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# Q&A on Using Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools

[Jerod Morris](#), [Chris Garrett](#), and [Sean Jackson](#)



TRANSCRIPT



## Q&A on Using Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools

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# Q&A on Using Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools

## Jerod Morris, Chris Garrett, and Sean Jackson

**Jerod:** Hello, hello, and welcome everybody to the latest Q&A, which is part of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. I'm your host, Jerod Morris, and I am here with Chris Garrett and Sean Jackson. Very excited to have both these guys here with me to answer your questions about SEO. Let me welcome these fine gentlemen in. Chris, how are you doing?

**Chris:** I'm doing great. I'll make sure I behave today, because this time Sean is with us, so I'll be polite and reasonable and professional.

**Jerod:** That's right. We will all be on our best behavior because Sean Jackson is here. Sean, how are you?

**Sean:** Hey, guys. Welcome to the webinar, everyone. I'm excited to be here. This will be fun.

**Jerod:** This month here on the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap, we're talking about maximizing your traffic with Rainmaker, and so in our last



session, we did a webinar on [How to Use Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools](#). We went through a lot of information in that session, so make sure that you go back and look at that.

In this session, we're going to answer your questions that you had based on that session, and maybe lingering questions that you've had on how to use some of these tools. We have Sean here, of course, because he is an expert in this area. He is the man who developed Scribe, which is what Rainmaker's SEO tools are based off of, so Sean will be able to give us a lot of insight both on SEO generally and on how the tools themselves work. With that said, let's hop in and let's start answering some questions. On this one, I've actually got the answer right there.

## Editing your slug (00:01:27)

**Jerod:** This is from Peter. Regarding the slug for a page or post, Peter knows that Rainmaker will automatically produce something, but if you were going to edit the slug, what SEO considerations come into play in deciding what is best? The number of words, relationship to the page or post, title, and when would you include what he thinks are called "stop words" in a slug, if ever?

First of all, I believe that you should always edit your slug. Again, there will be something there by default, but you want to make sure that it includes exactly the words that you want it to. Leave nothing to chance or automation. It's a



nice kind of default backup, but that's one of the first things I do after I edit my title, is I always go down and edit the slug. I'll show you here in just a second how to do that if you're not sure how to do that.

You should always edit your slug, and a good slug is going to include a keyword or a short keyword phrase, and if possible, it's going to answer the intent of the audience. Sean, that's a phrase that I got directly from you when you gave me some insight on this question. What did you mean by "answer the intent of the audience"?

**Sean:** If people are using "how to," then use "how to" in your slug. If people are asking, "what is," include "what is" in the slug. But you obviously always want to have it short, and you always want to have the keyword phrase in there. It is a best practice, in my opinion, to make sure that if you are writing something that is responding to a question, a "what," a "how," a "where," then include that in the slug, knowing that you're also going to pair it with your keywords. "How-to-do-content marketing." "How-to-do ..." Or, "Where-is-XYZ." It is okay to answer question's intent, but always the most important is to have the keyword in that slug always.

**Jerod:** Is there a rule of thumb on length? Like, you just said "how to do content marketing." That's five words long. Maybe not as elegant as like a single word slug, but is there any type of rule of thumb on how long it should be, or just how long it needs to be?



**Sean:** No. It has no ranking factor, and it really is designed for display inside of a search engine result page, so if you are answering someone's question and it shows up both in the title, it shows in the slug, and it shows in your description, then it has a higher probability of being engaged with, because you are answering a question to someone.

**Jerod:** Perfect. Okay. As to Peter's second question about stop words, stop words if you don't know, those are connecting words, like "a," or "is," or "with," or "but," or "to," like Sean just mentioned, that are often removed to make slugs simpler and more elegant. It's fine to remove them so long as their removal does not alter the actual meaning of your slug, or as in Sean's case, where he was talking about the intent of the audience, you would want it to say "how-to-do-content-marketing," not "how-content-marketing." That totally changes the meaning.

Same thing with this example right here, right? The difference between "what-is-hearing-loss," or "what-hearing-loss." Those are two very, very different things, and so I've got this link down here with [a blog post that I found](#) that really gives some good guidance on when you should and when you shouldn't remove stop words from your URL. Again, just think about it from an audience perspective. Think about it from the intent of the audience perspective, and remove them when it's not going to change the meaning, but if it will, then you want to keep them there.



## How to define your URL slug (00:04:51)

**Jerod:** If you are not quite sure how to define your URL slug, let's run through a very quick tutorial on how to do that.

When you are adding a new podcast episode, or a post, or a page, as soon as you enter your headline, Rainmaker is actually going to auto-populate a slug for you that basically just takes all the words and numerals in your headline and puts it into a slug with words separated by dashes.

As you can see, I entered this headline for a recent episode of The Showrunner podcast, and automatically it populates this slug. Now, you notice how long and kind of ugly that slug is, right? It's got some extraneous information that it doesn't need to have. If you click 'Edit' right here, you can edit your slug. You can add your own slug text, put whatever you want in here, and again, this is just showing you the edit screen with the default slug in there, but once you edit it with your own text, then click 'OK.'

Remember, keep it simple, but include a relevant keyword or keyword phrase that will immediately signal to an audience member what the page is about. In this case, the kind of "no-098" for "number 98" for the episode number is really not needed. I can also shorten the headline phrase into something simpler. Here, this is much simpler, right? "Time-management." It includes a relevant



keyword phrase and you'll also notice how the individual words, again, are separated by dash marks, and you want to do that.

Now, based on what Sean just said about using "how to," perhaps I could have made this even better by making this a how-to phrase. "How-to-manage-time-effectively." That would have been an alternate slug that would have worked as well. Something that makes sense, that's short, that doesn't include anything extraneous, and includes an important, relevant keyword.

One other consideration, specifically for podcasters, is you're going to be saying these URLs on your episodes, and so you probably want to take into consideration how easy it is to say and how easy it might be to remember, and then for someone to get to on a mobile device, where people listen to their podcasts most of the time.

You might consider using a numbering convention for your slugs, you know, "rainmaker.fm/audio/98," to make reading them easier, and to make remembering them easier. But me personally, I still think keywords are better, because they're better for search, and I think they're actually easier for your audience members to remember. But if you do listen to podcasts, you may hear some people use numbers, and that's why. If you want to do that yourself, this is how you do it, but hopefully with that explanation it gives you guidance to make a smart decision for how you're going to execute your slug strategy.



## Is it possible to repeat Tweets about particular posts and retweet after the passage of time? (00:07:27)

**Jerod:** All right. On to question 1a here from Peter. He says, "I have to admit that I have not used the Social Post Scheduling yet." He generally uses Hootsuite for that sort of thing. "Is it possible to repeat, say, Tweets about particular posts and revisit, retweet posts after the passage of time, say months later?" The answer to this is "not presently." You would actually need to recreate the social share to do it again. You can't just go in and duplicate one and repost it. Chris, anything to add on that one?

**Chris:** It's something we're going to be developing over time. The Social Post Scheduling is definitely something we're looking at, because we use it, so for ourselves we can see that there are things that it could do that it doesn't currently, and we'll keep developing it, as we'll develop everything else as well.

