

Stack 3

Group 2

Set 5

Stack 2

Squid

2 to 2

- Bret Holmes used Arrington to build SEO systems with Negative SEO against competitors.

- Spam Backlinks + Negative SEO causes a website to be blacklisted and lose rankings in Google search.
- sites ranking for terms like

- Money money press scam
- money money scam
- or any site with negative reviews

Arrington was asked to perform Negative SEO.

- Like ^{SEO} guru Neil Patel Arrington was one of few SEO experts with the skill set.

* Narrative - Arrington given unlimited power and Amex budget for providing such as invaluable service to Bret Holmes. If they could suppress and control negative narrative of MHP Ponzi products the company would continue to generate millions.

- Holmes tried to hire Patel behind Arringtons back and they had a falling out.



Do you want more
traffic?

YES, I WANT MORE
TRAFFIC

NO, I HAVE ENOUGH
TRAFFIC

Confessions of a Retired Black Hat SEO: 7 Crazy Tactics That Yielded Big Gains

Do you want **more**
traffic?

Hey, I'm Neil Patel. I'm determined
to make a business grow. My only
question is, will it be yours?

Home » Blog » SEO » Confessions of a Retired Black Hat SEO: 7 Crazy Tactics
That Yielded Big Gains

Your v

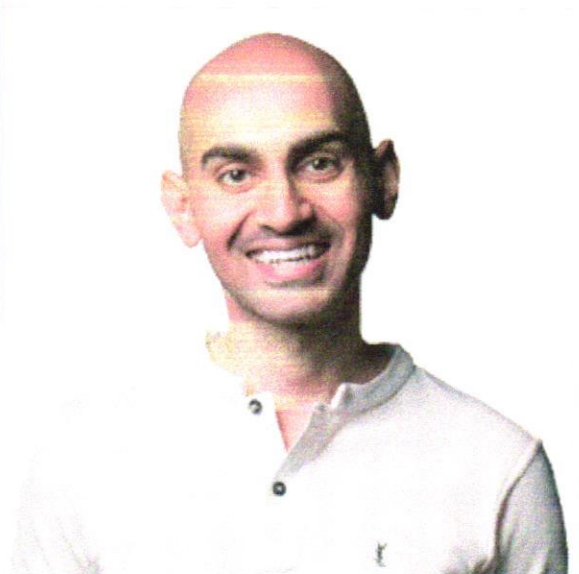
CONTINUE



When I started off my career in search engine
optimization, I was 16 years old. And, just like
most 16 year olds, I didn't worry much about
search engine "consequences." In my fairytale



Spin to Win!



world, they didn't really exist.

We all learn to know better as we age, but you have to keep in mind that I was naive. When I started off my journey into the world of SEO strategy, I didn't worry about the search engine rules... *I just did whatever I wanted.*

If you fast forward to today, I don't leverage or practice black hat or negative SEO techniques when it comes to internet marketing and if I could do it all over again, I wouldn't have dabbled in the art of the dark side. *Why?* Because if I spent all of that time and energy on legitimate search engine optimization tactics, I would have created a much larger long-term business.

I won't bore you with the reasons why you

better search results, as you already know them. Instead, I'm going to share with you 7 crazy tactics [with data] that I leveraged as a kid.

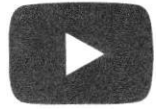
You'll quickly see that I was a really creative kid... *and it's one of the main reasons I do well as an internet marketing expert today.*

About Neil Patel

He is the co-founder of Neil Patel Digital. The Wall Street Journal calls him a top influencer on the web, Forbes says he is one of the top 10 marketers, and Entrepreneur Magazine says he created one of the 100 most brilliant companies. Neil is a New York Times bestselling author and was recognized as a top 100 entrepreneur under the age of 30 by President Obama and a top 100 entrepreneur under the age of 35 by the United Nations.

LEARN MORE

Search the blog



Crazy Tactic #1: TwitThis

What's one thing that every blog has? Well, of course, every blog has content and a content marketing campaign... *but they also have social media sharing buttons.*

