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## Types of Links

### Internal Linking - An introduction

The web as they call it is a mesh of links. The wired world is now being counted for what it is A Network. The more your pages are wired or integrated into the overall web linking architecture, the better it is from search engine ranking point of view. Google specially thrives on crawling on links. Its PageRank is a measure of this.

We will, in this article, measure the importance of good internal linking architecture on googles PageRank.

When setting up the linking architecture of your site keep in mind that links are of two kinds:

- Internal links
- External links

**Internal links** are the constituent elements of the way your web site is organized. They are the bridges by which one page of your site connects to the other & more importantly outlines, which page of your site will connect to which other pages.

**External links** on the other hand are the community tools by which the online community votes for you by linking to you. The more popular you get is a function of more incoming links into your website. This in turn is interpreted by search engines as a measure of your online value creation.

In essence, if your pages are orphaned (no one links to them) or lying isolated within your web site that's not good news from a PageRank point of view. To enjoy a good PageRank for the pages it is imperative to have proper linking amongst various pages within the website as well as having good quality external links coming into the page.

A factor to be cognizant of while linking is that one should focus on quality links & not always quantity. Consider that, there is a huge difference from a link, to your page from another page with a good PageRank than a page from a low PageRank.

### Internal Linking: A Primer -----

Proper internal linking ensures that the web pages are accessible to search engines & that they are indexed properly. (This is not to discount the navigational ease of the end user) A good internal linking structure should be intuitive as well as functionality driven. That will benefit everyone.

Internal linking on the other level decides the PageRank flow within the website. The pages that are linking to that page get a PageRank benefit from that page. Then it stands to reason that if the maximum numbers of pages linking are internal pages they will retain the maximum PageRank emanating from that page. This will boost their ratings as well.

Hence one rule of thumb says that have as many incoming links to your web page as possible (this will boost the PR of that page) from outside resources or may be good PR pages of your site. Try & pass on

the benefit of that page to the other pages of your site by proper interlinking. Inward looking as it might sound; this makes lot of good online marketing sense.

### **External linking -----**

External linking on the other hand is more difficult to control & hence more valued by search engines. This is what really builds up the PR of the webpage. Good quality (High PR) incoming links are craved by the online promotion experts all over.

### **Linking Attribute -----**

It is always preferable to have a text link rather than a Graphic/Image link, because in a text link you can use Keywords as the text on which hyperlink is given (anchor text). In effect you can make your anchor tag keyword rich. Anchor tags' text is a very important criterion in search engine ranking matrix.

Search engines look at not only how many people are linking to you, how important they themselves are but also what they are saying while linking to you. In fact search engines like Google have gone a step ahead. They not only look at the anchor tag but also the text surrounding it. Essentially they are trying to establish the relevance of that link to your pages content.

If anchor tag is so important & more often that not, one cannot control what the world says while linking to you then it is very useful to have internal links speak the language of keywords. This means that it is a good practice to use keywords as the internal linking text.

However if you are using Graphics/Image linking then you should not do it using image map because many of the search engine does not follow image map. To overcome this problem; make use of the ALT attribute. ALT attribute give the information about the image and where it is going to provide the link.

Another important aspect of the internal linking of your site is the sitemap. A sitemap is a page that contains links to every page on the site. There should be a link to the sitemap on every page, or at least on the homepage. A sitemap helps you to have an overview of your site linking architecture as well as it helps SE crawl the entire web site.

### **Internal linking architecture -----**

There are three forms that can be assumed while planning the sites internal linking pattern.

#### **Hierarchal -----**

In this kind of Internal linking all the pages of the website are connected to the home page and home page is individually connected to all the pages of the website, but there is no linking between the pages of the website.

#### **Looping -----**

In this kind of Internal linking the home page is connected to the primary page and the primary page is connected to the secondary page and this process goes on till the last page and the last page is connected to the home page in this way a loop is formed.

#### **Extensive inter linking -----**

In this kind of Internal linking each page is connected to each other in the website.

What kind of internal linking is preferable in a certain case, is dependent on the objectives you are trying to achieve in terms of Pagerank optimization, user navigation ease & site theme. One tip to bear in mind is that internal linking should reinforce the theme. One should not crosslink between the pages

on the site which are unrelated by themes. This will dilute the theme intensity & affect the page rankings on SERPs.

**Redundant Internal links: -----**

Two categories of internal links that should be guarded against are: broken links & dead links.

**Broken links -----**

Broken links are the links that are in the website and when they are clicked they don't open a webpage rather they show some error.

**Dead links -----**

Dead links are the links that are in the website and when they are clicked they don't open a webpage and they don't even show some error.

To summarize PageRank of a site apart from other factors, can be guided by the way information is organized within a site & the way it is presented. Careful planning with setting up the information flow will go a long way in helping optimize the PageRank of the site.

Do let me know if you have any queries and I'll be happy to answer them for you. This article can be reprinted as long as the resource box stays intact.

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