**Jerod:** Perfect.

## An example of using the Canonical link feature (00:08:16)

**Jerod:** Now, moving on to question number two from Jarmar. Jarmar says, "Jerod mentioned using the Canonical link feature for a blog post related to a



podcast. Can we see an example of that, and what SEO traffic advantages does that provide?" I'll be happy to, Jarmar.

First, the benefit of creating separate podcast posts and blog posts that I've found is that you can really optimize the on-page experience for each one. Remember, the biggest goal of SEO is to improve the experience, to optimize the experience for users. That is what in the long term will optimize your site for search engines, and so for me, I like to declutter the reading experience for blog posts, and then have a separate podcast post that will actually allow me to highlight attention on the player for the podcast. I can do that better, I think, with two separate posts as opposed to trying to do it all with one.

The benefit of using the Canonical URL is that since Google will filter duplicate content, though they won't penalize you, so you're not going to be penalized, but they will filter and choose what they think is the most relevant piece. Using the Canonical tag will ensure that the URL that you want to surface in search results is the one that actually surfaces. It gives you some control.

## Using a Canonical URL on the podcast version of a blog post (00:09:31)

**Jerod:** Let me show you an actual example of how this works, and this is from a post and a podcast that I put out earlier this week, actually. This is a real-life example of this in practice. Here is the blog post version. You'll notice how the



page is really clean, right? This is optimized for reading. I don't use a sidebar on this page for posts either, so everything about this individual URL, this page, is optimized for reading. If you see, I also provide a link right at the beginning to alert people to the podcast, should they prefer to listen to it, so it's right there and they have that option if they want to take it.

Now, here is the podcast episode page. You'll see how the page highlights the podcast player. I put it right at the top, even before any description. That also links out to other listening sources, if people would rather listen there as opposed to right here on the page. In this case, reading is secondary because I know people coming to this post want to listen. Then if you look a little bit further down the page, a link is actually provided over to the blog post so people know that they have that option too.

Now, the question is, which of these two pages would I prefer to surface in search engines? Well, I think the blog post page is the one that I would rather surface, because it has more text content, which should increase its likelihood of surfacing for relevant searches. That's the one that I want.

What I'm going to do is in the SEO widget, on the podcast edit page, under the Advanced tab, I've included the link to the blog post here as the Canonical URL. Doing this tells the search engines that the blog post is the "original content" and should be given preference over the podcast post for search results. The results, if you want to look at the results, just Googling a relevant phrase for that post is that the blog post is on the front page of search results



for this search, and again, it's the blog post, not the podcast episode page. That occurred for certain ... It might have occurred anyway, but it certainly occurred because I defined the Canonical URL on the podcast page and pointed it to the blog post.

Also, just as a side note, doing this test reminded me that I need to submit this site, The Assembly Call, to Google News, because I thought I had, but then upon further review, I realized that I hadn't, and I've been noticing that my links weren't coming up here in Google News.

Sometimes it's good, when it comes to SEO, to just go out and check and see how some of your posts are performing for keywords that you think you should be ranking on, because number one, you may realize, "Okay, I'm not ranking really as high as I think I should," and that's a check. Maybe you can go look at some of your fundamentals and make sure that you're doing things the right way, and number two, you might make big realizations like this one, that you need to have that site in Google News, because that's a nice additional source of traffic, and as you can see, the search results are much more attractive and much more likely to be clicked on.

## How do you get a letter grade? (00:12:26)

**Jerod:** Let's move on here to the next question, and this is from Christine. You will see that I've got my little placeholder here for short answers. We hadn't



answered this question until just minutes before we came live here on the Q&A, and Sean did some digging and answered this, and so Sean is going to give us an answer to this here in a second.

The question that Christine asked, she said that she entered both the keyword “proactive” and the key phrase “how to be proactive” into her traffic Outreach area, and was graded with a D. She wonders what this is looking at, because when you search “how to be proactive” in Google, it pulls a definition from her article and provides the link to an article on her site. That’s actually the very first result listed. She was wondering why she was getting a D on her site, and Sean, you did a little bit of digging and found out why this has happened.

**Sean:** Yes. Back at the end of January, there was a change, and that change had not been replicated into our system. However, a question like this, which goes to a logic in our tool, required us to immediately take a look and we have corrected it, so Christine, if you’re listening, you can go in now and you will get an A on that. Let me explain what the tool does, to give context to it.

There are actually several issues that are brought up in this particular question. The very first is that we have a feature that, based on a certain keyword or keyword phrase, we compare your site’s content to content that is already ranking. We look at that and see what the differences are to give you a grade, to say how hard it would be compared to what is ranking currently, that your content, your specific content, will have to meet to be in that cluster of top-ranking content.



In her particular case, her site was listed, but we look at the page level, not at the site level. She had a page that was in the top five, but when we went and dug further, she actually had two pages, one of which was in the top five, the other one was not.

We did a review very quickly, made a change literally before this call, and that is how we want to get feedback from you on our tools when it comes to the SEO side. If you see something that logically doesn't make sense, by all means bring up this question, because if there's a logic problem, those can be corrected, and in this case it was literally because of a change in one of the system providers that was resulting in it giving inaccurate information.

Now, but this also brings up two other things. Notice that "proactive" and "how to be proactive," well, there also happens to be a dermatological product called Proactiv without the E, which by the way, if you search for proactive just by that, you're going to see all these ads and other things about being not proactive, but just about this product called Proactiv without the E.

There is a difference in the search engines between these two phrases, between Proactiv, which is seen as a product, versus "how to be proactive," which obviously is not related to the product. Christine, good job of pointing this out to us. Also, looking at that "how to be proactive" and understanding that that is really different than the singular "proactive" phrase.

**Jerod:** Yup. All righty. Thank you for that, Sean.



## Is there going to be a feature to allow for automated social scheduling? (00:15:39)

**Jerod:** As we move on here, Christine had another question. She's wondering, "Is there any chance you're adding a feature in the future to allow for automated social scheduling? For example, when a blog post gets published, it will automatically post on Facebook and Twitter."

One thing here, Christine, is you can actually already have the social posts go live when a scheduled post publishes, using the Social Scheduler tool. That is in there. You just can't set it from the post screen. You can do it in the social scheduling tool, and we talked about that in our last webinar, and went through a tutorial of it.

Also, if you want all of your posts to automatically be posted to your social accounts when published on your site, there are actually third party apps that can assist with that and do that. Like, let's say that you want every single post, when it goes live, to be Tweeted, there are third party apps that will help you do that. You wouldn't need to use the Social Scheduler for that.

Chris, anything that you would add here to Christine's question?

**Chris:** Well, like I said before, we're going to keep developing the Social Scheduler tool. What I will say, though, is I tend to wait a little bit before sharing my stuff on Twitter or Facebook, especially Facebook, because the first



time Facebook gets the link, it tends to miss parts of your content, especially the featured image, or your social image. It takes about 20-30 minutes unless you use the Facebook Debugger.

I don't personally like the social schedule to go out exactly as the post is published. I like to wait a little bit, and as we said in the previous webinar, when I publish, there's always something that I find that stands out that I made a mistake on. I've got a typo, or I've missed something. I can miss whole words because I hallucinate what I think I wrote instead of what I actually wrote, so I don't like to do the social sharing immediately as it's published anyway. I like to wait a little bit.

