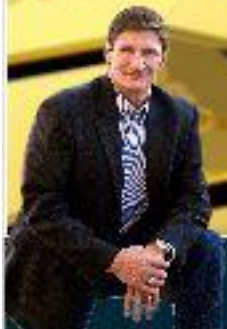


CoachTIP presents
Winning Strategies

The Book of
IM Insights & Tips

An Extensive Q&A with Business Coach,
Charles Holland - from basics to advanced IM now!



by Charles Holland



CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

CoachTip Presents:

IM Insights & Tips

An extensive Q&A with business coach Charles Holland

Charles Holland

with Paul Sedkowski

(A.D. 2013)

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

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CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

About The Author



Charles Holland is a marketing coach, certified business coach and investor with over 30 years of coaching experience in traditional as well as online business and marketing. Happily married family man, husband and dad with young twins, they are living their dreams in the Rocky Mountains west of Denver, CO, USA. Charles has learned the value of diversification as well as anyone. He continually advances his businesses in order to maintain competitive-edge advantages, and has helped hundreds of clients to do the same. He continues to teach and coach both online and offline.

“Everyone has incredible success potential, given the right attitude, tools and training. Success in business, marketing, relationships, and even happiness for that matter, are ALL “learned” skills. Owning your own small business(es) provides many benefits and comforts. Creating multiple cash streams and time freedom for busy professionals, parents, and entrepreneurs is rewarding beyond your wildest imagination.” (C. Holland)

* * *

Co-author, Paul Sedkowski is an SEO expert and creator of the deep keyword research methodology known as SEOlater. He’s had a rich career in business, including entertainment business, as well as an online entrepreneur and SEO/IM consultant.



CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Table of Contents

10 About This Book

11 Introduction

16 General Q&A

- *What Do I Need To Succeed Online?*
- *Do I Need A Website?*
- *How do I become an online marketing expert if I'm just an average Joe?*
- *How do I stand out above the noise of all the other marketers?*
- *How do I brand myself online?*

20 List Building Q&A

- *What is an email marketing system and which one would you recommend?*
- *How do I build a list?*
- *Do I need mega traffic or will lower, targeted traffic work to build my lists?*

22 Products & Selling Q&A

- *When Starting From Scratch, How Do I Discover a Great Product?*
- *What Is A "Great" Product or Service?*
- *Where do I find the best products to promote, if I don't have my own product?*
- *How Do I Know Which Products Will Sell The Best?*
- *What Is a Sales Funnel?*
- *How do I find the best IM niches?*
- *Do I need a separate blog or website for each product?*
- *How do I make my product look and feel better than all other similar affiliates?*
- *Why can't I just do one domain and have a bunch of pages/landing pages/sales pages for each different product so I could brand myself in all this?*

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

- *I don't have my own products. So how do I brand myself with other people's products?*
- *Is it easier to promote high ticket items or sell more low ticket items?*
- *How much money do I need to launch a product online? How do I budget properly?*
- *I hear that I have to give something away to get them on my list. Where do I find free products to give away?*

37 General Advertising Q&A

- *I hear people are getting "ad blindness" online. Is it true?*
- *How do I get people to read my ads?*
- *How do I get people to click my links?*
- *How do solo ads, ppc, online/offline classifieds work and which ones are the most worthwhile?*

41 Traffic Q&A

- *What Is Highly Targeted Traffic?*
- *What Is The Best And Easiest Way To Get Website Traffic?*
- *How do I track my success online with ads?*
- *If money were no object, what is the best paid traffic source(s)?*
- *What are the best paid traffic sources on a budget of \$1000 per month?*

49 Conversions Q&A

- *I see lots of websites selling lots of stuff, even getting lots of traffic...but when I call them, I can't tell that they're actually making any money. I have a site like that. Why can I get traffic but not conversions? Is there someone to review my campaigns and consult with me to give me tips?*

44 Writing Q&A

- *Where do I get some good ideas for writing?*
- *How do I find the best writers?*
- *How do I write good ad copy?*
- *Can I use duplicated emails for follow up marketing to my lists?*

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

48 Outsourcing Q&A

- *How do I find the best virtual assistants to help me?*

49 Video Marketing Q&A

- *How do I get my YouTube videos seen and ranked?*
- *Do videos really help my rankings?*

51 Writing Q&A

- *Where do I get some good ideas for writing?*
- *How do I find the best writers?*
- *How do I write good ad copy?*
- *Can I use duplicated emails for follow up marketing to my lists?*

55 Video Marketing Q&A

- *How do I get my YouTube videos seen and ranked?*
- *Do videos really help my rankings?*

57 Wordpress Q&A

- *Where do I find the best themes for my website?*
- *Who has the best IM friendly Wordpress themes?*

59 General SEO Q&A

- *How Does SEO Work And How Much Do I Need To Know To Be Successful With It?*
- *What Exactly Is A Search Engine?*
- *How Does a Search Engine Decide How To Rank My Site In Its Results?*
- *What is "local SEO"?*
- *What's the difference between and importance of onpage/offpage SEO?*
- *What kind of content is best for SEO?*
- *Where can I study up on SEO for myself?*
- *What is page rank and how do I get higher rankings with my new blog site?*

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

- *What kind on URL works best for SEO? Does it need to have the keyword in the name? What if I want to rank for more than one keyword in my niche?*
- *Websites only need to be submitted to the top three search engines and it will get around just fine? T or F?*
- *Is Google the only search engine that really matters in rankings and traffic?*

69 Linking Q&A

- *What is more important - lots of quality content or backlinking?*
- *Is link buying ok?*
- *What are the best practices for link building? Do link wheels work?*
- *How do I get other high PR sites to link to me?*
- *Is it useful or recommended to register your pages or sites with lots of search engine directories or use the "search engine directory" services out there?*
- *Is it true that internal linking doesn't matter for SEO these days?*
- *Are no follow links worthless or worth it?*
- *Are EDU backlinks worth the money?*
- *What about .GOV links?*
- *Does social media help for SEO?*
- *More inbound links is better? True or Myth?*
- *Does adding the +1 button with Google impact rankings?*
- *Does adding the +1 boost my SEO rankings?*

78 Keyword SEO Q&A

- *What are "LSI" keywords, how do they work and why?*
- *How do I do good keyword research?*
- *How do I find the best keywords that I can go after in my niche?*
- *Does good content have to contain lots of relevant keywords to rank well?*

81 HTML Tags Q&A

- *What are meta tags?*

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

- *I see from articles from gurus that Meta Descriptions don't help your rankings anymore. True or myth?*
- *Do I have to validate all of my HTML to make it readable by Google bots?*
- *Does using bolded text and H1 tags boost my rankings anymore?*
- *Do I need to change the fonts of keywords, bold, use italics and/or underline keywords to get better rankings on my content and articles?*

84 Search Engine Ranking Q&A

- *Does adwords, adsense, ppc really help my ranking on Google? On other engines?*
- *Seems there are endless providers promising that their personal SEO service will get my page to the top of Google. How can they all be right?*
- *How can I tell if SEO is working and track results?*
- *How long does it take to rank on Google?*
- *How do I make my site better than others to the search engines?*
- *What are the short cuts to rank on the first page of Google that everybody promises out there?*
- *I hear that Bing is now coming on strong relative to Google. T or M?*

89 SEO Outsourcing, Services & Software Q&A

- *What questions do I need to ask to hire the right SEO service?*
- *Do any of those SEO in a box software programs work well?*
- *How do I find the best SEO people to help me?*
- *What can I learn myself, and what do I need a professional to do mostly?*
- *How often do I have to do SEO once my site is set up? So, can I get it done by an expert and maintain it myself at that point?*
- *Is any SEO firm really "endorsed by Google" as so many claim?*
- *Does anyone really have a "working relationship advantage" with the search engines?*

92 "Back Hat" SEO Q&A

- *Can you fake out Google?*

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

- *Do black hat SEO techniques work? Which ones are safe?...LOL!*

93 Other SEO Q&A

- *Page Rank doesn't really matter? T or M?*
- *Does an XML sitemap really boost my Google rankings?*
- *Is a .com domain always going to outrank me if I can't get my name in a dot com, all else being equal?*
- *Google wants unique content and website experience over all else SEO wise nowadays?*
- *Google wants keyword rich domains still? (think you addressed this before)*
- *If content is king, then is there an ideal wordcount for articles and information on my site?*
- *How do I know if I've been sandboxed?*
- *How do I do SEO on an affiliate page that I don't own?*

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

About This Book

The content of this book is largely compiled from emails, chat records as well as recorded personal exchanges and Q&A sessions with entrepreneur and business coach Charles Holland, with SEO sections addressed by Paul Sedkowski.

The questions are organized by general topics. Some are very basic while others are quite advanced. The answers to all are original and, on occasion, will be substantially different to what you might hear from other sources.

Our purpose is to educate and inform with the most accurate and current information. Truth and clarity, devoid of an agenda, are our goals here

I hope you enjoy this format and find it useful. To learn more visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Introduction

Your business – online and/or offline - is an answer to a *demand*. Therefore, your mission is to be noticed or discovered so that you can meet that demand. Your mission is to *supply*.

If you're offline, it's all about "location, location, location". If you're online – it's all about "traffic, traffic, traffic". Having something worthwhile to offer is a given, of course.

This eBook aims to address itself primarily to the online entrepreneurs, or the "online marketers", if you prefer. We are also referred to as Internet Marketers (IM). To those who already have a business model and those just starting out...and particularly to those whose efforts have not yet met with success...enjoy, learn and prosper!

Success means much more than just monetary gains. But for the purpose of this booklet, we will sometimes use the economic success as a short-hand for a more broad kind of success. This is because the mechanisms of achieving it are, in many ways, the same. If success for you is reaching a broad audience with your message, or helping specific people, or making the world a better place – all of that can, and often does, have a monetary counterpart – or might as well have.

When you're trying to sell your product or service online, and assuming that what you're offering is indeed good and has a demand, and your website and presentation are optimal – the one thing you need at that point above all else is visitors to your site a.k.a. **Traffic**.

So, just like the understanding of what is the right location for a traditional retail business, understanding what web traffic is and how to get it is the very **foundation** of any online business.

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Charles Holland

Not all web traffic is created equal. There's "poor quality traffic" and there is "high quality traffic."

Poor quality traffic might be...

- ... bots which visit your site but will never read a word of what you've written and are unable to spend even a penny with you
- Poor quality traffic might come from people who visit your site as part of some traffic exchange scheme, where they're obliged to stay on your site for X seconds, before moving on, without even having glanced at what you have to offer.
- Poor quality traffic may be people who may have expected to visit a site about, say, politics, but somehow got tricked into visiting a site about laundry soap.

Good quality traffic, on the other hand...

- ... consists of the kind of visitors who have a high likelihood of engaging with your content. Be it as buyers of your products or services or readers of your articles, etc.
- Direct traffic from people who type in your URL into their browser are very likely to be interested in what you've got to offer.
- People who searched for what you offer using a search engine, and clicked through when they saw your listing.
- People who saw your ad somewhere and thought it was interesting enough to click through.
- Referral traffic from people who heard about you by word of mouth, perhaps personally or perhaps from a blog or a forum somewhere.

Needless to say, your mission is to find and attract that "good traffic".

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Charles Holland

But there is more to it than that. The more clear, targeted and specific you can be about your traffic – even before you go out and find it - the better for your online business. If you're providing, say, dog training, you need to know "who" is the most likely target audience for this kind of service or information. If you answer "anyone who has a dog", you'll almost certainly fail in achieving anything near the quality of traffic you need. Why? Well, let's have a quick think about that.

Let's say you're selling an eBook about dog training. You can immediately rule out children. They're not your target audience, quite obviously. You can probably also rule out most young adults who will tend to be too busy or too self-preoccupied to be reading books about dog training. After some study and thought, you'll soon discover that your age demographic will most likely be people between 25 and 64 years of age.

You'll also discover that the majority will tend to have high school or college education, and that their average income will be somewhere between \$50k and \$100k per year. You may also be surprised to learn that the majority of them are females!

Even if you had just stopped there, and with only the partial buyer's profile supplied above – would this affect not just the writing and presentation of your site, but also the way and the kind of traffic you would be pursuing?

If you answered in the affirmative, this eBook will probably prove helpful to you.

Common Sources of Traffic

If you spend an amount of money on newspaper or television advertising, some of the people who get exposed to those media and who happen to stumble upon your ad, may, with a little luck, take the extra time to write down your site's URL in order to have a look at your offer. This kind of traffic is also sometimes known as "offline traffic", because it's been generated through offline media.

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If you spend an amount on an online advertising campaign, be it by posting banner ads on a popular site, or by bidding for keywords on popular search engines, or by investing in an email campaign to lists of potential clients who have previously authorized such contact (opt-ins), you'll enjoy what's known as "**paid traffic**."

If you spend time optimizing your site so that the most popular search engines can find you, or if you build links between your site and other popular sites where there is a chance of visitors clicking through to your site, you'll be receiving "**organic traffic**."

Broadly, these are the main kinds of traffic, although there are many more than that, including multiple sub-divisions and flavors, each having their own special quirks, each requiring a different kind of expertise.

By far the most difficult kind of traffic to master is "organic traffic", using a broad selection of methodologies collectively known as "search engine optimization" or SEO. But it also happens to be among the most popular – because of the somewhat misleading notion that it's "free".

If you're just starting out, with limited funds, SEO may indeed be the best way for you to go. After all, "all" it requires is that you learn it, and apply it. Your time, while valuable in so many different ways, doesn't require an immediate cash outlay, so the SEO way does seem like the ideal alternative to paying for traffic.

On the other hand, if you're sufficiently well-off to be able to afford paid advertising, you may decide that all that hard work is not for you, and you may simply opt for paying for your traffic.

