



Linking Strategies for Small Business Marketing

Online Marketing for small business should incorporate a slew of different methods but all of them integrated to create a tsunami of attention and interest in the small business website. These small business marketing strategies should include blogging, blog commenting, creating profiles, article marketing and directory listings for an online marketing synergy that's greater than the whole.

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A short explanation of one-way back-links...

The more diverse your collection of one-way links back to your website are, the more Google and the other search engines will like you. The search engines are looking for a "natural" progression of accumulated links over time. That's why you don't sit down in a week and start creating links like a mad person all over the web. It's also why you don't want to "buy links."

The other reason you don't want to buy links is because you never can be sure where they will come from. They could come from porn sites, link farms, politically questionable sites; you just have no control. Any one of these sites could get you banned. Plus, if Google catches on that you're buying links, that could definitely get you banned.

It's also important for the links to come from "[relevant content](#)." In other words, if you sell Hawaiian shirts on your website, you don't want links coming in from a commercial banking website. Or if your business is selling farm equipment in Iowa, you don't want links coming in from a tanning booth store site in Alaska. See what I mean?

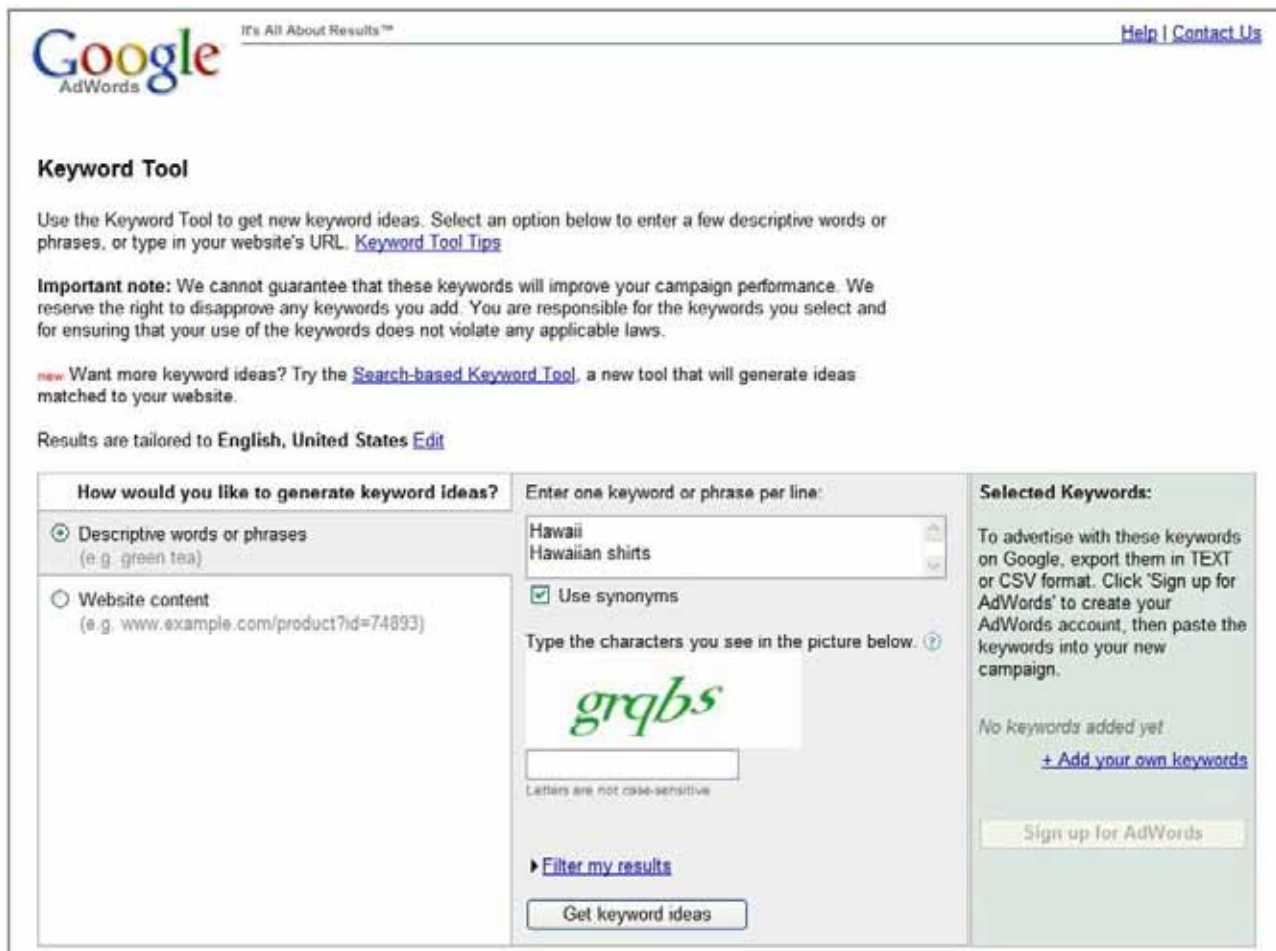


The links need to come from content related to what you do or related to your products or services.

