

# Important Message For Any Business Owner Who Gets Income From Their Website

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Hi. It's Peter Cutforth here, Managing Director of Business Clicks Marketing, and co-Director of one of Australia's leading online RTO's Urban e-Learning.



If you value your business income, I STRONGLY recommend you read this letter thoroughly from start to finish – you will need to actually invest about 10 to 12 minutes of your time!

This is an open letter to any business owner who gets leads, or makes sales from their website. It's particularly for my clients, or for businesses looking at using SEO services (mine or some other company's!). If you get leads and sales from your website because it gets traffic through Google, this letter could literally save your business.

If you don't get traffic from Google (then you should be!!), and you're not intending to change this situation, then I'd close this and read something else!

It's not a pitch for my services, or to try and increase my sales. It's written because I'm actually concerned for business owners, including myself, that we may not see what's ahead. Many have already been hurt. Many more will be in the coming months ahead. Read on...

Last night I got a notification from a colleague in the US about yet another Google ALGORITHM update. An algorithm update means Google change the way websites in their (massive) index are sorted and ranked.

There have been numerous of these during 2012. The most well known and devastating to probably hundreds of thousands of businesses were the so-called Panda and Penguin updates. I won't go into details on what these are, as there are heaps of authoritative articles out there about this. But I do know that thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of businesses **lost significant portions of their revenue, literally overnight**, because of these updates.

Many businesses went under altogether.

Google does most of these updates to counteract what they call "SEO SPAM", or in other words the activities of people who do SEO to "game" the search engines, and try to get websites ranked higher than Google would normally rank them.

It's all in the name of providing better quality search results – less spammy, rubbish sites... more high quality, "authority" sites that provide useful relevant information exactly related to the search term typed into Google.

That's not to say that everyone who's website got trashed in one of the big updates earlier this year, was doing spammy, black-hat SEO stuff. **Not at all.** There are many cases where that's not the case – unfortunately Google's algorithm is not 100% perfect.

And conversely, not all spammy, rubbish sites using grey or black-hat techniques have been kicked out of the top 10 results – not at all!

Just as a side note. I write today, not only as an SEO professional, but also as a business owner. With my business partner Steve, we run a multi-million dollar online RTO [urbanelearning.com](http://urbanelearning.com) and almost all of our many different products are on separate domains, with what's called "exact match domains" (EMD's), carefully chosen to be as close to the main

keyword phrases searched on for that particular product as possible.

So I am probably one of the few SEO guys out there, who also runs a serious other business, that has seen substantial growth directly because of online marketing and SEO.

I am also quite concerned about the potential impact of losing all my #1 rankings! We employ some 15 staff and many other contractors -so its right that I should feel the responsibility. I'm sure any business owner with staff, knows the feeling !

The email I got last night was a notification that Google have introduced another update to demote "low quality exact match domain websites". [Here's an article if you're interested.](#)

So here's the point:

## Everything with SEO has changed!

Well, that's not quite true, but my point is that what used to work at the beginning of this year (2012), to get your website ranked higher in Google, now quite likely does not work any longer.

Google is now favouring, bigger, fresher, more comprehensive sites. Of course, they always did, but in the past it used to be MOSTLY about how many backlinks were pointing to your website, and the nature of the "anchor text" within those backlinks.

That is still a big factor, but it is much less important now, and the characteristics of those backlinks are now required to be VERY DIFFERENT from what worked earlier this year.

Gone are the days when you could knock out a little EMD website with 10 pages of content, get a couple of hundred backlinks to it, and see it rocket up to rank #1 for medium and low competition

keyword phrases. At least, it might still work, **but you can't rely on this as an enduring approach any more.**

### **So what are Google Looking For?**

Here's the answer in three words:

1. Authority
2. Market leadership.

Let me explain both, as they are linked.

**“Authority”** from a website perspective, in Google's eyes, is the status that affords a website Google **respect!** It includes things like:

- fresh, quality, original, substantial, and useful content regularly (daily, weekly or at an absolute minimum several times a month);
- diversity of pages, with some long, some shorter articles, including images, video, audio and other means of user engagement;
- large number of pages (or article/blog posts) ie several hundred... arguably even >500;
- Activity on social media like Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus;
- Engagement of the audience – comments from readers, re-tweeting, “Liking” on Facebook, Google “Plussing” the article, blog comments, feedback forms, etc.
- recognition of the actual people / authors associated with the content, across multiple properties around the web. This brings us to.....

**Market Leadership.** A term coined (I think) by one of my mentors [Ed Dale](#) from Melbourne.

Essentially it refers to the concept of “who are the top 10 leaders in the {fill in your niche} market, in Google's eyes?”



For instance, do a Google search for the term “[White Card Online](#)” - see the photo of that guy in the #1 organic listing?

