

# Will linking to another website help my traffic to grow?



By [Adegboye Adeniyi](#)

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As I sat down to write my next article, I was thinking what should I talk about? Different topics ran through my head and while I was trying to decide, I received an email asking a question about the impact of linking out to a website?

I then decided that once in a while, I am going to be sharing my thoughts on questions people are asking me concerning search engine marketing. I will be doing this every once in a while so please, if you have a burning SEO question, kindly feel free to ask and I will do my best to answer it as much as possible.

The question was "Whenever I check the traffic details of blogs, I always come across the phrase, 'linked to so so so number of websites'. In essence, what I want to know is, does linking a blog to other websites drive traffic?



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In trying to answer this question, let us take a look at the purpose of backlinks in SEO, how it came to be and then we can give a right response to that question, after taking a holistic view of all issues surrounding it.

## What is a backlink?

Taking the definition from Wikipedia backlinks, also known as incoming links, inbound links, inlinks, and inward links, are incoming links to a website or web page

## How it came to be?

In truth, Google was the first search engine to introduce the concept of backlinks. While other search engines which existed before Google were doing well, Google came out with the academic formula their founders were familiar with.

If a document was deemed to be a good read in the academic sector for whatever reasons, people will reference it while talking about it in their own document. So bringing the concept to the online world was easy for them.

They held the belief that if one website references another, then that referred website must be of importance to the subject matter and the concept of using backlinks as a major ranking factor was done.

Now that we've done away with the background information, let us now answer the question. If you link to another website, does that help your website traffic or even ranking in anyway?

The straight forward answer is **no**.

Linking to any website should be done with the proper understanding that a link to a website is an indication that you will find "further information" about that website when you follow that link.

By linking to a website outside of your own, you are simply giving more authority to the website which automatically benefits from getting new links which could boost its own ranking, but the fact that you are linking out has no direct influence on your own traffic or ranking in search engines.

So why is there advice that you should link out to other websites? This is where the law of reciprocity comes in.

I am using a simple example in this case. Let us imagine that I am writing an article on a top dating website and I have listed all the dating websites I think my audience should be interested in.

After writing my article, I notify the webmasters of the dating website that I have linked to them. What I have simply done is tell them that "hey, I think you are doing a good job. I think so highly of you that I am willing to share your website with my audience because I am sure they will find this information useful".

Now the webmaster sees this and says in his mind "Whoa! Here is someone who appreciates what we are doing and is so proud of it he doesn't mind talking about it openly".

This singular act builds a level of relationship between the two webmasters. The other webmaster may then share the article with his own audience. This now leads to more publicity for your website and this kind of relationship is the type that can bring new audiences, new businesses, new social shares and even links back to your own website.

Now this sounds fantastic. Therefore let's start linking to each other.

This is where linking can hurt. Because links are powerful, Google is doing its best to understand why a link is giving and been received. Here all the factors of what makes good links are been considered and sometimes because Google is not human, even when you have all the best of intentions, you might still get your fingers burnt if you are not being careful.

Now you are going to be thinking? Niyi, you said linking out to other website is good and it can help my brand, but here you are asking me to be very careful because it could backfire.

That is why I am going to leave you with this parting information. Whenever you are receiving a link or giving a link, let this principle guide you:

- Is it relevant
- Was it given freely (without expecting a compensation in whatever form)
- If Google was God, can I truly stand in front of him and not be ashamed?

Then if yes, go ahead and build that link. If no, then don't.

Happy New Year to you all.

## ABOUT ADEGBOYE ADENIYI

Niyi Adegboye is the Head of Search for VTNS Solutions, an SEO Service firm that focus on helping brand increase their website traffic. Link Builder, avid chess player, lover of art and speaks three languages. One of these statement is false.

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