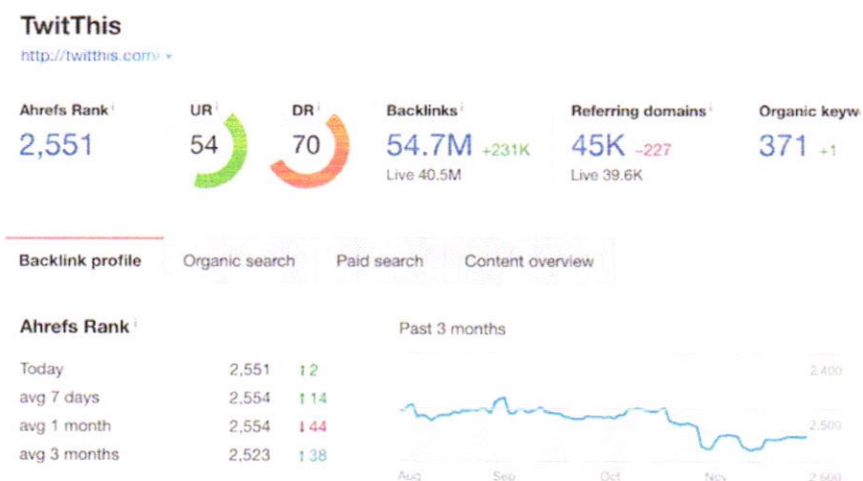
From social media sites like Facebook, to Twitter and even LinkedIn... you see these social sharing buttons everywhere. *But, that wasn't always the case.*

When Twitter first came out, they didn't have "tweet" buttons. Heck, people weren't even calling them "tweets."

So, my internet marketing team and I created our own Twitter social media sharing buttons that people could embed into their websites. We called these Twitter sharing buttons: TwitThis [you can see what the original site looked like below]



How did it do? Well, so many people started to embed TwitThis buttons on their site that it caused the website to once have a Google PageRank of 8 and over 54 million backlinks.



As you can see from the screenshot above, the site peaked at 54 million backlinks from 45,000 unique domains. But what's more impressive than all this link building is the backlinks profile.

Crawled pages ⁱ	6,059,342	
Referring domains	44,998	100%
dofollow	25,935	58%
.gov	27	< 1%
.edu	123	< 1%
.com	30,182	67%
.net	1,018	2%
.org	880	2%
Referring pages	23,212,190	
Referring IPs	16,149	
Referring subnets	10,248	
Backlinks	54,671,437	100%
Dofollow	35,217,442	64%

Just look at the image above, you'll see that the site had 27 .gov and 123 .edu backlinks.

That's not too shabby when it comes to link building results... all from just creating a free tool that allowed people to place "tweet" buttons on their site.

The way that I spread the word about it was really interesting. I just went on Twitter, found all of the popular sites leveraging it and I emailed the webmasters something like this:

ohn,

I noticed that CNN has been leveraging Twitter lately. Have you thought about asking your users to share your content on Twitter so you can get even more traffic and improve your click-through rate?

We actually created a free tool called TwitThis that makes this whole process easy. We provide you with a simple code that you can paste into your HTML so that your website readers can easily share your content on the social media site Twitter, which will help CNN get more traffic.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Neil

Once I built TwitThis up to a high domain authority site, I was then able to create subpages that would contain content around many of the popular terms out there and they would naturally rank high, as the site had so

much domain authority.

Crazy Tactic #2: Battlefield Bypass

I know what you are thinking... “what the heck is battlefield bypass”.

You’re probably already familiar with the search engine tactic involving buying expired domains. I took a bit of a different strategy when I was younger, I would only buy expired domains that were related to world history, as it increased the likelihood of .edu and .gov backlinks.

One of the domains I acquired was called battlefieldbypass.com. It was a website that used to be related to the [Civil War](#).

When I acquired it, it had hundreds of link building ops and many of them were from government-run websites.

I quickly acquired the site and turned it into an online casino site. Within a few months, the site ranked number 2 on Google for the term “online casino,” which is still a highly competitive term on the search engines.

On the website, I listed out the top 10 online casinos that someone could sign up for. Every time a user signed up because of my site, I got paid an affiliate commission. The site was averaging \$40,000 to \$60,000 a month.

Apparently, I didn't do a great job at fine tuning the site for affiliate income, as the person ranking above me was making over \$100,000 each month.

A lot of search engine optimizations still leverage expired domains... *but very few focus on ones that contain .gov and .edu links, even though they tend to be the most powerful.* You also have to pay more for these expired domain names, but I never understood why someone would try to save a few bucks when the difference could mean ranking number 1 on the search engine versus not.

Crazy Tactic #3: I Can Has Poker?

