



CSE Web Solutions Newsletter

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Basecamp – Small Business Project Management Tool

If you are a manager or small business owner, you most likely find yourself wearing many hats during the course of a day. And, naturally with those responsibilities, comes the need to coordinate multiple projects simultaneously. People going in different directions with the same end goal in mind. Well, it's called Project Management and definitely not for the fainthearted! But I have good news for you.

If you are responsible for projects, you need a systematic way to manage the collaboration efforts of your team. I ran across a superb little package called *Basecamp*, and wanted to share some of the features of the software and encourage you to try the 30 day free trial. After giving it a fair shake, I am confident you will end up using it in your company.

Basecamp is a [cloud-based](#) software used by businesses around the world, from the local "Mom and Pop" shop, all the way up to the big corporations including, Kellogg's, USA Today, Adidas, and even Wall Street Journal. Suffice to say, Basecamp has made a lasting impression on many businesses to help them manage projects smoothly and meet more deadlines.

Pros:

- *Cloud-based* – as a big proponent of cloud-based computing, having access to anything and everything from an Internet browser is a big plus. Nothing is loaded on your PC. As long as you have Internet access, you can access it anywhere. This is big for me.
- *Intuitive* - once you get the hang of software inner workings, it is very easy to navigate.
- *Integration* – plays nicely with your email so you can manage much of the "collaboration" efforts right from your email client. This is handy because it automatically updates the project *Messages* whenever people respond from email.
- *Manage all files under one roof* – files, pictures, videos, and more, all available for the team that includes an archiving feature to make sure you have the latest and greatest versions. This is very nice. No more emailing project members files. You simply upload it once for the team and you are done.

- Assign people to projects and tasks.
- Set Milestones for projects.
- And many more.

Cons:

- It does take some time to set up and figure out the inner workings. But once you do, it's easy peasy.
- The Free version is very limited. Therefore, unless you are a one or two person shop, do yourself a favor and get the paid version out of the gate. But even the Basic (paid) version is relatively inexpensive coming in at only \$24/month. **And don't forget that free trial period.**
- There are some Addon's that require you to pay extra – you don't necessarily need them to get full use of Basecamp however. Some of them do look pretty good, Campfire, Highrise, and Backpack are all more collaboration tools to definitely look into. I will be trying those out and will definitely report on them.

Overall, I am very impressed by this project management, web-based software. My entire team including myself, use Basecamp every day to manage important projects and keep them on track.

Anything to make life easier and make my company run more efficiently, becomes a must-have, Basecamp falls into this category - an elegant online project management and collaboration solution!

I hope you enjoyed my quick review of Basecamp. If you see yourself reading this article and thinking, yeah, I could use something like this, do yourself a favor and go sign up for the 30-day free trial of [Basecamp](#).

Link Building - Why Links are Important for your Website

One of the more important services SEOs provide is link building. But to the business owner, it may seem confusing or maybe even unnecessary for a business website. So just what is link building and why do I need it?

Bottom line? To make your web pages of your website appear higher in the search results.

Before we delve further into link building, let's first set the stage.

The Internet is made up of billions of web pages, loosely interconnected through something called a URL, a website address. Because of the sheer vastness of the Internet, there are many challenges search engines face to determine just which websites appear higher than others, a pecking order so to speak. Google uses hundreds of criteria to determine the relevancy of web pages. This allows them to rank and display web pages in the SERP (Search Engine Results Page).

But only Google truly knows the criteria used and how much emphasis is placed on each – otherwise known as the *algorithm*. The reason? If Google's algorithm was public knowledge, the level of “[Black Hat SEO](#)” would reach epidemic levels in an effort to “game” results and the results would become meaningless. Therefore, Google has a vested interest to not only keep this information under wraps and tightly sealed, but also make it an ever-changing algorithm, to stay one step ahead of the “gamers.” And it's the job of the SEO to keep up on those changes and make adjustments accordingly.

But, there are two known's in the algorithm - Content and Links.

We've covered the former in great detail from previous newsletters, so I won't belabor it any further. So let's cover the latter, links to your website.

OK, so what are links?

Simply put, a link is one website linking to another, pointing one web page to another web page. There is a need for both internal and external linking. But for simplicity sake, I will be referring only to external linking today.

So, why are links important for your site?

Links are a measurement used to determine “popularity” of a web page. Let's face it. If you have Wall Street Journal linking to a page on your website, Google will see your web page in a much different light - more authoritative. Subsequently, you will most likely see a boost in rankings, especially if you are targeting a specific keyword (which we will get into more in the next newsletter). Links are a measurement used, and used extensively, by Google to determine relevancy.

So in general, the more links you have pointing to your web pages, the more popular Google will see your website, and higher rankings will ensue.

Why do you need Link Building?

Link building is the practice of obtaining links from external websites in order to improve search engine ranking. Quite simply, there is a limited amount of links that will occur naturally or organically to your website. Link building provides that extra “boost of energy” that simply writing content will not provide.

Worthy Reading:

This article comes on the heels of last newsletter's push for content. Even though the source is an SEO forum, it touches on why websites may be technically sound or even "pretty", but you still need one basic thing to make it work.

<http://www.seroundtable.com/archives/022622.html>

Reviews are important to a business website. Make sure they are done right though.

<http://www.localmarketingsource.com/blog/reviews-make-or-break-online-local-marketing>

That's it for this week's CSE Web Solutions Newsletter, I hope you enjoyed it!

In the next newsletter, I will cover a few link building techniques I deploy to help my clients reach to the top along . And, staying on topic, I will delve briefly into on the difference between Links and Citations, and why Citations are so important in local search marketing.

-Dan