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Rainmaker Webinars

How to Use Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools

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TRANSCRIPT



How to Use Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools

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How to Use Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO Tools

Jerod Morris, Chris Garrett, and Sean Jackson

Jerod: Hello there, and welcome to the latest edition of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. It is great to see so many of you here. I am Jerod Morris. I will be your host for today's proceedings, and I am joined, as I typically am on these Rainmaker Site Building Roadmaps by the great Chris Garrett. He informs me that he is properly caffeinated and ready to go. Mr. Garrett, how are you today?

Chris: I'm doing good. Yes, I had an extra large double double for the Canadians on the line, and I'm super caffeinated, and even walked the dog, so I shouldn't have any dog snoring interrupting the audio. Good audio quality, that's what I'm hoping for.

Jerod: All right, Mr. Garrett. Are you ready to hop into this?

Chris: Yeah. Let's do it.

Jerod: Let's do it. This webinar begins our Maximizing Your Traffic with Rainmaker segment of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. What we're



going to go over today is how to use Rainmaker's powerful suite of traffic and SEO tools so that you can drive more traffic to your website. Get more attention on your content. This fits very well with topics that we've been talking about previously, because you've gotten your website ready to be readable, to convert, to really engage your readers, so now you're ready to drive more traffic there. I think it's important that we went in that sequence. We were very intentional in how we laid out the sequence for these webinars.

A brief overview (00:01:26)

Jerod: Chris, if you want to kick us off with just a brief overview of the strategy, and where today's session and the next section fits into this overall content marketing strategy that we've been looking at.

Chris: Yeah. As we've said on previous webinars, the idea is that we attract, we retain, and then we convert. In that retention step, there's retention and there's engagement. If you have your retention and your conversion elements set up, then you'll not waste any of the attraction, any of the attention that you generate. The idea is you set up some retention so every single person who visits the site, who visits any of your content, is encouraged to sign up to your email, is encouraged to come back.

Today, we're going to talk about how to attract people, how to generate traffic, how to get people onto your site, and there's two massive ways that we do



that. There's SEO, search engine traffic, and there's social traffic. If you look at that Online box, we've got forums, we've got social media, we've got blogs, we've got webinars, we've got interviews and articles. But really, search and social are the two big ones. If you look at your own analytics, you'll probably find your top three referral sources are going to be search, they're going to be direct, people typing in or using apps, and it's going to be social. Probably Facebook is going to be the big one.

Virtuous circle (00:03:00)

Chris: How do those fit together? If we look at this next zoomed in slide, we want to attract people. We want to get people onto the site. We want to create a virtuous circle.

Unlike a vicious circle, which is a negative thing, a virtuous circle is compounding that attention you attract, by encouraging sharing and referrals. Everybody that comes to the site, as well as getting them onto your email, you want to get them from your email, from the blog, back to refer other people and bring friends.

If people come to the site, you want them to engage with content, consume the content, get some value from it, and be inspired to share with people. To bring their friends and followers and their network to also visit, and that's how you can get that compounding effect.



It's like interest on your bank account. It's like investment. You want it to grow, but you don't want it to all be through your efforts. You want people to be salespeople for you, and that's the other side to that SEO element. You want the social to then spread the word and be an amplifier. It's not going into social media and just chatting and having conversations. That's important to be seen as a human being, to be engaging, to be attractive, and to be inclusive, but you want your network to grow your network.

You want to have a compounding audience. You want it to grow. That means that everybody that comes to the site, you want them on your list, but you also want them to broadcast for you. You want them to share. That's the two parts that we're going to talk about mostly today, is going to be SEO and social.

Maximizing Your Traffic series (00:04:44)

Jerod: Okay. In this Maximizing Your Traffic series, here's a quick roadmap of what is coming up over the next couple of webinars.

Today, we're going to talk about how to use Rainmaker's powerful suite of traffic and SEO tools. Then we will of course have a Q&A next week. The following week, we will have another webinar, How to Leverage Your Traffic Into Better Decision and More Conversions.



That's kind of a tentative title right now, because frankly we're really interested to see what your questions are, what some of the additional topics are after we're done with today's webinar that you still want us to cover. That's kind of our proposed title, but that could change based on the feedback that we get on this webinar. So please continue giving us that feedback, asking questions, responding to the surveys that we send afterwards. That really does help us plan these webinars to be as responsive to your needs and what you want to learn from us as we possibly can be.

The roadmap for this session (00:05:34)

Jerod: Here's the roadmap for today's session. We are going to spend a little bit of time talking about some things that you may not realize about SEO, because obviously understanding how Rainmaker's traffic and SEO tools work is very important, but it's also important to take a step back and make sure that we're thinking about SEO in the right way, because some things have changed over the past few years and we want to make sure that we're all on the same page there.

Then we're going to talk about the site-wide SEO settings that you have at your disposal with Rainmaker, and then also the very robust post-level and page-level SEO settings and tools that you have available to you with Rainmaker as well as the Social Scheduler. That is where we are going today.



What you may not realize about SEO (00:06:15)

Jerod: Let's start out with that first topic. What you may not realize about SEO. To sum it up, optimizing for humans is optimizing for search engines. Now, this wasn't always the case in SEO, but it absolutely is the case now, and as we go into the future, it will become more and more and more the case. This is something still that too many people overlook, and that we want to make sure that you don't, because understanding this and being ready to execute on this is how you will make the best use of Rainmaker's SEO tools.

I want to start out with a quote, and this is from an article that Brian Clark wrote, and if you want to go to the article, you can go to [Copyblogger.com/Forget.seo](https://copyblogger.com/forgetseo), and perhaps we can drop that into the chat. Here's the quote from this article by Brian. "In short, if you do the work that's required to understand the language and cover the topics your audience cares about in the context of doing business with you, you're doing the bulk of the work that constitutes modern SEO."

Do the work that's required to understand the language, right, and that's keyword research. Cover the topics that your audience cares about in the context of doing business with you. You're doing the bulk of the work that constitutes modern SEO. You'll notice there's nothing about link-building in there, and a lot of the technical aspects. It's about creating content in the voice of your audience that really serves the needs of your audience. That truly, in a macro sense, is what good SEO is about these days.



