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Google Penalties: Identification and Remediation of Partial and Site-Wide Matches

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BRIGHTEDGE

Who We Are!

- 6 year old Chicago based agency
- Decades of experience
- Dealing with penalties for 4 years
- We're pretty good zookeepers!
- Who is he?



- Who are you?





Real Stories



Case Study Uno

- Outcome
 - Penalty removed and rankings recovered in 6 weeks
- Meat & Potatoes
 - What: Partial Match
 - Why: Spam Links
 - Solution / Takeaway:
 - Link pruning – maintain high-value, remove low value links.
 - Disavow
 - Reconsideration



Case Study Due

- Outcome
 - Removed less than 2 months after identification
- Meat & Potatoes
 - What: Site-Wide Match
 - Why: Sub-domain Linking Strategy
 - Solution / Takeaway:
 - Immediate Site Change to Global Footer (read: Follow Google's Rules)
 - Sub-domain Level Disavow Files
 - Reconsideration



Case Study Tre

- Outcome
 - Penalty Removed after 9months and 3 reconsideration requests
- Meat & Potatoes
 - What: Partial Match
 - Why: Site-wide links from clients
 - Solution / Takeaway:
 - Cleanup old guest posts – Transparency
 - Identify potential foul play – Competition
 - Client / customer links done the wrong way can get you penalized



Penalty Life Lessons

- Beware of the following:
 - Site-wide links (even if branded)
 - PR – Monitor very closely
 - “Negative SEO”
 - Repetitive Anchor Text
 - Repetitive Anchor Text
- Warning signs:
 - Usually several weeks in advance
 - Ranking drops
 - Steady traffic decline



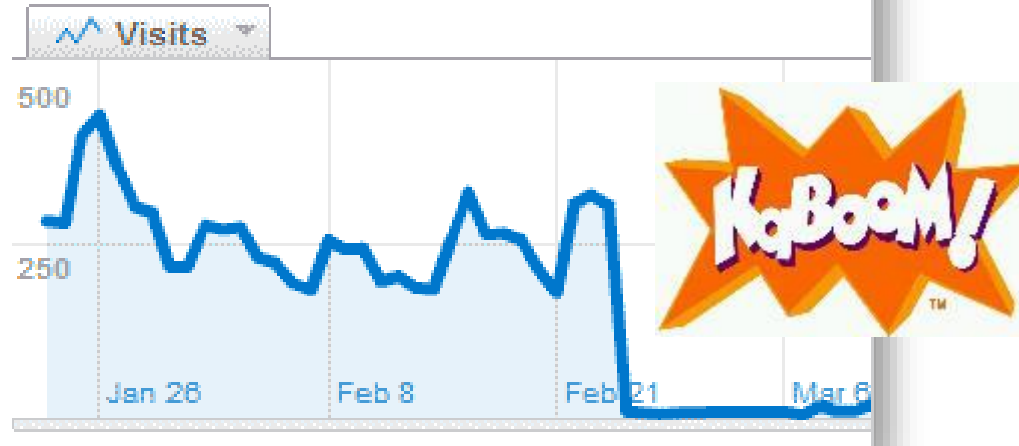


Identify, Research, Remediate

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Overview » Search Engines »

Search Engine: google



Houston, We Have A Problem!!

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Google penalty - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_penalty

A **Google penalty** is the negative impact on a website's search rankings based on updates to Google's search algorithm, manual or automatic review. The penalty can ...
Reasons for penalties - Notable penalties - Effects of penalties - Penalty notification

Google: Penalty - Search Engine Land

searchengineland.com/blogs/google/google-penalties

2 days ago - Earlier this year, eBay was hit with a search **penalty** by Google. The loss of traffic resulting from that has been noticeable enough that eBay ...




Manual Actions

This site may not perform as well in Google results because it appears to be in violation of Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

Site-wide matches

Some manual actions apply to entire site

Reason	Affects
 Unnatural links from your site Google detected a pattern of unnatural, artificial, deceptive, or manipulative outbound links on pages on this site. This may be the result of selling links that pass PageRank or participating in link schemes. Learn more.	All

[REQUEST A REVIEW](#)

Full / Site-wide Match

Zip, Zilch – No Rankings

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Partial matches

▼ Some manual actions apply to specific pages, sections, or links

Reason

Unnatural links to your site—impacts links

Google has detected a pattern of unnatural artificial, deceptive, or manipulative links pointing to pages on this site. Some links may be outside of the webmaster's control, so for this incident we are taking targeted action on the unnatural links instead of on the site's ranking as a whole. [Learn more.](#)

[REQUEST A REVIEW](#)

