

**Trademark Productions Web Talk Radio Show Transcript
David Mihm**



Dwight Zahringer: Your alternative to ordinary radio. Welcome to another edition of the Trademark Production's *SEO Web Talk Radio Show*. Hi, I'm Dwight Zahringer, Owner and Operator of Trademark Productions, a small digital boutique agency located in the outskirts of beautiful Detroit, Michigan. We've been involved in online marketing and web development since 1993. We figured we'd talk with a couple different industry experts on a regular basis just to keep everybody up on what's happening in the world of web development, online marketing, and optimization. We hope you enjoy our show, and we welcome your comments.

[Music Intro]

Dwight Zahringer: I want to thank you for joining us today for another edition of the Trademark Production's *SEO Web Talk Radio Show*. Hi, I'm Dwight Zahringer, Founder of Trademark Productions, the interesting web agency that specializes in development and optimization. Every week we like to reach out to a lot of different industry experts, discussing different aspects of what's happening in the industry, and how they're contributing to it or slaughtering away at people's sites and breaking them apart. And today we've got a very interesting person on with us. He's an online marketing consultant, and is also a writer, columnist, and speaker at a number of our industry events, promotes search friendly web sites for his clients throughout the U.S. and probably the rest of the world. He's on the board of directors for SEMPDX, Portland's Search Engine Marketing Trade Organization and Vice President of Partnerships. He's writing at Search Engine Land, Danny Sullivan's site, and his local search rankings factors project is among the most important studies of local SEO that's going on right there now. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. David Mihm. Am I saying that correctly?

David Mihm: Yes indeed, David Mihm. Thanks.

Dwight Zahringer: Thank you for joining us, I appreciate it. So tell us a little bit about your memorandum.

David Mihm: Sure. Memorandum is just my personal blog. I say personal, I don't really put too many personal things on there, but I write a number of different places and that's sort of the hub for most of the content that I publish. Pretty much focused on local search exclusively these days. You know, factors for ranking well, new developments in the industry, that kind of thing. And occasionally,

I'll throw a couple of web design posts in there, which is still a passion of mine, but in general these days, I'm mostly taking on local SEO work.

Dwight Zahringer: Cool. Yeah, I'm noticing by your site design and a little bit more researching, you threw the SERPS, and definitely you have a knack for web design. It's got a very nice, clean, modern look to it so you're probably very, very particular about the stuff you do and you just don't have as much time to sit there and put on the headphones and design away.

David Mihm: That's right, yeah.

Dwight Zahringer: Yeah, I figured as much. Search rankings, search ranking factors project, and local SEO. You said you know providently we talked a little bit about local SEO, and that you're being more of a forefather in that realm. I guess tells us a little bit more about that, and how you see that moving, and why your focus has shifted in that direction.

David Mihm: Sure. So you know I kind of got into local search kinda by necessity. I have worked with small businesses on their websites, and their online marketing for five or six years, and just kind of stumbled into local SEO because most of my clients were getting traffic from their particular geographic areas. And as Google Maps has sort of rolled into universal search, you just needed to stay on top of what was happening in that space in order to keep my clients at the top of the search engine ranking. I just really started as I said by necessity, and started writing blog posts, and figuring out who the other thought leaders in the space were. And about two, two and a half years ago, I started thinking about – based on Rand Fishkin's search engine ranking factors at SEOmoz decided that local SEO was really taking on increasing importance.

And from my own personal experience, and some of the things that the other thought leaders were writing on their own blogs, I felt like it was time to do a study of specifically what helps you rank better in the local results. And all of us in local are very collegial, and we share a lot of information with each other and the response from the community was really great. And local search has continued to become more important in the last year, especially. Google is showing more and more, used to be ten-packs and now seven-packs in local results with the map, and then business listings and it's important to – I just felt like it was important to put something out there that would help people figure out how that

algorithm worked a little bit better. Because again, it's taking on such an important role in universal search.

Dwight Zahringer: Sure. So let's talk a little bit about that algorithm. Can you define for us exactly what are all the ranking factors in the algorithm for Google?

David Mihm: Sure. I don't know if I could do all of them.

