

# IDENTITY



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THANK YOU TO MY BUSINESS PARTNER,  
FRED LAURENT, FOR HIS INSIGHT AND  
MY DAUGHTER GENIE'S LINGUISTIC  
SKILLS. THANK YOU ALSO TO DR DLO  
SMITH AND WEBMASTERWORLD'S  
MODERATORS AND MEMBERS OVER  
20+ YEARS. YOU GOT ME HERE.

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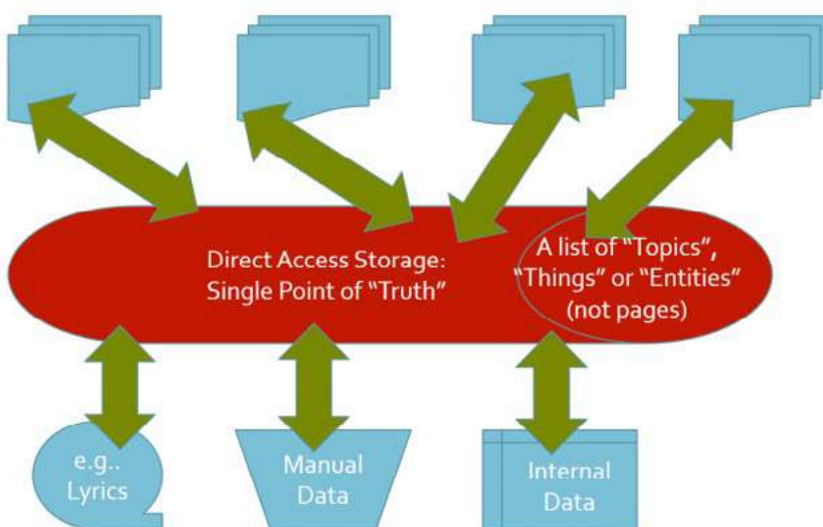
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# INTRODUCTION

This Semantic SEO guide provides an in-depth foundational understanding of Semantic SEO. Web search engines like Google increasingly focus on Semantic indexing and retrieval of content based around the concept of “entities” (or “things”) rather than the concept of “words” (or “strings”). On the upside, this is a much more efficient way of storing the world’s information. On the other hand, it occasionally loses colour and variety in results. This guide will give you a solid grounding on both the concepts behind Semantic search and SEO strategies you might adopt to leverage Semantic or Entity orientated search.



The Problem  
the Semantic  
Web Tries to  
Solve



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Semantic SEO helps to inform a Knowledge Graph



## What is Entity SEO?

There are several facets to entity or semantic search, and entity SEO or semantic SEO is the art of optimizing the underlying data. In one context, a semantic search is an information search that uses entities rather than web page URLs as the primary record structure in an information retrieval system. Semantic search is efficient for machines due to structured formats and relatively specific vocabulary. SEOs are starting to wake up to the profound difference between an entity vs keyword approach to content strategies. Google now has a large and sophisticated “Knowledge Graph”, which helps it understand the relationships between concepts.

The task, now, for your online marketing strategy is to understand how to optimize an organization’s online presence so that the organization’s core competencies are expressed within that knowledge graph. We call this “Semantic Search” or “Semantic SEO”. This short book is a training guide that will help digital marketing experts incorporate this Artificial Intelligence aspect into search marketing.

Another way to describe Semantic search is that a search engine is trying to derive meaning from the content it crawls on a page, not simply by counting words but also by considering the mark-up that makes up how the page is presented. A web search engine may still relate this content to meaning, but there are several mark up attributes that a crawler can readily use to help with meaning, such as:

- Header tags (H1 to H3) to identify important concepts
- Bullet points to help group concepts
- Tables to help organize data

More recently, JSON-LD has become a prevalent way to add structured data to content.



## How Semantic Search impacts SEO

Gone are the days of keyword stuffing. Semantic search leverages deep learning concepts. The search algorithms known as Hummingbird and RankBrain are part of a set of tools that have changed the whole meaning of “ranking in the SERPs”. This Semantic search guide will provide an updatable resource. We trust it will prove invaluable for SEOs.

## How Semantic SEO improves the User Experience

Semantic SEO improves the user experience as it provides the users with new concepts that are closely related to the original query. By answering the search intent, Google’s algorithm gradually learns that you have provided a great user experience and thus tends to rank your content high in the search results. Semantic SEO also allows your content to be seen in Google Discover and generally increases discoverability (in context).

# WHO SHOULD READ THE SEMANTIC SEARCH GUIDE?

This book is not the first content you should ever read on SEO. There are several good works on search, including:

- The Art of SEO: Rand Fishkin, Stephan Spencer et al
- Search Engine Visibility: Shari Thurow
- Search Engine Optimization for Dummies: Peter Kent
- Entity Orientated Search: Krisztian Balog

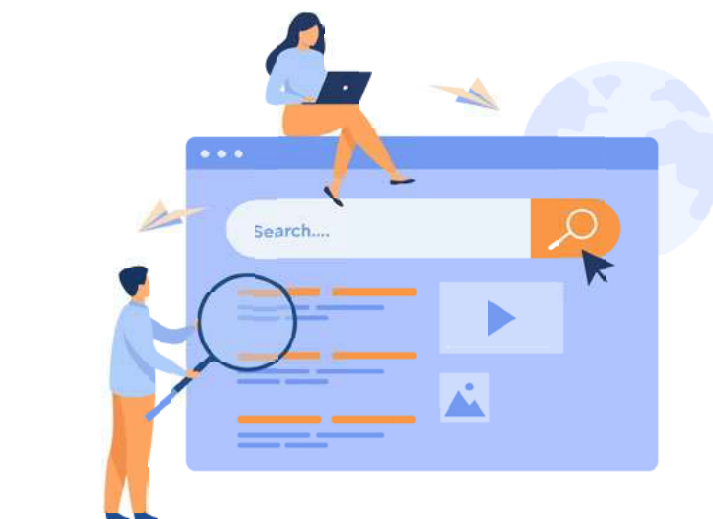


This guide is not trying to replace these. Instead, the focus is looking to augment traditional SEO approaches; it helps existing SEOs understand the principles of entities and semantic search and shows how maximizing the traffic and branding that entities can offer differently to traditional SEO.

At the same time, this guide is bite-sized, compared to other works on Entity Search. Some complex ideas may have been explained in terms that will be too complex for some and too simple for others. This book offers strategies for semantic SEO and does not seek to cover the complex subject of data indexing and information retrieval in Entity Search.

## Contribute to further editions or revisions

Entities are a continually evolving idea. This is a work that will need to be updated and improved frequently to remain relevant. Readers already noted as experts in the field are invited to add their chapters or sections to further editions of this guide by emailing them to [publications@dixonjones.com](mailto:publications@dixonjones.com). Sending content on this route will suggest that it is your own work and that you are willing to incorporate it into the main text



# 01 THE KNOWLEDGE GRAPH EXPLAINED

## Summary

Google's Knowledge Graph is generally a knowledge base containing information acquired from several sources and their relationships in order to enhance the search results. This concept was introduced around 2012 to provide more relevant, accurate, and helpful information based on what users search on the Web through the search engines. The knowledge graph presents the information to users in several ways, most notably via an infobox or Knowledge Panel usually placed next to the results.

The Knowledge Panel presents a wide variety of information concerning a subject or Entity. For example, when a user types the name of a famous musician, the knowledge panel displays such details as the musician's full name, images, list of songs, recent tracks, upcoming events, partners, and other information. The knowledge graph is made possible as it creates a database by using the data available about the Entity to develop meaningful relationships.

The user experience is significantly improved by knowledge graphs since the user is presented with an extensive range of information on a concept. This eliminates the need to keep on searching for a specific topic. The result is a reduced number of clicks and a reduced amount of time required to locate matching content.



The knowledge base is created by forming relationships between various entities. Entities in this case refer to concepts or things that are distinguishable including colour, people, location, a feeling, and organizations among others. Machine learning and other algorithms are deployed in the knowledge graphs to provide the most relevant and useful information to searchers. Interlinking data from millions of sources and utilizing machine learning concepts enables the knowledge graphs to come up with a knowledge base that has helpful and accurate information about the entities. When searching for some content via the Web, the graphs utilize semantic search methods to return the most relevant feedback. The knowledge graphs are designed in



tween keywords and phrases to better understand what the user is interested in or to understand the search's context that return matching results.

Edges are used to connect the various entities and provide a description of the nature of the relationship between these entities. Through the knowledge graph, Google can present searchers with more information that is relevant to the specific search, and also increases the traffic for search engine optimization (SEO). Google's knowledge graph helps in enhancing voice searches by identifying the entities in queries made using natural language. A business can benefit from knowledge graphs because it normally provides detailed information about the business after a search. Users find information about future events planned by a business that is beneficial to the business.

## Detail

For example, consider the following sentence:

*"Queen is a rock band"*

*An example of a "Semantic triple"*

The image shows a Google Knowledge Panel for the band Queen. At the top, there are several album covers and a "More images" link. Below this, the band's name "Queen" is displayed with the subtitle "Rock band". A link to "queenonline.com" is provided. The "Available on" section lists YouTube, Spotify, and Deezer, with a "More music services" link. A brief description states: "Queen are a British rock band formed in London in 1970. Their classic line-up was Freddie Mercury, Brian May, Roger Taylor and John Deacon." followed by a "Wikipedia" link. The "Origin" is listed as "London (1970)" and the "Genre" as "Rock". The "Albums" section lists "Innuendo, A Night at the Opera, Sheer Heart Attack, MORE" and the "Record labels" as "Universal Music Group, EMI, Parlophone, MORE". The "Songs" section lists "Bohemian Rhapsody" (A Night at the Opera - 1975), "We Will Rock You" (News of the World - 1977), and "Don't Stop Me Now" (Jazz - 1978), with a "View 25+ more" link. The "Members" section shows portraits of Freddie Mercury (Lead vocalist), Brian May (Keyboard), John Deacon (Bass guitar), Roger Meddows Taylor (Drum Kits), and Mike Grose, with a "View 2+ more" link. The "Profiles" section shows icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and Myspace. The "People also search for" section lists "The Beatles", "David Bowie", "Pink Floyd", "The Rolling Stones", and "Michael Jackson", with a "View 15+ more" link.

Visual display of a Knowledge Panel





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Here are some things that the Knowledge Graph might store for “Queen, the band”:

- **Freddy Mercury** (is a member of) **Queen**, (which is a) **rock band**,
- **Bohemian Rhapsody** (is a) **song** (written by) **Queen**, (which is a) **rock band**
- **Innuendo** (is an) **album** (written by) **Queen**, (which is a) **rock band**
- **Live Aid** (is a) **concert** (featuring) **Queen**, (which is a) **band**

The items in bold are all Entities. They all connect with a relationship (Shown in brackets). That’s really all there is to it! “Person”, “band” and “concert” are classifications of things. Or @types of things, rather than things in their own right... that is to say, Many people can be classified as a “person” entity, Queen in this record is classified as a band. In another record, Queen may also exist, classified as (say) a monarch. Some common classifier @types are:

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| • <b>Person</b>       | • <b>Review</b> |
| • <b>Place</b>        | • <b>Recipe</b> |
| • <b>Date</b>         | • <b>Event</b>  |
| • <b>Organisation</b> |                 |

By populating the Queen (a band) record with these lines of relationships to other records, the table that is produced acts as a semi-structured dataset about the entity. So when you type in “Queen, band” into Google, not only do you get the official website of the band as you have always done, you also get a “Knowledge Box” which is really just all these relationships laid out in a pretty manner. Their YouTube channel, their Spotify channel, their albums, members and more.

Note the importance of Wikipedia in much of Google’s Knowledge Panel. Google has noted in presentations that it uses the data from the Wikimedia foundation as a primary dataset for training its own systems when building the knowledge graph. IMDB also looks prevalent in this example.

## Semantic Triples

A “Triple” in the context of semantic search, is a relationship between two entities or entity @types. (The @ sign that we keep using will start making sense elsewhere in this guide).

If you understand the concept above, you’ll be delighted to understand that “Semantic Triples are even simpler. We used the example: “**Freddy Mercury** (is a member of) **Queen**, (which is a) **rock band**”. This is more complicated than a “triple”. In fact, THREE triples are contained in that statement:

1. “ **Freddy Mercury** (is a member of) **Queen**
2. **Queen**, (is a) **rock band**
3. Therefore we can DEDUCE a third triple that: “**Freddy Mercury**” (is in a) “**Rock band**”



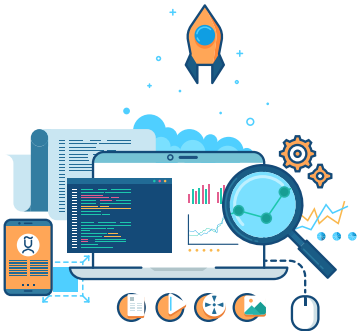
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Triples make up the core of the knowledge graph. Although interestingly, we see here that incomplete data can create errors. It would be more correct to have said Freddie Mercury **WAS** in a rock band. Without the date that he died as another triple, the deduction is in fact false. This is because the INPUT data, saying Freddie **IS** a member of Queen was also false.

## How the Knowledge Graph has changed search

Now that Google understands Queen as an ENTITY, Google can then go much further, by enriching the traditional search results, because Google now knows the YouTube channel. So can easily show a few videos in the results, for example.

Notice in the knowledge box for Queen, one of the first entities listed is “queenonline.com”? The official website is in itself an entity related to Queen, the band. It is not surprising, then, that Google also lists that website as the first traditional organic result.



## Vectors

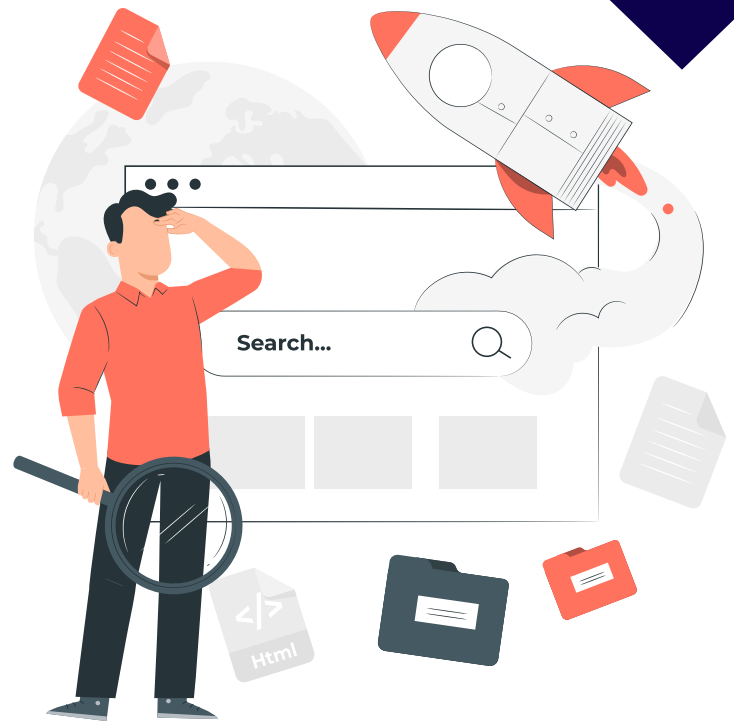
Just from that knowledge box for Queen, you can probably see that Google is likely to see that John Deacon and Freddie Mercury are “semantically close” to each other. Similarly, Google thinks the Beatles and Pink Floyd are probably semantically close bands. This is an extremely important concept for SEOs to understand. If you want to write about Queen, the band, then you had better also write about John Deacon and Freddie Mercury. Talk about London in the 1970s and the amazing video techniques used in Bohemian Rhapsody. Of course, this will not help you rank anymore for the term “Queen, band” because that Entity is already fully defined and you don’t own the official website (unless you do, in which case, can you please link to this article?). However, you **CAN** still generate organic traffic relating to Queen, the band. We describe this in the section “optimizing for the edge”.

That didn’t sound TOO scary, I hope. If you want to be a good SEO, though, you’ll need to know more about how machines can take text and convert text into hierarchies and numbers in a way that they can use to provide us, humans, with useful search results.

You can analyze any web page semantically, the way Google does for free at [Inlinks.net](http://Inlinks.net).

# 02 THE EVOLUTION OF SEMANTIC SEARCH

Modern Search Engines can derive insights across multiple documents instantly. Cataloguing systems over the years moved towards “10 blue links” search results and how now moved on to a more encyclopedic format. In a way, the retrieval methods have gone full-circle.



## The Journey from Directories to Semantic Search

Back when we all used real-world libraries more (and those libraries are still there, very peaceful places to work now, away from the children’s section), how did the librarian look up where a book was when you asked? She invariably had a cataloguing system. In my youth, this was a card-based system, based on numbers. Today you still see every book in the library with catalogue number stuck to the back.

When the Internet started, Jerry Yang and David Filo thought that someone should start doing the same thing with websites and they formed the YAHOO directory. This was a manually curated list of websites, with a small summary of each site’s purpose and a hierarchical category. By modern standards, it wasn’t sophisticated, but at one point Yahoo was the most valuable online business in the world. Two popular variations of the model were Looksmart, which was used by Microsoft and the Open Directory Project, which was an open-source variation that could be used by any search engine, (later including Google). Competing with this idea of cataloguing websites was the concept of “full-text search” – which was led by AltaVista and myriad other companies (including a valiant effort by Yahoo) but ultimately won by Google in the west, Baidu in China and Yandex in Russia. Full-text search offered more promise, providing everything



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could fall into place. Website curation was slow and manual. All the contents of the website had to be explained in a few sentences! Much like a cataloguing system in the local library. Full-text search, on the other hand, needed no manual intervention and every PAGE could be a separate entity in the index. That allowed for a much larger index overall.

Knowledge bases are, to some extent, a swing back to the old way of doing things. We'll return to this argument later, but first, let's explore the differences between catalogue or directory-based indexing and text-based indexing and then delve into some of the concepts behind text-based indexing. Time starved SEO experts that already know text-based search may choose to skip to the next section.

## Directory-based search vs Text-based Search

### DIRECTORIES VS TEXT

#### DIRECTORIES FROM CIRCA 2000 (YAHOO, LOOKSMART, ODP)

- Relatively small number of records
- Manually curated, so accurate when records are created
- As sites increased, the demand on human resources meant that energy went into cataloguing new sites, instead of rechecking existing (changing) sites
- Eventually most manually curated directories closed down, although Wikipedia is a very notable exception

#### TEXT INDEXES FROM CIRCA 2000 GOOGLE, INKTOMI, ALTAVISTA

- Massive number of records which were increasing daily with no end in sight
- Impossible for manual oversight, except by sampling
- Relied on crawlers to cope with the scale
- Was able (eventually) to cope with changing content
- Arguably, the record size is now much larger than the number of "useful concepts" on the web, so "Entity Search" was born

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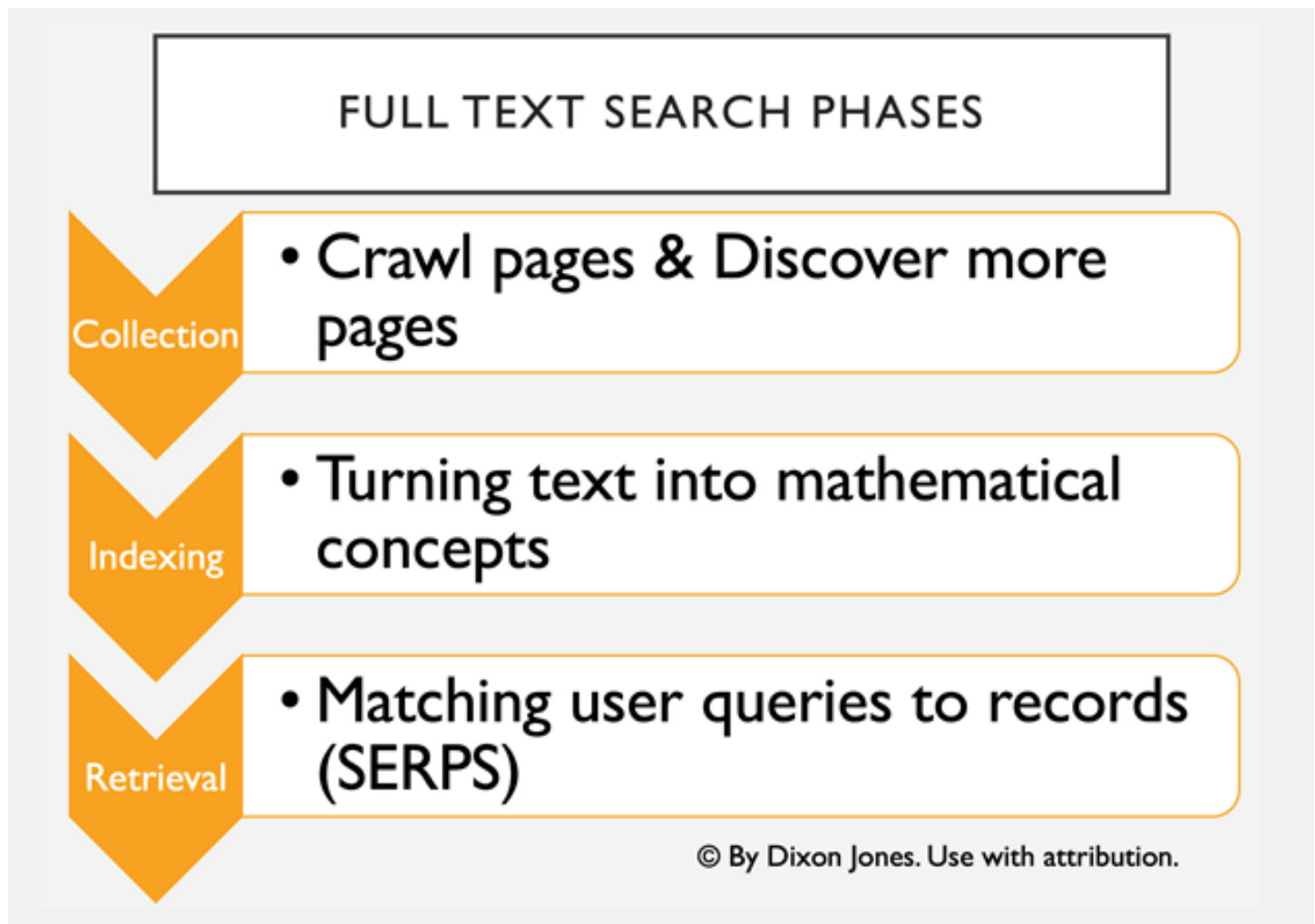
There were some advantages of both approaches to indexing the Web. There still are. Ultimately the full text-based approach won out until recently. As the Web continues to grow, however, Google's mission of "organizing the world's information" has hit several new barriers. Given that there are more pages on the Internet about any given subject than anyone can ever read, how much point is there in Google continually trying to collect the information and order it, if nobody ever looks past the first page of results? Even Google's resources are finite, and even if they were not, the planet's resources ARE finite. You may be surprised to learn that one energy website has estimated the power needed to drive Google search is about



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the same as powering 200,000 homes. Statista reports 4X more energy used by Google, so approaching a million next year if something doesn't change! Google could still sustain this by buying renewable energy to a point. Even so, Moore's law, which suggested microchips would continue to get faster and faster has reached both a physical and economic barrier. Quantum computers may fill this void, but right now, any search engine needs to make compromises.