Chris, any thoughts on this quote before we move forward?

Chris: No. I think that's the main thrust. If you look at what Google intends to do, Google's mission, including the fact that they've hired human beings who look at your content, they have real people who look at websites all day every day, the idea is Google wants to serve up what human beings like and respect and trust. You have to really be in tune with your audience, the people you want to attract, not the technical SEO aspects as a primary driver.

The 4 most important SEO ranking factors (00:08:31)

Jerod: Yup. Let's talk about important SEO ranking factors. Again, these can change from year to year, but these are, what we're going to cover right now, the four most important SEO ranking factors.

You'll see as we go through the rest of this presentation how Rainmaker's SEO tools will help you improve when it comes to these ranking factors, and I took this from an article from our friends at Search Engine Journal, titled [2017's Four Most Important Ranking Factors, According to SEO Industry Studies](#), and it's written by Aleh Barysevich. I hope I pronounced that name correctly. Aleh Barysevich. But let's go through these four important SEO ranking factors.

It should surprise no one that number one is content. These are quotes directly from the article. "Content has been an important ranking factor for



a while, but in recent years, we've seen a shift away from keyword-focused content, towards more relevant content written in natural language. Expect to see more of that as 2017 unfolds." Number one is content.

The number two most important SEO ranking factor is backlinks. "The key to a strong link-building campaign in 2017 is to create content people crave, and then to promote that content relentlessly. When other industry authorities read and link to your content, Google will read your backlinks, matching anchor text, and consider your content more relevant."

Getting backlinks is still very important, obviously, and promoting your content to get those backlinks is important, but you can't just get them from everywhere. These need to be from authoritative sites. Backlinks, and we'll show you how Rainmaker's SEO tools help you do that. Backlinks are the second most important SEO ranking factor.

Number three is mobile first user experience. I'm guessing most of you are well aware of how important this has become with search engines. "Mobile optimization is an extremely important ranking factor. All of the top 100 most visible domains have mobile-friendly solutions, according to SearchMetrics. Mobile-friendliness is now the norm."

On the very, very bright side, all Rainmaker themes that you would put on your site are mobile-friendly, and also with Rainmaker, you have fast hosting to give you fast page load speeds, so everything in that regard is going to be



beneficial when it comes to Rainmaker, and help you in search engines. Mobile first gaining increasing importance by the year it seems, and currently the number three most important SEO ranking factor.

Finally, number four is kind of a grouping of other technical factors. Among these technical factors, switching to HTTPS encryption, and we've covered that in a previous webinar but we're going to go over it again briefly today. Making use of H2 headings, especially if the top URLs in your niche don't. Ensuring that your anchor text is diverse and semantically relevant, and anchor text is the actual text on which the link is.

If you have "Click Here" on a link, "Click Here" is the anchor text. You want some links pointing to your site to say, "Click Here." Some of them to say your domain name, some of them to say keywords that are semantically relevant to your content, but you want that to be diverse.

Then you also want to remove all intrusive interstitials from your mobile website. If you go to a website and the entire content is overshadowed by an interstitial or an ad or something that pops up over the content and it's hard to get rid of, you are going to be knocked down for that. Those technical factors.

Again, content, backlinks, mobile friendliness, and these other technical factors, the most important SEO ranking factors, and this is as recently as January of 2017 when this article was written, and obviously it's SEO. You want to try and stay as up to date as you can on what the latest developments are,



but the bottom line is that optimizing for humans is optimizing for search engines, and if you remember that, and if you always make decisions based on, “What is best for my reader? What is best for a human reader?” Then you will be basically future-proofing your website for the next evolution of search engines.

Chris: Yep.

Jerod: Chris, any thoughts before we move on?

Chris: I just wanted to underline how much the advice is saying, “Be natural. Write for human beings. Don’t just focus on your precise keyword. Have a variety of anchor text.” It’s about being natural and human, and writing for people. You can make some tweaks for SEO, but Google is encouraging you to write naturally, to the point where now they have the “artificial intelligence,” I put that in quotes because I’m a bit of a picky nerd about that, but they have the artificial intelligence to be able to interpret the difference between cat, the feline, and CAT, the industrial equipment, right?

You can write naturally. You can write for your audience how the audience wants to be spoken to, and Google can understand it. You don’t have to force “keyword, keyword, keyword.” You don’t have to be unnatural, to the point where they’re penalizing people for over-optimizing, for overemphasizing the keywords. Your anchor text shouldn’t be the precise key phrase every single time. You have to make it natural. Your links need to be natural.



The other part of it is, links are still important, and how do we get links? Well, there's a few ways, but one of the major ways that people are getting links is through social, through your content spreading to social, to get more people to see your content, and hopefully authorities linked to it. We'll talk about that a bit later, but just keep in mind how much of a system this is, and how interrelated all of the traffic generation strategies are. It needs to be attractive for people to share. It needs to be attractive for people to click on it and search. It needs to be attractive for people to link to it.

Jerod: Yup. There are a lot of questions I see about HTTPS. We're going to cover that coming up, so hopefully that answers most of those questions, and if not, Brian and Amelia will be able to answer any specific questions that you may have about your site as well.

Chris: Lots of questions about keywords and what's natural and relevant. We're going to talk about keywords as well.

Site-wide SEO settings (00:15:04)

Jerod: Yup. Let's hop into site-wide SEO settings first. We will begin with really, I mean, the most fundamental kind of SEO element when you think about SEO, and that's the home page SEO title and description. How do you set that on your Rainmaker site?



Well, what you want to do is you want to go to Settings>Content, and then scroll down a little bit and you will see a section for Home Page SEO. This section allows you to define your SEO title and meta description. When people search for your site and they see it in the search engine results, what is the title, what is the description that they see? This will allow you to define that.

Now, you'll see kind of these funky little formulas here, these codes, right? '%site name%' What in the world is that? Well, what that will do, '%site name', will pull your website title in Settings>General, and I'll show you where that is in just a second, all right? The '%sep', that will add a dash as a separator, and then '%sitedesc' will add the site description from Settings>General.

