# The 3 Step SEO Guide to

Rank Any Business

**Local Pulse** 

D Local Pulse

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# Chapter 1

# **Preface**

If you can't describe what you are doing as a process, you don't know what you're doing.

W. Edwards Deming



Nothing is more important to growing your business than having a system.

You need a system to attract visitors, turn them into leads, and... drumroll convert them into paying customers.

Repeatable and scalable SEO strategies are crucial for sustainable business growth.

And that's exactly what we're going to break down in this guide.

You'll learn step-by-step strategies for the three pillars of SEO: research, content creation, and link building.

The goal isn't to take the creativity out of your marketing—it's to give you a proven foundation to build on.

With the right system, you can grow your traffic, bring in more customers, and scale without feeling overwhelmed.



# Adapting Your SEO Strategy to Your Business

Not all businesses need the same SEO strategy. A local bakery's approach will look very different from an online store that ships nationwide.

This is why we have categorized businesses into three types. Each of these profiles have a distinct system for each pillar of SEO.

Let's get started with a nice little decision tree to help you determine what type of business you run.

# How big is your business?

You have a small business which specifically targets customers in the local area. Usually providing local products or services.

The Local Strategy

You have expanded to serve the whole nation typically through online retail/e-commerce or franchised services.

The National Strategy

You operate in an ultra- competitive industry, either nationally or internationally.

The Enterprise Strategy

Easy, right? Now that we have that squared away let's take some time to drill down into these three different strategies.



# The Local Strategy



If your business has a small area of operation, then this is the plan for you. These businesses need strategies to boost their visibility for location-specific searches and local search packs.

# The National Strategy



This type of business serves an entire nation. They might be a modular homes company that builds housing across the US or an ice cream shop franchise with multiple locations around the UK.

# The Enterprise Strategy



This king of business is in an ultra-competitive industry. Perhaps they run a national insurance company.

Maybe they're a new fintech startup aiming to take on behemoths like Intuit.

Such an ambitious task requires an innovative and more aggressive approach.

There will be times when you'll need to tweak your SEO approach to fit your unique business needs.

And that's perfectly fine—adapting is part of the process!

With that said, let's dive into the step-by-step strategies that will make ranking your business easier and more effective.

Get ready to transform the way you think about SEO Growth.



# Chapter 2 Research

Research is non-negotiable when it comes to getting results with SEO.

It's the foundation that supports everything else you do.

Let's break down the process step by step so you can apply it to your business.

Once we cover the basics, we'll show you how to tailor your strategy to your specific needs.





# **Keyword Research**

Some keywords are much more valuable than others.

You need to identify the search terms that will bring the most traffic and customers to your business.

This involves analyzing several factors:

# **Keyword Difficulty**

Keyword Difficulty is a metric that provides insights into the competitiveness of a keyword in search engine result pages (SERPs).



A high keyword difficulty score indicates that lots of established websites with strong domain authority are already ranking for the keyword. That can make it challenging to rank for it.

A lower score suggests that there might be an opportunity for websites with less authority to rank in the top results for the keyword.

Many different keyword tools provide their own versions of Keyword Difficulty measurements, so you might want to cross-reference across a few to really find those hidden gems.

# **Search Volume**

Search Volume represents the number of times a keyword is searched for within a month. It indicates the keyword's popularity among searchers.





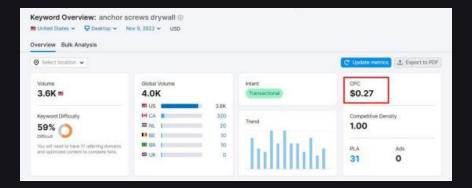
A high search volume means that a large number of users are searching for that specific term, and it has high traffic potential.

Again, several different tools offer versions of this measurement. It can be hard for external tools to authoritatively measure the traffic for specific keywords, so cross-referencing across several tools is again helpful here to really pick out the best opportunities.

# **Conversion Potential**

Conversion potential refers to the likelihood of users taking a desired action after they land on a web page after searching for a specific keyword.