Partial Match

Pulled from SERPs for specific phrases

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Before



After

Finding the Clues

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First, Low Hanging Fruit



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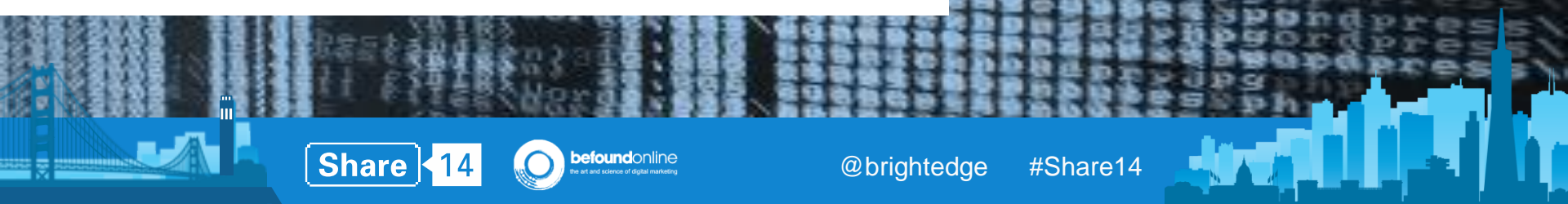
Deep Dive

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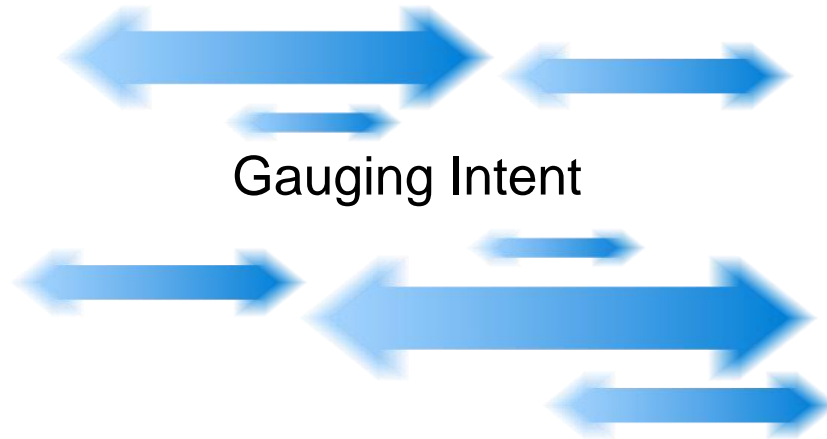
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A Helpful Mindset for Backlinks



“For Benefit
of Users”



“For Search
Engines”

Acknowledge



Hello Google Search Quality Team,

Since receiving our original warning indicating un-natural links on partial matches of our site, [www.brightedge.com](#) we have been diligently working to remove all unnatural links pointed towards our site. We believe that through these efforts, we have been successful in making our site fully compliant with Google's search quality guidelines and have reviewed the set of quality guidelines thoroughly before submitting this reconsideration request.

Below is a summary of the specific changes we have made in order to address this situation:

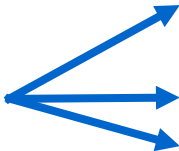
1. We have closely examined every link pointing to [www.brightedge.com](#) through Google Webmaster Tools as well as a variety of other link review tools and assessed whether these links would be considered unnatural by Google. We have made a large effort to remove these links over the past several weeks by reaching out to each webmasters controlling these domains. Our evidence of this communication as well as our analysis of every link has been included in the following Google Docs documents:

<https://drive.google.com/file/...>

2. We have submitted a disavow file that contains links and domains for sites that have either not responded or have refused to remove requested links.
3. In addition to the above outlined steps above, we do also wish to confirm the following:
 - a) We do not have any hidden links, doorway pages, or any other types of misleading re-directs
 - b) We do not keyword stuff any of our content or have irrelevant keywords on our pages.
 - c) Our site has original product descriptions

- d) We do not have any links that contain misleading or deceptive meta-data
- e) We do not have any pages that contain misleading or deceptive meta-data
- f) There is no advertising or affiliate program content on our site that does not adhere to the Google Ads

Detail



Commit



We are committed to doing whatever it takes to meet the Google Search Quality guidelines. If you or your team still finds links that do not meet the guidelines, we would highly appreciate an example of the specific links to help our efforts in removing these links.

Reaching Out To Google

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Summary

- Identification
 - Analytics – Traffic dip, drop, plummet!
 - BrightEdge – All of the above plus rankings!
 - Webmaster Tools – “Dear John” from Google
- Understanding
 - “Full” or “Site-Wide” Match
 - Partial Match
- Finding the Clues
 - Precursors
 - Big Trends / Patterns
 - Gauging Intent
- Solving the Problem
 - Backlink Cleanup (Quick Wins First)
 - Reconsideration Request
 - Disavow



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Thank You!!