The screenshot shows a Google search for "white card online". The search bar contains the text "white card online" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, it says "About 468,000,000 results (0.19 seconds)".

Under the heading "Ads related to white card online", there are several advertisements:

- \$39 White Card Online | whitecardexpress.com.au**  
[www.whitecardexpress.com.au/](http://www.whitecardexpress.com.au/)  
Valid in NSW QLD WA VIC NT ACT TAS SA - Fastest Construction Whitecard  
Only \$39. Start Now. - Open a Corporate Account
- White Card Online Fr. \$39 - Valid All States.**  
[www.narbiltraining.edu.au/White-Cards](http://www.narbiltraining.edu.au/White-Cards)  
**White Card Online** Pass Now & Pay Later. 100% **Online**  
Construction Blue/White Card - Accepted in All States - Fr. \$39 - Start Now.
- White Card Queensland - Worksafe Approved**  
[www.whitecardonline.com.au/](http://www.whitecardonline.com.au/)  
\$60 Pay When You Pass
- White Card Courses Online, Top Construction White Card Training ...**  
[www.whitecardonline.com.au/](http://www.whitecardonline.com.au/)  
by Steven Asnicar  
Get Your **White Card Online** with our convenient and economical online course for only AUD67. Easy to follow multi-media construction safety induction course  
...  
Userlogin ... - Construction Induction Card - White Card NSW - White Card WA
- Get your White Card online with Blue Dog Training**  
[bluedogtraining.com.au/](http://bluedogtraining.com.au/)  
Start your **White Card online** now! Blue Dog Training also offers other short courses and apprenticeship training.

On the right side, under the heading "Ads", there are more advertisements:

- 25 Sheets A4 Soft White Card With A Subtle Ribbed ...**  
  
\$7.73 - eBay.com.au  
Great deals!
- 10 X A4 Smooth White Card 240gsm**  
  
\$4.35 - eBay.com.au  
Get great deals on eBay
- White Card Online Now**  
[www.whitecardonline.com.au/](http://www.whitecardonline.com.au/)  
Complete Your **White Card** Course **Online** Now. Fast, Easier & Cheaper!
- \$55 Qld OHS White Card**  
[www.trainonline.com.au/QLDWhiteC](http://www.trainonline.com.au/QLDWhiteC)  
Qld OHS Construction **Card Online**  
Immediate Certificate-Start Now!
- White Card Online - \$39**  
[www.whitecardonlineexpress.com.au](http://www.whitecardonlineexpress.com.au/)  
Quicker, Easier & Cheaper **Online**.  
Get Your **White Card Online** Today!
- Fast White Card Online**

A red arrow points from the text "That's my business partner Steve" to the profile picture of Steven Asnicar in the advertisement for "White Card Courses Online".

That's my business partner Steve. Same story if you search for: “[personal protective equipment construction site](#)” and heaps of other terms related to our topic.

Similarly “[chain of responsibility update](#)” – see how many times my articles appear in the results.

### [Chain of Responsibility Update: Distribution of Responsibility ...](#) [www.chainofresponsibilityonline.com.au/.../chain-of...](http://www.chainofresponsibilityonline.com.au/.../chain-of...)



by Peter Cutforth

While **Chain of Responsibility** legislature distributes responsibility across the board for members of the supply chain, many in the transport industry are unaware ...

Lots!

So, we are regarded by Google as “market leaders” in these (along with other) fields.

This is the “new” SEO. (arguably its not really new, as Google have always respected the above criteria - it’s just that this is now pretty much the ONLY reliable way to achieve sustainable and reliable Google rankings, so you can sleep at night!).

OK, so here’s the rant.

Peter’s RANT:

You can’t expect to RELY on your website’s Google rankings, if you’re not investing in being a recognised market leader, and authority in your field (at least in Google’s eyes).... if you’re not investing in **keeping your site well ranked**.

Your website may have been ranked well for years, and you’ve never hardly had to touch it. Well don’t be **lulled into a false sense of security. It could disappear from its high ranking tomorrow, faster than a lead balloon.**

“What’s the remedy Peter?” You rightly ask...

I dearly dearly wish I could, with my hand on my heart, say to you: “Pay me \$1,000 a month and I’ll make sure you’re always ranked #1 for whatever terms you want!”.

But that would be ridiculous. I’m not Google,. I do not control what Google does. I can’t anticipate what Google is going to change, or how they’re going to change it (most of their updates they don’t even announce beforehand).

But I can do two things:

1. **Give advice** on what we do know, and what the general SEO community (and Google) offer as best practice at the **current**

**point in time**, and give you the heads up that these days you HAVE to stay updated and ahead of the game, or eventually, you WILL be left behind, and your business WILL suffer. (This applies to more than just SEO by the way, it also includes things like usage of social media, and engagement of mobile websites and Apps. More on these another day!)

