



How To Cope With A Google Penalty

British Business Show : Google Workshops

INTRODUCTION

- Hello
- What is a Google Penalty?
- What should you do if you receive a penalty?
 - Diagnosis
 - Recovery process
- Questions?



WHAT IS A GOOGLE PENALTY?

- Algorithmic v. manual penalty
- Recent algorithms more punitive in nature
 - Not strictly a penalty
 - <http://moz.com/google-algorithm-change>
 - Does your drop in traffic coincide with an algorithm update?



WHAT IS A GOOGLE PENALTY?

- Algorithmic 'penalty'
 - Need to address underlying issue(s) and wait for re-crawl / re-index
 - Will need to be patient
- Manual penalty
 - Need to address underlying issue(s) and file a reconsideration request
 - Hard work but more likely to see traffic bounce back if penalty is removed

CONFIRMING A MANUAL PENALTY

- Since August 2013, Google Webmaster Tools has offered a 'manual actions' tab
- Site-wide v partial matches
- Typical actions:
 - Cloaking / sneak redirects
 - Hidden text / keyword stuffing
 - Spam
 - Thin content
 - Hacked site
 - Unnatural links to / from your site

Google

Webmaster Tools

Site Dashboard

Site Messages

▸ Search Appearance ⓘ

▾ Search Traffic

Search Queries

Links to Your Site

Internal Links

Manual Actions

▸ Google Index

▸ Crawl

Security Issues

Other Resources

▸ Labs

CLEANING UP LINKS

- Long process
 - No short cuts
 - Expect frustration when trying to get links removed
- Need to document the process meticulously
 - Google is looking for genuine attempts to clean up your act
 - Need evidence to show that you have done your best

IDENTIFYING YOUR LINKS

- Need to identify as many links pointing at your domain as possible
- Variety of sources:
 - Google Webmaster Tools (Free)
 - Open Site Explorer (Freemium)
 - MajesticSEO (Freemium)
 - Ahrefs (Freemium)
 - CognitiveSEO (Paid)
 - Link Research Tools (Paid)
 - Link Detox

REVIEWING LINKS

- Each and every link needs to be reviewed and designated as good or bad
- Key questions to ask:
 - Is the link from a relevant website?
 - Is the link from a trustworthy website?
 - Is there a plausible reason for the link being there?
 - Is it there purely for link building purposes? Does it look false / manufactured?
 - Is the anchor text over optimised?
- Need to attempt to remove all bad links

REQUESTING LINK REMOVAL

- Find contact details
- Email / phone site admin and politely explain why you believe the link should be removed
 - Make it personal
 - Make 3 attempts
- Document everything – use Google Docs, e.g.:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
From URL	To URL	Anchor Text	Why should this link be removed?	Contact details	1st contact	2nd contact	3rd contact	Outcome?

- Success rate to expect?

PREPARING DISAVOW FILE

- Disavow links tool is relatively new from Google
 - Allows you to ‘disown’ links that you can’t remove
 - Use with caution
- Simple text file
 - List of pages / sites
 - Can add comments
- Domain v specific links
 - ‘Domain:example.com’ v ‘http://www.example.com/specific-page.html’
- Upload disavow file via Google Webmaster Tools

RECONSIDERATION REQUEST

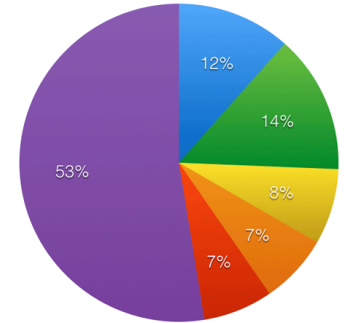
- Disavow is not enough alone
- Need to make an official request to review your penalty
- Link within manual actions section of GWT
- Be concise
 - Detail the process you have undertaken
 - Reference support material
 - Be honest and admit to any mistakes / previous poor quality link building
- Submit and wait...

REQUEST A REVIEW

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Approximately 10 days to get a response
 - If fail, usually get some specific examples
- Having a penalty revoked does not guarantee rankings return
 - Bad links may have previously been boosting your ranking
 - Need to build good links to build authority
- Regular link detox is a good practice
 - Monitor for possible negative SEO

● Days ● Month ● 3 Months ● 6 Months ● A Year ● Never



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QUESTIONS



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#survey

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