



## Search Engine Optimisation Whitepaper Three Tips for SEO in Press Releases

*Publicity Agents have been successfully promoting our clients for many years. Ever respectful of this expertise, the new breed of SEO (Search Engine Optimiser) seeks to join forces – after all, successful clients equal successful marketing agencies. This Whitepaper offers three fundamental suggestions for getting the most SEO value from existing press distribution services.*

Fundamental SEO practice is easier to employ than you might have once thought. Considering the three following suggestions will position you to instantly enhance the benefit of your publicity work for your client, ensuring your retention and mutual success. The suggestions are practical and simple technical information is provided where required.

### Relevancy

What's the first action taken by a large proportion of viewers of an advertising campaign? Few deny the pivotal role Search Engines play in converting consumers, regardless of which media developed their interest they're highly likely to go straight to their favourite Search Engine. That being said, no one can tell the population at large what search terms to use; they'll search for something using terms they know. Marketers in the mid-2000's seemed to think it clever to advertise in print campaign 'Google "such and such"' - confident the promoted website was ranked first. This however offers free advertising for other websites who achieve secondary rankings for that term, and opens up the possibility that the promoted website isn't even #1 anymore. In today's highly volatile Search Engine landscape where Google #1 can be Google #nowhere overnight, the chance of the Search Engine Results Page changing unexpectedly while your print media still carries it's gloss is very real. Simply put, page two of a Search Engine Results Page is all but total obscurity when a drop from the #1 spot to #3 means a 70% decline in traffic.

### 1. Online Coverage: Don't Expect, Suggest

Suddenly viewing your clients coverage through the World Wide Web lens, you might be surprised to find how little online coverage your press release or advertisement is receiving. And yet it's this lens that consumers across every demographic now refer to first, some even exclusively. The following questions will help you evaluate a distribution outlet's effectiveness for your client's web presence and SEO:

- Is your distribution outlet guaranteeing a web page appearance of the full release?
- Is it available on a dedicated page or masked by scores of other entries?
- Are they syndicated with other online content aggregators?
- Do they employ RSS and Atom feeds?
- Is language translation (at the very least, automatic online translation) and distribution employed?
- Is the title and/or lead sentence published to Twitter? Along with a link?
- Is any video content uploaded to YouTube with associated text?
- Can viewers of the online version easily bookmark or redistribute the coverage, including to their social media like Facebook?

Some outlets simply aren't geared for online distribution. Others, like AAP (Australian Associated Press) don't guarantee web page publishing because their Newswires are available to registered journalists only and not Search Engine robots like Google's Googlebot. Your evaluation of such services may encourage them to change their methods, or to develop alternatives like a community forum section where you can add descriptive briefs. At the very least, it can help you recognise those offering the most value.

### 2. Insist On Receiving Web Links

The single most influential factor in a website's success in the Search Engines is the number and quality of web links pointing to it. This can be said authoritatively. While quality website content is essential, a miserable website can succeed in Search Engines due to quality links from sites with quality content – effectively leveraging both their content and Search Engine ranking. Therefore, it is imperative that wherever digitally possible, a web link is made from the source site to your client's site. Beware, however, as press or advertisement sites have many ways of unintentionally destroying the value your client can receive from links to their website.

**Bad example #1:** Some links that appear to be links to your client's site from a press release site actually point back to that same website. Even if, when clicked, they employ a redirection from the press release site to your client's site, they pass no SEO value. When you hover over the link or right click and copy the destination URL, it must plainly begin with <http://your-clients-website/>.

**Bad example #2:** If the website code of the page linking to your client contains the *rel=nofollow* attribute, the value of your hard-earned link will be null. This could be in the line with the link (*<a href=...*) or in the meta data (*<meta name=robots...*). Ask the source site owners about their practice, but better still, see for yourself by right-clicking the web page and choosing 'view source'. Then you can use Ctrl-F to find occurrences of *nofollow*.

### 3. Get The Link Text Right

Both web users and Search Engines, like Google, learn from the text inside the link to your client's site. It is used to determine the site's relevancy to the keywords consumers are searching for. Countless expensive directories and advertisement websites use the text *website* as the link to your clients domain. As much as that is bad practice, it tells Google your client's website has something to do with, wait for it, *website*! Good practice involves including descriptive text in the web link, as follows: 'See the *outdoor furniture on their website*'. If you're not sure what text to use in the link, take a look at the title of your client's web page you're linking to. This can be seen as the text naming the tab of your web browser when viewing their website or internal page (if it's truncated, hover over it to reveal the entire title). That point beckons mentioning that the correct page must also be selected as the recipient of the link. Not every link should go to the home page – web users need to be directed to the most relevant page with instant information pertaining to their desire.

Many high quality websites use the website address as the link text for your client's link. This represents an unfortunate decline in value, however some ingenuity here can maximise the benefit. If possible, ensure that the link points to an internal page, not just the home page. That way, the words in the file name or address for that internal page will now add value to the meaning of the link. For example, if I can only use the website address in the link text to [www.embodydenim.com.au](http://www.embodydenim.com.au), I will choose to supply the target link address as <http://www.embodydenim.com.au/Denim/Jean/>, or for a different type of website, possibly <http://www.customsup.com.au/Custom-Stand-Up-Paddle-Surfboards/>, since the words 'Denim Jeans' and 'Stand Up Paddle Surfboards' will assist the site in ranking for those highly popular consumer search terms. (It should be noted here that addresses which utilise underscores spoil the word value since Google does not index an underscore in a file name as a word break. See this SEO underscores or hyphens article for demonstrations and proof.)

Still another type of implementation is where a Press Release or News site requires the link text to state the company name. You may not even realise where exactly this happens, but at some point in an online or paper application form where the company name is requested, the outlet will simply copy the supplied company name and place it as the link text for your client's web link. Almost all websites (certainly well-constructed ones) will rank highly for their company name, so this is not of any particular SEO benefit. Some company names are more relevant to search terms than others, which can be a bonus, however the best use of link text is for descriptive, often searched-for keywords. Therefore, with a little ingenuity, you may be able to list the company name as relevant keywords when completing your client's Press Release registration. Take this example of the usual trading name 'Globe Jockeys' being presented as [Light Globe Replacement](#) – a far more relevant and helpful term, both for SEO and for users.

### Conclusion

The collaboration of professional expertise and resources is an often overlooked key to client success and retention. With just these three simple suggestions and a little supplemental technical knowledge, our mutual clients can perform better, presenting a stronger future all partners.

*Pioneer Websites is a boutique web development agency specialising in content managed eCommerce sites custom built from the ground up. They hand craft each site without automated procedures and build in the right SEO from the very beginning, including keyword and competitor analysis from privileged data sources within the industry. Ongoing SEO and online promotional marketing, combined with an affordable development service, allow Pioneer Websites to create and market websites that don't cost more money than they make.*