. It is “group think” where one SEO suggests doing a specific tactic will lead to good results in organic and then everyone follows.

Someone might say article directories leads to easy rankings and then six-months later the group will jump from article directories to guest blogging and from guest blogging to link wheels and so on.

If someone found a loophole, they wouldn’t post it in a forum, sell it in an ebook or sell it via software – they would exploit it to make as much money off of it as possible.”

In recent [video](#) from Matt Cutts, Google’s head of webspam answers the question on how Google separates the concept of popularity from authority.

“Popularity and authority are two different things. Porn sites are often way more popular than government or organization sites but government sites are often more authoritative than porn sites. So the two concepts are different.”

Matt Cutts, Google’s head of search spam, tweeted an interesting tip to SEOs around disavow file submissions. He said:

“You should not delete or remove the original disavow file when uploading a new one. Upload the new one, which will replace the old disavow file. Because when you delete the old one and upload a new one, it generates two emails to the Google team and may confuse them when review manual actions.”

If your site got Google Penalties and can’t regain the old rankings, should you start a brand new site? Google’s John Mueller said on [Google+](#) on this question:

“It’s never a decision to make lightly, but there can be situations where a website has built up so many problems, that it may appear easier or faster to start over with a fresh & new website, rather than to try to fix all of those problems individually. This isn’t an easy way to get past problems that have been built up over the years, it’s a lot of work to create a new website, even if you already know the business area.

If you feel you're in this situation, make sure to get advice from friends & other people that you trust (including webmaster communities where you trust their opinions) before doing anything drastic!”

In the [Google Webmaster Help](#) thread, he also said as follows:

“If you're creating a new website, and don't want to be associated with the old one, I'd strongly recommend really making a *new* website and not just moving the content to a different domain. You don't need to wait for anything in a case like this -- it's fine to remove (or block) the old website, and to create a really new one elsewhere at the same time.”

In [Google Forum](#), the following is the response for a question on how long a URL length should be:

"As far as I know, there's no theoretical length limit, but we recommend keeping URLs shorter than 2000 characters to keep things manageable.

Your URL looks much shorter than that, so just from the length that would be fine. As Charlie mentioned (thanks!), there are definitely more important things to watch out for."

Off topic links coming to you are not to be afraid and disavowed. Google John Mueller said as follows;

“Just to be completely clear on this: you do not need to disavow links that are from sites on other topics. This tool is really only meant for situations where there are problematic, unnatural, PageRank-passing links that you can't have removed.”

In a new [video](#) from Google's Head, Matt Cutts, said again the significance of backlinks. In a question, he said:

“There is no public version of the search engine that excludes backlink relevancy, my team has run internal tests to see what would happen. excluding backlink relevancy resulted in “much worse” search quality. It turns out backlinks, even though there's some noise and certainly a lot of spam, for the most part are still a really, really big win in terms of quality for search results.”

In his [video](#), Matt Cutts addresses about third-party comments with poor grammar on your blog or site. He said:

“You do not need to worry about the grammar people use on your site. You should worry about your writing style and your grammar but there is no need to worry about how other people are writing comments on your site.

... this doesn't mean you should allow spam comments, you still should remove spam comments. But when it comes to being on top of grammar, you have enough to worry about with content that you write, and you don't need to worry about what others write.”

Matt Cutts, Google's head of search spam, announced that Google has released last Thursday, February 6 2014, a refresh of its Page Layout Algorithm also known as the Top Heavy algorithm, downgrades the ranking of a web page with too many ads at the top or if the ads are deemed too distracting for users. He said on Twitter:

“SEO folks: we recently launched a refresh of this algorithm: <http://t.co/KKSXm8FqZW> Visible to outside world on ~Feb. 6th.”

As we know as Google said:

“We've heard complaints from users that if they click on a result and it's difficult to find the actual content, they aren't happy with the experience. Rather than scrolling down the page past a slew of ads, users want to see content right away.

So sites that don't have much content “above-the-fold” can be affected by this change. If you click on a website and the part of the website you see first either doesn't have a lot of visible content above-the-fold or dedicates a large fraction of the site's initial screen real estate to ads, that's not a very good user experience. Such sites may not rank as highly going forward.”

Matt Cutts, Google's head of search spam, said in a [video answer](#) to webmasters not to use article directory web sites with the goal of building links. He said shortly:

“My personal recommendation is to not upload articles to article directories.”

