



Larry Chase's

Essential Search Engine Marketing Resource Guide

from Web Digest for Marketers

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Larry Chase's *Essential* Search Engine Marketing Resource Guide

2006 Edition

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Introduction

The Internet has redefined time in many ways. For example, it was far less than a generation ago that Larry Chase started the first ever online newsletter about Internet marketing.

By dint of that singular act on April 14, 1995, Larry positioned himself as one of the most senior homesteaders on this “cyber planet,” with his email newsletter “Web Digest for Marketers.” Yet despite having staked such an early claim, Larry is far from greybeard status. In fact, Larry possesses and operates one of the youngest, nimblest and most frequently reinvented minds in the Internet world.

I don't write those words casually. I know many of the other players in this space, and I see how they innovate, how they implement. But of everyone out there on the leading edge, if there were one person who truly had the right to pen the Internet version of a “Who's Looking Out for You?” type of book, it would be Larry Chase.

He takes a responsibility to present the issues, moderate the debate, and set standards for this emerging medium in ways that many of the other trailblazers just don't seem to do.

Of course, speaking of books, Larry is already the best-selling author of “Essential Business Tactics for the Net.” Wisely, publisher John Wiley and Sons arranged to have the book translated for a market and culture that some believe may ultimately become the largest stakeholders on the Web, the Chinese.

Larry's book is now in its second edition in its original English. Spanish and Korean editions have also been published.

If he could fit you into his busy schedule, Larry might assist your company with one of his high-octane presentations, or perhaps an incisive strategic consulting session.

Most companies, unfortunately, will never have that opportunity, because there are only so many available days in the year. And, more to the point, there's only one Larry.

Still, one of the most important issues Larry would address for you in person would inevitably be search engine marketing.

What you'll find in this valuable report is, in many ways, the next best thing to getting Larry's wisdom face-to-face. Why? Because right here you get extremely valuable resources that would have taken you days, if not weeks or months, to find on your own. That is – if you could have found this high-level, crucial-to-Internet-marketing information at all.

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Acknowledgements

I asked the best and brightest people in the field of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) to contribute their top picks for websites in their field of expertise. Then these SEM masters wrote reviews of these favorite sites.

What we have in this resource guide is the cream of the crop SEM sites from the cream of the crop SEM experts. They have my gratitude and highest respect. There are as follows:

Mike Grehan: He talks to the coders at the search engines, and then expresses it in marketing terms, and in English. The fact he's English probably helps:). His occasional newsletter is worthy of your inspection. It's at <http://www.searchengine-report.co.uk>

Heather Lloyd Martin and Detlev Johnson: These two gurus have an interesting blend of creative and technical talents. They show mid to large-size firms how to do search engine marketing for themselves. Go to <http://www.searchenginewriting.com> to see what they offer.

Andrew Goodman: I call him Mr. PPC (Pay Per Click). His world-famous best-selling ebook is called "21 Ways to Maximize Your Profits on Google AdWords." If you're buying keywords at search engines and you haven't read this ebook, you're most likely wasting money. Check it out at <http://pagezero.com>

Bruce Clay: Among other things, Bruce offers an interesting suite of SEM tools for not much money. Whether you subscribe to his tools or not, you'd do well to visit his site at <http://BruceClay.com>.

Thanks to all of these SEM Experts for making us a little bit smarter about an integral part of our lives, namely, Search Engine Marketing.

--Larry Chase

Publisher: Web Digest For Marketers & Larry Chase's Essential Search Engine Marketing Resource Guide

<http://wdfm.com>



Advanced SEM Tools & Techniques

Network Tools

<http://www.network-tools.com>

This useful set of no-cost tools includes Web-based lookups. Find the details about your site's hosting configuration by translating the Web address into an IP address, and other useful tips and tricks.

IEHTTPHeaderViewer

<http://www.blunck.info/iehttpheaders.html>

This HTTP header viewer is a browser plug-in for Microsoft Internet Explorer. For those who prefer the Web route, my favorite Web-based header viewer can be found at <http://www.rexswain.com/httpview.html>

Advanced Search (any search engine)

http://www.google.com/advanced_search?hl=en
<http://www.hotbot.com/adv.asp?prov=Inktomi&ab=web>

Once you are comfortable with advanced searches, use the advanced interface to learn other things. For instance, draw 100 results at a time and run a "Find" on your .com in the browser window to locate your listing top 100. Hotbot offers advanced filters on a number of engines, Inktomi being the default.