Why in the world would you want to use this instead of just typing it in? Well, if we go here to your general settings, and that's where you get to this page, General settings, you can add your site name, and you can add your site description. You may want to change it there, but then not have to remember to go back and change it in your home page title and description.

If you're using these codes right here, then this will automatically update when you change your title and description here. It just gives you a little bit more flexibility there, makes things a little bit easier on you, but this is where you would change those to link up with these codes.



Now, you can also just enter your own title if you want to. For example, I did that here for The Assembly Call, and I like a colon better than I like a little separator, so I did the “The Assembly Call: Indiana Basketball Podcast and Post-Game Show.” That’s typically a good thing to do with your home page, is have the name of your site, the name of your show or your blog, or whatever it is. The name of your business, and then a quick description, you know, maybe that gets a couple of important keywords in there, and then you add a meta description. You can add your meta description right here under the title.

Remember that only 156 characters will be displayed in the search engine results, and remember that your meta description can do some additional heavy lifting for getting people to click, so people see the title, but then they also see the description. You’ve got 156 characters of space to give people a description of what you do, what your site is about, and why they should click on to see more. That is where you’re going to set your home page title and description. Anything to add, Chris?

Chris: I just wanted to reinforce what you’re saying about making it attractive so people want to click on it. There’s no point in ranking number one for a search result if it’s so dull that people skip past it and they click on number two. It’s about attracting people to click on it, so it’s copywriting. It’s not just SEO. It’s not just getting your keywords in. It’s copywriting to make it attractive so people want to click on it.



Jerod: Yup. Absolutely. Now section two, HTTPS. To get to your HTTPS settings, go to Settings>General, and you want to use the “Configure HTTPS” option to get HTTPS enabled on your Rainmaker site. Important note: This only works once you take the site live. If you’re currently working with a preview site, you will not be able to do this. This only works once you take your site live.

Now, once it’s configured, you can enable HTTPS only on your checkout page, or on the entire site. Yes, Google in particular prefers the latter. They prefer that you have HTTPS on your entire site, and that’s why a lot of sites have gone to this and have decided that that is the best option for them.

Now, a couple of important points about HTTPS and how Rainmaker handles it. Number one, Rainmaker will automatically redirect HTTP links to HTTPS. I decided, actually, after doing the research for this presentation, I had had Assembly Call HTTPS only on the checkout page, and I decided that I should do it on the entire site.

So I reached out to Jen in Support just to double check, and I asked, “Okay, if I do this, do I need to add any redirects? Will it automatically redirect all the links from HTTP to HTTPS?” She told me, “Yep, Rainmaker does all of that for you.” That makes it very, very simple, gives you some peace of mind there that you can make this change and you’re not going to have a whole lot of people ending up on links that no longer work or having to manually redirect them yourself.



Now, the other question that people often have, and I see Daniel had this question, the social share counts that are displayed on your pages will be affected, since technically each page of your site will now have a new URL. That is something to consider, that if you do this, your social share counts will essentially reset, because now that your URL will be HTTPS and as far as Twitter is concerned, that link will never have been shared, so it will go back to zero.

Now, for me, when I was making this decision for The Assembly Call, the display of our social shares isn't that important to me. I would much rather be set up better in the search engines, so I was able to weigh those two things, and making the decision made sense.

For you, that could be a little bit different. Chris, I believe if I'm not mistaken that on Copyblogger, we still have it as HTTP on normal links. Correct me if I'm wrong, but that is something that you'll need to decide, and it will just be based on, how many social shares do you have? How important is that for the authority building and the trust building of your website? But that is something to consider, because those social shares will reset if you put HTTPS on your entire site.

Chris: And the longer you wait, it's one of those things that, do you pull of the Band-Aid now, or leave it til later? I'm making this decision myself. I've got a lot of social proof in those social shares, but if I leave it, those social shares are



going to grow, and it's going to be more painful to change it, so I'm going to change it.

Jerod: Yeah, and I think that's a really good way to look at it. You know, again, you may have been around for six, seven years and those numbers are huge, and so it can be a little bit hard, but I think the Band-Aid analogy is a good one. That's how HTTPS works. Again, if you have any questions, let us know. Bring them to the Q&A next week, or if you have specific ones about your site, Amelia and Brian can answer them in the chat now as well.

The third site-wide SEO option that you have in Rainmaker is Outreach Options. A quick note here, you know, Rainmaker's SEO tools like Outreach Options, and like the Content Optimizer, which we're going to get to in a few minutes, those are only available on live sites. They're not available in preview mode, so if you're looking at your site, and you're like, "Wait a minute. I don't see Outreach Options." Check and make sure that you're not on a preview site, that you're actually on a live site, because if not, you won't see these options.

To get to Outreach Options, you want to go to the Traffic tab, and then click 'Outreach Options.' What you can do here is you can find out, first of all, how well your site is optimized for important keywords and phrases, and then you'll get insight on how you can improve this.

Here's an example from my site, The Assembly Call. This is about Indiana basketball, so if I search for that keyword, I would certainly hope that I get



a good grade for that keyword, because if not, I've been doing some things wrong. As it was, I got an A, which is quite nice, so that was obviously nice to see, and you can check that just to make sure that you're on the right track, and that you're using the proper keywords, and that search engines will look at your site and say, "Okay, this site is relevant for this term if people search on it." Just a good check to make sure you're on the right track.

Now, the External Links tab will help you identify authoritative, trusted websites that would provide powerful backlinks. This can be a big question. Like, "I know I need backlinks, but where do I go to get backlinks? What sites are relevant for the kind of keywords and the kind of topics that I'm talking about, and they're serving the audience that I'm looking to serve?"

Well, this External Links tab will help you identify this. There's a lot of options shown, so here's the first four, and then it goes on and on and on. You may look at this, and I know I've had this reaction sometimes when I've looked at the results, that some of them may seem a little bit out of your league, right?

Like ESPN.com, CBSSports.com, those are huge websites, pretty good chance they're not going to link to little old Assembly Call, right? But others will be independent blogs or websites like yours. For example, here, InsidetheHall.com, and I actually guest post for InsidetheHall.com, which are likely to be more receptive to a guest post or to an interview inquiry.