**Jerod:** I agree with you. It's funny, like, when something is published, it's like I'll run over and do a last quick proofread, and I always find something that I want to change, and I'll go change it real quick. It's kind of a good rule of thumb to have.

**Chris:** Yeah.

## How can SEO and social be used with curated content? (00:17:50)

**Jerod:** All righty. Question number four, from Arthur. Arthur wants to know, "How can SEO and social be used with curated content? For example, when



using Rainmaker's post level SEO and social tools, can I treat a post I've created from curated content the same way I would for a traditional post? Would this change under either of these circumstances?" Number one, he adds a single curated source to one of his own articles as a way to enhance it, or number two, he combines multiple curated sources to create a curation only post, similar to Brian Clark's Further.net. "Do you have any other tips or tricks for using SEO and social for curated content?"

The answer here, Arthur, is that I guess I would kind of pose a question back to you. Why would the SEO and social strategy for a post with curated content be any different than a post with all original content? Either way, you have a URL with content on it, which delivers some amount of value, and you are looking to get that URL in front of the people who will find it valuable.

To me, you need a headline that makes a promise, that your content, curated or otherwise, is going to deliver on, and that headline should include keywords that your audience will recognize and use when searching for the answers that your content provides. Essentially, you're "optimizing" a curated post the same way that you would optimize a regular post.

I want to run through a couple of examples here to kind of illustrate this, and Chris and Sean, I definitely want to get your ideas, if you disagree with me here, if you think I'm missing anything, but Chris, let's look at a post from your site here, Maker Hacks, right?



This is a curated post. You went through and you found 34 3D printing Facebook groups, and you've got them all listed here on this page. Now, the headline makes a very simple promise that the content delivers on, so you tell people they're going to find 34 great 3D printing Facebook groups, and you list them.

You're delivering on your promise, and it's also optimized for searches around 3D printing Facebook groups, which you can very easily see people Googling if they want to find a group of people, like-minded, who enjoy talking about 3D printing. It's also structured to attract social media attention, because you've got that big number at the beginning. You use a word like "best," so you kind of ... You're doing two things there with your headline, both of which are smart.

The only element of this page that might be different from a normal post on the site is the goal, because the goal for this page is to attract a click, and then to have the post be read, and ultimately deliver value in the form of people learning about these Facebook groups, which because of the way the post is structured, you're assuming that they're eventually going to click over to. But you're obviously hoping that before people click away, some authority is built for yourself, and maybe even that some of those people decide to subscribe.

I would just add the only other thing that might be different, and we'll talk about this a little bit later when we talk about the "no follow" link, is with some



of your links. If you're doing a curated post, you may want to "no follow" some of those links to not pass so much of your link juice on, but otherwise, most of what you're doing is going to be the same.

**Chris:** Let me just jump in, though. The actual goal was, it was link bait. I wanted people to link to me with the phrase "3D printing."

**Jerod:** Aha. Okay, so an additional goal.

**Chris:** Yeah. The reason it's, "34 of the Best 3D Printing Facebook Groups" rather than "34 of the Best Facebook Groups" is I wanted people to link to me. I wanted at least a few more links with the anchor text "3D printing" in it. It's link bait. That's the reason I created it. You'll notice there are no social shares. That's because since the last webinar, I actually changed to all HTTPS, and as we said, it blanks all your social shares, because the unique links, the HTTP, is seen as different than HTTPS, so there's no social shares anymore. It actually was shared a lot on Facebook, unsurprisingly.

**Sean:** Yeah. I want to bring ... That's a great point, Chris, by the way, and I do want to address just for a second "HTTP" versus "HTTPS." This causes a lot, a lot of SEO problems out there, even for a company of our size. If you have [Google Search Console](#), and you went from HTTP to HTTPS, those are two different sites in the Google Search Console. Same for Bing. Be very cognitive of the fact that the way that search engines and certainly a lot of social media,



et cetera, look at these pages, the protocol, which is HTTP or HTTPS, are seen as distinctly different sites, even though they share the same domain and subdomains in the URL stream. This is a great point. This has been a constant issue in the SEO world, as people move from HTTP to HTTPS, or the secured version of the web protocol.

**Jerod:** Do your rankings change, or do you need to do anything else when you switch to HTTPS? Because we covered that in the last webinar, but we didn't exactly bring that point up that you just made.

**Sean:** No. You just need to be very conscious of the fact that a lot of the systems out there ... Search engines as an indexing vehicle are very, very smart, but when it comes to the support tools they have, again, for Search Console, being the one that is clearly obvious to me, social media aspects of these things, which of course social media doesn't per se play a role in the SEO side, but it does play a role in content discovery.

You just need to be very, very conscious of this, and if you see an anomaly, and you think, "Oh, that's right. They put a security certificate on my site." That anomaly is related to the fact that HTTPS is now the preferred primary way, and anything it disconnects us to will cause issues like what you see on the screen.



**Chris:** Rainmaker does redirect from the HTTP to the HTTPS, so there might be a little speed bump, but it should recover because we're actually doing permanent redirects.

**Sean:** I'm just talking in general, and also on your Google Analytics, because ... I mean your Google Search Console, because they are seen as two different sites in Search Console.

**Chris:** Yeah. Christine's asking, "Is switching a bad thing or is it a good thing?" Switching to HTTPS is a good thing. It's one of those "pull off the Band-Aid" things that the longer you leave it, the harder it's going to be. That's why I took the plunge after the last webinar. I have to swallow the fact that my vanity metrics of my shares have got to drop, but it will go back and it will recover. Might as well do it now.

**Sean:** You have to go to HTTPS. I will tell you now, it is absolutely a ranking factor. It is absolutely something that the web in the next several years, they will pretty much ignore non-HTTPS sites. I mean, just think of it in that way. That will be the penalty, that you will be ignored if you're not securing your site up.

**Chris:** All the optimization that browser manufacturers and all the web hosting people and networks, they're all optimizing for HTTPS. Nobody's really paying much attention to HTTP anymore. Over time, you'll actually find that



people can access your site faster because Firefox, Chrome, Microsoft, they're all going to optimize for HTTPS traffic.

**Sean:** With the recent legislative changes, more people are concerned about the encryption of their data anyway, even though the meta-information will still stay. You're right, Chris. It is pulling a Band-Aid off. Better to do it now than wait til it hurts you later.

**Jerod:** We can give no greater endorsement of that fact than Chris and I both have done that for our sites, after preparing these webinars, realizing how important it was. We did it for our sites, so we recommend that you do it for yours as well.

**Chris:** Even though I lost the social shares.

**Sean:** Tanya, no. Tanya asked a question, "I changed to HTTPS. Should I include both?" No. Stay with HTTPS, and never look back.

**Jerod:** Yup. All righty. Back to this question about curated content, and Chris, I'm glad you brought up the point of a post like this being link bait, because one of the things that you could do when you create a post like this and you see it all the time, and you want to be careful to do it in a way that isn't annoying, but when you link to people, you can obviously let people know that you've linked to them. And then that may encourage them to obviously



link back to this post, because they want to show their audience that they got linked in this post, or they want to use it as a resource, so it is a good piece of content to have as bait for backlinks, as Chris mentioned.