Position Tech

<http://www.positiontech.com>

Question: "What's the smallest thing likely to cause you problems getting indexed with the major search engines?" Answer: "?" That's right. Pop that little old question mark into the query string of your URL [NB: This happens when Web page content is dynamically generated from a database, e.g. asp, php, jsp, cfs] There are a number of technical workarounds to make it easier for a crawler-based search engine to pick up your dynamic content. But I find the easiest way to "guarantee" that it gets indexed is to pay for it to be included. Position Technologies is at the forefront of "pay for inclusion" services. Simply open an account and submit your pages directly to Inktomi, Ask Jeeves and Fast. You'll see the results in days (not weeks) and if you have a large number of URLs (pages) to submit (500 or more), you can use the trusted feed (XML delivery) service they provide. By the way, you can open an account with only one URL to begin with if you wish.



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Associations

Search Engine Marketing Professional Organization (SEMPO)

<http://www.sempo.org>

The newest search marketing association on the virtual block, SEMPO is working to (according to their mission statement) "increase awareness, and promote the value of search marketing worldwide." These folks officially launched during the 2003 San Jose Search Engine Strategies Conference - and they immediately placed themselves on everyone's search marketing radar.

SEMPO is the only pure-play organization dedicated to search marketing professionals. Their site reflects this, with much of the text revolving around case studies, editorials and a resource list outlining member SEO companies. SEO newbies and old-timers will both enjoy the resources this site offers - and there is sufficient information about membership (and its benefits) to make an informed decision.

Copywriting

High Rankings

<http://www.highrankings.com>

A word in your ear from an expert can be very useful. But search engine optimization expert Jill Whalen will tell you that your ear is most certainly NOT a recommended place to stick a word where search engine ranking is concerned! She's been writing about writing (for search engines, that is) for long enough to tell you exactly where to stick 'em. Her just released e-book "The Nitty-gritty of Writing for the Search Engines" gets straight down to it: keyword research, how to structure your copy and most importantly - where to stick those all important keywords. Jill and I rapped about her long-awaited keyword report in a Boston bar last month - she must have used all the right words - I paid for the drinks! Make sure that senseless search engine spiders understand what your Web pages are all about. And make sure your Web pages make sense to your human visitors.

Position Pro

<http://www.positionpro.com>

Position Pro is a copywriter's best friend, and yet it's one of the best-kept SEO secrets out there. The technology, offered by Position Technologies, takes the guesswork out of good search engine copywriting - plus it lets you submit your pages in a non-sp*mmmy manner. Position Pro spiders your site like a search engine, providing writers (and technologists, too) with scads of search marketing data. Pages are scored by the algorithm, helping you learn which pages are considered highly relevant for what terms. Plus, you'll also receive a biweekly trend analysis and positioning report. Yes, there is a small learning curve (phrases like "index value" can confuse even the most metrics-minded marketer). But, once you figure out the lingo, Position Pro is a powerful tool.

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SearchEngineWriting.com

<http://www.searchenginewriting.com>

SearchEngineWriting.com is run by well-known search engine optimization copywriting expert Heather Lloyd-Martin and technical SEO expert Detlev Johnson. Together, they've formed SuccessWorks, a search engine optimization firm, and this site is a repository for their articles and insights as well as a corporate presence. Currently, you'll find many informative SEO copywriting articles plus a "Writing for Spidering Search Engines" tutorial written by Ms. Lloyd-Martin - a very detailed, step-by-step guide to the process of writing for search engines, from identifying target keyword phrases to editing content with your target phrases in mind. Their bi-monthly TagLine newsletter features in-depth coverage of SEO techniques and solutions, including case studies, interviews with SEO experts and the latest SEO news and strategies. Topics in recent issues included discussion of the XML trusted feed and using XML to manipulate keywords.

Directories

Pandia

<http://www.pandia.com>

Pandia is a guide to search engines, search engine marketing and search engine optimization, and an excellent place to start your SEO research. Some of the information is fairly basic, but it is presented in a clear and concise fashion suitable for beginners. The site also contains more advanced information in the form of "Q-cards" for many of the major search engines, which list each engine's features and search syntax. You'll also find links to a wide array of search engine and SEO resources, such as submission and optimization tools and a list of all the search engines on the Web.

Google Essentials

Google API

<http://www.google.com/apis/>

Once you begin defining several advanced queries you want to make, the only safe auto-querying on a large scale must be done through the Google API. "Google uses the SOAP and WSDL standards so a developer can program in his or her favorite environment - such as Java, Perl, or Visual Studio .NET."

Google Dance Tool

<http://googledance.seochat.com/>

The Google Dance is when Google starts switching its indexes every 28 days or so. Pages are shuffled, rankings are changed, and the SEO industry holds its collective breath. What *will* the new positions be? If you want a sneak peek at future positions, the Google Dance Tool lets you view results from all ten datacenters. Simply type in

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your URL and you can see how positions shake out across the different servers. It's great to illustrate to clients how positions can fluctuate across indexes - and (for the geeky set) it's always fun to check your positions.

