

How to Generate Traffic to Your Website

How to let people know you exist and
get them to come to your website!

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How to Generate Traffic to Your Website

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Preface

Why do you need Traffic to Your Website?

The simplest answer is that because without traffic your website doesn't exist!

If you have no traffic then no one comes to your website, which means no one can buy your product, no one can click on your ads, and no one can read your articles. You just don't exist. It's as simple as that.

The more traffic you can generate to your website the more you can do with it. If you sell a product or service, the more that people know about you the more you're going to sell. If your goal is to generate revenue by placing ads on your website, the more traffic you have the more you can charge for your ads. If you have a blog that shows your expertise in a domain where you sell consulting services, the more people read your blog the more contracts you'll get and the higher the rate you can charge.

The one thing to remember is that traffic doesn't automatically convert to revenues. It doesn't mean you'll sell more of your product, sell more ads, contracting gigs, etc. That's another story. For that you'll need to be able to convert your traffic to sales (or whatever your goal may be). This book is focused on teaching you how to get traffic to your website. To convert your traffic I recommend books such as [Call to Action](#) and Bob Walsh's recent EBook [MicroISV Sites that Sell!](#)

Without traffic you have nothing to convert to revenue!

A Common Myth

Build it and they will come. If only that were true! The reality is that if you build it no one will come unless you let them you know built it. Having a website is no longer enough to succeed online. Maybe that was true in the mid-1990's but that definitely not true today. The web is saturated with websites. There are millions and millions of active websites. You need to give people the ability to find you. Hoping that Google lists you in their search results is not enough.

You need to pro-actively attract traffic. You need to help Google know you exist. You need to give people other ways to find you then just the search engines. You need to create paths to your website that people can easily find.

Who am I and Why should You Listen to Me?

Why should you listen to me? What do I know? *Well firstly if you're reading this EBook it means you found my website. I was able to build you paths to find my website where you bought this EBook using the techniques I'm about to describe. Hence the techniques in this EBook work!*

Beyond getting you to the website where you found this EBook, I founded the company [LandlordMax Software Inc.](#) several years ago which has sold thousands of licenses across the world (99.5% through online means). As well I am the author of the blog [FollowSteph.com](#) which has over half a million unique visitors a year and growing rapidly. I've also been the co-speaker at a 4-day seminar presenting a large portion of the materials in this EBook.

When I first started I knew little about how to promote a website online, much less generate traffic. But after years of experience I can now successfully AND repeatedly generate traffic to almost any website. Again, *the fact that you found this EBook means that these techniques to generate traffic do work!*

Introduction

Website traffic generation techniques can basically be broken down into two main categories. **Those that cost money and those that don't.** *Of course free traffic generation techniques aren't really free, they cost you your time. Depending on how valuable your time is, some free traffic generation techniques may actually cost you more than paid services.*

Below is the list of the traffic generation techniques this book will cover. Although this list isn't complete, it does include the most effective and efficient techniques.

Time Based Traffic Generation Techniques

- Search Engine Optimizations (SEO)
- Content (creating valuable content)
- Freebies
- Blogging
- Social Networking
- Social Network Site
- Web Directories
- Miscellaneous

Money Based Traffic Generation Techniques

- Google AdWords
- Press Releases
- Domain Acquisition

Section 1: Time Based Traffic Generation Techniques

Chapter 1 - Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search Engine Optimization

When a lot of people hear SEO (Search Engine Optimization), or SEO consulting, they think snake oil salesman. That or this whole SEO thing just doesn't work. *The reality is that your SEO efforts are very important, however it's that they're frequently done very poorly by people who don't really know what they're doing.* Make no mistake about it, there are a lot of snake oil salesman in the SEO business.

To give you an idea of how prevalent this is, Jeremy Schoemaker (ShoeMoney) recently published an article [Why I do not like 95% of SEO Experts](#) which got well over 200 responses and comments. He describes SEO experts as used car salesman because:

1. They can always sell you something
2. They can never guarantee results
3. They can not be held accountable
4. They have an answer for everything
5. All the magic happens behind the curtains - they can't tell you what they are actual doing because that would be getting to much into the secret sauce
6. Anyone can be a SEO

And he's pretty much right. Especially when you consider points 2, 3, and 5. There's no guarantee that anything will work, they can't really be held accountable, and they can't fully explain what they're doing. Doesn't exactly make you feel warm and fuzzy inside does it?

