

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2014

Google™

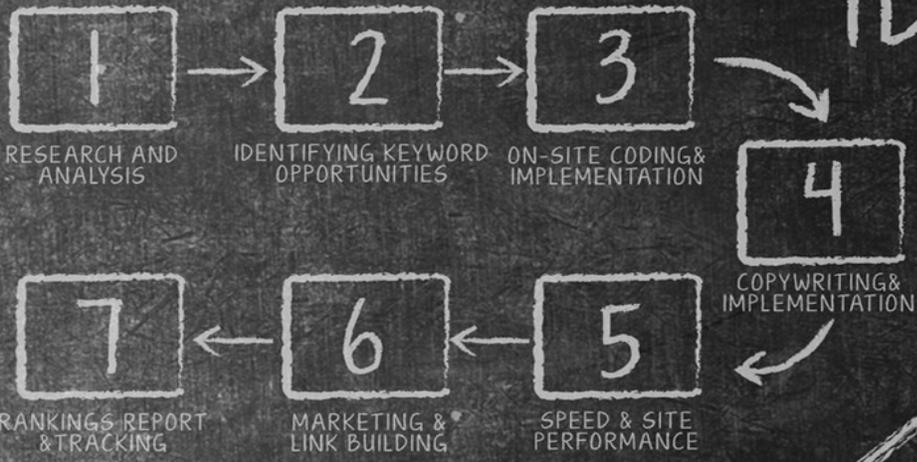


Strategic Search Engine & Internet Marketing Solutions

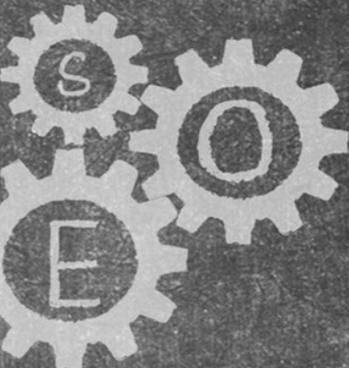


WEB MARKETING

SEO PROCESS



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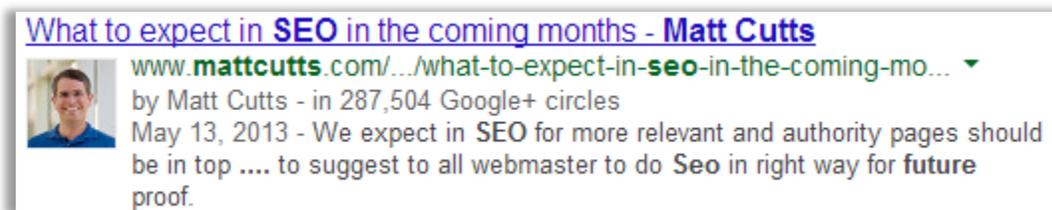
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01

GOOGLE AUTHORSHIP VS PUBLISHER MARKUP. WHICH ONE TO USE FOR YOUR WEBSITE

Google Author Rank is definitely a hot topic in both the content and search marketing industry. Having Authorship implemented on your website essentially gives you the opportunity to officially claim your content with Google. And it comes with three great benefits:

1. Increases your click throughs - When your content is marked up properly Google includes your G+ profile image next to the listing within the search results. There have been countless studies indicating this increases your listing's click through rate. People are naturally inclined to look at images in a body of text. Check the below sample.



2. Protects Your Content - This code also tells Google that you are the original owner. If your article gets picked up and reprinted Google is more likely to see your marked up article as the original and de-value the rest.

3. Increases your content's authority and trust - This is the most important reason to markup your content. When you officially claim your content using this code and tying it to your G+ profile you're also building up your own personal brand. The more trusted, quality content you produce for authoritative sites - the stronger your brand becomes in the eyes of Google as well as within your Industry.

4. Google Analytics Tracking - You can track analytics on content you have written for any website in Google Webmaster Tools using the Author Stats area under Labs.

5. Adding the Publisher tag will make sure that your Google+ page's information is displayed next to your website, making it stand out in search results.



However, over doing it will put you in trouble. Worst case, slap you a manual penalty in Google Webmaster Tools. Google has just released a new Manual Action penalty that's designed to target sites that have been manipulating rich snippets to get more traffic for their sites. This penalty comes on the heels of Google removing more than 15% of all rich snippets from the search engine results page, as a measure of quality control. Here's what such a message looks like:

Spammy structured markup

Markup on some pages on this site appears to use techniques such as marking up content that is invisible to users, marking up irrelevant or misleading content, and/or other manipulative behavior that violates Google's Rich Snippet Quality guidelines.

