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# How to Unleash the Power of Internal Links

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# HOW TO UNLEASH YOUR INTERNAL LINKS

How you link within your own website determines how well your website ranks and which pages rank for which keywords.

Search engines **rank pages** not websites, so, the more specific you are **within your own website** and how you link important pages determines how search algorithms weight those pages and rank them in their index.

A simple analogy for internal linking is like the difference between a flashlight and laser. Both are based on the premise of light, except one is **concentrated** and the other is **diffused**. The same applies to how you link.

Internal linking (linking from one page to the next strategically with specific anchor text) is how you concentrate your webpage's ranking factor with laser-like precision for **targeted keyword and key phrases**.

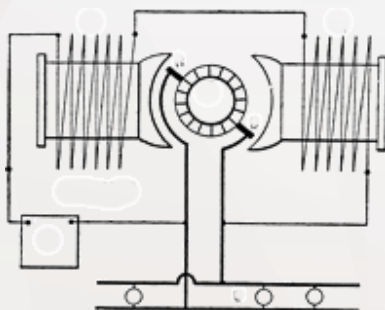
In the guide below, we'll show you how we've used internal linking over the years to create wildly successful SEO campaigns for ourselves and our clients. And in just a few minutes, you can too.

# Internal Link Dynamamos - Your Most Powerful Asset

How do you control which pages rank for which keywords and if those rankings are either exact match or stemmed broad match or long-tail keyword variations?

This SEO tip revolves around how to create Top 5 or Top 3 organic search engine positioning for a web page by understanding the inherent ecological link / support system underlying the on page and off page ranking criteria.

Depending on your ranking objectives, the intent, size and purpose of the website (commerce, lead generation, education, passive affiliate revenue, etc.), you should select the most appropriate [SEO method](#) between the two outlined below.



## Exact Match (Laser)? or Broad Match (Flashlight)?

Were you aware that you can make a website or web page rank differently for specific [exact match keywords](#) or an array of semantically related [broad match](#) keywords based on applying different optimization techniques?

The following tutorial covers tactics which we have found extremely useful over the years for producing laser-like rankings in record time based on a few simple on page and off page preferences.

## (internal link dynamos continued)

For example, to create a **specific** (exact match) ranking you will need:

- 1) Theme relevant content (content written with the primary, secondary and related keywords).
- 2) Keyword mirrored in the H1 and URL (although this used to have greater impact, it still matters).
- 3) Use the exact match keyword first in the meta title.
- 4) Determine which pages have the strongest relevance and weight then add contextual links from those pages to the new target page (the higher up on the page the better, e.g. first 100 words ideally or at least above the fold).
- 5) Get strong themed backlinks (focus on high domain authority / quality links).
- 6) Scale by getting additional internal and external links.

To create a **broad match** (theme related) ranking you will need:

- 1) Theme relevant content with a more diverse array of internal links from a higher number of pages to augment the semantic signal to increase relevance.
- 2) All the keywords or synonyms targeted present on the page (in either the body content, Meta title or description).
- 3) A more diverse array of backlinks to reinforce the on page topics.

## (internal link dynamos continued)

For example:

If you want a page to rank for **more than one keyword**, then the title tag should contain all of the keywords intended as the destination for those keywords.

For example a page that I want to rank for [SEO Tips](#), I should have that shingle (group of words) first in the title, then use overlapping keywords or phrases to cement relevance for them collectively.

**Title:** Proven SEO Tips, Tutorials & Tactics

**Meta Description:** Searching for SEO Tips? Company X offers Search Engine Optimization Tips, Tutorials & Tactics to Improve Search Engine Positioning.

Now, the stage is set, at least potentially and based on the relevance between the keywords themselves which are all semantically close as nodes (Tutorial, Tutorials, Technique, Techniques, Optimization, Search Engine Optimization, SEO and even Search Engine Positioning were incorporated).