**Chris:** That's ego bait.

**Jerod:** Yeah.

**Chris:** Tweet them, say, "I mentioned you on my list," and people might retweet it, might share it.

**Jerod:** Yeah. Exactly. He mentioned Brian's site, Further.net, so here is [a curated post from Further.net](#), and it includes links to external articles about health, wealth, wisdom, and travel. That's the whole idea here, with Further.net. While it's based as a newsletter, you can get to these posts just on the website as well. They have individual URLs, as you can see. Further.net/start-habit-sticks.

The headline, again, as we talked about, makes a promise that the post needs to deliver on, whether it's a curated post or not, and hopefully it does it with more substance than just another link to click. I think if you can, the best curated post will give people a little bit of something there at your site that keeps them there for a little while, allows them to engage.



Hopefully provides some time for being on that page to confer some authority to you before they just go and click on to another site. That's why I like what Brian does here at the beginning, because he includes a useful five-paragraph description that describes his own personal experience with habits, and sells the value of clicking on this first link right here.

Now, in this particular case, it's a link to a guest post that was written on Further.net. This link will keep people on the site, but usually with Brian's posts, it's not. This is an external link. But again, he's providing this kind of short but still useful description before people click away.

Now, what is the benefit there? Well, the presence of this copy will keep people on the page longer, it will give them value independent of the next link click, and that thereby will confer authority onto Brian and the site, and it will keep people on this page a little bit longer, rather than just coming and then bouncing right off to another link that they're clicking on.

Then, again, hopefully it compels the reader to subscribe, because that's ultimately the goal, and there's a pop-up here that comes up on the page using site notices, and the goal there is for Brian to get more people to subscribe to the email newsletter from these curated posts that are out there on the web.

That kind of walks you through a couple of examples there, and hopefully that answers the question about what to do with a curated post. Chris or Sean,



anything else on curated posts and what you can do from an SEO and social perspective?

**Chris:** Yeah. I've just got one point to make about curated content. A lot of the concern about curated content is the idea of a duplicate content penalty.

Now, we're not talking about duplicating your content. What we're talking about is curation. You're not going to take large portions of somebody else's content. You get a quote or paraphrase. You're not going to have big blocks of duplicated content. Having these posts is adding value, and the curation is you're using your authority, and your selection, and your description, and your call to actions to make the content and the links appealing and valuable. What you're not doing is copy and pasting.

**Sean:** Duplicate content is probably one of the most overblown fears out there, and it continuously comes up. I will say in most circumstances, you're not going to have a duplicate content penalty. It was designed to address a very specific aspect of websites that had really messed up URL structures, where they had the same content on five, six different pages with different URLs attached to them. Chris, your point is 100% right, and I know it's a constant question, and I think your answer is spot-on.



## What's the ideal length of the SEO title and SEO description? (00:29:53)

**Jerod:** Yup. All righty. Moving on now to our next question. This is from Dan. Dan wonders, "Is it better to keep your SEO title to 60 characters or fewer, and your SEO description to 140 to 150 characters or fewer, or is it better to have these items read well with all the necessary keywords in place and go over the character limits a bit?"

The rule of thumb here, Dan, is that the shorter, the better. For titles in particular, you want to put your most important keywords toward the beginning, and then don't worry about including all possible variations in the title. Trust the search engines to get it, because they're pretty sophisticated, and they're getting pretty good at that kind of thing.

For descriptions, you really want to think like a copywriter, because descriptions aren't actually an official ranking factor, but the words that you write will influence clicks, because the descriptions are visual in the search engine results, and clicks are obviously going to influence traffic, visitor expectations, and ultimately rankings, because it can improve the experience that people actually have when they get to your page.

They're not that official ranking factor, but they can still indirectly have a really big impact, and so you want to make sure that you're paying attention to the



words that are visible, and there's no reason to go over the character limit because it's not going to help you once you get past that.

Sean, anything to add here on titles and descriptions?

**Sean:** I think the most important thing to remember is that the result that appears on a search engine or any discovery engine out there, be it Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, I mean it doesn't matter, those are ads. They are really ads. By being focused on what the user needs and doing it in the most succinct way, which is a discipline of copywriting, is always the best rule of thumb. If you really need more space, you probably need to think back on what you're trying to give them to entice them to click that ad in the search results, and not try to be as overly descriptive as possible. I can't reiterate this enough.

**Jerod:** Sean, let's be clear. When you say "ad," you mean an ad for your site, not to be confused with a paid ad that ...

**Sean:** That's right. It's an ad for your content.

**Jerod:** ... is literally on the page elsewhere, yeah.

**Sean:** Right. Certainly there's ads on the page, but then there's an ad for your content, which you get to control, and you get much more latitude actually



in what you say about it than in generic ads that you would see on a search result page, right? Because you have more space, and you want to increase the shareability of that content so when people see it on, let's say, something like Twitter, on a social engine, then the words are truncated enough so that people can augment and append to it as they're continuing the sharing process. It is always, always, shorter the better.

This is a way to think about it, is as an ad for your content. If you think of it that way, you will force yourself to get much shorter in everything from the title, to the description, to the slug, et cetera, to be succinct and enticing for them to click on it.

**Jerod:** I didn't include a screenshot here, but really, really take advantage when you're in there creating a post, creating a page or a podcast episode in Rainmaker, take advantage of the Snippet Preview. It's down there in the SEO widget that will show you exactly how your result will appear in a search engine with the title and the description and the slug.

You really want to look at that and manicure that, be meticulous about it so that it looks exactly how you want it to. Because again, that's what people are going to see. That's that ad, as Sean said, for your site that's going to be there in the search results, and having that visual, being able to see it, can sometimes really help you decide, "Okay, let me rearrange how these words are. Let me make sure that this fits in here." You really want to make sure that you take advantage of that.



## SEO low-hanging fruit (00:33:31)

**Jerod:** Moving on now to question number six, from Will. Will says that he has paid very little attention to rankings, and continues to see his list grow, likely from creating worthy content that gets shared. He lucked out on a blog post a year ago about a dangerous dog drug, and now appears on page one of the search engine results page for that drug's name. In general, what few low-hanging fruits should he be picking that aren't just good content plus Rainmaker goodness, to increase his SEO?

Let's look at a few pieces of low-hanging SEO fruit that aren't just good content and Rainmaker goodness, and these are the three that I came up with, and then it will be interesting to see if Chris and/or Sean either disagree or have some other ones to add.

Will, this is what I would say. Number one, and Will runs an amazing website about homeopathic ... He's a homeopathic veterinarian, so natural remedies for dogs and for other animals. Will has tremendous respect in the industry, so I would leverage your authority into backlinks. You'll be able to get guest post spots and to be on podcasts.

When you are on podcasts, make sure to request a link in their show notes. Submit articles to relevant roundups. If there's someone out there doing news roundups in your industry, similar to what we showed with Chris, or similar to



what Brian does with Further, submit your articles to get in those roundups, and that will help you get some really high quality backlinks.