But until this crisis point, the full-text search was killing human-curated search. To achieve quality results for users in full-text search, search engines needed to change text strings (which are notoriously hard for machines to analyze) into numerical and mathematical concepts, which can then be easily ranked or scored, ready for the time when users need answers to their search queries. The process goes something like this:



## Crawl and Discover phase

Most search engines discover content by crawling it, although traditional crawling is far from the only way in which search engines can ingest content. According to Incapsula (now Impervia), most web traffic actually comes from bots. This is not just Google and Bing. Distributed crawlers like Majestic (where I used to be a director) a specialist search engine analyzing the links BETWEEN web pages, crawls faster than Bing. I





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discussed this once with a friend in Microsoft and he said that one of Microsoft's objectives was to reduce the need for crawling altogether. I do not know how true this is, but certainly, at this point, web crawling is the main way in which search engines ingest text. It is also the main way in which they discover new URLs and Content to feed these insatiable crawlers because crawling a page reveals links to new pages, which can then be put into a queuing system for the next crawl. Discovery also comes in many other forms. Site maps are very helpful for Google and they make it easy for website owners to submit maps directly into Google through their "[Webmaster Search Console](#)". They can also cut corners by looking at news feeds or RSS feeds which update as the website content updates.

Crawling at scale was relatively efficient for many years. The bot could simply grab the HTML of the page and some other metadata and process the text on the page at a later point. However, technology never stops and first frames, then iFrames, then CSS and then [Javascript](#) started to add complexity to this process. Javascript, in particular, creates a huge overhead for search engines to process. Content delivered by Javascript is rendered on the client side. That is to say, your own PC, laptop or phone uses some of its CPU to make the web page appear in the way it does. For a web crawler to read every page on the internet is one thing. For it to crawl it AND understand the Javascript at the same time would slow the crawlers down to such a pace that crawling would not scale. Google, therefore, introduced a fourth step into the process of indexing.

## FULL TEXT SEARCH PHASES

Collection

- Crawl pages & Discover more pages

Rendering

- Javascript etc is analysed in a later step

Indexing

- Turning text into mathematical concepts

Retrieval

- Matching user queries to records (SERPS)

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## Javascript Challenges

Google currently looks to be leading the charge in analyzing Javascript and they have certainly improved significantly over recent years. Nevertheless, the computing overhead required is immense, the processing has to take place sometimes several weeks after the initial crawl and significant compromises have to be made. Martin Splitt, from Google, runs many excellent videos around this challenge.

## TURNING TEXT INTO MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS

Now we turn to the heart of full-text search. SEOs tend to dwell on the indexing part of the search or the retrieval part of the search, called the Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs, for short). I believe they do this because they can see these parts of the search. They can tell if their pages have been crawled, or if they appear. What they tend to ignore is the black box in the middle. The part where a search engine takes all those gazillion words and puts them in an index in a way that allows for instant retrieval. At the same time, they can blend text results with videos, images and other types of data in a process known as “Universal Search”. This is the heart of the matter and whilst this book will not attempt to cover all of this complex subject, we will go into a number of the algorithms that search engines use. I hope these explanations of sometimes complex, but mostly iterative algorithms appeal to the marketer inside you and do not challenge your maths skills too much.

If you would like to take these ideas in video form, I highly recommend a video by Peter Norvig from Google in 2011: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvDCzhbjYWs>





## Continuous Bag of Words (COBW) and nGrams

This is a great algorithm to start with because it is easy to visualize. Imagine a computer reading words at breakneck speed. It reads a word on a page, then the next, then the next. With every word it reads, it initially makes a decision:

Decision: Is this word potentially important?

It decides here by stripping out all those very common words like “an”, “it”, “as”. It does this by checking against a (curated) list of STOP words.

Decision: is this the right variant?

At the same time as deciding whether to drop a word, it might change the word slightly, by removing the “s” from “horseshoes” or matching capitalized words with non-capitalized variants. In short, it aggregates different variants into one form. We'll return to this when we talk about entities because there's not much difference between “litter”, “rubbish” and “garbage”.

Then the system simply counts words. Every time it sees the word “Horseshoe” it adds 1 to the total number of times it has seen the word horseshoe on the Internet and adds 1 to the number of times it sees it on the page it is currently looking at. Technically, Information retrieval experts call pages “documents”, mostly due to historical reasons before the Internet was a thing, but possibly in part just to make us mortals feel inferior!

Now, the search engine can easily see that a searcher looks for the word “horseshoe” it can find the page with the word most densely mentioned on it. This is a pretty BAD way to build a search engine because a page that just spams the word horseshoe would come to the top, instead of one that talks



about horseshoes, but we will come to dealing with this kind of spam when we talk about PageRank and other ranking tools. It is a GREAT way, however, of storing all the words on the Internet efficiently. Whether the word is used once or a million times, the amount of storage needed is about the same and only increases by the number of pages on the Internet. (Information retrieval experts partly call the Internet the “corpus” of “documents” here... partly due to historical reasons, but now I am beginning to think they do it through some sense of passive-aggressive intellectualism. You judge for yourselves.)

This system gets much more useful when the crawler starts counting words that are next to each other, called n-grams. The crawler can then count the number for phrases several words long, after first stripping out the stop words and choosing the dominant variant of each word. Google even went so far in 2006 to publish a data set of n-grams for 13 million words, which is shown in Peter Norvig's lecture and remains [available for download](#).

- Number of sentences: 95,119,665,584
- Number of unigrams: 13,588,391
- Number of bigrams: 314,843,401
- Number of trigrams: 977,069,902
- Number of fourgrams: 1,313,818,354
- Number of fivegrams: 1,176,470,663

Now we can glean huge amounts of information from this information. Google knows that the phrase “the quick fox” is much more common than “the clever fox” on the internet. It doesn’t know why, but it does not need to. It only needs to return relevant pages for “the quick fox” when a person searches for this. If you are not sure why a fox is more likely to be “quick” than “clever”, it is because this forms part of a famous sentence that uses all the letter of the alphabet, making it ideal for teaching people to type on a QWERTY keyboard.

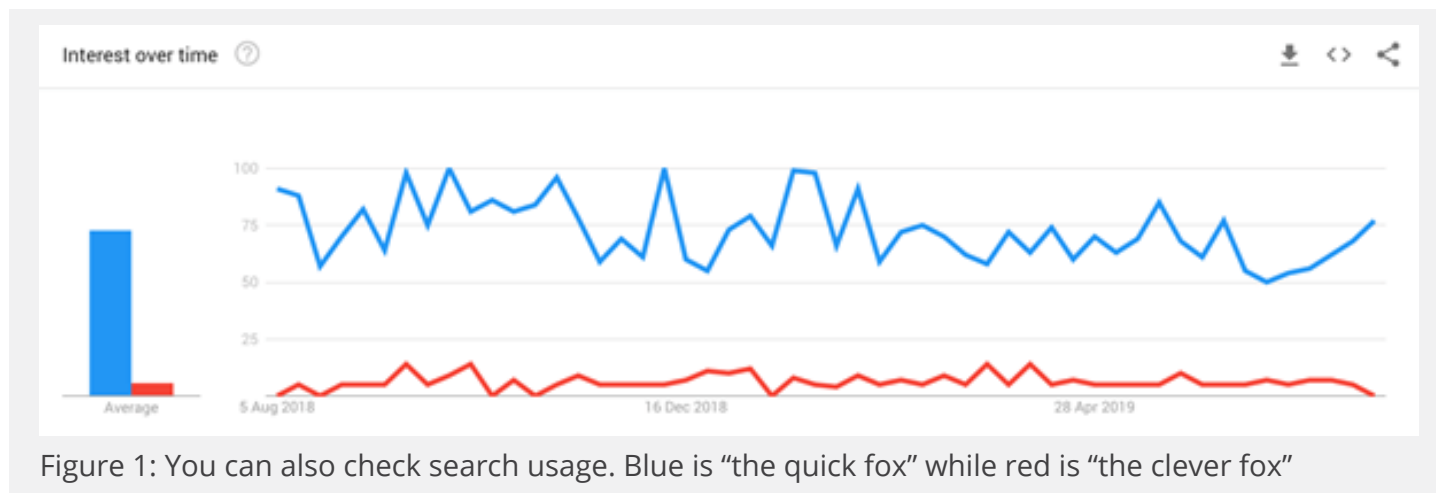


Figure 1: You can also check search usage. Blue is “the quick fox” while red is “the clever fox”

A search engine can look at the number of times the words in the search – both individually and as a group – appear on a page. Spamming aside, there are myriad ways to then score each document for this phrase. A search engine is born!

## Vectors

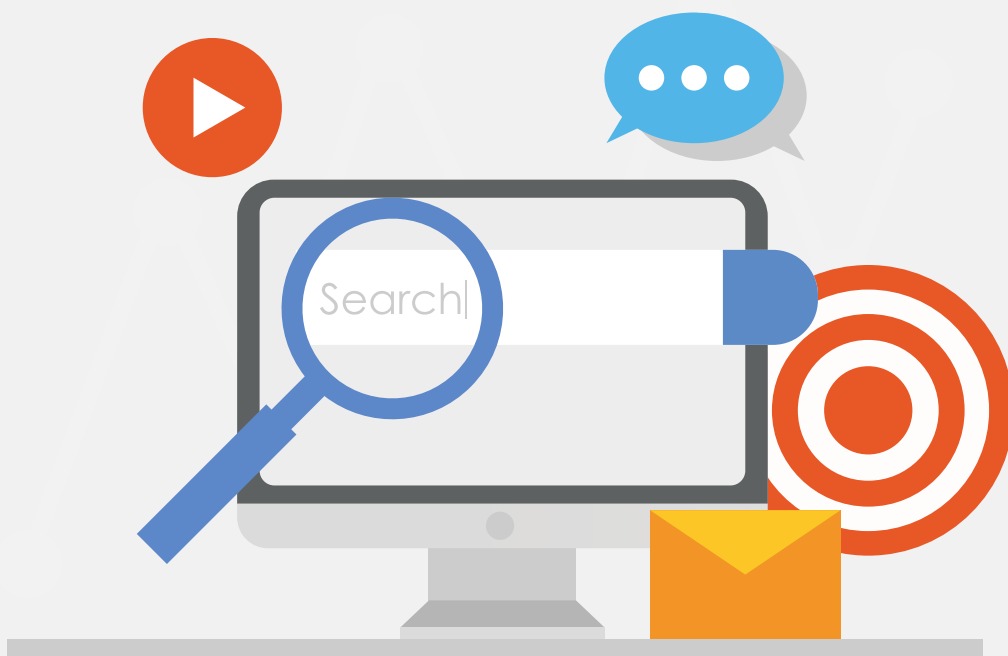
There is another revelation here. Having seen that “the quick fox” is much more popular as a phrase on the Internet than “the clever fox”, we can also deduce that the word “quick” is semantically closer to the word “fox” than “clever”. There are many algorithms, such as “Word2Vec” that use this kind of intuition to map words based on their “proximity”. “King and Queen” end up close, whilst “king and fox” end up very far apart. For further reading on this, look up “Vector Space Models”.

## The move to Semantic Markup

By adding Semantic Mark-up to pages, Google and other search engines can shortcut the algorithms that they need to turn words into concepts. You help explain the content in a way that machines can digest and read. However, on its own, it would be very easy for web content to abuse this system. The knowledge graph needs to only augment the information that it already has when it is confident that the recommendations in the semantic mark-up are valid. If the search engines get this wrong, then Semantic Markup would be little more effective than the “olden days of SEO” with keyword stuffing.

To do this, Search engines still need to trust humans! The Knowledge Graph started with a human-curated set of data.

## Trusted Seed Sets: A glorified directory!



We started the journey of search by discussing how human-led web directories like Yahoo Directory and the Open Directory Project was surpassed by full-text search. The move to Semantic search, though, is a blending of the two ideas. At its heart, Google's Knowledge-based extrapolates ideas from web pages and augments its database. However, the initial data set is trained by using "trusted seed sets". The most visible of these is the Wikipedia foundation. Wikipedia is curated by humans and if something is listed in Wikipedia, it is almost always listed as an entity in Google's Knowledge Graph.

This means that the whole integrity of the Entity based approach to search depends on the integrity and authenticity of those (usually unpaid) volunteers curating Wikipedia content. This produces challenges of both scale and ethics which, are [discussed by the author here](#).

So in many regards the Knowledge Graph is the old web Directory going full circle. The original directories used a tree-like structure to give the directory and ontology, whilst the Knowledge Graph is more fluid in its ontology. In addition, the smallest unit of a directory structure was a web page (or more often a website) whilst the smallest unit of a knowledge graph is an entity that can appear in many pages, but both ideas stem from humans making the initial decisions.

This leads us on to what Google considers an entity and what it doesn't. Clearly, knowing this is important if we are to start "optimizing" Semantic SEO.

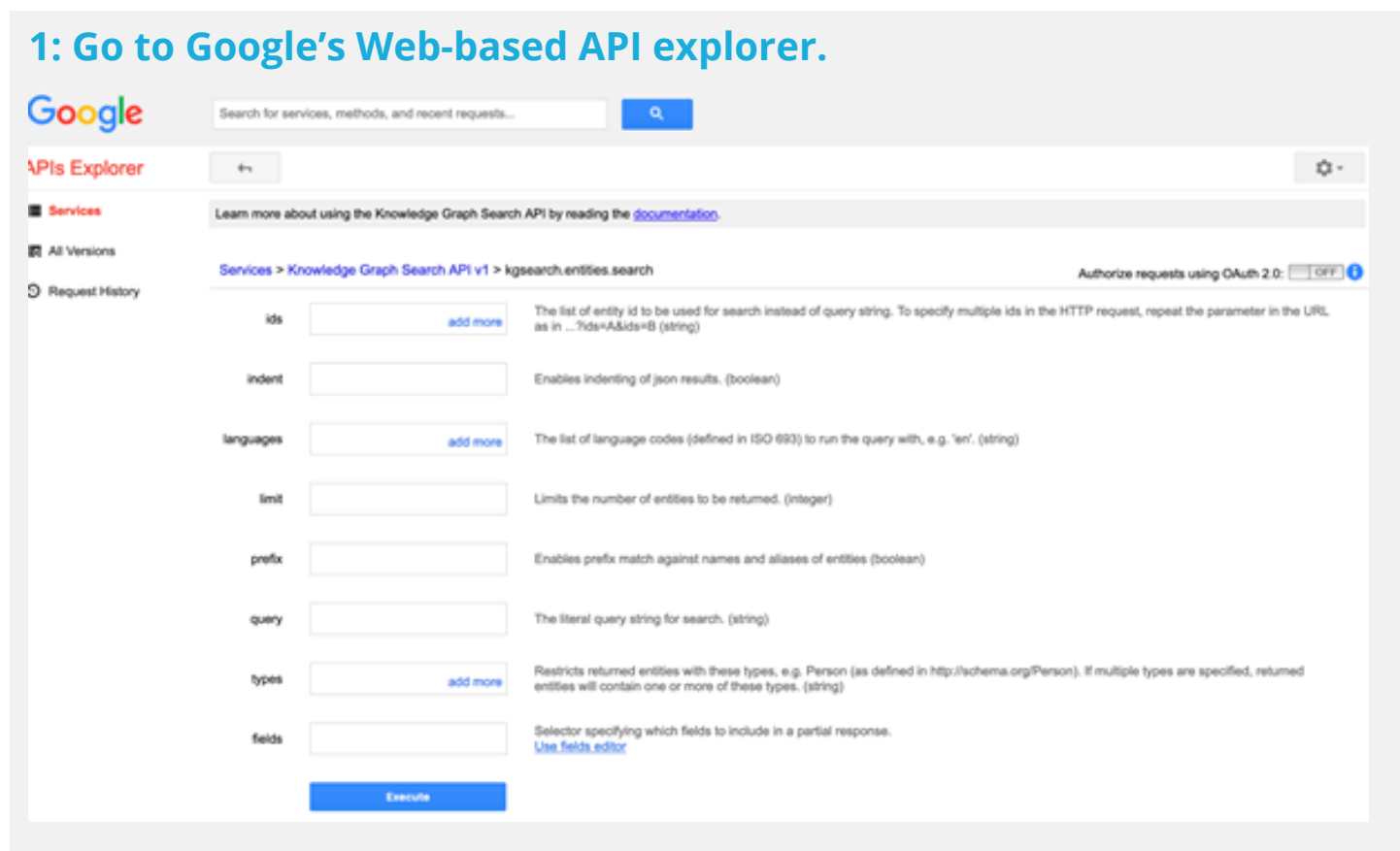
# 03 GOOGLE'S ENTITY SEARCH TOOL

## Know what is an Entity (and what isn't)

Just as you can type in site:example.com into Google search to see all (or most) of the web pages that Google has for any given site in its web index, they also provide a tool <https://developers.google.com/apis-explorer/#p/kgsearch/v1/kgsearch.entities.search> to allow you to interrogate their knowledge base. This is a very useful place to start. After all, if your brand, product, organization or person is already well defined in Google's Knowledge Graph, then you are in a much stronger position than if it is not defined.

Here are the basic steps. We'll go deeper in the next section.

### 1: Go to Google's Web-based API explorer.



The screenshot shows the Google APIs Explorer interface. At the top, there's a search bar for services, methods, and recent requests. Below this, the 'Services' tab is selected, showing a list of services. The 'Knowledge Graph Search API v1' is selected, and the endpoint 'kgsearch.entities.search' is shown. The interface includes a sidebar with 'Services', 'All Versions', and 'Request History'. The main area contains a form with various parameters for the API call, each with a description and a type. The parameters are: 'ids' (string), 'indent' (boolean), 'languages' (string), 'limit' (integer), 'prefix' (boolean), 'query' (string), 'types' (string), and 'fields' (string). An 'Execute' button is at the bottom.

Parameter	Description	Type
ids	The list of entity id to be used for search instead of query string. To specify multiple ids in the HTTP request, repeat the parameter in the URL, as in ...?ids=A&ids=B	(string)
indent	Enables indenting of json results.	(boolean)
languages	The list of language codes (defined in ISO 639) to run the query with, e.g. 'en'.	(string)
limit	Limits the number of entities to be returned.	(integer)
prefix	Enables prefix match against names and aliases of entities	(boolean)
query	The literal query string for search.	(string)
types	Restricts returned entities with these types, e.g. Person (as defined in <a href="http://schema.org/Person">http://schema.org/Person</a> ). If multiple types are specified, returned entities will contain one or more of these types.	(string)
fields	Selector specifying which fields to include in a partial response. <a href="#">Use fields editor</a>	

The page should look a bit like the image above. In the Query field, add your search term. Then click execute.



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2: Scroll Down!