Unfortunately this is the reality of the SEO business. It's just how it works. But because of these reasons a lot of people have taken advantage of SEO consulting. So much abuse has happened that it's left a bad taste in many people's mouth. Everyone knows they need it but no one knows who to trust.

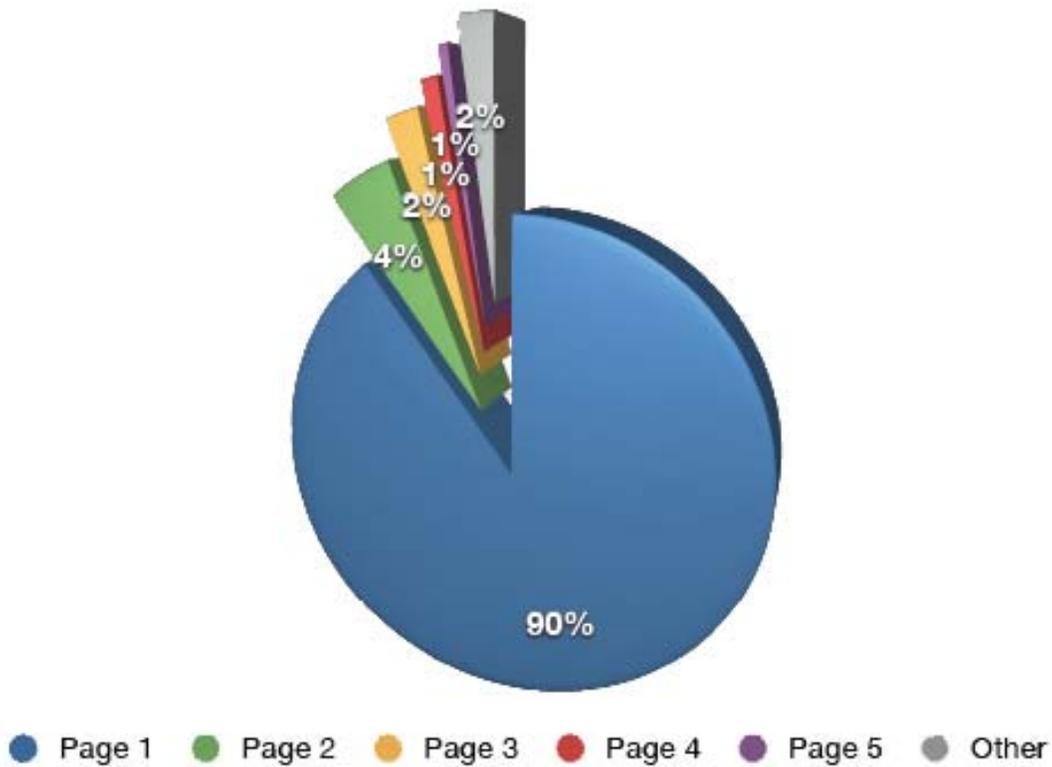
Note: *Even large companies aren't immune to bad experiences from unscrupulous SEO consultants. [BMW's German website was banned from Google's search index](#) at one point for employing black-hat SEO techniques. In this particular instance [they created two versions of their website](#), one for how users web browser's see their website and another for how the search engines see it (the website targeted for search engines was so over stuffed with keywords that the copy didn't really make sense).*

Here what we'll attempt to do is give you an overview of the most effective SEO techniques at your disposal. I can't hope to cover everything SEO related, there's too much material. Indeed, I'd recommend the [SEO Book](#) by Aaron Wall as further reading. I bought his EBook about 2 years ago and I still continue to personally reference it as a great resource. And as new SEO techniques surface and others expire, Aaron continues to update his EBook.