By the way, stick around for the end of this Q&A because we go over some strategies for diversifying your backlinks as well. You want to make sure that you pay attention to that as well. That's number one. Leverage your authority into backlinks.

Number two, then, would be to focus on your internal link structure, especially to your Cornerstone pages. Because, again, you have a site with a lot of authority. It's been around for a while. It ranks well, so your site actually has a lot of what is called link juice.

Link juice is still a thing, and it's still relevant, and with every link, you're passing link juice on to whatever site you're linking to. You want to pass a lot of that on to your own pages. You think about, what are your Cornerstone topics? What phrases do you really want to rank well for? What pages are necessary for people visiting your site to go to regularly? Link to those pages often within your content, and link to them on ... Vary, obviously, the anchor text that you're linking on, but really focus on that internal link structure.

Then number three is to pay attention to the details. Once you've been around for a while, sometimes those smaller details can start to make a difference. URL slugs, like we already talked about. Including keywords in your H2 subheads. Including descriptive alt tags on images.



Now, to be clear, from everything that I've read, the alt text in images isn't actually a ranking factor, but what it is, is remember that these details aren't even as much about optimizing your site technically, even though a lot of times that's how we think of them for a search engine, but it's about improving the visitor experience. What does an alt tag do?

Well, if an image doesn't come up, then the alt tag is going to basically be a description of what that image is. If for any reason that image doesn't pop up, at least instead of just seeing a blank space or that little logo that comes up when people don't see an image, there will actually be a description there. You know, "Image of a dog on a vet's table." At least people can kind of visualize it and see what it might be, and again, that's going to improve their experience on your page, which in the big picture, then, is going to improve overall the optimization of your site.

I think those are three pieces of low-hanging SEO fruit that certainly a site with your authority and just how long it's been around would really be helpful, and I think for everybody watching this, these would be three really good things to pay attention to as you move forward. Sean, would you disagree with any of these, and/or add any to this list?

**Sean:** No, and it's funny, because the low-hanging fruit is really just, make sure you're covering all the basics, right? It's only because we get so busy during the day and during our lives that we often sometimes let the basic stuff go away. For example, Google News for your site Assembly Call, right?



**Jerod:** Yeah.

**Sean:** Think about it. That's one little thing that isn't here in your site that you could do that has nothing to do with Rainmaker SEO. It's just making sure people in Google know that you have a news site that they can pull up for references on Indiana basketball. I mean, those are the simple things.

Another point: Have you taken time to go through your keywords in Google Search Console? I mean, that's the only place that you can really get Google keywords now. Have you gone through and looked at that list lately? I mean, maybe in there is some content ideas. I think that if you would take the time to kind of look through, you may find, "Holy cow. I'm getting a lot of people coming to something that I haven't really gone into in a lot of detail."

Especially on the podcast that you bring up there at the very number one, I will tell you, and Jerod, you know, and I know, and Chris knows, when you're doing a podcast, you're always looking for good ideas and content.

As a guest on a show, make sure to reference a post on your site that answers or has value to the audience, and then make sure in the followup to the interviewer, "Thank you for interviewing me. Here is that link to that post that I referenced repeatedly during the interview." Great way to get the link. Very, very easy, and certainly not as onerous as trying to get someone to guest blog post request on their site.



**Jerod:** Yeah. Boy, that's a great strategy, Sean. Yeah. That's a great strategy.

**Sean:** Like I was thinking with Chris's 34 Facebook Groups, if he was doing a maker interview, he would say, "There are some great groups out there. There's 34 of them I identified. Let me tell you about two or three, and I'll make sure that there's a link to my post that gives you the entire 34 of them." Right?

**Jerod:** Chris, what would you add?

**Chris:** Well, I'm just going to pick it back up from what Sean was just saying. I'm shy, but I very rarely turn down an interview request, because it's a way of giving some value to the audience, but in a way that they're going to have to talk about you, and they always say, "Where can we find out more about you, and more about this subject?" Right?

Every single podcast, every single YouTube Hangout, they always have to say, "Tell us a little bit about yourself." And at the end, they say, "Where can we find out more?" It's a way of getting a good link back. Guest posts are an excellent way of getting some tactical links, but remember there's a lot of publications that actually pay people to write articles. Some of my best links have come from me being paid to write for these publications. It doesn't have to be free.

Speaking. Speaking gigs can give you some great backlinks, because of all the people who go to the conference and write their show notes about this conference they've just been to, and they quote you and stuff. They'll link



to you. They'll link to your social media account, or they'll link to your site or your articles. You can get paid for speaking, so you can get paid to generate really healthy backlinks. Think outside the box a little bit. Have a look at your competitors, where they're getting links from, and it will inspire you to think of new ways to get links that are natural and organic, but also powerful.

**Jerod:** By the way, Sean, in the chat, Tanya has noticed something about you that we've all known for a long time, and that is that Sean is very passionate about SEO.

**Sean:** But it's funny, because I hate the term SEO. I love optimizing content for discovery, is the better one, but you are correct. I am passionate about creating content that gets easily discovered, and the tactics that go towards that, so you are 100% correct.

**Jerod:** Yes, which is why we couldn't have these sessions without you.

**Sean:** There you go.

## What do page score and site score mean? (00:41:19)

**Jerod:** All righty. Speaking of Tanya, perfect segue there, Tanya's question is next. She wants to know, "What do these two really mean? Page score, and site score." For one page, she got a page score of 100, and a site score of 50. As she says, the 100 sounds fantastic. Does that mean that she wins?



The page score and site score rank how optimized your post and your site as a whole is for the keyword that you have chosen to analyze for. Without more detail, the site score can be difficult to judge, but if the primary keyword for this post is also a primary keyword for your entire site, then you should maybe take it as a suggestion to improve the site's overall optimization for that keyword. Sean, is that an accurate description?

**Sean:** That is correct. The page score is literally, "How well does this page meet the basic elements of enhancing its discovery on search engines?" Are you doing certain things that are both best practice, as well as are you making it clear to understand what the primary content or terms are on that page?

The site score is fundamentally different, because we did notice over the years, as Google started to refine both their indexing and their ranking, that the content on the overall site started to matter as much as the individual page.

I'll use as an example, back in the day, we used to have these big article sites where anyone could submit any article, and you put it on these big aggregation sites. I know this because I was the SEO person for PR Newswire, when they revamped their site many, many years ago.

They had all this content out there, and we spent a lot of time on page stuff, but then all of a sudden they had a ranking drop, because when Google to change how they looked at the entire site, it was, "I don't want these generic



sites that have all sorts of divergent content. We like sites that are focused on specific ideas.”

Hence, the site score is a function of, “How well does this site cover this term across the board, not just on the page?” It is very likely you will have a well-optimized content on a page, but the site, if it doesn’t mention that term frequently, or in such a way that the majority of the content really addresses it, you will always get a lower site score.

Ideally, you get higher, but trust me, the difference between 88 versus 100 is not that big of a difference. Meaning you want to get over the majority of it, but the nuance of one versus the other, don’t get too hung up on that. Just continue to write well and make the site focused on a particular idea, both of which will improve your scores.