The danger with SEO is that you may simply learn it wrongly, or that the time needed to achieve results may exceed your expectations. But the danger with paid

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Charles Holland

traffic sources is their very simplicity. You may wind up with tons of worthless traffic and an empty bank account!

Clearly, both of the above methods have their pluses and minuses. But, ultimately, both should be used in a serious business, once you've understood how to use them and their purpose.

Throughout this book, we will do our best to answer some of the most persistent questions regularly posed by webmasters, newbies and experienced users alike. It appears that the vast majority of online entrepreneurs have trouble understanding the very basics of their business and, needless to say, if they build their business on flawed foundations – the outcome can be equally flawed. Worse still is to lose time *and* money buying or learning systems and/or dangerous shortcuts that can get you or your sites penalized or banned. Bad reputation spreads a lot faster than good. In this ebook, we aim to save you time and money with up to date, real world solutions and resources.

Our answers to the cited questions will be as concise as we can make them for the purpose of this book and are intended to get you started on the right path, rather than be in-depth or exhaustive treatises! To learn more, remember that Google is an endless source of great information, and you're also welcome to visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

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Charles Holland

General Q&A

What Do I Need To Succeed Online?

Before you even get started putting your site together, you need to set your goals, have clarity and a plan. You need to be crystal clear on what you really want to accomplish, what is your budget and expectations, and have a clear plan of action. Further reading will help you with a clear and detailed plan for online success. Once you've established your goals, in simplest terms, you need:

- **A great product or service** which is in high demand and the sales of which can be scaled greatly without requiring a corresponding scaling-up of your effort
- **A website** which presents this product or service in a thorough and compelling way.
- **An automated sales funnel** which is simple and doesn't put the visitor off and which also captures the most interested visitors who didn't buy from you on a list, so that you can follow up with more information..
- **Multiple highly targeted traffic sources**, so as maximize your chances of making successful sales.

Further recommended reading here: [CoachTIP](#).

Do I Need A Website?

Strictly speaking, you don't "need" a website to be able to earn commissions on a product. However, it needs to be said that without a website your chances of building a successful online business will be minuscule.

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Charles Holland

If you promote your affiliate link only (the “you don’t need a website to earn” model), your success or failure will depend on the percentage of visitors who not only click through on your link but also make an immediate purchase. In such a situation, all you need is an ad on someone else’s site – and off you go.

But this kind of a business model is very fragile and ultimately ineffective. If only 1% of the clicks result in vague interest, and only 1% of those result in a sale – you’d have to have a TON of visits to make even a *single* sale.

For this reason, having your own website where at the very least you’re able to capture the leads who are undecided (by offering them something valuable and of interest – for free) is really the **ONLY** way to go. If your website contains additional materials and resources which help to establish your credibility and offer value to your visitors, your chances of making sales will increase dramatically.

How do I become an online marketing expert if I’m just an average Joe?

You become an expert in anything in life by studying and applying your knowledge. “Perfect is the enemy of good”, to paraphrase Voltaire, so you also need to be able to get out there and ACT even before you’ve completely perfected your marketing pitch. Avoid the “paralysis of analysis” but also do not skimp on that analysis part.

Becoming an expert is not an overnight thing. You can not become a true expert without going around the track a few times. You can create an APPEARANCE of being an expert, of course, by creating great content (through research or by having it outsourced), but true expertise is a function of time, blood, sweat and

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Charles Holland

tears. And remember: **You don't have to be good to start. You just have to start to get good.**

How do I stand out above the noise of all the other marketers?

The answer may surprise you. In a way, it's much easier than you probably think. Sure, there are probably millions (literally) of marketers out there but only a tiny portion of them know what they're doing. If a given product or niche has a competition of tens or hundreds of thousands, you can be pretty sure that your "worry" only concerns a tiny percentile of that number. Typically a few dozen, or for more popular products, perhaps a few hundred.

Okay, a few hundred competitors can still be tough to beat – but – the good news is that if you diversify your traffic-getting portfolio, and set up your campaigns correctly, you will almost certainly reach a sufficiently significant portion of your market.

We agree that the above statement sounds a little bit optimistic. We're not saying that you "will" succeed "no matter" what you do. All we're saying is that your chances of breaking through the clutter are in fact a LOT better than you probably at first thought.

How do I brand myself online?

If you're selling products from your own website, you're automatically "branding" yourself, whether you like to or not. People will see YOUR domain name when they consider your products. So, branding as such happens automatically – but –

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Charles Holland

this doesn't mean that your brand will ever become the next Coca Cola. For that, you need to scale things up.

Once you learn how to attract traffic to your site profitably, you can continue scaling up pretty much indefinitely, and as you do, your brand recognition will continue growing.

Some marketers believe that "branding" involves "branding ads" – much like most advertisers on TV do these days. Sure, you could go down that route, placing very unspecific ads all over the place, but that would be extremely uneconomical in the online world. It's much wiser to simply focus on traffic to specific offers or pages of interest on your site – and the brand recognition will soon follow suit.

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Charles Holland

List Building Q&A

What is an email marketing system and which one would you recommend?

An email marketing system, also known as an “autoresponder” is a program which helps you organize and automate your correspondence with your prospects and clients. It also helps you collect their data, in effect functioning as a kind of a membership management system (not quite, but not far off either).

A good autoresponder doesn't “just” help you do the above, but it must also mail out – and DELIVER – your mails to your members. Delivery rate (i.e. strictly related to being white-listed by email servers) is key. You may have 1,000,000 subscribers but if a major mail server thinks you're a spammer – not one of them will receive your email. This is why it is not advisable to make bulk mailing from your own email account – if you get reported by just ONE disgruntled recipient of one of your mass emails, you will be flagged as a spammer and may have problems sending even individual emails as a result!

A great autoresponder such as [aWeber](#) is therefore a must for any online marketer. For a more complete list of high quality autoresponders and a deeper discussion of what they do and which one may be the most appropriate for you, visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

How do I build a list?

To build a list of subscribers, you need to subscribe to an autoresponder program online, such as [aWeber](#), [ConstantContact](#), etc. Do NOT use your own or an offline autoresponder because of deliverability concerns. [aWeber](#) has the highest

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Charles Holland

deliverability rate among all autoresponders at the time of this writing, so this is the one we recommend.

Once you have your account set up, create a new list (it will, of course, be empty – for now), name it, design a lead capture form as well as a sequence of confirmation and follow-up emails.

Once all that is done, place your form on your lead capture page – and... start attracting targeted traffic.

For more information visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

Do I need mega traffic or will lower, targeted traffic work to build my lists?

As with everything in life – quality always beats quantity. This said, there are those who believe in the old maxim “throw enough doo-doo against the wall and some of it will stick.”

Personally, I prefer quality over quantity any day. But quality costs more.

This is a frequent dilemma for those just starting out. The objective is to find balance. An even bigger objective is simply to find the most targeted and worthwhile traffic and worry about the price later!

To learn more about the art of selecting the best paid traffic sources, visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

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Charles Holland

Products & Selling Q&A

What Is A “Great” Product or Service?

A “great” product or service is one which directly answers a need or fills a gap in the market. It can be a physical product or an informational product. It can be anything for which there is a high demand and which you can provide with the highest integrity.

In terms of growing a business *fast* a “great” product is one which is extremely popular. But many niche businesses may not have those massive audiences but can still have great products. This said, typically, dominating a niche is required to make substantial sales on a niche product, whereas only conquering a small part of a major niche may be enough to achieve the same results in a popular niche.

When Starting From Scratch, How Do I Discover a Great Product?

By understanding the market you wish to target. By understanding people just like you who are looking for things they need – in any market niche. And then, by researching that market and discovering the best or most popular products that cater to it. Additionally, the product must be profitable enough for you to warrant your marketing efforts.

Once you identify the market niche which you believe is “hot”, follow this procedure to discover its biggest needs – and products:

- Determine a one- or two-word descriptive “keyword” that describes your main niche (for example “health and fitness” or just “health”, etc)

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Charles Holland

- Visit [Adwords Keyword Tool](#) (register for free and log in) and choose “Keyword Tool” from the menu. Type in the desired keyword (or multiple closely related keywords, some of which may also be followed by the word “product” or “service”) into the search box.
- Unclick the “broad” checkbox and click the “exact” checkbox (on the left of the screen) and then click on SEARCH.
- Click on the “global results” column to sort the results in a descending order, from highest to lowest.
- Observe the total number of exact monthly searches and also note the trend (if the Trend graph doesn’t show up, enable it by clicking the “Columns” button).
- Once you find the keyword with the highest number of searches which ALSO has either a steady or a growing trend, click on that keyword to open [Google Search](#)
- Write down the top PRODUCTS which come up within the first 10 or 20 results on Google.com
- Now visit [Google Trends](#) and enter the first product. Once you see the graph ADD another 4 products. Watch their trends and replace the weakest one with the next product on your list. Continue in this manner until you’ve found 5 of the best-trending products.
- Go back to Google Search and, one by one, type PRODUCT NAME + the word “affiliate” or “affiliate program”. Open the results page and copy its URL into your notepad. Do this for each of your products. Compare the terms and ease of use and provided support of each affiliate program.
- Now, visit the most popular online marketplaces to see what kinds of related products they may have to offer. For a comprehensive list of marketplaces, visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#)

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Charles Holland

account there. The most popular ones are [Clickbank](#) and [Commission Junction](#).

- Look through their marketplace listings within the selected niche and write down the products with the greatest popularity and highest competition (“gravity”, in case of [Clickbank](#))
- Go back to the [Keyword Tool](#) and enter their names there – check the volume of monthly searches.
- Go back to [Google Trends](#) and compare them.
- Now compare the profitability of each affiliate program. Select the one which combines the best profitability with the greatest popularity – but one which is also not “too saturated”. This can be a little tricky to discover and in many cases you’ll only be able to know this for sure once you’ve tried it. But one way to check this is to type in the name of the product in quotation marks into [Google Search](#). The number of matches that you will see there is your “organic competition”. About 5% of that number is your “real” competition. Can you beat all of them? If so, then perhaps the product is not yet over-saturated.
- The next step will depend on the method of attracting traffic that you will resolve to pursue. If you’re only going to use SEO, you will need to implement a keyword strategy, beautifully described in [SEOlater](#). Essentially, you’ll need to develop content for your site, gradually conquering a keyword at a time, starting from easiest to hardest. If your strategy is to acquire paid traffic, you’ll need to learn how to find the best sources for least, and we recommend you also visit www.coachtip.com to find out more about that.

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Where do I find the best products to promote, if I don't have my own product?

There is a multitude of ways to find great products you can promote as an affiliate. A great many products actually have their own affiliate programs, and frequently companies who sell various product ranges also have affiliate programs that cover “anything” you sell from their catalogue.

There are also different kinds of products you can promote – from info-products to software to physical products to services to special offers.

Among the most popular “marketplaces” where you can find collections of products and affiliate programs you have sites such as [Clickbank](#), [Neverblue](#), [Commission Junction](#), [AdToll](#), [MaxBounty](#) and many others, visit [CoachTIP](#) for a more comprehensive list and discussion.

Among the most popular online shops which also offer affiliate programs you'll find entities such as [Amazon.com](#), [BarnesAndNoble.com](#) and many others.

Also smaller individual product owners frequently offer great commissions – just Google product name + the word “affiliate”. An example of a terrific (and highly profitable) individual affiliate program within the internet marketing niche is [Followup Selling Systems](#) by Charlie Page, the owner of [Directory of eZines](#) which in itself is also another example of a superb affiliate program.

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

How Do I Know Which Products Will Sell The Best?

Now, there's a million dollar question! A great product is one for which there is a high demand, which is profitable, and which has high quality. It's also a product you can feel passionate about. It's a product that, when you sell it, you know you'll have a win-win situation with your buyer.

So how do you know if the product you've just decided to promote fulfills the above criteria?

Start with your own feeling and knowledge about this product. If you're comfortable, even excited about it – that's a first very important step.

Next, establish its popularity. Do this in two stages: first confirm that the niche itself is indeed very popular and then see if the specific product is doing well. To do this, use a combination of Google's Adwords Keyword Tool, Google Search, Google Trends and Quantcast. You can also use many other tools, but these four will suffice in most cases.

Start by entering a few niche keywords into the [Google Keyword Tool](#) and select "exact" match. Look at the average volume of monthly searches within that niche. If most keywords are very well represented, chances are you're on to something good. Now verify this with [Google Trends](#). Next, check [Google Search](#) and type a few of your main niche keywords in quotation marks. Is the number of competing pages high? In the millions? If so, chances are very good you're in a hot niche.

Next, repeat the above steps but this time enter your product's name. After that, if the product is owned by an individual company, visit [Quantcast](#) to analyze the

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

demographics of the people who are interested in that product. If the product itself isn't that popular but you believe it will sell well, pick another similar product and do the same kind of analysis.

You also need to consider market saturation. [Google Trends](#) will be helpful in that respect, to some extent, but also data from sites such as Clickbank.com will – to some extent – give you a clue. For example, on [Clickbank](#) the so-called “gravity” is a broad indication of popularity of the given product among affiliates, so you may conclude that it's either over-saturated, under-saturated or just right. Additionally, if you do a variety of searches using [Google.com](#), with your product's name as part of the search term, you'll be able to see how many others are promoting this already. You want a product which is already competitive and popular, but probably not one which is overwhelmingly so.

Finally, consider the support that the product's owner gives to affiliates. Do they have an area with marketing resources, videos, banners, articles, tips? If they do, and if everything else is great as per the above outline – you've probably found yourself a GREAT product to promote and invest in! For more information, visit [CoachTIP](#).

What Is a Sales Funnel?