One of the best ways to judge conversion potential is the Cost Per Click (CPC).





If advertisers are willing to pay a high amount for a keyword in ad campaigns, it often means they see a good return on their investment.

That shows the keyword has a high potential to convert visitors into customers.

### Search Intent

Search intent is the motivation behind why users search for a keyword.

Understanding this intent is crucial.

It's how you determine the best keywords to target in your content strategy.

There are four main types of search intent:



# Informational

Users are searching for information or answers to specific questions. An example could be "symptoms of the flu."

# **Commercial**

These terms are used by searchers considering making a purchase but are still in the decision-making phase. An example could be "laptop reviews" or "best smartphones."

# **Navigational**

Users are trying to locate a specific website or real-world location. For example, a user might search for "YouTube" or "Gmail login."

# **Transactional**

These searchers are ready to make a purchase or perform a specific action. For example, a user searching for "buy iPhone 16 Pro online" clearly intends to make a purchase.



You can speed up the process of choosing the right search terms by using a keyword research tool.

Simply enter your topic or website, and you'll get data on search volume, competition, and relevance to help you choose the best keywords.

With the right keywords, you can focus on terms that attract the most traffic and potential customers.



# **Competitor Analysis**

You need to know what you're up against to rank at the top of the SERPs.

Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of businesses that operate in the same market space as your business can help you improve your SEO strategy and outperform your competition.

Your primary competitors are typically websites that rank for your target keywords.

They offer services or products similar to your business, making them direct competitors for your target audience's attention.



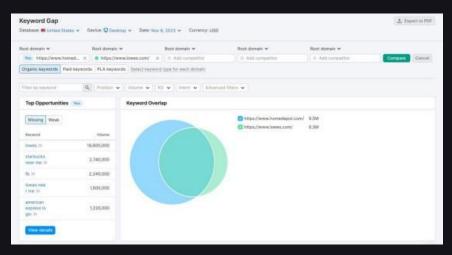
# **Keyword Gap Analysis**

This is one of the first things you should do when researching your competitors.

Keyword Gap Analysis can help you identify the keywords for which your competitors are ranking, but your business is not.

Keyword research tools like Semrush and Ahrefs can simplify this process.

Enter the domain of your business and your competitors, and you'll get a breakdown of the keyword profiles of the different websites.



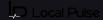
You also get clear data insights that help you make informed decisions for your business.

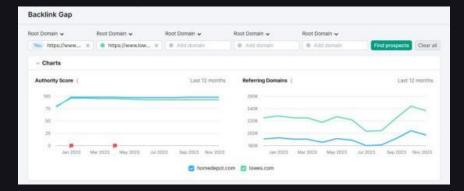
# **Backlink Analysis**

Analyzing your competitors' backlink profiles can reveal potential link building opportunities.

You can see which sites link to your competitors and get insights into the strategies they are using to get links.

Tools like Semrush and Ahrefs can give you a detailed comparison of the number of links and referring domains.





You can use this information to guide your outreach and link building strategy.

### **Content Evaluation**

To make sure that your content stands out and offers unique value, you need to see how it measures up against the competition.

You can look at the depth of information covered, the freshness, and the overall presentation of your competitor's content.

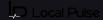
This will help identify areas where you can improve your content strategy.

It's also important to note the types of content used by competitors. This can help you determine the types of content that resonate best with your target audience.

You can streamline content analysis by using keyword research and competitor analysis tools.

By identifying relevant keywords and studying top-performing content in your industry, you can create a content plan that builds authority.

Organizing your topics with clear titles, word count goals, and a structured outline will make content creation more effective and strategic.



# The Local Strategy



For local businesses, you want to get really specific with your research.

Focus on keywords that include local identifiers like city names or "near me" phrases.

Because these terms are more specific, they generally have a lower Keyword Difficulty. This also often means the conversion potential is higher as the search intent is clear.

The priority for competitor analysis will be similar businesses operating in the same geographic area.

Look at the Google Business Profiles of these competitors and where they get links from. Pay close attention to local community websites, news sites, and business directories.