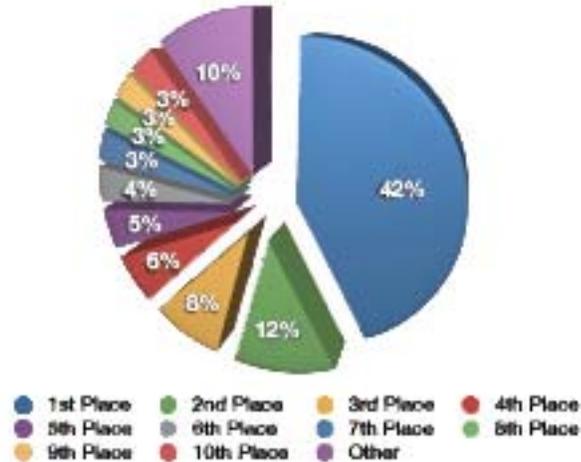
For today, our goal is to cover enough SEO material to give you a really good head start. To give you enough of an understanding to appreciate what it takes to be highly ranked, why it's so important, and how you can increase your website's search engine ranking.

Why Search Engine Ranking is Important

There is very little hard *quantifiable* data on why search engine ranking is so important. Everyone realizes it's important, but just how important has been a continual source of debate. Luckily for all of us AOL released some of its search engine data for a few days before retracting it. Although the data was anonymous, there was enough within it to quantify the value of ranking on the first page of a search engine. As you can see in the graph below, ranking on the first page is very important. ***90% of the people clicked on search results listed on the 1st page!***



Even within this first page (the 90%), there's a lot of difference between ranking in 1st place and in 10th place. ***The first place listing on the first page gets 42.3% of all the click throughs versus 2.97% for 10th place*** as illustrated in the following graph. The 10th place search result gets 7.02% of the click throughs as the search result in the 1st position. ***Worded differently the 1st place listing on page 1 gets more than 14 times as many click throughs as the 1st placed listing on the second page of the search results! A very significant difference.***



Obviously there's a big benefit for you if you can rank your website high in the search engine results. For my company LandlordMax, during the calendar year of 2007, 37.90% of our traffic came from Google search results because of our high search rankings: a very significant amount of traffic. For our main keyword, we've been consistently ranked on the first page of the Google search results where we generally fluctuate between the first, second, and third positions. Another thing to note, which we haven't talked about yet but which will be our next topic, is that this is for a very competitive keywords. It's so competitive that the last time I checked, the CPC (Cost Per Click) for the top position was around \$8/click on Google AdWords!

Tip: Ranking high for a very highly competitive and prominent keyword doesn't happen overnight. It requires a lot of effort and time.

Which leads us to our next SEO topic: keyword selection. *Before you can even begin to optimize your website for search engine ranking you need to determine for which keyword(s) you want to optimize it for. You need to focus on which keywords you think will be the most valuable for you (traffic, conversion, etc.) because if you try to optimize for everything you'll end up optimizing for nothing.*

Keyword Selection

Keyword selection is the act of selecting which keyword(s) you want your website to be optimized for in regards to the search engines. The less keywords you select the easier it is to optimize for those keyword(s). Selecting one keyword is the easiest but it also gives you the least visibility in the search engines (you will be found mainly for the one keyword you optimized for).

Tip: Optimizing your website isn't the only thing you can do to increase your search engine ranking for specific keywords. Sometimes the links coming to your website can even override all your SEO effort. A while back [many people "Google Bombed" the keyword "miserable failure" so that any searches on Google for "miserable failure" pointed directly to George Bush's webpage at the Whitehouse.](#)

Which keyword should you optimize for?

That's the million dollar question, and there is no right answer. And no one can know for sure, at least not without some trial and error. For example, for my company LandlordMax, it took me three tries before I discovered the optimum keyword for our website. *So don't be scared if it doesn't succeed as well as you expected the first time, practice makes perfect.*

That being said, there's a lot you can do to increase your odds of selecting a good keyword. Instead of just making random guesses you can make educated guesses. *You might not get the absolute best keyword, but you can definitely stack the odds in your favor to choose good keywords.* After all it's not rocket science, its just research and probabilities.

