

## The benefits of SEO tuned press release distribution

One of the recent buzzwords for the marketing departments in many companies is SEO – PR. This is where the traditional press release meets Search Engine Marketing, and done correctly every press release will supposedly assist in improving the organic ranking of specific web pages. To better understand and measure these SEO benefits and maybe put some kind of a value to them, in addition to see if there might be any additional benefits as well, I decided to “follow” two of our press releases.

The headline for the first release was “*Company Delivers World's Fastest Oscilloscopes Enhanced for 3rd Generation Serial Data Analysis*” with a sub headline of “*DSA70000B Series Provide Industry's Best Signal Integrity Performance and Equipment Investment Protection*”. The release was optimized for search using the following key phrases, “*Oscilloscope, DPO70000B, jitter noise floor, ENOB, PCI Express, SATA, Super Speed USB, HDMI, Display Port and Ethernet*”, each part of our overall optimization and pointing back to a unique page on our web site.

The release was posted to, and released through our wire service on January 19. Within just a few hours the site had been crawled by various well known and less well known spiders, and within 24 hours the release had already found its way to virtually every corner of the web. In this particular case, in just a few days after going live, the report reported ~ 26 high ranking web clips, basically meaning that the release had now been picked up by every main search and / or news engine. This doesn't count the sites that aren't accessible to clipping applications, such as

the Wall Street journal or the Financial Times. Drilling down one level, using the headline as an exact match search phrase, shows that Google has indexed 1,250 different sites, Yahoo 2,190, All the Web 1,850 and so on, adding up to tens of thousands of sites, distributing the content, but more importantly providing links back to tek.com. How many customers in total that pick up the news from the various sites is not know, but the assumption is that the majority of customers will get the information through less than 5 – 10 industry publications / publication sites, and the benefits of wide distribution mainly site optimization. Looking more closely at the keywords and the links in the wire distribution tool shows a list of related keywords (in addition to our targeted key words) that searchers are using that accessed the release, providing some deeper insight to new phrases we might have to consider adding to our phrase vocabulary. The portal also shows that the press release have been accessed 94 times (accessed by people with spiders, robots, crawlers are all filtered out). Good or bad? Comparing this with some other releases that were previously released, it's better than average, and significantly better than

“award” related releases, probably demonstrating that the perceived news value of a product news release is greater than generic news. In addition, the release is not only picked up by web sites and on-line applications (27%), but also by magazines (25%), newspapers (20%) and radio (9%).

One additional benefit becomes apparent when you search on only parts of the headline. For example a Google search for *Serial Data Analysis* reveals several first page organic listings from both our competitors with links to their sites, but non for the company. The reason for why we don't show up is that our *Serial Data* pages are not optimized for *Serial Data Analysis*, due to the fact that *Serial Data Test* generally provides higher search volume than *Serial Data Analysis*. Since you can't optimize for two words simultaneously, this evidently lead to loosing out on some traffic. Fortunately, due to the press release however the company now shows up through some of the key industry publication sites, so at least now we have an indirect link for this phrase. This actually provides some valuable insight, for an extended key words strategy in those cases where there are two competing, but equally important phrases. In this case the release is not only helping us rank higher on *Serial Data Test*, but also enables us to have a short term presence for *Serial Data Analysis*, which means we'll show now show up both the words *Test* and *Analysis*, which wouldn't be possible otherwise. A couple of other functionalities available on many of the news sites that picked up the release are various social media book-marking features, such as *Digit*. The question is, would it behoove us to *Digit* our story and enable other people to *dig* it as well for

additional visibility, and to get the story published in additional places? Two weeks after submitting our *dig*, the results still shows zero, and by the time of writing this, our story had been dropped from the site, due to low interest.

I also searched around on *Digit* on some other related key phrases. Most of these revealed consumer oriented content (for example *HDMI*), but for *oscilloscopes*, I only found a handful of “semi-related” content. Surprisingly our *PPC* ad also showed up, served through the *Google* content network. Generally the content network doesn't generate many clicks, but it doesn't hurt to display the *Ad*, expect in some regions regions, where the content network is often subject to click fraud. In summary, it looks like sites such as *Digit* is not yet used by our customers and related topics.

Let's get back to our newswire service and the release. These hyperlinks are all fine, but does it matter? Will it actually enhance the ranking of specific pages on the search engines and if so, how much? So it was time for another test. Through another different tool that we're using we can track new links (and the relative value of these) pointing to our site and their impact on specific pages based on the overall page grade. In reality links are only one of the factors determining the overall grade, but with all other things equal / unchanged on the page, one should be able approximate any improvements to the grade of a page as a result of additional in-bound links. This second test was done using one of our product enhancement press releases (released March 16), “*Company Waveform Monitor Enhancements Keep Users Ahead of the DTV Transition Curve*”.

The keywords in the release were *waveform monitor* and *rasterizer*, pointing to a specific web page. A snapshot of the page / link grade was taken prior to March 16, and then again repeated April 13. As can be seen from the table below there was no dramatic changes to the rank of phrases or the page expect the number of inbound links. This can be seen as a bit disappointing, but could also mean the release activities helped us not to loose any ground. Another limiting factor is the tool itself, which is really not meant for sites our size, and has only a limited weekly capability to report out new links.

	<b>March 16</b>	<b>April 13</b>
Waveform monitor rank	8	8 (9-8-9)
Rasterizer rank	100+	100+
Page popularity	16	36
Inbound links	139	757
Page grade	20	9
Link grade	-	42
Link grade (new links)	-	33
New inbound links (30 days)	-	11

In summary there are probably too many unknown factors (such as the Google algorithm itself), variables and limitations of existing tools (inaccuracies) to fully be able to measure and understand the exact impact of SEO-PR. One thing that is clear though is that in addition to providing assurance that the news is being distributed, it provides a lift for closely related key phrases, and “double optimization” opportunities, which quickly leads to the fact that maybe some our release writing efforts could be done for search engines only.