Here's where the differentiation comes in to play. As SEO experts, one should know the difference between Authorship and Publisher Markup and how to implement them.

Here are some points to consider before implementing these markups on the site:

- Unfortunately, a lot of site owners simply applied the authorship markup (`rel="author"`) to absolutely everything on their site, including service pages to product information pages. This is not acceptable as per the latest Guidelines.
- Make sure to implement Google Authorship markup (`rel="author"`) only for content you have written. A good example could be a blog on your website, an article section featuring informative content, or a page about yourself.
- Publisher markup (`rel="publisher"`) informs Google who the publisher of the content is. This is usually a business. Google expects each publisher to have a Google+ Business Page—**not a profile**—and Google will use information on this business page to enrich search results for that publisher. Make sure to use this markup for all pages including your home page.
- Finally, make a habit to check Google's rich snippet [testing tool](#) to be sure your rich snippets are formatted correctly.

From our end, we have already started making the transition from Google Authorship to Publisher and have advised our clients to do so as well. Doing this change will surely help us in the long run and protect us from a potential Spammy structured markup penalty.

WHAT'S NEW IN GOOGLE LOCAL SEARCH

02

Let's jump straight in and see 'What's New in Local Search' for March 2014.

The most controversial change made is to the Business Listing Quality Guidelines allowing people to add a single descriptor to their business name in their Places listing. Here is the [blog post](#) from Mike Blumenthal.

Here is what Google's official [blog post](#) mentions:

- Your title should reflect your business's real-world title.
- In addition to your business's real-world title, you may include a **single descriptor** that helps customers locate your business or understand what your business offers.
- Marketing taglines, phone numbers, store codes, or URLs are not valid descriptors.
- Examples of acceptable titles with descriptors (in italics for demonstration purposes) are "Starbucks *Downtown*" or "Joe's *Pizza Restaurant*". Examples that would not be accepted would be "#1 Seattle Plumbing", "Joe's *Pizza Best Delivery*" or "Joe's *Pizza Restaurant Dallas*".

We aren't exactly sure what Google will really allow. However, we advise to wait a while and see how this plays out. Do not go too aggressive with adding the descriptor to your business name. Don't be the guinea pig i.e. make changes for which you will have to work more for later.

In another announcement, an important change is that some business owners are being required to update and save their Google Place listings. Google has been sending this scary warning:

Action Required: You have 3 weeks to save your Google Places Listing... ..If you did receive this email, don't worry. Please log into Places for Business, take a look at your business information, update it if necessary, and click "Submit." You'll need to do this for all listings in your account by February 21, 2014, so they can stay on Google Maps. Otherwise, you'll need to add your business information and undergo PIN verification using Google Places again.

Here's what Jade Wang from Google had to say:

We are making some changes to Google Places for Business and Google Maps so we can continue providing people with the best experience when they're looking for local businesses. As part of this process, we're asking business owners to review and confirm some of the information in their Google Places accounts so we can keep showing it to Google users. We know this will be a few extra steps for merchants, and we apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your time.

We have sent business owners affected by these changes an email entitled "Action Required: You have 3 weeks to save your Google Places Listing".

If you received this email, there's no need worry. You simply need to login to Places for your Business, review your business information, update it if necessary, and click Submit.

And finally, Mike Blumenthal tells us why businesses need to [take control of the photos](#) on their Google+ pages. Upload good photos now before someone else uploads bad ones.

03

PENALIZED BY GOOGLE? WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO KILL YOUR SITE AND START AFRESH

As more and more Google penalties become more transparent, recovering from them seems to get harder. Even when you do recover, the rankings don't always return.

Eric Ward in his blog post [When The Best SEO Move Is To Kill The Site](#) also concluded that "in almost two-thirds of the cases I advised that the best move was to kill the site." This is when it comes to unnatural link penalties or Penguin related issues.

Even Matt Cutts has said numerous times that [digging yourself out](#) of a spam hole is often harder than starting afresh.

In addition, Google has also confirmed that even if you switch to a new domain with the same content and site structure, Google will still be able to follow you and continue to penalize your website. If it was as simple as copying your site to a new domain name, switching might make sense more of the time. But you have to go the extra mile and rebuild the site, content and user interfaces to convince Google it really is a new site. Here is the video, again fast forward to about 23 minutes and 15 seconds in:



This is what Google's John Mueller had to say in a Google Webmaster Help [thread](#):

If you're creating a new website, and don't want to be associated with the old one, I'd strongly recommend really making a *new* website and not just moving the content to a different domain. You don't need to wait for anything in a case like this -- it's fine to remove (or block) the old website, and to create a really new one elsewhere at the same time.