Dwight Zahringer: I know; I'm just giving you a hard time. I guess from what you're seeing now, from an optimization standpoint of view, especially on a localized level, what are some of those common factors. Before I have you answer that, I love that survey that SEOMoz does, and how they just released that a couple weeks ago. I apologize; I didn't know you were on the list, and one of the people contributing to it. But we're not ones that are asked, of course, but we did have a lot of the same opinions with the majority in a lot of those, so we found it to be completely on par as well.

David Mihm: Yep, and Rand is certainly one of the premier, not only search engine optimizers, but also has his finger on the pulse of where the industry is going. And he asked some very, very heavy hitters in the industry, and I think the results that they all came back with certainly bear out what most people are seeing these days.

Dwight Zahringer: Sure. Tapping on Rand there too, he said a lot of exporting is going on out of his organization over there over the past year. Do you think that's leading to something?

David Mihm: Yeah, I think part of that might reflect just where Seomoz is going as a company. I don't have any inside information, but it certainly seems like with all the tools that they're releasing, they're becoming more of a technology company. And certainly they've always had this incredible background in search and intimate knowledge of how to optimize. I think that Rand has sort of made the decision, going out and getting D.C. funding that he really wants to move into a tool based website, and he's done a great job of it. Linkscape is just a killer tool.

Dwight Zahringer: Oh yeah, absolutely. 100%.

David Mihm: I think just the needs of just personnel has shifted a little bit from the consulting role into more of the technology side, but –

Dwight Zahringer: Sure, sure. So devise a little bit more of those ranking algorithms for local. A lot of our listeners and people that we work with are in

a localized level as well, and we do see that shift here with our agency. A lot more businesses wanting to get more geo-specific. So optimization standpoints, there is a lot of very broad, simplistic things, you know off the top of the head, but let's dig a little bit deeper aside from utilizing your city or state, counties, components like that to our boroughs. It might be a generalized area. Go a little bit deeper into that for us for those that need a little help.

David Mihm:

So one of the key points, I think key differentiators between local search and organic search is that organic search is about websites and local search is about location. Actually, a lot of what helped you rank in local search doesn't occur on your website. It occurs in various local search portals. It occurs at the data aggregators which I'll get into in a little bit. Your website certainly plays a role.

You can tell Google, "This is my business, this is where I am, this is what I do," just like with organic search. But they're really looking in some pretty different places in local than they do for organic. So as far as the most important factors, the one that you really can't control that seems to be the most important these days is actually having an address in the city that's being searched. So if somebody's typing in car repair in Detroit, Michigan, having a repair shop in Detroit is kind of essential to be playing in that space. But beyond that, there's certainly some things that assist in ranking better, and I think the one that's a new idea for a lot of folks is this idea of citations coming from major data providers and other local search portals.

So, essentially, a citation is a mention of your business, primary business information, so your address, your phone number, in close proximity to your business name. So something that's in a structured format that Google can say, "Ah, yes, this document is referring to this business on the web."

Dwight Zahringer:

You know that almost sounds a little bit more like some of the criteria for building back-links.

David Mihm:

Right, exactly. So I like to think of citations as sort of a local version of a link. The reason is that not every small business, in fact only about 50% of small businesses, actually have websites. And so Google, there's no where to link to if you're not, if you don't have a web site you can't link to something. And so Google needs some other measure of authority for these small businesses without web sites, and I think it's this idea of citations is kinda what they've been using.

Dwight Zahringer: Those are the free; those are more the map listings. Are you talking about third party directories that would be listing those that are geo –?

David Mihm: That's right. Exactly, exactly. So in order to rank in the maps area, I think that it is important to be on prominent third party directories. So places like Yelp, places like City Search, those types of portals, absolutely.

Dwight Zahringer: So the next statement you're going to make is you're going to hand out your affiliate ID code for your Verizon super pages right?

David Mihm: Not exactly. But, in fact, I think most of the Yellow Pages, Internet Yellow Pages portals probably have not taken too kindly to some of the things that I've written about their print products recently. So I'm not exactly on good terms with them.

Dwight Zahringer: I know, I'm kidding. Yeah, I don't agree with those, because you're not seeing a lot of those inserts and that's just a mass media evolution of how they're monetizing, making money, and keeping their companies afloat.

