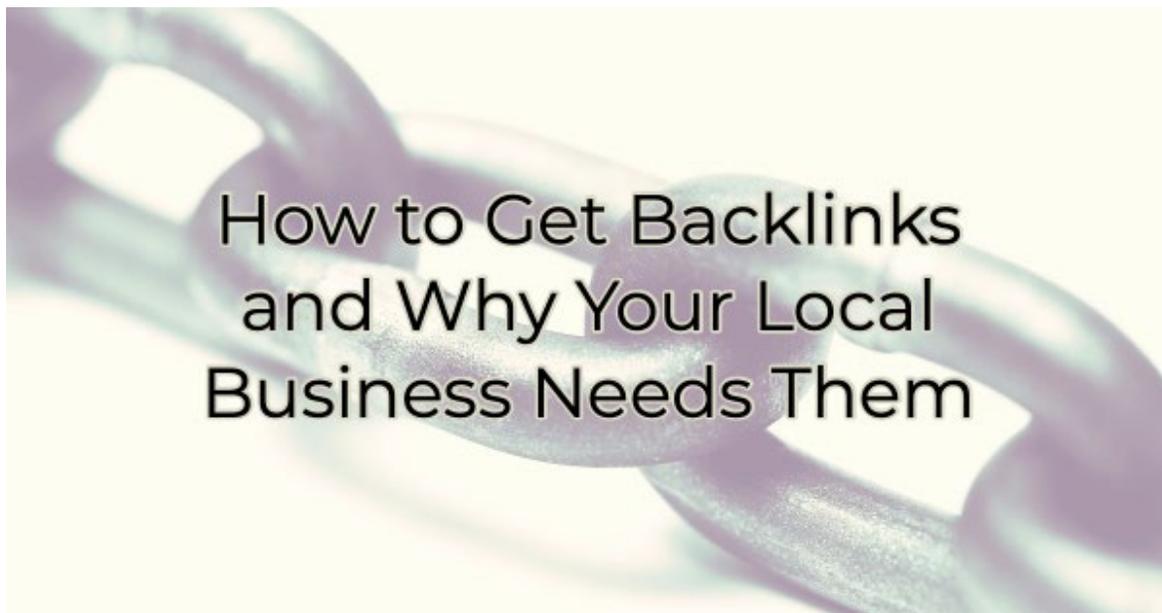


How to Get Backlinks and Why Your Local Business Needs Them

When I was in marketing for a tech company in the beginning days of content marketing, links were gold. Every time someone linked to our content my boss got excited. While I loved the free publicity and SEO awesomeness we acquired from links, I hated the act of actively pursuing them. It felt like we were begging people to like us and—let’s face it—we were.

But while a lot of things have changed since that time, the importance of links is still relevant. Search engines use links from other sources to your website as an indicator of quality content. While it’s not the only indicator, it is an important one.

Your business website needs links to show the search engines you’re loved by others. But not all links are of the same worth. Here’s how you can get some great links for very little effort.



Some Links Are Better Than Others

First, let’s talk about how things used to be done and what you can no longer get away with. Back in the early days of link building, there were link farms and sites that offered to link to your content for money. It was lucrative for everyone involved but that practice has ended. Google grew wise to it.

Now it ranks links by the credibility of the website. A site like CNN that linked to your website would bolster the importance of your content in the “minds” of the search engine. However, you don’t need a site like that to get good vibes from the search engines. There are a lot of easier options out there such as the following:

Good Ways to Get Great Links

If you want good quality links back to your content, try these easy solutions.

1. **Chamber of Commerce.** Your local chamber of commerce probably has excellent credibility from a search engine prospective thus making it the perfect place to get links from. Whether it's a listing in their directory, a mention on their website, a link to your business as a sponsor, or a guest blog post with attribution, as long as it's not a "no-follow" link it will help you improve your credibility to Google. Ask your chamber about link options. You might be surprised by the variety of ways they can help.
2. **Referable Content.** Very few people will link to your content if it stinks. You want to create content that people will find value in. Consider producing a reference guide that people could use when shopping for your product/service or a checklist or calculator that people would want to come back to. If you create something like this, writers creating articles on your topic may refer others to the tool you've created or the advice you've given. In fact, long form content receives 77% more links than short articles. A couple of good, well-researched long form pieces can be all you need to garner good links. If someone asks you if they can use your content or a quote from it, always ask for an attribution with a link back to it. Also, if you have a keyword alert for your business (and you should have those set up), or you come across someone using your work, ask that they give attribution with a link. Most people will accommodate you. If you read an online article that you believe could benefit from your expertise or a link to your article or resource, don't hesitate to reach out to the author. But be specific about what your piece could add to theirs.
3. **Business Associations.** Business associations or industry magazines are always looking for content. If you've created something you are proud of, pitch it to your industry magazine. Ask for the link.
4. **The City.** During COVID, a lot of cities have created business pages to help visitors know what's open and what's not. Ask to be included and ask for a link. Make sure it's not a no-follow link.

These are all easy ways to get credible links. If you want to know more about how Google and other search engines weigh links, [click here](#).

[Christina R. Metcalf](#) (formerly Green) is a marketer who enjoys using the power of story and refuses to believe meaningful copy can be written by bots. She helps chamber and small business professionals find the right words when they don't have the time or interest to do so. Christina hates exclamation points and loves road trips. Say hi on [Twitter](#) or reach out on [Facebook](#).