**Jerod:** Real quick, if you’re wondering where that comes from, that comes from the Content Optimizer, and we went through a detailed tutorial of the Content Optimizer in the last webinar, so if you missed that, make sure to go back and check, but it’s the Content Optimizer that is there on your pages and your posts, and that’s where you get the page score and the site score down there in the site.

**Sean:** Your site score will change over time, by the way. It’s not uncommon that it will start out at a low number, and then as you continue to write about the subject matter, the site score will improve over time. The site score is



always in a state of flux, whereas the page score is specific to the content that is on that page.

## SEO tricks for search (00:44:36)

**Jerod:** Yup. Then Tanya is wondering, “What about SEO tricks for search, like submitting your site and pages to Google? Things like that.”

As I mentioned earlier, while you should certainly consider submitting your site to Google News if it qualifies, you don't need to “submit” your site to Google. If you have a new site, you simply start posting your links to your social media accounts, and the search engines will follow, or get a link somewhere else, and then once you're in the index, the only real trick is to show search engines in a variety of ways, as we've been discussing on this session and the last one, that you're delivering an exceptional visitor experience. Is this overly simplistic here, Sean, or are there other kind of tricks that we could point out?

**Sean:** No. I will tell you that always, always have a Google Search Console site as well as [Bing Webmaster Tools](#). By default, the moment you create a site, just register it with those two services. That immediately tells the search engines, “I'm here. I have information that is of importance to you.” And that's the number one.



Secondly, there are ways to expedite the process of indexing your content, primarily by putting a Tweet out there with a link to it. Because the Twitter fire hose is now being consumed by Google. There are studies that show that by submitting a Tweet out there with a link to your content will put it into the index faster, so that is one way. There's actually a new feature that just came out recently where you can talk about submitting your page to Google, in the Google search box, and it will actually put up a form where you can submit it in there. I think cover your basics, submit to Search Console and Webmaster Tools.

Secondly, be considering the social media implications so that that link will then be exposed via Twitter to Google, and then count on the fact that Google is getting really, really good at indexing things that are irrelevant, and what I mean by that is if you're on a continuous publishing schedule, they realize you have new things to add to the index, versus someone who only posts maybe once a year, where they realize maybe it's just not that important to index it in a priority fashion from everything else that we have.

There's no real trick other than maybe the Twitter trick, if you will, but just make sure you have a Rainmaker site with the site map in the Google Search Console, and you'll be taken care of.

**Jerod:** Yup. Then this is kind of cool. Tanya added in her question that she has a creative 404 page, and we had mentioned in a recent Rainmaker Platform Newsletter to send creative 404 pages if you have them, and she said, "I think



I've got one. Go find it." I did. This is the 404 page here for Tanya's site, and I bring this up both because it's creative and a great 404 page. I mean, it's great because there's a call to action on it, and if you go below it, there's a form in the footer for entering people's name and email address, and the reason I want to mention this is because I want to point out we haven't had a chance yet, the custom 404 feature inside of Rainmaker.

I'm not going to go into it in great detail here, but the way that you get to it if you're not familiar is go to Settings>Content, and then you'll see the 404 page. Either you can select a landing page if you want to, or you can make it a custom 404 page, and you give it a title, and this is actually the one that I use on AssemblyCall.com.

If you want to go to AssemblyCall.com and find [the 404 page](#), you'll kind of see it. It's got a funny video of Indiana's old coach Bob Knight on there, and just kind of some funny stuff that if you're not an IU fan, you won't get, but an IU fan would understand. It's just kind of a fun way to add a little bit of personality and make sure that if people do land on a 404 page, they're kind of getting some value, and then that you point them in the right direction for where they should go next. Thanks for sending that over, Tanya, and for reminding me of that, because it's something I've been meaning to point out.



## What should we do for SEO landing pages? (00:48:24)

**Jerod:** All right. On now to question number eight, from Claire. Claire says, "What should we do for SEO on landing pages? Is it not necessary?" She said that she finds that the SEO summary, and she's actually talking about the Landing Page tool in Rainmaker, never shows the content having the target term in it.

The SEO in general, the way that I would answer this is that the SEO for a landing page is not going to be fundamentally different from any other page. In fact, we should think of all pages as landing pages, especially when it comes to optimizing for search and social, and that means in terms of what we're doing with our title tag, what we're doing with our description, the fact that every single page should have a singular goal that we want to lead people toward. In that case, a blog post page is a landing page. We should think of everything as a landing page.

Now, specifically as it relates to Rainmaker, the pages that are built using Rainmaker's Landing Page tool, the Content Optimizer will not always provide accurate results, as Claire has found, so really want to point this out here. It's a bug, and actually it's going to depend on which content areas you use. The Content Optimizer will be able to read some, but others it won't, and that can kind of skew the results.



If you want to check your content with the Optimizer tool, and you're building a landing page using the original Landing Page tool of Rainmaker, the best way to do it is to paste your content into a regular post or page, and then run it through the Content Optimizer that way, and then you can make any edits, transfer them back over to your landing page, and then simply delete that draft page. That's kind of the one way to get around it. I recognize not the most convenient way to do it, but given how things are currently, that's the best way if you really want to use that Content Optimizer on a page built with Rainmaker's Landing Page tool, and have it provide you with accurate results.

Chris, anything to add on that question?

**Chris:** Just you get into a habit of doing the right things. We've talked about the low-hanging fruit, and the basics. You will get into the habit of just naturally doing these things so you'll not have to lean on the tool quite as much going forward.

**Jerod:** Yeah. Good point.

## Using the site score as an indicator (00:50:34)

**Jerod:** Next up, we have Tracie. Tracie's question has to do with the Content Optimizer. She has 14 posts so far. Most are around 1500 words. Some are a little over 2000 words, and a couple are around 1000 words. She has a page



score of 100 on all but one, which has an 88. That is phenomenal, and clearly she's doing the right things with her posts.

The site scores for her main focused keywords, "emotional eating" and "mindless emotional eating," range from 38 to 62. Will her site score go up with more pages, and it's just an amount/number of posts issue, or is there something else that she needs to do? How much should she be looking at the site score as an indication that she's on the right track with SEO?

Tracie, as you create more content centered on the key term, your site score will go up, as Sean explained earlier. It's not a function of number of pages, per se, but of content overall that is centered on your keyword. Sean, do you want to add maybe any more depth to that?

**Sean:** No. Just realize that as you add more pages that are off-topic, the lower your score will be. As you add more pages that are on topic, then your score will improve. It is dynamic over time. You could have a 10 page site, you could have a 100 page site, a 1000 page site, and if you're all over the board on the primary keyword term, then your site score will go down, but if all the pages are focused on it, they're centered on it, they are in the right range, if you will, meaning that the primary keyword is being identified on the content page, and all of those pages share those same primary keywords, then they will come up and your site score will improve over time.



**Jerod:** Sean, how would you counsel somebody who has a site where they're covering a lot of different topics, and want to attract search from a lot of different areas? Like, take Copyblogger, right? We want to rank for landing pages, and content marketing, and email marketing, and all these different things. How do we make sure that we have a good site score that is focused appropriately, but that is also general enough to be able to allow us to target a range of keywords?