David Mihm: Exactly, and I think that there are some great products on their online portals. There was a great case study that a friend of mine, Ed Reese, in Spokane, wrote on my blog about a year ago, actually, about how his ranking in Google Maps improved when he had a prominent position on superpages.com. And so I think that's a unique situation to local, this idea of being listed on these prominent local search portals so that Google can again see that primary business information in a structured format and weight, that as a reference to that business. And the other thing to keep in mind with local search, well a couple more things, actually. Google probably already has, even if you have, the first thing everyone should do is go to the Google local business center, and claim your business.

Tell Google that you're the business owner, and verify your contact information at Google. And the address for that is google.com/lbc. That was named the fourth most important ranking factor by my participants this year, and I think it's just a total no-brainer. Everybody should just go and do that. And when you're there making sure you're putting your business in the proper categories, so Google pulls your business information from all sorts of places. So, superpages.com is one of them. There are also companies that don't actually have publicly available indexes

that feed a whole bunch of these other sources. So superpages.com, yellowpages.com, Yahoo Local –

Dwight Zahringer: What is one of those? I actually thought about reselling that years ago, or actually maybe about a year ago, we were approached to help to feed that database, and make that available as a resell product for some of our customers, and they feed a number of different engines and directories.

David Mihm: Exactly, so the big three in the space are Localeze –

Dwight Zahringer: Yeah, that was who it is.

David Mihm: Info U.S.A. and Axiom. Localeze does have a place where you can go, and submit your business on their website. It's local E-Z-E .com, localeze.com. Info U.S.A. and Axiom are fed by a company called Universal Business Listing. Info U.S.A. does have a place to submit directly, Axiom does not, and so currently the only way to get into Axiom, as far as I know, is to use Universal Business Listing. So anyway getting on, getting your business properly cited, properly listed on those big three data providers, can be absolutely critical because they feed so many of these other secondary search sites. So that's really a key consideration for local, and I think if you got that under control, you can start to move on to some of the more advanced tactics. But that's claiming your listing at Google Maps, and getting properly listed on these major data providers, I think will go a long way towards helping you rank.

Dwight Zahringer: And that's your one-time effort into doing something like that can yield some long-term results.

David Mihm: Absolutely. Google certainly does like to see businesses and Localeze as well, like to see businesses going, and keeping their information current. If you get it in there, and you get it in there correctly, most of your work going forward will just be sort of maintaining that presence, making sure a keystroke wasn't mis-entered or a category didn't translate properly, which certainly does take some ongoing work. But it's nice for small businesses who don't have a big budget. You can dip your toe into local search pretty easily, and sit back and hopefully see, at least on a data side of things, that information stay consistent.

Dwight Zahringer: Sure. So to recap this for our listeners. They want to go to Google, they want to go to Yahoo. We'll get to Dmoz in a second, and talk about that. But let's also go over to Being. Let's go over

to some of Localeze. Let's go over to the Info U.S.A., and let's stake a claim for our company name and make sure that we have our listings there, that they're thorough, they are confirmed, that they are in the right categories. And once, look at how they're showing up in the search results, and maintain those. That's a great entry point that essentially is no cost aside from a small business owner's time.

David Mihm: Exactly. As I said, Universal Business Listing, Info U.S.A. and Axiom, and their fee is \$30.00 a year for that, so it's a pretty nominal charge to make sure that you're in those two directories.

Dwight Zahringer: Now encompassing that, let's also talk about directories too. Because this is something that's been definitely, going back to SEO and building of links is you always – one of the recommendations is try to find as many directories that are of value that have numerous different types of factors that we're probably way too indulgent to go into in this podcast. But, what do you think about the fact of now all these different types of directories for local businesses going out and submitting to a lot of different directories and getting them listed? And then some of these directories may be geo-specific as well. But then, what about as far as keeping weary of a lot of these PHP, or these open-source directory software sites that are just made to sculpt and sell PR?