Google's Chris Nelson of the search quality team said on the [Google Webmaster Blog](#) to webmasters running affiliate sites that affiliates that produce thin-content and have little-to-no value-add on their site may be penalized for going against Google's [guidelines](#).

“Recently, we've seen this behavior on many video sites, particularly in the adult industry, but also elsewhere.”

Google sums up clearly, “If your site syndicates content that's available elsewhere, a good question to ask is: “Does this site provide significant added benefits that would make a user want to visit this site in search results instead of the original source of the content?” If the answer is “No,” the site may frustrate searchers and violate our quality guidelines.”

In his latest [video](#), Matt Cutts said old sites may not have their Google rankings all the time. He said:

“There are many old sites that are in the range of about 15 years old and while that is a good thing, some of these sites have their original design templates and have not done much to their sites to improve things over the years. They have never redesigned the site, never updated the user interfaces, never added new features for their users, etc. If you want to stay competitive ... you need to take a “fresh” look at your site and keep upgrading, tweaking, improving the site and the user experience.

Otherwise, new sites that have a better user experience, may surpass you, as they should. In short, having an old domain doesn't mean you will always keep the rankings you have today, tomorrow."

In his personal post titled "[The decay and fall of guest blogging](#)", Matt Cutts said about bad signals from guest blogging.

"So stick a fork in it: guest blogging is done; it's just gotten too spammy. ... It seems like most people are getting the spirit of what I was trying to say, but I'll add a bit more context. I'm not trying to throw the baby out with the bath water. There are still many good reasons to do some guest blogging (exposure, branding, increased reach, community, etc.). Those reasons existed way before Google and they'll continue into the future. And there are absolutely some fantastic, high-quality guest bloggers out there. I changed the title of this post to make it more clear that I'm talking about guest blogging for search engine optimization (SEO) purposes.

I'm also not talking about multi-author blogs. High-quality multi-author blogs like Boing Boing have been around since the beginning of the web, and they can be compelling, wonderful, and useful.

I just want to highlight that a bunch of low-quality or spam sites have latched on to "guest blogging" as their link-building strategy, and we see a lot more spammy attempts to do guest blogging. Because of that, I'd recommend skepticism (or at least caution) when someone reaches out and offers you a guest blog article."

In his latest [video](#), Matt Cutts said Google don't give any weight on Facebook or Twitter signals as ranking factors. He said:

"Google does not give any special treatment to Facebook or Twitter pages. They are in fact, currently, treated like any other page. ... They put a lot of engineering time into it and then they were blocked and that work and effort was no longer useful. So for Google to put more engineering time into this and then be blocked again, it just doesn't pay. ... However, I see Google crawling, indexing and understanding more about identities on the web in the long term."

In his latest video, Google's Matt Cutts answers the question, "How can I guest blog without it appearing as if I paid for links?" Matt Cutts told the differences between spam and organic guest blogging content. The spam content doesn't match the subject of the blog itself and will contain keyword rich anchor text.

"A true guest blogger is usually someone who is an expert on the subject matter and doesn't drop a heavy amount of keywords in their anchor text."

"Guest blogging seems like it's the fad of the month, it is best done in moderation. It shouldn't be your full-time job."

“ If guest blogging is all you are doing to drive traffic to your site, you’re probably not doing any favors for your site’s reputation.”

According to a [video](#) posted, Google’s head of search spam, Matt Cutts, clearly said that the geo-location or redirecting users based on their location is not spam. Google will not consider a site that uses geo-location techniques as spam. What Google does consider spam is when you redirect GoogleBot to a web page of content that users cannot see. That is considered spam and a form of cloaking, according to Google’s guidelines. Google expects you treat GoogleBot as a user accessing your web site from the United States.

In an online discussion, Google’s John Mueller said:

"From a usability point of view, having a really fast site is awesome -- and like others mentioned, sometimes local hosting (or local CDNs) can help there.

For search, specifically for geotargeting, the server's location plays a very small role, in many cases it's irrelevant. If you use a ccTLD or a gTLD together with Webmaster Tools, then we'll mainly use the geotargeting from there, regardless of where your server is located. You definitely don't need to host your website in any specific geographic location -- use what works best for you."