One of the annoying things about many of these tools is that they are meant as demos for programmers, not for SEOs that do not program day-in-day-out. That means there is a little laxness when it comes to UI. If you don't see anything happen when you pressed execute, it probably did work, but displayed the results below the fold. Scroll down the page to see something like this...

```
200 OK
- Show headers -

- {
  "#context": {
    "#vocab": "http://schema.org/",
    "goog": "http://schema.googleapis.com/",
    "EntitySearchResult": "goog:EntitySearchResult",
    "detailedDescription": "goog:detailedDescription",
    "resultScore": "goog:resultScore",
    "kg": "http://g.co/kg"
  },
  "#type": "ItemList",
  "- itemListElement": [
    - {
      "#type": "EntitySearchResult",
      "- result": {
        "#id": "kg:/m/0l1jtm",
        "name": "Adidas",
        "- #type": {
          "Thing",
          "Corporation",
          "Organization"
        },
        "description": "Design company",
        "- detailedDescription": {
          "articleBody": "Adidas AG is a multinational corporation, founded and headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Germany, that designs and manufactures shoes, clothing and accessories. ",
          "url": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adidas",
          "license": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Text_of_Creative_Commons_Attribution-ShareAlike_3.0_Unported_License"
        },
        "- image": {
          "contentUrl": "http://t2.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GoQBj6WocunVU4gSp70e972MJcNlvvzotURQbghAtGCKURUgUET",
          "url": "https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adidas_Logo.svg"
        },
        "url": "http://www.adidas.com/"
      },
      "resultScore": 195.353943
    },
    - {
      "#type": "EntitySearchResult",
      "- result": {
        "#id": "kg:/m/0d4f_0",
        "name": "TaylorMade",

```

Do not be alarmed by the look of this! It may be long or short, but it is structured... and quite easy to read as a human if you don't panic.

### 3: Search for your domain

If the output is long, simply type CTRL-F to open a search box on your browser and see if your domain is on the page.



## Understanding the output of Google's Entity Search Tool

The tool described above is, in one sense, the last word on whether an entity is "recognized" by Google. Simply put, if the Entity is in this list, then your Strategy should be to make the record richer by helping Google add verifiable information to the Entity record. Once a record is created, then Google will be able to enrich the record with more information as it travels around the Web (including your website) and reads structured mark-up in particular. However, whether any given structured data is taken on board by Google is far from clear. Barbara Starr talks about "Trust" and "Proof" being at the top of the Semantic Web Stack. This is worth a read to understand why you cannot just add to the record manually. Even so, there are some great nuggets for SEOs when analyzing the output from this tool. We'll discuss some now...



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## When ZERO entities exist for a given query

Regardless of whether any data is returned, the output provides a few lines of text. These can be ignored, except that it does mean that Google doesn't consider the query to be associated with "an entity".

```
200 OK
- Show headers -

- {
  "@context": {
    "@vocab": "http://schema.org/",
    "goog": "http://schema.googleapis.com/",
    "EntitySearchResult": "goog:EntitySearchResult",
    "detailedDescription": "goog:detailedDescription",
    "kg": "http://g.co/kg"
  },
  "@type": "ItemList",
  - "itemListElement": [
    ]
  }
}
```

## When only one result exists

If you are lucky enough to be famous and have an uncommon name, you may have found the Entity SEO equivalent of what Gary Stock and later Dave Gorman once termed as a GoogleWhack. The output text that appears when no entity is returned still appears, but then the output for one other Entity. To understand the output, here are TWO query variations: "Bill Hartzler" and "Ramsey Saint Mary's"

```
"@type": "ItemList",
- "itemListElement": [
  - {
    "@type": "EntitySearchResult",
    - "result": {
      "@id": "kg:/m/0l2g06h",
      "name": "Bill Hartzler",
      - "@type": [
        "Person",
        "Thing"
      ],
      "description": "Internet marketer",
      "url": "http://www.globerunner.com/"
    },
    "resultScore": 278.345642
  }
]
```

Result for "Bill Hartzler (July 2019)

Result for "Ramsey Saint Mary's" (July 2019)

Both these queries return a single item. Going through these line by line helps us to understand what we are looking at:

@Type: EntitySearchResult: They are both showing @EntitySearchResults because we were using the Entity Search API. Every record seen using this tool will start with this description for the @type.

@id": "kg:/m/...": This is the all-important record locator. If this is the record you hope to optimize, then make a note of it. You could try using it in your structured mark-up on your web pages. The "kg" means that the data comes from Google's "Knowledge Graph". This may tell us that there

are other structured data stores at Google? There is also another nugget for SEOs here. "m" usually seems to mean the data was sourced from Google's purchase of Freebase several years ago. This data was expected to be migrated over to WikiData (part of Wikimedia open-source data) but it is not clear whether this migration was ever completed. If this was a "g" instead, the data is sourced in Google's proprietary dataset.

"name": "Bill Hartzler" or "2007-08 Isle of Man League": Here we get the name of the thing/entity in question. This is the Entity that Google has returned for the search query that we entered. I find this interesting, because whilst "Bill Hartzler" is an exact match to the query, "2007-08 Isle of Man League"



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is not what I was expecting at all! I know Ramsey @type: now appears again on both entries. We have Saint Marys" as a tiny village in Huntingdonshire, countryside in the UK. I have no idea how Google associated this query with what appears to be a sports league in the Isle of Man! already seen @type higher up in the output, so why do we see this again? Note the slight indent as we are heading down the text? ....

```
"@type": "ItemList",
- "itemListElement": [
  - {
    "@type": "EntitySearchResult",
    - "result": {
      "id": "kg:/m/04g0zh8",
      "name": "2007-08 Isle of Man League",
      - "@type": [
        "Thing",
        "Event"
      ],
      "description": "Tournament",
      - "detailedDescription": {
        "articleBody": "The Isle of Man League 2007-08 was the
of Man is played at an amateur level. There are two tiers of
        "url": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2007%E2%80%9308_I
        "license": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Tex
      }
    },
    "resultScore": 2.225766
  }
]
```

## What this Teaches SEOs

- A search query does not need to be an exact match for Google to return an entity.
- There could be a possibility in this ambiguity for Black Hat optimization to try to exploit Entity Search.
- Sometimes Google is just WRONG.

Inlinks builds out a full knowledge graph specific to your website and can find many stronger entities and relationships than Google does. This delta – the gap between the entities on your site and the entities that Google THINKS are on your site represents a valuable SEO opportunity. The tool is free for the first 20 pages on any site.



# 04 SEMANTIC SEO STRATEGIES

## Become an entity or an expert on an entity

Your first strategic decision is whether you want to try to BE a fully defined entity in your own right. There has been a move in recent years away from optimizing for keywords and instead simply trying to make your brand stand out from the crowd online. One reason this works well is that your brand can become an entity that you, more or less, can control (although not always). Once you have an entity on Google's knowledge graph, what that Entity gets up to will be continuously updated in the knowledge graph. If you are a band, for example, then marketing your new album organically becomes MUCH easier than it would be for a record store to market the same album. The knowledge base will simply update, showing the new album. This immediately creates a short vector between the album and the band. The relationship is defined... but the record shop may have a harder time and will need an edge strategy.

## Strategies covered in more detail

Below are several competing ideas for semantic SEO. The SEO industry rarely agrees on anything and tends to use the phrase "it depends" way too often for C-suites to take SEOs seriously. In the end, you will need to weigh up the merits and risks associated with each approach and act accordingly.

- Get Listed in Wikipedia
- Become an Entity by association
- Other approaches to becoming an entity
- Using an Edge Strategy



# 05 EARNING A WIKIPEDIA LISTING

Getting a Wikipedia entry is fraught with dangers. Inlinks has chosen not to list a specific strategy. Instead, we are bringing in tips and ideas from well-known practitioners in online retrieval, including Inlinks users.

One of the challenges is that Wikipedia is controlled ultimately by a very small and not necessarily unbiased group of people. According to Ricardo Baeza-Yates ([24 minutes into this lecture](#)), 0.04% of the users of Wikipedia create 50% of all posts. That is considerably more extreme than Facebook or Twitter, also cited in the same lecture.

0.04% is less than 1 in 2,000 users.

I have previously discussed the [bias that results from this problem](#) over on my personal blog.

## What the Experts Say

I approached Wikipedia editor, Search Engine Journal author and Webmasterradio online radio personality, [Jim Hedger](#) to get some thoughts.

“The crux to Wikipedia is to go very slowly and build personal authority. It’s a community-driven legacy project with a high sense of purpose and mission. It has a hierarchy of authority but most decisions are made by regular editors who subscribe to a common set of guidelines.

Topical areas people want to edit in become little sub-tribes of networked contacts who have worked the subject material for years and newly interested people. Such communities are built on trust in long term dedication to accuracy and skill. Pretty much everything else revolves around some variation on the rules of educated and civil society.



Cite everything you can. Wikipedia is all about providing new paths for users to follow when examining and evaluating information if there’s a credible source. (There are strict criteria for what can be considered “credible”).

Don’t try to impose your ideas on other people without first considering their backgrounds and experiences. Wikipedia isn’t social media. There is a definable right and a wrong and a great deal of proof is required to prove oneself right, even on things that are obvious to every observer on Earth.



Forgo: political bias or commercial goals, I mean... are another way of introducing subversive or commercial content without being completely obvious.

'like', 'ok', 'so like', 'of course', 'but', 'you know...'. Polite, educated, civil society and all that. We have incredibly complex polite, educated, civil societies already made up of people who have known each other since they went to school together. We all know how things are done amongst people who have lived to learn to trust each other eh? It's the same, 'tis the same in the whole wide world. Keep your political and/or commercial ideas at an arm's length from your profile until you know it's OK to introduce them in subtle ways.

Citations are extremely effective ways of being subtle but, of course, they're the among most examined elements of newer editors' work. Images

Almost all Wikipedia editors, meta-editors, and admins can read (almost) but fewer will be able to visually contextualize an image unless they are extremely familiar with a topic. Know when to pick your battles. Unless you're behind the scenes or sit on an American Parents Teachers Association, it's hard to describe the levels of petty bullshit that fly around in discussions about ideas or controversial edits. You have a finite amount of social capital and community respect. Know how to invest it so it grows rather than spend it so it declines.



Jim Hedger

Arnout Hellemans, a Dutch search specialist, agrees that you should take small steps and not try to dive in. He also recommends focussing on Wikipedia's prime data repository, WikiData. Paraphrasing his telephone conversation:

I really became interested in Wikipedia after reading a SEMRush article [by Jacques Bouchard] on how to use Wikidata. The trick is to move slowly and connect the dots. Let me start with the example of a hotel, such as the Waldorf in New York. Look up other hotels that have entries on Wikidata and look at the "identifiers" section. [This represents other URLs that represent the same physical Entity.] Now make sure that you add similar identifiers to your hotel.

Wikidata is the 'Linking pin' between all of the trusted topics of your Entity.

Take your time and do not make multiple edits on the same Entity. Edit and add identifiers to many

other areas and add to the collective repository and not just ones you are directly interested in.

For SMBs and people, it is much harder to use Wikidata.

Arnout Hellemans

Information Retrieval expert, Dawn Anderson takes a much more direct approach:

Do something notable I would say. Getting into Wikipedia is not a given for anybody.

Dawn Anderson

This is great advice but demonstrates how challenging it is to warrant comment in what is an encyclopedia. There is often a feeling of anguish at the personal level that you or your favourite Entity does not warrant inclusion in Wikipedia, but would you have expected such an entry in previous versions of encyclopedias? Such and Encarta or the Encyclopedia Britannica? If not, then perhaps this is a pause for thought.



Jason Barnard concurs, but adds a cautionary note:

When thinking about a place in the Knowledge Graph, I would say 'find your springboard'. As Dawn says, what makes you notable (and worthy)? Wikipedia's rules are a great guide but are no longer the 'law'. The opportunities have gotten MUCH wider in the last year. And will get wider still in the years to come.

If you create an entry that is not worthy of a place, or overdo editing on pages you are closely associated with, you will get a warning, or possibly removed. The job to get a page relisted is very very difficult, and the work to remove a warning is very slow and delicate. Be warned!

Jason Barnard

Greg Niland of GoodROI suggests:

Using the Help a Reporter site can help to build up enough media mentions to support a case for inclusion.

Greg Niland

This looks at solving the problem from a side-on perspective and avoids trying to manipulate or edit Wikipedia directly. The theory is that if you can be cited as an authority in a reputable source, such as the Wall Street Journal or the New York Times, then this significantly increases the odds of a third party using your citation as an independent citation to back up a Wikipedia entry. Note that this Strategy is not directly aiming at BEING an entity on Wikipedia, but instead develops LINKS from Wikipedia.

## Avoiding editing your own entry

I asked "how should I suggest people deal with the thorny point that if you are connected to the entity/article, you are not supposed to edit the entity/article? This, to me, seems a little misguided as it means by definition, the editors are NOT experts in the content they are editing... but how should a would-be-notable address this?" I received this sage response:

I would suggest going to the "Talk" tab, start a thread there and just tell them that you realize you can't edit it because you're connected to it, but layout the inaccuracies/corrections/additions and ask if someone would please make those changes.

Doc Sheldon

## Other Resources

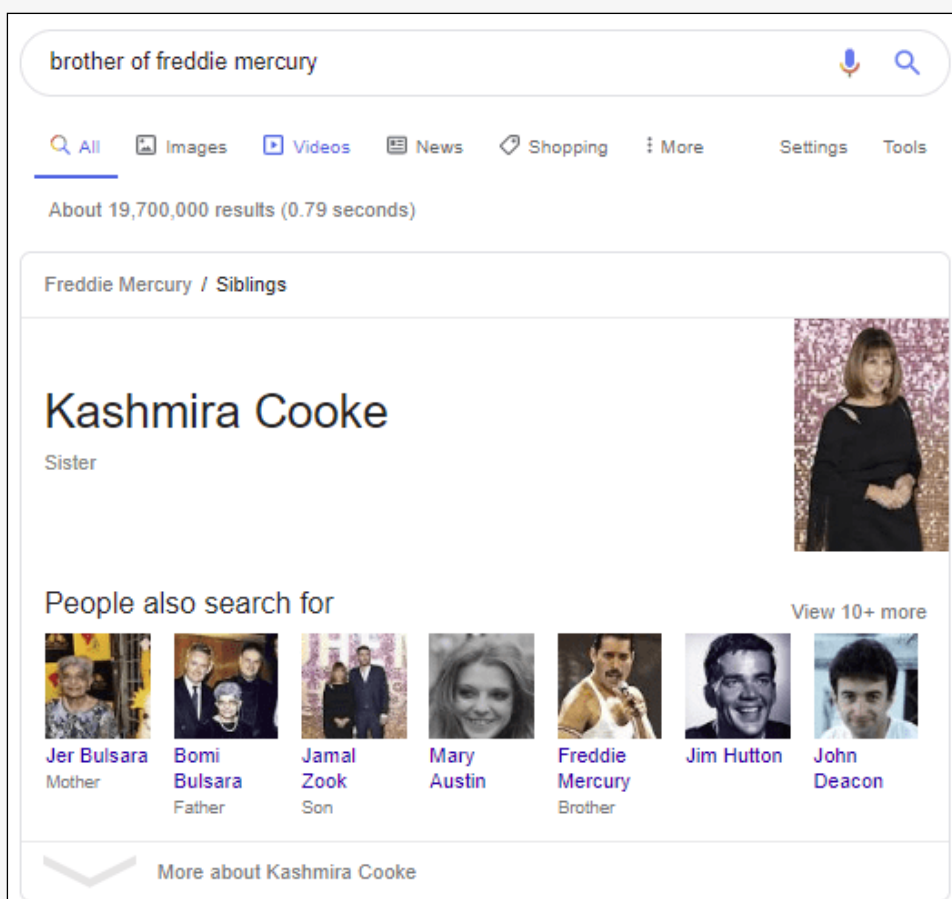
- A very good article on getting listed on Wikipedia is offered here.
- Wikipedia also gives a guide itself here.
- This SEMRush article from 2015 is also cited above.



# 06 HOW TO BE AN ENTITY WITHOUT A WIKIPEDIA ENTRY

When researching how the KG was being updated, it initially took me a long time to find entities that were anything except Wikipedia listings. It turns out, though, that Google has a lot of data that it does not initially reveal in the knowledge graph answer box.

Google's knowledge graph extrapolates insights gleaned from its data set. Here is an example:



Google made two leaps here. The first was in what I searched for. I searched for "brother" and Google returned a sister! Google knows that "brother", "Sister" and "siblings" are semantically so close that Google made the substitution for me (and didn't even tell me that it had). The second leap is that Google has provided details on a person without their own Wikipedia page.



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**WIKIPEDIA**  
The Free Encyclopedia

- Main page
- Contents
- Featured content
- Current events
- Random article
- Donate to Wikipedia
- Wikipedia store
- Interaction

Special page

## Search results


**Advanced search:**  X

**Search in:**  X

**Did you mean:** [kashmir cooke](#)

*The page "[Kashmira cooke](#)" does not exist. You can [ask for it to be created](#), but consider checking the search results*

In fact, there is no specific entity for Kasmira Cooke anywhere in the Wikimedia set of sites, if we use "Wikidata.org" as a measure:



**WIKIDATA**

- Main page
- Community portal
- Project chat
- Create a new Item
- Create a new Lexeme
- Recent changes
- Random Item
- Query Service

Special page

## Search results

To search for Wikidata items by their title on a given site, use [Special:ItemByTitle](#).

**Advanced search:**  X

**Search in:**  X  X

There were no results matching the query. You may [create a new item](#) for "kasmira cooke".

How did Google get to this level of confidence? Google uses content to add to existing entries and in the process, creates new relationships. each "triple" as described in an earlier section, creates two entities. So in this case, Google felt it could trust the content on Wikipedia which gives several triples in just this section:

### [Freddie Mercury](#)

Mercury had a younger sister, **Kashmira** Bulsara, now based in Nottingham, who took her husband's surname after marrying Roger **Cooke**. Mercury spent most of his

123 KB (12,248 words) - 22:21, 22 August 2019

(From the Wikipedia page for Freddie Mercury)



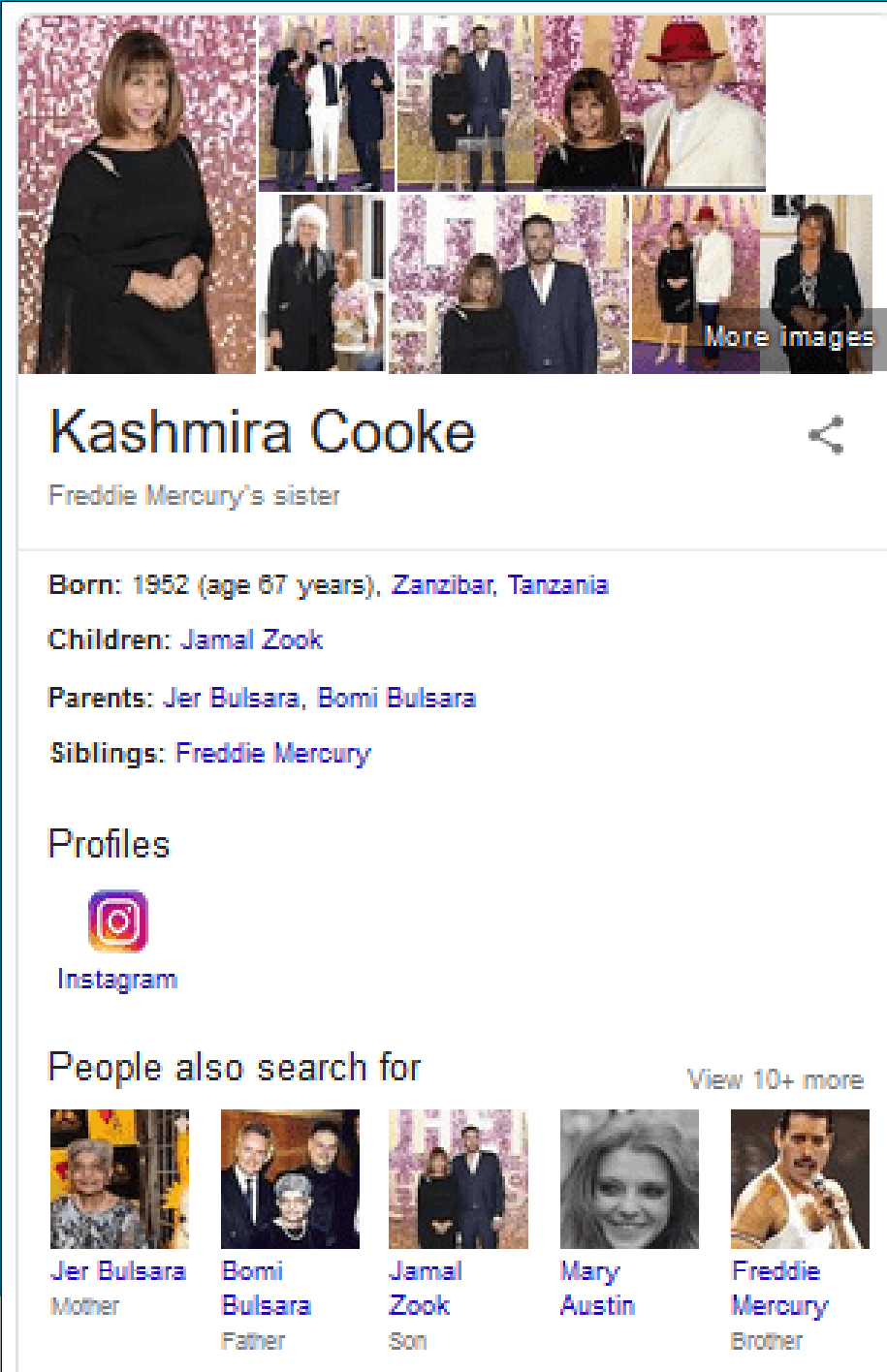
## Now Google knows:

- Freddie Mercury (is the brother of) Kasmira Bulsara
- KasmiraBulsara (is a type of) Person
- KasmiraBulsara (is the same as) Kasmira Cooke

Google can then carry on collecting information about the new Entity. Put “Kasmira Cooke” into Google and you get a pretty solid looking knowledge box.