# The National Strategy



At the national scale, you need to take a broader approach.

Their target audience spans an entire country, so keyword selection usually includes more competitive search terms. These terms have higher Search Volume and can have a more varied intent.

You can include more informational intent terms in your strategy.

Analyze competitors who are ranking for your target keywords. See which types of content they are putting out and which topics generate the most traffic and links.



# The Enterprise Strategy



Enterprises can operate on a global scale.

You're looking to attract an extensive, diverse audience. That means managing a large set of keywords with a mix of high-competition head terms and long-tail phrases.

Competitive analysis will need to be more in-depth. You'll have to monitor a larger selection of direct and indirect competitors.

You may find competitors have more advanced link building strategies to attract links from industry publications and high-authority websites.

Your content strategy will also need to be more expansive. Look at how competitors establish thought leadership and develop a strong presence in the SERPs throughout their marketing funnels.





# **Chapter 3 Content Creation**

Content is why people come to your business website.

It drives traffic, conversions, and, ultimately, business value.

There are four main types of content you should include in your SEO strategy.



# Long-Tail Content

Long-tail content ranks quickly due to its specificity.

These keywords often encompass question-based topics, industry news, and educational materials.

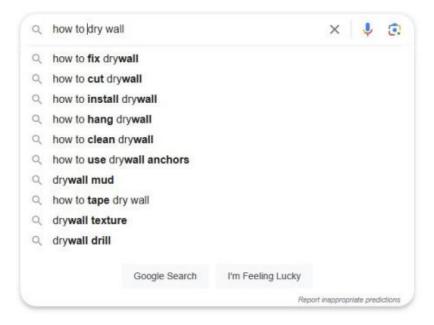
One effective approach is to use the following formula to identify them: [main keyword] + [search intent helper]. A search intent helper clarifies the content type with phrases like "how to," "reviews," or "hear me."



For instance, in the drywall industry, applying the formula results in keywords such as "how to drywall" or "drywall reviews." The next steps involve:

- Google each seed phrase.
- Note intriguing terms from autocomplete results, SERP features, and the "Searches related to" section.





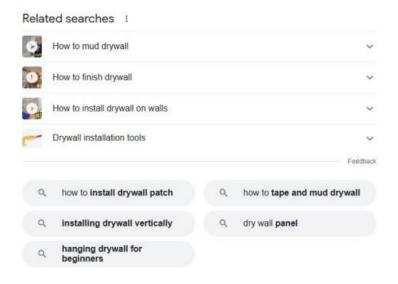
- Repeat steps I and 2 with the new keyword ideas until no new ones emerge.
- 4 Enter these terms into a keyword research tool for further analysis.

Taking "drywall how to" as an example, Googling reveals related searches, including "how hard is it to install drywall."



# People also ask : Can you dry wall yourself? How to install drywall step by step? What do you need to drywall? How hard is it to install drywall?

The "Related searches" section at the bottom of the page offers even more keywords.



From this research, we can infer that videos are popular in the drywall domain.

Incorporating videos in posts can enhance visibility. There's also a trend toward DIY terms like "by yourself" and specific topics like "drywall finishing."

By repeating this process, you can amass a rich list of long-tail keywords ready for content creation.



# **Infographics**

Infographics can be effective tools for gaining likes, shares, and building links. But they require thoughtful execution.

A successful infographic demands more than just a collection of statistics.

To differentiate your infographics from the rest:





# **Prioritize Quality**

Aim for superior design and content.

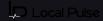
Avoid generic topics that have been overused. For example, instead of creating a general infographic on "Workplace Productivity Trends," you could focus on the impact of technology on productivity for remote teams.

This topic is more specific and highly relevant for many businesses today.

# **Leverage Original Research**

Although using existing data is an option, creating your own research provides uniqueness.

This makes it more likely to stand out and attract links and shares.





### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

# The New Best Times To Post On Social Media In 2022

These are the new best times to post on social media to generate engagement in 2022:



### Social media (in general):









9:00 AM) 9:01 AM) (7:59 PM)







(7:00 AM) (3:15 PM) (7:00 PM)









(8:38 AM) (9:26 AM) (10:00 AM)







1:00 AM 10:00 AM 12:00 PM











(12:00 PM) (6:17 PM) (8:02 PM)

# Summary

The best times to post to social media in 2022 are 7:00 PM, 3:15 PM, and 8:41 AM in your target audience's time zone.

The best hourlong periods to post on social media are 9:00 AM, 7:00 PM, and 10:00 AM in your target audience's time zone.

The worst hourlong periods to post on social media are 2:00 AM, 3:00 AM, and 1:00 AM in your target audience's time zone.

The best times the top .5% of organizations post on social media are 12:00 PM, 6:00 PM, and 9:00 AM in their target audience's time zones.







You don't need to conduct extensive research to get your data. Even simple surveys within your industry can be valuable.

For example, an architectural firm might gather insights about architects' salaries, preferred tools, or universities attended.

# **Invest in Design**

The visual appeal of an infographic is crucial.

Hiring a professional graphic designer is worth it if you plan to release one high-quality infographic annually. The design is the first thing people notice, even before they delve into the data.

Whether you create it yourself or hire a designer, a well-crafted infographic can make your content more engaging and shareable





# Cornerstone Content

Cornerstone content is a high-quality, comprehensive resource on a particular topic. These pieces have the potential to rank high in search results and attract substantial traffic.

Cornerstone pieces are a long-term investment. They may take longer to gain traction in search rankings because they often target competitive keywords.

However, the effort put into creating and promoting them can yield substantial returns through consistent, high traffic and positioning your site as an authority on the topic.

You'll want to combine primary keywords with related, long-tail variations to create a holistic piece that addresses multiple search intents.

Here's a great example by Lemon Light:



### **Getting Started**

How Do I Create a Video Marketing Strategy?

How to Build a Video Marketing Strategy

Start with Your Video Goals

Find Your Target Audience

Figure Out What Story You Want to Tell

Keep Creative Requirements in Mind

Always (Try to) Stick to Your Timeline

Maintain a Realistic Budget

Leverage Al Technology

What Kind of Video Should I Create?

What Style of Video Should I Create?

What Are the Three Stages of Video Production?

Why You Need a Video Production Partner

How Does Video Improve My SEO?

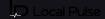
How Do I Distribute My Video?

Should I Repurpose the Same Video for Every Platform?

Which Type of Distribution is Best for Me?

How Do I Know If My Video Is Successful?

Time to Get Started!



You can see that the piece covers a plethora of sub-topics and long-tail queries.

Don't make the mistake of one-upping your competition based solely on the word count or how many keywords you could pack into your metas.

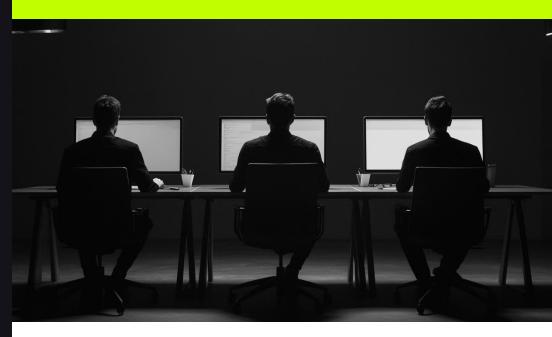
Get inside the mind of the person searching for your target keyword. What do they want?

Will a video solve their woes? Would detailed photos/illustrations help? Are they a beginner or an expert?

Ask yourself these questions before doing anything else.

Once the content is live, it's not enough to wait for organic traffic. Promote the cornerstone content through strategic link building campaigns to boost its visibility and authority.

With regular updates, cornerstone can be a reliable asset for a long time after being published.

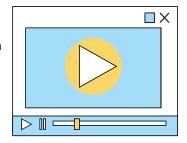




# Video

Videos are a great way to capture attention and communicate information quickly.

They get lots of engagement and can be a super-effective way to drive traffic to your landing pages.