WebWorkshop

<http://www.webworkshop.net>

SEO consultant Phil Craven's website has an excellent assortment of articles on search engine optimization, copywriting, marketing and the like, but its real beauty lies in a dedicated focus on the big Kahuna of them all, Google. If you are interested in improving your Google ranking (and who isn't?), here you will find articles and tools to help you do so. First, you must understand exactly how Google works. Do you know exactly how PageRank, Fresh Crawl and themes can impact your ranking? No? Then read on for the nitty-gritty details on how to woo and win over the mother of all search engines.

International

Search Engine Colossus

<http://www.searchenginecolossus.com>

It goes without saying that it's essential to concentrate your search engine marketing efforts on the major services. But, from time to time you may need/want to target very regionally. And then you'll be asking yourself questions like those in the headline above. Fear not: you won't have to spend an eternity scouring other search engines to find the answers. Here's a list of links to search engines in 195 countries covering 38 territories around the world. Which reminds me: sales of my book have been a little slow in French Polynesia just lately...

Link Popularity

Linking Matters

<http://www.linkingmatters.com>

It's not often I come across something that's so good - I wish I didn't have to tell anybody! I can guarantee that the no-cost document at this site is probably the most useful, practical, time-saving, no BS roadmap to link popularity (as it's loosely termed) available anywhere online. I had the pleasure of meeting Ken McGaffin, the author of this document, at a roundtable event I chaired in London just last week. His philosophy is wonderful: "Create good content, link to great content and great content will link to you." The Linking Matters website is an experiment to prove that a strong linking strategy provides a major benefit to good search engine ranking. Download a 30+ page PDF document with your roadmap laid out, as well as 10 work sheets to help walk you through the strategy. This is a five-star online marketing tool.

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News & Trends

Search Engine Blog

<http://www.searchengineblog.com>

Teach a man to fish, and he'll eat for the rest of his life. However, give him a "Blog" about search engines, and the "old so-and-so" will sit on his lazy arse and let someone else do all the industry research for him! It's a good job, and my friend, the extremely affable and considerate Peter Da Vanzo, in New Zealand, doesn't mind doing the spade work for all of us. Not only that, he's quickly become the veritable "chat-show host of Blog". Tune your browser in to Peter's daily musing of the search engine industry for wry comment and interviews. Get the omnibus edition mailed to you at the end of each week. Gud onya sport. (that's New Zealand for "splendid chap - well done")

Search Engine Watch

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com>

Many consider Danny Sullivan's Search Engine Watch to be the authoritative guide to Internet search engines, registration and ranking issues. According to Sullivan, it all started in 1995 when a client complained that he couldn't find his site in WebCrawler. Sullivan did research and in 1996, published "A Webmaster's Guide To Search Engines," the base of today's Search Engine Watch site content. Now owned by Internet.com, Search Engine Watch offers tutorials on how to submit URLs, use HTML metatags and boost placement. Sign up for The Search Engine Report, a free monthly ezine with the skinny on the latest in search engines.

Resources

Lycos SEM Guide

<http://insite.lycos.com/tutorial.asp>

This search engine marketing guide contains a wealth of no-cost information, and yet very few people know about it or reference it. If the principles contained outlined here were followed in good faith, you'd be well on your way to search marketing success.

Top Site Listings

<http://www.topsitelisting.com>

Top Site Listings is run by the SEO company Orbidex, Inc. The "News & Articles" section offers helpful SEO information for both beginners and experts, from basic how-to tutorials to guides to optimizing dynamic content and how data from server logs can help in SEO work. Further information is provided in their search engine optimization strategies section, which covers topics like link popularity campaign strategies and SEO campaign targeting theory. Marketers with an SEO bent will especially enjoy the

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research section, which features profiles of most of the major search engines. Each profile details exactly what a website needs to be highly ranked by that engine, and explains all the factors that an engine takes into consideration when categorizing its results

Pay-Per-Click Directories

PayPerClickAnalyst.com

<http://www.payperclickanalyst.com>

Troy Perkins has put together a useful and regularly updated compendium of content and reviews of major PPC engines. Unlike some others, this site offers valuable information and articles, as opposed to being merely a vehicle for affiliate links.