At a special event in the garage where Google was born, Google announced a new “Hummingbird” search algorithm to handle complex queries. Hummingbird is the name of the new search algorithm that Google is using for better results. Hummingbird looks at PageRank — how important links to a page are deemed to be and other factors like whether Google believes a page is of good quality, the words used on it and many other things. For more information, [Click Here](#). Google said:

“Hummingbird is paying more attention to each word in a query, ensuring that the whole query — the whole sentence or conversation or meaning — is taken into account, rather than particular words. The goal is that pages matching the meaning do better, rather than pages matching just a few words.”

“There’s nothing new or different SEOs or publishers need to worry about. Guidance remains the same. Have original, high-quality content. Signals that have been important in the past remain important; Hummingbird just allows Google to process them in new and hopefully better ways.”

Matt Cutts, Google’s Head of Spam, said not to use “rel=nofollow” attribute with links in internal pages as follows:

"It doesn’t hurt to use the rel=nofollow attribute with links that point to useless pages. In general, it is better to avoid the rel=nofollow attribute on internal pages. Better use the noindex tag if you want to exclude pages from Google.

Unless you have a very good reason to exclude a site, it is better to allow Google access to all pages."

In an interview, Google's Head Matt Cutts said, "Not all link building is bad." He said about good link building strategies as follows:

"The philosophy that we've always had is if you make something that's compelling then it would be much easier to get people to write about it and to link to it. And so a lot of people approach it from a direction that's backwards. They try to get the links first and then they want to be grandfathered in or think they will be a successful website as a result. Their goal should really be to make a fantastic website that people love and tell their friends about and link to and want to experience. As a result, your website starts to become stronger and stronger in the rankings."

Webmasters use press release as a good tool when they want to promote their product or anything. Here, Matt Cutts said about press release.

"Link from a press release will probably not count, but if that press release convinces an editor or a reporter to write a story about it, and that's an editorial decision, then if that newspaper links to your website as a result of that editorial decision to write a story, it doesn't matter whether it started or was sparked by a press release or it was started by an email that you sent. It's still someone making a decision to cover it."

Matt Cutts said about good practices of SEO and marketing. He said as follows:

"There are lots of ways to do marketing and do it well; there are lots of different ways to get peoples' attention and to get traction. And the more creative you are or the better the experience is with your website, the more likely you are to be successful. But in a lot of ways, if you think like a good marketer and think about what will appeal to people, you will find your job as an SEO and getting links or trying to build your links will be easier as well."

On a question for link building with strong Twitter, Facebook, Google+ presences building great content and followings, Matt Cutts replied as follows:

"If you take that big picture view in which you're really doing marketing, one of the ways to get the word out is to have a devoted following. Musicians could have a mailing list or people could follow you on Twitter or Facebook or Google+ or any social outlet.

I firmly support the idea that people should have a diversified way of reaching their audience. So if you rely only on Google, that might not be as strong of an approach compared to having a wide variety of different avenues by which you can reach people and drive them to your website or whatever your objective is."

On a question about building reputation on the web and how Google will detect that activity, Matt Cutts said as follows:

"There are certainly people who are widely known on the web, who have a great reputation, who are experts, who are authorities, who everybody listens to or trusts.

Somebody like Nate Silver for example who talks about elections. If he talks about elections, you want to take what he says seriously. You might disagree with him, but you'll probably pay attention to it.

There's the same sort of thing with, for example Danny Sullivan on search engines. You want to be one of those people because that's useful in and of itself, and over time you can certainly expect that search engines will try and do a better job of saying this person or this website is an authority on this topic and therefore when they write about it, it's something that users are more likely to be interested in."

Webmasters publish great content and syndicate to higher authority sites as a link building method. Is it a valid way? Matt Cutts said about content syndication as follows:

"Syndication can be a valid way to either increase your reputation or to drive traffic and potentially to get more links. The main caution that I would add is that there are some mechanical things that you should pay attention to and try to make sure that you get right.

"So if you are also publishing the article on your site, you want to try and do these mechanical things so you are still seen as the original author."

Things like rel=canonical help. Embedding a link within the text of the article itself never hurts. Ideally, you'd want to insist on some sort of attribution on the syndicated page. You can use authorship markup. So if you are also publishing the article on your site, you want to try and do these mechanical things so you are still seen as the original author.

Or, see if you can make sure that the article publishes first on your website. Give it a few hours or days or however much of a window you can, and then syndicate it onto another site. If you think about it, search engines are not psychic. They have to use signals and heuristics to make their best guess about what the best website is or who wrote content in the first place.

