

Maximize Your Link-Building Opportunities

Innovative link building ideas to help bolster your search rankings.

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High quality, organic link building continues to be one of the most important factors in achieving top search rankings on Google and other search engines for your dermatology website. Numerous opportunities to attract powerful inbound links are available to you, if you are ready to work for them. It is equally important to keep looking for bad or dubious quality links to disavow from your site. Here are a few proven strategies for link building:

INNOVATIVE LINK BUILDING IDEAS

Freebies, Polls, Contests. Polls, contests, giveaways, and sweepstakes are successful tools to attract great links. Polls about issues that directly relate to the concerns of your target audience, and innovative contests can often lead to natural links from local news sites and popular blogs.

EDU Links. Some of your most effective links can be built on college and university websites. You can create dermatology content using university research and data, publish interesting articles that address the dermatology needs of college students, and win some unique inbound links for your website.

GOV Links. Just like .edu, government pages with .gov domain are highly authoritative from a link building perspective. You can engage over relevant forums and resource pages on .gov top level domains (TLDs) and share valuable research, information, and links that relate to your field.

Job Listings. Whenever you have a job opening at your practice, you can get your site listed on leading online job boards. Such listings can earn you excellent .edu links. Employment opportunities are also often shared on various .gov websites, leading to high-value link building opportunities.

Nonprofits and Community Engagement. Nonprofits provide for strong link building opportunities. If your practice engages in any community programs or contributes socially in any way, you can share the information with various nonprofit sites and blogs.

Environmental Causes. Whenever your practice adopts any eco-friendly measures to reduce your carbon footprint, which could include something as simple as switching to

LED lights at your office, you can share the information with local environmental groups. This presents a great opportunity to generate green links.

Conferences and Events. If you associate with a dermatology-related event in any manner, participate in seminars or conferences nationally or internationally, or conduct podcasts or webinars, it opens a plethora of opportunities to boost your link building. Event participation will improve your brand visibility, garner publicity, and generate a variety of useful inbound links.

CREATIVE CONTENT TO GENERATE LINKS

Content marketing is the most widely used way to earn links. But to generate very high quality links, you need to get more creative with the kind of targeted content you develop for link building. Some innovative content development ideas include:

- Create fact-sheets about various dermatology products and services to inform patients
- Prepare educational content or tutorials to inform and educate patients and others about how to address specific medical or cosmetic concerns
- Publish a series of how-to articles in a patient-friendly language on a variety of topics
- Create an “Ask your Dermatologist” interactive section, or at least develop a comprehensive list of FAQ
- Develop short, interesting information video content and distribute it via YouTube, Google+ and other social media

TRADITIONAL STRATEGIES DONE RIGHT

Traditional link building strategies and tactics such as forum participation, article marketing, and press releases can still be useful in generating new back links, provided they are done right. Here are some good examples:

Forum Participation. When you choose selective and highly reputed online forums that are relevant to your practice, it can be valuable from the viewpoint of link building.

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Article Submission. Identify high quality websites and article directories that are choosy about the kind of content they publish and have strict submission guidelines. These could include both general sites and niche sites related to dermatology.

Patient Stories and Case Studies. Comprehensive case studies and stories about specific patients can be created with their consent, or by maintaining confidentiality of the patient's identity. Several leading sites, blogs, and forums or local news sites would be interested in publishing such content.

Guest Columns. A number of websites and online publications are looking to publish guest articles by authoritative professionals who are qualified to write on the topic. Periodic guest articles or a syndicated column can provide excellent link-building opportunities over time.

Blogging. Regular blogging activity is a time-tested way to generate links. Create a dedicated blog section on your website or do guest blogging on a partner's site. Popular blogs also accept high-quality posts on topics of interest to their readers.

REMOVE UNDESIRABLE LINKS

Major search engine algorithmic updates in recent years have ensured that poor quality links generated just with the aim of manipulating search engine rankings are no longer helpful. On the contrary, such links can only pull down the rankings of your dermatology website. Google provides you an opportunity to clean up your site and remove old links.

Google's link disavowal tool not only helps you remove unwanted links, but it also lets you inform Google that you do not want certain links from specific external websites to be included as part of Google's system of accounting for links to rank sites. If you purchased links in the past, which is now considered a violation of Google's policies, you can avoid penalty by using the link disavowal tool to retain only natural and organic inbound links. ■

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