A link-building campaign starts with the keyword phrases...

Since I'm an Online Marketer professional, let's take a look at how I would promote a client's website if their business is selling Hawaiian shirts. Let's say you have a brick and mortar store in Vermont and you specialize in selling genuine, "Made In Hawaii" Hawaiian shirts.

The first thing I would do is go to the [Google Adwords Keyword Tool](#) and start typing in keyword phrases related to Hawaii and Hawaiian shirts.



Google AdWords
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Keyword Tool

Use the Keyword Tool to get new keyword ideas. Select an option below to enter a few descriptive words or phrases, or type in your website's URL. [Keyword Tool Tips](#)

Important note: We cannot guarantee that these keywords will improve your campaign performance. We reserve the right to disapprove any keywords you add. You are responsible for the keywords you select and for ensuring that your use of the keywords does not violate any applicable laws.

new Want more keyword ideas? Try the [Search-based Keyword Tool](#), a new tool that will generate ideas matched to your website.

Results are tailored to **English, United States** [Edit](#)

How would you like to generate keyword ideas?	Enter one keyword or phrase per line:	Selected Keywords:
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Descriptive words or phrases (e.g. green tea)	Hawaii Hawaiian shirts	To advertise with these keywords on Google, export them in TEXT or CSV format. Click 'Sign up for AdWords' to create your AdWords account, then paste the keywords into your new campaign.
<input type="radio"/> Website content (e.g. www.example.com/product?id=74893)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use synonyms	No keywords added yet + Add your own keywords
	Type the characters you see in the picture below. ?  <input type="text"/> <small>Letters are not case-sensitive</small>	<input type="button" value="Sign up for AdWords"/>
	Filter my results	
	<input type="button" value="Get keyword ideas"/>	



Here are the results I get from these two keyword phrases...

Keywords	▲Advertiser Competition	Local Search Volume: June	Global Monthly Search Volume	Broad
Keywords related to term(s) entered - sort by relevance				
tribune hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	12,100	14,800	Add
traditional hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	2,900	Add
paradise found hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	91	Add
maui hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	110	Add
hilo hattie hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	46	Add
hawaiian shirts oahu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	36	Add
hawaiian shirts hilo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	73	Add
hawaiian shirts hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	170	Add
hattie hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,600	1,000	Add
muumuu hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	320	390	Add
traditional hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	91	Add
hawaiian tropical shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	480	Add
hawaiian shirts made in hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	36	Add
hawaiian shirts from hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	36	Add
hawaiian island shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	320	Add
hawaii wedding shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	36	Add

Notice where it says **Advertiser Competition** in red. It's red because I clicked on that heading twice. What this does is give me the least competitive phrases related to my keyword search, first. Obviously, I don't want to compete for keyword phrases against every Target, Abercrombie & Fitch and Walmart on the planet.

If I can find some keyword phrases related to my products that aren't insanely competitive, I have a good chance of beating the others competing for those phrases. The key is the bigger that blue bar is, the more people are fighting for those keywords in Google Adwords and the more they are willing to pay for them.

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Okay, I'm not finding any keyword phrases here that are getting me excited with the number of searches so we look further down the page.

hawaii fabrics	<input type="checkbox"/>	390	320	Add
sarong hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	390	480	Add
paradise hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	390	Add
matching hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	590	Add
hawaiian surf shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	320	Add
hawaiian shirts dresses	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,600	720	Add
hawaiian flower shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	260	Add
hawaiian car shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	720	320	Add
hawaiian baseball shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	390	170	Add
hawaii silk	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,300	880	Add
hawaii mens	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	1,900	Add
hawaii cotton	<input type="checkbox"/>	720	590	Add
dresses hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	5,400	3,600	Add
clothes hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	4,400	4,400	Add
blue hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	480	Add
surfboard hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	3,600	2,900	Add
hawaiian shirts silk	<input type="checkbox"/>	2,400	1,900	Add
hawaiian dress shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	480	Add
hawaii outfits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	480	Add
hawaii aloha shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	260	260	Add
paradise found hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	480	210	Add
kahala hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	260	140	Add
kahala hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	8,100	5,400	Add
hibiscus hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	5,400	3,600	Add
hi hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	49,500	27,100	Add
hawaiian shirts for kids	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough data	320	Add
hawaiian shirt pattern	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,300	590	Add
hawaii floral	<input type="checkbox"/>	2,900	1,600	Add
hawaii attire	<input type="checkbox"/>	720	590	Add
christmas hawaiian shirts	<input type="checkbox"/>	590	1,000	Add



Okay, now things are getting interesting...