The more signals or hints or indications you can give us, the easier job it will be for search engines to make sure that the attribution and the reputation flow in the correct direction so that you enjoy the benefits of syndication but you also do well on search."

Webmasters use guest blogging as a tactics. Matt Cutts said about good and bad practices of guest blogging as follows:

"Those are certainly good criteria to keep in mind. The challenge with guest posting is that people have different conceptions about what it means. And so for a lot of people, a guest post is something that a fantastic author has thought deeply about, labored over, polished, put a lot of work into and then publishes on a highly reputable domain name.

Posts like that can be a great way to get your name out there, to build your reputation, to make yourself more well-known, potentially build links or traffic or help with your SEO.

The problem is that if we look at the overall volume of guest posting we see a large number of people who are offering guest blogs or guest blog articles where they are writing the same article and producing multiple copies of it and emailing out of the blue and they will create the same low quality types of articles that people used to put on article directory or article bank sites.

If people just move away from doing article banks or article directories or article marketing to guest blogging and they don't raise their quality thresholds for the content, then that can cause problems. On one hand, it's an opportunity. On the other hand, we don't want people to think guest blogging is the panacea that will solve all their problems."

In guest posting, webmasters can give and get interviews to build brand awareness. They can publish content on their website by interviewing people with recognized authority. They can also get interviewed by people to publish the content on others' websites. Here is what Matt Cutts said about this matter:

"... Interviews can be a fantastic way to build awareness of your brand and to generate and distribute insights. It's funny because if you think about it, the entire podcasting industry is often based around this idea of doing interviews or even just people in conversations.

Somebody like Kevin Smith has something he calls the [SModcast](#) which is just him talking with friends. He has been able to more or less make a living at just doing tours where he goes around and does his SModcast in an auditorium.

Criteria that come to mind are, "who are you talking to?", or "how interesting is the conversation"? The beauty of an interview or a podcast for something like that is if you're not interesting, people won't tune in. Or they might tune in at first but they'll tune out. It's a self-limiting phenomenon. You can't just do interviews with everybody forever if you're always giving or getting boring interviews.

There's a little bit of reinforcement that helps force you to either be interesting or say interesting things or think hard about how to make something compelling."

On a question about the importance of rel=author tagging and author rank, Matt Cutts expressed his points as follows:

"While it remains the case that you always want to think about what you're saying and make sure that that's interesting and of use to people, you make a very good point that the outlets and the responsiveness of those outlets is a good way to get an idea of how other people think about you.

Just to switch to an analogy from email, Google has something called a priority inbox and we look at things like how often you reply to people and how fast you reply, versus do you always archive something, an email that somebody sent, or never even read it.

The priority inbox can start to get an idea of what is important to you. It might not know that this person is your boss, but it sees that you always respond within 5 minutes. It takes some of those signals and ends up with a pretty good assessment of which emails really matter.

You really want to think about, how do I make sure that in an SEO sense, I'm in somebody's priority inbox? That I matter to them? That I'm relevant to them? That I can give them something of use? That they find me of value?

If those are the sorts of things you're thinking about, that will be really useful because you'll tend not to bore people or be pushing for favors when people are a little leery of doing that. That can be a good attitude to approaching life in general. How can you add value to anybody else's life?"

On a question if the authority that people demonstrate online will become a ranking factor, Matt Cutts said as follows:

"I would concentrate on the stuff that people write, the utility that people find in it, and the amount of times that people link to it. All of those are ways that implicitly measure how relevant or important somebody is to someone else.

Links are still the best way that we've found to discover that, and maybe over time social or authorship or other types of markup will give us a lot more information about that.

We'll always keep chasing after the ideal world in which the search engines do what you would intuitively expect and bring you the best answer, whether it be from someone who is a friend of yours or someone who is an expert in the field or some completely different serendipitous author or person that you didn't know about before, but they can really help with the information you need at that moment."

On a question on what signals are driving ranking, Matt Cutts pointed out as follows:

"If your emails are getting replies, if people are replying to you on Twitter or Facebook, if you're getting good traction on your endeavors, that usually means you're moving in the right direction. If people suddenly go radio silent or you're not getting traction, that's a good time to step back and do an assessment and see if there's something that's missing in your approach or something that you could hone in order to resonate with your audience."