This is a somewhat ugly name for a process of gradually leading your prospect to a decision of buying from you. You can have sales funnels which are very “hard sells” and you can also do it more subtly and with class. In simplest terms, the funnel begins with a visit to your site. Once there, the visitor engages with its content. In the process of this engagement, the visitor may require more information, or perhaps a special report that you're offering. Once the visitor signs up to receive this information, he thereby joins your “list” and you can now

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

continue building a relationship with him or her by periodically mailing information and eventually also special offers.

Crudely put, a funnel might look like this: visitor -> landing page -> free gift -> signup -> sale -> followup.

This kind of a sales funnel has the advantage of a seeming immediacy, but it can also be off-putting and impersonal. It's hard to recover trust from a bad first impression as so many online marketers do in their rush to profit or turn 'em and burn 'em as they say. You can opt to maybe get some of them once but you will lose most of the good ones forever. The better alternative is to attract them to your list with quality and keep them coming back forever for more quality content and solid insights and worthy offers.

A more sophisticated funnel might look like this: visitor -> blog -> lots of content -> encouragement to signup -> free report -> more content -> more content -> encouragement to buy -> more content -> followup -> etc.

While many marketers will see this is as a bit of a drag, this is in fact the best long-term "prescription" for a solid online business and repeat customers. It's much easier, wiser and more economical to retain good customers that bring referrals and multiple purchases over time than it is to go out and get new customers again and again. Yes, it's more work to set up a solid, long term business that pays long term. But that's just good business sense. Do it once, do it right... and you've got it forever.

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Charles Holland

How do I find the best IM niches?

It needs to be said that money can be made in just about “any” market. This said, not all markets are equally large, some are harder to get to, some easier, some are more competitive than others, some are low-ticket, some high-ticket, some are massive and some are small.

While there is no shortage of “huge” markets out there, as a rule of thumb, especially for a beginner marketer, there are essentially only four major markets you should look at - if “massive” is what you’re truly interested in. Those are:

- Health and fitness
- Relationships
- Wealth
- Special interests and hobbies (although you could argue that this is not one market but many)

For a deeper discussion of these and other major markets, visit

www.coachtip.com.

Do I need a separate blog or website for each product?

This very much depends on your approach. If you’re branding yourself as an expert in a particular niche, then any product you sell within that niche can well be promoted under the same domain. If you’re branching out into distinct areas, you can either use a generic “brand name” domain or have a domain which contains the primary keyword. A word of caution at this point: if you buy a domain

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

which is too specific to the product you're promoting, consider what might happen next year when the product is superseded by the next version. So, in a case like that, keep the name semi-specific only.

How do I make my product look and feel better than all other similar affiliates?

This is a very common concern for all marketers, particularly when they're promoting the same product. How do you stand out?

The answer is deceptively simple: provide something extra that no one else is providing. This could be something like a bonus or a free gift, but it can also be the overall experience. For instance, if you promote your products using an informational blog, this alone can set you apart from everyone else as your authority and strength of recommendation grows.

If you decide to "bribe" your visitors to buy from you, the best kind of a freebie is a truly useful special report or a resource document or ebook closely related to the product you're selling. You can also promise another one (or more) such report on the other end of the transaction.

Many marketers, rather than create their own bonuses, seek out freebies online, and there are indeed many very good products out there which you can offer. But keep in mind that many of those products have strings attached which many buyers do not like. They usually ask the buyers to opt into THEIR lists as well. A way around that would be to adapt a PLR product ("private label rights" – a product you can distribute as your own) to your needs and then offer it for free. This is often the best way to go for many new marketers, but a good original report which you create yourself can set you apart equally well – or better.

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Why can't I just do one domain and have a bunch of pages/landing pages/sales pages for each different product so I could brand myself in all this?

Why can't you? Of course you can! In fact, many "brand name" companies would consider the opposite strategy to be tantamount to business suicide and brand dilution! If your site provides high quality products and it gains a reputation as the place where one can find good stuff – it can only benefit from promoting everything it does under one banner.

But this question is really about something else entirely and it almost exclusively addresses itself to an upstart online business person. If you want to sell an IM info product and you also want to sell a weight-loss product, should you do it from the same web property?

The answer will depend on your long-term plans and strategy. If your strategy is to try a few things out and see what works, you may indeed benefit from creating websites with domain names closely related to the products you're selling. If, on the other hand, you wish to become a multi-product vendor, your brand name might either contain words to that effect – or ignore that consideration completely.

I don't have my own products. So how do I brand myself with other people's products?

If you simply forward traffic from your landing page to your affiliate offer, or if you don't even have a landing page and simply forward all the clicks to the product offer – you will not have much of an opportunity to brand yourself. You wouldn't

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Charles Holland

be contributing anything to the product after all, so branding yourself wouldn't even make much sense.

If you are, however, adding value to your offer, either through additional articles, videos or complimentary free products, your buyers will soon come to recognize you as a "brand" and will be much more likely to come to you for the follow-up products – as long as your offer did indeed deliver value.

You should always send people to the offers they're interested in via your own landing page where you can offer them something of value - for free – and THEN send them on to the offer itself. Once you have a list of buyers, you can proceed to market to them in follow-up communications. But you should keep in mind that marketing alone isn't a good idea. First and foremost provide them with valuable content, so that when you do finally market something, your offers will fall on fertile ground!

Is it easier to promote high ticket items or sell more low ticket items?

It depends on the product – and the nature of your clients. High ticket items are more profitable on a per-unit basis, but tend to be more difficult to sell. Low-ticket items are cheap and affordable to most – but their profitability may be questionable.

It's all in the balance. Why not have a mix of offers, some high, some low, some in-between. And some with monthly rebilling too! Rebilling items are often "cheap" – but keep on paying you month after month.

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Charles Holland

Another way to look at all this is that what determines the profitability of a given product is the relationship between the price and the cost of traffic acquisition. It would stand to reason, therefore, that pitching less profitable offers might indeed be very profitable if you already have the list to which you can market – for free.

How much money do I need to launch a product online? How do I budget properly?

It's an open-ended question actually. It depends on many factors, among them: Who are you up against? How competitive is your niche? Where are your traffic sources and how expensive are they?

In principle, judging by personal experience as well as that of others, a budget which is too tight tends to be a recipe for failure. This is a broad sweeping statement, of course. There have been and will always be individuals who can turn a \$10 investment into a million. But those individuals are rare – and probably quite lucky.

So how much is “enough” for a “typical” product?

Again, the answer to this question must be guarded with ifs and buts and caveats. But let's see if we can play along. If the item you have decided to promote is a product which has a proven sales record, and you have the ability to acquire high quality traffic for it, and if your sales and marketing ability is well developed, you MIGHT be looking at a MINIMALIST scenario like this:

- Spend \$500 on traffic at \$0.10 per click = 5,000 visits.

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Charles Holland

- Convert 10% of those visits to signups = 500 opt-ins
- Convert 10% of the optins to sales = 50 sales
- If each item earns you \$25 net, your turnover would be = \$1,250 and your profit would thus be \$750 or 250% - nice!
- If you re-invest your profits and manage to repeat the same exercise with similar results, you can scale up with increasing speed – and create an online empire!

But the same scenario could also play out like this:

- Spend \$500 on traffic at \$0.10 per click = 5,000 visits.
- Convert 2% of those visits to signups = 100 opt-ins
- Convert 1% of this to sales = 1 sale
- If you earn \$25 per sale, you would be -\$475 in the hole.

At this point you would need to reconsider not just your product but also your traffic sources and marketing methodology – and try again.

How many trial-and-error exercises like this would you need? The answer to that will be your answer to your startup budget.

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Charles Holland

One more point at this stage: You can – and probably should – test your products, traffic sources and marketing strategies using lower amounts. So, work backwards. If you have \$100 to spend, you need to sell enough to earn \$100 to break even. If you are dead-set on selling a product which pays you \$25 per unit, you will have to make 4 sales.

If you expect to convert a paltry 1% of your list, you will need 400 people on your list. If you expect to convert only 1% of your visits to optins, you need 40,000 visits.

So then the next question would be: how cheap would the traffic have to be in order for me to be able to purchase 40,000 visits for \$100? The answer is \$0.004 per click. That's REALLY cheap. And yes – you CAN find traffic this cheap. But... chances are it will be VERY POOR quality traffic and even these super-low conversion expectations will be too high for it.

So, given such a small budget (\$100) – what else could you do?

One answer is that you should learn SEO and build your list organically. Eventually, you would earn enough to be able to make a more comprehensive and realistic test.

Another answer is to revise your campaign goals and strategies. For example, you could ditch the \$25 product and replace it with one which earns you \$100. You would only need 1/4th of the traffic and expense in the above scenario to make things work – even with that cheap traffic source. But we would recommend that you don't waste your money on traffic sources THIS cheap. But to know how to do that, you'd need to learn the ins and outs of paid traffic

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Charles Holland

sources and strategies. So how about visiting [CoachTIP](#) for some more in-depth answers!

I hear that I have to give something away to get them on my list. Where do I find free products to give away?

If you Google “free stuff” or “giveaways” or “JV giveaways”, you’ll find thousands of websites who offer products (typically eBooks or software) which you can indeed give away for free. Most, if not all, of these comes with some strings attached – typically the requirement that the recipient of the freebie also opt-in to their list. One of the best sites with free stuff for the IM market is www.jvgiveaways.com.

Another source of free stuff are PLR or MRR sites (“private label rights” and “master resale rights” respectively). These products you can buy – sometimes even get for free - without strings attached, and you can even put your own name to them as the author. Start with [PLR Mini Mart](#) and continue searching on Google for other options if you don’t find what you like on this site.

Coupons and CPA offers are another way to find free products. You’ll find endless listings of attractive CPA offers on [Offer Vault](#).

Finally, you can also create your own product – or have one created for you. For this you might turn to sites like [oDesk](#) or [Guru](#), etc.

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Charles Holland

General Advertising Q&A

I hear people are getting “ad blindness” online. Is it true?

Of course it’s true. Once you get used to seeing something you stop observing it actively. The same applies to visiting websites where the layout is “generic” and you’re conditioned to avoid looking at sidebars, for example.

One of the “cures” for this – but also potential annoyances – is to place ads within the body of your content. But this doesn’t always work. It helps to study visitor behavior using eye tracking programs such as [ITU Gaze Tracker](#), [Ogama](#) or [MiraMetrix](#) – or mouse tracking (heatmap) software such as [CrazyEgg](#), [ClickTale](#) or [ClickDensity](#).

How do I get people to read my ads?

There are a few ways to look at this. One way is to try to have professionally designed ads that “jump out” of the page. Another is to have ads that pop up while visitors peruse your site. Yet another, and in our view the most effective, is to make conversational references within your articles to specific ads you particularly believe in.

Each of these methods has its pros and cons, and you’ll have to experiment to know which one works best. A good mix of the above techniques may be the answer.

Briefly, static ads tend to “disappear” (ad blindness), pop-up ads tend to irritate. But ads referred to within the text may never be noticed – unless the user reads the article.

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Charles Holland

How do I get people to click my links?

By making sure that the visitor has a good reason to do so. Nobody will click your links because you want them to. They will only click if your link promises them an answer to their question or if it addresses their need. Contextual links placed within the body of your text may be very effective, if they're carefully selected and addressed within the narrative of your articles. Contextual links which are automatically generated can be very intrusive and may even result in people leaving your site – for good.

You can only get action from your visitors if you provide value.

How do solo ads, ppc, online/offline classifieds work and which ones are the most worthwhile?

This question implies a great degree of confusion. So before we try to briefly answer it, don't forget to bookmark a more in-depth discussion of this topic, visit [CoachTIP](#).

There are multiple models of paying for traffic. The CPC method (meaning "cost per click"), means that you pay each time your ad or link gets clicked – irrespective of how many times it is seen. In the CPM method, you pay for 1000 impressions, i.e. for each 1000 people who SEE it – but not necessarily click on it. There are also other methods such as CPA (cost per acquisition) or CPL (cost per lead), and many more.

Solo ads are typically mailouts by list owners. If a marketer has a list of, say, 10,000 people on his list, he can mail your ad to them. Chances are, that if he's

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Charles Holland

got, say, a 20% open rate, that 2,000 people will thus SEE your ad. If he's got a 20% click-through rate (CTR), 400 people will CLICK on your link. If your landing page is really good, some of them may actually opt in to your offer. (Most solo ads promote free offers only, but some allow direct sales as well).

Classified ads exist both online and offline. With the exception of sites such as Craigslist, online classified ads tend to be a bit of a hit-or-miss proposition. Offline classifieds, on the other hand, tend to be much more profitable – if you can find the right newspapers and magazines in which to place them – and if your cost per ad (and its circulation) is reasonable.

Any one of the above methods can be very profitable, depending on your product, your approach and the traffic quality. None of them can be predicted in advance, so in each case you will HAVE TO run small-scale tests to confirm your assertions and budgets.

Briefly, here's how you can look at comparing the various types of campaigns.

Solo ads – Say you can buy 1000 solos for for \$300 and that they guarantee each click. This means you get 1000 visits for \$300, i.e. you're paying \$0,30 per visit. If you can convert 20% of those to opt-ins, you'll have 200 signups at a cost of \$0.66 per lead. If you can convert 10% of those to sales, that's 20 sales at a cost of \$15.00 per sale.

CPC – Say you budget \$300 for a campaign with a low-priced vendor who charges \$0.05 (5 cents) per click. This will give you 6,000 visits to your page, but these visits will (typically) not be nearly as targeted as your solo-ad visits. So let's assume that 2% of the visitors will opt-in to your offer, i.e. you'll get 120 signups.

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Charles Holland

At this point, if you can convert 10% of those to sale, you'll have 12 sales at a cost of \$25 per sale.