It doesn't necessarily mean that you should contact every single one of these sites, but this is a really good way to get a quick look at a number of sites that may work well for you. For some of these sites, depending on how their domain registration is set up, you may be able to get their contact information and even their phone number right here just from the tool.

Now, for some you may not. You may have to go to the website and look them up, but this is a good place to start as you're getting ready to plan kind of your strategy for going out and building authoritative, trusted backlinks to your content.

Then finally, the Social Media tab identifies ongoing social media conversations around your topic, which gives you a jumpstart on who to connect with and what current conversations you should participate in.

Again, not every single person listed here or conversation listed here is going to be exactly relevant for you right now, but there's a pretty good chance that some of these will be. And these are people you can reach out to, conversations that you can jump into and add value to, that is going to help people start to notice you as a potential authority, start to look at your content, and then hopefully obviously visit your site, subscribe to your site, and everything that we've talked about in our previous sessions.

Chris, before we move on to our page level, anything else you'd like to say about the site level SEO options?



Chris: Yeah. Can you just hop back to the external links because I've got a couple of tips? And actually Sean Jackson, who's our CFO, has just managed to get on the call, so he's an expert, he's our SEO expert, so he can correct me if I go wrong here, but there's a couple of tips just from the example on the screen, that you're thinking outside the box, you might not realize. Jerod said there are some big names here that you'll not be able to get. Actually, you might be able to. If you look at CBS Sports, right? CBS Sports is a huge deal in the sports world, I assume. It's CBS and it's sports.

Jerod: Yes. They're big.

Chris: It's shop.cbssports, right? How many sites do you go to that have a store that actually takes external reviews? They want to encourage the testimonials. They want to encourage positive reviews. Sometimes they allow you to drop a link into the review, so that's a way you could get a link back from CBS Sports, if they have followed links.

Then there's also a forum in there. Indiana.forums.rivals.com. Forums often allow you to have footer links. In your profile, you can set a signature line or a footer for every message you post, and that's how I got a link from one of the biggest brands in 3-D printing. The forum is indexed by Google. The links are followed, so I would just hang out in the forum until my messages got indexed by Google, and it actually gave me a ranking boost. So link-building doesn't have to be a sketchy thing.



Jerod: Yeah. Those are great tips, Chris. Thanks for pointing that out. Now, Sean, you want to say hi real quick?

Sean: Hello, everyone.

Jerod: Hey. It's great to have you here. Sean is actually responsible for developing some of these tools that we're going over here, so it's awesome to have you here.

Sean Jackson: Thank you. You guys are doing a great job on it. It's always nice to see how other people interpret what you do, and you're doing a fantastic job of it, but I will let our audience know, I am here for questions. That's where my expertise can maybe help you, so by all means, if you have a question, we are here to answer it, and I am more than happy to give you some additional insight, but you guys are doing a great job on this.

Jerod: You'll be joining us on next week's Q&A as well.

Sean: Yes, I will.

Jerod: Perfect.

Chris: Sean speaks at some of the big SEO conferences, so he's definitely somebody to listen to.



Jerod: Yes he is.

Sean: There you go.

Page-level SEO settings and tools (00:28:08)

Jerod: All right, so we talked about our site-level SEO settings. Now let's talk about page-level SEO settings and tools. First, let's go over a real world example, Chris, and you had a really good example that you wanted to share. Do you want to kind of walk us through this and then we'll show folks on a post-level some of the ways that you optimize these posts to get the great results you're about to show us?

Chris: Right. What you want to happen with your traffic building exercises is you want to track increasing traffic, and I've got a suspicious spike in my traffic here. Where did that come from? That came from all of the things that we're talking about here, and just to show that it works. So if we keep going, let's see how it works. Let's see how this real world example happened, and look at that, right?

My biggest traffic building posts are my SEO-optimized posts. You can look at the headlines and see that I want brand names to be prominent. They're my keywords. You can see I'm getting 7,561 visits from Google, and this is a year-old site now, so I started this site one year ago, and part of the idea behind us



having these sites -- Jerod has his site, I have my site, Rafal has a site -- is we get to actually use the tools that we're building for you. We actually get to eat our own dog food. All of the things we've talked about are stuff that I had to do to get this result.

If we keep going, we can actually see all the things that we've been talking about actually works. Ranking on Google, first page, at least in the data center that I am on, because if you're logged in or logged out, using different data centers.

I'm in Canada, you're in various places around the world. I'm ranking twice on the first page of Google for the most important 3D printing brand out there, and review. The great thing about this ranking is, reviews are the converting traffic. Reviews are people who want to actually purchase, they're buyers, and I'm ranking twice. All I've done is all the stuff that we're talking about, so you can do it to.

Here's another example. This is another brand name. Just keep going, and then we'll get to the good stuff. Here's another one. Upgrades is another important one. This is how Rainmaker will tell you if you're doing a good job of optimizing your page. You write for human beings, and then it will say, "Hey, have you got your Target Term in your heading, article heading? Have you got it in the page title? Have you got it in your page URL? Have you got it in the content? Have you got it in the description?"



Tell Rainmaker that the SEO part of Rainmaker, you tell it what keywords you want to go for, and it will tell you if you're missing anything. It actually tells you what to do. It holds your hand as you do it.

Post SEO meta data (00:31:14)

Jerod: Yup, and we're going to walk through all these tools now as we move forward in this section. Let's start with the post SEO meta data, and this is probably the tool that you will use the most. The SEO tool that you will use the most inside of Rainmaker, because really, I don't remember the last post I published where I didn't do something in this section. I'm always down here doing something, either changing my SEO title, adding a meta description, doing something in this SEO tool.

As we just walk through this, the Snippet Preview part of the SEO tool shows you what the search engine result for this page will look like. Up at the top, you see the SEO title, then you're going to see your URL so that you can see what the slug is and what it will look like, and then you'll see the meta description. That gives you a preview.

When people see this in a search engine, this is what they will see, and again, we talked about how so much of this, it's as much art as science, right? And the importance of copywriting when it comes to this because it's not just about surfacing the result. It's getting people to click on the result. You want



to see, if you have something at the end of your title and it's not even being seen, that's not going to help you actually get it clicked on. Same thing with your meta descriptions. You want to just take a quick look and make sure that it looks how you intend it to look.