The first thing you need to do is gather up a list of keywords you think people may be using to search for your website on the search engines. The idea is to think beyond your focused view. Ask people you know. Ask strangers. Ask your customers. Ask them how they would find you on Google. Ask them how they would find your type/category of website on Google, not necessarily you (you might be surprised at how different the search terms can be between trying to find you and your type of website).

Think outside of the box. Don't limit it to just your experience. A lot of people will get stuck in their mind frame, this is normal. After you've been doing it for a while it becomes easier to see from other people's perspectives, but at first this is incredibly difficult. This is why it's generally recommended to ask other people for ideas when you're first starting out.

Next research what terms people in your industry use, not only your potential website visitors. ***Don't research your own in-house terms, but instead get in the heads of your website visitors and use the words and terms they know and understand.*** Just because you use specific terms doesn't mean its industry wide. Look at different industry blogs. Look at the discussion forums within your industry. After a while you'll start to notice similar terms. Keep track of these common terms, they're exactly what you want.

If you already have a live website then you can also look at your own web analytics. Look at the most common search terms that have gotten people to your website. Figure out why this is? Is it what you thought? Why are they using these terms? Try to understand what's happening. And then add them to your list.

Web Analytics: Web analytics is the study of the behavior of your website visitors. Some common metrics includes the number of unique visitors, the number of pages the visitors have viewed (page views), how long the visitors spent on your website, and so on.

There are currently two methods almost every web analytic system uses to analyze your website. They either examine your existing log files from your web server or by page tagging the individual web pages on your website (page tagging means that as a page is rendered, information is sent to a third party server with details about your visitors – which is usually done with JavaScript).

**** Very Important Tip:** There is a lot of debate as to the accuracy of the different web analytic techniques, as well as the different tools using the same metrics. For example the definition of a unique visitor is still debated. Is it a unique IP address? Is it a unique computer? How long between visits before a visitor is considered unique again? Etc.

You'll also find there are large discrepancies between the different analytic tools measuring the same metrics, sometimes even orders of magnitude! Therefore when possible I strongly recommend you use both methods. And rather than looking at absolute values I suggest you look at the trends across the different web analytic systems (such Google Analytics, Webalizer, AWStats, etc.). The trends will be much more consistent and they will give you a better feel for how well your website is performing.

Once you've got as many keywords as you can think of, you then need to separate out the less valuable keywords from your most valuable keywords. This doesn't mean you remove the ones with the lowest CPC or the lowest traffic. Not at all. It's much more than that. You need to decide from this list which keywords will give you the most traffic, the best run for your money. And this is where there are a lot of keyword strategies you can choose between when you select your core keyword(s).

Keyword Strategies

Before you select a keyword you need to determine what your SEO strategy is going to be. Are you just looking for the most traffic? Is it the most targeted traffic? Are you trying to dominate an “easier” keyword? And so on. Each strategy has its pros and cons, and you need to decide which one works best for you.

Maximum Traffic Keyword Strategy

This is the simplest strategy; get the absolute most traffic you can. This means you’ll want to target the keywords with the most traffic. Plain and simple.

Pros

- *Easy to find keywords with the most traffic*
- *If successful it results in extremely large amounts of traffic.* For example the first search result for the keyword “credit card” gets a lot of traffic. Although no one knows for sure (other than companies like Google), there are tools out there such as Wordze.com that can give you a decent estimate of the traffic for specific keywords. For example, according to Wordze.com, “credit card” is searched for 73889 times. And that’s the direct keyword, this doesn’t include the different variations. Therefore being at the top of this keyword search will definitely result in significant traffic.

Cons

- *Extremely competitive.* Getting to the top of a very high traffic keyword is going to be very hard. It will take a lot of effort not only just to get there, but to stay on top. You’ll continually be waging hard fought battles with people to stay on the first page, never mind the first listing. It may or may not be worth it, that’s up to you.
- *Most of the traffic is untargeted.* For example, if my company LandlordMax was the first search result listed for “real estate” that would be great, but a lot of the traffic wouldn’t be relevant. We’re a property management software, a rental property software, a real estate software, etc. “Real estate” is too generic a term for us to get targeted traffic.