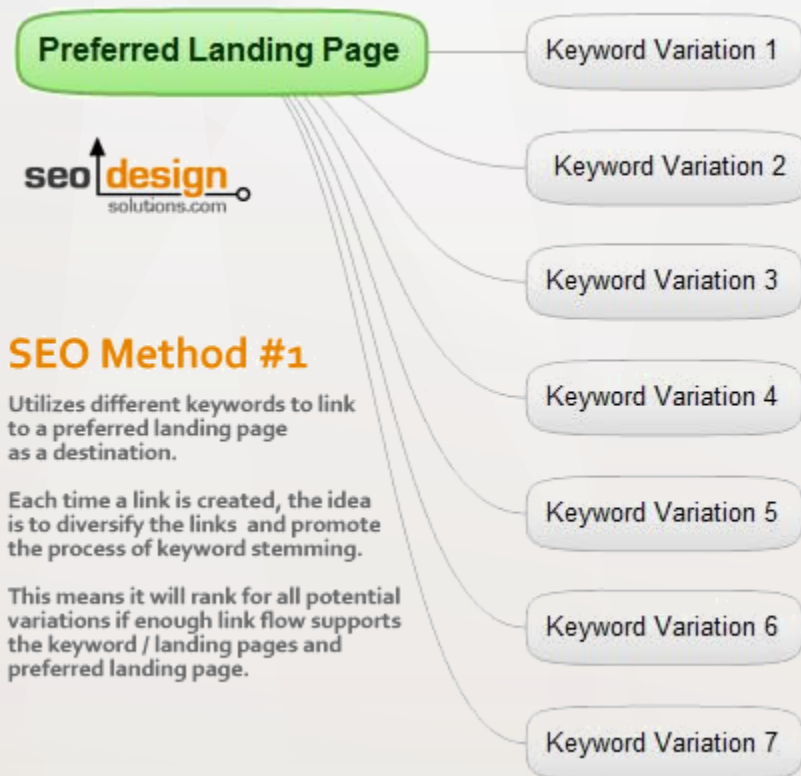
This page when assessing [on page SEO factors](#) is groomed as a preferred landing page for any of these keyword combinations.

To rank this page, you'll need to use dozens of other pages linking to it from related pages in your website with the keywords SEO Tips, SEO Tutorials, Search Engine Positioning Tips, Search Engine Tactics, Tips for SEO, Tips for Search Engine Positioning, etc., until you cover all of the semantic branches that pertain to the context of the pages content.

# SEO Method#1 for Keyword Stemming

This produces [keyword stemming](#) by default (ranking for some or all variations of all of the keywords). Or, on the contrary, if you wanted that page to rank for just one keyword or one keyword and its respective plural variation (refer to SEO Method#2 below).

By tactfully limiting the amount of varied anchor text (both internally and externally) from other websites to that page you can dial-in more [specific/competitive keywords](#).



# SEO Method#2 for Exact Match Competitive Rankings

If using method #2 you are better off using the top 10 pages identified from Google for the target keyword in your own website to link to your landing page.



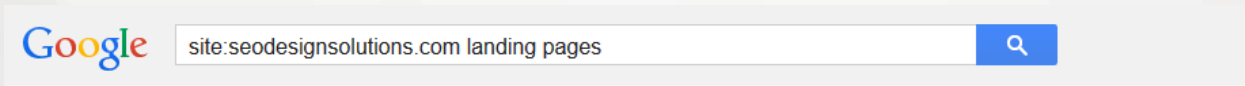
Using this method, only link to a landing page or homepage with **ONE** keyword consistently; **NOT** multiple variations like Method #1. This produces **EXACT MATCH** rankings in search engines for more competitive keywords.



# (SEO Method #2 continued)

So, how do you know which 10 pages are strongest? Just ask Google, here's how.

1. Use the site: command by adding your domain and keyword after it in a Google Search. For example, if I wanted to use SEO Method #2 on a brand new target page that ranks for the keyword "landing pages", I would use a search operator like this.



Then Google will show me which pages are link candidates from my own site that have been deemed significantly authoritative based on the keyword in question. By the way. This technique works like gangbusters ;)

A screenshot of search results for the query "site:seodesignsolutions.com landing pages". The results are displayed in two columns. The left column contains results from seodesignsolutions.com, and the right column contains results from other domains.

**Why Most Landing Pages Fail - SEO Design Solutions**  
www.seodesignsolutions.com/blog/seo/.../why-landing-pages-fail/ - Nov 5, 2010 - The saying you can lead a horse to water, but can't make them drink is the equivalent of bringing a visitor to a landing page through paid ...

**Aligning Keywords and Landing Pages**  
www.seodesignsolutions.com/blog/seo/keywords-and-landing-pages/ - Feb 7, 2010 - One of the most valuable components of an SEO campaign is the correlation that exists between keywords and landing pages.

**How to Segment Traffic and Landing Pages**  
www.seodesignsolutions.com/.../how-to-segment-traffic-and-landing-pag... - Oct 12, 2010 - Determining which page to use for converting online window shoppers and passerby hit-and-run traffic depends on which page they land on ...

**Leveraging New Landing Pages Using Related Pages**  
www.seodesignsolutions.com/.../leveraging-new-landing-pages-using-rel... - Apr 12, 2011 - When building out site architecture, you can use a tiered or layered effect to provide consistent ranking factor up the chain to each landing page ...

**Are Your Landing Pages Optimized with First Rank Priority?**  
www.seodesignsolutions.com/.../are-your-landing-pages-optimized-with-... - May 30, 2009 - You have heard of first link priority right? well, what about how to create first rank priority for your SEO'd landing pages so that when people ...