## What this teaches SEOs

You do not NEED to have a Wikipedia page to get your own Entity in Google’s Knowledge Graph. Even so, it very much helps to be related (in this case quite literally) to an entity existing in Wikipedia. Have a good think about the Entity you would LIKE to get listed in Google’s knowledge graph. Does it have any close relationships with any listings in Wikipedia? Does the person running that Entity have a famous brother/sister/father/mother? If so, that person might get listed in Wikipedia as related to an existing entity. From there, they have their own Entity. After this, you can use schema to help Google understand that this Entity runs the Entity you wish to get listed.



The image shows a Google Knowledge Graph entry for Kasmira Cooke. At the top is a collage of six photos: a large photo of Kasmira Cooke in a black dress, and five smaller photos showing her with family members. Below the photos is the name 'Kasmira Cooke' in large blue text, with a share icon to the right. Underneath the name is the text 'Freddie Mercury's sister'. Below this is a section with biographical details: 'Born: 1952 (age 67 years), Zanzibar, Tanzania', 'Children: Jamal Zook', 'Parents: Jer Bulsara, Bomi Bulsara', and 'Siblings: Freddie Mercury'. Below the biographical details is a 'Profiles' section with an Instagram icon and the word 'Instagram'. At the bottom is a 'People also search for' section with a 'View 10+ more' link. This section contains five small portrait photos with names and relationships: Jer Bulsara (Mother), Bomi Bulsara (Father), Jamal Zook (Son), Mary Austin, and Freddie Mercury (Brother).

**Kasmira Cooke**

Freddie Mercury's sister

**Born:** 1952 (age 67 years), Zanzibar, Tanzania

**Children:** Jamal Zook



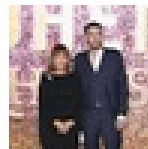

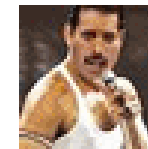
**Parents:** Jer Bulsara, Bomi Bulsara

**Siblings:** Freddie Mercury

**Profiles**

Instagram

**People also search for** [View 10+ more](#)

				
<b>Jer Bulsara</b>	<b>Bomi Bulsara</b>	<b>Jamal Zook</b>	<b>Mary Austin</b>	<b>Freddie Mercury</b>
Mother	Father	Son		Brother





## Hire a Chair / Patron

Not all of us have the luxury of a famous brother or sister. But Princess Anne has nine pages of charities that she supports. These allow Google to make the connection. It does not in any way GUARANTEE it, though. Leuchie Forever Fund is a charity supported by the Princess Royal, but as of the writing date, this charity did not have an entity, but it offers a potential path for the enterprising SEO to develop.

Who says that the Old School Tie network is dying out in the age of automation?

## Start with a Unique Word to Brand your Entity

Google would have had a LOT more difficulty in making these relationships if Freddie Mercury was not a unique name and if his surname had not been "Bulsara". Uniqueness helps the KG reach levels of confidence faster. I am not suggesting a change of name will guarantee success, but it might be a consideration if you are just starting out and have not yet settled on a strategy.

## Google is an agnostic White Man

This might be a little contentious, but "brother" and "sister" both have different meanings in black and religious communities. Google has connected these words so closely with the word "siblings" that it's algorithm may have become closed to other interpretations of these words. This may emanate from the types of people involved in curating the initial seed set. This bias is a recognized problem in the building of Knowledge graphs.

There are also other databases that google considers beyond Wikipedia... let's look at a few approaches to getting into these...





# OTHER WAYS TO BECOME AN ENTITY

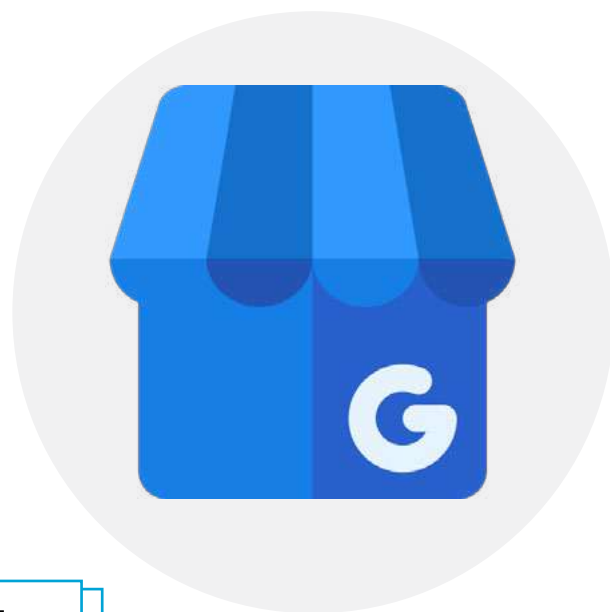
## Being the Entity

If you are a business or organization, then you ARE an entity. Google may not have enough confidence, yet, to know this. Every person on the planet is an entity, but Google does not yet try to distinguish between every version of “Purna Patel” or “Sally Stokes” on the planet... at least not in the search results. In the end, though, Google is collecting large amounts of this data. Very few of us in Western society can avoid having some form of Google login. Google, is currently having to address privacy concerns, however. This will mean that you being represented in search as an entity will increasingly require you to actively opt-in and request such representation. Google+ was shut down in December 2018, no doubt largely in response to the GDPR in Europe and increased concerns in the US over privacy.

This suggests that Google is being careful to ensure that if you as an individual are represented in Google’s Knowledge Graph (or on the knowledge box in the SERPs), that they are confident this is a result which is not only accurate but also in the public domain and public interest to show. There are many ways to approach becoming a named person or Entity, some of which are highlighted in this guide under “RDFs and how to find relevant ones”.

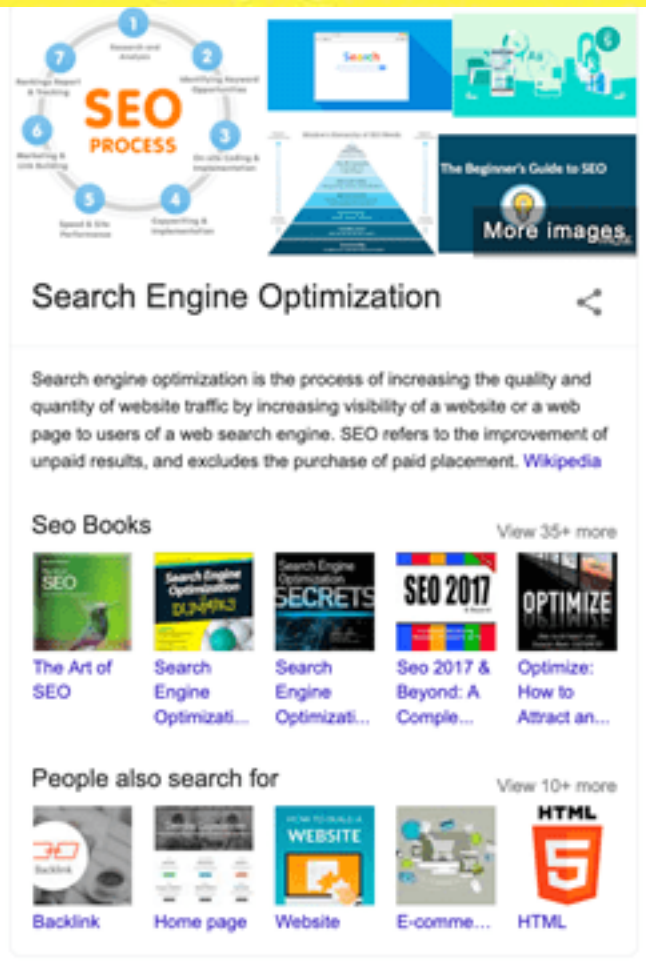
## Google My Business (GMB)

As an organization, your Entity can live and flourish in Google, initially through Google My Business. GMB is itself an RDF and a great place for an organization to start. Being listed in GMB will usually give you the ability to show up as a knowledge box, but this might be only in tight searches. Nevertheless, it acts as a useful launchpad for most organizations.



## Becoming connected to an Entity

If you cannot BE the Entity, you can still become an entity by association. It is possible that nobody can own the Entity or thing in question. This work is an example. It hopes to show authority in the field of SEO. SEO (or more accurately Search Engine Optimization) is an entity that Google understands. You can see from the knowledge box that writing a book on SEO is probably a great way for Google’s knowledge graph to link you closely with SEO.



Damn! My old sparring partner, Rand Fishkin's excellent book (co-authored by Eric Enge, Stephan Spencer and Jessie Strichiola) is right there. "mastering the Art of SEO". The very fact that four authors all known for their SEO are listed on the cover, makes them all semantically close to each other. Do you see how these close associations can easily start to create bubbles in a Knowledge Graph? You might understand Entity Search from the ground up and may have built your own knowledge graph as Inlinks has... but unless you are associated closely with the subject matter, the bubble that already exists will cut you out. Don't get angry... it is simply Google's equivalent of the echo chambers we see in society and on social media. These echo chambers in themselves are not good or bad, they just are. You simply need to find another way in...

## Other RDFs

Wikipedia is by no means the only data source that Google can extract data from...

## Write a book and get it published by a reputable publisher

This will get you associated with the book ontologies. If your book has an ISBN, then this can be independently referenced. (The US has a similar book referencing system).

## Act in a film or Direct a Play

The IMDB is a powerful RDF database that is believed to be respected by Google as an authoritative (and therefore trusted) source of information about actors and directors. If you are in a film and listed in the credits, you can get into the IMDB and then claim your listing, much like you can with Google My Business. Having this listing will either help you to become an entity in your own right or will give a neutral and verifiable link for the creation of a Wikipedia entry.



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## Stand for something!

If you are a Congresswoman or a Member of Parliament, it is almost impossible not to be considered as an entity, because all the other people will also be considered entities.

## If you are a band, get on the Festival Circuit

Your band may not be an entity, but Reading Rock Festival, or Glastonbury, or Burning Man certainly is. By getting onto the bill of these established entities, you create independently verifiable information about the band.

us music festivals

All
Images
News
Maps
Videos
More
Settings
Tools

About 323,000,000 results (0.83 seconds)

According to americanholidays.com

View 1+ more

Burning Man

Ultra Music Festival

Coachella Valley Music an...

Stageco... Festival

Hangout Music Festival

Essence Music Festival

Lollapalo... Chicago

Top 10 Music Festivals in the USA 2019

- Burning Man. No festival list in the US would ever be complete without including the Burning Man music festival. ...
- Ultra-Music Festival. ...
- Coachella Valley Music Festival. ...
- Stagecoach – Top 10 Music Festivals in the USA 2019. ...
- Hangout Music Festival.
- Essence Festival. ...
- Underwater Musical Festival. ...
- Lollapalooza.

More items... • 18 Jan 2019

Top 10 Music Festivals in the USA 2019 | American Holidays

<https://www.americanholidays.com/en-gb/blog/things-to-do/top-10-...>

A few music festivals likely to be listed in Google's knowledge graph

# 07

# ALIGN YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE WITH YOUR NICHE

This is much harder than it sounds, mostly because businesses do not entirely agree with the message that they want to portray and the niche they want to dominate succinctly enough. Mary Bowling, a long-time SEO from Ignitor, recommends looking at your website as if it was your own personal knowledge graph:

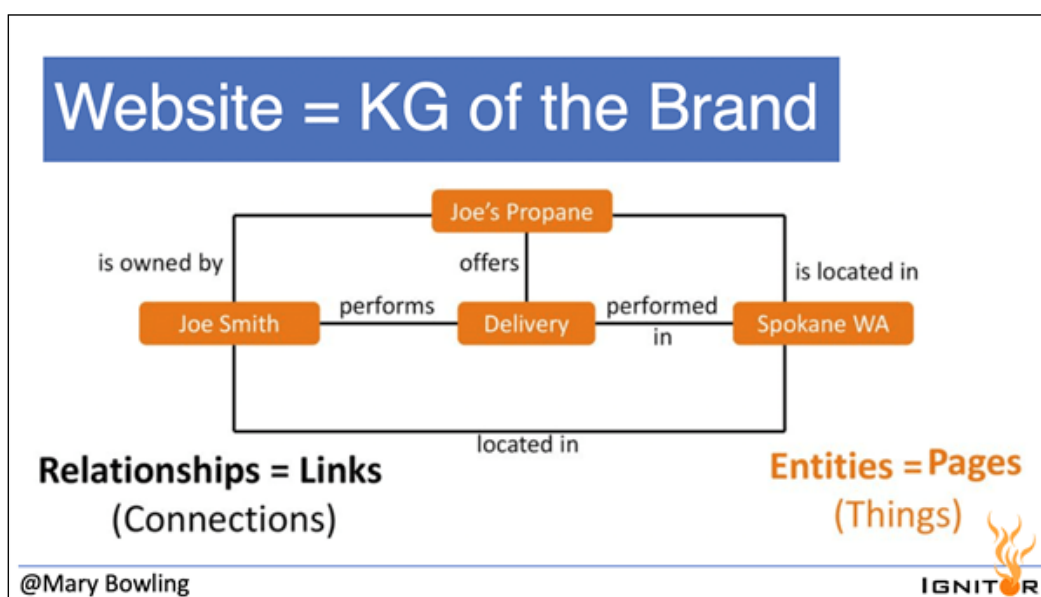


Figure 2 Make your site a Knowledge Base of your brand. Reproduced with permission from Mary Bowling.

This approach was also proposed by Jarno Van Driel, known as “@SEOSkeptic” on Twitter, several years ago. However, I think we can step one level beyond this approach. In a modern marketing strategy, you need to communicate with your audience on their terms, not yours. That is to say, some will engage on Twitter, others on Instagram and others on Youtube. Increasingly few will engage directly via your website and this should be factored into your personal knowledge graph.

This means that the relationships (links) should not solely be on your website, but should connect all your digital assets. In addition, Entities in your personal Knowledge Graph should be extended to other digital assets beyond the website.

This leads to discussing the creation of Digital Assets.



# 08 CREATING DIGITAL ASSETS



Whether you have decided that your Strategy is to be the Entity, be an authority on the Entity or play on the edge, your next step is to start marshalling or making your digital assets. Here the thought process is rather different to the old school idea of “content marketing” where you just carry on writing content about a subject and hope it generates organic traffic. The best way to understand this is to return to Google and look more closely at how many different ways digital assets affect something. Let’s choose a very different theme this time... something that might be seen as a bit of a free-for-all “entity”. I’m feeling hungry, so let’s do food:

The screenshot shows a Google search for "coronation chicken". The search bar at the top displays the query. Below the search bar, there are tabs for "All", "Images", "Shopping", "Videos", "News", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The search results are displayed below the tabs, showing about 4,600,000 results in 0.57 seconds.

The first result is "Easy coronation chicken recipe | BBC Good Food" with a link to <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/6080/instant-coronation-chicken>. It has a rating of 4.8 stars from 20 votes, takes 5 minutes, and has 463 calories. The description says: "Make a classic coronation chicken filling to serve with jacket potatoes or in sandwiches and salads. It's an excellent way to use up leftover chicken after a roast."

The second result is "The Original Coronation Chicken - The Petite Cook" with a link to <https://www.thepetitecook.com/coronation-chicken/>. It has a rating of 4.7 stars from 3 votes, takes 15 minutes. The description says: "16 Feb 2019 - The Original Coronation Chicken is super easy to prepare, and makes a great condiment for anything from sandwiches, salads, baked potatoes ..."

The third result is "Easy Coronation chicken recipe - All recipes UK" with a link to [allrecipes.co.uk](http://allrecipes.co.uk). It has a rating of 4.6 stars from 78 votes, takes 15 minutes. The description says: "This recipe has a decidedly citrus twist, but feel free to embellish however you'd like - add sultanas, peppers, pineapple, nuts, spring onion, etc. ... In a large bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, chutney, curry powder, lime zest, lime juice and salt. ... Use half mayonnaise, half ..."

Below the search results, there is a "Videos" section showing three video thumbnails with titles: "How to make Coronation Chicken Salad - a Food in a Minute recipe", "Super Easy Coronation Chicken || 4 Ingredients Only", and "Coronation Chicken: Mildly spiced, creamy, crispy dish".

On the right side of the search results, there is a detailed information panel for "Coronation chicken". It includes a description: "Coronation chicken is a combination of cold cooked chicken meat, herbs and spices, and a creamy mayonnaise-based sauce. It can be eaten as a salad or used to fill sandwiches. Wikipedia". It also lists the "Place of origin: United Kingdom", "Created by: Constance Spry and; Rosemary Hume", and "Main ingredients: Chicken meat, herbs and spices, mayonnaise-based sauce". Below this, there is a section "People also search for" with links to "Curry ketchup", "Wat", "Slicing cucumber", "Clotted cream", and "Poultry".



As with so many entities, Google chooses to have a snippet from Wikipedia in the knowledge box here. There is a very interesting section in the book reference earlier called “Entity-Orientated Search” on the structure of a Wikipedia [page](#). Wikipedia is surprisingly exact and consistent, making it extremely easy for a knowledge base to create structure out of the Content in Wikipedia. There are also many other [RDFs](#) (Resource Description Frameworks) based on the Wikimedia organization. We’ll talk a little about RDFs in general and Wikimedia properties in particular separately.

The point I wanted to make here is that there are many other digital assets on this page other than just recipes for Coronation Chicken. There are Youtube videos, for example. Youtube is an extremely large structured data source, so why would you not try to have a video on how to make Coronation Chicken if you wanted to influence this page? Putting your brand of Mayonnaise in the video is part of the optimization.

Then there are multiple images on the knowledge box. These can come from anywhere on the Web, including your website. Do you see that one for

“Curry Ketchup”? Now THAT is finding a [niche](#) J. My point is that you cannot optimize for Entity search unless you create all the digital assets that Google is choosing to represent on the page. Images are important. There is a renowned case of one brand taking this too far, by changing all the images on Wikipedia for ones that had their brand on. Unfortunately, Wikipedia did not see the funny side and now the case study makes up the majority of their brand page. Ask someone on Twitter if you want to find the case study.

We now also see ratings on the [search results](#). Ratings are another form of [structured data](#), helping Google to assess the quality of the coronation chicken recipes that it might choose from.

Lastly – I notice that [Wikipedia](#) thinks coronation chicken was invented by Constance Spry and Rosemary Hume and links TO their entries, which in turn link back. Look at how Wikipedia continually cross-references these facts through internal links (Inlinks):

## Rosemary Hume

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Rosemary Ethel Hume** [MBE](#) (1907 – 1984) was a cook and writer. She taught at [Le Cordon Bleu](#) in [London](#) and co-devised [coronation chicken](#) in 1953.

Rosemary Hume’s Wikipedia entry links back to the Coronation Chicken entry





## Twitter Content

Once Google has associated an entity with its Twitter profile, a direct search hit on the Entity will also return live Twitter posts in the search results! It is therefore important that IF you use Twitter, you properly link to it through structured mark-up and website (and complete the loop by linking back from your profile). On top of this, it is important to make sure the Twitter “tone of voice” is consistent with the rest of your brand story.



## Video Content

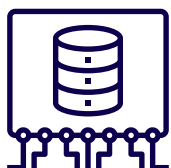
Whilst posting your videos on Youtube is a great idea, it is very possible that videos are created by other people that talk about you, your product or the Entity. For example, if your staff talk at events. These are also powerful assets and you can harness these by including these in your video channel if they are on YouTube or embedding them in your blog content. In doing so, you help to connect the dots for the knowledge graph.



# 09 HOW TO ADD STRUCTURED MARK-UP TO YOUR CONTENT

You can define your own entities on your web pages. When a search engine such as Google comes to see your site, they will see the underlying structured data on the page, which will allow them to easily categorize the content. Webpage schema is a sensible approach to doing this. You do not need to be listed in other RDFs to have entities recorded around the content you create.

Here is full documentation on structured data from Schema.org. However, as this is the beginner's guide, here are some quick and easy ways to understand, organize and add structured data to your pages.



## Looking at your structured data

Unless you are used to working with code, it can be very difficult to understand what structured data is already on each page of your website. Fortunately, Google provides a simple to use structured testing tool. You do not have to own a website to be able to use the tool. It works on any site.

