

Ranking Factors

by SEOMOZ.org

On-Page (Keyword-Specific)

1. Keyword Use Anywhere in the Title Tag
2. Keyword Use as the First Word(s) of the Title Tag
3. Keyword Use in the Root Domain Name (e.g. keyword.com)
4. Keyword Use Anywhere in the H1 Headline Tag
5. Keyword Use in Internal Link Anchor Text on the Page
6. Keyword Use in External Link Anchor Text on the Page
7. Keyword Use as the First Word(s) in the H1 Tag
8. Keyword Use in the First 50-100 Words in HTML on the Page
9. Keyword Use in the Subdomain Name (e.g. keyword.seomoz.org)
10. Keyword Use in the Page Name URL (e.g. seomoz.org/folder/keyword.html)
11. Keyword Use in the Page Folder URL (e.g. seomoz.org/keyword/page.html)
12. Keyword Use in other Headline Tags (<h2> – <h6>)
13. Keyword Use in Image Alt Text
14. Keyword Use / Number of Repetitions in the HTML Text on the Page
15. Keyword Use in Image Names Included on the Page (e.g. keyword.jpg)
16. Keyword Use in or Tags
17. Keyword Density Formula ($\# \text{ of Keyword Uses} \div \text{Total} \# \text{ of Terms on the Page}$)
18. Keyword Use in List Items on the Page
19. Keyword Use in the Page's Query Parameters (e.g. seomoz.org/page.html?keyword)
20. Keyword Use in <i> or Tags
21. Keyword Use in the Meta Description Tag
22. Keyword Use in the Page's File Extension (e.g. seomoz.org/page.keyword)
23. Keyword Use in Comment Tags in the HTML
24. Keyword Use in the Meta Keywords Tag

On-Page (Non-Keyword)

1. Existence of Substantive, Unique Content on the Page
2. Recency (freshness) of Page Creation
3. Use of Links on the Page that Point to Other URLs on this Domain
4. Historical Content Changes (how often the page content has been updated)
5. Use of External-Pointing Links on the Page
6. Query Parameters in the URL vs. Static URL Format
7. Ratio of Code to Text in HTML
8. Existence of a Meta Description Tag
9. HTML Validation to W3C Standards
10. Use of Flash Elements (or other plug-in content)
11. Use of Advertising on the Page
12. Use of Google AdSense (specifically) on the Page

Page-Specific Link Popularity

1. Keyword-Focused Anchor Text from External Links
2. External Link Popularity (quantity/quality of external links)
3. Diversity of Link Sources (links from many unique root domains)
4. Page-Specific TrustRank (whether the individual page has earned links from trusted sources)
5. Iterative Algorithm-Based, Global Link Popularity (PageRank)
6. Topic-Specificity/Focus of External Link Sources (whether external links to this page come from topically relevant pages/sites)
7. Keyword-Focused Anchor Text from Internal Links
8. Location in Information Architecture of the Site (where the page sits in relation to the site's structural hierarchy)
9. Internal Link Popularity (counting only links from other pages on the root domain)
10. Quantity & Quality of Nofollowed Links to the Page
11. Percent of Followed vs. Nofollowed Links that Point to the Page

Site-Wide Link-Based

1. Trustworthiness of the Domain Based on Link Distance from Trusted Domains (e.g. TrustRank, Domain mozTrust, etc.)
2. Global Link Popularity of the Domain Based on an Iterative Link Algorithm (e.g. PageRank on the domain graph, Domain mozRank, etc.)
3. Link Diversity of the Domain (based on number/variety of unique root domains linking to pages on this domain)
4. Links from Hubs/Authorities in a Given Topic-Specific Neighbourhood (as per the “Hilltop” algorithm)
5. Temporal Growth/Shrinkage of Links to the Domain (the quantity/quality of links earned over time and the temporal distribution)
6. Links from Domains with Restricted Access TLD Extensions (e.g. .edu, .gov, .mil, .ac.uk, etc.)
7. Percent of Followed vs. No followed Links that Point to the Domain

Site-Wide (non-link based)

1. Site Architecture of the Domain (whether intelligent, useful hierarchies are employed)
2. Use of External Links to Reputable, Trustworthy Sites/Pages
3. Length of Domain Registration
4. Domain Registration History (how long it’s been registered to the same party, number of times renewed, etc.)
5. Server/Hosting Uptime
6. Hosting Information (what other domains are hosted on the server/c-block of IP addresses)
7. Domain Registration Ownership Change (whether the domain has changed hands according to registration records)
8. Inclusion of Feeds from the Domain in Google News
9. Use of XML Sitemap(s)
10. Domain Ownership (who registered the domain and their history)
11. Domain Registration with Google Local

