

## Generation 3 Search Engines.

Remember the Socks and Hats thing in the last article? Well, generation 3 search engines are very clever. They can recognise whether two words or phrases are related concepts. So Google knows that Socks are a type of clothing and Hats are too, so links to a sock website from a hat website will have higher relevancy than links from a dentist's website.

How do the search engines do this? Well, they use a technique called 'latent semantic indexing' which uses mathematical techniques to discover patterns in related keywords by looking at their context. For example, if Google finds that on a lot of clothing websites the words 'socks' and 'hats' appear on the same page, then it can conclude that they are related terms. Google is just a robot, it does not comprehend the concepts of clothing or socks or hats; it just knows they go together.

Generation 3 search engines, which is where we are today, build up a keyword vocabulary (also known as a 'keyword theme') and uses this to determine relevancy. If you search for 'socks' then the top results in Google will be filled by pages that are **about** socks – whether the word socks appears on the page or not. Some pages just have 'underwear'. Some pages have 'footwear', but Google knows that they are related to socks and so they appear in the search results too.

To get good rankings in Google now you must concentrate more of your efforts into getting the content of your pages to contain this keyword vocabulary. If you stuff your page with 'socks, socks and more socks' the chances are Google will look at your site and think, "well, that looks rather spammy" and give you lower rankings.

When doing backlinks, the best tactic is to avoid using keywords in the link text, but try to have the backlink appear on authority pages which are relevant to your site's content theme. A good idea is to have the title of the webpage that you are linking to as your link text. So if you had a page titled "choosing a suitable bike for your needs" and you wanted to put a link to it in another page, instead of:

*"When buying [a new bike](#), always consider the terrain you plan to ride on."*

You should write the link as:

*"When buying a new bike, always consider the terrain you plan to ride on – read more on '[choosing a suitable bike for your needs](#)'."*

Or you can just put the website address as the link, as in:

*"When buying a new bike, always consider the terrain you plan to ride on – read more here:  
<http://welikebikes.com/advice/choosing-your-bike>*

Notice in the last link, the address of the page still has relevant keywords in – 'advice', 'choosing' and 'bike' are all themed to the topic of researching bikes. This method of creating urls is favoured by Google, and it also helps give people an idea of what your page is about just from the web address.

What we've found as a good rule of thumb when designing SEO strategies is that whatever helps your visitors and gives them a better experience on your site, also tends to help with SEO. Having logical site structures, making sure there are no broken links, making sure the site loads quickly, eradicating spelling mistakes and linking to and from good quality sources are all essential to getting good rankings (and thereby traffic) for your website.