Pay-Per-Click Optimization

Andrew Goodman's Page Zero Media

<http://www.page-zero.com>

"You've optimized and link analyzed but now you feel demoralised..." Okay, I admit, Eminem I may not be... but I'll bet those words strike a chord with many WDFM readers. So, a little more name dropping here. I had dinner the other night with Andrew Goodman, the Google AdWords expert. I asked him: "What's the magic formula for a return on my investment at Google?" And he told me this: "Buy my industry leading report, you tight old skinflint!" I haven't quite cracked the secret code which is obviously subliminally implanted in those words yet... Google AdWords is a major opportunity in this marketplace. It's still new enough - and confusing enough to the majority of advertisers - that incredible bargains are still there for the taking, if you know what you're doing. And when it comes to Pay-Per-Click, my chum Andrew Goodman really does know what the word is.

ConversionRuler

<http://www.conversionruler.com>

As their slogan says, "You can't manage what you don't measure." This service allows you to track which pay-per-click ads are converting to sales. If you use it correctly, you can gather this information right down to specific keywords. ConversionRuler is adding functionality to track "unsourced" traffic such as search engine traffic and referrals from websites (even when you aren't using tracking links). The service is very accurate, but the company desperately needs to hire programmers and product managers to develop world-class reporting - not easy for a small company. Pricing is small-biz-friendly, starting at \$20(US) per month.

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Position Tech

<http://www.positiontech.com>

Question: "What's the smallest thing likely to cause you problems getting indexed with the major search engines?" Answer: "?" That's right. Pop that little old question mark into the query string of your URL [NB: This happens when Web page content is dynamically generated from a database, e.g. asp, php, jsp, cfs] There are a number of technical workarounds to make it easier for a crawler-based search engine to pick up your dynamic content. But I find the easiest way to "guarantee" that it gets indexed is to pay for it to be included. Position Technologies is at the forefront of "pay for inclusion" services. Simply open an account and submit your pages directly to Inktomi, Ask Jeeves and Fast. You'll see the results in days (not weeks) and if you have a large number of URLs (pages) to submit (500 or more), you can use the trusted feed (XML delivery) service they provide. By the way, you can open an account with only one URL to begin with if you wish.

Go Toast

<http://www.gotoast.com>

Go Toast is a popular pay-per-click search engine bid management and marketing solution that automatically monitors your search term bids, from twice a day up to every 30 minutes, and offers useful ROI tracking, analysis and reporting features. The product will completely index your site and submit your keywords to Google, FindWhat, Overture (DE, UK and FR), Kanoodle, ah-ha, Sprinks, goClick, ePilot, Search123, 7search, BrainFox, Espotting (FR, DE, UK, SP and IT), SearchFeed, Turbo10 and Xuppa (Bay9). The service is cost-efficient since you only pay for clickthroughs, and the software can handle multiple URLs. Be sure to spend some time in the "no-cost" tools section, where you can see how auto bidding works, check your Web standing, investigate the cost of a keyword, perform budget gap analysis and get a few advertising recommendations. A complimentary two-week trial is available.

Pay-Per-Click Resources

SearchDay - Perfecting Paid Listings

<http://searchenginewatch.com/searchday/article.php/2161001>

This is PPC author and marketer Catherine Seda's report on a "Perfecting Paid Search Engine Listings" panel from the Search Engine Strategies conference held in San Jose, CA in late 2002. The session was full of fundamental concepts such as how to avoid "compulsive clickers" (with advice from Kevin Lee), how to measure the lifetime value of a click, not short-term profit (with advice from Jim Novo) and how to document click fraud (with advice from Jessie Stricchiola).

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WebmasterWorld

<http://www.webmasterworld.com/forum85>

Specifically, check out the forum on "pay-per-click engines." Online forums can have a poor signal-to-noise ratio, but here experiences of strange glitches and editorial policies are shared with others in nearly real time, if you go for that sort of immediacy. An anonymous Google rep, GoogleGuy, has been supplemented with a new addition, AdWordsAdvisor. This adds spice and solid (if often limited) information. Don't get too caught up in the "low rent" mentality of some of the webmasters.

SEM/SEO Providers

Google's Information for Webmasters: Choosing an SEO Provider

<http://www.google.com/webmasters/seo.html>

Seeking assistance from an SEO firm? With all the claims out there, it's hard for some companies to decide if a search marketing firm is above board - or if they'll be sinking their cash into a bottomless marketing pit and facing low (or no) return on investment. Google has outlined some tips to help you choose an SEO firm that will help your site succeed - and not get it dropped from the index. Sure, some of the tips (like "Be wary of SEO firms that send you email out of the blue") seem basic. However, discover some danger signs here and learn how to choose search partners wisely.

