

1. Start By Researching Your Keywords

- Use [Wordtracker](#) & [Google Keyword Tool](#) to find keywords.
- Review your Google Analytics reports for keywords.
- Search for your competitor's site on Google without using their site name to find keywords that will work for you.
- Analyze your competitor's websites with [Google Keyword Tool](#) in "site" mode and the [Keyword Density Checker](#).
- Focus on keywords that are heavily searched with low competition.

2. OnSite

- Consider the importance of blogging on a narrow topic.
- Site looks professional with good design or pro theme? Are you using Wordpress to blog? [Wordpress install help](#)
- If using Wordpress, install plug ins:
 - Add *All in one SEO or similar*
 - Add *sitemap.xml generator*
 - Add *share this*
 - Add *better blogroll*
 - Add *WP* Super Cache*
- Install Google analytics tracking code or similar.
- Change default permalink structure to SE* friendly URLs.
- Sign up for [feedburner](#). Switch feed signup to feedburner.
- Site design validates, is standards based?
- Ping with each post (Pingomatic, etc).
- Plan for regular updates? Plan for internal links?
- Have links page/blogroll? Keep high quality.
- Avoid duplicate content.
- Is domain name old? Google sandbox problem?
- Keywords in category names and cat descriptions?
- Move all js and css off page.
- Noindex, nofollow archives.
- Nofollow unneeded links (login, reg, etc).
- Show related posts.
- Ask visitors to subscribe. Make it easy.

3. OffSite - Link Building

- Find high ranking sites linking to your competitors and ask nicely to be linked too. Use your Research from above.
- Never link out or into a bad neighborhood.
- Submit your site to [DMOZ*](#) for free quality page link.
- Consider paying for listings on Yahoo & Business.com
- When linking, use keywords as the link anchor text.
- Use [Yahoo Site Explorer](#) to find links to your top competitors.
- Chart your link building requests and keep asking.
- Cross link to other sites you own.
- Link from profile pages you own to your other sites.
- Follow your commentors, comment their blogs.
- Issue news releases online in text format. Use keywords.
- Install [Google toolbar](#) which allows you to see Pagerank.
- Rank links to top competitors by pagerank, save list.

You need links. We need links. Start now with a FREE link from Sparkdog!

Contact Sparkdog to find out how we can both benefit. | link@betterfindability.com | Offer good until 10/30/08

4. Writing Posts

- Create great content. Listen to audience.
- Keywords in page title (<meta>).
- Keywords in post title (<h1>) And not a boring title.
- Keywords in post text (between <p>).
- Keywords in post URL (WP- see permalink structure).
- Keywords in img alt tags. Keyword in bold.
- Keywords in anchor text of links.
- Write for people, not search engines. Seriously.
- Internal link on keyword to another post.
- Moderation with outbound links.
- One topic per post.
- Post at least 250 words?
- Posts not all same length or very close?
- Build a list, resource, link bait?

5. Social Media

- Create great content. Find great content. Share.
- Use [Twitter](#). Build following. Twitter useful links.
- Claim your blog on [Technorati](#). Fav it. Fav others.
- Join [stumble upon](#). Stumble your blog.
- On [Facebook](#), install Blog Report. Claim your blog.
- Bookmark blog in [Delicious](#). Build useful collection.
- Submit your RSS to a My Yahoo account.
- Notify relevant bloggers of your existence.
- Participate on other blogs and forums in niche.
- Link on keyword in signature on forums.

6. Track and Improve

- Write down your specific goals. Ex: traffic, SE* rank.
- Track your statistics in [Google Analytics](#).
- Always compare stats by time periods: year/month ago.
- Track keyword positions, [Google Webmaster Tools](#).
- Use auto monthly email reports in Analytics.
- Track subscribers in [Feedburner](#).

Boxes marked in blue represent the most important things to start with. Do these first.

* WP= Wordpress, SE = search engine, SERP = search engine results page, DMOZ = Open Directory project

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Sparkdog

www.BetterFindability.com



Dear Blog Owner,

Sparkdog is an [Asheville search engine optimization](#) and [web marketing firm](#). Businesses hire us to create a marketing plan for a web site, run with the plan, and measure the results. It's fun work. If you know anyone that needs this type of help, well, send them our way.

Thanks for downloading our Blog SEO and marketing checklist. A few quick words of explanation:

- Google any item on the list and you'll get useful explanations in the search results. Usually.
- There is no tech support for this list. It is what is.
- The checklist represents a workflow that, executed over time, will both build your blog traffic and improve your position in the search engines. It's not a "do it once" list.
- Link building is a big deal. Links from high page rank sites are very valuable.
- This checklist lives online here: <http://www.betterfindability.com/blog-seo/sparkdog-blog-seo-checklist.pdf>

We had help creating this checklist and we appreciate that help. Thanks to Corey Creed at [Hippo Internet Marketing](#) for reviewing an advance copy and for pointing out the power of Twitter. Thanks to Anthony at [Akioe Trade Show Displays](#) for coming up with the final layout for the list. And thanks to [ScrutinyHooligans](#) and [Ashvegas](#) for taking early looks at the list from their perspective as experienced bloggers.

Best wishes in all your endeavors!

Sincerely,
Clark Mackey
[Sparkdog Better Findability](#)