Offline classified ad – Say you pay \$300 for a campaign directed at 7,000,000 readers of a few dozens newspapers across the States. How many people will even get to the classified section? You won't know until you've tried it. But let's assume that 1/100th of a percent will not only read the classifieds but will also take the trouble to write down your URL and go online to check your offer out. These are very strongly motivated people, so it's all good – but how many does that make? 700 visits. Of course, if COULD have been 7,000 visits if you're wrong in the above assumption. If we agree that 700 is reasonable, then we can also assume that their opt-in rate will PROBABLY be higher than average (because they took all that trouble), so let's say we'll get 40%, i.e. 280 opt-ins. If, once again, only 10% of those convert to sales, you'll have made 28 sales at a cost of \$10.71 per sale.

Naturally in all of the above methods, the VARIABLES (conversion rates) are where it's at and it's very difficult to know how responsive a given traffic source is until you've personally tried it. The proven list responsiveness can COMPLETELY change the above calculations, needless to say.

Also, needless to say, your per-unit profit must be such that any of those hypothetical calculations must work at result in an overall campaign profit.

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Charles Holland

Traffic Q&A

What Is Highly Targeted Traffic?

The ideal visitor for a commercial site is someone specifically interested in buying the very product that the site has to offer. The next-best visitor is one who is looking for a product “like” the one you have to offer, and may be persuaded to pick this one over any other one. The next-next-best is a visitor who doesn’t quite know what he wants within this niche, but is ready to have his mind made up for him. The next-next-next-best visitor is one who has a general interest in your niche, is not YET ready to buy anything, but may become ready a little further down the road.

All other kinds of visitors are NOT the visitors you should be bragging about. That is why well-SEO’ed sites with, say, 3,000 monthly visits can sometimes make more sales than blindly-bought-traffic sites with 100,000+ visits!

Whether you’re using SEO or paid traffic sources your job is to narrow down your options to those specific people. With SEO this typically takes a little longer but may result in a much more stable and targeted long-term traffic, while with paid traffic sources, the traffic will only last for as long as you’re paying for it, but will be much higher - immediately.

What Is The Best And Easiest Way To Get Website Traffic?

It may surprise you to know that while there isn’t really any single “best” or “easiest” way to get traffic, there are many “worst” and “hardest” ways.

The rule of thumb which you should always stick to is: **“if it sounds too good to be true – it is.”**

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So, never fall for automated traffic sources like special programs or widgets whose job is to send you tons of traffic without you moving a finger – all for \$19. These programs almost never work, or work only briefly, and more often than not, they wind up costing you much more on the back-end, and/or actually impairing your site's ability to succeed.

Also, offers to buy a “zillion visitors for \$19” can only mean that this traffic is extremely untargeted at best and fake at worst.

The best quality of traffic is typically achieved the hard way – word of mouth, being easily found by the search engines, having laser-targeted ads on all the relevant sites. Another good source of traffic is through careful research of paid sources.

- **Word of mouth** is by far the very best way to succeed. By providing superior service and user experience, you can fail-proof your business. People will talk about you if you're good. They'll talk even more if you're bad. Always strive to provide a superior quality service.
- **SEO** (search engine optimization) is an indispensable component for any website that wishes to stay around for a long time. But you need to be able to do it well. Poor quality SEO may be indifferent to your results at best, or actually detrimental at worst.
- **High quality paid traffic** is a must if you want to scale up quickly and reach break-even in record time. But quality and method of obtaining traffic will also affect your bottom line. This is why tracking, testing and measuring your campaign results is so critical.

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Charles Holland

How do I track my success online with ads?

There are many ways to track your promotions. Some are manual, some are automated. For example, if you have come up with two ways to sell a particular product, you may create two separate sales pages for it and two separate [PayPal](#) buttons, one for each page. After that, you can look inside of PayPal to see which one generates more incomes.

But this method would be quite cumbersome with more complex promotions. Sure, you could create your own home-made methods for distinguishing where the sales came from (including tracking your page hits using, say, Google Analytics or any other statistical program), but there is, fortunately, a much better way: using an ad tracker.

An ad tracker is a program which provides statistics for the specific page you want to monitor. Typically, you would go about this like this:

- Create a new campaign within your ad tracker
- Enter your product affiliate link into the campaign setup
- When promoting your link, you no longer promote your original link, but rather your ad tracker link

Once you set this up – and it's really quite easy – you can monitor unlimited number of campaigns very easily.

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Among the best ad trackers, you'll find products such as [AdWatcher](#), [Hypertracker](#), [HitsLink](#), [DynaTracker](#) – and many more. [Hypertracker](#) tends to have the greatest following because of its ease of use. Most of these tools cost anywhere between \$20 and \$30 per month to start with, but you may pay more if you generate very high volumes of traffic.

If money were no object, what is the best paid traffic source(s)?

This is a “how long is a piece of string” kind of a question. The answer to this depends on a whole lot of different factors. Very often, people and companies with “unlimited” budgets simply waste their money on advertising. Sure, they might get some sales out of that, but more often than not their advertising is inefficient in terms of cost-to-sales ratios.

An ideal scenario is to have a mix of traffic sources, some long-term (articles, SEO, etc) and some short-term (CPC, CPM, banners, etc).

Now, when looking for paid traffic sources, you need to understand HOW and WHERE are those are promoted. So, if you buy traffic from a vendor who displays your ads as exit pages or intrusive pop-ups, or perhaps as part of some “click to earn” scheme, you can be pretty sure that only a small portion of web surfers will click through on those. But then you look at the costs, and let's say that it costs you a mere cent per click. It could be that your calculations indicate that if you get 1 click per 1000 exposures, for example, and then 1 sale per 1000 visits, then if the traffic cost was sufficiently low and your product earnings sufficiently high – you just might have found a formula that works.

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Charles Holland

But this method has a few built-in problems: it will take you quite a lot of testing (i.e. spending money) to discover the traffic vendor with the best quality of traffic. So, you could also turn to the “big boys” like [Google](#) or [Facebook](#) and try to structure a CPC campaign with them. Sure, it will be much more expensive on a per-click basis, but it has a chance of being much more targeted and effective. Again, testing will prove you right or wrong about that.

Finding the “best” traffic sources also depends on your niche. Some traffic vendors are great for IM products only, others only for non-IM or even more specifically for, say, family products, etc.

For a deeper discussion and paid traffic resources, visit [CoachTIP](#).

What are the best paid traffic sources on a budget of \$1000 per month?

This is not really the right way to plan your traffic investment. If you believe you’ll be spending \$1000 month in and month out – you’ll be wasting your money, in all likelihood.

Why? Because if you drive your high quality traffic correctly, it will keep growing. And if it keeps growing and your site is correctly set up with a great product to boot, you will keep earning more and more – and your budget will continue rising in lockstep with your sales.

A better way to look at this is as follows:

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After you've picked your killer product and created all the necessary pages and lead capture page, email follow-ups and so on – invest a small amount of money into a handful of diversified and good quality traffic sources.

If you want to work with \$1000 to start with, then put about \$100 into each of up to 10 sources:

- 2-3 different CPC ad networks
- 2-3 different Solo Ads
- 2-3 different media buys
- 1-2 CPM ad networks

Track each campaign and in the next round, repeat the most successful one(s). If, say, 50% of your campaigns returned a healthy profit, invest your next \$1000 into just those and double the amount for each.

If the trend continues, you know you have discovered reliable traffic sources – you can now scale up quite dramatically – but not “too” crazy either.

Continue scaling up as long as your profitability is good.

The time it may take to establish profitability of each one of your sources can be as short of a few days up to a couple of weeks. This means that it's entirely possible that already in the first month your budget will in fact be double of what

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you planned. This is okay, however, because you will be funding your next campaign from profits!

If, on the other hand, your first test campaigns do not result in a profit or, heaven forbid, a loss, this could be an indication of either:

- Poorly chosen traffic sources
- Poorly structured landing and sales pages
- Poor choice of a product
- Wrong price-point for your targeted traffic

For more information about paid traffic strategies, visit [CoachTIP](#)

How can I see my competitors' traffic sources?

You can not see “all” of your competitors' traffic sources, but you can indeed gain some valuable insights into “some” of their traffic sources using the techniques outlined here.

Let's start at the top. When you visit [Google Search](#) and search on any number of keywords which return your competitor's site, you can definitely establish that you've discovered at least one traffic source: SEO. You can further analyze their site using the [Google Keyword Tool](#) and entering their URL. This will reveal many of the additional keywords they've targeted. If you randomly check just some of those keywords with Google Search, you'll be able to establish just how well

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

done their SEO is. So, if they rank on all the keywords you throw at the search engine, chances are their SEO person knows all the relevant techniques – and their authority is good.

If, while using [Google Search](#) you spot any ads (either on top of the page, on the sidebar, or within the body and/or at the bottom of the listing), you will also know that a portion of their traffic comes from AdWords, and chances are that most or all the keywords you've uncovered in the previous step are also part of their campaign.

Next, you can try to establish where their links are coming from. Again, there are many ways to do this. For one thing, you can type this command into Google Search: [links::theirdomain.com](#). But this will NOT give you the complete list of external and internal links – Google's policy is only to reveal a small part. A better way would be sign up to a service like [Majestic SEO](#) and/or [Cognitive SEO](#). You can also use another paid service [SERP IQ](#) to help you with further research as well as keyword competition research. Finally, you can also check out [SpyFu](#) for details on who's paying how much and for which keywords.

Finally, there are paid traffic sources. Those will be the hardest to figure out, although in some cases the above link analysis will reveal at least some of them. Thing is, when you purchase traffic from company X, it's only very rarely that their traffic will come from domain X. So you'll never know for sure, unless you keep track of all the different traffic distributors – and you can only do that with any degree of certainty by experimenting (i.e. paying for traffic) personally. Thankfully, the first three ways should be more than enough to know a LOT – indeed *enough* - about your competitors' traffic strategies.

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Conversions Q&A

I see lots of websites selling lots of stuff, even getting lots of traffic...but when I call them, I can't tell that they're actually making any money. I have a site like that. Why can I get traffic but not conversions? Is there someone to review my campaigns and consult with me to give me tips?

The vast majority of websites, and even the vast majority of marketing websites fail to monetize their traffic – completely or not at all!

Monetizing your traffic is much tougher than getting it. It doesn't even depend on how tricky or clever your ad campaigns are – it depends on the relationship you manage to build with your visitors. Monetization is based on trust.

Big brands tend to have a “credit of trust”, even before people purchase from them. This is because they believe in their quality and in possible recourse should things go wrong. Big brands often don't even have to explain how good their products are and why you would benefit from them (and, occasionally, they abuse this trust by selling you sub-standard stuff!). Small brands and individual marketers, on the other hand, have a major credibility problem going in, even if they offer superior value. It is for this very reason that approaching online marketing from the point of view of “let's make some money” can never yield positive results. Your approach must be “let's build credibility” and only THEN “let's make some money”.

In fact, keep the “let's make some money” out of the equation entirely. Money, like power and women, rarely yield to those who pursue them directly. Aim to provide the best service and build the best reputation, share your knowledge and

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Charles Holland

expertise – economic gains will follow automatically and as a byproduct of that positive approach.

As for experienced consultants who can help you turn your website or business around – there are many reputable ones out there, if you know how to find them. One such consultant can be found here: www.homebusiness-coach.com (hey that's me!).

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CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Writing Q&A

Where do I get some good ideas for writing?

Once you've decided on your niche and your product, you may also decide to create articles about it in order to promote them online and thus get lots of permanent and long-term links to your sales page. A great strategy. But how do you get inspired to write GOOD quality content?

As with so many things online, remember: Google is your friend. By simply searching for your product or your primary keyword, you will find unlimited resources and articles which you can study and... re-write. Or you can condense your article from many sources, e.g. "so-and-so thinks this, but Mr X thinks that, while Ms Y insists that...".

You can also use Q&A sites such as Yahoo Answers, LinkedIn Answers or Amazon Askville (for a more complete list, visit [CoachTIP](#)).

Also, don't forget to look for forums, blogs, newsletters and ezines that deal with that topic. One fabulous resource for this is [Directory of Ezines](#).

How do I find the best writers?

While keeping in mind that you get what you pay for, you need to know that you can find anything from "passable" to "decent" to "excellent" writer using only a handful of online resources. Naturally, Google is – as ever – one such resource. Just type in "high quality writers".

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Charles Holland

You can also find very good writers who not only know how to write but also thoroughly research your topic on sites such as Guru.com, eLance.com or oDesk.com (for a more complete list visit CoachTIP).

You can also turn to micro-jobs sites such as Fiverr.com or even get some pretty excellent writers from IM forums such as WarriorForum or DigitalPoint.

In all cases, make sure you test your writers first before committing yourself.

How do I write good ad copy?

Ad copy, like any other form of writing, is all about communication. The difference between an ad and an essay, however, is that the ad's function is to communicate a message which the reader may or may not be choosing to read at the time. It is not, as some have said, because the ad is essentially self-serving, whereas an essay is supposedly not. All you need to do to disprove this is read a supposedly objective editorial in just about any newspaper!

An ad is therefore a form of intrusion upon the reader – or the viewer. It does not mean that it is therefore undesirable or that the audience for that ad would not appreciate it – it only means that by its very nature an ad has a somewhat intrusive nature.

Given that the ad starts out with this disadvantage, the writer of an ad needs to consider a method of communication which is both the least intrusive, the most eloquent and the most powerful. It also needs to promise some form of a reward to the reader, in order to supply him or her with the motivation to react to its call to action.

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Charles Holland

In most typical situations, an ad also needs to be concise and precise in order for it to have a chance of engaging the reader's attention.

While you might not become a brilliant copywriter overnight, if you follow these simple principles of ad- or copywriting, you'll be well on your way to mastery:

Spend the most time devising a short but powerful HEADLINE. The function of the headline is to make them STOP what they're doing and read the rest of your ad – and then click through on it.

