

Anchor Text – The Most Important Factor of SEO

Many moons ago Google PageRank (PR) was the most important aspect of SEO, not any more, in fact it now counts for very little and is seen as somewhat of a gimmick to the experienced webmaster. By far the most important aspect of modern-day SEO is anchor text found in the backlinks to your website (a backlink is an incoming link). Anchor text is the clickable text that is displayed for a particular link. For example this link:

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<a href="http://www.google.com">Google Search Engine</a>
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links to www.google.com and has the anchor text "Google Search Engine". When you get links to your website you should always try to get your targeted keyword or keyphrase in the anchor text. This is an incredibly important factor used by search engines when generating the result pages.

Analyzing The Competition

Wouldn't it be useful to see how many of your backlinks or your competitor's backlinks contain the keyword you are targeting so you have some idea of how many links you need to overtake them in the results? Well, you can!

To do this you can use [WebLink SEO](#) which has a backlink analysis tool. This tool works by finding the anchor text of all of the backlinks that point to a particular website. You can then see how many of the backlinks contain the keyword you are targeting. Then all you need to do is work on getting more links with your keyword in than they do, and you'll overtake them in the result pages!

For example let's say I run a website about business management and I want to get to the #1 position in Google for the term "business management". I want to find out how many backlinks the website listed in first position Google has that contains the word "business" and "management" in the anchor text.

I then go to the backlink analysis tool and enter www.brint.com (the website that ranks first in Google for "Business Management") as the website to be analyzed. WebLink SEO then crawls all of the webpages that provides links to www.brint.com to discover the anchor text that is used in the links, the results are then displayed in a table: -

Backlink Summary		Backlink Analysis	
Search Engine	Domain	URL	Page Title
Google	http://www.online-pr.com	http://www.online-pr.com/directory.htm	OnlinePRdirectories&calendars
Google	http://ipmail.org	http://ipmail.org/web_resources/record_request_pb_20.php	Patents, Copyrights, Trademarks, Tra...
Google	http://www-users.cs.york.ac.uk	http://www-users.cs.york.ac.uk/~kimble/teaching/mis/mis_...	Management and Information Systems...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=917	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=94	Knowledge Management Think Tank - ...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=767	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?goto=lastp...	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/calendar.php?c=2&week=1...	https://www.brint.net/forums/calenda...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/member.php?find=lastposte...	https://www.brint.net/forums/membe...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=857	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?p=2257&m...	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=308	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/member.php?find=lastposte...	https://www.brint.net/forums/membe...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/forumsdisplay.php?f=41&day...	https://www.brint.net/forums/forumsd...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=674	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/forumsdisplay.php?f=50&day...	Knowledge Management Think Tank - ...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/newthread.php?do=newthr...	https://www.brint.net/forums/newthr...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=570	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?t=590	https://www.brint.net/forums/showth...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/newreply.php?do=newreply...	https://www.brint.net/forums/newrep...
Google	https://www.brint.net	https://www.brint.net/forums/showthread.php?mode=hyb...	Knowledge Management Think Tank - EIS
Google	http://www.syre.com	http://www.syre.com/Formations/Initiation.htm	Stages Knowledge Management (Le m...
Google	http://www.prosecuritywarehouse.com	http://www.prosecuritywarehouse.com/links.html	Useful Security Industry Links
Google	http://www.internetvejviseren.dk	http://www.internetvejviseren.dk/viskat.asp?ID=210	Handelskloernes Internetvejviser: Søg...
Google	http://www.hidd.hr	http://www.hidd.hr/virref/sustavi_intranet.htm	Web portal
Google	http://www.marketing-montreal.com	http://www.marketing-montreal.com/ann/ressources/liens...	Archives de liens Internet - AMM - [
Google	http://www.ninonvnet.com	http://www.ninonvnet.com/nubid/cf?246.htm	www.ninonvnet.com/nubid/cf?246.htm

It is then possible to query the table to find exactly the number and percentage of links that have the word "business" contained in the anchor text:

Keyword	# occurrences in anc...	%
business	249	11.85
management	116	5.52

I now know that www.brint.com has 246 links with the word "business" in the anchor text and 116 links that contains the word "management", and also a list of the websites that are providing links to that website.

One thing you must remember, is that the search engines are aware that people purposefully target keywords via their anchor text, so it is a good idea to vary the anchor text that is used so that you don't get penalized or banned for attempting to spam the search engines!

Utilize The Anchor Text on Your Own Website

Anchor text is not only important for back links to your website, but it's also important for internal linking of you web pages too. You should **never** have a link that has "click here" as the anchor text – it's a wasted opportunity where you could use the anchor text to optimize your website. Instead, put the keyword of the page you are linking to in the anchor text for the link.

I hope this guide has helped you understand the importance of link anchor text, and how it is possible to analyze the anchor text of the leading website in order to attain the number 1 position in the search engines. In the next lesson we'll look at how you can optimize your internal linking structure of your websites.