The SEO title, we went over the home page title. The SEO title is similar. This allows you to define a specific SEO title for your post or page that may be different from the headline on the page. Now, it doesn't need to be, but it certainly can be, and there are certainly some times where you want to do that. One thing that you want to remember is that a lot of times, Twitter will actually pull your SEO title when someone hits the Twitter button to Tweet your link.

One thing that I've done, for example, on The Assembly Call, there's a hashtag #IUBB, that a lot of people Tweet on. What I'll do is at the very end, and you can see the beginning of this right here. At the very end of my SEO title, right, to the point where it's not going to be visible when people look at it in search engine results, I'll put that hashtag so that when people Tweet it, the hashtag is automatically there.

Again, doesn't do me any good here visually in Google, but will help me in Twitter. Obviously I don't want a hashtag muddying up my headline on the page, because that wouldn't look very elegant, wouldn't look very nice. Some of those little techniques you can use here with the SEO title.



There may be a way that you format posts on your website, based on how they're displayed on your home page, like for instance, sometimes if it's a podcast, I'll put "Podcast:" right at the beginning. But I may not necessarily want to do that for my SEO title. I could do it in my headline, but then I can make my SEO title look a little bit different. There are many, many different reasons why you would want to do that, but the SEO Title down here is where you have that flexibility to use a different title.

Now, if you want more kind of on this, the strategy and the thought here, and then also six other really easy to forget SEO tips that you should be doing every time you post, I wrote about this over at Copyblogger. I'll send you there. [Copyblogger.com/SEO-Steps](https://copyblogger.com/SEO-Steps), because there's kind of some more advanced stuff and some other little kind of nook and cranny type things that I go over in that blog post that we won't have time to go over today. But if you're interested in this, it would be excellent additional reading along with Brian's post that I linked to earlier for more on this topic.

Chris: I believe in the Social tab, if you set the Facebook title, I believe Twitter will use the Facebook title, so that's something we need to check later and confirm for everybody.

Jerod: Okay, so you could even have a third title that's specific for social.

Chris: Yeah.



Jerod: Very nice.

Chris: We need to check that, but you can definitely set the Facebook one, but I believe Twitter will use the Facebook one, so we need to check that and actually confirm or correct.

Jerod: Okay. The social tab that we're talking about right now, we're going to show you that here in an upcoming slide.

Chris: Yeah. And Jerod, Christine asked, "Can you go back and correct old posts?" Yes, you can go back, and it's not going to harm anything tweaking old posts. I actually do that quite a lot. Yeah.

Sean: Chris, that's a great point, and that's something that I want to point out, that you can find that by changing the SEO title, you may see additional traffic later, especially for some of your older posts where you don't want to change the headline component. If you have content that is not performing as well on search engines, using the SEO title is a great way to adjust that without having to change the on-page items that you spent so much time doing. If you're not happy with the traffic, start with the SEO title.

Jerod: Yeah. Another great tip. Again, like I said, we could probably do an entire session just on things you can do differently between headline and SEO title, and those are a handful of them right there. An extremely, extremely important tool right here.



Moving on with the SEO meta data, you've got the Meta Description. Again, another good place to include your Target Term, and more importantly to sell the click, which we talked about earlier. Take the meta description seriously, and remember that you only have 156 characters, and so there's a counter here that will tell you once you've gone over. There's not necessarily a penalty for going over, but it just won't be visible, and so you can see the visible part of it right up here.

Now, speaking of this, as I was going through and doing this, I actually realized that this example, this meta description, could stand to include the entire Target Term in the visible area. This really wasn't the most compelling of meta descriptions here. Again, that's part of the reason why going back through and doing this is good, because you can find areas that you can actually optimize the post and improve it.

What about this Target Term? Chris showed you earlier on his graph, or on his screenshot, what the Target Term will do. What happens here is if you enter a Target Term or phrase, Rainmaker's analyzer will tell you where that exact phrase is used in your post, and it's going to be the exact phrase.

If you look at this, I put in this Target Term, "archie miller hired." That's the first statement in my SEO title. This is the new coach for IU. "Archie Miller hired." I knew this is something people were going to be searching in search engines for the first couple of weeks after he was hired, because it was a really big news item. I put in "archie miller hired," and it tells me that it's in my page



title. Obviously it's right here, but it wasn't in the heading, the headline on the page. It wasn't in the page URL. It wasn't in the content, and it wasn't in the meta description. This is good information to know, because in this case, it serves as an alert that I have not used that exact phrase in a few important areas of the page. Now I can go review those areas.

The question is: which of these should I change? These elements right here that tell me no, what should I change? The answer is going to be, what answers make sense from a reader's perspective? It doesn't mean that I have to run and change everything that's a no into a yes, but I should look at it and decide, "Okay, using natural language, using language that will work for my audience, should I make a change here?"

For example, I think it makes sense to change the Meta Description. If you look at this new one, which is much different from the old one, it says much more that will actually matter to a potential reader without awkwardly trying to shoehorn in the phrase "archie miller hired." I'm not putting in the exact phrase, but I am putting in something similar and giving people a more compelling reason to actually click on this link. In this case, it really helped me to do that.

Now, it's not going to change this no into a yes. The only way to do that would be to have the exact phrase "Archie Miller hired," but that's awkward. I don't want that in there. Google is smart enough to understand what I'm saying



here, so this is going to be good enough. Sometimes that's kind of how you make that decision. You use this as a check, but then still figure out, "What's going to be best for my reader?"

I can do the same thing with the other elements on the page, right? It told me that my headline didn't have the exact keyword phrase. It doesn't. It says "Archie Miller Hire" instead of "Archie Miller Hired." Okay, again, that's close enough so I'm not going to change it just to get that D in there when it's going to make the headline a little bit more awkward. But there's no reason not to work some of that integration of the basic phrase into the main site copy, and so I did add that into the post as well.

Once again, after making these changes, I went back and looked at the Target Term, and it still tells me no on these four areas, because in some places I had "Archie Miller has been hired," "the Archie Miller hire." It wasn't the exact phrase, but I feel comfortable with my variations, and looking at this helped me to make some improvements to the site so this page is now more optimized without being overly optimized, and that's exactly what we want to do.