Use "POWER WORDS" in your copy. Many people consider power words to be the equivalent of hype – and indeed they can be. It is therefore up to you to find the appropriate balance between what you consider to be in good taste and "non-hypey" and powerful statements which tend to work really well with most people – regardless of their disdain for such words. Examples of power words include "easy", "guarantee", "new", "proven", "results", "discover", "save", "safety", "free", "love", "health", etc.

Use SHORT PHRASES. Not only does your reader initially doesn't want to read your ad, once he or she does read it, their attention span will be very short indeed.

Use a strong CALL TO ACTION. It's not enough to state "we have the best widget in the world." The ad needs to instruct the reader what to do about it. "Click here" or "visit this URL" or "Act NOW!" are examples of calls to action. A sense of urgency is also an important technique to consider, particularly if it's real! "Offer ends on Tuesday" is a good example of this strategy – but it may backfire on you if the offer doesn't end at all!

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Charles Holland

Just remember that the ad is up to 80% of your success, so do it well. If you're in doubt, hire the services of a professional copywriter.

Can I use duplicated emails for follow up marketing to my lists?

Many people consider email "swipes", i.e. word-for-word copies of emails written by other people to be a form of plagiarism, or a form of duplicate content.

So let's break this down a little bit. While it may indeed be a form of legal plagiarism, it is definitely not "duplicate content". Your emails do not travel to their destination through a search engine, and it's only the search engine rules that may be concerned with the originality of your content (although not quite in the way you probably think – which is a matter for a separate post). Also, the recipient of your email doesn't much care whether you wrote the same words to someone else, or whether someone else wrote those very words to another person.

So, using swipes is a perfectly legitimate way to at the very least inspire yourself regarding the content of your follow-up emails, or to even use them verbatim – if they indeed say what you want them to say!

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Charles Holland

Video Marketing Q&A

How do I get my YouTube videos seen and ranked?

On the assumption that your videos are interesting and of good quality – in the broadest sense of these words – you can optimize the “tags”, descriptions and, above all, titles of your videos in much the same way you would optimize any web page. You can also link to and from your videos in much the same way as you would with web pages and, similarly, you can invite comments and responses – again, just like with any good blog post.

It is this optimization combined with linking which helps the search engine – or the video server engine (e.g. [YouTube](#)) – to determine how relevant your video is to the search term which sets out to find it.

Since YouTube – far and away the world’s #1 video platform – is owned by [Google](#), you wouldn’t be too surprised to hear that the underlying search algorithm it uses is very similar to Google’s own search algorithm. If you simply follow the same optimization rules as you would with a web page, you won’t be far wrong with your YouTube videos. There are, however, a few important differences. These differences stem primarily from the fact that the vast majority of YouTube users – including the marketers – do not utilize best SEO practices when optimizing their video tags, etc. As a result of this, for example, YouTube saw no urgent need to introduce some of Google Search’s anti-spam principles. So, you can keyword-stuff your descriptions and titles much more liberally than you would with an ordinary web page. Not that we recommend that you do this, but knowing that you have a little more latitude in that department should give you some ideas...!

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Charles Holland

YouTube also pays a lot of attention to the name of your channel. If you're promoting widgets and your channel contains "widgets" in its name, you will automatically have a small advantage over another channel which doesn't. This is not dissimilar to exact match domains under [Google Search](#).

Following SEO principles in your YouTube videos will help you rank for sure, but the content of the videos themselves - just like the content quality of your web pages - will also play a very important role in the chances of the video "going viral", i.e. being recommended by viewers for others to check out as well.

You should also keep in mind that YouTube, even though it is indeed the largest video sharing platform on the planet, is by no means the only one. For more on video marketing, visit [CoachTIP](#).

Do videos really help my rankings?

It is reported that over 60% of all web activity across the world at any given time is spent on watching videos. What does this tell you? At the very least, it should tell you that if you're not promoting your website or product using videos, you're missing out on 60% of the market's attention!

Many people also prefer absorbing information through pictures rather than words. Do you think that your message might benefit from a video presentation, as opposed to text alone? If you answer in the positive, that's the answer to your question!

For more about video marketing, visit [CoachTIP](#).

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Charles Holland

Wordpress Q&A

Where do I find the best themes for my website?

Assuming that you're working with the Wordpress platform, free and paid "themes" (or "skins" or "site templates" to you non-WP users) can be found all over the net. There are literally tens of thousands of them.

As for the "best" – there really is no such thing. It's only a question of taste. Some themes may be more feature-rich than others, but this is neither here nor there for someone who knows HTML and PHP well enough not to care. Some themes may have a magazine-like look, but someone who's after a more conservative look might not like them at all.

Regardless of which platform you use for your website, you only need to Google "wordpress themes" or "website skins" or "website templates" and you'll see the endless suggestions.

If you're looking for a few good places to start right away, we recommend having a look at [ThemeForest](#) – but this is but a tip of the iceberg. Have fun!

Who has the best IM friendly Wordpress themes?

Wordpress has fast become the platform of choice not only for bloggers but also for website developers in general – and particularly for online marketers who appreciate the power and simplicity of this extraordinary program.

One of the advantages of Wordpress is that it allows you to "re-skin" (or "re-theme") your site on the fly, within seconds in most cases. Another advantage is

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Charles Holland

that some themes come complete not just with a particular “look” but also with special tools to help you set up marketing-related pages (e.g. squeeze pages, landing pages, etc).

While experienced users can adapt just about any theme to just about any purpose, marketers are typically not experts in these things – or have better things to do with their time. For that reason, a small industry was created around Wordpress themes for marketers only.

The most popular among those themes is Thesis (but note that it takes a little bit of learning – although Thesis 2.0 is a bit easier to use). Also very popular and powerful is [Socrates](#), favored by many top-dog marketers. Another popular one is [The Profits Theme](#). Some marketers also swear by the [Versatile Theme](#), while others prefer the [IM Theme](#). The options are endless. [Google](#) it!

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Charles Holland

General SEO Q&A

If I'm new to SEO, where do I start?

You start by not caring about SEO. First and foremost focus on your content and the value your site provides to your visitors. Only once you've assured yourself of that, should you start looking into "optimizing" your pages for the search engines.

Search optimization comes down to keyword research (see the relevant section within this document). The more thorough your keyword research, the better your chances will be of optimizing your pages correctly.

Once you've optimized your pages for the best primary and secondary keywords, progress to high quality link building and also consider complimentary promotional strategies such as article marketing and syndication, video marketing, social marketing, and so on.

Once you're done with that – consider paid traffic generation.

How Does SEO Work And How Much Do I Need To Know To Be Successful With It?

Search engine optimization is a method of optimizing your site so that the search engine indexing program which visits your site (a.k.a. a "bot" or a "crawler" or a "spider") can identify not only what your site is about, but also how likely good it is at what it specializes in. As a result of its findings, the search engine (e.g. www.google.com) will be able to organize its results in an order of relevance with respect to the searcher's query.

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Charles Holland

The simplest approach to SEO is to write great content for your website. Simple as that. But great content isn't the whole formula. The next step is to "tag" your content pages in such a way so as to make it easier for the search engine to figure out what your site is about and how relevant it is to the query typed in by the searcher. So, this implies a certain "density" of usage of certain key phrases ("keywords") within the content of your pages, and a consistency of those with the HTML tags that you use to further classify your pages and their content.

Such tags include the TITLE of the page, its DESCRIPTION, its KEYWORDS declarations, its IMAGE TAGS, and so forth. For an in-depth study of how to optimize your pages, visit [CoachTIP](#).

A general principle, however, is that you just need to be sure that each page you publish contains a TITLE which also contains the primary keyword you're trying to rank on. Additionally, it also needs to have a DESCRIPTION which, too, needs to contain at least that one keyword; furthermore any graphical elements you use within that page also need to be tagged with your primary or related keywords. Finally, your primary keyword needs to be repeated a certain number of times within the body of the article and there also need to be other closely-related keywords in use on that page. There are other "finer" principles, but these are the main ones.

Apart from the above, you also want to let the search engines know that you "belong" to a web community of related sites. This is accomplished by having other sites point back to your site, even to the specific page you're publishing, and also your site and/or page pointing to other related sites. This process is known as "linking" or "backlinking".

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Charles Holland

Linking is critically important to the popularity of a site (and thus its ranking within the search engine indexes), but – as with everything – the quality of links is far more important than their quantity. For more in-depth information on that, visit [CoachTIP](#).

What Exactly Is A Search Engine?

A search engine is an online program whose job it is to seek out websites on the web, figure out what they're about, index their content, and organize it in order of relevance. Additionally, it needs to have a method (an "algorithm") of determining how to organize its results in relation to the search term typed by the searcher.

Search engines do not provide results in real time. The results you see come from pre-made indices that are constantly generated and re-generated by the search engine program.

The most popular search engine, responsible for handling up to 80% of worldwide search traffic is www.google.com. Other major engines include www.yahoo.com and www.bing.com but a host of other, much more specialized and niche engines.

How Does a Search Engine Decide How To Rank My Site In Its Results?

The exact "recipe" for how a given page is ranked is a closely guarded secret. Search engine owners, such as [Google](#), go to great lengths to explain what they expect in pages and how they reward them for their content, but no matter how detailed their explanations, there are always many grey areas which are up to the webmasters to figure out.

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Charles Holland

This, in fact, is the reason for SEO (search engine optimization) coming into being. Crudely put, SEO is the result of webmasters trying to figure out how the search engine algorithm is written.

The underlying principle in all search engines is to discover the “most relevant” content and list it in order of relevance, from the most relevant to the least. This is complicated by the fact that human beings are NOT directly involved in evaluating sites (except in cases of manual search *directories*, such as for example www.dmoz.org). So, the search engine algorithm employs certain “mechanical” or “algorithmic” methodologies which aim to establish the validity of the billions of pages within its index in relation to the query. As you can imagine, this is no easy feat.

For an in-depth discussion of how search engines work and to discover some “shortcuts”, visit [CoachTIP](#). In general, however, just keep in mind that the search engine must first establish that the keyword entered by the searcher is reflected within your pages, and in the next pass it needs to establish how “respected” or “authoritative” your site is on that subject, compared to other sites within the same niche.

The simple conclusion from this is that your content needs to be of the highest quality, it must be well optimized and your site must be well linked to other related (and not only) sites on the web.

What is “local SEO”?

Local search engine optimization aims to signal to the search engines that your page is not merely relevant to a particular search term, but it is particularly relevant to searchers within specific geographic areas.

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Charles Holland

If you have a car bodywork shop in Manchester, for example, it doesn't do you much good to be found by someone in New York (except if your car body shop provides some product which can be shipped worldwide).

In essence, therefore, "local SEO" is paying attention to keywords which are strictly related to your geographical area.

What's the difference between and importance of onpage/offpage SEO?

"On-page" SEO is what you do to your content. When you write your articles and structure your pages, the content and the tags as well as outgoing links that you place are all part of "on-page" SEO. In other words, everything that you can affect directly without leaving your site.

"Off-page" SEO, in simplest terms, comes down to building links from other sites back to yours. This is the stuff you can't "directly" influence within your site, but you CAN do some things on other sites that will affect your site.

An example would be posting a comment on a forum or a blog, along with a link to your page. That link, if accepted by the external site, will "point back" to your site (i.e. it becomes a "backlink") and will count as part of your "authority score".

And this comes down to the question of "backlink quality". Backlinks received from sites relevant to yours, ideally within a context of a comment or an article, tend to be among the most valuable. Featured backlinks (e.g. someone recommending their visitors to click through to your site) can have even higher value. For more in-depth information about quality backlinking, visit [CoachTIP](https://www.CoachTip.com).

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Charles Holland

What kind of content is best for SEO?

If this question implies “what are the best tricks to rank well on search engines”, then the answer is “high quality content which is correctly optimized for the targeted keywords.”

If this question is simply about “what kind of content works best for SEO”, then the answer is “any kind of content which is well crafted and well optimized for the search engines”.

If both these answers appear roughly the same to you – you’re right. High quality original content is your best insurance of good ranking on the search engines. Looking for shortcuts in that department is almost always an illusion of progress and will almost never yield the results you’re hoping for.

Where can I study up on SEO for myself?

The web is FULL of SEO courses, some free, some paid. Some are great, some are so-so. One of the best ones we know of is available from [Meguoda](#) – where big parts are made available for free. Another superb SEO and IM course is available from [Chris Farrell Membership](#). A professional and highly advanced 1-on-1 marketing course is also available here: www.homebusiness-coach.com.

What is page rank and how do I get higher rankings with my new blog site?

A Google Page Rank (a.k.a. “PR”) is a rating given by Google to individual pages on the web. Contrary to popular mythology, PR does not reflect the quality or relevance of content of the given page, but rather only its interlinking status.

Crudely put, the more sites point to a particular page, the higher its PR will be.

How To Double Your Productivity and Triple Your Incomes Online

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

PR is an important factor in Google's search ranking algorithm, but it isn't the only one. Another, "hidden" factor which is still relatively widely unknown or ignored by the SEO community is the "Trust Rank" or "authority score" (the two concepts are not exactly synonymous, but are indeed closely related).

One of the best discussions of Trust Rank are found here: [CoachTIP](#). Briefly, however, it is a "composite" score for the quality of your site and individual pages, which takes into consideration not only the level of individual page optimization and its backlinks, but also more esoteric factors such as "semantic environment", social relevance, age, and many more.

What kind on URL works best for SEO? Does it need to have the keyword in the name? What if I want to rank for more than one keyword in my niche?

For the longest time, it was clear to anyone with half a brain that Google rewarded exact-name domains (so-called EMD's). So, if your primary keyword is "buy a car" and your domain is buyacar.com – you'd have a much higher chance of ranking near the top of the major search engines.