Targeted Keyword

*This strategy is very similar to the Maximum Traffic Keyword Strategy except that instead of focusing on the keyword that gets you the absolute most traffic, you focus on a **TARGETED** keyword that gets you the most traffic.*

Going back to our example, instead of just optimizing for the keyword “credit card” you would focus on a targeted subset of that term such as “credit card consolidation”. For example using the Wordze.com Keyword Search Tool, we get the following related keyword search results for “credit card”:

Find More Keywords

Keyword Research Tool

Find more keywords by searching for related keywords, then dig even deeper with other tools to learn about the industry, keyword search history, or to dig deep into the search engines to see what others are optimizing for.

Enter Keyword or Phrase:

[Open Options](#)

7288 Keywords Found	Count	Estimated	KEI [?]	History	WordRank [?]	Dig
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card number generator downloads	9407	75782	2.27			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card	9172	73889	0			
<input type="checkbox"/> greenflag credit card theft	6076	48948	48950			
<input type="checkbox"/> chase credit card	4013	32328	0.03			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card generator	3911	31507	0.27			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card processing	2655	21388	0			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card offers	2424	19527	0.01			
<input type="checkbox"/> apply for a credit card	2019	16265	0.02			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card debt consolidation	1972	15886	0.01			
<input type="checkbox"/> discover credit card	1653	13316	0.02			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card debt	1649	13284	0			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card fraud	1473	11866	0.01			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card size digital camera	1420	11439	3.89			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card numbers	1396	11246	0			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card consolidation	1337	10771	0.01			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card roll	1336	10763	8.41			
<input type="checkbox"/> capital one credit card	1321	10642	0.02			
<input type="checkbox"/> apply credit card	1278	10295	0.09			
<input type="checkbox"/> miles edge credit card	1275	10271	56.42			
<input type="checkbox"/> credit card via paypal	1263	10175	0.12			

As you can clearly see, there are many keyword subsets to the keyword “credit card”. Again, rather than focusing your efforts on “credit card”, maybe you’d be ahead focusing on “credit card fraud”, “credit card processing”, or even “apply credit card”, and so on. Basically instead you focus your energies on trying to dominate a more targeted and specific keyword.

Pros

- *Much less competition than the most generic keyword.* Although there is still going to be a lot of competition, it’s not nearly as cutthroat as the most generic term.
- *The keyword is targeted to your website.* If you’re a credit card consolidation company, you definitely want the “credit card consolidation” traffic, much more than the generic “credit card” traffic. It’s targeted and you don’t have to pay for the extra bandwidth of incorrect traffic. They’re specifically looking for what you have to offer.
- *If you’re successful at dominating the targeted keyword it can result in significant targeted traffic (the most valuable kind of traffic).* For example “credit card fraud” gets 11,866 searches, which is pretty good. It might not be the 73,889 searches for the keyword “credit card”, but it’s still very high. *And best of all it’s targeted!*

Cons

- *Requires a decent amount of effort to determine what the good targeted keywords are for your website.* Although I make it look simple in the examples I’ve used, it doesn’t always fit so nicely. For example, with my company LandlordMax, our main keyword doesn’t have “real estate” as part of it. It took us about three or four tries before we decided on one that had satisfactory results for us.
- *Targeting specific keywords means that people searching outside of your keyword(s) are more likely to miss you.* For example many people searching for “credit card consolidation” will just search for “credit card”, therefore you might not get this traffic. As well someone might search for “credit card combination loan” (or some other odd combination) that would only appear in the generic search results. In other words you might miss some of the long tail keywords searches.
- *You might have to research beyond your means for the “right” keyword.* What you might think is the obvious choice is not always the obvious choice. It’s possible that none of the keywords you selected will generate good results. Similar to the amount of effort, it also means that you may not achieve success immediately. You may need to expand your horizon to outside help to bring in a new perspective.