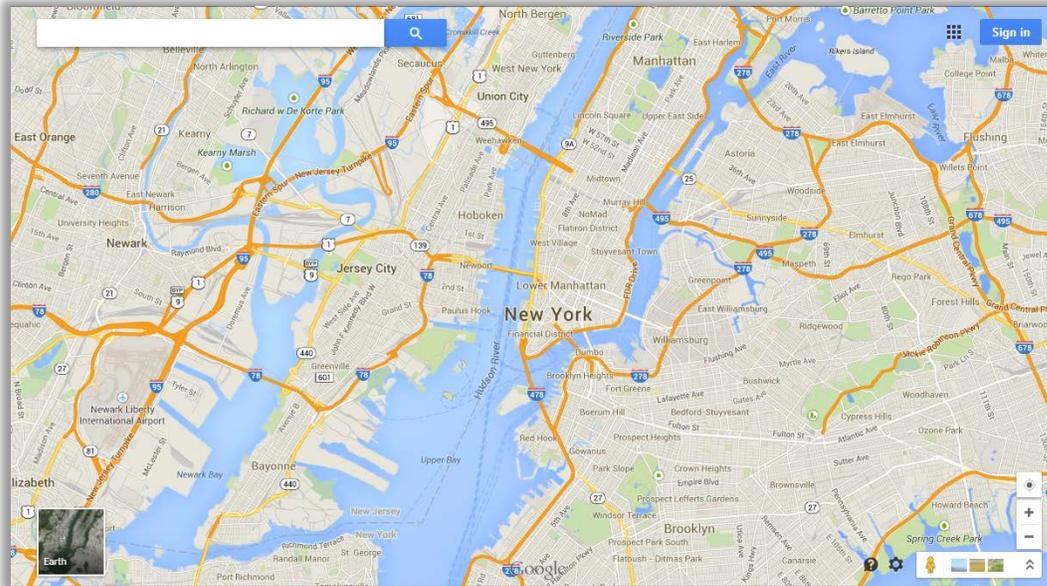
This is what we recommend:

- The first aim would be to get rid of these links. Unless these links are removed, it would not be possible to achieve the best of rankings and traffic. Start working on the link removal process by contacting the website owners. Since this is a tedious process, it will take at least 2 to 3 months.
- Once you are sure that you have removed as much backlinks as you can, start with the disavow process. This will take a week at least.
- Once the disavow process is complete, submit a reconsideration request to Google.
- Track the progress of the campaign for another couple of months. If you feel that the rankings have satisfactorily improved after couple of months, slowly start with the SEO activities.
- However, if you think that there has been no improvement at all, we highly recommend optimizing a new domain for SEO.

Of course, it is not always this black and white and the specific situation might change the solution.

CONFLICTS ENCOUNTERED INCLUDING DUPLICATE LISTING ISSUES AS GOOGLE UPGRADES BUSINESS LISTINGS

04



Google has been automatically upgrading Google Place listings from the old system to the new Google Places dashboard. During this upgrade, there are conflicts encountered which prevent the upgrade from completing. The latest conflict is that there are duplicate listing issues and Google needs you to step in, fix the issue and then complete the upgrade process.

Google has recently started sending out notices via email to those impacted by this issue. The email reads:

We'd like to inform you that Google Places no longer accommodates more than one authorized owner per business location. Your account contains one or more listings that have been identified as duplicates of other listings and as a result, some of the information you provide will not be shown to Google users anymore...

Jade Wang from Google posted a detailed response on how to fix this issue in the [Google Business Help forums](#):

- 1) Your account and another account that you don't control became verified for the same business using the old Places dashboard.
- 2) You may have verified the page multiple times using accounts you control.

Each has their own method of resolving, which Google has either emailed the business owner or you can read them below in more detail.

Here's some more information from Jade.

In one scenario, your account and another account that you don't control became verified for the same business using the old Places dashboard:

Additional unknown verified account(s) from the old Places dashboard

Google Places no longer supports multiple verified business owner accounts for the same business location, so we are letting you know that your account has a listing that's a duplicate of a listing in another account. By [logging into your Google Places for Business dashboard](#), you can view the duplicate listing, which will show a banner reading, "You cannot update this listing because it has been marked as a duplicate of another." If you no longer want to manage this listing, you can [remove this listing from your dashboard](#). Alternatively, you can request administrative access from the current owner of the listing using the link to **Learn more** in your dashboard.