- Hawaiian Shirts Dresses is very low for competition but has 1,600 local searches per month (local meaning US)
- Hawaiian Car Shirts is also low and has 720 searches
- Clothes Hawaii is low and has 4,400 searches
- Hawaiian Shirts Silk is not too competitive and has 2,400 searches
- Hawaii Attire is middling for competition and has 720 searches

If you go further down the page you may find more keyword phrases. You don't want to get much past the half-bar for competition. The number of searches you're willing to settle for is up to you. In this case, I've been keeping it above 500 but if you're willing to look outside the US for business, you have a lot more eligible search terms.

What to do on your website with your search terms...

Okay, so now you have your search terms. You should break them up into groups of least one to four phrases and assign each group to one page on your website. As an example, here's what I'd use for one of the pages on the website in the HTML meta tags:

```
<title>Clothes Hawaii | Hawaiian Shirts</title>  
<meta name="description" content="Clothes Hawaii shouldn't be hard to find or expensive to buy. Find the Hawaiian clothes you're looking for at Hawaiian Shirt Store" />  
<meta name="keywords" content="clothes Hawaii, Hawaii attire" />
```

Use the words "clothes Hawaii" and "Hawaii attire" in the website page content a few times.

I always recommend to clients that they get their website search engines optimized first. You need to understand this is only very basic Organic Search Engine Optimization. This alone will do little to build your business because real onsite SEO is a lot more complex. But if you aren't willing to invest in full-blown SEO, this is a good first step and will give you the raw tools to do off-site SEO or link building.



Here are some articles to give you more information about on-site organic search engine optimization or SEO:

- [SEO Article - What You Absolutely Must Know About Search Engine Optimization](#)
- [Who Needs Search Engine Optimization and Why?](#)
- [If You Want to Know What Google Thinks is Good Search Engine Optimization...Ask Them](#)

After you've done this (using unique keyword phrases for each page in the meta tags and content) for every page of your website that you want to promote, *it's time to start link building.*

Creating your Link Building Strategy

Go to [Google Alerts](#) and set up alerts for each of your keyword phrases. If you have a Gmail account you can just log in with your Gmail. If you don't, use whatever email account you want your alerts delivered to. Set up a separate Alert for each keyword phrase. Make sure they are "comprehensive" Alerts and you set them up for "once a day."

When the Google Alerts arrive, it's time to start blog commenting and creating profiles. Open the first Alert and look at what each item is about. If it's a news article related to Hawaiian clothes in some way, click on it.

If it's a newspaper or magazine article, check to see if they allow commenting. If they do, they will probably require you to "sign up" and create a profile. Definitely do this. When you are registered, go in and create as complete a profile as you're allowed. If they let you put any links in your profile, create links back to your website using a keyword phrase as your anchor text.

They may also allow you to have a blog. Set one up and create a post with a link back to another page of your website using the anchor text keyword phrase for that page. Make a note of where this blog is and your log in info.

Here's an example of a [WordsmithBob profile and blog](#) I set up at the Detroit Free Press website for free. These links have the highest value for SEO because they come from a legitimate information source. A newspaper website full of professionally written stories.



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Over the course of the next two or three weeks, I want you to keep going back to that blog and adding new posts until you have at least five posts, all with links back to different pages of your website and/or your business blog. You'll notice that the posts on this blog have links to other posts on my [WordSmithBob blog](#).

If the Alert takes you to a blog, see if they allow commenting. If they do, go ahead and leave a comment. Where they ask for your name, use one of your keyword phrases instead because then when they link to your website, it will be using your keyword phrase as the anchor text. Just make sure of two things.

First, at the end of your comment, put your real name and the name of your business so they know who left the comment (since we used a keyword phrase as your name.) Also, make sure you leave a quality comment that adds information to the original blog post. If you just put something lame like "Wow. Great post. Lots of good info," the odds are, they will delete your comment and you'll have wasted your time.

For more information about small business marketing, social media marketing, strategic linking campaigns and blog commenting, read:

- [Small Business Online Marketing Plan for 2009 - part one](#)
- [My favorite article submission sites](#)
- [Great Marketing Systems Have You Consulting Rather Than Selling](#)
- [How To Use Social Networking Websites to Market Your Business](#)
- [Does a Small Business Really Need a Blog?](#)

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