

10 TOXIC SEO TECHNIQUES



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10 TOXIC SEO TECHNIQUES

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SEO changes daily.

You need to be willing to adapt just as quickly. It can be painful to abandon techniques that have worked well for you in the past, but it's necessary if you want to prosper in the future.

In this eBook, we'll go over once-popular SEO techniques that have mutated into toxic waste. Remember them fondly if they served you well, but don't waste your time trying to preserve them in 2013.

Let's get started.

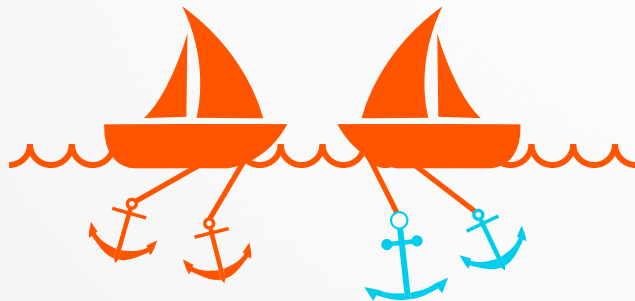


EXACT MATCH ANCHOR TEXT

The anchor text (also known as link label, link text, or link title) is the visible, clickable portion of a hyperlink.

TOXIC:

For years, the majority of SEO consisted of having a lot of backlinks that contained the anchor text you wanted to rank for. If you were trying to be #1 for “quality widgets,” you would simply seed the web with links to your site that had the anchor text “quality widgets.” It was such a widespread technique that people are **STILL** doing it. The problem is that Google is now penalizing exact match anchor text because it is an obvious attempt to game the system.



INSTEAD:

Diversify your anchor text by using related but different terms that modify your keyword by things like quality, price and geography, for instance, “Best Widgets”, “Cheap Widgets” and “Widgets USA”.

Truly, the best way to do it these days is to write quality, sharable content that gets organically spread. That way, you don’t have to worry about the anchor text being diverse, it will be naturally diverse.

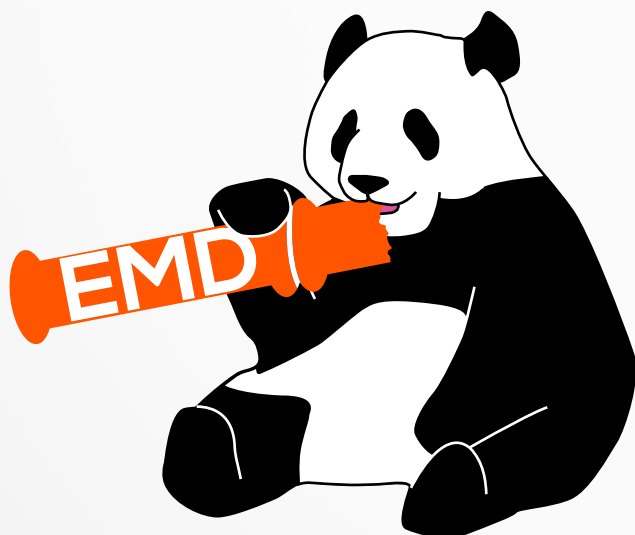


EMD

An exact match domain (EMD) is a domain that exactly matches your targeted keyword. For instance, “qualitywidgets.com” is an EMD.

TOXIC:

EMDs aren't toxic in and of themselves, but be wary. They once gave a huge boost in search results and people would base SEO strategies around them. Since Panda, EMDs have dramatically reduced power and no longer are a major ranking factor.



INSTEAD:

Make your domain your brand name and build that brand! The real way to succeed in any industry is to make your name synonymous with the product, and that should always be your goal when marketing. Note that having an EMD won't hurt you if you already have one, or are just starting a business and want to include a keyword in your brand name. It just won't help much.



LINK EXCHANGING

Exchanging links is when you give another site a link with the exact anchor text they specify, and then they do the same for you.