Remember, as a final note, this tool is just a check. It's a guide, so you don't have to make changes based on its output, but you can certainly use it to help you optimize your post both for readers and for search engines, which is our goal.



Chris: Yeah. I just want to point out that anybody that's interested in this topic is going to be alerted to the phrase Archie Miller too, because human beings have a reticular activating system. It's our human brain search engine. We're looking out for things that we're interested in.

In social, if somebody sees Archie Miller and they're interested in the topic, it's going to alert them. If I see the words "Sandra Bullock," then I'm going to pay attention, because I'm particularly interested in her. I'm not interested in sports as much as Jerod is. We're looking out for things. It's not just search engines it helps. Having those keywords prominently displayed, picks up our interest. If I see Star Wars, I'm going to be interested. It's working for humans and for search engines. It's the thing that keeps coming up.

Jerod: Okay, but if you see Star Wars and Sandra Bullock, which one's going to get the click? That's the question.

Chris: I'm going to be clicking so hard I'll break my keyboard on that one.

Advanced SEO settings (00:41:27)

Jerod: All right. Moving on. Now, let's go to the advanced SEO settings. We're still down here in this SEO widget. This widget does a lot, right? This tool does a lot. You've got General, Advanced, and Social.



Let's look at the Advanced. The first option here is the Meta Robots Index. Basically, do you want search engines to index this post and make it available for search results, or not? If you do, then you want it to be indexed, or just leave it as the default. If you don't want it to be indexed, then click 'noindex.'

Now, next up is ... Why might you not want a page to be indexed? Maybe it's some kind of admin commentary, or it's something that's only for people who already visit your site. It's not necessarily for someone to pick up in Google. There can be other reasons, too, but any reason that you wouldn't want someone to index it, click 'noindex.'

The next is going to be 'Meta Robots Follow.' The question you're asking here is, do you want search engines to follow the links on this page and possibly index them? If you want them to follow the links, then click 'Follow.' If you don't want the search engines to follow the links on the page, click 'Nofollow.'

Sean: Jerod, I want to give an example of where the 'noindex,' 'Nofollow,' or 'Follow' rules can come to apply. If you have a page, let's say you have a series of partners for your business, and you have a page for each one of those partners where the copy tends to be somewhat the same, with the only alteration being the partner's logo, their name, and a link to them, and you don't want those pages per se to show up in a search engine, right? But you do want to have the links on the page, which may link to other content on your site, to be followed.



That is a great example of using 'noindex,' which says to the search engine, "I don't want this page to appear in the search engine, but I do want you to follow the links from this page to other sections of my site or to my partner's site."

If you're ever worried about, let's say, duplicate content, or you're creating a series of pages that may share similar characteristics, the 'noindex' and 'Follow' may be one of the better options for you, and the converse of that is maybe you want the page indexed, but you do not want any of the links on there followed because, again, you don't necessarily want to vouch for those links or the link juice that you will share.

Those are two different scenarios where the 'index' and 'no follow' or 'no index' and 'follow' could come to bear.

Chris: Another example would be a Thank You page for the email signup. You don't want that indexed, because you don't want people to be able to grab your goodies without signing up to your email list.

Jerod: Yup. Absolutely. Excellent examples there. We talked about the Meta Robots. Now, we have Meta Robots Advanced, and Sean, maybe you want to add some insight here. I have never actually deviated from the defaults here. What should folks know about this section, Sean, when they're making their decisions in the advanced SEO tab?



Sean: Just use the default.

Jerod: Okay, yeah. That's what I've always done.

Sean: There's really ... This is certainly a legacy artifact. Certainly when we talked about the open directory system, the Yahoo directory, et cetera, these are artifacts from prior, so many times if these are different, it is because at some point in the past, the person had done that based on a recommendation. But by default, we give you exactly what you need, and there is nothing that you would benefit from by changing it unless in a very, very unique instance where these other indexes have better information than you have on your own site, at which point you probably need to fix your site.

Jerod: Okay. Excellent.

Chris: I'm so relieved to hear that.

Jerod: Yeah, I know. I've never deviated from the defaults here either, for including in the site map or site map priority. Can you guys think of any reasons why folks might want to deviate from the defaults here?

Chris: I can't think of any.

Sean: Yeah. I can't either.



Jerod: Okay. Perfect. The next two you will use, and I use these a lot. Canonical URL and 301 Redirect. What do you use the canonical URL for? Well, here's a couple of questions to ask yourself. Is this post, the post on which we're doing these SEO options, is this post syndicated from another site? Or do you have multiple pages on your site with the same content? If you do, then you should consider putting the URL for the original content here, because the URL that is here is the one that search engines will serve in results.

Again, let's say that you are syndicating a post from another site. Then you would want to put the original URL for that post here, so that search engines know, "Okay, the content is on this site, but it originated here. We want to make sure that we're surfacing this other URL in search engines."

Now, I just used this earlier today actually, because I put out a blog post, and then I also put out a podcast episode where I did a reading of that blog post. Obviously the content there is pretty similar, and so I only wanted one of those surfacing in search engines.

On the podcast page, I did the canonical URL to the blog post, so that Google will only surface one of those, and then on the blog post I linked, I have a little link that says, "Hey, do you want to listen to the podcast version of this blog post? Click here." It simplifies things, and it alerts Google to what, for this content, for this topic, what is the page that we really need to be surfacing? That's how you're going to use the Canonical URL.



For the 301 Redirect, what you want to think about is, if this post or page's URL should redirect elsewhere, then add the destination link here. Let's say that the content on this page is no longer relevant, but it's still coming up in search engines. You can redirect it to a page that's more relevant or if it contains an expired offer. We'll do this sometimes on Copyblogger. Once an offer has expired, then we'll redirect it to another page, or if you just want to create a simple redirect URL. I create a lot of redirect URLs in here.

In fact, if you go to, for instance, AssemblyCall.com/iTunes, or AssemblyCall.com/iHeart, they'll redirect you to our iTunes link, or to our iHeartRadio link. It makes it really easy for me to say on podcasts, and all I've done is I've posted the destination link right here in 301 Redirect, and then it automatically redirects.