Google Structured Data Testing Tool

The screenshot displays the Google Structured Data Testing Tool interface. The left pane shows the raw JSON-LD code for a webpage. The right pane shows a structured view of the data, identifying it as a 'WebPage' with various properties like @type, @id, url, inLanguage, name, datePublished, dateModified, description, isPartOf, @type, @id, url, name, and publisher.

```
11 <!-- This site is optimized with the Yoast SEO plugin v1.4 - https://yoast.com
12 /wordpress/plugins/seo/ -->
13 <meta name="description" content="Stand Up Comedy Clinic - Jerry Corley will
14 teach you how to be a stand up comedian or comedy writer and you'll be
15 rockin' the stage in 8 short weeks." />
16 <link rel="canonical" href="https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/" />
17 <meta property="og:locale" content="en_US" />
18 <meta property="og:type" content="website" />
19 <meta property="og:title" content="How to be a Stand Up Comedian - Stand Up
20 Comedy Class" />
21 <meta property="og:description" content="Stand Up Comedy Clinic - Jerry Corley
22 will teach you how to be a stand up comedian or comedy writer and you'll be
23 rockin' the stage in 8 short weeks." />
24 <meta property="og:url" content="https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/" />
25 <meta property="og:site_name" content="Stand Up Comedy Clinic" />
26 <meta name="twitter:card" content="summary" />
27 <meta name="twitter:description" content="Stand Up Comedy Clinic - Jerry Corley
28 will teach you how to be a stand up comedian or comedy writer and you'll be
29 rockin' the stage in 8 short weeks." />
30 <meta name="twitter:title" content="How to be a Stand Up Comedian - Stand Up
31 Comedy Class" />
32 <meta name="twitter:image" content="https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/wp-
33 content/uploads/2017/07/standupcomedyclinic.jpg" />
34 <meta name="twitter:creator" content="Stand Up Comedy Clinic" />
35 <script type="application/ld+json" class="yoast-schema-graph" >
36 {
37   "@context": "https://schema.org",
38   "@type": "WebPage",
39   "url": "https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/",
40   "name": "Stand Up Comedy Clinic",
41   "publisher": {
42     "@type": "Person",
43     "name": "Jerry Corley",
44     "url": "https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/"
45   }
46 }
```

The right pane shows a structured view of the data, identifying it as a 'WebPage' with various properties like @type, @id, url, inLanguage, name, datePublished, dateModified, description, isPartOf, @type, @id, url, name, and publisher.

Property	Value
@type	WebPage
@id	https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/#webpage
url	https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/#webpage
inLanguage	en-US
name	How to be a Stand Up Comedian - Stand Up Comedy Class
datePublished	2011-07-20T10:14:50+00:00
dateModified	2018-10-13T02:06:54+00:00
description	Stand Up Comedy Clinic - Jerry Corley will teach you how to be a stand up comedian or comedy writer and you'll be rockin' the stage in 8 short weeks.
isPartOf	WebSite
@type	WebSite
@id	https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/#website
url	https://www.standupcomedyclinic.com/#website
name	Stand Up Comedy Clinic
publisher	Stand Up Comedy Clinic



## Tip: Use the structured data tools on your competition

There are many structured data tools. It is likely, though, that you have a few serious competitors in your niche. Some of these may have done a much better job than you at becoming an entity in their own right or at least becoming an expert on entities that you feel you should own. You can take two steps to view a data structure that might work for you:

- 1 Use Google's Knowledge Graph Search Tool to establish whether your competitor's brand or name is already properly defined in the Google Knowledge Graph.
- 2 Then use the Structured data tool on the best-represented competitors' web pages to understand how they used structured data.

## Inlinks Automates Webpage Schema Markup For You

Many tools claim to automate schema, but very few, beyond Inlinks will create webpage schema for you automatically. This is because most schema tools will create other types of schema – which is valuable of course – but not necessarily helping Google understand the content on your site. Another schema may help turn content into a recipe, or an event or describe the author or the organization behind the content. Inlinks, on the other hand, describes the Content meaning itself, by taking the most important entities and telling search engines through a schema that the page is ABOUT these main entities and then takes the secondary ideas and tells the search engines through a schema that the page MENTIONS these secondary entities.

Click on to remove a Schema line. Remove all the "about" lines to remove the Schema.org markup for this page. **Note:** these actions are irreversible.

```
<script type="application/ld+json"> {
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "WebPage",
  "headline": "Align your online presence with your niche - InLinks",
  "url": "https://inlinks.net/p/align-your-online-presence-with-your-niche/",
  "about": [
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "online presence", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet",
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "niche", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niche_market"
  ],
  "mentions": [
    { "@type": "Organization", "name": "Twitter", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter",
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "Knowledge Graph", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_Graph",
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "Seo", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization",
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "website", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Website",
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "brand", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brand",
    { "@type": "Thing", "name": "creation", "sameAs": "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invention"
  ]
}</script>
```

**Explainer**

... Talking in JSON-LD  
... Using Schema.org  
This page is entitled "Align your online presence with your niche - InLinks"  
It is located at <https://inlinks.net/p/align-your-online-presence-with-your-niche/>.  
It addresses the following topics:  
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet>  
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niche\\_market](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niche_market)  
It also mentions some secondary topics:  
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter>  
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge\\_Graph](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_Graph)  
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search\\_engine\\_optimization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization)  
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Website>  
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brand>  
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invention>

This JSON-LD Webpage Schema was automatically generated by Inlinks.net

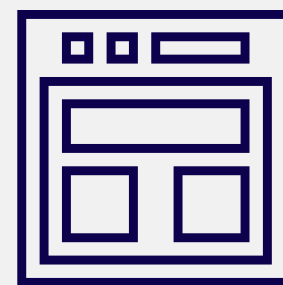
Inlinks can automate this very effectively because it manages its own knowledge base.



## How to Automate Webpage Schema

### (using Inlinks.net)

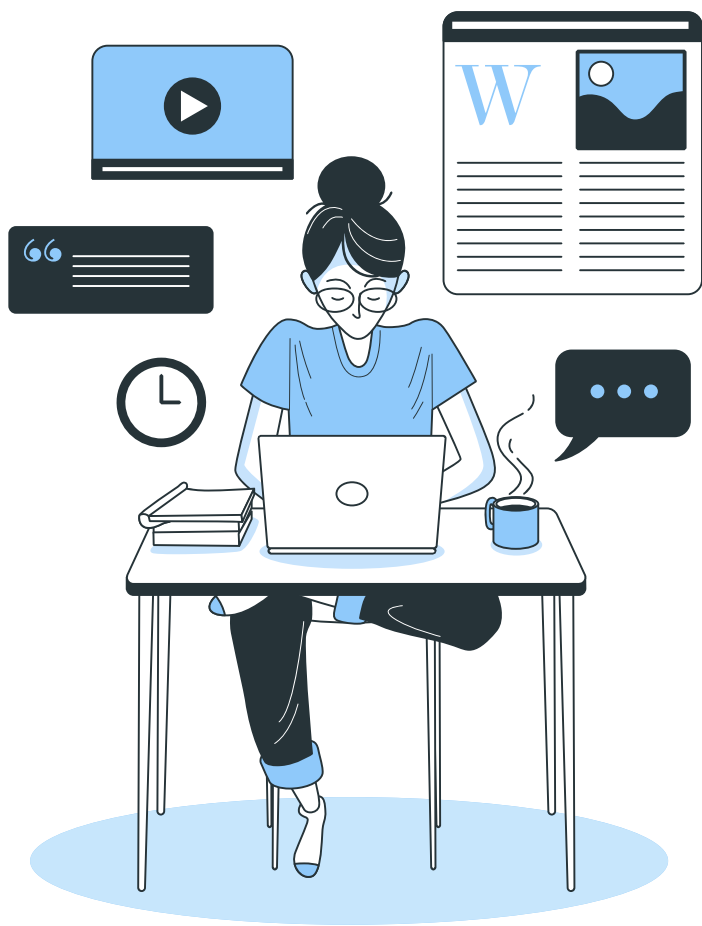
- 1 Add the URL to Inlinks
- 2 Associate the URL with one or more primary topics
- 3 There is no 3 (if you have already set up Inlinks code)



## Using Plugins for WordPress

Yoast plugin for WordPress: Yoast's plugin is one of several that will create your structured data for you. All you have to do is to decide whether your blog should be set up as a person or as an organization. The plugin then uses your other setup configurations, such as your user profile and social media profiles to build out the structured data.

Many other plugins also allow you to manage your structured data on WordPress. A self-updating list is [here](#). You should only integrate plugins with a large (10,000+) user base and one that is being regularly updated to work with your versions of WordPress. It is also probably good to only have ONE plugin trying to manage your structured data at any one time. You can make plugins inactive at the click of a button in WordPress if one plugin is clashing with another.



# 10

# HOW TO BUILD INTERNAL LINKS FOR SEO



A well crafted internal link structure significantly improves your chances of your content being seen at the right place and at the right time. Your internal links structure is also known as your “Link Graph” and there are three core elements: Your Navigational or menu link structure, your breadcrumb link structure and – by far the most important in today’s search algorithms – the internal link structures in the body of the text. That is to say, how your main content connects to other content on your websites can have a profound effect on both Google and users alike. In this “How to” guide, we’ll bypass the navigational links and breadcrumb links and dive straight into internal “body text” links.

## Why Internal Links are important to Google

Even before Google migrated its ideas towards Semantic search, links acted as important signposts for search algorithms. You can really understand the importance of links for Google’s Pagerank algorithm here. There are a few points of note about PageRank which are worth noting, though, First, PageRank was calculated at the page level, not the domain level. this means that internal links play a big part in determining the strength of the page in terms of Pagerank. Second, PageRank in its purest form has no context. That is to say, that a link should only really affect a search algorithm if it adds to the context of the article or page on which it exists. Google did talk about “Topical PageRank” although were not explicit at the time about the way they implemented it. One paper on Topical PageRank from Cambridge University shows how this works.

**For search, the presence of links in a document collection adds valuable information over that contained in the text of the documents alone.**

Jardine & Teufel

There are also important reasons why internal links are relevant in the world of semantic search. By linking text closely to content about the Entity, you are making life much easier for a reader to understand the meaning of an article and – just as importantly – you are helping Google and other search engines derive the meaning of your content. For example, if you talk about “Queen” on a page, are you talking about a band, a monarch or a lifestyle choice? By linking to an article of content which has schema around this context, machines can readily identify the nature of the relationship between the two pieces of content.

In “15 advantages of using Internal Link Building for SEO”, Fred Laurent makes the argument for internal links compelling.



Once your site relies on content, internal links are as essential to your visibility as external links, to:

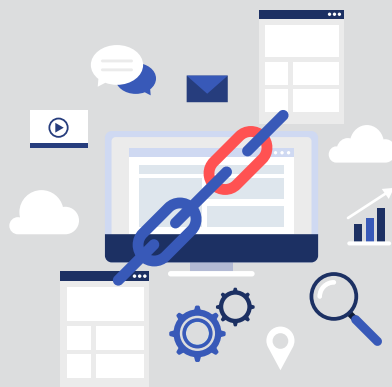
- \* Increase the number of long-tail keywords
- \* Better respond to users' queries
- \* And ultimately, increase your visibility and your organic traffic

*Fred Laurent*



# 11

## BUILDING AND VIEWING YOUR INTERNAL LINK GRAPH



 inLinks

Internal Links [inlinks.net](https://inlinks.net)

LIVE ON SITE Your Javascript code is active. `<script src="https://inlinks.net/i/x/469/inlinks.js"></script>`

 TARGET PAGES

8 PAGES

 INTERNAL LINKS

108 LINKS CREATED

LIVE ON SITE

Viewing your Internal links structure can be achieved with several tools, but building and automating an internal link Structure is best done using [inlinks.net](https://inlinks.net), which is free for the first 20 pages of your site.

## 3 Tools for viewing internal links

### 1 Screaming Frog

Every SEO's go-to tool. Screaming frog lets you crawl any website. In doing so it tracks all the internal links that it finds and allows you to sort. The graphic above shows you how to see all the "Inlinks" (Internal links into a given page) in one place. (The next tab also shows the outbound links from the same page.) Unfortunately, this does not separate the body text links.

The screenshot shows the Screaming Frog SEO Spider interface. The top navigation bar includes tabs for Keywords, H1, H2, Images, Canonicals, Pagination, Directives, Hreflang, AJAX, AMP, Structured Data, and Site. The 'Link Metrics' tab is selected. Below the navigation bar, there is a table with columns: Address, Status Code, and Title 1. The table lists various URLs from inlinks.net, including privacy-policy, session/login, and creating-digital-assets/. The URL 'https://inlinks.net/p/creating-digital-assets/' is highlighted. Below the table, there is a section for 'Type' and 'From' to 'To' links, showing a list of internal links. The 'Inlinks' tab is selected in the bottom navigation bar. The 'Filter Total' is 77.

1: Select Link Metrics

2: Select Target Page

3: Select "inLinks" tab

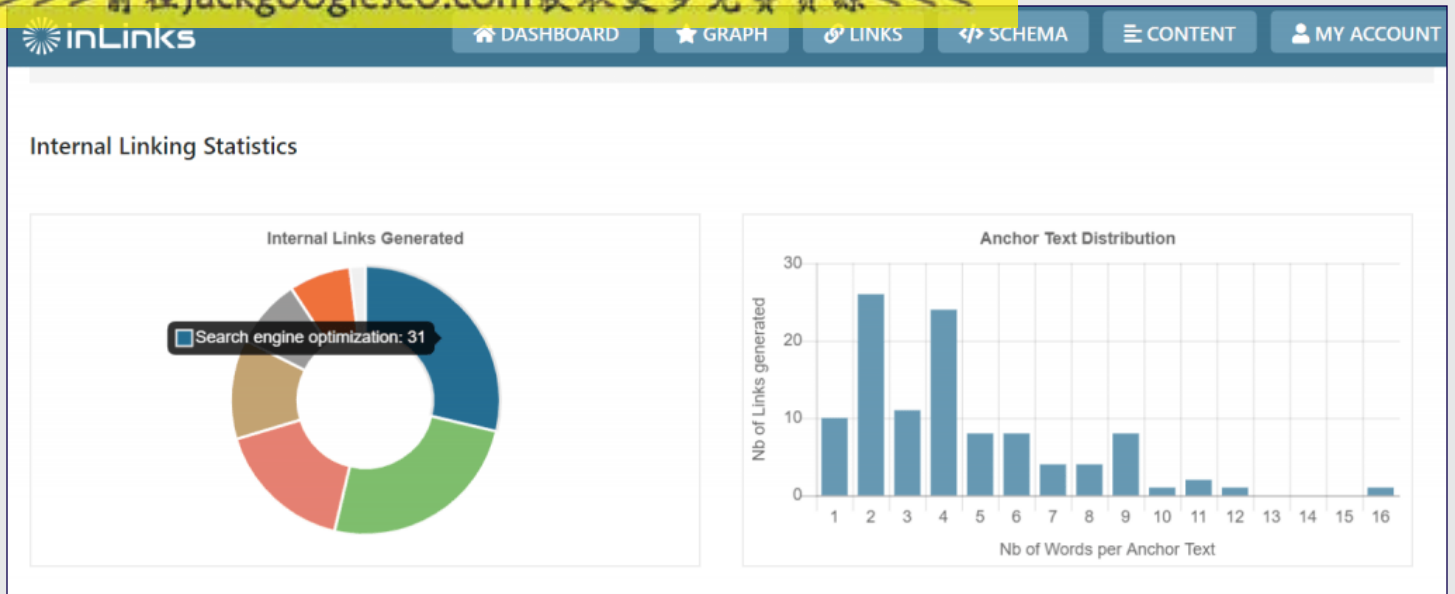
4: See inlinks to that page

### 2 Inlinks Link Tab

Using Inlinks to view your internal link graph is a double-edged sword. On the plus side:

- 1 Navigational links are ignored
- 2 You can see the anchor text length distribution
- 3 You can remove unwanted links with a single click
- 4 Links are visually grouped into their target pages

>>> 前往jackgoogleseo.com获取更多免费资源 <<<



**Latest links created**

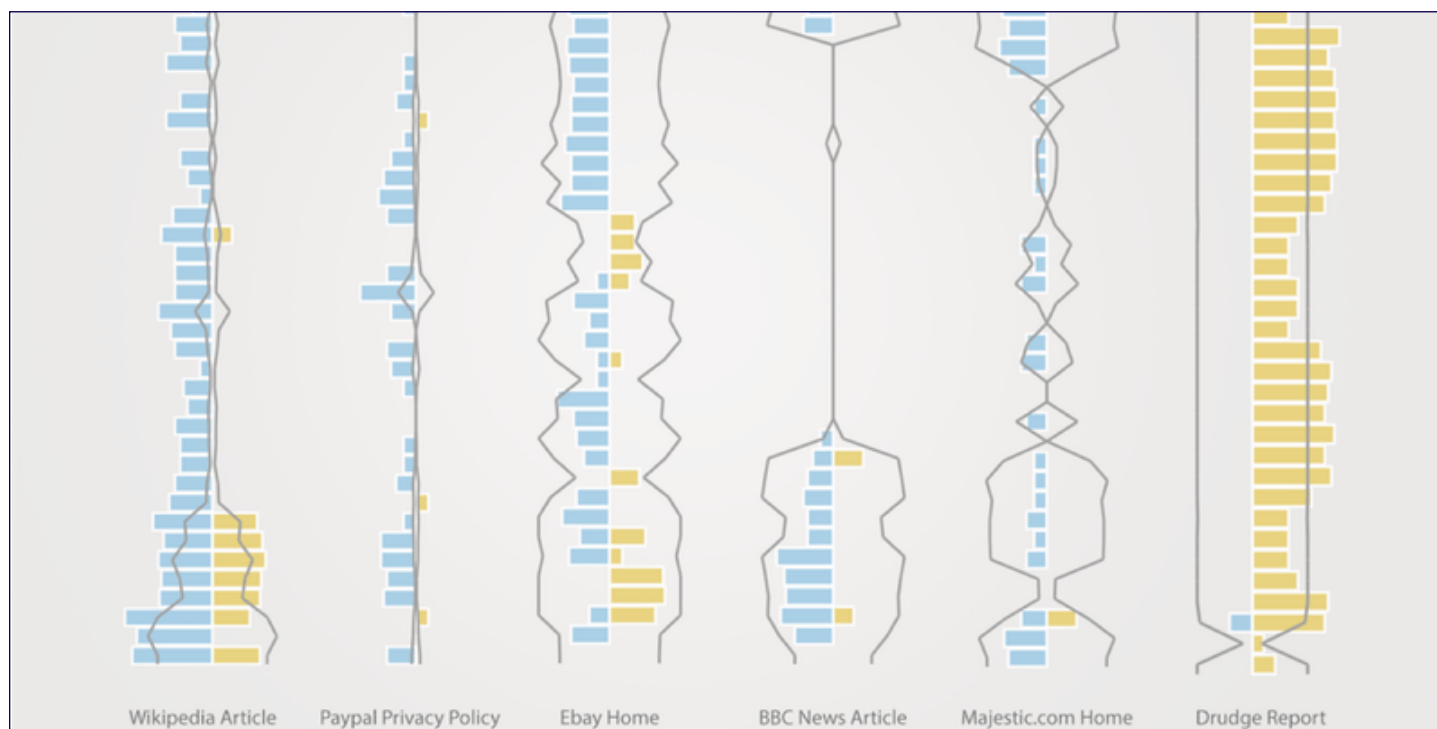
Source Page	Anchor Text	Target Topic	Target URL	Remove
<b>InLinks - Semantic SEO software</b>				
	semantic in-text internal links	Semantic Web	Semantic Search Guide ? InLinks	
	internal link structure instantly	Link building	15 advantages of using internal linking for SEO	
<b>The Knowledge Graph Explained ? InLinks</b>				
	SEOs to understand	Search engine optimization	InLinks - Semantic SEO software	
	Knowledge Graph is a collection of nouns	Knowledge base	The Knowledge Graph Explained ? InLinks	
	semantic search	Semantic Web	Semantic Search Guide ? InLinks	

On the downside, Inlinks is a complete SAAS tool and only reports on the links that it generates. The links are also in Javascript, but this is not the problem for Google that Javascript used to be. Recently, Google's Martin Splitt confirmed that they are crawling and rendering 90% of Javascript within 5 seconds of their initial page crawl.



### 3 Majestic's Link Context

Recently, my previous company, Majestic, came out with a brand new way to visualize links on a page.



This new visualization shows how links are balanced on a web page, with internal links in blue and external links in orange. Each page is segmented into 40 sections, allowing you to see where on the page the links are and also the kind of company each link keeps.

The benefit is that you can see the overall look of the page and can reasonably determine which links are in the body and which are in the navigation. On the downside, Majestic does not render Javascript links at the moment and this visualization looks at the links out of a page, rather than the links into the page.

## The Ultimate Tool for building Internal Links

Here, Inlinks tries to stand head and shoulders ahead of the field. Whilst there have been WordPress and non-WordPress based tools in the past that have tried to automate internal linking, they were primarily designed around keywords, rather than topics. This led to unnatural anchor text signals, which Google has been known to object to. By ONLY linking on anchor text, the links are not intent-based. Inlinks is different because it first builds a knowledge graph of the content on each page of your site that you submit to the system and from there can build links based on topics, rather than keywords alone. Let's take an example.



>>> 前往 [jackgoogleseo.com](https://jackgoogleseo.com) 获取更多免费资源 <<<

## Example internal link graph

The above shows the internal links on this site that have been generated by Inlinks to the content around earning a Wikipedia page. At the time of writing, the system had identified 8 occasions where the content on the blog had discussed Wikipedia. As we had determined that the [Earning a Wikipedia listing page](#) is the best resource that we have at this point on Wikipedia itself, these topic mentions have linked to this target page. What is encouraging is that the system has not simply linked the anchor text “Wikipedia” each time, but has instead taken more semantically appropriate phrases for the anchor text each time.