Recently, however, there has been a marked shift in attitude towards EMD's on Google's part. The domain name remains an important aspect of SEO, but it can now also get you in trouble if your other ranking factors are not addressed properly. So, today more than ever, **content is king!**

If your EMD site doesn't have the content to match – it will quite simply not rank.

As for ranking for more than one keyword – this is accomplished by having enough content on your site, and having it correctly optimized for a multitude of keywords, including both the primary and related ("LSI") keywords.

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Charles Holland

If a site is well optimized, it matters very little if its domain name is an exact match for any particular keyword. If it's got high authority or Trust Rank, it will be found in a multitude of listings in response to a wide variety of search terms. For more information about this, visit [CoachTIP](#).

Is it true that websites only need to be submitted to the top three search engines and it will get around just fine?

Are you ready for a minor shocker? You generally don't need to submit to search engines – they find you!

Before I explain this a little deeper, let me briefly say that you DO need to submit to *directories*. Directories are typically compiled manually (though many are not). A prime example of a high profile directory is www.dmoz.org. Being listed on [Dmoz](#) actually adds points to your SEO! The only trouble is that it can take many months to get accepted. As for other directories, you can register with each one manually, use a submitter, or an outsourcer to do it for you. Each listing is a permanent backlink to your site, so there's a pretty good reason to do it!

Now, the reason why some people want to submit to search engines even though they do eventually find you is that it may take a while for a page to get indexed. Also, occasionally, when a site is not optimized correctly, a search engine "crawler" might completely miss a particular page on your site.

In some situations, as I said, your page might not get indexed at all, or it might take inordinately long for that to happen. When you consider the enormous size of the Internet, it's easy to understand why even "web spiders" crawling at the speed of light might take some days to get to your page. So what do you do if you want to be indexed NOW?

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Charles Holland

To understand this next step, remember that not all sites are created equal. Some are new, some are old and established. Some have high authority, some have none. If CNN posts a story, it gets indexed in seconds – automatically. That’s because the search engines trust the quality of its content. When a newbie site posts content, it might have to wait. Thankfully, there’s a neat way around this and, best of all, it doesn’t violate Google’s rules.

You can attach your page link to an authority page! So, if you post the news about your newly-published page to a social bookmarking site, for example something like [StumbleUpon](#) or [Digg](#) – or for that matter on a social site like [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) – you KNOW that Google crawls these sites “constantly”, and it will therefore see your link as well. And – presto! – your new page gets indexed in seconds!

Is Google the only search engine that really matters in rankings and traffic?

Google is the world’s largest search engine with global search traffic anywhere between 60% and 80%, depending on which source you trust. For this reason, it’s natural that everyone wants to be found there.

But ignoring other engines would be a little silly. And not only search engines like [www.bing.com](#) or [www.yahoo.com](#), but also [www.ask.com](#) and... for that matter – why not Google “search engines and directories” and see what you come up with.

But why stop there? If you ONLY focus on search engines and directories, you’d be missing 70% of all the OTHER action! Many people rarely use search engines

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

at all, and yet they're on the web all the time! That's because they either go directly to sites they enjoy or they take part in all manner of social networks.

Before you know it, you'll discover that the number of types of resources on the web is not only huge on a per-category basis, but also each category has countless sub-options. This should tell you that you can't possibly conquer all these avenues at once. In fact, you probably won't conquer most of them at all, unless you spend your entire lifetime glued to the computer – or outsource all that work to others.

For this reason, it's best to be selective. Depending on the specific situation, I might recommend a three-pronged approach: (a) SEO on Google, (b) basic social networking, and (c) paid traffic generation.

As you get good with each of these three, you can always add other methods one by one.

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Charles Holland

Linking Q&A

What is more important - lots of quality content or backlinking?

Both are important but ultimately, it all starts with content. If you have no content, backlinks are meaningless. Not only does content need to be unique and of high quality, backlinking too needs to be of great quality. This means that the sites you link to as well as the sites linking to you need to be reputable and of high quality as well.

Is link buying ok?

By far the most popular SEO-related business model is the sales of backlinks. Wherever you turn, you find someone offering to sell you thousands of backlinks for very little money.

This is, in effect, a “black-hat” (meaning: underhanded, semi-legal or outright illegal) method of making your site APPEAR to be popular. This practice is so wide-spread and popular now that even Google doesn’t discourage it. But – this doesn’t mean that “poor” backlinks are rewarded as well as “quality” backlinks.

As a matter of principle, backlinks SHOULD be real, i.e. “deserved” or at the very least “honestly relevant”. Trust us when we say that Google (and other search engines) DOES know a cheap link from a quality one!

Buying links, if you take care that they’re of high quality (i.e. coming from relevant sites, located on publicly available pages), can greatly accelerate your site’s progress, but buying poor quality links (for example on hidden pages crammed with thousands of other irrelevant links, or created on-the-fly as “profiles” on irrelevant social networks, etc) can in fact be detrimental for your website.

CoachTip Winning Strategies: IM Insights & Tips

Charles Holland

Building links manually, e.g. through blog commenting, forum posting, guest posting, establishing personal relationships with sites, etc, can be outsourced to some extent, and is the preferred way to build backlinks. Yes, it's more time consuming and potentially more expensive, but it's the only way to go.

What are the best practices for link building? Do link wheels work?

Slow, gradual and above all regular and systematic link building is the way to go. Automating link building can backfire, if you don't do it well. Outsourcing link building is a better alternative, as long as you instruct your outsourcers to do it the "right" way,

The "right" way to build links means that you avoid the cheap and nasty ones and only go for meaningful and high authority links, using decent content and anchors along the way.

As for link-wheels – it's a link structure where one resource points to another related one, that one in turn points to yet another one, and so on – until the final one points back to the original one. Not all link wheels need to be "closed loop" like the one described. Some can be structured more like spokes of a bicycle wheel. They can also be immensely complex. In a natural situation, if a site or an article is very popular, "link wheels" will occur spontaneously and can have amazing complexities. In most situations, however, pages point to one or two resources at best, and have another one or two pointing back at them.

So what does this do for your ranking? Quite simply, the more complex, organically cross-referenced a given page is, the more important it is – especially if it's the center of such an imaginary hub.

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Charles Holland

And that's how we come to artificial link wheels. Some webmasters believe that they can simulate this intricate natural phenomenon by structuring link connections between dozens – even hundreds or thousands (!) of sites.

Indeed, with enough patience, or a cleverly-written software, one can indeed create a monster link wheel which a search engine may interpret as evidence of immense popularity of the page at the center of the hub.

But... - and yes, there is a “but” in case you were wondering – one of the most important (ongoing) changes to the Google algorithm has to do with unraveling link relationships. And that includes link-wheels. Google is now able to detect “unnatural” linking patterns and proceeds to deduct points for those which it considers to be incontrovertibly fake.

One of the pitfalls of automated linking is its inherent tendency to be ordered and neatly structured. Once such order is discovered by the Google algorithm, it's easy to determine that it's not accidental. And thus a link-wheel will not only lose value – it might actually work against you. On the other hand, if you set out to deliberately create a link wheel, but apply slightly more “chaotic” and random principles, it's not very difficult to out-wit the search engine and make it believe that the given page is indeed so immensely popular.

It must be noted, however, that this kind of deliberate link wheel is borderline “black hat” – so you should proceed with caution, or not at all. Or to put differently: set your link wheel up in order to spread the message for your human readers, rather than to game the bots. If it fulfills a human-centric role, it's no longer black hat and you're free to do whatever you like.

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How do I get other high PR sites to link to me?

The best way of them all is to have content so good that you don't have to ask anyone to link to you – they do it willingly. To get to that point, however, isn't as easy as all that, so we all need to resort to other techniques. As long as those techniques are legal and above-board, all will be well – in time.

There is, however, one interesting issue here. You mentioned “high PR” sites as if that was the only kind of site worth linking to. It is true that some high PR site ALSO have high authority, but PR is NOT synonymous with authority, no matter how much high-PR traffic link vendors would like you to think it is.

It's by far more important to develop high quality, real links, rather than indiscriminately purchase masses of links from supposedly “high PR” sites. The only other thing to keep in mind is that higher authority sites are, naturally, more worthwhile as far as linking is concerned, but don't dismiss a site which is high quality and relevant just because it's PR score is low!

Is it useful or recommended to register your pages or sites with lots of search engine directories or use the “search engine directory” services out there?

Don't confuse search engines with directories. The first are fully automated, the latter are typically manually maintained either by the owners or by the human submitters.

Most search engines will find your site and its individual pages automatically. Most directories won't. Entries in directories count as backlinks to your site, so it's always a good idea to be on as many as you can.

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Is it true that internal linking doesn't matter for SEO these days?

Nope. That's completely false. Internal linking matters a great deal for a variety of reasons. For one thing, it's a service to your readers, so a search engine like Google values the links for that reason alone, to start with. Next, it also expands the context of the page or article within which it is contained, thus adding to Google's understanding of your "semantic environment". Furthermore, it helps direct Google's attention to the anchor texts which are used with these links. All told, internal links can be – and in many cases are – more valuable than some external links.

Are "no follow" links worthless or worth it?

Under the latest "Penguin" revision of Google's algorithm, "no-follow" is generally treated as a potential intent to manipulate Google's ranking algorithm.

The root of this story is in the way most webmasters understand how Google calculates its "link juice". The general idea is that if you link to another site, you "give up" some of your link juice (this is actually false), but if you use the "no follow" attribute then Google should think that the link doesn't matter and thus not rob you of your precious points. In reality, if giving links were to cost you points, most of the biggest sites in the world would have no authority!

Either way, the "no-follow" instruction is there to save crawlers time. "Don't follow this link because it's private or because it's only meaningful to me". That's the idea. In all other cases, *always use the default DO-follow!*

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Are EDU backlinks worth the money?

Authority websites always benefit you more than non-authority sites – whether they link to you or you to them! User comments on EDU and GOV sites (educational and governmental) are almost always moderated by a real live human (unlike many other blogs which tend to slack off on that front), and additionally, because of their position, they tend to be more demanding of the quality of the comments they accept. For this reason, Google awards higher points for links coming from these sites.

What about .GOV links?

See above. I'll also add that EDU and GOV sites can not (normally) be purchased by outsiders – one more reason why they're valued higher by Google. Note, however, that there ARE ways around this – and Google knows it too. So, not all EDU and GOVs are created equal. But as a rule of thumb – they're a pretty good bet.

Does social media help for SEO?

Yes. Especially the major social sites like [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [StumbleUpon](#), [Pinterest](#), etc. Today, an increasingly important part of the ranking algorithm on [Google](#) is the number of backlinks your website receives from these major social sites. It's because Google treats social activity as evidence of “buzz” about your web properties.

In fact, it is highly recommended that your website be interlinked with your social pages. This can be achieved by means of plugins (for Wordpress users) or through scripts for other platforms – most of which are in fact free. Additionally,

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Charles Holland

you can subscribe to a service like [OnlyWire](#) in order to have them automatically post your articles on the most important social sites. If you want to boost that effort even further, you might want to opt for the [Syndication Rockstar](#).

More inbound links is better? Truth or Myth?

True. But – as with everything on the web – there’s a caveat. QUALITY. Many webmasters don’t realize it and create thousands of low-quality profile links on low-quality social sites, or thousands of links on worthless “link sites” – and then they wonder why Google doesn’t reward them for their site’s “popularity”.

If your links are of at-least-decent quality (i.e. from sites which have some authority, or from pages which feature the links prominently), then it is indeed true that the more links – the merrier.

But there’s one more caveat: don’t do a bunch of links one day and then stop linking. Linking is understood to be a slow and organic process, so anything which Google will perceive as automated and opportunistic will not be counted the way you think it should be – even if you’re linking to quality sources. In other words: link slowly and regularly.

Does adding the +1 button with Google impact rankings?

No more and no less than any other high quality social network. Some webmasters argue, however, that because this particular social network belongs to Google – it will reward you MORE for links from it. This MAY be true, but it’s probably only a marginal advantage – if any.

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Charles Holland

I see that many of my links and backlinks aren't working. Is there a link checker available for these?

Yes. You can use [Majestic SEO](#) or [Cognitive SEO](#) for this purpose quite well. Naturally, you can also use [Google's Webmaster Tools](#) which are equally powerful, if not a little harder to learn.

In which social network is my site content shared the most?

You can analyze your links manually by using resources such as [Google Webmaster Tools](#), [Majestic SEO](#) or [Cognitive SEO](#), but you can also try a neat little program on [Social Crawlytics](#)).

What's the position of my (and my competitors') incoming links in the pages where they are included?

The same tools recommended in previous sections, with [Cognitive SEO](#) and [Majestic SEO](#) being among the easiest to use. Note that each of these tools have both free and premium versions. Typically, you can get all or at least some of your own results for free, but you need to subscribe (pay) to investigate your competition.

The research site knows that you own the given site because it asks you to upload a special verification file to your root domain. Can't cheat there!

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Which of my incoming links have changed during the last week?

Once again the combo of [Majestic SEO](#) and [Cognitive SEO](#) will do the job very well for you. If you invest the time it takes to learn your [Google Webmaster Tools](#) you can achieve similar results for free.

I receive lots of blog posts and email requests for link exchanging or reciprocal linking? Should I do it?

In principle exchanging links is a good idea – as long as you’re exchanging with real people like you. In many cases, however, the link exchange requests you receive are generated by programs where the owner has only the most minimal input and is actually only looking to “farm” links.

Are such “farmed” links of any value? Sure, some can be, although “most” are not. One of the reasons for this is that they’re typically hidden from view, so ONLY the search engines will be able to find them – not human searchers.