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Dan Reno, VP Organic Media

Talk to us **@befoundonline** #share14

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Appendix: *Manual Action Definitions*

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Tools to Help Along the Way

- Disavow Tool: <https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/disavow-links-main>
- Reconsideration Request Tool: <https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/reconsideration>
- Glossary of Manual Actions: <http://www.seroundtable.com/google-manual-actions-spam-17204.html>
- Helpful Resources
 - <http://befoundonline.com/seo/4464/life-google-penalty-rebuilding-credit-google>
 - <http://befoundonline.com/seo/4427/panda-penguin-google-penalties>

Types Of Google Manual Actions

- Manual Actions
- Cloaking and/or sneaky redirects
- Hacked site
- Hidden text and/or keyword stuffing
- Pure spam
- Spammy freehosts
- Thin content with little or no added value
- Unnatural links from your site
- Unnatural links to your site
- Unnatural links to your site—impacts links
- User-generated spam

All Manual Actions

Handy Link: <http://www.seroundtable.com/google-manual-actions-spam-17204.html>

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Two types of actions are displayed on the Manual Actions page.

- The **Site-wide matches** section lists actions that impact an entire site.
- The **Partial matches** section lists actions that impact individual URLs or sections of a site. It's not uncommon for pages on a popular site to have manual actions, particularly if that site serves as a platform for other users or businesses to create and share content. If the issues appear to be isolated, only individual pages, sections, or incoming links will be impacted, not the entire site.

Each section includes the following information:

- **Reason:** The reasons for each action Google has applied.
- **Affects:** The parts of the site affected by each manual action. If a manual action affects more than 1,000 URLs or sections, only the first 1,000 matches will be displayed.

Manual actions that may be listed include:

Unnatural links to your site—impacts links	Unnatural links to your site	Unnatural links from your site
Hacked site	Thin content with little or no added value	Pure spam
User-generated spam	Cloaking and/or sneaky redirects	Hidden text and/or keyword stuffing
Spammy freehosts	Spammy structured markup	

Manual Actions

Cloaking and/or sneaky redirects



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that your site may be showing different pages to users than are shown to Google, or redirecting users to a different page than Google saw. [Cloaking and sneaky redirects](#) are a violation of Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to the affected portions of your site. Actions that affect your whole site are listed under **Site-wide matches**. Actions that affect only part of your site and/or some incoming links to your site are listed under **Partial matches**.

Hacked site

If you see this message on the Manual Actions or Security Issues page in Webmaster Tools, it means that Google has detected pages that appear to have been hacked by a third party. Often a hacker will upload files or modify existing files, which then appear as spam in our index. In many cases, this malicious content is hidden through a process called [cloaking](#).

To protect users, your site's pages may be labeled as compromised or may not rank as highly in our search results.

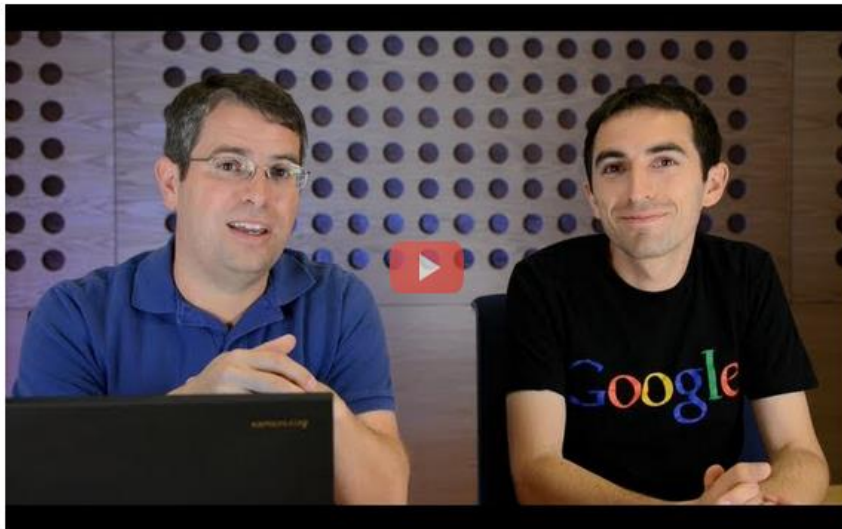


Recommended action

For a comprehensive list of what you can do if your site was compromised, please refer to <http://www.google.com/webmasters/hacked>.

Once you're sure your site is no longer compromised, [request reconsideration of your site](#). After you've submitted a reconsideration request, be patient and watch for a message in your Webmaster Tools account — we'll let you know when we've reviewed your site. If we determine your site no longer contains problematic content, we'll remove the compromised warning from our search results.