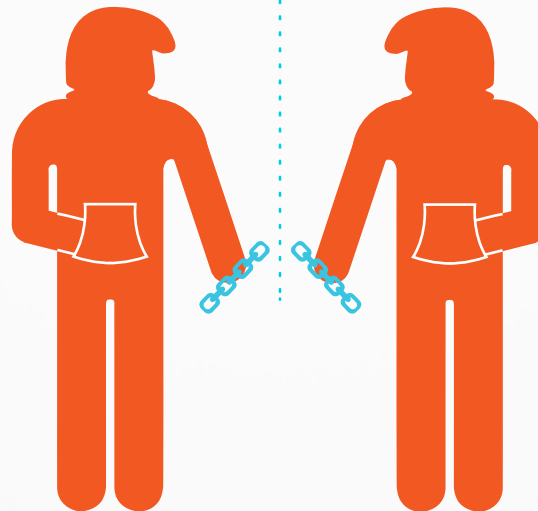
TOXIC:

Most places asking to exchange links today are still operating with toxic practices. Your link will just be part of their link farm, and will do far more harm than good. Additionally, their site is most likely low-quality and by linking to it, you further damage your own site.

INSTEAD:

Just don't do it!

There are always exceptions, and if you want to partner up with a site that has a related theme, quality content, and a great PageRank, then go for it. Just be very discerning before you trade links with anyone.



ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

Think “EzineArticles” and content spinning and you’ll get the gist of what article submission is all about.

TOXIC:

Article submission used to be a quick way to get backlinks to your site. Honestly, it still is a quick way to get backlinks, but those backlinks are toxic and will do far more harm than good. This toxic effect is amplified every time you resubmit the same article to a different article-farm, or (God forbid) try to spin it and repost it.



INSTEAD:

If you’re going to write articles, you’re better off taking the time to write quality pieces. Submit these pieces to reputable sites that have humans who approve or deny work, and make sure the content is actually helpful for your audience. Once something is published, don’t submit it to a bunch of other places. If it’s good, it will be organically shared and spread. If it’s bad, move on to the next piece and try harder.



NO-NEWS PRESS RELEASE

When your business does something truly newsworthy, a press release is a great way to get the word out.

TOXIC:

Businesses know free article submissions are no longer valuable, and many are turning to spamming press releases as an alternative. In this case spamming means issuing news releases about things that aren't newsworthy by any metric.

No-news press releases have the exact same effect as article submission (harming your business's SEO) and have the added bonus of alienating news networks who won't be willing to report on your business when you do have real news.

INSTEAD:

Don't issue a press release unless you're doing something that merits one. If you REALLY want a good press release, then go create a big event for charity like an auction or golf tournament. You'll get the good PR and the satisfaction of knowing you actually helped people.



BAD GUEST POSTS

Guests posts are quickly growing in popularity. Anytime you write content for someone else in return for a link to your own site in the attribution section, that's a marketing guest post.

TOXIC:

When looking to make a guest post on a blog, it's important you do your research. Guest posting has a lot of potential, but businesses hurt themselves by guest posting to the wrong blogs. A blog is the wrong blog if it has duplicate content, link-farming, low PageRank, or anything else that reeks of content aggregating over content creation.



INSTEAD:

Ensure the site you're guest posting to is high quality. A good blog will have a decent PageRank, unique content, post frequently, and have positive social signals like comments, likes, reTweets and shares. Also, be sure the blog is relevant to your own target audience.

Once you find the right blog to guest post on, be sure to send your best work. Also, most guest blogs offer a link in the footer, but try and get one in the body of the text. Those are more valuable!

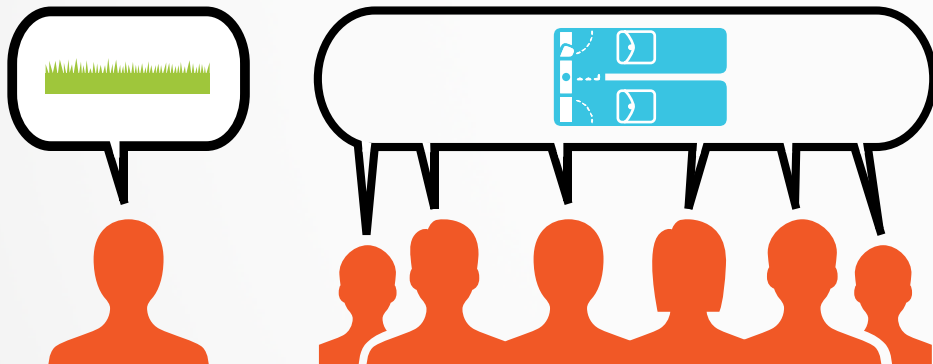


IGNORING SOCIAL CUES

Social cues show that your content actually has an audience beyond Google's robots. They can be anything from Facebook Likes and Twitter Shares to Google +1s and blog comments.