**Sean:** Right. You do that because you will fill up the quantity of posts that are related to that specific term. Content marketing, in the case of Copyblogger. We have a lot of content about content marketing, right? It's hard to not see a post that doesn't at least mention it in some way, form, or fashion, to various degrees, whether it's intentional or unintentional.

If you're going to cover a range of topic like email marketing, which we do, native advertising, content marketing, you're going to end up creating a lot of posts centered on that, versus a one-off. That's really what the score is designed to do, is to say, "If you're just creating a one-off post, that's great, but that's not what the majority of your content is about on the site."

It could be a potentially low score for the site, because you only have one or two pieces in context of the 100, 200, 300, et cetera. You can really focus a site down by concentrating on two, three, four words, but you're writing a lot of content around that. Native advertising, we do very well for that, because we



wrote an entire series of posts around native advertising. Same with content marketing. Same with email marketing.

## Can you be penalized by Google if the sites you link to are not of the same standard? (00:53:45)

**Jerod:** Yup. Okay. Now we have Jeff's question. He says, "Hi, guys. Loving these trainings." His questions are, number one, "If I apply your advice on best SEO practice" to his site, could he still be penalized by Google if the sites that he links to are not of the same standard? Number two, is the external backlinks tab, Outreach options, the way to check?

I mentioned this earlier, Jeff, but every link on your site passes link juice, which in other words is kind of your earned authority and trust with search engines. It passes it from your site to whatever site is being linked to. You don't want to waste your link juice on any site that you might question. Again, this is also a reason why the internal linking is important, so that you're spreading your link juice to other pages on your site that you want to rank well for particular terms.

If you question the site that you are linking to, use the `rel="nofollow"` attribute in your hyperlink. I've provided an example here so that you can actually see the HTML for how that works, right? If you're going to link to SpammySite.biz, you've got the anchor text, "Click here to see an example of a spammy



site." Well, in your A tag, you want to add `rel="nofollow"`. That means that the search engines then will not follow that link, and you won't pass link juice on to them. You're not going to be penalized, quote-unquote, but you just won't be leaking out your link juice to a site that shouldn't have it.

Then in terms of the Outreach options, those are there to help you find sites that you can potentially get links from. I don't know that I would use that necessarily as a guide for what sites you wouldn't want to link to, or that would be questionable. Sean, do you have any insight on either one of those questions?

**Sean:** No. We call it "link love," and the currency of the search community is links, right? That's the currency we trade in. I would say that you're basically giving part of your money to someone else, and so you want to give it to people that I think sometimes are deserving of that. You can always link to Wikipedia, but Wikipedia really doesn't need your link love. They've got enough currency. They're fine.

Maybe a new site starting out, maybe you want to go ahead and give them some of that link love, but if you ever question it, realize that links are the currency of SEO, and you are giving part of that currency out every time you link to someone. How much love do you want to share? That's where you use or make the determination of the `rel="nofollow"` versus leaving it out.



As far as the Outreach options, truly that's what is indicated here. This is a place to go and start your thinking about, "Who can I go get links from?" Are there government sites? Are there educational sites? Are there other blog sites out there that I can go and reach out to, and through that discovery process, find opportunities to contribute to their audience with additional information that is valuable to them through linking back to your site?

## What would be some situations to use follow versus nofollow for links? (00:56:44)

**Jerod:** Nicholas asked, "What would be some situations to use follow versus nofollow for links?" One example off the top of my head, right, like let's say that on a post on The Assembly Call, I want to cite the point spread for a game, and I want to provide a link because I want to show the reference for where I got that from, but I don't want to pass link juice on to a gambling site. Then I might use the link, but I might add the rel="nofollow" tag to that link. Sean, any other examples that kind of come off the top of your head? Maybe more realistic ones for this audience than that one, that they should maybe look out for, for when they should do this?

**Sean:** No. I think by default, you have to use your best judgment. Obviously, any link to a page on your site should never have rel="nofollow", right? You always want to come in there. There's certain very niche cases where you want



to link sculpt your site, but that is so advanced that quite frankly it's in very rare circumstances where it comes up.

Generally speaking, if it's a really, really big site like CNN, Wikipedia, big news source, if you don't want to share your love, then don't need to, because they're not going to miss it. I would say for the most part, use nofollow on exterior sites unless you really like them and you want to give them part of that currency from your site to them. Maybe the rule of thumb, if you want to really be fastidious, is everyone's a nofollow unless I specifically say, "I want you to follow this link, because I want to share some of the love with someone I think would have benefit towards it."

**Jerod:** Just to make sure we're clear, like, there's not a ... Are you actually leaking link juice ... Let's say that you link to Wikipedia, right? They're taking some of your link juice. That doesn't, like, deplete your own amount, right?

**Sean:** It degrades it. It does take some away from you, but not a huge amount. You've got to remember. I mean, these are very nuanced conversations that we have in the SEO space, but in general, yes.

Every site, every page, has a link authority. You are passing some of that authority from your site over to them. Again, being a good resource means sometimes you will put lots of links on your site to third party sites, and again, you have to make the determination, "How much of my authority am I willing to give to them with a follow link?"



That's something that, again, as you're looking at sculpting a site down, you have those conversations out there. Is it huge? No. Is it going to make a giant difference? Probably not. But if you're looking for best practice, which is where this question applies to, then I would say yeah, be very cognitive that you're sharing some of your authority with a site, and if you're giving it to Wikipedia, they may not need it, whereas Bob's new site may want it.

**Jerod:** But to be clear, if you're referencing something from Wikipedia, then you need to link to it, because that's the best practice of the web, and not doing that, someone may look at you and say, "Wait. This person's not linking to Wikipedia. They're not referencing their source. I'm not coming back here again."

**Sean:** Links are the currency of the web. Great content's going to have lots of links embedded in its content, and I will tell you that best practice is, if I mention something that I've referenced on my site before, I link to it. If I'm referencing a third party site, then I have to ask myself, "Do I want it to be follow or nofollow?" Generally, nofollow except if you want to share some of your currency.

**Chris:** I've got a slightly different perspective on it, coming from a blogger point of view rather than a SEO point of view, in that sometimes you pay it forward, and it comes round in a positive way. It's kind of like karma, right? If you're doing a link roundup, it could be that you get the attention of the other bloggers in your niche by linking to them, and them seeing you in the



referrers, and seeing you in their search engine results, and shared by social media.

Sometimes using some of that currency generously can reap rewards, but talk about currency, if your link is compensated in some way, then nofollow it. You don't want Google thinking you're selling links, either in kind or in money. If there's any sort of compensation going on, or it could be seen that you're getting compensated, nofollow.

**Sean:** Yeah.

**Jerod:** Yup. Excellent. That was a good discussion, guys.

## Could you explain more about making anchor text "diverse and more semantically relevant"? (00:01:58)

**Jerod:** Moving on now. Jeff had another question. He wanted to know if we could explain more about making anchor text diverse and more semantically relevant. Those are topics that we talked about on the previous webinar. He's unclear if we're referring to the benefits of using branded and unique type anchors as opposed to exact match or long tail anchors. "An example would be useful." We're happy to do that.