**Build Landing Pages**  
www.kickofflabs.com/page-builder - Test & Improve Your Landing Pages Drag & Drop Page Builder. Try Free!

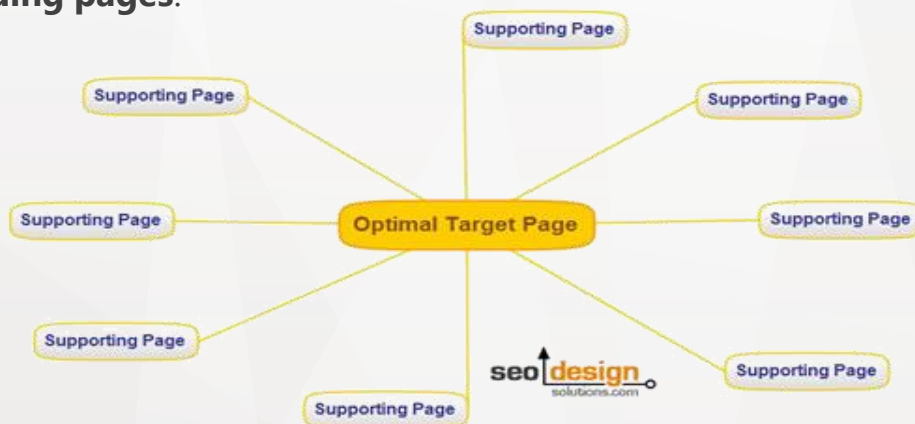
**Optimizing Landing Pages**  
www.jacobsclvenger.com/ - Free ebook: Optimizing Landing Pages and PURLs

**AdWords Landing Page Tool**  
www.wordstream.com/Landing-Pages - 3.7 ★★★★★ rating for wordstream.com See how your AdWords landing pages are performing. Try it free!

**#1 Landing Page Platform**  
www.megaphoneapp.com/ - Use Megaphone To Create Better Landing Pages. Start Demo. See your ad here >

## (SEO Method #2 continued)

2. Then I would simply edit those pages and add a link to my preferred landing page using the **exact preferred keyword** I'm trying to rank the target page for. Which happens to be in this case is the anchor text **landing pages**.



3. By doing this, I am telling Google that the new target page is the new page at the apex that should rank for this keyword.
4. If you were to link 100 times to the new preferred landing page with the exact match anchor text landing page that is simply overkill and there is no need. Only use the top 10-20 results from thematically related pages to create the proper internal link leverage.
5. From there, it's time to get 5 or more backlinks quality inbound links from sites with theme relevance, link weight or authority (which is another topic in itself) to give that page some buoyancy so it can start its ascent to the top 10 search results.

Not saying you're going to rank with 5 links, but, the tipping point for each keyword will depend on authority, site structure, trust, social citations and other metrics, but this is the way to get your own on page solid.

## (SEO Method #2 continued)

The real value is ranking for less competitive terms and getting your site noticed as an authority and then using each page that ranks to pass along ranking factor to the more competitive keywords. It's a long term goal, but, this is one way to structure the outcome.

Over time, each page essentially reaches optimal link-flow for a keyword and like a cup flowing over distributes that ranking factor to other pages.

While all pages may start at the same level (0), over time they have an equal opportunity to evolve into bona fide power-house pages capable of capturing [multiple rankings](#) for keyword variations as ideal destinations for eager consumers executing corresponding search queries in search engines.

# SEO Methods Recap

## Recap of the Strategy:

1. Map out the keywords that need a boost in the SERPs.
2. Use the site colon command `site:yourwebsite.com` keyword
3. Find the first occurrence of the keyword (the higher the better in the body copy) then edit the text to link to your preferred landing page.
4. Repeat this for the first 10 or 20 occurrences per keyword.
5. Measure results and continue to either (a) create fresh content to introduce into the cycle (b) build deep links to the preferred landing pages or (c) dig deeper into the 30, 40 keyword co-occurrence mark and use slight variations (to mix up anchors to the target page) to gain additional buoyancy from on page optimization / internal linking.

While the notion of doing this by hand could be rather daunting, if you use WordPress you could automate all of this with the Deeplink Juggernaut link dampening option from SEO Ultimate to set specific thresholds for individual or groups of words to target pages.

For example, if you want a homepage to rank for dozens or hundreds of keywords, then build links back to that page with different anchor text from your other pages.

## (SEO recap continued)

On the contrary, if you want your homepage or a page to rank for a very specific keyword, then only build links to that page with that keyword, a plural or a very close semantic cousin.

\*Keep in mind that you'll want to vary the anchor text or use a priority based internal linking approach when using this tactic (shown above with the Google search operator `site:domain.com keyword`) as search engines have a tendency to devalue pages that are over-optimized for a specific keyword.