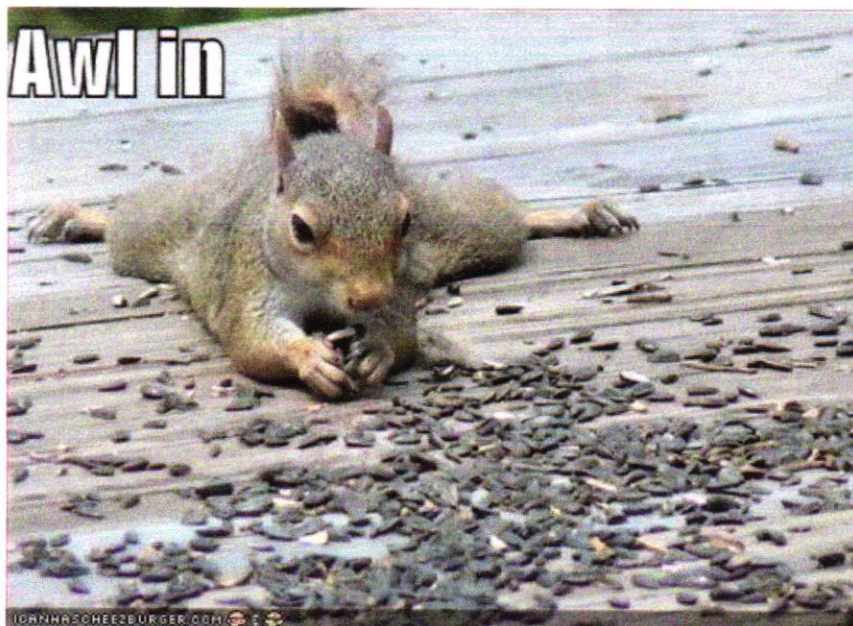
Have you heard of a crazy cat website called [I Can Has Cheezburger](#)? I don't know how popular the site is at the moment in the search results, but it used to generate around 500,000,000 page views a month. Not too shabby for a site that has tons of cat memes.

The audience was so loyal that I partnered with them to run a contest. The contest was a poker giveaway in which one person would win a two-night trip to Las Vegas with \$500 in spending cash and free airfare for 2 individuals to and from Las Vegas.

I can't find the page on I Can Has Cheezburger that discusses the contest [guessing they removed it]... but here is a snapshot:

Create a funny cat meme related to poker [they have a meme creator on their site].

Embed the cat meme on your website to enter [the embed code linked back to my poker site].



Within a matter of days, I got over 2000 link

building opportunities that contained the phrase “poker” and “online poker” in the anchor text. I even had I Can Has Cheezburger rotate up the embed codes so that I could make the anchor text more natural.

Within a few days, my search engine rankings shot up to page 7 of the search engines for the search term “online poker.” Within a week, I was ranking on page 2 and, within two weeks, I was ranking on page 1. I probably would have hit the number 1 spot on the search engines, but I quickly got caught and Google pulled my ranking.

My total cost for the whole contest was under \$10,000. Fifty percent of that was what I paid I Can Has Cheezburger for running the cost.

Crazy Tactic #4: WordPress Themes

What’s one thing that all WordPress themes have in common? They have a footer link to the designer.



And, what's one thing that most WordPress theme designers have in common? Most of them create themes out of passion and rarely try to make money from them, a different spin on the world of internet marketing. These themes do really well, because the designers care about their work.

So, I thought it would be interesting to pay these theme owners a thousand dollars to release an update of their already popular theme. The reason I targeted existing themes is that when they release an update, it would show up in the user's WordPress admin and they would just click a button to update the theme.

On the flip side, if I created brand new themes from scratch, there would be no guarantee that people would like the design and install it... for this reason, I **only** targeted existing themes that were popular.

Once a WordPress user added the new theme update, they would get some cool new features and, of course, a link back to one of my sites was placed in the theme footer.

The site I had the links go to was called [Web Hosting Information](#) (I don't know how, but the

site is still up... not sure who the owner is).

At one point, the site ranked in the top 3 search results of Google for “web hosting.” Eventually, the search engines caught on and the site got slapped and the search results rankings plummeted.

These days, I still use WordPress themes, but more so for branding. I want more people to know me as an internet marketing guru, so I pay theme companies to include “marketed by Neil Patel” links within their theme and, of course, each link building op is nofollow so that I am not breaking Google’s rules.

Crazy Tactic #5: Operation Google Domination

The easiest tactic I deployed was this one. Do you remember Google Pages? It was when you could create a web page using Google’s domain name. That’s right, you could set up a site on “google.com.”

Google Pages doesn’t exist anymore... closest thing I could find is [this](#).

I used to set up search engine submission

pages for highly competitive terms, like: credit cards, auto insurance and forex. From there, I would buy spammy blog links from Sponsored Reviews, Blogsvvertise and Pay Per Post.

From these networks, I would obtain PageRank 4 and 5 links for around 30 bucks a pop and I would buy a few hundred at a time. In total, I spent \$24,990 on paid links.