For national and enterprise clients, videos are a great way to establish their brand's voice and personality.

You can use videos to showcase product demonstrations, customer testimonials, behind-the-scenes, and more. It's a great way to boost a brand's perceived value and trustworthiness.

It can communicate the benefits of the platform much faster than any written content could.

Here's how you can make videos work for your SEO strategy:

# **User-Centric Content**

There are three main goals for video content. You want to inform, educate, or entertain the viewer.

Whether creating a brand story video, a social media ad, or a step-bystep tutorial, make sure you achieve one or more of those goals.

# **Optimize for Search**

Just like your written content, videos should be optimized for search engines.

That means using relevant target keywords in the video title, description, and tags.

You can also use tools to auto-transcribe your video content to boost searchability. This will help Google understand and rank the content.



# **Engage with Thumbnails**

If you're posting your video on YouTube, make sure you invest in a high-quality thumbnail. An enticing thumbnail can make all the difference between a user clicking on your video or scrolling past it.

You don't need an in-house video production team to get started with this type of content.

Transform your existing blog posts into engaging videos by using simple video editing tools or Al-powered platforms. Repurposing content into video format can boost engagement and help reach a wider audience.

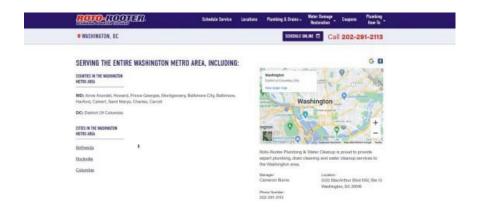
# The Local Strategy



Local clients! The backbone of the small business economy. Our strategies here are much less content-focused. Our goal is to position our business as the goto resource for our services in the local area.

You can do this by creating landing pages for each location the business owns.

Here's a great example of a popular plumbing company that creates these kinds of pages for all of their locations.





There are a few reasons why location-targeted landing pages should be your priority:

- They rank like hotcakes.
- 2 They are mind-blowing tools for lead generation.
- 3 Depending on the competition, they could bring results to your business reasonably fast.

Make sure you include the most important information on these pages. That includes opening hours, the address, phone number, detailed descriptions of your services, and more.

You can also create location-specific blog posts. For example, you can cover topics directly related to the community, local festivals, or seasonal trends that resonate with the local audience.

# The National Strategy



- 2-4 long-tail blog posts per month
- ◆ 2-4 videos per month
- ♦ I Infographic per year
- 4 cornerstone pages per year

For national businesses, you need to be smart about the types of content you create.

Generally, you'll want to focus on "Bottom-of-the-Funnel" (BoFu) content. This content targets customers who are almost ready to make a purchase but need that final bit of convincing.

Targeting this ready-to-buy audience can maximize the return on investment of your content.

For example, let's say you're a tech retailer. You could create BoFu content in the form of in-depth reviews or comparison posts of your best-selling products.



This type of content equips the customer with the knowledge they need to make an informed decision. It bridges the gap between interest and purchase.

You can reassure the customer that they are making the right choice, increasing the chances of a conversion.

# The Enterprise Strategy



- ◆ 4-8 blog posts per month
- ◆ 4-8 videos per month
- ◆ 1 cornerstone post per month
- ♦ 2 infographics per year
- ♦ 2 press releases per month

Compared to the other business types, we are upping our amount of content creation.

With more expansive reach and resources, enterprise businesses have the capacity to create content for each stage of the buyer's journey.

You can create more informational top-of-the-funnel (ToFu) content to draw potential customers. ToFu content is an excellent way for enterprises to flex their authority in the industry and position themselves as thought leaders and go-to sources for information.

You'll also need to build out your middle and bottom-of-the-funnel content to drive conversions.

The strategy is much more comprehensive. That means you'll need to invest a lot more time into content creation and promotion.

But you can quickly scale up by streamlining your content creation process. Outsourcing tasks like blog posts, cornerstone content, and local landing pages can save time and ensure consistency.