David Mihm: Right, so I think there's certainly a fine line there. I don't think Google would certainly penalize businesses for getting listed on some marginal directories, but really you want to stick to the ones that are going to rank, the directories that are ranked well for your own keyword. Because those are getting spidered well by Google, and they're trusted sources of business information for them. So back to the example of an auto repair shop in Detroit. You see what portals are showing up for that search. Is it insider pages? Is it City Search? Is it Judy? Some of the more trusted names, I think, are going to float to the top, and some of the ones that I'd really focus my efforts on as far as getting listed.

Dwight Zahringer: Sure, so again for our listeners, it's a lot easier than you think. Don't try to peel the onion back too far. Look right at the top of the source. Basic general listings from a lot of these large sites is a great way to stake your claim, and to go ahead and make sure that you do have some listings for those.

David Mihm: Exactly, exactly.

Dwight Zahringer: So let's define small business. Let's define your target market, and we'll talk about local search and small businesses because there's a lot of different talk about that. Define for us what you feel is good for local businesses or small businesses. How do we, how does a customer or a listener of this podcast, determine are they in the small business category or do they need to go to a point of an agency, like us, or do they stick with trying to chip away at a consultant, like yourself, to work with them? What was that definition, and how do they go about determining that?

David Mihm: Well, I'm not sure it really makes sense to define what a small business is. I think any business would get traffic comes largely from geographically targeted or searches with geographic intent. I think that they would do well regardless of their contact a professional just to get a sense of what the professional thinks is required to get them to rank. I think there's plenty of things that you can do on your own, and if you've got time and not money, just ask the consultant for a document with recommendations for things that you can implement yourself. And if it's something where you don't feel comfortable sort of taking that on, then you engage in more of a project basis or a retainer basis with that agency.

So I don't think it really makes sense to distinguish between what a small business is, and what an enterprise size business is. I think everyone can benefit from talking to someone first, and getting a sense for the space. As I say, it totally depends on sort of what your comfort level is with implementing recommendations yourself versus having the agency do it.

Dwight Zahringer: Fair enough, fair enough. David, in the beginning I didn't do a big background on you, but I guess tell us and our listeners, how you got involved in this industry, how it evolved from the web design, getting into SEO as your niche. And speaking –

David Mihm: Sure, but yeah. So I think most of it, as I said, was just by necessity. I came into the SEO space from the design side, and my clients are asking me, "Well, do you know how to optimize our website? We're getting calls from all these companies." And I said, "Well, I don't know a lot, but let me look into it, and the search space is, there's an incredible amount of great information out there." So I started with Seomoz and Aaron Wall's SEOBook site, reading search engine – well, at that time, search engine wasn't in existence yet, but some of the major spots where Danny Sullivan and others in his sphere were sort of toasting. And learn

by doing. As I said, trying things out for each of my clients, seeing what worked, seeing what didn't.

As the map interface became more prominent, trying to figure that whole component out. But I think there was so much great information out there in the SEO community. It's a really unique industry, in terms of people, not necessarily keeping all their secrets close to their breasts, but I think people are willing to show their expertise by blogging about things that work, which can be good and bad. Some things that work, Google might say, "Well that probably shouldn't work actually," and change their algorithm in a couple months but –

Dwight Zahringer: Right, right. That was going to my next question is –

David Mihm: Right.

Dwight Zahringer: There's so much information out there in the overload, and what we find is a lot of our clients and those getting into this, there's a lot of people out there claiming to be SEO's, claiming to be experts in a lot of these things, regurgitating a lot of information they read and do. But how does a small business or someone that is looking to start to make an investment into online marketing really distinguish between the good and the bad and ones that really can do something for them? Do you remember the days of 1P.com?

David Mihm: I don't. I'm not familiar with that company.

Dwight Zahringer: Searching 1P.com in Vegas, and they were selling rankings, and they were the masters of black-hat and cloaking, and doorway pages. Quick 302's and a huge, huge SEO scam that happened back in 2003, 2004. But infamous in the SEO industry.

David Mihm: Yeah, I would say just before my time in the space. I was just graduating from college right then so hadn't quite gotten into the space yet. As far as vetting a perspective SEO agency, in general, I think anyone who calls you or emails you, I would regard with some – a little bit of hesitancy. I think most of the good SEO firms out there work on a word of mouth type of basis, and their work will speak for itself, rather than having to go out and actually sell what they're doing. So I think just doing some basic research, look at the Seomoz recommended list, for instance. Do searches for the phrases of a type of search that you're trying to get into, like ecommerce search engine optimization or local search engine optimization. And see beyond just which companies are ranking,

look for the top blog in that space, and see who the people behind those blogs are.