Hidden text and/or keyword stuffing



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that some of your pages may contain hidden text or keyword stuffing, techniques that are outside our [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to the affected portions of your site. Actions that affect your whole site are listed under **Site-wide matches**. Actions that affect only part of your site and/or some incoming links to your site are listed under **Partial matches**.

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Pure spam



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that Google has detected that some of your pages may be using techniques that are outside our [Webmaster Guidelines](#). The site appears to use aggressive spam techniques such as [automatically generated gibberish](#), [cloaking](#), [scraping content from other websites](#), and/or other repeated or egregious violations of Google's quality guidelines.

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to the affected portions of your site. Actions that affect your whole site are listed under **Site-wide matches**. Actions that affect only part of your site and/or some incoming links to your site are listed under **Partial matches**.

Spammy freehosts

Google tries to be precise when taking manual action related to spam. However, if a significant fraction of the pages on sites hosted on a service are spammy, we may take manual action on the service as a whole.



Recommended action

- [Get tips for preventing and identifying abuse of your service.](#)
- Remove any existing spammy accounts from your service.
- Once you're satisfied that your site follows Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#), submit a [reconsideration request](#).

If we determine your site is no longer in violation of our guidelines, we'll revoke the manual action.

Thin content with little or no added value



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that Google has detected [low-quality pages](#) or [shallow pages](#) (such as thin affiliate pages, cookie-cutter sites, doorway pages, automatically generated content, or copied content) on your site. These techniques don't provide users with substantially unique or valuable content, and are in violation of our [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to the affected portions of your site. Actions that affect your whole site are listed under **Site-wide matches**. Actions that affect only part of your site and/or some incoming links to your site are listed under **Partial matches**.

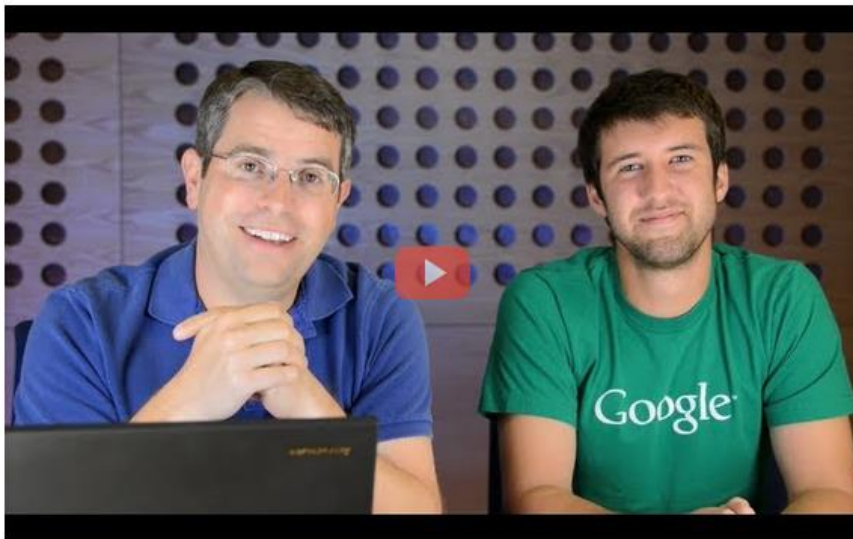
Unnatural links from your site



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that Google has detected a pattern of unnatural artificial, deceptive, or manipulative outbound links. Buying links or participating in link schemes in order to manipulate PageRank is a violation of Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to the affected portions of your site. Actions that affect your whole site are listed under **Site-wide matches**. Actions that affect only part of your site and/or some incoming links to your site are listed under **Partial matches**.

Unnatural links to your site



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that Google has detected a pattern of unnatural artificial, deceptive, or manipulative links pointing to your site. [Buying links](#) or [participating in link schemes](#) in order to manipulate PageRank is a violation of Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to your site.

Unnatural links to your site—impacts links



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that Google has detected a pattern of unnatural, artificial, deceptive, or manipulative links pointing to your site. Buying links or participating in link schemes in order to manipulate PageRank is a violation of Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#).

Google doesn't want to put any trust in links that are artificial or unnatural. However, because we realize that some links may be outside of your control, we are not taking action on your site's overall ranking. Instead, we have applied a targeted action to the unnatural links pointing to your site.

User-generated spam



If you see this message on the [Manual Actions](#) page, it means that Google has detected user-generated spam on your site. Typically, this kind of spam is found on forum pages, guestbook pages, or in user profiles.

As a result, Google has applied a manual spam action to the affected portions of your site. Actions that affect your whole site are listed under **Site-wide matches**. Actions that affect only part of your site and/or some incoming links to your site are listed under **Partial matches**.