Earning A Wikipedia Listing ? InLinks			
https://inlinks.net/p/earning-a-wikipedia-listing/		how to get listed in wikipedia	1240 8 2 ✓ <a href="#">Send</a>
Internal Inbound Links [Outbound Links] [Schema markup]			
#	Anchor	Source Page	Remove
1	Wikipedia is the most important of these	InLinks ? InLinks pages	<a href="#">✕</a>
2	Wikipedia is the most important of these	How to associate target entities to web pages for (...)	<a href="#">✕</a>
3	Wikipedia	Modifying Schema on InLinks ? InLinks	<a href="#">✕</a>
4	Wikipedia entry	Other Ways to become an Entity ? InLinks	<a href="#">✕</a>
5	Wikipedia is the most important of these	Dixon ? InLinks	<a href="#">✕</a>
6	Wikipedia pour satisfaire à des exigences SEO	15 bénéfices du maillage interne pour le SEO	<a href="#">✕</a>
7	Wikipedia	Creating Digital Assets ? InLinks	<a href="#">✕</a>
8	Wikipedia to satisfy SEO requirements	15 avantages of using internal linking for SEO	<a href="#">✕</a>

## Creating internal links manually

Of course – it is not necessary to use a tool like Inlinks to create internal links. You can easily create internal links within your content to other pages on your site. However, you will not achieve scale and will not be able to easily recalculate and redistribute these internal links when content s updated. This will mean that you are likely to miss many internal link opportunities that may be open to is? That said, here is a simple step process to creating internal links within WordPress.

## How to create Internal Links in WordPress

### STEP 1

### Find pages on the site that discuss a particular topic

The best way to do this is to type in a keyword into Google followed by “site:yourdomain.com”. So, to find the pages on this site that might be appropriate for internal links for the TERM “Internal links” I would type this into google.





## STEP 2

### Select your target page for your search term

Usually, the top result will be the page that you would want to have as your target page for the search term you have chosen because this is the one that Google already believes to be the most relevant. If you are writing new content, then, of course, you may choose the new page instead.

## STEP 3

### Identify where other pages should link to the target page

You should insert the link somewhere around where the term is highlighted by Google in the search results. You do this by...

internal links site:inlinks.net

**Onboarding – Setting Topics – InLinks**  
<https://inlinks.net> › [help](#) › [onboarding-setting-topics](#) ▼  
It is OK to move forward with blue “undefined” associations between Topics and Landing pages, but you will then not have as many internal links or schema ...

**Why do some links have #body appended? – InLinks**  
<https://inlinks.net> › [help](#) › [why-do-some-links-have-body-appended](#) ▼  
25 Sep 2019 - If inLinks generates an internal link which would duplicate an existing link already on a page, it appends #body to the new link, to differentiate it ...

**How to associate target entities to web pages for semantic ...**  
<https://inlinks.net> › [help](#) › [how-to-associate-target-entities-to-web-pages-fo...](#) ▼  
14 Oct 2019 - ... concern the category of Fantasy jewellery. Use possibilities 1) and 2) simultaneously (in particular to maximise the internal link network size).

**Help – InLinks**  
<https://inlinks.net> › [category](#) › [help](#) ▼  
21 Oct 2019 - Here's what we are working on: The ability to manually add links into text A ... If inLinks generates an internal link which would duplicate an ...

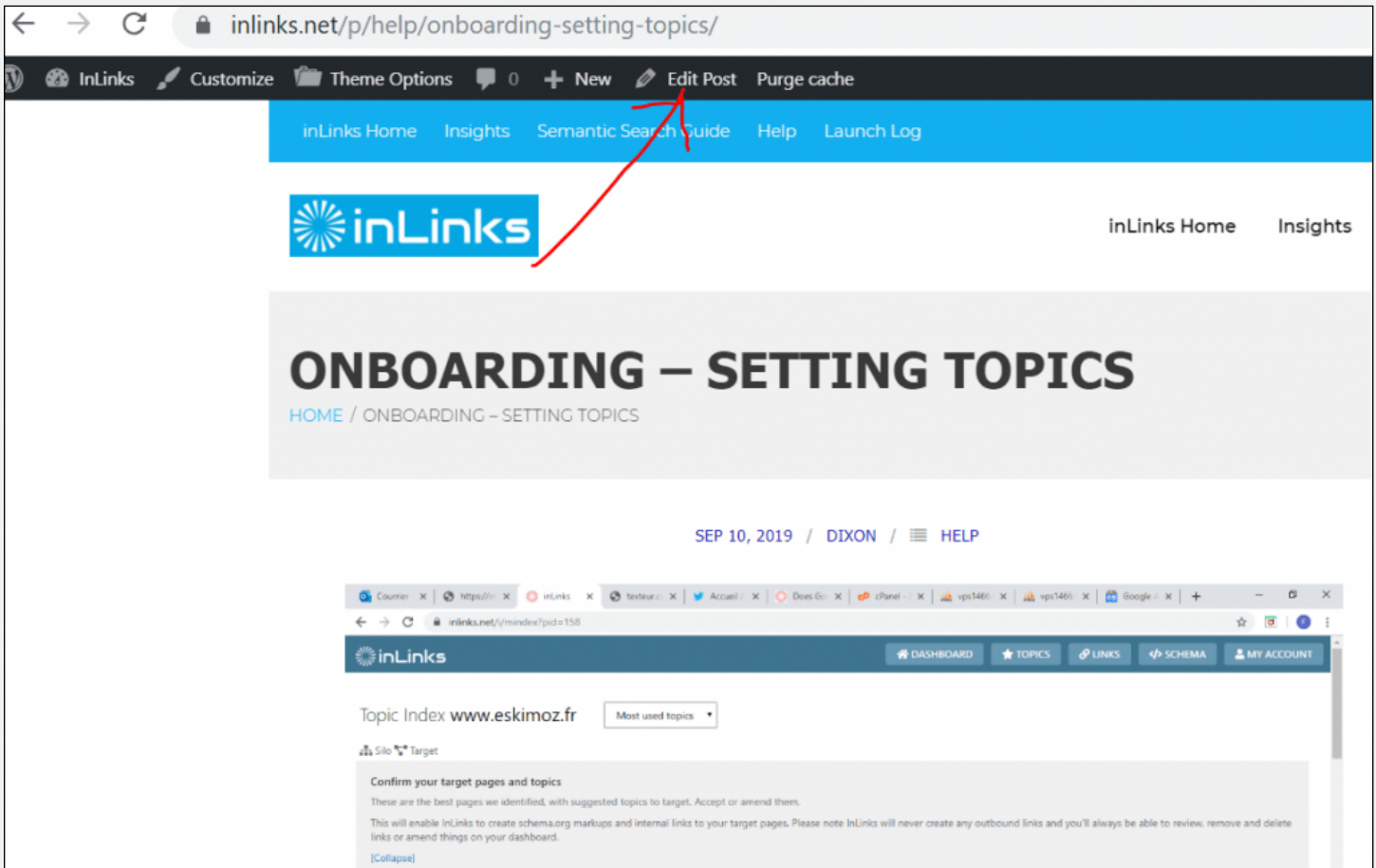




>>>前往jackgoogleseo.com获取更多免费资源<<<

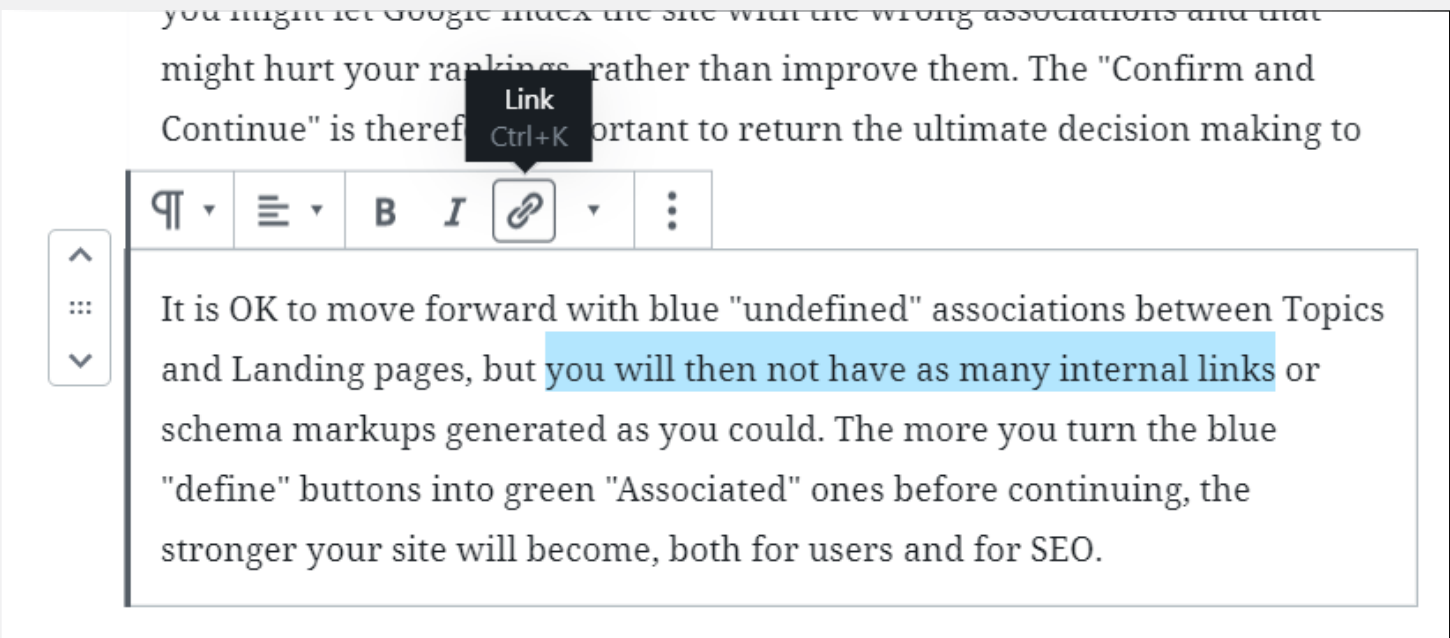
## STEP 4

# Dragging your cursor over the text you want to link

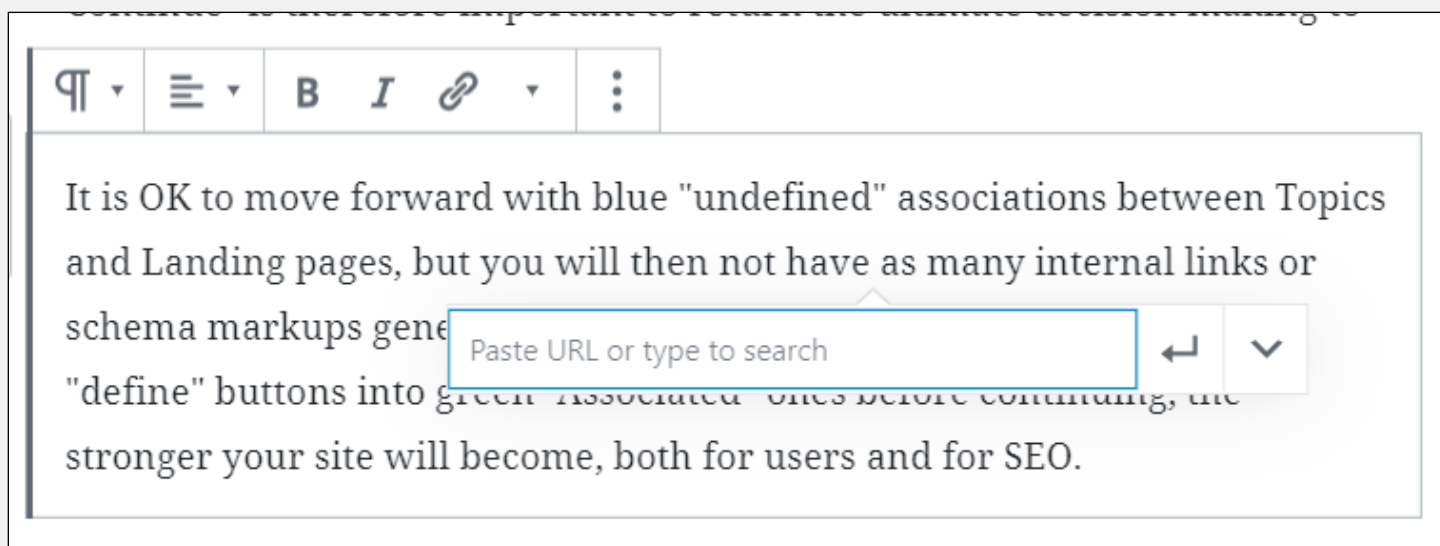


## STEP 5

# Dragging your cursor over the text you want to link



## STEP 6 Click on the hyperlink icon to insert the link

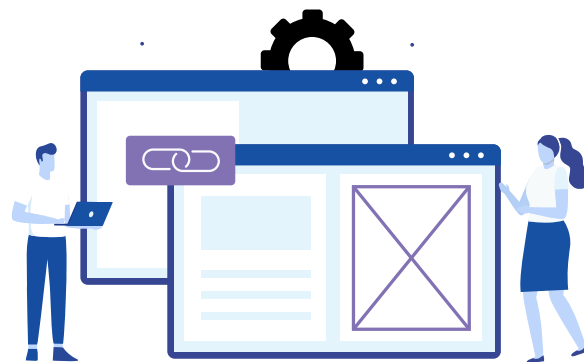


## Internal Links FAQs

### What is the theory behind Internal Links?

Links have always been important to Google's algorithms, initially because of its PageRank maths. This later developed to include the "reasonable surfer" algorithms, which meant that some links out of a page were more important than others. It is presumed that link in the body of an article, and nearer the start of the content are the most valuable links in Google's maths. In more recent times, Google has played down the importance of links for PageRank, although this has not always washed with the SEO community. Google still accepts that they still use PageRank.

Moreover, good internal linking is great marketing in its own right. This Strategy helps users understand the content they are reading on a page, by providing solid, supporting links to the underlying concepts discussed. This in turn also helps machines like Google connect the concepts into tight graphs that allow search engines to derive meaning and intent.





## How Significant a Ranking Factor is Internal Linking?

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Internal linking is as much about topical proximity as it is about ranking. Even so, the significance of any single internal link will depend on the authority of the source page itself. Because most internal pages on a site have much lower authority than those of (say) the home page, individual links may not always provide much significance, but provide context.

## What's different about Internal linking vs External Linking?

---

An internal link is a link from one page to another page on the same domain or site. An external link is on a page that links to an entirely separate domain. Is there any material difference to a search engine? One philosophy says no... as Search Engines calculate most of their signals at the URL level. Indeed... now that the Knowledge Graph is so developed, it can be argued that the search engines analyze at an even granular level... splitting a page into segments or chunks. Other SEOs, however, maintain that the domain itself might infer authority. This author is yet to be convinced of this latter approach since most research pages do not formerly discuss sites, but pages. Even so, it is clear that the website owner will have far more control over internal links into any given page than links from other domains. It might, therefore, be more valuable (all things being equal) to have links into a page from outside your site than links coming in from inside your site. Certainly, the PageRank maths would suggest that without any links coming in from the wider Web, the internal links would not carry much weight, as ultimately only links from outside the web owner's immediate locus of control can add to the overall authority passed through internal links.

## Should I link to external sites?

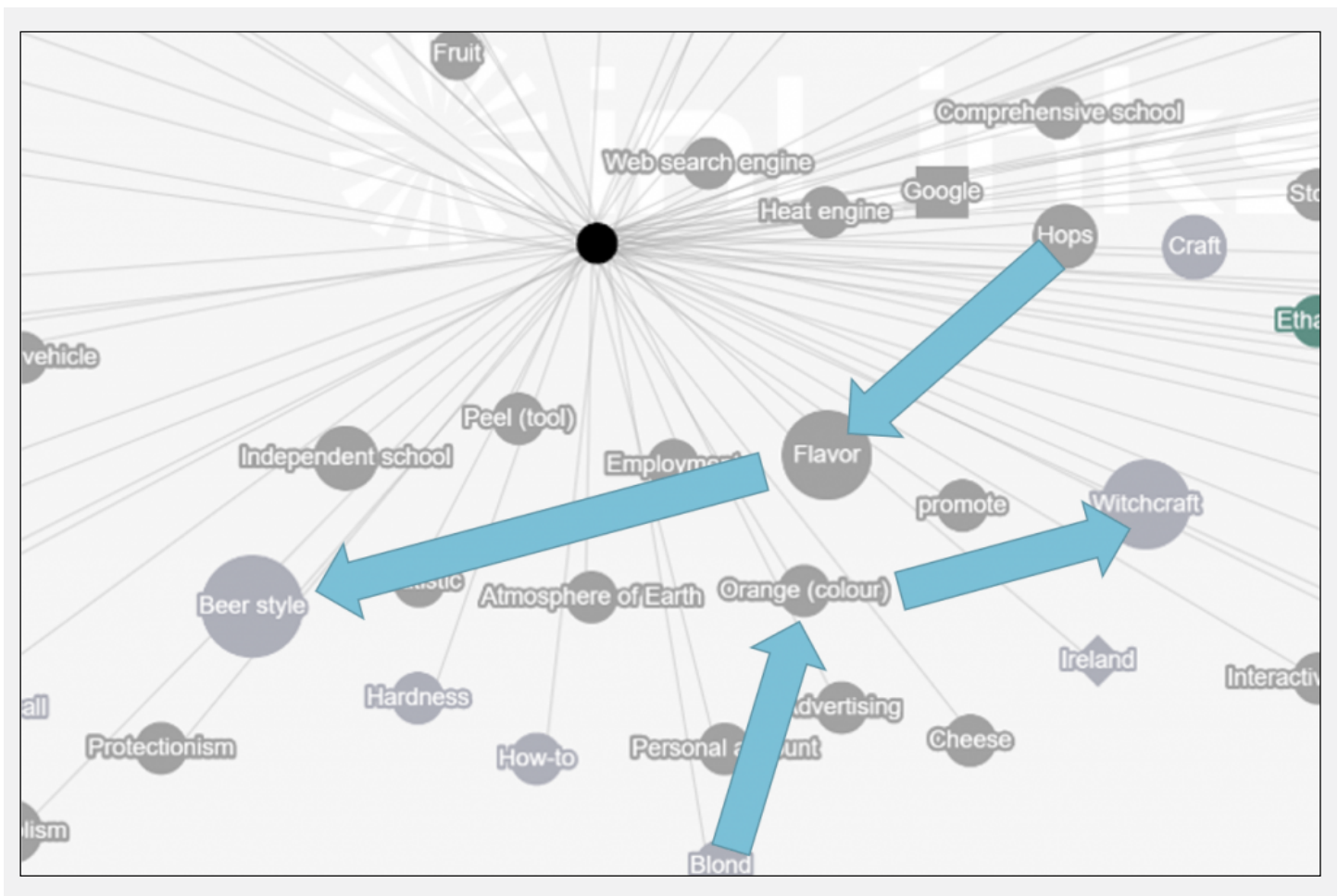
---

If it makes sense to do so, then absolutely. It makes sense to do so when your user will be able to better understand the argument you are making in your story. In this instance, you WANT the user to click on the link, understand the underlying context, then return to your article. Moreover, Inlinks has been looking at the patterns of pages returned for most queries and we rarely find results with pages that are NOT linking out to external websites.

# 12

# INTERNAL LINKS GUIDE

Internal links are important for SEO and UX alike. This comprehensive guide shows you what they are and how to optimize a website using inlinks. It is no longer enough to create a hierarchy, some breadcrumbs and navigation and say your internal links are optimized. You need an effective and scalable methodology to create contextually relevant internal connections within the body of your content. This guide shows you the principles behind internal linking and helps you develop a strong methodology for your websites.





## What are Internal Links?

Hyperlinks are the way we navigate on the Internet and are more nuanced than you might imagine. It is separate to link building.

Whenever you click on something on the Web (or sometimes even just hover over an active area of text or picture) the hyperlink is the address of the item you are calling. If this address is on another site, we refer to it as an “external link”. If it is to a page on the same site, we refer to it as an “internal link”.

The reverse would be a “backlink” is generally a link to a page from another site, whilst an “inlink” is to a page from the same website. There are many other types of link as well: “homepage links” and “site-wide links” to name a few, but we will concentrate on the inlinks in this article.

## Benefits of Internal Linking

Before learning how to develop an optimized strategy, let’s remind ourselves just how important this is for SEO. Whether you consider human interaction or a search engine’s, the benefits are considerable.

### Benefits of search engines.

A good internal link structure leads to a better quality of organic web traffic over time and a better quality leads to higher rankings and more web traffic. Three signals given to search engines from links are:

- Discovering a page in the first place
- Authority of a page (PageRank)
- Understanding the meaning or context of topics on a page.

#### DISCOVERY

Googlebot and other web crawlers still rely heavily on discovering content on the Web by crawling pages they already know about and seeing links to new content.

#### AUTHORITY

Links were originally important to search engines (particularly Google) because of the way PageRank, Google’s initial algorithm worked. In recent years this importance has started to take authority in context. Links into and out of web pages help to give the Content meaning.