TOXIC:

Social media used to just be for those gosh darned kids and their baggy pants, am I right? Right? GET OFF MY LAWN!



INSTEAD:

Use social! Your business needs a presence on all of the major social networks, and your content needs social sharing buttons right there on the page. Make sure you're syndicating your best content out to all of your social networks and watch what does well. Finding the content with the most positive social cues, and replicating that style, is the fastest way to grow your audience organically!

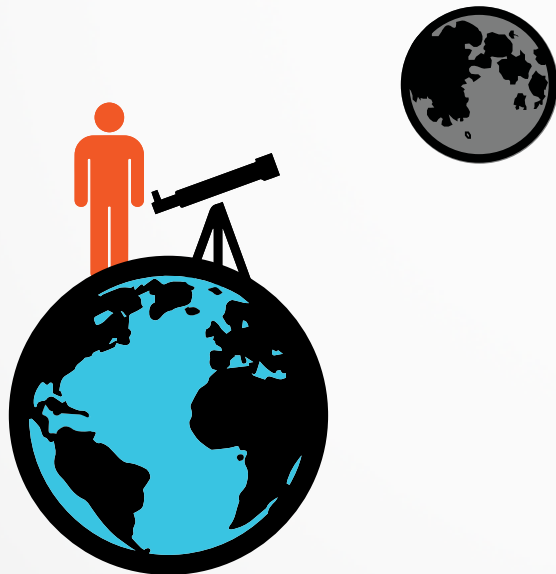


IGNORING LOCAL

Local search accounts for about 45% of all searches (Google, 2012). It also works a little differently than traditional SEO.

TOXIC:

If you want to blend in with the sea of competitors, then ignoring local is the right move for you. Google especially is keen on delivering local results, and people especially are keen on using Google, so neglecting local is a sure way to damage your SEO efforts.



INSTEAD:

The best way to start with local is to create a Google+ business page. These pages are delivered above **MANY** other organic results and contain valuable snippet information like contact info and social cues. You may have heard that Google+ as a social network isn't great for marketing, and that's more or less true, but Google+ local is a necessity.



GOOGLE ONLY

Google is the dominate search engine and has been for years, but other search engines DO exist. Weird, we know.

TOXIC:

It's a good idea to focus on Google, because that's where about 67% of all people do their searching. However, if you do some quick math, you'll realize that leaves about 33% of searches unaccounted for.



INSTEAD:

The bottom few search engines are too small to invest much time in, but the second place finisher, Bing, has about 17% of the remaining search share, and that number is only rising. That 17% is significant enough for you to spend a little time on. Luckily, Bing uses many of the same indicators as Google, so if you're ranking on one, it shouldn't be too hard to rank on the other. Check out Bing's webmaster tools to get started.



WORTHLESS CONTENT

The new mantra of SEO is **CONTENT IS KING**.
Content is what drives traffic, raises rankings,
and builds brands.

TOXIC:

Since content is the new commodity, people are trying to produce it as fast as possible. If content is good, lots of content must be great, right? The problem is that it isn't content that's king, it's **UNIQUE, QUALITY CONTENT**.



INSTEAD:

Instead of writing hurried content and publishing it as many places as possible, produce content in a slow, deliberate manner. Write longer posts and back them up with facts. Edit your work and make your writing fun to read. One long blog or article that gets shared and linked hundreds of times is infinitely more valuable than five short articles that fizzle and die.

In today's marketing world, your content IS your brand, so have some pride in it.



CONCLUSION

If you only learn one lesson from this eBook, let it be this:

SEO is no longer about gaming the system.

It's about creating content that is valuable to your target audience, and then finding the best ways to share and spread that content.

Ditch the gimmicks and clean up the toxic waste. Embrace your audience and EARN customers with quality work.

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Even if you just need help getting started, or have a question about one of our tips, never hesitate to contact us. Here at Wikimotive, we don't want to just be another vendor; we want to be a trusted asset and friendly community member.

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