Building a reliable workflow or working with experienced writers can help you meet your content demands efficiently.



# Chapter 4 Link Building

Links are one of the most important Google ranking factors.

Even if you have awesome content, you need high-quality backlinks to deliver results for your business.

Publishing great content is an integral part of a successful SEO strategy. But you need to actively build links to your content to help it rank.

In this section, we'll reveal the link building tactics you should focus on for each business profile. These white hat tactics are what works in the SERPs now.

It's important to remember that diversification is key here.

You'll want to mix up your strategies for a healthy, natural link profile for every business type.





# The Local Strategy



- Continuously build local citations
- Email clients' donors, suppliers, and other relations
- ♦ I-5 targeted blogger outreach links per month
- Press releases

# Citations, Citations, Citations

As we're not creating as much content and resources as other kinds of businesses, citations are a big part of local business link building efforts.

You should focus on really going for those industry-specific, locationspecific citations. In addition to those, there are a good number of generic but ever-so-important citation opportunities.



Computer services Computer repair service



You have to decide if this is something you're going to do in-house or outsource to a reputable company.

You must account for the time, effort, and training you would need to invest in doing in-house local citations. After that, compare the costs with reputable companies that specialize in citations.

For many business owners, handling citations manually can be timeconsuming and tedious. Professional services can often provide faster, more reliable results, allowing you to focus on other areas of growth.

When evaluating your options, look for accuracy, consistency, and transparency—ensuring your business information is correctly listed across trusted directories will make a significant impact on your local search rankings.



# **Email Your Businesses Current Relations**

A local business might have product suppliers, they may participate in community events, and they may donate to charity.

Politely email these different organizations and see if they would be interested in showing off your brand as somebody who endorses them.





# **Getting Links from Bloggers**

The most effective way to get links from bloggers is to either email bloggers who write about your local area or to participate in guest posting.

You could leverage the name and experience of your businesses brand. A plumbing blog would value an article contributed by a company that's actually in the trenches every day.

# **Press Releases**

You can support your link building efforts with press releases when your business has something newsworthy to share.

That could involve announcing a major company update, receiving an award, or signing a significant partnership. The key is to highlight something that captures attention and has genuine news value.

When you distribute a press release, it can get picked up by local media outlets, news websites, and industry-specific platforms. Each time your press release is published, it's an opportunity for a backlink to your business website.

To maximize its reach, ensure your press release is well-written, distributed to relevant publications, and optimized with key details that make it compelling for journalists and readers alike.



# The National Strategy



- Continuous building of local citations
- 1 skyscraper campaign for every piece of content you publish
- ◆ 2 press releases per month
- ◆ 10-50 infographic links per month
- ◆ 10-30 blogger outreach links per month
- Follow up with charities your client donates to, suppliers, and/or accrediting bodies for links or references on their sites

# Types of links:

- 50-60% home page
- 30% content pages
- ♦ 10-20% money page



# **Build High-Quality Local Citations**

A common misconception is that local citations are only valuable for businesses that serve a small surrounding area.

Well, even for businesses that operate nationally, citations are an incredible resource to set the groundwork for your link profile.

But here's the thing... quality matters.

We do not recommend shooting for every directory under the sun. Not only will that have little to no effect on your rankings, but it will cause a BP-oil-spill level of a cleanup effort every time your NAP info changes.

So, what's your plan of attack here? Prioritize industry and area-based local citation opportunities.

Look for those hard-to-find but ultra-valuable citations not listed in the typical "Top 1,000 SEO Citations" listicles.



When managing local citations, accuracy and relevance are key. Focus on submitting your business to directories that are specific to your industry and location. Keep track of your listings with a detailed report.

# **Skyscraper Campaigns**

In simple terms, a skyscraper campaign is when you find a piece of content, write a better version, and then email everyone who has linked to that piece of content (and ones that are similar), seeing if they'd be interested in linking to your new article.

You'll find good topics for skyscraper research by looking at a site's toplinked or highest-performing pages.

Below is an example of how you could find a bunch of great keywords and topics by looking at the Top Pages section inside Semrush.