Additionally, many such contrived link pages contain not just a small handful of valuable links but literally hundreds – even thousands of them! When Google determines the value of a link, it also looks at how many other links are “stealing its thunder” on the given link page. Any positive points you might receive for links like those will be positively negligible.

Valuable link exchanges are those where your links are prominently featured. At the very least in a “friendly links” section on the reciprocating site, or even on the sidebar (but this, many webmasters will tell you, is *advertising* – not mere

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Charles Holland

linking!). If your site is equally valuable to them as theirs is to you – one-to-one featured link exchanges can work very well indeed.

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Charles Holland

Keyword SEO Q&A

How do I do good keyword research?

Keyword research is the lifeblood of not just SEO but also of ANY traffic-generation-related activity on the web – paid OR free.

So, it can be said, that the better your research, the better your results may be.

You can research keywords manually, semi-manually or automatically.

Whichever method you choose, it is critically important that you UNDERSTAND what is going on and WHY certain keywords are “good” and others may not be.

For the best in-depth understanding of how keyword research works, we recommend [SEOlater](#). An excellent automated tool for keyword discovery is [Keyword Discovery](#). A more in-depth look at keyword tools is here: [CoachTIP](#).

For a manual approach, use the combination of [Google Keyword Tool](#), [SpyFu](#) and, naturally, [Google Search](#).

What are “LSI” keywords, how do they work and why?

LSI stands for “latent semantic indexing” and is a fancy way of describing keywords which are semantically (meaning-wise) related to the primary term. Some words may be directly related others indirectly. For example the keyword “car” is directly related to “automobile”, while it is indirectly related to “driving”.

Some LSI keywords are related at the “core”, for example “driving a car” has a core relationship to “driving a car fast” – because the core “driving a car” is there in both keywords.

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One of the ways in which Google and others establish whether your page is relevant to the search query is by looking for those related keywords within the body of your text.

So, if you write a flowery text about, say, “cars” but never mention “switching gears”, “driving”, “handling” or “speed” you MAY confuse the search engine which might thus deem your page to be “not really” about cars.

In most cases, ordinary human intelligence is enough to create a page with strong semantic relationships between keywords. You simply write about something you know and the “LSI keywords” happen automatically as you write. There are, however, slightly more “cutting-edge” techniques for figuring out which LSI keywords are more likely to be scored high by the search engines. For a deeper discussion of this, visit [CoachTIP](#). Briefly, however, you can use tools such as the Google Keyword Tool or sites such as www.lsikeywords.com to help you establish which keywords you’d be well-advised to use alongside your primary keyword.

How do I find the best keywords that I can go after in my niche?

Among the sea of questions about online marketing, this one is among the most fundamental and important. Apart from using keyword tools (e.g. Market Samurai, Keyword Country) or keyword research techniques (e.g. SEOlater), you can also use online tools such as [Google Keyword Tool](#) visit [CoachTIP](#) for an elaboration on that subject.

There are, however, also other considerations which most people are not aware of. For example, how valuable is it for you to conquer a bunch of niche-level keywords as opposed to very specific product-related keywords? Sure, it will look

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Charles Holland

like you're going for a much lower level of traffic – but – it will be highly targeted traffic. People who are already looking for what you have to offer are, ultimately, the ideal kind of buyers for you.

It may be a little different when you're promoting a product which isn't yet very well known. In that case, indeed, you may need to target more generic keywords, but also in that case you need to try to isolate the ones you believe are the most likely to find "ready buyers" for you.

Using a great keyword tool or a keyword research method is key – but using your own common sense is another vital component without which even the best keyword tool will be useless.

Does good content have to contain lots of relevant keywords to rank well?

Absolutely. Google can't READ, but its algorithm keeps getting better and better at pretending that it can! For this reason, you can almost say that Google's crawler "almost understands" what your page is about – and it does that by means of clustering related keywords together. The most consistent this semantic environment is (and not just on a single page, but also across your whole site), the better it is for your ranking.

Google also employs algorithms which attempt to "read" your page like a human would. Believe it or not, it is more or less able now to determine "how good" your content is and how educated it sounds.

In conclusion then, good quality articles with well-picked semantically-related keywords within them are extremely important to your SEO.

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HTML Tags Q&A

What are meta tags?

Meta tags are specific expressions within the HTML code of each page which signal specific things to the search engines. Think of them as an “executive summary” of what your page is about.

If you open any web page and then click “view source” within your browser, you will see the HTML code underlying that page. All expressions enclosed within the angular brackets <...> are, in fact, HTML expressions or tags. Some of those tags have very specific functions to act as “content signals” to the search engine. So, your page’s TITLE should be enclosed in a <TITLE> tag (and terminated with a </TITLE> tag, when done).

Other tags include DESCRIPTION, image ALT, image TITLE, KEYWORDS, and so on. Not all tags have equal importance, but you should know as much as you can about them anyway. For a deeper discussion about tags, visit [CoachTIP](#).

I see from articles from gurus that Meta Descriptions don’t help your rankings anymore. Truth or myth?

Mostly myth and misunderstanding. This stems from Google’s decision some years ago to dismiss the “Keywords” tag – and a few other such tags. The keywords tag was used to declare the keywords you wanted to rank on. But Google soon discovered that it was being abused by webmasters in order to game the ranking results. So they dropped it for a while. Or so it seemed.

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Later, it was discovered that they still continue using that tag, but in a more clever way. So, if you don't declare your keywords – Google says “that's fine – we can figure out what your keywords are by analyzing your page.” But if you DO use this tag, Google says “thanks for helping... and now let's check if your page REALLY deserves to get those keywords awarded”. If you declare keywords which fall outside of the scope of your page, you'll lose points. If, however, your keyword declaration and on-page usage are consistent – you get *extra* points!

The same is true of most other tags. If you use them “honestly” – you can't go wrong!

Do I have to validate all of my HTML to make it readable by Google bots?

Google awards extra points for validated pages, so why not. But is it strictly necessary? No. Almost all HTML development platforms have their own little quirks and they're often not compliant with the W3 standards. So you won't – typically – suffer too much if you have minor errors. This said, one of the reasons why complying is beneficial is for cross-platform compatibility. So, if you have W3 errors on your page, SOME browsers or computers may have trouble reading your pages.

To check how well you're doing in this department, visit www.validator.w3.org.

Does using bolded text and H1 tags boost my rankings anymore?

Yes. It's only a minor thing, but every little bit counts. Bolding, underlining, italicizing as well as sizing your text signals something of importance to your

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readers, doesn't it? And for that same reason it also signals something to Google. If you took the trouble to bold something, it must be important!

As for the headline tags (H1, H2... H6), they remain extremely important. That's because they tell Google what your most important headlines are and thus further serve to help Google analyze and categorize your post correctly.

What is rel=Author?

This is a tag which informs the search engine about who the author of the given page is – namely, you.

This tag is wholly optional and if you do use it, avoid the temptation to also put your email there – you'll get spammed to death. If, however, you use article syndication a lot, you'll find that this tag will help you considerably, particularly if you also sign up to [Google Plus Authorship](#).

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Search Engine Ranking Q&A

Does AdWords, AdSense, PPC really help my ranking on Google? On other engines?

This question is about paid traffic which we discuss in a separate eBook, here: [CoachTIP](#). Briefly, however, we can confidently say that some forms of paid traffic are indeed very beneficial – if you know how to find them, how much to pay and how to target it.

On a separate note, we just want to point out that [AdWords](#) and [AdSense](#) are two opposite sides of the same coin. You use AdWords to advertise your product by the process of bidding on certain keywords, and you use AdSense to monetize your site – to get paid as opposed to paying.

Another consideration is whether and to what extent will paid traffic affect your SEO ranks. Depending on how you organize your website and your campaigns, paid traffic can have little-to-no-effect of your rankings, or it can be a powerful boost.

There is a reasonably common opinion among SEO experts that establishing *paid* campaigns with, for example, Google, will have a beneficial effect upon *organic* rankings. In our opinion, this assertion remains to be proven. It is rationally understandable that an advertiser will have certain advantages with the publisher, of course, but it's really a matter of scale. If you place a paid classified ad in your local newspaper, how much influence do you think you'll have over that newspaper? If, on the other hand, your advertising campaign covers a significant percentage of that paper's budget, you can be pretty sure that your opinion will matter a little more.

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Charles Holland

Now, it's been said that placing paid ads on Google counts as positive points in the search engine ranking algorithm. This may well be true, but extremely difficult to prove positively. All you need to test this is to set up a brand new site and purchase an AdWords advertising campaign for it. Once you've done that, go ahead and start searching on the keywords you've paid for. You will find your ad showing up in the ad section, but unless you've done some SEO, you will almost certainly not show up in the organic results.

Seems there are endless providers promising that their personal SEO service will get my page to the top of Google. How can they all be right?

Many roads lead to Rome, as they say. They CAN all be right. It can indeed be true – depending on the provider. They may all use the same technique or a variety of different ones. Whose technique is best? Only a hands-on trial will prove that.

Understanding the principles of SEO as well as paid traffic will be extremely useful to you in your decision to pick the “right” outsourcers. This course is the first step in helping you get to that point.

How can I tell if SEO is working and track results?

“Trust everyone but count the cards”, as they say. It's no different in SEO – regardless of whether you do it yourself or have someone do it for you, you need to MONITOR your results.

There are a few ways in which you can do this quickly, easily and efficiently.

If you were to manually type in any keyword you'd like to rank on, you would be able to see how far down (or up) in Google results (and other search engines)

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does your site appear. But if you have hundreds or even thousands of keywords you wish to check in this manner, you need a tool which can do this for you automatically.

Among the best options for this are [RankChecker](#) and [Rankerizer](#).

Furthermore, you need to check your visit stats, using [Google Analytics](#) as well as your own statistic log (most hosting companies provide one as a free service along with your hosting, e.g. people who have cPanel also get a program called AW-Stats, etc).

By monitoring how many keywords you have “conquered” and how much traffic you have thus acquired, per keyword – as well as per any other traffic method you employ, you can draw conclusions regarding your SEO’s efficiency.

Ultimately, your SALES will be the final indicator.

To learn more visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

How long does it take to rank on Google?

How long is a piece of string? It depends on what keywords you want to rank on, how tough your niche is, as well as how you go about optimizing your site.

Typically, it takes a little time. 2-4 weeks. But - with a good system and an established site, it can take mere days – even hours! – to rank. But in the early stages of a site, you need to count on at least a week per keyword, assuming everything else is done correctly. Sometimes longer, and initially only for the “easy” keywords. And sometimes you won’t rank at all!

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As your site and its authority grows, you can start ranking on tougher and tougher keywords, faster and faster. In reality, however, your competition will always interfere with your results, so a combination approach (SEO with paid traffic) is often the best way to go.

Just keep this in mind: ranking on Google is not the be-all and end-all of an online business. It's important, and in some cases it may even be critical. But, ultimately, if you're building your website in order to have an online BUSINESS, you need to consider multiple traffic sources. And for this, we recommend the *personal* Charles Holland course here: www.homebusiness-coach.com.

How do I make my site better than others to the search engines?

If you simply “try” to do some search engine optimization (SEO) on your site, you will already be ahead of about 99% of everyone else. In spite of the fact that you're probably very familiar with this term and what it implies, most people have no clue it even exists.

This said, the remaining 1% is still a lot of sites. With that in mind, you should learn a little about best SEO practices and ensure that your site conforms to most of them. This will set you apart from another 90% of that 1%, most of whom do not do great SEO at all.

If your business model depends on purely organic traffic, you should consider hiring a professional SEO consultant to help you tweak the finer details. But remember: even the “best” SEO is no guarantee of success – it's only an extra reassurance. For a site to be “fully insured” you need to develop multiple traffic streams, only one of which – albeit a very important one - is SEO.

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Charles Holland

What are the short cuts to rank on the first page of Google that everybody promises out there?

Ah yes, the shortcuts. As the old story goes, there were originally four Wise Men. But we only know of the three because the fourth one took a shortcut!

This said, there are indeed ways to rank very quickly on Google – and other search engines. The only real consideration is: how to rank quickly and STAY ranked.

The surest way to stay ranked is to play by the rules and optimize your pages well as well as develop high quality links to and from all of your site's pages.

As for the “fastest” way to rank – there are a number of methods all of them coming down to one of the two main approaches: (a) aggressive optimization of content and rapid indexing and bookmarking of your latest articles, and (b) rapid (but not suspiciously so) link development. Or – a combination of both of these approaches.

To learn more visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.

I hear that Bing is now coming on strong relative to Google. Truth or Myth?

A bit of both. Bing and Yahoo are trying hard to beat Google at this game. Their successes are regional, but not quite global. Some communities on the web and around the world might briefly prefer a Google alternative, but it's too early to talk about lasting trends.

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SEO Outsourcing, Services & Software Q&A

How do I find the best virtual assistants to help me?

As your internet business grows, you'll find yourself increasingly relying on outsourcers and virtual assistants. Thankfully, there is no shortage of resource sites which can help you with that. The same sites that provide article and ebook writers (see the above Q&A post) also provide virtual assistants. But there are also highly specialized VA sites including AssistantMatch.com, OfficeDeails.com or VANetworking.com (for a more comprehensive list, visit CoachTIP.)

What questions do I need to ask to hire the right SEO service?

This relates to the question above. You need to have a decent understanding of the task you want outsourced. This will help you not only with asking all the right questions, but also with understanding how much the given service is worth to you.

For a more in-depth look at an outsourcing mindset, visit CoachTIP.

Do any of those SEO in a box software programs work well?

The short-and-sweet answer is... Not if you don't know how to use them. Also, not all of them are equally good.

There are programs such as Axandra IBP which are spectacularly powerful and indeed useful, but they don't do the work for you – you use them to do the work.