#### CONTEXT

Associate mentions of a particular topic in the text to a cornerstone piece of content to definitively explain that topic. Search engines can then understand the content better. Links within the body of a piece of content carry more context and meaning than links in navigation menus

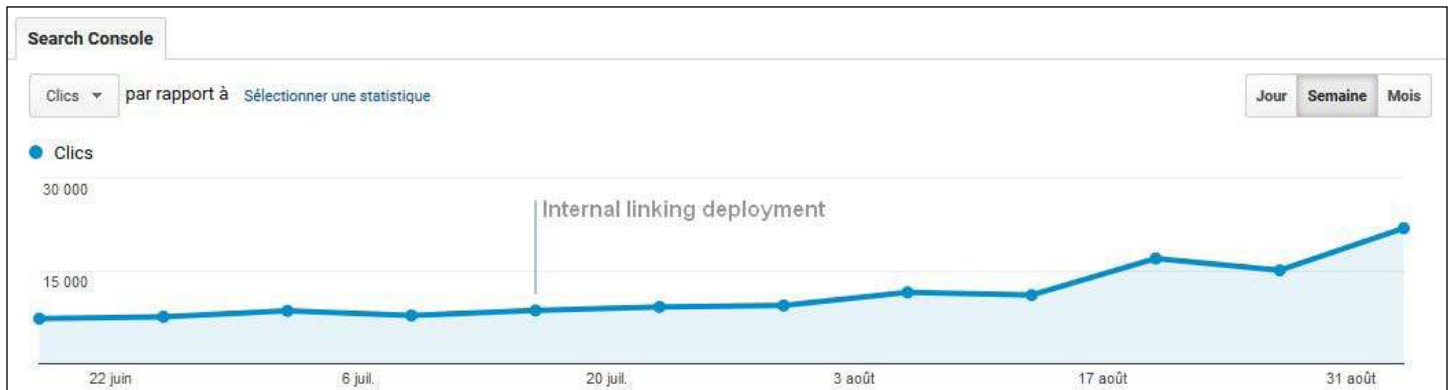
*Links within the body of a piece of content carry more context and meaning than links in navigation menus.*

*Suggested Reading: <https://patents.google.com/patent/US8117209B1/en>*



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These links are surrounded by words that give context to that page's meaning. Links in the body of an article will likely carry more weight than others on the page.



In case studies, we see Internal Linking increase organic traffic over time

At its core, a link graph represents a compelling way for a machine to see which pages are stronger than others. It also links tend to tie concepts or topics together, helping search engines to see what ideas are semantically close to each other.

Knowing this, search engines believe they can better interpret the content on your page.

## Benefits of internal linking to a person.

Google uses algorithms that aim to act as proxies for human decision making. Humans also value links on web pages. The hyperlink is the only way that people navigate the internet. They are our Magellan.

Before humans click, they can make assumptions just by looking at the hyperlink in context. For example:

- **Timeliness:** We make assumptions as to the timeliness of the content they will see. (Whether it will be evergreen content or news or changing data)
- **Passion:** We may know whether the writer is making a positive or negative connection with the target article.
- **Relevance:** We get annoyed if a click takes us to somewhere irrelevant (Don't click this... you know you want to...).
- **Context:** The best experience adds context for the person to better understand the article they are currently reading
- **Trust:** Often the user can recognize the domain name the content links to and know whether the source is trustworthy.

There is so much latent meaning associated with hyperlinks. Google therefore often takes them as a proxy for human decision making.



## Marketing benefits for you and your visitors

Even if you do not accept and if the algorithmic reasons for getting your internal graph right, consider the marketing benefits. Your business most likely boils down to a few main product or service offerings. The larger your site, the more chance that the visitors enter your ecosystem. Once there. The only way they will navigate your pages will be by clicking on links.



### Strategic Approaches

There are three common approaches to Internal Links management. By far the most common is “Meh...”. That is to say, most people overlook its importance. This is not a strategy we’ll cover here except to say... why would you do that? Very few SEO tactics are as easy and safe to manipulate as this one. Just do something more intelligent than “Meh”. The other two strategies are a manual strategy and an automated (or semi-automated) approach. These are both covered in this article.

### Optimizing Internal Links Manually

Modern CMS systems (like WordPress) do make it easy on a small scale to connect pages and concepts together. These systems usually come with a WYSIWYG text editor. The connection can, therefore, be made in the same way as you would in Word or Google Docs. The problem comes when you start to look at the scale of the challenge. If you have 100 web pages, each discussing 5 different topics, then you will need to manually curate 500 links.

On average, Inlinks case studies show between 3-5 internal links within a body of content. Large pages will usually have more on each page. This would be because they have more content relating to the topics discussed on-page.

Here is a process for optimizing manually.





## STEP 1

# Define your cornerstone content for a given keyword.

This is an important step. Often, webmasters think that by having lots of web content on or about the same topic, they will rise to the top of search engines. Nothing could be further from the truth if you do not give all that content hierarchy through internal links. Some SEOs call a lack of hierarchy “cannibalization”. The search engines see multiple pages on the site that COULD all rank for a given topic. If the MAIN page is not defined, no page has enough clarity or confidence to rank.

Actively decide which page should be the master page for a given phrase or topic.

*From: [How to associate target entities to web pages](#) (suggested reading)*

Actively decide which page should be the master page for a given phrase or topic. You also decide that the other pages should NOT rank for that topic. Link to the cornerstone content when the topic is mentioned elsewhere.

## STEP 2

# Find opportunities

Use your site’s search functionality to find other mentions of those keywords. You can also use the popular Google hack to do this. Search in Google for “Your keyword site:yoursite.com”. (That is to say, the SITE: command within a Google search will limit Google’s search results to the site you specify).

This latter approach is not effective if Google has not yet properly indexed all the content on your website, so do use your site’s own search function if it has one.

## STEP 3

# Link other mentions to the Cornerstone Content

Wherever you find your keyword mentioned on the site, link that keyword through to the cornerstone page. This is not quite as straightforward as it sounds. If your keyword is too specific, you may not find all the mentions in a search. Worse, you may

use an increasingly unnatural “anchor text”. (Anchor text is the text that the reader sees when looking at the link on the web page.) Avoid this.

Try and make sense to humans. For example, you may have a cornerstone page about “The Ritz Hotel, London”. On the page about afternoon tea, you might have the text “Tea at the Ritz”. You need to decide whether to use the words “The Ritz” or the whole phrase “Tea at the Ritz” in the anchor text. This should depend on whether there is another page about the concept of “Tea” at “Tea at Hotels”. If not, then use the whole phrase.

You need to be seen to be adding context to the reader. e.g.: The key phrase itself is not being used on the page in a way that requires clarification. For example, if you talk about a “Ritzy looking ballroom”, a hyperlink to the Ritz page would be incorrect.

You need to be seen to be adding context to the reader.

*See this video example:*

<https://inlinks.net/p/help/writing-about-topics-not-keywords/>



## STEP 4

# Repeat with varying keywords and synonyms.

Google often understands variations on a theme. For example “Site, Website, and Domain” may (or may not) mean the same thing. It will depend on the context of their use.

Assuming you are not talking about construction sites and fiefdoms, let’s say you have a cornerstone page about “Websites”. You may also want to link mentions of “sites” and “Domains” to the same cornerstone content. Doing so should help Google see that these are similar concepts.

## Generating Internal links automatically

### Benefits of automating Internal Linking

There are several challenges with managing internal linking manually. The first, as mentioned, is the sheer scale of the task.

It is very difficult to pick out link opportunities unless you are intimately aware of all the content on the site. Even if you wrote all the content yourself, our memories play tricks on us and we quickly forget.

Whenever new content is created, proper optimization involves re-reading the entire website to create new links to the new content. This is a challenge. Re-reading the entire website every time a new page is written is not scalable. This is where automation can help.

### Risks of automating Internal Linking

Automating the process is not without risk. A tool like Inlinks is very effective at finding topics within the content and linking them to your cornerstone pages. However, it can be “over-enthusiastic” at times and perhaps start linking a little aggressively. This can be mitigated, though, by ensuring a human review of the links created automatically.

Another risk is that SEOs tend to try and create “exact match” links.

Most internal link automation tools are keyword-based, rather than “concept” based. They, therefore, tend to create link patterns that do not look or feel like they are doing anything other than trying to manipulate the SERPs for that specific phrase. In Links works differently, though. Inlinks first builds a knowledge graph of ideas that are mentioned in the website’s content. By then linking topics, rather than just keywords, the resulting link graphs tend to have less exact match links.

It is possible to review the links created by Inlinks and modify the anchor text manually.

# How to Automate Internal Linking Correctly

Here is the Inlinks methodology for internal linking. Following this process will also you to scale the process rapidly and optimally. It is a powerful process for SEO when correctly applied.

## 1 Identify a Target Topic

Inlinks builds a knowledge graph (database) of the topics discussed on your site, sentence by sentence. It is, therefore, easy to see which topics are most frequently mentioned.

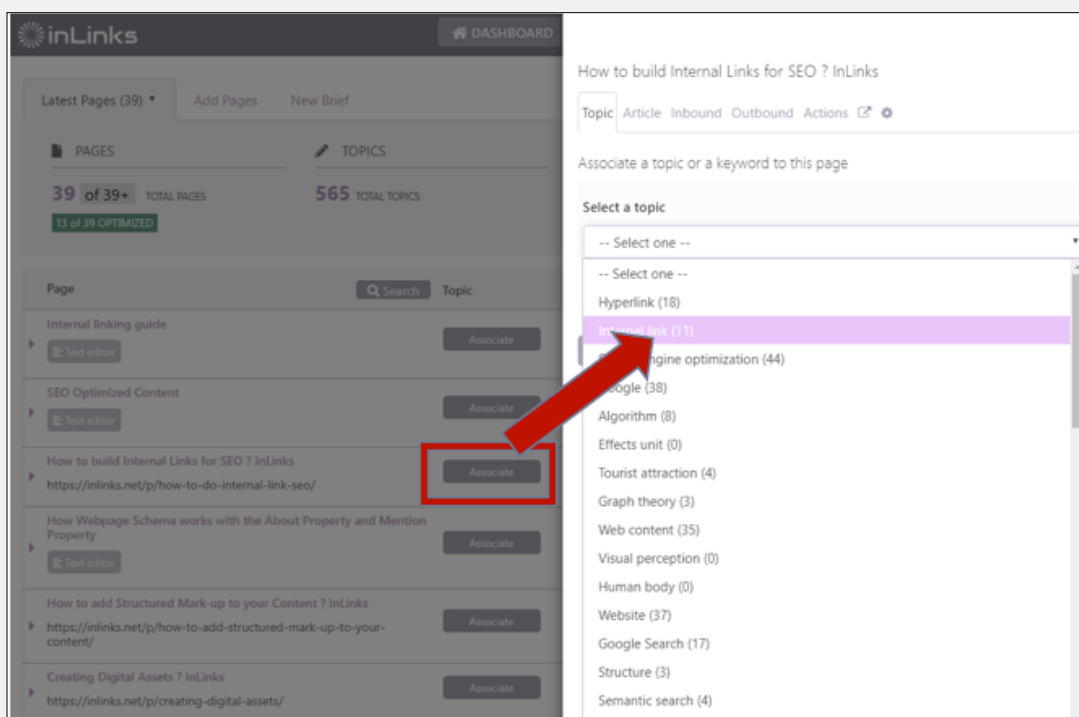
Looking at the Topics, sorted in frequency order, shows which topics most need to be associated with cornerstone content.

## 2 Associate a Page to the Topic

The important topics need to be associated with cornerstone content.

You can either make these connections at the page level or (probably more efficient) use the Topic view.

At the page level, associate the page with one or more of the topics found in the knowledge graph. Associating a Page to a Topic In the Topic View, select one of the pages listed under each topic to be the cornerstone page associated with that topic.



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inLinks

DASHBOARD GRAPH LINKS SCHEMA CONTENT MY ACCOUNT

Knowledge Graph of inlinks.net ▶ Most used Topics [Entities]

Most used topics Knowledge Graph

Topic name	Volume	Frequency	Occurrences	Links Potential	JS Links	Factor	Actions
Google	83.1M		26	38	15	-	✓ Associated
Search engine optimization	135K		26	44	35	-	✓ Associated
Backlink	6.6K		25	27	-	21	Associate
Web content	590		24	35	-	6	Associate
Website	27.1K		22	37	-	1	Associate

Topic: Backlink

Your content talks about the topic Backlink 27 times in... By defining a target page about this topic, InLinks will create schema markup for this page. This will boost its SEO and which page is the strongest for the topic.

Select one of the existing pages below

or Create a Brief to write a new page.

or Select an URL and associate it to this topic.

RECOMMENDED PAGES

How to associate target entities to web pages  
/p/help/how-to-associate-target-entities-to-web-pages/  
semantic-seo/  
2652 words  
G

How to Check if google Parsed your JavaScript  
/p/help/how-to-check-if-google-parsed-your-javascript/  
445 words  
JavaScript Google

Select

### 3 Creating Context and Silos

When associating an entity to a page, it is possible to specify a context. The context will limit link creation to the page only when the source page contains a particular entity.

inLinks

DASHBOARD

in inlinks.net ▶ Latest Pages added

Pages (39) Add Pages New Brief

PAGES TOPICS

of 39+ TOTAL PAGES 565 TOTAL TOPICS

39 OPTIMIZED

Search Topic

SEO Optimized Content

Topic Article Inbound Outbound Actions

Associate a topic or a keyword to this page

Select a topic

-- Select one --

or specify a Wikipedia topic (ex: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La)

English Wikipedia URL

or specify a set of keywords

Keywords (comma separated)

Restrict to articles containing

-- Select Context --

Linking type

Standard Silo



## Creating Silos

Inlinks offers two types of Internal automation:

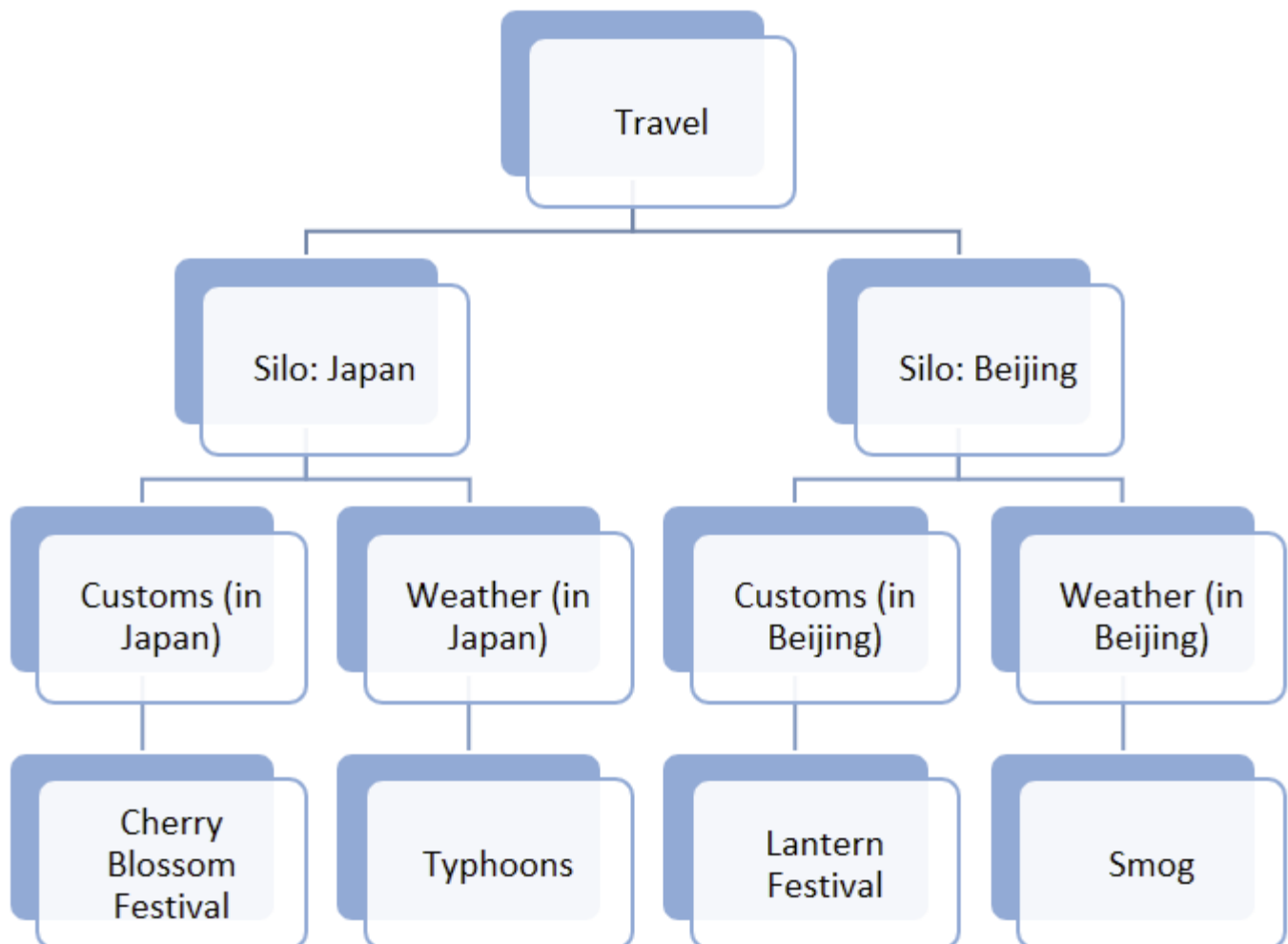
**Internal Wikipedia-type links (Flat architecture).** This is the most common type. Like Wikipedia, any page can connect to another, as long as the target topic is present on the source page.

A Silo. A silo represents a group of thematic or subject-specific content on your site.

In a silo, the architecture of the network will be hierarchical, with 3 types of pages. The links inside each silo will be bounded. A page from one silo will not be able to connect to a page from another silo.

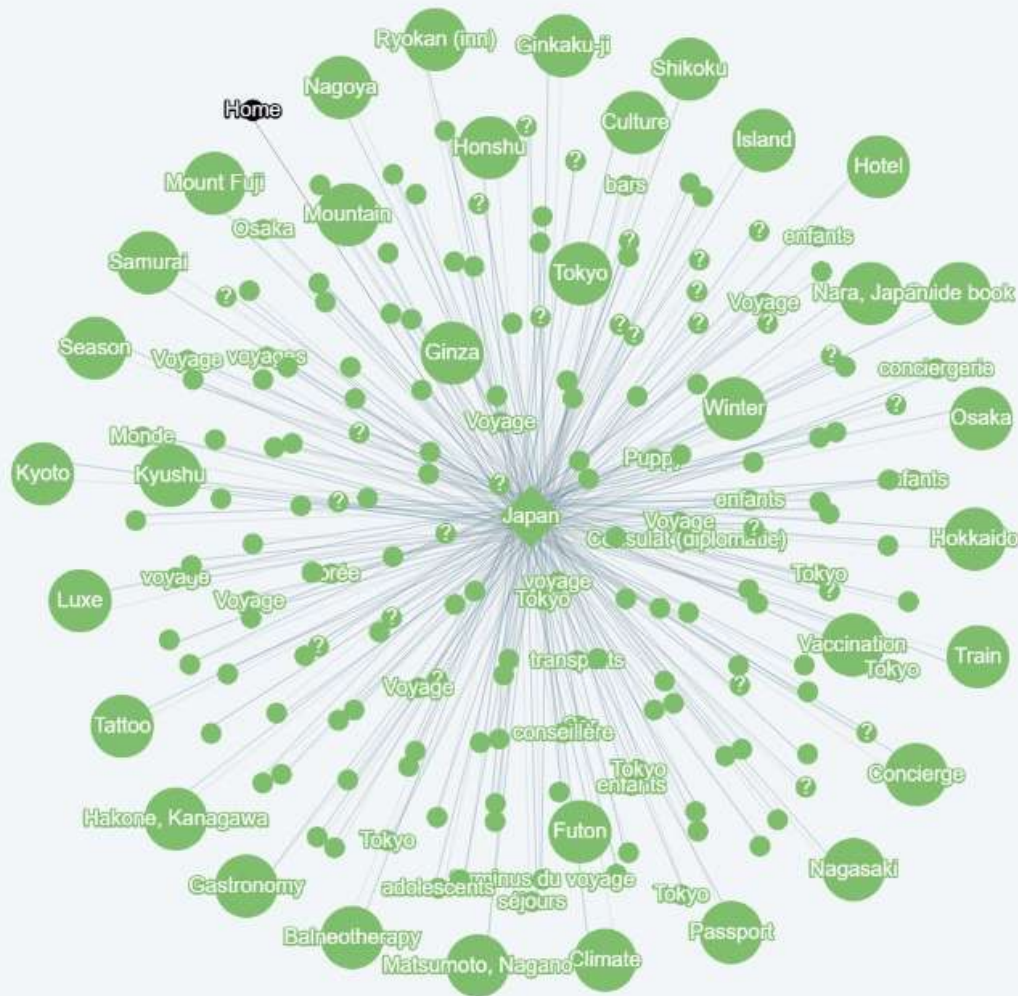
Let's take the example of a travel site for which we want to create a silo on the destination **Japan**.