Targeting Several Keywords

In this strategy you optimize your website for as many keywords as you possibly can.

Pros

- *You will be found for several keywords if implemented well.*
- *You decrease the likelihood that you selected the less optimal keyword(s). After all the more keywords you have the better your chances that you'll hit at least one very valuable keyword.*

Cons

- *It will be harder to rank higher for each keyword. The more keywords your website is about the less potency each keyword will have for SEO purposes.*
- *It's hard to stop adding more keywords. It's very easy to add just one more keyword, then another, and maybe one more, and so on until you completely dilute the value of every keyword on your website.*
- *The more keywords you add the harder it becomes to optimize, until eventually it becomes impossible. There's no way that you can optimize a website for 20+ keywords, at least not on-site (it's only possible with off-site SEO efforts). We'll discuss the differences between off-site and on-site SEO efforts shortly.*

Easy Keyword Domination

For lack of better terminology, this keyword selection strategy is very similar to the others except that in this case you're looking for one very easy keyword to dominate. Rather than picking the best targeted keyword for your website (one with a lot of traffic), this strategy suggests you instead pick a keyword(s) that extremely easy to dominate. One that has very little competition if any at all, yet that still gets reasonable traffic. An example of this (using Wordze.com) is "national dog show". This keyword gets an estimated 1329 searches per day. It's not nearly as high as the tens of thousands of searches for "credit card", but it might be enough for your website. And you can easily dominate it.

To do this, you can use [Wordze's Research Keyword Market Competition tool](#) to analyze how much competition different keywords have.

Notice: Although I'm advocating the [Wordze](#) tools, please use this only as a research tool. Don't base your decision solely on their numbers, they're not 100% accurate. Most are within scale, but on the odd occasions I've seen some large discrepancies. Use their numbers rather as a quick starting point from which to follow up upon.

WordRank

Research Keyword Market Competition

WordRank is a tool that will inspect the search results for a given keyword, then analyze each domain to assist you in understanding the level of competition you can expect from others that already are leaders for the keyword or industry.

Enter Keyword or Phrase:

[Open Options](#)

Results	KEI [?]	WordRank Index [?]	R/S Ratio [?]	Average Monthly Links	Average URL PageRank
1,730,000	0	9.8	1301.73	20.97	2.8

Domain	Link Per Month	Total Links	Age in Months	Domain PR	URL PR
http://www.nationaldogshow.com/	1.01	154	153	3 <div style="width: 30%;"></div>	3 <div style="width: 30%;"></div>
http://www.purina.com/resources/nds...	1640.52	251000	153	7 <div style="width: 70%;"></div>	3 <div style="width: 30%;"></div>
http://www.philadogshow.com/	20.97	3230	154	4 <div style="width: 40%;"></div>	4 <div style="width: 40%;"></div>
http://www.events.purina.com/dogs/s...	0.19	22	118	4 <div style="width: 40%;"></div>	3 <div style="width: 30%;"></div>
http://www.chiff.com/pets/national-...	28.06	4490	160	5 <div style="width: 50%;"></div>	1 <div style="width: 10%;"></div>

Link Per Month By Domain

Domain	Link Per Month
www.events.purina.com	0.19
www.nationaldogshow.com	1.01
www.philadogshow.com	20.97
www.chiff.com	28.06
www.purina.com	1640.52

As you can see Purina.com is definitely dominating this keyword. And although it might seem like a large dominance, it's really not that much. Although you might not get the first search result listing, I believe that getting the second search result listing shouldn't be too difficult. And the fourth position should be pretty easy (relative). (Note I haven't done any follow-up research here as I advocated in the previous Notice box)

Pros

- *Easiest keywords to get high search result rankings.*
- *Least amount of SEO expertise needed to succeed because of limited competition.*
- *Easiest keywords to stay at the top of the search result listings.*
- *If you haven't already created your product, website, etc. than this can be highly effective in focusing your efforts before you start.*

Cons

If you are interested in reading the rest of this EBook,
[you can purchase it for \\$39 by clicking here now!](#)