



Google will find your paid links

At one time, purchasing paid links was one of the most popular strategies to improve a law firm's search engine positions. Of course the practice has been banned for several years but it continued as marketers found ways to sell "undetectable" paid links. Google's algorithm has changed significantly over the last few years and even purchased links that promise anonymous origins fail to deliver.

Google's Distinguished Engineer Matt Cutts recently spoke out against Anglo Rank, a link-selling network that markets "footprint-free" paid links. According to Anglo Rank, their links leave no traceable footprints because they originate from a variety of private networks.

Anglo Rank has stated that despite negative attention from Google, very few websites in their networks have been hit. But Anglo Rank does not own any of the websites that use their links, so it may be difficult, if not impossible, for the company to really know if their customers have been penalized.

Cutts warned against paid link vendors in general. The threat to the market is recent, so the small, worrisome stone may not have created waves in the pond just yet.

For now, Anglo Rank seems unconcerned. The company has suggested that the only way Google could take out their network (or any link service which resells links from private networks) is to negate all their sidebar and footer links — a threat they doubt would ever turn to action.

However, no one should ignore Google's avowed determination to take down link sellers. If you are still considering purchasing links, and if you believe Anglo Rank's private-network promises, consider the risks.

It never pays to ignore Google's Webmaster Guidelines. Make sure you and your marketing team are following the rules.





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BIGGER LAW FIRM MAGAZINE AND ADVANTECH ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A TOM JOHNSON/BLF MAG PRODUCTION
"A BIGGER 2014: YOUR MARKETING PLAN IS COMING" WRITTEN BY BETHANY AUCK AND CHRIS KAZOR EDITED BY CARA MUCKER AND KRISTEN FRIEND STYLING BY JASON BLAND
CASTING BY DIANE DEAN-EPPS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRENDAN CONLEY EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RYAN CONLEY AND KERRIE SPENCER PRODUCED BY JUSTIN TORRES EDITOR SLIDE RABBIT

DECEMBER
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