Search Engine Optimization Tools

SEOposition.com

<http://www.SEOposition.com>

Kudos to SEOposition.com (a search engine optimization company), for its comprehensive list of the best no-cost and low-cost search engine optimization resources for your reference. We were delighted to discover several new additions on the list, including a link to the Google AdWords keyword suggestor (you don't have to have an AdWords account to use it) and another to a Link Reputation Analyzer from OptiLink, which rates the effectiveness of the sites and links that point back to your site.

Wordtracker

<http://www.wordtracker.com>

This an excellent tool for the type of keyword research that can help advertisers find cheaper, highly targeted clicks. If you're uncertain, try a "24 hour" license for about \$6(US). Remember, real-time impression data from your Google AdWords or other PPC campaigns is a marketplace alternative to a keyword research tool.

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Fantomaster

<http://www.fantomaster.com>

To many, he is the shadowy Fantomaster. But to me he's... good old Ralph! It has to be said - some of his tools and tips are frowned upon by search engines. However, Ralph Tegtmeier (AKA Fantomaster) is, probably, one of the most technically adept, professional search engine optimizers I know in the game. His new Fantomas ShadowMaker software is described as "heavy duty industrial-strength cloaking - generating 100% relevant and unique content..." This can be scary stuff in the hands of the wrong person. But, in the same way as the Surgeon General infers smoking CAN kill you - not WILL kill you... So, you're grown-ups, you know the risks - you decide. Excellent gratis newsletter here too, by the way.

Search Engine Relationships

Bruce Clay's Search Engine Relationship Chart

<http://www.bruceclay.com/searchenginechart.pdf>

There is no easier way to visualize the convoluted relationships between the search engines and instantly understand how it all works. Simply spending a few moments with the chart (which is faithfully updated whenever there's a relationship switch) helps the most inexperienced newbie grasp how the search engines feed each other. And, for more experienced SEOers, it's a great "cheat sheet" when a client is on the line and you can't quite remember who feeds whom.

Kevin's Lee's Paid Search Engine Relationship Matrix

http://www.did-it.com/sem_poster.php

Confused about where the paid search engines syndicate their results? Just like Bruce Clay's chart, Kevin Lee's Paid Search Engine Relationship Matrix provides a visual explanation of the PPC's ever-changing relationships.

Plus, you can even order a poster at no cost (except for shipping and handling, of course) that's suitable for framing in your SEO corporate office.

Kartoo

<http://www.kartoo.com>

Who's linking to whom? Find out in 3D. If you like search to have a little more depth, check this "search with a difference" site.



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Tutorials

Spider Food

<http://www.spider-food.net>

If you want a step-by-step guide to search engine optimization from soup to nuts, try Spider Food. The site is organized in a linear, easy-to-navigate format that starts you off with SEO basics and leads you step-by-step through everything you need to know. Emerge at the other end and you may soon be optimizing dynamic content with the pros. Each topic contains a how-to guide detailing what to do (and also what not to do). Be forewarned: Spider Food does cover some banned SEO techniques, but warns against using them.

The site also has a moderately active forum in which participants can discuss all sorts of optimization and search engine issues, and the users of the forum are fairly knowledgeable. Need help optimizing a website? Want to know what's going on with Google? Chat it up here.

SearchEngineBlog.com Master Class

<http://www.searchengineblog.com/interviews/pay-per-click-part1.htm>

Bone up on pay-per-click strategies for search engine marketers as revealed through interviews with several PPC practitioners. This is a very useful primer that covers why search marketing is important, how it's different from other media, how to get the most for your dollar on Google and other services, how to track results and more.

Perry Marshall's Google AdWords Course

<http://www.perrymarshall.com/google/index.htm>

Unlike various dumbed-down "copycat" pay-per-click how-to's, this new ebook on how to get the most out of Google AdWords is offered by a top-notch professional who has experience in helping high-tech companies market themselves to niche business clients. The course offers screen shots and other helpful aids, and while it does cost a bit of money - pricing starts at \$49(US) - there are also some free tidbits you can access on Marshall's site to help you decide whether to buy the course.

Usability

Cre8pc

<http://www.cre8pc.com>

Cre8pc covers a wide range of information on Web development, with a focus on search engine optimization and website usability. The search engine optimization tutorials link to articles from around the Web on a variety of SEO topics, ranging from

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how search engine spiders work to an analysis of Google's PageRank algorithm. Unique to the site are a series of informative articles about the intersection of SEO & usability, which should be required reading for any serious marketer.

At Cre8pc you will find many no-cost tools to help with optimization tasks such as keyword and ranking analysis. Need more assistance? Check out the very active forums - search engine optimization, writing content for the Web, Web design, usability, website critiques (called the "Website Hospital") and online marketing & promotion are debated with gusto.

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