It's possible that someone else in your organization, or a third party whom you once worked with, verified the business in another account. If you don't believe anyone else could possibly be active in managing this business information, other than yourself, you can always [contact support directly](#) to help restore your account's access to the listing.

Or, you may have verified the page multiple times using accounts you control:

Multiple known verified accounts from old Places dashboard

You may [remove the duplicate listing from the dashboard](#) in the account we emailed, which won't affect the information on Maps. Then, please simply use the other account to manage the listing.

Verified same business in both Google Places and in Google+, same account

You had a listing that you created on Google Places as well as a local page that you created in Google+, using the same account. You PIN verified the local page in Google+. The system now has identified that the listing you have in Google Places and the page you have in Google+ as duplicates. We have marked the listing from Places as duplicate. If you log in to Google Places, and you should see your local page (from Google+) as well as the duplicate listing, which will show a banner reading, "You cannot update this listing because it has been marked as a duplicate of another." You can [remove this listing from your dashboard](#), and continue to manage the business using the account with the listing which is connected to Maps.

Verified same business in both Google Places and in Google+, different accounts

You or someone in your organization used different accounts to verify the Google Places listing and the local page in Google+. If this is the case, please use the latter account to manage this page. You should be able to do so via Google+ or Google Places. You can [remove the duplicate listing from the account](#) we emailed in Google Places, which won't affect the information on Maps.

In any of the above 3 scenarios, you can keep the duplicate listing instead of the active one if you really want. First, [remove the active listing from that account](#), and then you should [contact our support team](#), who can help make the duplicate listing active again.

05

REACH MORE CUSTOMERS ACROSS SEARCH AND DISPLAY WITH SEARCH NETWORK WITH DISPLAY SELECT

Google AdWords has been trying to encourage more advertisers to include the display network in their PPC advertising.



Customers are accessing information across multiple devices, and might look at 10 different sources - online reviews, news articles, recommendations from friends and more - before making a purchase. Display advertising captures these signals, enabling advertisers to connect with customers across millions of sites, videos and apps. But for some advertisers, managing separate search and display campaigns can be complex and time consuming.

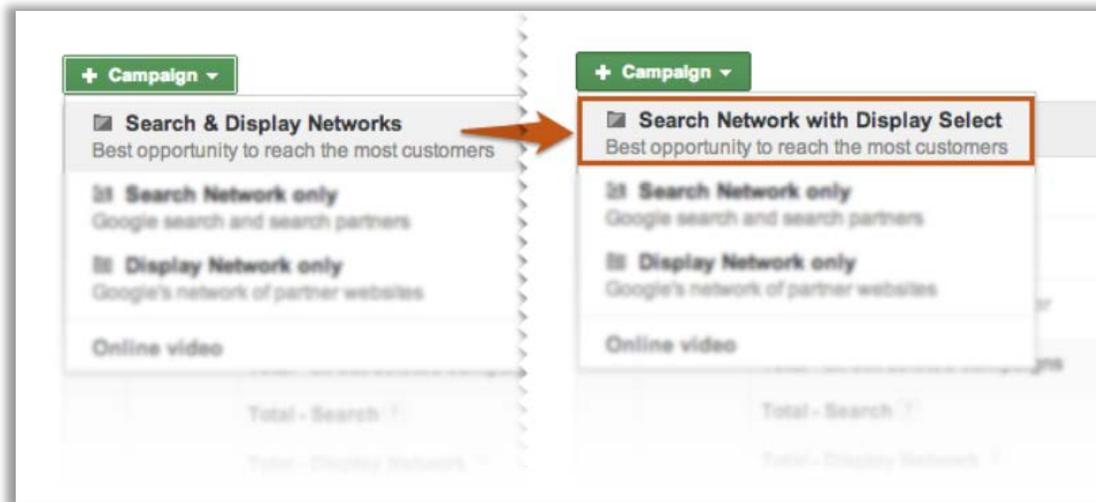
But because some advertisers feel the quality of some sites within the Google display network is lacking, and conversions are lower, many advertisers just simply opt out of the display network completely, and simply advertise on the search network.

Google is now trying to overcome this issue by offering a new "Search Network with Display Select" option. It has launched a new high-performing way for advertisers to grow their businesses across both search and the very best of display opportunities in a single campaign: **Search Network with Display Select**.