Simply plug in a competitor's domain and take a look at their top pages and what keywords they are ranking for.

You can sort the pages according to the number of backlinks and referring domains to narrow in on the best opportunities.

# **Press Releases**

Like local businesses, you can use press releases to build links to your national business website when they have something newsworthy to share.

Because they are a bigger organization, there's a better chance that notable publications will pick up the press release.

Remember to keep your press releases clear, concise, and interesting.





# **Infographic Links**

The range of infographic links you should earn your business can be from 10 to 50. This will all depend on the size of your businesses niche and how interesting the topic is.

Also, think about other industries that might be interested in the topic of your infographic.

If our infographic is an animated illustration of how an automotive clutch works, we don't have to limit ourselves to other car sites.

For example, we could also reach out to mechanical engineering blogs.



# **Media Placements**

Media placements are all about getting your website mentioned and linked in articles, news stories, or features on media outlets.

By getting a link on these sites, you can reach a wider audience and boost your website's authority. These types of links can really move the needle.

To get featured in top publications, research where competitors are mentioned and pitch valuable insights or news about your business.

# **Blogger Outreach**

Bloggers are the backbones of links. So many great backlinks are out there waiting to be had by building great relationships with bloggers.

The easiest way to start a positive relationship is by contributing a great guest post. Not an average one, but a great one!

Bloggers are always receiving guest post requests. Knocking one out of the park is a great way to stand out and will increase your ability to get more links from said blogger in the future.



# **Links From Your Base of Connections**

It's easy to forget about the people you know and only seek new opportunities.

### Don't!

Your may donate to charities, sponsor events, or even have good relationships with product suppliers. Reach out to these organizations and pitch them on a link.

Often enough, these organizations/companies would love the opportunity to show off a brand that supports them.

# Anchor Text and What to Link to

Include your brand name in most of your links' anchor text.

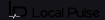
As mentioned, a rough estimate to go by is 50-60% links to your home page, 30% content page links, and 10-20% money page links.

The amount of money page links you get will vary.

Is your business an electric car company taking on Tesla? You're going to have no problem getting plenty of money page links.

Is your business a national waste removal service? Yeah, you're not going to have as easy of a time.





# The Enterprise Strategy



- 20-40 blogger outreach and media placement links per month
- 2 press releases per month
- Email suppliers, charities, and other relations of the client

Infographic outreach

5-20 journalist links per month

# **Blogger Outreach**

The main component of our strategy will be to build relationships with bloggers and aim to score 20-40 links per month.



# **Infographics**

The two infographic campaigns you send every year should be quite large. You're aiming to get a lot of attention and links through these campaigns.







# **Industry Partnerships and Collaborations**

If you're working with a notable enterprise client, you can take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with influential figures in their industry for content creation, webinars, or events.

This can be a great way to enhance brand visibility and generate valuable backlinks.

# Comprehensive PR Strategy

Enterprise businesses need a comprehensive digital PR strategy. That should include regular press releases and media placements.

You should consider using original research to get your business featured in well-known publications and leading industry magazines.







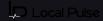
# **Journalist Links**

Online platforms connect journalists looking for original quotes and insights with expert sources. Responding to these queries can get your business mentioned and linked to in high-authority publications.

When a journalist uses your quote, they usually give credit by linking back to your business website. This is a great way to gain exposure and build authority.

But expert quote link building isn't easy. You need to continually monitor incoming queries and respond quickly to journalists.

Building journalist links takes time and consistency. If you can't monitor queries regularly, consider setting up alerts or delegating the task to ensure you never miss an opportunity.



# **Closing Notes**

We've covered a lot of ground in this guide, and you're now ready to rank your business no matter what size you are!

As you can see, there's a lot that goes into ranking even a local business.

One of the best ways to save time and focus on growing your business is to outsource your SEO tasks. At **Local Pulse**, we offer a range of services, including link building, content creation, and SEO strategy, to help you rank higher and drive more traffic—without the hassle.



Be Rank One.