I think, in general, the cream does rise to the top in the SEO industry. I think just doing some basic research and making sure that you're not getting scammed up front can certainly save you some headaches down the road. So places like Matt McGee, Small Business SEM, I mentioned SEO models already. Mike Bloomenthal. Look who these guys are linking to on their sidebars. Andrew Shotland with the local SEO guy. There's any number of well respected companies out there, ethical companies out there that are happy to share business with other ethical companies, and I think that's probably where I'd start if I were looking for someone.

Dwight Zahringer: Sure, sure, sure. Speaking of Matt McGee, we just had a podcast with him just a couple weeks ago as well so that's interesting you brought him up. You were out; you're out doing a lot of speaking. You just spoke at SMX as well. How did you get interjected into doing that, and how's that been panning out?

David Mihm: Yeah, conferences are a lot of fun, but they're also pretty exhausting. When I published my first iteration of the local search ranking factors back in 2008, Greg Sterling of the SMX local team, invited me to present at SMX local, and I think that my presentation there was pretty well received. And things just snowballed from there, and I was invited back to speak at some of the SMX events. I got to speak at a couple of SES shows this year, which was really fun, in New York and San Jose. And then I think just active blogging can do wonders for your profile in the industry, really demonstrating the knowledge that you gained from working with clients or doing studies or whatever. I think you can do really great for raising your profile.

Dwight Zahringer: Sure, sure. How was the SES conferences now?

Dwight Zahringer: SES, they kinda went a little downhill, maybe two years ago with the saturation of all these conferences and a lot of the cross-pollination, and similar types of keynotes and sessions themselves. I haven't been to an SES in the past year so I was just questioning how well they are. Because that used to be one that I would recommend to some of my clients that really wanted to go out there, get into these, learn about a lot of things, and really open up and expand their knowledge set.

David Mihm:

Sure, I think it's a matter of what fit is right for a particular conference attendee. If you're looking for a general introduction to SEO, if you're new to the space, if you want to meet some people, learn who the big names are, I think SES shows are great. I think the level of advanced content has sort of stagnated across most of the conferences. I think things really haven't changed a whole lot on the organic side of things in the last couple of years. I think it's still all about getting links.

It's all about making sure your site is crawlable, and includes keywords and title tags and all of that. So I think the advanced stuff tends to be a little bit more limited. I think SES doesn't have an SES advanced show. I think that's one spot where SMX has done a really nice job. I've been to that, the conference in Seattle, SMX Advanced, since it started. And that's been a really great show every year. But I think SES is still has some great content there. There's some great speakers there to go up and meet and network with and I think you just need to ask yourself what you're trying to get out of the conference. That might help you determine which ones to go to.

Dwight Zahringer:

Did you happen to speak at SES in San Jose, and get a chance to go to Googleplex?

David Mihm:

I have been to the Googleplex before. I didn't go this year, but I was in. When I was in San Jose, it was predominately for a spinoff of SES, called the Local Search Summit. And that was put on by Steve Espinoza primarily, and that was a really great event. It was a very small event, maybe only 100 to 120 people attending, but again, the networking was fantastic. I thought the level of the presentation in local was exceptional, and so that was a really fun piece of SES San Jose this year.

Dwight Zahringer:

Cool. Going back to – I guess there's a couple things that we could offer our listeners. I've got a web presence, and I've been working with a company. Or I've been working with an individual, and I really need to step up the A game on a lot of things. And I hear all about SEO, and people call me and tell me or I've interviewed some people and they say they're SEO and they know SEO. What are some things from a sea-level executive? Let's talk about CEO's, and let's talk about CMO's and people in those positions, maybe just within the company. This could even be on a local smaller business level as well. Or that companies that are broken down, and have different franchises or geo-specific areas that they cover or reign over. What are some of the very

basic high level SEO considerations they need to take into their step when outlining a plan?