On a question about what signals are Google takes into consideration, Matt Cutts replied as follows:

"That's a reasonable way to look at it. If you're always trying new things, whatever your criteria is, and if you're making forward progress on those goals, you're often showing the signs of making progress in other areas well. It wouldn't surprise me if in the process of setting and making progress on and achieving your goals you end up also getting

traction, reputation as a person, as an individual, as an author, as an expert, as someone on the web and potentially someone in search engines as well.”

Google [announced](#) an even easier way to get your picture into the Google search results by adding automatic author attribution through Google+ sign-in. Now if you sign in to WordPress.com with Google, the articles you publish with that sign in will now be associated with your Google+ profile automatically. Google started it with a limited number of beta programs including WordPress and Typepad. Google said it also works on other sites including About.com, WikiHow, and Examiner. Eventually, Google may increase support for this in the future.

Matt Cutts said more Google +1s reflect higher Google web rankings. He added:

“It isn’t surprising content with more likes or +1s have better rankings. If you make compelling content, people will link to it, like it, share it on Facebook, +1 it, etc. ... But that doesn’t mean that Google is using those signals in our ranking, ... rather than chasing +1s of content, your time is much better spent making great content.”

Google rolled out “[in-depth articles](#)” on August 6, 2013. When you're searching for a broad topic (on google.com in English to start), you'll find a new block of results of in-depth articles. A Google Spokesperson said:

“Our goal is to surface the best in-depth articles from the entire web. In general our algorithms are looking for the highest quality in-depth articles, and if that’s on a local newspaper website or a personal blog, we’d like to surface it.”

Jay from Spain asks, “Recently I found two porn websites linking to my site. I disavow those links and wrote to the admins asking them to remove those links. But what can I do if someone – like my competition – is trying to harm me with bad backlinks?” Matt Cutts replied in a [video](#):

“So you’ve done exactly the right thing. You got in touch with the site owners and you said, “Look, please don’t link to me. I don’t want to have anything to do with your site.” And then if those folks aren’t receptive, then just go ahead and disavow those links.

As long as you’ve taken those steps, you should be in good shape. But if there’s any site that you don’t want to be associated with that’s linking to you, and you want to say, “Hey, I got nothing to do with this site,” you can just do a disavow. And you can even do it at a domain level. So you could say, disavow domain:example.com and that will ignore all links from example.com.

At that point, you should be in good shape and I wouldn’t worry about it after that.”

Google Link Disavow Tool may end up harming your site's performance in Google. Google's Eric Kuan from the search quality team said:

“The disavow backlinks tool should be used with caution since it can potentially harm your site's performance. However, if you see a considerable number of spammy, artificial, or low-quality links point to your site, and you're confident that the links are causing issues for your site, you can use the disavow tool to disavow those links. In most cases, Google can assess which links to trust without additional guidance, so most normal or typical sites will not need to use this tool.”

Matt Cutts said:

"It's something where it is possible, in the process of telling Google to ignore links to your site, to make mistakes. So I would approach it with caution. I wouldn't just jump in."

So, if you think that you built spammy links in the past, use Google Disavow Tool to remove the links. But if not, there are better ways to invest your time than cleaning up old links. Instead of working with old links, concentrate on getting new backlinks. Investing your time in new high quality backlinks will have a much bigger impact on the rankings of your website on Google.

Google can detect bad backlinks and that it's not necessary to use the disavow links tool. On Google+, Google's John Mueller said:

"You don't have to react all manual actions. That generally means that we're not counting some of those links in the way that we might have in the past.

If you're not aware of the specifics, remember that we're essentially ignoring those links, so the rest of your site, and the other natural links, will be used as before. In short, you don't need to take action, but if you're aware of specifics, it's always good to clean up the issues directly too."

Google will only apply Authorship SERPs markup to human faces and may penalise you if you go beyond this rule. Faceless images or images in violation are quickly picked up on fairly quickly! [Content policy](#) says:

“Your Profile Picture cannot include mature or offensive content. For example, do not use a photo that is a close-up of a person's buttocks or cleavage.”

Many webmasters are talking about duplicate content. In general, Google does not penalize websites for duplicate content. They just pick one version of the content and ignore the rest. If your web page is not detected as the original source of the content, it will be ignored. Matt Cutts said they should not worry about it. He said as follows:

“I wouldn't stress about this unless the content that you have duplicated is spammy or keyword stuffing.”

Play his [Youtube video](#).