Search Network with Display Select campaigns are helping advertisers gain up to 15% more customers than search campaigns alone. In fact, the average advertiser can see a 35% higher click-through-rate, and a 35% lower cost-per-customer purchase on the display portion of their Search Network with Display Select campaigns.

Getting started

The best way to find out how this campaign type performs for your account is to log in and try it out! Google made upgrading to Search Network with Display Select easy in the AdWords interface.

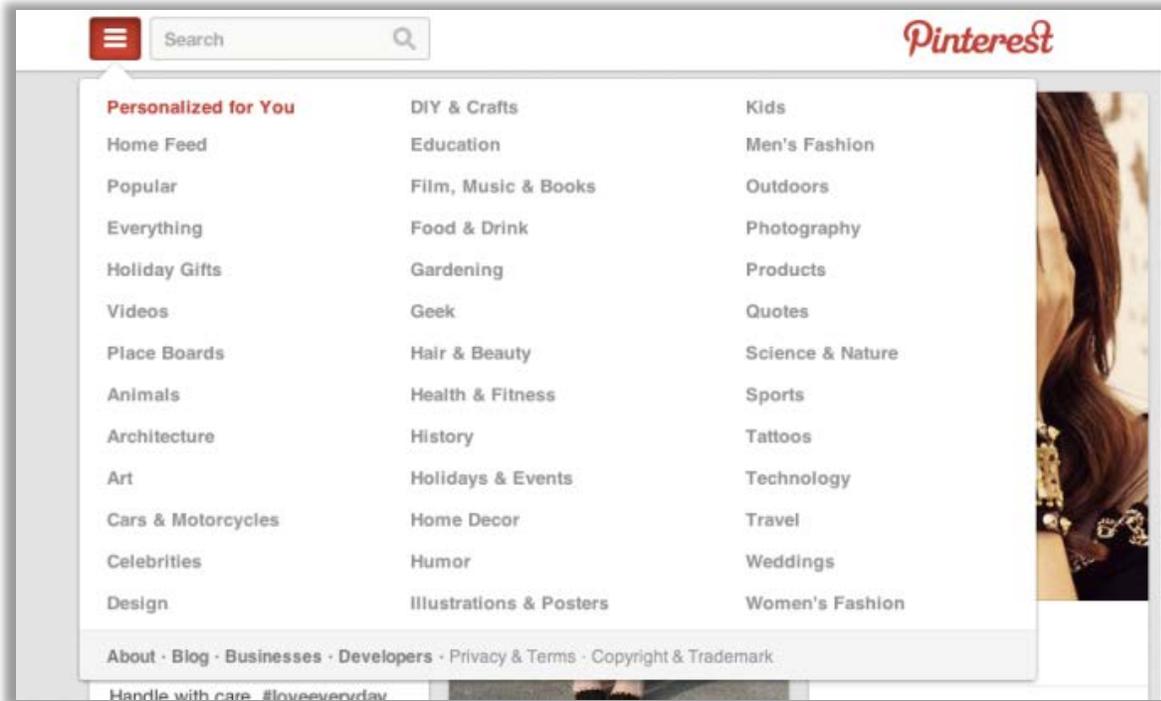


Advertisers who manage their search campaigns and their display campaign separately won't need to change anything.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN VISUAL SOCIAL NETWORK SITE – PINTEREST

06

If your marketing process focuses heavily on Social Media efforts & gives major emphasis to visual content, then it is a must to be on Pinterest. Not only this, if your brand caters heavily towards women, then active presence on Pinterest will add value to your brand. Considering this, let's have a look at the new changes in Pinterest.



Going one step ahead to engage the user-base more into the visual content, Pinterest brings you “Personalized Pages” for each of its pinners. This new change is based entirely on the user's interests. For example: A fashion-focused Pinner might see categories like shoes, wallets, accessories etc. on the personalized page of his/her, & then later on they can click to view the pins.

The images that are shown will be based on your pinning history. So if you have been a fashion addict then be prepared to see lot of new style stuff. By keeping a track of things that you like & pin, it will display images that you might like.

However, this feature is not currently available to all the users but the ones who do have this feature have a positive review on this new change.



Moving ahead, Pinterest now provides a button on chrome so that users can pin the images from all around the web. All you need to do is, log into your Pinterest account & then click on the drop down menu. If you have it, then the red icon will appear on far left side.

Keep Pining!