Two very, very helpful tools here, Canonical URL and 301 Redirect. Chris, anything to add to either one of those?

Chris: No. That's exactly what I do myself, and a canonical URL is why syndicating to Medium doesn't damage your search engine results, because we put the canonical link into the Medium syndicated post, so that your Rainmaker site is the canonical version of that content.



Social settings (00:48:23)

Jerod: Yup. Okay, so moving on now to social settings, the third element of the SEO tool. This allows you to define Facebook-specific titles, descriptions, and images for your posts. If you want the title that Facebook pulls to be different from the SEO title, put that title here. If you want the description that Facebook pulls to be different from your meta description, put that one here, because that's what it will pull by default.

Now, we do have some breaking news here that I do want to let you know. We have confirmed that if you put a title here, that is the title that Twitter will pull as well, correct, Chris? We have that confirmed?

Chris: Yes. Thank you, Amelia. Amelia checked that on the fly for us, and we have it confirmed. Your hashtag example, you could put that there instead of using the SEO title.

Jerod: Yup. Absolutely. Perfect. We have that there. Now, a quick note. If you want to define a Facebook or Twitter image for the home page of your site, because obviously you don't have an SEO tool like this for the home page, contact Support, because they'll be able to help you do it, unless you're using a static page as your home page, and we showed you how to do that in a previous webinar.



You would do that in your Appearance settings, then you could define it this way, by simply going to that particular page, and then using the SEO tools on that page. That's how you set up the social settings.

Keyword research (00:49:48)

Jerod: Number four is keyword research. Again, these are site-level SEO tools and techniques, all right? You can actually perform keyword research right from the post and page edit screens. This can be really, really helpful.

As you're going through writing your posts, sometimes you want to do it before your post, but it's a great tool to give you ideas and make sure that you're speaking in the language that people actually use online, that people are actually searching with, and it can give you some ideas for how to vary what you're saying. If you're like me, sometimes you feel like you kind of say the same thing over and over again. What would be some good variations? The Keyword Research tool will help you do that in a still semantically relevant way.

For example, on this page I decided to do some keyword research on 'SEO tips.' When you do that, you'll get some results like this. Notice how 'seo basics' has lower competition. The competition is 50 to seo tips' 55, but almost the same popularity. SEO basics is 38. SEO tips, 39. This actually suggests that I'll have an easier time targeting SEO basics than SEO tips, and in this case, if it works,



if it makes sense for the content, targeting the term SEO basics as a primary keyword, maybe using it in my title tag in my headline, may be something that I want to consider. Not for sure. It's just a potential guide. Gives you some information that you can go from. It certainly gives me another iteration of the term, another variation, that I can use, which is good to have.

Content Optimizer (00:51:30)

Jerod: Now, once you do that, once I choose a term, I can scroll down and hit 'Save Target Term' and it will save that term for me, and we'll show you what you do with that here as we look forward to the Content Optimizer. Once you have a title, a meta description, and your content, because it won't allow you to do it if you don't have those things, and these will be red X marks instead of green check marks, and I did this on another page for the example. That's why this has link building instead of SEO basics.

Once you have that, you can use the Content Optimizer. Right now we haven't used it. There's nothing there for page score. Nothing there for site score, so I can click "Analyze." When I do that, I'll get a site score. Clearly, the site score here is 30, and it tells me, "Your site does not use these terms frequently. Consider adding more content to your site for these terms." Clearly, we should be publishing more content and attracting more links based on this topic. In this case, for link building, if we want to be ranking better for the term 'link building,' and that's a pretty competitive term.



The Content Optimizer also gives you a page score in addition to your site score, and it gives you a number of really helpful analysis and recommendations. It tells me that no hyperlinks were found in the first part of the page, and that can be an important ranking characteristic. As we get down to that number four, some of those more technical ranking characteristics, having semantically relevant hyperlinks early in the post can help. Same thing with keywords.

The Flesch Score is one that I really like to use, because obviously we want our content to be accessible, we want it to be readable, and the Flesch Score describes the comprehension difficulty for a passage of text. For this one, it's fairly difficult, and this was actually done on a post that Brian Clark wrote, but the Flesch Score, fairly difficult. So there could be a reason to maybe try and simplify some of the language there and get that Flesch Score down a little bit because that may help how the search engines are going to view this content.

If you scroll down on the Content Optimizer page, you get some additional keywords that may be smart to try and consider kind of optimizing for in a secondary way, because they are related keywords to our primary one.

People who are looking for content about link building tend to be looking for content about Search Rankings, Online Publishers, Publishing Online, and for example, sometimes you'll get a false positive, so like Smart People, okay. That's in here. That doesn't mean I'm necessarily going to do anything with that one.



However, Search Rankings, that may be something that I want to put in there a little bit more, because these are terms that are related, so it may help the content look better to the search engines overall. The Content Optimizer gives you a ton of information, and then it's up to you to kind of go through, look at it, see what makes sense to change and improve, so that your posts will obviously be better both for users and for the search engines.

Chris, did you want to add anything about the Content Optimizer or the keyword tool before we look at one final tool for the site-level SEO tools?

Chris: Yeah. A few people have asked about how they should judge the keywords, the difficulty, and the competition. It all comes down to your site, and how much trust your site has with Google, how much authority your site has with Google. What might be difficult for you to achieve today, but in a year's time it might be easy for you to achieve. It's all about you and your competition, but it doesn't mean you shouldn't try necessarily. It just means you need to prioritize based on your constraints, what you need to go for today, what you need to go for long-term.

Have some short, medium, and long-term goals, and try to get the keywords that you want long-term, but maybe get the lower hanging fruit straight away, because you want to start building your traffic straight away. Remember, some of these things you plant the seeds, and you keep nurturing it, and eventually it's going to bear fruit. Some of these things aren't overnight successes. A good example is Darren Rowse, he had a website about one of the Olympics,



and he started a year in advance, so that by the time the Olympics came around, he was ranking for the terms. Don't think it's an overnight thing, and you can always go back in and tweak. Think short, medium, and long-term.