Some webmasters have multiple domain names and keep them cross linked. But in a lot of those situations, the sites were pretty spammy. Matt Cutts said about the proper way to handle multiple domains.

"If you have 20 domain names and they're all versions of the domain in different countries, such as Google.co.za, Google.fr, it can make a lot of sense to be able to get from one version of the domain to a different version. But even then I probably wouldn't link all the domains all in the footer all by themselves because that's a little bit strange,"

"I'd probably have one link to a country locator page, which might even be on the main .com, that might have flags or something like that so there are ways to get to those other domains. And as long as there is a good way for users to get there than search engines will be of the follow those links as well. Just make sure their normal static HTML and we will be able to follow them and PageRank will be able to flow."

Play his [Youtube Video](#).

Most webmasters are confused with canonicalization or canonical URL. Matt Cutts said to clarify about this topic as:

"Canonicalization is the process of picking the best URL when there are several choices, and it usually refers to home pages. For example, most people would consider these the same urls:

- www.example.com
- example.com/
- www.example.com/index.html
- example.com/home.asp

But technically all of these URLs are different. A web server could return completely different content for all them. When Google "canonicalizes" a URL, we try to pick the one that seems like the best representative from that set."

In copywriting, will a keyphrase that wants to rank be used in its original form or in individual words separately in an article? Will a keyphrase need to repeat in headline, ALT tag, anchor text etc.? Should the original form of keyphrase be used once or twice in the copy to help Google out and sprinkled individual words of the keyphrase throughout the rest of the copy? Matt Cutts said on each of such questions:

"Keyphrases don't have to be in their original form. We do a lot of synonym work so that we can find good pages that don't happen to use the same words as the user typed.

In general, though, if the words are on the web page (not in a spammy way, of course), that makes our job easier because we don't have to rely on synonym matches to find good documents."

“People can overdo it to the point that we consider it keyword stuffing, and it hurts. I would just make sure you do it in natural ways where regular people aren't going to find it stiff or artificial. That tends to be what works best.”

“Correct, as long as it's done naturally, not artificially or in a spammy way. As I've always said, "Never sacrifice the quality of your copy for the sake of the search engines." It's just not necessary. The next time you write a new page of copy, test this approach to writing for the engines and see if you get as good (or better) results than before. I'm betting you'll be pleasantly surprised.”

What to do if you think your site is affected by Google Panda? In his [new video](#), Google's Matt Cutts said:

“Make sure to write high quality content, content at the level of published books or in popular magazines. Panda launched on February 24, 2011 and this year has been integrated into the “indexing process” where the algorithm is somewhat baked into the normal ranking algorithms. The reason for this is because now the Panda algorithm impacts a “smaller number of sites” and thus is a safer algorithm to run in an automated way.

So if you notice your traffic dropped and you are not ranking as high as you were, Then you should look at the quality of your content and improve on that.”

Matt also references a post named [More guidance on building high-quality sites](#) by Amit Singhal, Google's head of search.

Google looks in URLs or domain names included in content for discovering new content. Typically no PageRank or trust is flown from an unlinked URL or citation, but Google may indeed use it for content discovery. Google's John Mueller said in his [video](#):

“We use those kinds of links to try to discover new content. So for instance if we see that someone has been writing about a new domain name and we can recognize that as a domain name in the text even without a normal HTML link there, then that is something where we will try to pick that domain name up, try to crawl it and index it and see if that is something worth including in our search results.

Sometimes it happens that we pick up a whole URL like that. Sometimes someone will try to shorter a URL with just a ‘...’ in between and we try to crawl that URL so we get it wrong. But our goal here isn't necessarily to pass any pagerank, which we don't do with those kinds of links. But rather discover new URLs that we haven't seen before. And if we see someone write about a URL that we haven't seen before we will pick that up and try to index that for search.”

In his [recent video](#), Matt Cutts, Google's head of search spam, discussed a pretty clear spam tactic that Google will take action on. It is about automatically generated pages that provide no added value. Google will take action on such spammy pages. As Google is not perfect and if you see examples of auto-generated content that is found in the search results that do not add

value, such as search results pages or scrapped content, Google wants you to submit a spam report.