Nothing on the (Silo L3) Typhoon page will be associated with the (L1) Beijing page





- **The landing (cornerstone) main page (Travel to Japan)** will be the silo head (level 1). It should be associated with the topic “Japan”.
- **The silo will include several intermediate pages** (level 2). These are associated with topics either specific to each silo (geographical pages) or found for each destination (Customs, useful addresses, weather ...)
- **The silo will finally include the level 3 pages.** These will not receive links but can connect out to the higher-level pages.



Silo example of "Travel to Japan". Diamond is level 1, circles with topics are level 2. Others are level3

*With our software, the silo setup and the construction of the connections can be simplified considerably. This is done in 2 steps: 1: Associate the cornerstone page with its topic and choose "Silo" for the type of mesh. 2 Associate the intermediate pages with each topic that corresponds to it. We then automatically generates the entire internal mesh between the different pages in the silo.*

*Try it free here.*

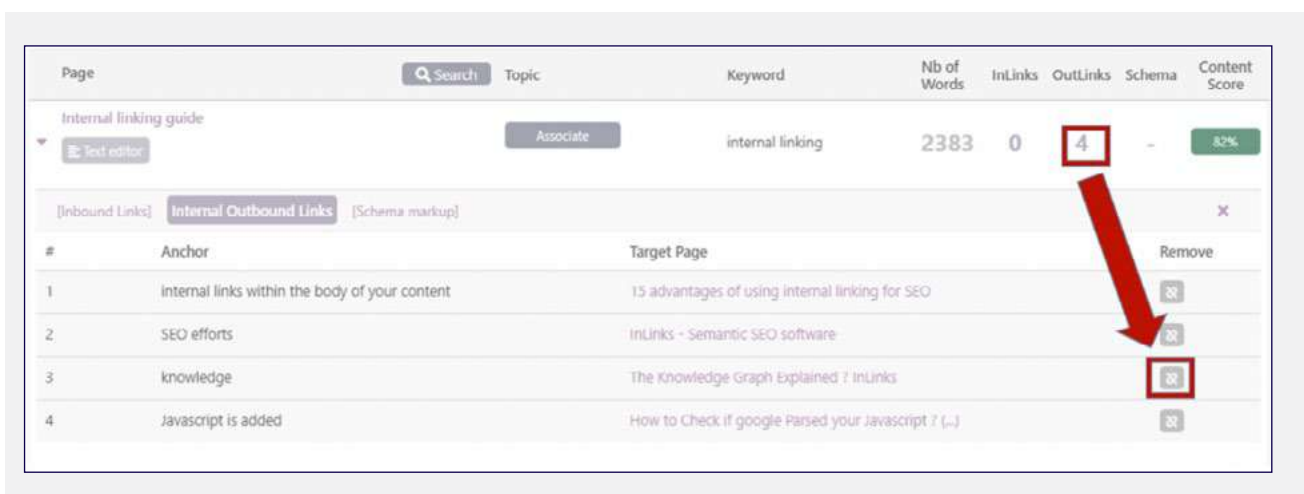
## 4 Building the Links

The system will now go through the pages on your site and will connect mentions of the topic to the cornerstone content. The system understands and also links synonyms and context. Links will appear within sentence fragments and will only be applied to text in paragraph blocks, not navigational areas of your site.

## 5 Checking (Pre-deployment)

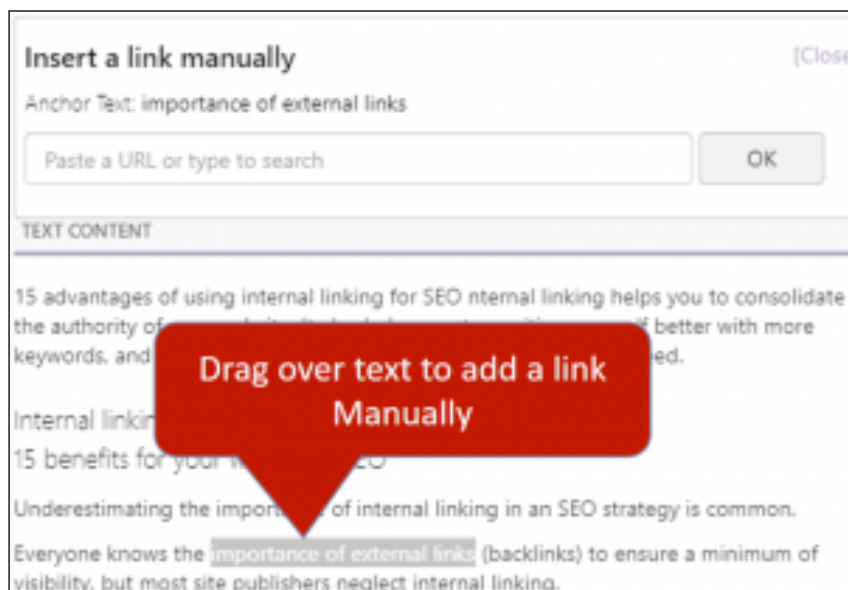
If this is your first time deploying our system on your website, the links will not be live until the Javascript is added. There may also be a large number recommended, so this is an ideal opportunity to review them. At this phase, you have the opportunity to edit each one or removing it entirely. In particular, you should delete any which are not relevant. Links that do not make sense to the user are also likely to confuse search engines and have the opposite effect of diluting the contextual relevance of the target (cornerstone) content.

- **Delete unwanted links.** This can easily be done with a single click on the “break URL” icon



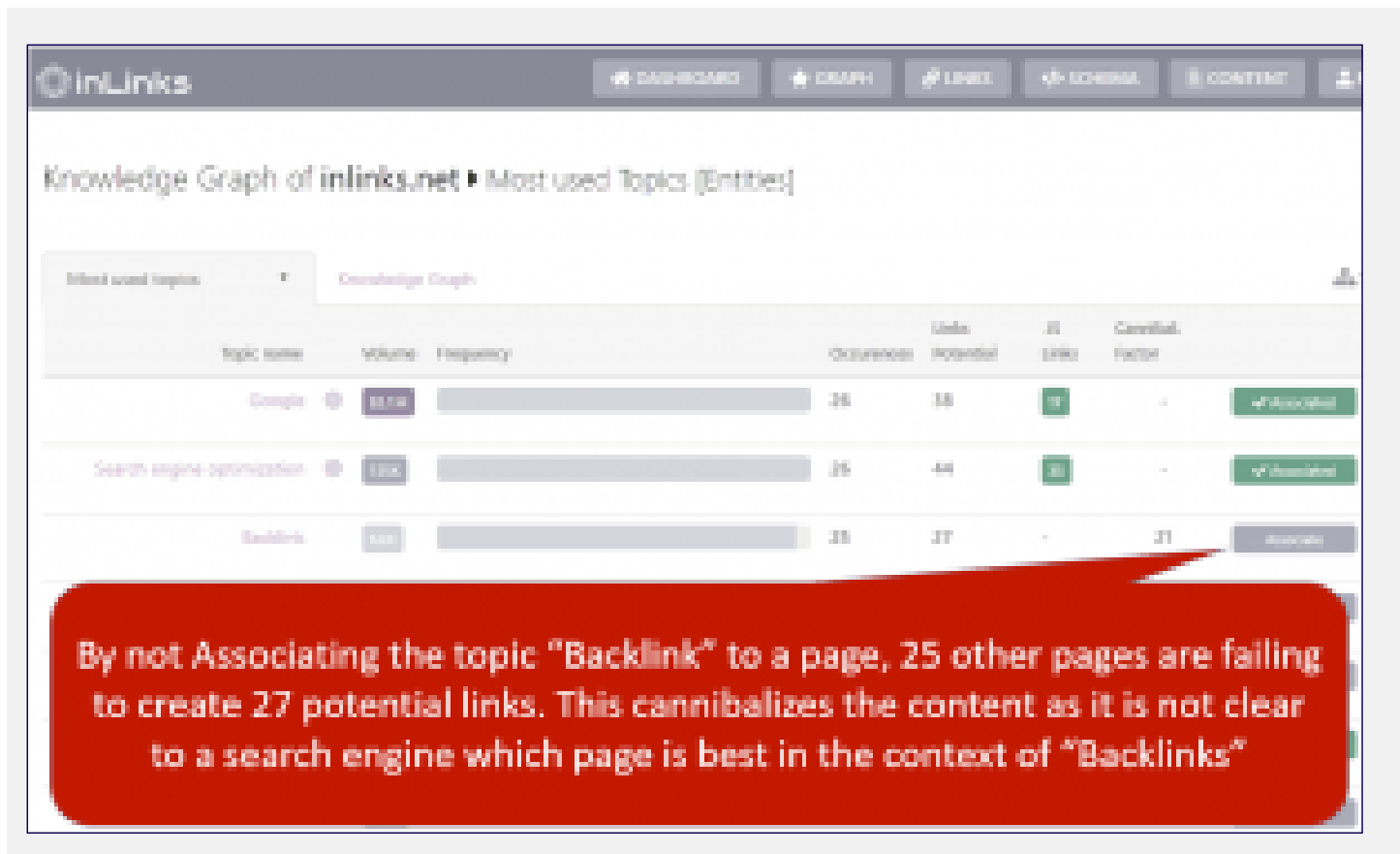
How to delete a link

- **Add extra.** Click on the page and drag over a section of text to manually add links to the page



- **Modify Links.** To modify any first, delete the link, then add a new one on the anchor text you want.
- **Check by Topic.** On the Topic section of the Knowledge Graph.

Check links by topic



## 6 Implement the Javascript

When you are confident that the proposed setup (or graph) will enhance your website for both users and search engines, add the JavaScript code to the footer section of your website. This will mean that all pages, now and in the future, can continue to be optimized as new content is created, without further need to modify the website.



Google Handles Javascript much better than in years gone by. This is a great opportunity for SEOs

*Suggested Reading;*

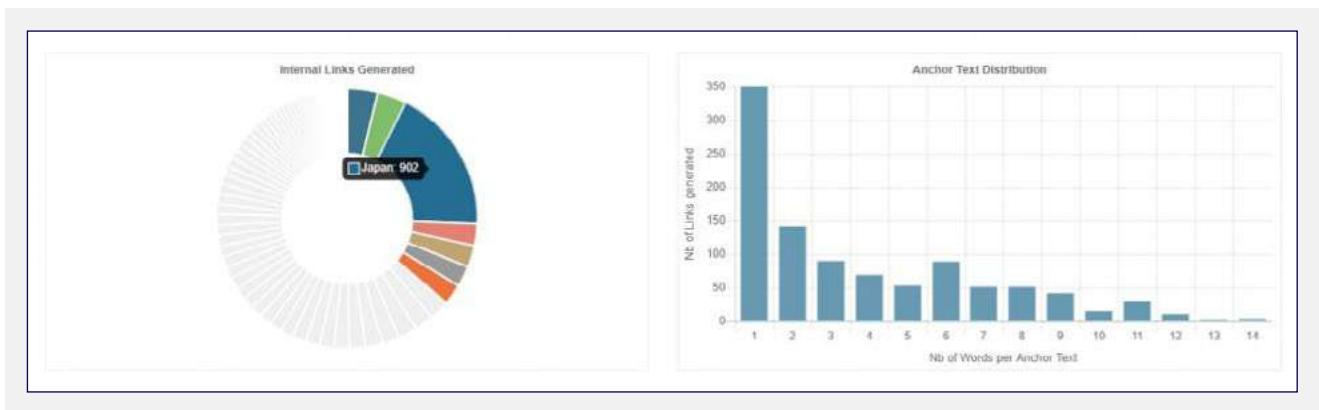
<https://inlinks.net/p/help/how-google-handles-javascript/>



## 7 Post-deployment check

It is important to review the pages when new content is associated with new topics if the javascript was already deployed on the website. New links will automatically be generated as soon as any page gets associated with a new topic (or conversely, when a topic is assigned to a page on the site). You can easily review these a few minutes after the association is made, by clicking the metrics on the dashboard of the page.

## 8 Internal reports



### Internal metrics

Search engines and humans alike can more easily understand your content after the graph is generated. They know where to find the authority content for and topic within your site. There are many tools within the system that allow you to further manage your internal linking.

### Metrics

The dashboard provides quick metrics on the number of inlinks created into and out of any individual page and within the site as a whole. These metrics only count ones generated by the software, so will not include any that you may have manually created on the website. Navigational menus are not included. There is a search functionality to easily find a URL or page title on large sites.

### Manually adding

There may be times when you want to connect text to a page on your website which is not picked up by the automated system. To enable this, we allow you to also manually add links from within the dashboard! This is extremely useful as you will not need to have editorial access to the content and will not need webmasters to modify HTML on your behalf.

### Internal Updates

If you ever modify the content or change the topic associations, you should reanalyze the internal links, otherwise, the site will not stay optimized if the content changes significantly.

## Risks and Bad Practices

Optimizing inlinks is much less risky for SEO than traditional link building, which is generally seen as using strategies that develop links INTO your site or online ecosystem from third parties. Google frowns on many of these techniques, even though the majority of SEOs believe that this is a necessary tactic for SEO.

Google's take...

Any links intended to manipulate PageRank or a site's ranking in Google search results may be considered part of a link scheme and a violation of Google's Webmaster Guidelines. This includes any behaviour that manipulates links to your site or outgoing links from your site.

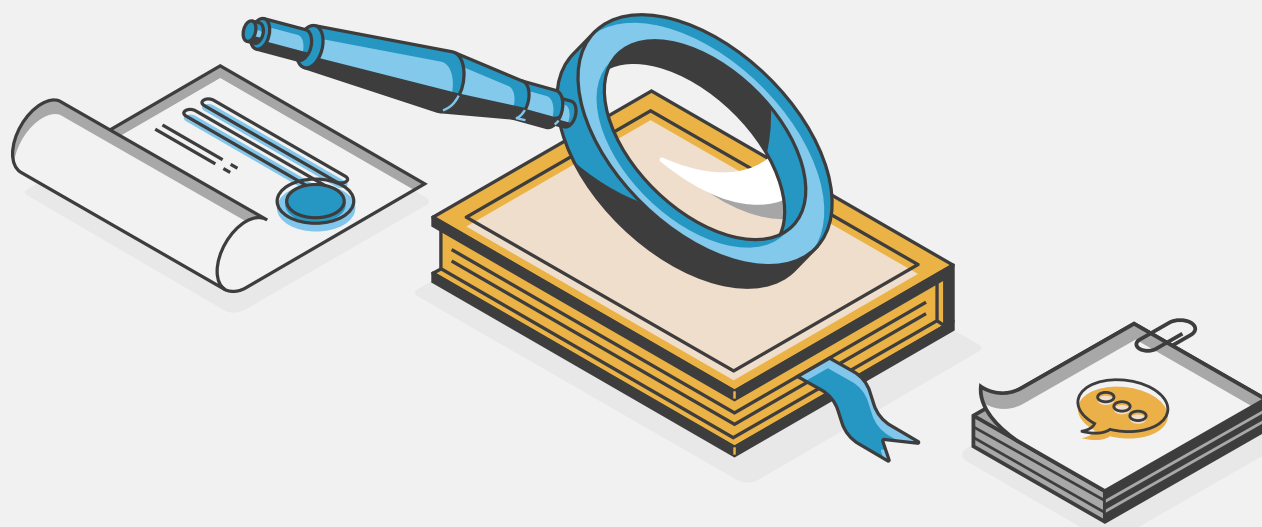
*Taken from Google's [link guidelines here](#).*

## Case Studies

Several studies are backing up the benefits of internal linking for SEO.

- Search pilot recently carried out an independent study.
- Two other studies are summarized here.

To optimize your site, [login or sign up here](#).



# 13

# SEARCH ENGINE UNDERSTANDING

## Semantic SEO Writing and the Flesh-Kincaid Algorithm

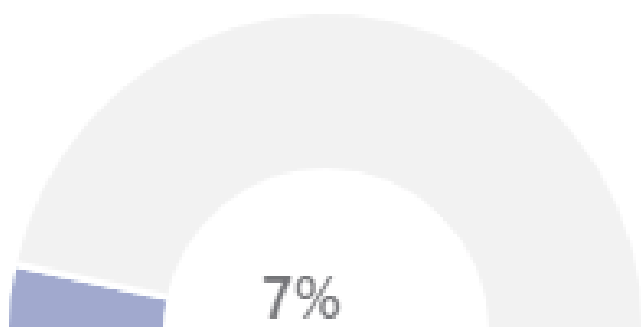
One way to assess the readability of semantic SEO writing is to analyze the content using the Flesh-Kincaid algorithm. This helps you determine at what level a reader needs to be to understand your content. The Flesh-Kincaid algorithm takes into account several elements such as the length of your sentences and paragraphs, the use of headers and the vocabulary level.

Inlinks uses the Flesh-Kincaid scale of 1 to 100 to provide you with a readability score for your content; the higher this score, the easier it is to read.

### A newer approach: SEU

Inlinks has been working on a different approach, called Search Engine Understanding or SEU for short.

#### Google's understanding ?



### What is SEU?

SEU or "Search Engine Understanding" is an analysis of the engine's natural language processing API's ability to recognize all the entities or topics on a page of content. Modern search engines (in particular, Google) have moved towards this approach of connecting a page's underlying concepts to their knowledge graph. However, parsing words and text and trying to extract underlying concepts is not always an exact science. [Inlinks publishes regular case studies tracking Google's understanding of concepts](#) in different sectors, according to its own natural language API.

### How do you Calculate SEU?

Calculating SEU is done by comparing two different NLP (Natural Language Processing) algorithms. The first is [Google's public Natural Language API](#) and the second is Inlinks' own proprietary NLP API which is not currently public. We then look at the number of defined entities in both data sets to get a percentage score of how many Google registers in its API.





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## How Good is the Inlinks NLP API?

The Inlinks API is specifically designed to be overly aggressive at extracting entities from a corpus of text. This will occasionally mean that it finds topics that a human would say are incorrect (for example, we might see text talking about an “engine” in this text and incorrectly associate this with a combustion engine). This aggressive approach is important, however, for SEOs, because it is the job of the content optimizer to match genuine topics to the about schema and to help ensure the CORRECT entities are communicated to Google. (Inlinks also helps automate this through about schema)

## Does Google use the same API in its search engine as they offer Publicly?

We only know that the one we use is the official Google API. It is part of the larger Cloud Machine Learning API family from Google.

## Why is SEU helpful for SEOs and how do I use it?

If you can rephrase your content to make it easier for a search engine to extract the correct topics as relevant and meaningful, then the search engine can store all those topics very efficiently in their Knowledge Graph. When a user asks for a particular search query, a Search engine can look at the pattern of topics that might be relevant for answering that query and then display results with a close digital footprint to the one the searcher may need.

## Should I be aiming for 100%?

No, not really. Our Natural Language Understanding case studies are showing that the best of breed sites are on average only scoring around 18% at the time of writing, although this varies quite significantly by sector. In the education sector, for example, Genie Jones at Warwick university spotted that in the education sector, machine learning is significantly better at 34% and might even be doing its part to help widen participation in higher education. On the other hand, dumbing down your text just to help a “dumb search engine” might also be having a negative bias on humanity. It is a complex topic that I will enjoy philosophizing over for years to come. (Keynote opportunity, anyone?)

## More Resources

Here is our FREE Training Courses on Semantic SEO for Content Writers.

Here is the Inlinks Youtube Channel.

# 14 WRAPPING IT ALL UP

This book was my first. I am sure I made howlers that some of my peers may pick me up on, but that alone gives me a final piece of philosophy with which to leave you. Our understanding of the world around us is never static. We used to think the world was flat (some still do). We learn, and we often adapt. Machine learning is like humanity in this regard. It gets things wrong. This is often a reflection of real life.

Moreover, humans (and machines) often do not correct themselves when they get things wrong. They say that the victors write history, but history is also written by the uninformed. Why do pirates wear eye patches? Because they lost an eye in a fight? Oh really? – Only in Hollywood. I will let you look up the real reason, but my point is that large sections of society will create a narrative that, whether wrong or right, will be picked up by machines learning from the things people write. When we get things wrong, devices can sometimes correct us, but as often as not, we overwrite the machine.

The thinking of Entity SEO as a new approach to optimizing content is changing fast. We will already be thinking differently about some of the ideas in this book whilst possibly doggedly sticking to others without foundation. This book is how I saw “Moving Search from Strings to Things” should look like when I wrote it. I will endeavour to remain open to new and more enlightened ideas and iterations. If you liked this, please find SOMEWHERE to make a public comment, review or endorsement. If you do, hopefully, the book will make it to a revised and improved edition.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dixon Jones was Born in England in 1964. He is a well-known, respected and award-winning member of the Internet Marketing community with 20 years of experience in search marketing and 25 years of business innovation. An expert in Information Retrieval manipulation, specifically in Big Data environments. A pioneer of the Freemium SAAS subscription business model. A family man with two children. Dixon now lives in Bedfordshire, England.

Dixon started in Search Engine Optimization in 1999 when he cofounded the agency Receptional with his then partner, Dr David LO Smith, who sadly passed away in 2021. He then went on to help build the specialist search engine: Majestic into a Queens Award-winning technology. He is currently the CEO and co-founder of Inlinks.net.

## Qualifications

- FRSA (Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts). Not so much qualification as a movement of people trying to make the world more equitable.
- MBA From Aston University Business School with a specialism in Strategy
- BA(Hons.) From Brunel University in Maths and Management Studies

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