

# Why PR is the Best Way to Approach SEO



Although Google's algorithm is very complicated and includes over 250 different elements, luckily for us they've been very open and clear about what gets good ranking in their search engine. Their stated goal is to organize the information on the internet and give their users the very best possible experience and result when they search for something online. With that in mind, their parameters for ranking make perfect sense.

## Google's main ranking factors

1. Original, good quality content that is relevant to the search query
2. A website that provides a good experience for the searcher (low bounce rate, higher time on site)
3. Proof that others consider your site to be a good source of content on this subject (inbound links from the right websites, social media conversations and mentions)

This has always been the basis of Google's algorithm. How they gauge these things has changed over time. Ten years ago social media did not yet exist, so inbound links played a huge part. Now Google cares about engagement on your website, as well as comments and sharing of the content on social sites.

Write great content and post it regularly. Share useful, interesting information and you will naturally get the links, conversation and engagement.

## Building Good Links Naturally

Way back when Google first started they created an algorithm to rank web content based on relevance and citations. (Citations, as in those footnotes you see on a research paper where one academic or researcher references other published content that supports or endorses his paper.)

***"Professors only list (link) to the other papers most relevant and most important to their paper. You can't buy that and it never occurred to researchers to try and do that with each other. This system was pure at its heart." Eric Enge. [The Google Perspective on Links](#)***

This is still the underlying premise of the algorithm. In an [interview with Eric Enge](#) about what Google considers quality content, Matt Cutts, (then senior search engineer at Google) said:

***By doing things that help build your own reputation, you are focusing on the right types of activity. Those are the signals we want to find and value the most anyway.***

So SEO is about building your reputation and getting third-party endorsement. That's pure PR.

Yet so many SEO firms trash the notion of doing public relations. But according to Cutts, and he should know, the

standard PR approach is the only thing that *does* work.

## The PR Approach to Link Building

1. Every piece of content should enhance your reputation.
2. Post unique, original content that positions you as a front-runner in your field.
3. Provide real value to people looking for information on your chosen topic.
4. Write interesting, useful articles with substance – content that offers insights not found elsewhere.
5. Create a database of industry experts who can provide useful and accurate information. Get them blogging.
6. Produce interesting, original images and videos that enhance and extend a story.
7. Create compelling, well-designed infographics with accurate information that help people quickly grasp complex information.
8. Make genuine content partnerships with other relevant sites or blogs that want your content because it has value for their readers.
9. Post content that will spark conversations in social media. People talking about your content provide ‘social proof’ (endorsement) that the content has value.
10. Never ‘buy’ links, earn them. (Earned media is again a core PR play)

Instead of doing content marketing to get better rankings, leads or sales, take the PR approach. Do it to build your reputation and earn genuine third-party endorsement and social proof. That naturally leads to the rest.

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