Jerod: Yup. SEO is definitely a more medium- and long-term, and of course if you need an immediate hit, that's where paid traffic can come in, right? SEO obviously, you want to look at it much differently than that.

Link Building (00:56:05)

Jerod: Let's talk about the final tool that's there on the page, and that is the Link Building tool. Once you've done your Content Optimizer, then you will see the Link Building tool, and you can use it to instantly find posts on your own site where you can add semantically relevant links to this particular post.

This is a really, really helpful tool, because what you'll find is these are all links to your content, and it tells you the page authority of that content, and links that are actually coming in to that content, right? For example, on the Copyblogger blog, 10,943 links are coming in there. We may not have a place to add a link to this link building article on the main blog page, but this particular post, right, "[Five Link Building Strategies That Work](#)," has pretty good page authority, has a decent amount of links coming into it.



We should open this page up and see if there's a spot that makes sense to link to this new blog post. Because as important as back links from external sites are, your own internal link structure can help too, because what it does is it just ... Through the relevancy, through semantically relevant anchor text, can help to train search engines as they follow links to what this particular page is about. If you're on this page, Five Link Building Strategies That Work, and you link to your new link building article, it's one more way for you to kind of alert the search engines to this page and to what it's relevant for. You can do that using this Rainmaker SEO tool.

Anything else in there, Chris, that we didn't cover before we move on to the social scheduling?

Chris: No. I think we've given people a lot to consume. Let's keep moving.

Jerod: We have. We have.

Social Scheduler (00:57:50)

Jerod: Finally, let's talk about the Social Scheduler, because you can do social media scheduling right there inside of your Rainmaker dashboard. The first step is that you need to connect your social accounts, and you do this by going to Settings, and then going to Social. After you do this, then you will see



Twitter and Facebook and LinkedIn, and even Bitly on down the page, if you want to add Bitly for link shortening. And it's pretty simple.

You just connect your account. It'll take you to a page, and you grant access to Rainmaker, via Twitter or Facebook, whatever, and then you will see your icon come up, and that's how you know that you are connected to that particular account. For any social media accounts that you want to be able to post from using the Social Scheduler, that's the first step, is going here to your Settings and link up your social accounts.

The next step then is to actually schedule your social posts. To do that, you want to go again to the Traffic tab, and then go to Social Scheduler. You notice how the one tool isn't here? That's because this is a preview site that I'm on, so if you're using a preview site, again, you won't see the Rainmaker SEO tool there in traffic. Just an alert that that's why it's not there. You have to be on that live site to do it.

If you're using the Social Scheduler, click the 'Social Scheduler,' and then what you want to do, your first step is to give this particular social share a descriptive title for yourself. This is only going to be seen in the dashboard. It's not going to go out when it's Tweeted or posted on Facebook, but it's just so later on you know what this social share was, so that you can get in and look at it. In this case, this example, was Tweeting a link to a podcast that we did about Bill Garrett. That's my descriptive title.



Then you want to choose the social account that the share is for, so I'm doing this one for Twitter. You can see the little blue outline on the Twitter icon.

After that, then you want to either paste the URL for the content that you're sharing, and I can paste the URL here, or you can just start typing right here and choose from published content on your site. I just started typing in "Bill," and it brought up all of the content that I could use that had that name in it. This is what I wanted, this podcast, and so I just clicked on this, and once I did that, the link automatically populates here. The rest of the title populates here, and then the share content automatically populates based on the headline of the post.

Now, you can automate this, or you can edit this if you like, but it's going to come in here automatically based on the headline, and you'll notice the shortened vanity URL, and I have this because I linked up Bitly with my Rainmaker account, and Bitly allows you to take kind of a shorter URL like this and create your shortened vanity URLs, which is just a nice little touch for Twitter.

Then you can also attach an image if you wish. Just use the attached image, add an image to that, and then finally you can schedule when you want to share it. You can share it now, you can share it when the post publishes, so you can do this ahead of time and share it when the post publishes, or you can do a custom and, say, have it schedule a week from now or a couple of days from now, whichever one you want to choose.



Chris, this is an example, I believe, of a Tweet that you created using the Social Share, or the Social Scheduler.

Chris: Yeah. I love to do that, because the format, if you just type a Tweet out, isn't as nice. It's not as convenient. I like to be able to schedule these, and I like to either post it right now, if it's a Tweet that I want to go out right away, or instead of using when the post publishes, I actually schedule my social media for a little bit after the post is scheduled. And the reason I do that is because of caching, and because Facebook doesn't necessarily catch up straight away.

There is a Facebook debugger where you can get it to scrape the URL again. I just leave it a little bit after, and it also gives me an opportunity to fix any mistakes that I see in the live post. I'm a little bit particular about this part of this traffic generation strategy. I like to have the posts go live, check it out, give it another look, maybe get some second eyes on it, give my wife an opportunity to point out any mistakes I've made, and then I'll do the social sharing.

Jerod: Yup. I do the exact same thing. I always find I hit publish and then I'll find something, so I like to change that before sharing it.

Coming up ... (01:02:27)

Jerod: All righty, so coming up next Thursday, we have the Q&A on using Rainmaker's Powerful Suite of Traffic and SEO tools. So if there are questions



after the sessions, questions that we didn't get to, submit them for that. We will be sending out the link to sign up for that webinar, as well as the link for the question box very soon, so that you can submit questions. I believe Sean will be able to be with us hopefully for at least a portion of that session, and then coming up after that, How to Leverage Your Traffic Into Better Decisions and More Conversions. That will be on Thursday, April 20th.

With that, we actually don't have time for questions. Chris, we had really, really great intentions of keeping this to just an hour. We went about six minutes over, but that's about what Sean talked, so I think ultimately we did a pretty good job, and Sean's commentary was well worth it, so it was six minutes well spent I think.

Chris: Yeah. He always gives a lot of value, does Sean, so definitely get your questions in and tune in for that, because he's our SEO expert, and Jerod and I learn from Sean.

Jerod: Yes. Yes, we do. Thank you everybody for being here on this edition of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. We will look forward to seeing your questions come in, and we look forward to talking with you on the Q&A next week. Have yourselves a great afternoon.