Here is kind of a walkthrough of diversity in backlink anchor text. You want your backlinks ... Just to be clear, these are links from other sites that point to your site, to have the following attributes.

Number one, you want them to be natural. If someone were to kind of take a survey of your backlinks, and see all the different backlinks that you have coming into your site, it really shouldn't immediately reveal an obvious link, "strategy," right? It should just look natural. All the different and many ways that people link to sites, you know, rather than every single link being on the exact same anchor text, which quite clearly would be some sort of coordinated effort.

Now, you also want your links to be semantically relevant, okay? You want them to be natural, but you do still want the anchor text on some links to include important keywords. That doesn't mean, again, that you necessarily have to be going out and trying to do this. As long as you're clear on your site what it's about, and your title tag, and your subheads, and you're clear with someone who's reading your site, what it's about, if they're linking to you, then chances are you're going to get some semantically relevant links, and those are still important, to have some of those there. Then again, you want them to be diverse.

The way to be semantically relevant and natural is for the anchor text from link to link to have some diversity. Now, that can be people linking with primary keywords to your site. That means some people are probably going to link



on longer tailed keyword phrases. That means some people are probably going to link on the words “click here,” and other people are just going to post the URL for people to click. That kind of diversity looks natural and also has elements of semantic relevancy.

Let's take an example. This is an example from Jeff's site. His site is BusinessAffinity.co.uk. Let's take strategy number one, and let's say that you have five backlinks coming in to your site. One is “business consultants in london.” Another is “london business consultants,” then “business consultants in London,” “business consultants london,” and “london business consultants.” Those are the five links coming in to your site. Take a look at link number four, right? “Business consultants london.”

Well, this link basically would not be grammatically correct, and would therefore be unnatural in almost any sentence or description about your business. Take numbers two and five, London business consultants, which are exactly the same. While this is probably a term that is searched often, people would go in and just type “London business consultants,” it's not the kind of phrase that's often going to appear naturally in on-page copy. That means that it wouldn't really naturally appear as anchor text in a link unless it was some kind of unnatural link.

Trust the search engines to know that your site is relevant for a search for “London business consultants,” even without example after example of this



specific anchor text being what is linked to ... Coming on links that are coming to your site. That's strategy number one.

Now, take a look at "strategy" number two. You've got one link on "business consultants in london." Another that's just "BusinessAffinity.co.uk." People linking right on the URL. You've got another one for "click here to learn more." Another on "Business Affinity," which is the name of your website, and then another link on "this london consulting business." Again, something that people would actually link to.

All right, now notice the diversity, and how you can actually envision each of these links appearing naturally on a page, and that's what you want to happen. You want it to be natural, still have some semantic relevance, and have some diversity, but above all else, be natural so that search engines don't look at it and say, "Hey, wait a minute. Some kind of tomfoolery is going on here."

Sean, is this a good example? Anything else that you would add or maybe change about this, when it comes to backlink diversity?

**Sean:** No. I think it's very good, but there's another element to this, and there's a whole industry built around disavowing links to your site, which is a topic for another day, but I think you were pointing out that the quality and caliber of people that are linking to your site, both in their authority on the web, as well



as the hyperlink information that is actually pointing over to you, does matter. Do not think it doesn't. It does.

This is a very good topic to start the conversation about looking at those links coming to you, looking what kind of terms they are using. Does it seem spammy over at that other site? If so, maybe some of their spaminess is coming over to you.

Those are things to look for, and this is a perfect indicator of ... If it looks unnatural or is not embedded in the content, but maybe in a sidebar somewhere, you really need to take a look at those links coming to you, and be prepared to use the Google disavow tool to say, "This site is not a reflection of my quality. I disavow its link coming to me." If you start to notice that there is a drop-off of search traffic because of some of these spammy sites linking to you.

**Jerod:** That's something that you can do in Webmaster Tools? Is that the best place to go do that?

**Sean:** Yeah. Absolutely. Yes. Absolutely. The Google Webmaster Tools has a disavow capability. Don't get freaked out by it, folks. If you're not seeing a change in your search traffic, then I wouldn't freak out about it, but if you're starting to look and inventory the backlinks coming to you, this type of information here, what are those links that are coming to you? What do they say about me?



That's going to be really important because if Google determines that the source site has spammy links that are pointing over to you, they may penalize you because of it. This is kind of going into very advanced ideas about the link crafting to your site and in your site, but this is a good place to start out. If you like what other people say, great. If you don't, reach out to the Webmaster and ask them to change it. That may be the easiest way to fix it so you can get a better, more organic-looking link back to you.

**Chris:** Yup. Search engines are getting better and better at understanding context, so just because it says "click here" doesn't mean that it's not going to pass any relevance, because the paragraph around it could be saying how you're one of the best business consultants in London, "click here to learn more," and Google will pick up on that.

**Sean:** That's right. Yeah. They've gone from being a child to a teenager. They're getting really good.

## What's next? (01:07:48)

**Jerod:** Yes. All righty. What is coming up next in the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap? Well, coming up next Thursday, April 20th, we're going to be talking about how to leverage your traffic into better decisions and more conversions. Then we'll of course have a Q&A on that very topic as well, coming up the following Friday. That will be what we have in our next two sessions.



Before we close up here, obviously we ran a little bit over, so we don't have time to take any additional questions. It looks like actually most of the questions that people asked were answered in the chat, so thank you to Amelia and Brian who are always in there doing a fantastic job.

Before we go, Sean, just any kind of final thoughts here on SEO? Anything that we haven't covered, or kind of a summation statement that you want to make to send people off with, so that they're doing the right thing?

**Sean:** Sure. Tanya, I want to reference you again, because she put in there that maybe instead of SEO guru, I could be the OCD guru. It brings up a really good point. Because all of this is about optimizing your content for discovery, and in optimizing your content for discovery, it's not just search. It is going to be social media. It's going to be other vehicles. Cover the basics before you think about any tricks, or ways, and nuances, et cetera.

Are you doing the basics? Are you paying attention to it? Is your site on Google Search Console and Google Webmaster Tools? Are you looking at it? Are you thinking about, "Is it HTTP or HTTPS?" "Am I doing the on-page things?" "Am I writing about these things?" There's so much to cover on the basics that if you can just execute on that time and time again, your search rankings will improve, your social rankings will improve, because you've made it easy for people to discover your content. That, at the end of the day, is what SEO is really about.



**Jerod:** Hey, Chris, if I'm interested in 3D printing Facebook groups, you know anyplace I can go for more information?

**Chris:** Funnily enough, I think I do. I'll drop the link for you later.

**Sean:** But I need 35 of them, though. I'm pretty particular. I need 35 places to go, not just 34.

**Jerod:** At least. Yes.

**Chris:** The nice thing about doing content like that is because you can keep coming back to it as people suggest more, so I can keep announcing it again. 35, 37.

**Jerod:** That's true.

**Chris:** It's the post that keeps on giving.

**Jerod:** All right, everybody. Thank you so much for being here on this latest edition of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap, and thank you for your questions. We really, really appreciate the questions. These sessions would not be as useful as they are without those questions, and we will talk to you next week on the next webinar. We're looking forward to it.