Automatically generated content is a violation of Google's guidelines and the examples of content like this include:

- *Text translated by an automated tool without human review or curation before publishing*
- *Text generated through automated processes, such as Markov chains*
- *Text generated using automated synonymizing or obfuscation techniques*
- *Text generated from scraping Atom/RSS feeds or search results*
- *Stitching or combining content from different web pages without adding sufficient value*

In a video, Matt Cutts said: “typically, links that are nofollowed can't hurt your rankings in Google.”

While most cases are that links that have the nofollow attribute on them will not negatively impact your rankings in Google. Google did add that if you are mass spamming at a huge scale, Google may take manual action on your links to discourage your spamming, despite the links being nofollowed.

Why would Google take action on links that already are not trust by Google? It appears that some spammers don't care and they need more of a knock to encourage them to stop link spamming.

Google's John Mueller said to guest bloggers and natural writers about the use of 'No follow' and 'Dofollow links' as follows:

“Think about whether or not this is a link that would be on that site if it weren't for your actions there. Especially when it comes to guest blogging, that's something where you are essentially placing links on other people's sites together with this content, so that's something I kind of shy away from purely from a linkbuilding point of view. I think sometimes it can make sense to guest blog on other peoples' sites and drive some traffic to your site because people really liked what you are writing and they are interested in the topic and they click through that link to come to your website but those are probably the cases where you'd want to use something like a rel=nofollow on those links.”

Matt Cutts said keyword rich anchor texts used in article marketing and guest blogging are problematic.

“Exact match anchor text used in internal linking doesn't typically cause problems for a site. The big problem then is using exact match anchor text in any link pointing at your site from an external domain.”

Watch his [video](#).

In a [video](#), Matt Cutts explained that with most of Google's spam fighting algorithms, such as the Panda and Penguin algorithms, Google does put a lot of effort into internationalizing them. This way the algorithms don't just work on English search results but all search results. He added:

“Google does indeed sometimes launch algorithms just for the English language but when possible, Google does try to launch them globally.We have Googlers around the world who work in search quality fighting spam on a manual level in 40 or so different languages.”

On links to manipulate PageRank, Google said:

“Any links intended to manipulate [PageRank](#) or a site's ranking in Google search results may be considered part of a link scheme and a violation of Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#). This includes any behavior that manipulates links to your site or outgoing links from your site.”

Google have updated the list of [link schemes](#) they considers spam. Google does not like bulk links and artificial links. The following are 11 types of link building Google don't like. If you are involved in such link building practices, you might be in trouble:

- 1. Paid links:** Buying or selling links that pass PageRank can negatively impact your website's ranking in search results. This includes exchanging money for links, or posts that contain links; exchanging goods or services for links; or sending someone a 'free' product in exchange for them writing about it and including a link.
- 2. Excessive link exchanges:** Exchanging links with other websites is fine. Actually, it is normal for most websites. For example, websites about dolphin research can cross-link to all other websites about dolphin research without getting in trouble.
- 3. Large-scale article marketing or guest posting campaigns:** It's okay to publish your articles and guest posts on other websites as long as you don't do it in bulk. If you do guest posts just to get keyword rich backlinks, your website might get penalized.
- 4. Automated programs or services that create backlinks to your site:** You've probably seen the ads for tools and services that promise hundreds (if not thousands) of backlinks with very little work. These tools that help you to 'dominate' the search results are a sure way to get your website banned from Google.
- 5. Text ads that pass PageRank:** If you run a text ad on another website, make sure that it uses the rel=nofollow attribute in the link. Otherwise, Google might think that it is a manipulative backlink.
- 6. Advertorials and ads that include links that pass PageRank:** As are rule of thumb, always use links with the rel=nofollow attribute if you pay for an article or an ad. If the ad includes a paid link that passes PageRank, it might trigger a penalty.

7. Links with optimized anchor text in articles or press releases: If your article contains paragraphs that look like the following, you might invite Google's spam algorithm to take a closer look at your website:

"There are many wedding rings on the market. If you want to have a wedding, you will have to pick the best ring. You will also need to buy flowers and a wedding dress."

8. Links from low quality directories or bookmark sites: If you're submitting your website to hundreds of Internet directories that will never send you a single visitor, you don't need to bother. These links won't help your Google rankings.

If a directory sends your website visitors, it's worth getting the link. You can ignore other directories.

9. Widely distributed links in the footers of various websites: Some websites put keyword rich links to other websites in their footers. These links are always paid links and you should not use them to promote your website.

This does not apply to 'About us' or 'Privacy policy' footer links but to backlinks such as 'buy flowers' or 'buy wedding rings.'