When I suggest to build links, I am implying both internal (within the site) and external (from other sites). Also note, that content nested deep in a site still adds relevance to the global term weights search engines use to parse the collective volume of occurrences any given keyword has.

These metrics take into account a key phrases contextual occurrences within a document, anchor text, usage, keyword saturation, frequency or proximity in the title, bold, italics, as well as other relevance weights.

The only thing to determine is, which method is conducive to the type of conversion optimization being employed? What are the respective offers? And what margin or ROI could they potentially yield (immediately as well as in the long-run).

# Which Method Can Increase Keyword Conversions by 200%?

Have you ever wondered an easy way to increase keyword conversions by 200%? Just use the wildcard (.\* ) method implied above in #2.

So, instead of just using one contextual link and linking to the preferred landing page with specific anchor text, also add an H2 link to a secondary page (a related landing page) and both pages can rank for the keyword.

Over time, this produces the coveted [double ranking](#) (a search engine results page ranking with another from the same site indented under it). Not only does this garner a 200% potential return on investment (2 positions mean the prospect is more likely to select your website), as well as you are taking one more spot a competitor would have occupied.

So, once again, in addition to building a contextual link from the top 10 pages. Also add a second link on the page using an H2 tag that links to a secondary page you want to rank for the same or similar keyword. This is what we called the grappling hook technique and perfected it over the years.

It even works in reverse such as a non-ranked page getting a link from a page that's ranking in the top 10 for a specific keyword, can pull the new page into the top 10 right next to it (as long as the on page internal links also support that keyword).

Also, if you are targeting [long-tail phrases](#) (which comprise 80% of most traffic) then you could quickly devour hundreds if not thousands of rankings from using the keyword stemming method to drive more traffic collectively to all of your pages.

Just as we mentioned the H2 tip above, it plays well into the last strategy we will cover in greater detail below.

# Adding Deep Links from Ranked Pages to Promote Buoyancy

Once any page is ranking in the top 10 for a keyword, there is a simple trick you can use to pass link weight and relevancy to another page.

Ready for it? you just link to it contextually so, let's say we get the **Landing Pages** page ranking, then you could link to a conversion optimization page with the keywords **conversion optimization** to pass vital ranking factor along. This is essentially deep linking (linking to pages nested in the site).

When deep linking you must determine which long-tail phrases are worth pursuing or if targeting the root phrase is more ideal, e.g. do you target conversion optimization or conversion optimization strategy, conversion optimization tools, etc.

If you choose to target more competitive keywords, you will either need (1) more specific landing pages and supporting pages or (2) a higher volume of links to the pages in order to build more momentum and ranking authority. This is essentially siloing or the basis of [website silo architecture](#).

If you use the second method (linking only with the **Exact Match** keyword) and getting enough [deep links](#) (links from other themed pages) from other websites (preferably on the same topic as the keyword), you can secure a more dominant search engine position.

This method is priceless as it is interwoven into the very fabric of the [link graph](#) itself. Which plays into this technique perfectly.

# (deep links for buoyancy continued)

## **Harvesting Link Equity from Aged Pages**

Going back to your own aged pages is one of the most undervalued treasure troves for link equity. After 4-6 months, the pages you created have long since moved out of the fresh content factor, subsided, been assimilated and now can be leveraged as a pivotal foundation for trust to augment preferred content.

So, rather than trying to trick search engines, just give them what they want (order, structure, consistency or multiple references) which will allow their algorithmic programs to select the common denominator based on the keyword vacuum created by the query.

This is also the way to compete, compete with metrics by creating optimal overlapping layers of metrics that search engines reward. There are 200 metrics or more that search engines use to determine relevance.

The more relevant nodes you unlock, the closer you are to the top position; meaning, websites which lack the proper aligned metrics will be subordinate and eliminated algorithmically as contenders as a result of your collective momentum and high relevance score.

Despite the simplicity of concentrating your keyword anchor text to rank for competitive keywords or using multiple anchor text variations to promote keyword stemming, this truly is a priceless SEO tactic.

Regardless of which method you choose, your pages will gain more strength and context for the topic, which will only reciprocate an aggregate amount of ranking power for you to funnel, sculpt or direct within your new or aged pages as you see fit.



# In Closing

This internal linking guide was originally written by us in 2009 but still works like a charm to this day. These methods were a precursor to the website silo architecture [silo builder](#) module we created for WordPress and have deployed countless sites since then using our SEO Design Framework.

If you enjoyed this, then we encourage you to check out our professional WordPress tools, [SEO Ultimate](#) and the [SEO Design Framework](#) which each have distinct modules created specifically to implement and automate the strategies covered in this guide.

"You need more than just a pretty website! SEO, social signals and the semantic web matter, and if you're not ahead of the curve, you're behind everyone who is."

-Jeffrey Smith



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