David Mihm:

Sure, so I think making sure that going back to basics, making sure that your site is indexed properly, do a search in Google for site:yourdomainname. See how many pages Google has in its index for you. Does that match sort of what your IT department is telling you as far as how many pages you actually have on your site? I think for larger companies, there tend to be many more technical concerns as well as process concerns. So which part of the organization is responsible for SEO? Is it the IT department? Is it marketing? Is it its own department? Does it live in multiple departments?

I think those kinds of considerations from a sea-level are things to keep in mind as far as SEO. For a smaller company where you may not have a VP of Marketing, I think it's much easier to assess what you need. Look at your competitors. See what the space is like. Are they doing certain things either with social media? Do they have a great Facebook presence? Are they on Twitter with 10,000 followers? Look at how successful people in your space are doing and try to get a sense for, if you are in the same ballpark with them, or do we need someone to come in and really help us maximize our presence?

Dwight Zahringer:

Do we match up with them or not? You brought up a couple; you talked a little bit about the social landscape of those components. Your recommendation to small businesses, do friends equal dollars? Are you recommending that they really go into the social component? How do you guide them on telling them as far as recommendations? Is that something you should be considering and really put weight on that?

David Mihm:

In local search, reviews are really important. Not only for ranking, but also for conversion. So when people come across your business on Yelp or on City Search or insider pages – depending if you're in Travel and Trip Advisor and those kinds of sites. What other people are saying about you not only helps you rank better, but also gets them to call you. And so being very active at monitoring – what people are saying about you, encouraging people who have had a good experience at your business to leave a review for you on one of these major portals. That's really important, again not only from a ranking perspective, but from a conversion perspective.

Dwight Zahringer: That brings up another point that a lot of people have asked me, and they come to me and I'm sure you get the same types of questions or the statements. "I want to rank for these keywords or I need to be number one for this, and this, and that." And then you happen to take a look at a little bit of what their site is about, can kind of see they really don't have a lot of very, very clear, concise goals. And you have to take in consideration part of optimization that is just not from organic level, when it does focus, it could be a misleading statement that I'm going to make. But part of it, in my opinion, is not from organic level because just like you brought up isn't from a social aspect or City Search. Reviews, different components like that, those show up in search results, so that it is natural and those are also helping for conversion.

So getting back to my original statement is if you're number one for all these different keyword phrases, does it really mean that the traffic is going to convert once they come to your site? Is that encapsulating all the trust? So optimization, in my opinion, is a little bit more about the overall conversion, how well that's actually achieving your goal.

David Mihm: Yeah, I think that's absolutely right. I think as you said, you can rank number one for a million phrases and once they click on your link, if they're not calling you or sending you an email, what's the value in that ranking? So there are a lot of factors that play into conversion. I think design certainly plays a role. Making sure users have a sense of trust when they visit your website. Making sure that the calls to action are strong, clear, and prominently placed.

Making sure that you've got local, making sure you've got reviews and testimonials from customers that are singing the praises of your business. I think that's all really, really important stuff for conversion. I think you're right. SEO cannot solely be focused on number one rankings. It's got to be focused on what is the value to my bottom line. So, absolutely, all those additional factors play in.

Dwight Zahringer: Great. We're going to have to wrap up in a couple seconds here, but I want to talk about a couple things, and then we got a little spoof for you at the end here too in the flavor of Halloween, the spirits. Directories, and let's talk about Dmoz. Dmoz, is it worth really trying to get their links or get their listing inside of there and saturate within different categories?

David Mihm: I think Dmoz is probably overrated. I think Google knows that the process for getting in there isn't as easy as it used to be, which is

probably partly a good thing, and partly a bad thing. I think that there've been plenty of rumors and stories about editors either accepting payment to get in there or it's not the squeaky clean community edited project I think that it started out as. I think that the value of Dmoz has certainly dropped in the last several years. I think it's the type of thing where you try to submit once there and if you get in, great, if you don't, you know spending your time on something that's going to be a little bit more fruitful for you.

Dwight Zahringer: Now this leads to my next question, what about the Yahoo directory purchase for 299 a year?