10. Links that are embedded in widgets that are distributed across various sites: Some widget developers offer free widgets that contain links to other websites: "Visitors to this page: 1,234 - buy wedding rings"

If a widget developers offer you to advertise your site through these widgets, make sure that the links use the nofollow attribute or do not use the links at all.

11. Forum comments with optimized links in the post or signature: Some tools automatically post comments in forums:

"That's really great information! Thanks a lot!
Peter
buy wedding rings buy flowers best wedding"

Google engineer Aaseesh Marina told that using Google Webmaster Tools "Links to Your Site" section would be enough to discover the bad links pointing to your site and to submit a reconsideration request. Google's John Mueller said that the downloaded sample links report would be enough to find the bad links to your site. But for where Google sent an unnatural link notification to a webmaster, and one of the example links provided by Google in that notification was nowhere to be found in the link report within Google Webmaster Tools, Matt Cutts said:

"It's certainly the case that we endeavor to show examples from the set of links returned by Webmaster Tools, and likewise we prefer to assess reconsideration requests on that basis of those links. However, if there's a really good example link that illustrates a

problem, we do leave enough room to share that link, especially because it can help point the webmaster in a better direction to diagnose and fix issues.”

When to submit a reconsideration request? Google says, “You should really only submit a reconsideration request when you receive a manual penalty but if you are unsure if you have a manual or algorithmic penalty, submitting the request “is fine”.

Useful Tips:

- ***Only submit the reconsideration request after you take action to fix the issues with your site.***
- ***Use Google’s “links to your site” report within Webmaster Tools to analyze bad links pointing to your site.***
- ***Remove bad links by disavowing them, nofollowing them and having them completely removed.***
- ***When submitting a reconsideration request, provide a detailed explanation of what you changed and why.***
- ***Responses for reconsideration request can take a few days but may take much longer depending on the site and current workload.***
- ***Googlers review each reconsideration request manually.***

For more information, check at [Google blog](#).

On the topic of what to do if a webmaster gets a manual penalty, Matt Cutts replied:

“If someone gets a notice about webspam that means that they have a manual webspam action. If the message is unclear and the webmaster wants more advice, we recommend asking questions in our webmaster SEO [forum](#). After the issue is resolved, webmasters can file a reconsideration request.

After a webmaster files a reconsideration request, we do provide information about how the request was processed, e.g. if the request was granted or whether more work still needs to be done. We don’t have the resources to have a one-on-one conversation with every single webmaster, but we do reply to some reconsideration requests with more information and advice.”

Google launch [Disavow Links Tool](#). When webmasters find bad links pointing to their site, they need to use this tool. But Matt Cutts warns to use it cautiously. First, contact the spammy site owner(s) to remove the link(s). Google has made a help page about the new tool [here](#). You can also watch his [video](#).

In a [YouTube video](#), Matt Cutts said that .cc domains should not be used for international websites. For more about Top Level Domains Google treated as generic TLD, [Click Here](#). He said:

"If you go and pick a really weird novelty domain that nobody else really uses, and mostly is used by this other country, we’re still probably going to assume it’s most relevant to that particular country."

For mobile devices, page speed ranking factor is not important on mobile search. Matt Cutts said in his [video](#):

“It is not that in mobile, we apply that [page speed ranking factor] any more or less than desktop search”.

According to Matt Cutts, top 5 SEO mistakes commonly happened to webmasters are:

1. Not having a website or having a website that is not crawlable is the biggest mistake he sees.
2. Not including the right words on the page. The example Matt gave is: don't just write, “Mt. Everest Height” but write, “How high is Mt. Everest?” because that is how people search.
3. Don't think about link building, think about compelling content and marketing.
4. Don't forget to think about the title and description of your most important pages.
5. Not using webmaster resources and learning about how Google works and what SEO is about.

Play his [video](#).

This ebook is a collection of what Google said about tricky SEO and published in the interest of webmasters. This ebook will be updated continuously whenever a new thing is found from Google by the publisher. If you have any comment to share on those words from Google and to check availability of a new edition of this ebook, [Click Here](#).

Read and use the following books and tools to increase your SEO rankings and traffic.

1. [Top 10 SEO Books 2014](#)
2. [Best Link Building Books 2014](#)
3. [Best Social Media Books 2014](#)
4. [Best SEO Software](#)