For a closer look at automated software solutions, visit CoachTIP.

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Charles Holland

How do I find the best SEO people to help me?

As with any service, you need to look around and read reviews of any services you're about to invest in. Word of mouth is the best way to determine the quality of a particular service.

In the event you can't find enough information about a particular service, write to them and ask them friendly questions. The speed and the tone with which they will reply will go a long way towards enlightening you about their possible quality.

What can I learn myself, and what do I need a professional to do mostly?

You need to understand the entire process as well as you can. It's not difficult, but it does take a little time. Once you've understood it, you should play to your strengths from that point on.

If you're not a great writer, outsource your writing. If you have better things to do with your time than manually backlinking your site, outsource that along with detailed instructions for how you want it done.

But it's a mistake to outsource work you don't understand. Before you outsource ANYTHING, make sure you understand what it entails!

How often do I have to do SEO once my site is set up? So, can I get it done by an expert and maintain it myself at that point?

SEO is an on-going process. You can do it yourself (it's not that complicated) or you can hire an expert. In both cases, you need to be vigilant and monitor your results regularly. If you set goals for your site and your SEO efforts reach them, then all is well. If some of the results decline, you need to focus on the reasons why.

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Charles Holland

Having a qualified SEO expert helping you with this can be tremendously helpful – but even more helpful is if you yourself understand the process well enough to be able to monitor it – and keep your SEO expert in check!

Is any SEO firm really “endorsed by Google” as so many claim?

It’s like saying that if you drive Ford, you’re “endorsed by Ford”. What are the chances? Extremely slim. Don’t fall for it. What this means – at best – is that the given firm strictly adheres to Google’s directives – and wants you to know it!

Does anyone really have a “working relationship advantage” with the search engines?

You can have an advantage like that if your site is excellent all around, ranked well all around and has high brand recognition. Other than that, if you’re intimately connected to someone at Google, for example, you MAY have an edge as well – knowing how life is.

Also, if you’re a paying advertiser (especially if your budget is high), this too will help you get things done, we have little doubt.

Other than that, “working relationship advantage” simply sounds like a glib marketing term that might mean “we do white-hat SEO”.

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“Back Hat” SEO Q&A

Can you fake out Google?

Yes, for brief periods of time it is possible to “fool some people some of the time”. It is, however, almost inevitable that any attempts to do so will eventually get discovered and your site will be penalized or even de-indexed as a result.

Efforts to “game” the search engines are also commonly known as “black hat SEO”. AVOID, AVOID, AVOID!

Do black hat SEO techniques work? Which ones are safe?...LOL!

They can work, briefly. We NEVER resort to those, however, because we’re interested only in building long-term online businesses – not flashes in the pan which disappear from view faster than they appear.

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Other SEO Q&A

Does an XML sitemap really boost my Google rankings?

There are two kinds of site maps, and each one helps your rankings in a direct way. One is a “sitemap” (one word) and the other “site map” (two words).

The first one is a set of instructions to the search engines which not only maps your whole site and thus instructs the search engine spiders on where to look, but also (by means to such devices as “robots.txt”) tells them where NOT to go. This makes the crawl more efficient and scores you lots of extra points.

The latter is intended for human visitors and its purpose is to make human orientation and searching easier. When Google discovers that you’ve provided not merely a “sitemap” but also a “site map” – it gives you extra points on account of your diligence and care about your visitors’ surfing experience.

Wordpress plugins for both these site map types are available. For the bot-friendly version use “Google XML Sitemaps Generator”, and for the human-friendly one try “Sitemap Generator Plugin for Wordpress”.

Is a .com domain always going to outrank me if I can’t get my name in a dot com, all else being equal?

Of course not. As you will be able to ascertain yourself by looking at any Google search results sampling, a multitude of top level domains (TLD’s) are represented in each listing – com, net, org, info – co.uk, us, tv, de... there are a few hundred of them and you can’t help but see them in most listings.

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So what's all the fuss about?

For various historical reasons, dot com has become the far-and-away most POPULAR kind of TLD. It is not bound to a specific country like co.uk (United Kingdom) or de (Deutschland = Germany) or pl (Poland), or to a specific activity type like gov (governmental), edu (educational), info (informational), etc.

Depending on the popularity of a particular domain type, the price of purchasing a domain name within the given TLD class will vary. COM domains tend to cost between \$9 and \$25, while INFO domains can be as cheap as \$2 to \$10. Other TLDs like GOV or EDU may cost hundreds of dollars and their sales are restricted.

When people decide to buy a domain name, they usually want the most popular type – and it's typically COM. Not because it's the technically "best suited" to their needs, but because it's the most intuitive to other users – for historical and cultural reasons.

This is why COM remains the most popular and the most recommended type of TLD on the market.

But then there are other types of TLDs which are "slightly" frowned on by Google and other engines. That's the "cheap" ones like INFO. Their very cheapness is the reason for the prejudice – because they're known to be used for spamming much more frequently than other domain types. So if you have an INFO domain, you'll be under closer scrutiny by Google – at least initially. Once it decides that your particular INFO site is "kosher" – it will have equal chances in the rankings.

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So, to recap, purchasing COM domains is considered a “safe” bet not just because it’s easier for people, but because Google is most used to it as well.

But note: different domain types are also subject to different jurisdictions. For example CO.UK domains can only be issued by UK-based domain vendors acting on UK-based authority. Should you base your site on a CO.UK domain you’ll be subject to UK laws. Conversely, COM, ORG, NET, INFO and scores of other domain types are all administered by US authorities and thus make your site subject to American laws.

Does Google want unique content and website experience above all else, in SEO terms?

Not only does Google want unique high quality content – so do your visitors. In fact, Google wants this kind of content BECAUSE visitors want it. Don’t YOU like good content when you surf the net?

I understand, of course, why people have this concern. It’s motivated by the drive to find shortcuts and start making money with less effort. It’s natural and there’s nothing wrong with that.

But – try to avoid the temptation to look for shortcuts which cheapen your image. People don’t like “cheap”. They like “inexpensive” and they like “value for money” even more.

Unique content sets you apart. It is also preferred by Google and other engines, which in turn helps with your SEO. High quality content endears you to your visitors – and thus helps build your authority.

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There's one more point I thought I'd bring up in this context: "unique content".

Most webmasters believe that they will get penalized by Google for reprinting pre-existing articles ("duplicate content penalty"). For this reason they resort to techniques such as "article spinning" (automated re-writing using synonyms) in order to fool Google into thinking that their content is unique. Such "spun" articles are often amusing, or worse: dreadful, to read. They have some minor advantages in SEO terms, but they're near-worthless in human terms.

Let me try to clear this up a little bit and tell you how to use these principles to your advantage.

Firstly, "duplicate content" ONLY refers to identical content on *your own* site. Google doesn't penalize you for duplicating someone else's article on your site – only for duplicating yourself on your own site. It just doesn't give you any points for it and it lumps your result with all other duplicates, so you'll be found on page 99 rather than on page 1, for example.

If, however, you reprint an article with full links to the source, you're no longer "duplicating" or "plagiarizing" anything – instead, you're "syndicating" or "curating" content. And that actually helps your rankings because it's treated like an outgoing authority link. Clever, huh? You can thus have dozens of "curated" articles on your site – and you'll be helping the sites you're taking material from as well as your own, by providing your users with neatly compiled and relevant content. It's the same principle as when you use RSS feeds from other sites on yours.

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Now, as far as rewriting – or “spinning” – your own articles for the purpose of mass article marketing, there is a “right” and a “wrong” way to do this.

The wrong way is to fully automate this. The results will be near-unreadable documents which Google can also “un-spin” in milliseconds and lump together with all the other derivative content.

The right way is to either manually rewrite each article, or to use a high quality article spinner (e.g. [The Best Spinner](#)) where you provide manually entered alternatives to each sentence, word or phrase, and only THEN does the spinner automatically recombine everything. You then take the time to re-read each spun version to ensure high readability and quality. And NOW you’re ready to do some article marketing and syndication.

Article syndication can be one of the most powerful SEO techniques out there, when done right and it CAN drive lots of highly qualified traffic to your site – for free.

If content is king, then is there an ideal word count for articles and information on my site?

There are two considerations here.

Firstly, quality is more important than quantity. So, it’s better to have an article that’s short-but-good than a lengthy article that wears your readers out.

Secondly, articles which are “too short” can be overlooked or ignored all too easily by your readers – and treated as irrelevant.

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But these are just broad strokes. You can certainly have super-brief blog posts which are meaningful and enjoyable, and you can have mile-long essays which engage the readers totally as well.

When developing content for your site, focus on meaning and value. Then, to add some form of discipline to your writing (you'd need the same kind of discipline when writing for a newspaper, for example), limit your articles to certain lengths, depending on the type of function they're supposed to fulfill.

As a broad rule of thumb, articles between 600 and 1000 words tend to work the best. But, clearly, there will be many pages on your site which would be awkward if they were so long – and others which would be awkward if they were this short! So use your own judgment and don't shortchange your readers!

Why do so many top listed pages on Google have very little content?

As a rule, all top-listed pages will have content – but – as many webmasters will point out, there are what appear to be exceptions.

Those exceptions can be due to one of the following reasons:

- “Content” IS in fact there, but “content” is not merely an “article” – it can be pictures, music, videos or even some types of ads.
- The content on that page is being re-written and the current indexed version may be a “transitional” one.

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- It may also be an algorithm error on Google's part. This happens quite often, especially in the early days after an update is released. Usually, it only takes a few days for such results to disappear.

How do I know if I've been sandboxed?

The first sign is that your site suddenly loses its Google rankings. This CAN be a temporary thing, but it can also be the result of sandboxing – or even de-indexing by Google. In order for that to happen, you have to really break some rules!

If in doubt, visit the [Sandbox Checker](#):

How do I do SEO on an affiliate page that I don't own?

In a word – you don't. Unless the product owner lets you in there (but why should he/she?), there is no way. You have two basic ways to promote an affiliate product: (a) by directly promoting your affiliate link to the owner's sales page, or (b) by creating a landing page of your own and promoting that instead.

If you create your own landing page (highly recommended), your objective will be to capture leads there and provide a unique extra value.

A page you own can be promoted using SEO or paid traffic sources. Your affiliate link can only be promoted using (typically) paid resources.

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What should I do about competitors spamming the search engines?

There isn't much you can do, other than reporting them to the search engines. Just note that there is a huge potential for abuse here. Some ruthless competitors may indeed denounce a site to Google as part of their evil strategy to get ahead. As a result of this, Google will take your complaint into consideration – but whether it acts on it or not will depend on what its algorithm concludes as regards its authority and adherence to Google's rules. If your accusation is met with a confirmation – the site you've denounced will be either sandboxed or de-indexed.

What should I do if I get negative comments, justified or not, on my site?

You're the owner of your site. It's like "your home". What do you do if impolite visitors come to your house?

Yes – you kick their butts out on the street.

This said, in some cases a comment may be hostile but still "positive" in a general sense. It may add spice to your site and spark a heated discussion, some people defending you or your position, others attacking it. This is PRICELESS – don't remove controversial comments like that, unless they're clearly too stupid or unnecessarily offensive.

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What plug ins for my browser are most useful in this SEO and research journey?

There are loads of those, but my favorites include [SEOquake](#) and [SEOMoz Quicklinks](#). Other than that, you may also like the [Alexa](#) toolbar, although it is made redundant by the SEOquake toolbar.

How does switching my servers affect SEO and rankings, if any?

If you merely transfer your site from one host to another, there will be no adverse effect on your rankings.

If, on the other hand, you create a new site and wish to utilize the content from a discontinued site on it, you will lose all rankings and links – unless – unless you do so-called “301 redirects” on a page by page basis.

If your hosting account includes cPanel, such redirections are easy. Simply type the original URL and redirection target – and your new site can benefit from all that old link juice!

What are the better servers if I want complete access and control over my domain?

It sounds like you’re confusing hosting with domains. Some hosting companies also sell domains, and some domain vendors also provide hosting, but the two are separate concepts.

A domain vendor will sell you a domain name, e.g. mysite.com. You can then direct that domain to your hosting account and host it from there.

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Some very popular domain vendors (like [GoDaddy](#)) also routinely provide hosting. In GoDaddy's case, we do not recommend their hosting. One of the reasons is their extremely confusing interface and lack of free cPanel services (you can get them if you pay extra). So, if you purchase your domain from GoDaddy or from a "cheap" vendor like [NameCheap](#) we recommend you host that domain on [HostGator](#) or [BlueHost](#) – they're dead cheap and their service is second to none.

How does a subdomain work for seo and marketing?

You've probably heard that "exact match domains" (EMD's) are good for SEO. This remains true today, even though there are some important new considerations here which we discuss elsewhere in this book.

But what do you do if your favored domain name is no longer available? Knowing that Google likes it if your domain or your URL contains the keyword, wouldn't it stand to reason that if you could "somehow" smuggle your keyword into the URL you'd get extra brownie points?

So, if you're dead-set on conquering the keyword "widget" and [widget.com](#) is not available, you could write an article like [mysite.com/widget.html](#) and thus have your keyword in your URL. Good. But can you get MORE power out of this?

And this is where you might be tempted to introduce a subdomain or a subfolder. For example [widget.mysite.com](#) (subdomain) or [mysite.com/widget](#) (subfolder).

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Great. But does this work? It does in fact. A little bit... Not quite as well as when the root domain contains the keyword, but it does work – and the subdomain tends to be marginally more effective than the subfolder technique.

So what would work even better, given that the root domain is not available? Clearly an LSI-keyword-based domain name. For example buywidgets.com or the-best-widget.com.

I hope you enjoyed this book and found it useful. To learn more visit [CoachTIP](#) and log into your [IM Competitive Edge](#) account there.