Within 60 to 90 days, I was on page one for the terms listed above, as well as other competitive key phrases.

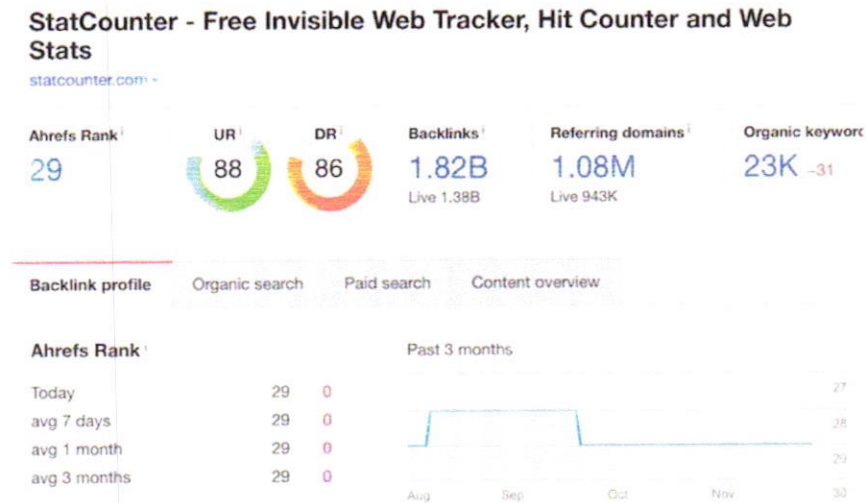
The reason this tactic worked so well is that I was link building to Google's own domain and it already contained tons of authority for search engine optimization.

Eventually, Google caught on, like they always do and the pages stopped ranking.

Crazy Tactic #6: My Stat Counter

Are you familiar with StatCounter? It's the popular analytics tool that was around way before Google Analytics. And, for StatCounter to give you stats, you have to add a counter to your site. The counter also contains a backlink

to StatCounter.



Just look at their link building profile, they have over 1 billion links. That's right... **1 BILLION**.

To log into StatCounter, you once had to go to my.statcounter.com [that subdomain doesn't exist anymore]. So, I thought it would be clever to create my own stat counter type of site and called it MyStatCounter.com.

I got tons of search engine traffic from people who typed in "my.statcounter.com" incorrectly, which resulted in lots people creating stat counters using my website.

Examples of Hit Counters



When people would embed one of those hit counters into their site, they would automatically also link out to whatever site I wanted to promote. The embed code would contain 3rd party links and I required that people leave it on, as my service was free.

Like most of the black hat tactics I leveraged, my rankings shot up fast. It lasted for more than 2 years and worked so well that I was even selling links on My Stat Counter to other companies who would pay me. it was great for my search engine marketing success.

I was smart about it as well... I would make sure that the anchor text was rotated. So, it seemed natural and I never leveraged My Stat Counter for any of my marketing related sites or blogs. I didn't want to draw attention to it. Plus, when someone signed up, I would ask them what type of site they had, so that I could place relevant 3rd party links versus random ones.

None-the-less, I eventually got caught and stopped using this tactic.

Crazy Tactic #7: Arbitraging Google

Based on the tactics above, you already know that if you have a lot of links pointing to one domain, you can rank for almost anything.

In the early days of search engine optimization, there weren't Panda or Penguin penalties and Google's algorithms were a lot less sophisticated.

Back in 2003, Google released AdSense, a service where people could monetize their own sites by placing Google ads on them.

So, I took one of my websites that had a high domain authority, Advice Monkey [site no longer exists] and I scraped over 100 million Google search results pages. I took each of the results within their search engine and I created millions of pages on my site that contained the same exact listing data.

My pages looked just like Google's search results pages, but with my AdSense ads all over them.

Within a month, I started to get traffic from lucrative terms that I scraped, such as "mesothelioma" and I was making \$943 to \$2592 a day from AdSense.

And, as you can probably guess, Google eventually shut me down for leveraging this tactic as well.

Conclusion

I know some of these tactics may seem cool and I may paint them to be glamorous, but they really aren't. I am not proud of what I did and if I could go back in time and tell myself one thing... *it would be that I shouldn't focus on any black hat tactics.*

If I focused all of my energy on legitimate white hat SEO techniques, I wouldn't have gone through as many sites. Instead, I would have had one much larger site that still existed today.

Sure, in the short run, I would have made less money. But, I started so early that in the long run, I would have been way ahead of everyone else.

The big lessons from this post should be:

1. **Be creative** – the best marketers tend to be the most creative ones. It doesn't mean that you should break Google's policies (you shouldn't). But, it means that you need to