David Mihm: Yeah, I think for small business, that again, have the money, but maybe don't have the time, that's a great option. You get listed on a number of different regional directories as part of that which all show up as links to your site. So I think that might still have some value. I was going to say, though, that I think creating content that is going to be linkable from Wikipedia these days actually might sorta be the new Dmoz.

Dwight Zahringer: Ooh! So even with the fact that the value there is no more juice apparently being passed to the Wikipedia. You still think that's going to help with your rankings?

David Mihm: Right, well, who knows how Google is actually interpreting no follow these days. I think you know we've heard from SMX Advance this year that internal no follows aren't even really paid attention to by Google. So if they're not paying attention to internal no follows, why couldn't they set additional parameters for how they interpret no follow on a site by site basis? I think given how well Wikipedia ranks, given how well it's policed by the Wikipedia community, I think that Google probably has quite a bit of trust in links that are coming off of there whether or not they have that no follow tag.

Dwight Zahringer: Yeah, and obviously the search results for numerous, numerous things, all the search on a daily basis can test to that fact because they're always showing up in the serps itself.

David Mihm: Exactly, and I think those links whether or not they're packing juice, they're going to send you a lot of direct traffic.

Dwight Zahringer: And that's the other part too that we want our listeners to be aware of and take note of is that optimization and SEO is not always just going to be about getting ranked. If you are getting good placement, you have some citations, you are being cited by

unknowns to you except on a back-link check one day that some people put you in a Wikipedia post. That is accreditation, that's authority, that's an authority back-link to your site even if it's not passing juice supposedly, that that's going to bring you a lot of good traffic. And that's part of the optimization component correct?

David Mihm: Definitely. I think a link is a link and whether or not it's passing juice, if it's on a site where people who are interested in my service or my product are going to be interested in it, I think it's an important link to have and Wikipedia is a really good example. If there's a particular topic page on Wikipedia that's incredibly germane to what it is you do, write a piece of content that's not salesy, that's informative to people that can be used as a reference, and I think that that content is going to hold value and hopefully accrue links from prominent sources.

Dwight Zahringer: Oh yeah, two years, two and a half, three years ago was that one of your places that was secretive of you placing and citing Wikipedia articles for people to get them some nice fat back-link?

David Mihm: No, I actually don't have a power Wikipedia account. I know some friends that do, but I don't think it needs to be under the radar. I think it's a totally legitimate link building practice if you've got a piece of content that is valuable enough to be referenced on Wikipedia, why wouldn't Google want to write that?

Dwight Zahringer: Sure, sure. Well and you're obviously speaking in a very political fashion since you know that Mr. Cuts is also a listener of our podcast, which brings me back to the next thing too is, so back-links is still a predominant ranking factor of helping you to be ranked and get search results? You think links are holding true with the Seomoz recent report?

David Mihm: Absolutely. Links are still the name of the game for sure.

Dwight Zahringer: Perfect, and with that being said, before we take off and go, two things, are you going to pumcot? Are you going to be over there in two weeks?

David Mihm: Well, I'm actually not going to be at pumcot as I was saying the other, it's a kind of double-edged sword with these conferences that they're great from networking standpoint, from keeping up with what's going on in the industry. But they're just exhausting and I think pumcot is just kind of one too many for me this year.

I've been the last several years and – or at least the last handful of years, and I just don't think I can do it this year.

Dwight Zahringer: Yeah, they beat you up. And last but not least, I notice on your blog there that we have some sidebar links over there. What are you charging for any of those? Can we get one?

David Mihm: Those are absolutely 100% editorial links.

Dwight Zahringer: Oh!

David Mihm: I know every single one of those people that I'm linking to personally, and I can vouch for their content.

Dwight Zahringer: Good answer, good answer. All right Matt, nothing on Mr. Mihm. David, thank you very much for taking the time out of your busy schedule on a Friday, and we appreciate all of your kind words of wisdom on local search. And for all of our listeners that want to get a recap of this, you can check it out on tmprod.com, TmProd our blog, and also follow David, go see him at one of these conferences. David Mihm, M-I-H-M.com. David, thank you very much, and we hope to speak with you soon.

David Mihm: Yep, thanks a lot guys. I really appreciate the opportunity.

Dwight Zahringer: All right, bye-bye.

[Music]

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