12. Domain “Mentions” (text citations of the domain name/address even in the absence of direct links)
13. Inclusion of Feeds from the Domain in Google Blog Search
14. Citations/References of the Domain in the Yahoo! Directory (beyond the value of the link alone)
15. Citations/References of the Domain in DMOZ.org (beyond the value of the link alone)
16. Citations/References of the Domain in Wikipedia (beyond the value of the link alone)
17. Use of Feeds on the Domain
18. Citations/References of the Domain in the Librarian’s Internet Index - Lii.org (beyond the value of the link alone)
19. Domain Registration with Google Webmaster Tools
20. Activation of Google’s “Enhanced Image Search” (aka image labeller)
21. Use of Security Certificate on the Domain (for HTTPS transactions)
22. Validity of Mailing Address/Phone Numbers/Records from Domain Registration
23. Citations/References of the Domain in Google Knol Articles (beyond the value of the link alone)
24. Use of a Google Search Appliance on the Domain
25. Use of Google AdSense on the Domain
26. Use of Google AdWords for Ads Pointing to the Domain
27. Alexa Rank of the Domain (independent of actual traffic)
28. Compete.com Rank of the Domain (independent of actual traffic)
29. Use of Google’s Hosted Web Apps (not App Engine) on the Domain

Social Media/Social Graph Based

1. Delicious Data About the Domain or Page
2. StumbleUpon Data About the Domain or Page
3. Twitter Data About the Domain or Page
4. LinkedIn Data About the Domain or Page
5. Facebook Data About the Domain or Page
6. MySpace Data About the Domain or Page

Usage Data

1. Historical Click-Through Rate from Search Results to the Exact Page/URL
2. Historical Click-Through Rate from Search Results to Pages on this Domain
3. Search Queries for the Domain Name or Associated Brand
4. Use of Query Refinement Post-Click on a Search Result
5. Average "Time on Page" Duration
6. Data from Google's SearchWiki Voting, Ratings, Comments
7. References/Links to the Domain in Gmail Emails

Negative

1. Cloaking with Malicious/Manipulative Intent
2. Link Acquisition from Known Link Brokers/Sellers
3. Links from the Page to Web Spam Sites/Pages
4. Cloaking by User Agent
5. Frequent Server Downtime & Site Inaccessibility
6. Hiding Text with same/similar colored text/background
7. Links from the Domain to Web Spam Sites/Pages
8. Excessive Repetition of the Same Anchor Text in a High Percentage/Quantity of External Links to the Site/Page
9. Excessive Number of Dynamic Parameters in the URL
10. Excessive Links from Sites Hosted on the Same IP Address C-Block
11. Link Acquisition from Manipulative Bait-and-Switch Campaigns (301'ing microsites, etc.)
12. 41% low importance
13. Keyword Stuffing in the On-Page Text
14. Hiding Text with CSS display:none; Styling
15. Keyword Stuffing in the <title> Tag
16. Keyword Stuffing in the URL
17. Link Acquisition from Manipulative Widget/Badge Campaigns
18. Cloaking by JavaScript/Rich Media Support Detection
19. Cloaking by Cookie Detection
20. Link Acquisition from Low Quality Paid Directories

21. Excessive Links from Sites Owned by the Same Registrant
22. Links to the Page from Web Spam Sites/Pages
23. Links to the Domain from Web Spam Sites/Pages
24. Link Acquisition from Manipulative Viral Campaigns
25. Cloaking with Positive User Experience Intent
26. Over-Optimization of Internal Link Anchor Text
27. Use of “Poison” Keywords in Anchor Text of External Links (e.g. student credit cards, buy viagra, porn terms, etc.)
28. Link Acquisition from Buying Old Domains & Redirecting
29. Excessively Long URL
30. Use of Keyword-Rich Anchor Text Internal Links in Footers
31. Keyword Stuffing in the Meta Description Tag
32. Link Acquisition from Buying Old Domains and Adding Links
33. Overuse of Nofollow on Internal Links for “PageRank Sculpting”
34. Forum Link Building (Signatures, Link Drops, etc.)
35. Excessively Long Title Tag
36. Keyword Stuffing in the Meta Keywords Tag

Factors Negatively Affecting the Value of an External Link

1. Domain Banned from Google’s Index for Web Spam
2. Domain’s Rankings Penalized in Google for Web Spam
3. Link is Determined to be “Paid” Rather than Editorially Given
4. Domain Contains Links to a Significant Amount of Web Spam
5. Domain Has Not Earned Trusted Links

Geo-Targeting Factors:

1. Country Code TLD of the Root Domain (e.g. .co.uk, .de, .fr, .com.au, etc.)
2. Language of the Content Used on the Site
3. Links from Other Domains Targeted to the Country/Region
4. Geographic Location of the Host IP Address of the Domain
5. Manual Review/Targeting by Google Engineers and/or Quality Raters
6. Geo-Targeting Preference Set Inside Google Webmaster Tools
7. Registration of the Site with Google Local in the Country/Region
8. Address in On-Page Text Content
9. Address Associated with the Registration of the Domain
10. Geographic Location of Visitors to the Site (the country/region from which many/most visitors arrive)
11. Geo-Tagging of Pages via Meta Data (e.g. Dublin Core Meta Data Initiative)