

ICROSSING POV: INCREASING SEARCH ENGINE RANKINGS WITH SYNDICATED PRESS RELEASES

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OPTIMIZED PRESS RELEASES DRIVE INCREASED WEBSITE VISIBILITY AND TRAFFIC

Public relations professionals and search engine optimization experts share a common goal of building brand awareness for their organization, and both groups achieve that by writing optimized Web content (like product pages and press releases) that can be found by target audiences in searches. However, one important factor in the content optimization picture is how much traffic and how many links are pointed to company websites. This is an area in which PR Newswire's online syndication network can really help your site optimization efforts.

In addition to providing access to company news for subscribing journalists, PR Newswire syndicates press releases across thousands of websites that are relevant to the content of a given release. Many of the websites carrying the PR Newswire feed – including their own high-visibility site – render the anchor text links in press releases, and these backlinks can help search engine rankings.

How PR Newswire News Syndication Drives Search Engine Visibility:

- + Content is pushed to thousands of relevant, authoritative websites, including high profile sites like PRNewswire.com
- + A single release distributed via PRNewswire can produce dozens of **backlinks** and significantly increase website visibility.
- + Significant, immediate traffic is driven to releases, as they are posted on the websites that news search engines such as Google News and Yahoo! News rely upon as information sources.
- + Google Real-Time search means additional direct traffic and increased real estate for your message, as it includes content from social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and others.

Backlinks are links pointing to your website from another. Search engines view backlinks as a "vote" for your site from another – they're a critical component of search engine optimization (SEO).

WEAVING ONLINE NEWS SYNDICATION INTO YOUR SITE OPTIMIZATION STRATEGY

1. Utilize “Soft News”

To build visibility for critical keywords, you need to increase the number of relevant backlinks to your content. This can be done by repackaging promotional newsletters and syndicating “soft news” releases – articles that foster reader engagement like seasonal tips and suggestions, polls and surveys – across PRNewswire’s vast content network with **anchor text** links.

Take a look at the content your organization has produced, both online and off, and chances are good you'll find soft news that will be appropriate and effective in this application.

Anchor text – the visible, clickable text in a hyperlink – links readers to more information, and syndicating relevant anchor text in a press release can improve the rankings of targeted URLs.

2. Target Narrowly Defined Keyword Terms

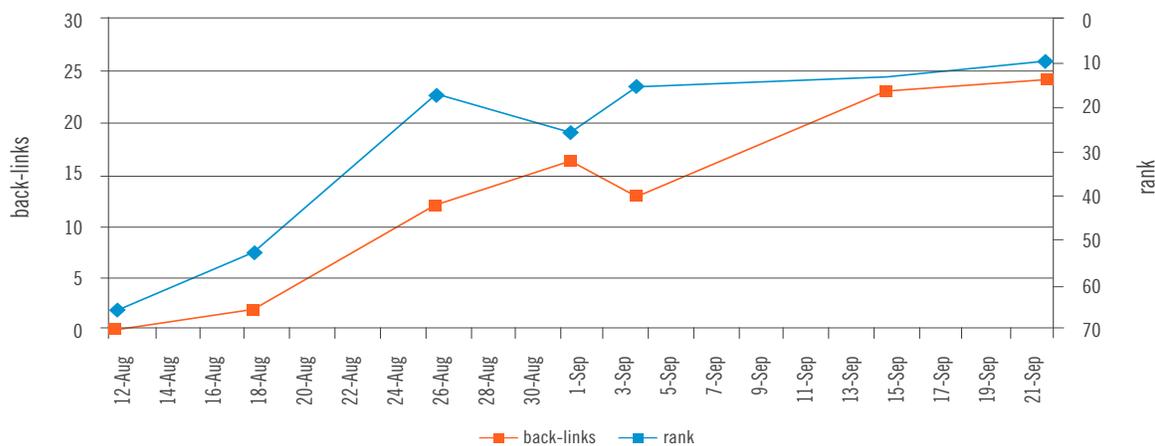
When writing the article, it is important to target specific keywords, by utilizing those terms in the headline, lead and anchor text links. Focusing on more narrowly defined, specific terms is generally more effective than utilizing widely used, less descriptive language. Not only are these keywords less competitive which makes them more easily ownable on page one rankings, they can drive traffic from highly motivated consumers that are ready to buy.

The words contained in the anchor text that link to relevant content are weighted heavily by search engine algorithms and can help determine the ranking that the content will receive on search engines. Take this example: an athletic wear retailer has optimized a page on its site for a keyword phrase such as “women’s Nike running shorts”. When they link to that page from the phrase “women’s Nike running shorts” in their press release, they increase that page’s relevance for their target search phrase while directing traffic from hundreds of niche websites posting the release.

3. Press Release Content Increases Backlinks and Rankings

In iCrossing’s experience, the strategy of syndicating a press release, specifically optimized to meet a client’s goals, has increased the number of backlinks and subsequently improved search engine rankings nearly every time. This is true for more generic keywords as well as more specific, directed keyword phrases.

In the examples shown in these charts, the number of backlinks to the target URL went from 0 to 24 over a five-week period, and the client’s position for the target phrase increased 85 percent, moving from page seven to page one in search engine results.



URL: http://www.Client-Domain.com/Langing-Page-URL							
keyword: torso term							
date:	12-Aug	18-Aug	26-Aug	1-Sep	4-Sep	15-Sep	22-Sep
rank:	65	52	17	25	16	13	10
back-links:	0	2	12	16	13	23	24

4. Bringing it All Together: Tactics for PR Professionals

As you integrate your news release content strategy with your company’s broader marketing and search objectives, here are a few things to keep in mind:

Understand the long-term and near-term SEO goals: This syndication strategy requires that PR professionals understand both immediate and long-term company SEO goals and work closely with those responsible for website optimization to ensure a unified approach to targeting keyword terms. The results will be well worth the time and effort.

Use what you have, create what you don’t: PR professionals are wise to survey their company’s external communications and leverage the online visibility afforded by press release syndication. Does your company already create email or online newsletters, case studies or white papers that can be optimized and syndicated through a news distribution service? Look at the content you have and make sure you get the most out of it – it can build your organization’s relevance and authority to both search engines and the world at large.

Know what keywords have been mapped to specific website URLs: Different areas of your organization’s website will likely already have been optimized for specific terms. When you know a term that has been used to optimize a given page, use that term in the content you distribute and link that term back to its associated page, you build that page’s relevance for that term in the eyes of search engines.

In-depth keyword research and a syndication strategy based on your marketing or promotional calendar often helps to set the stage for a powerful boost in site optimization. Taking full advantage of news syndication services closes the optimization loop, driving visibility and traffic for your company and brand.