2. Endeavour to change with the times as quickly as we can in terms of the “**done for you**” services we offer through Business Clicks Marketing, and provide these to my clients at reasonable “fair exchange” market rates. (Note: This will most likely not be the “Cheapest”. There are plenty of legacy SEO firms, and backyarders, and Indian freelancers who I’m sure are hammering you every day with messages of how to get ranked on page 1 of Google, who might be “cheap”.

But even more than ever before, you really, really need to be careful, what services and methodologies you engage – be warned!)

**Firstly to quickly cover off #1 above, here’s what to do:**

- write lots of 700 to 800 word high quality, unique articles and post them regularly to your website/blog, mixing them up with some shorter (300 to 400 word) ones as well, with pictures and videos included, and with varied titles, some relating to target keyword phrases, some not. and link back to your home page, or target landing pages with varied anchor text combinations;
- post snippets or full articles to a Facebook profile or preferably Page with links back to your website;
- post to Twitter regularly with links back to your website, as well as some to other websites randomly;
- Post to Google+ regularly and make sure your articles are linked back to your Google + profile and your G+ profile lists you as a contributor to all your websites;
- Post to other Web 2.0 properties regularly;

- Create and post videos to your YouTube channel and other video directories;
- Do a range of other activities (too numerous to mention here) to get a broad diversity of backlinks and make sure your primary keyword backlink anchor text ratio does not exceed 20 to 25%

If you don't want to do all that yourself, **here are some important questions to ask yourself.**

**This is the crux of this article:**

If you run a small part time business from home, then you could maybe only afford a few hundred dollars a month, and we could do a little bit of the above, and you would need to post some blog posts on your website yourself.

If you run any kind of full-time, serious business, and especially if you are big enough to have the responsibility of employing staff or other team members, ASK THIS QUESTION:

**>> Where are my leads and sales coming from? <<**

I'm always amazed how few business owners really know the answer to this question – based on REAL DATA, not just their guess!

You NEED systems in place to accurately measure where your business is coming from. If you need help with this, [contact me](#), but its VITAL you do it, and it just gets MORE VITAL from year to year,... here's why:

If you don't know the ratios of where your business comes from, **you don't know what to a) protect, and b) improve!**

Lets say you sell a service and your average sale is \$150. You need to sell roughly 50 a day to keep your business profitable and your staff busy and fully utilised.



Hopefully, you get a lot of your business from regular repeat clients, and secondly from referrals from happy clients. All good so far – they should always be your #1 and 2 sources of business in an ideal world.

But then what? Do you get leads from a Yellow Pages Ad? (unlikely you get much these days!)... from newspaper Ads, from TV Ads, from Online Pay Per Click? (Google Adwords)... from Organic Rankings... from other referring websites? Social Media marketing, walk in traffic, billboards... the list goes on and on...

Excuse the CAPS: But **YOU NEED TO KNOW ALL THIS INFO ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS!**

With any of these lead sources (including referrals).... if you don't invest in maintaining, securing and developing them.... don't expect them to sustain themselves in the medium to long term, because they probably won't.

Same for your search engine traffic.

If you're getting 20 sales a day from website traffic from organic listings in Google, then you're getting \$3,000 of revenue per day just from that one source. Lets assume for the sake of the discussion you make a 33% gross margin before your fixed cost overheads. So \$1,000 profit per day, ie at least \$20,000 per month.

**So if that were the case, is it wise to be spending a total of only \$300 or \$400 / month on your SEO?!!**

If that's what you were prepared to spend, does that actually make sense to you? It certainly doesn't to me! I would suggest you should be **investing in proportion to the revenue and profit each marketing channel brings in.**

We spend tens of thousands a month in our RTO business on online marketing, SEO etc. because I know it produces a profit. I know that because I spend time monitoring it (or having my team monitor it) every day and week.

The same principles apply to ANY business – just the scale maybe different.

**You can't expect your website to magically retain its position in Google when your competitors are spending money on SEO, and they're spending time and energy keeping up with the latest trends.**

**Please excuse me sounding harsh... but:**

**If you keep your head in the sand, and your wallet in your pocket, you will eventually get blown out of the water! And it may happen suddenly and swiftly with no warning.**

I'm seeing it happen and hearing the horror stories all the time.

Can I completely guarantee that I can proof you from that? No, of course not.

But can I significantly reduce the risk of you dropping away in Google. Totally and absolutely.

We are working away developing models that will develop your website's **authority over time**. Getting and retaining good Google rankings takes TIME, and resources (money).

SEO is not about "I need more leads next week please". It just does not work that quickly.

It's typically a 3 to 6 month horizon, just to get started! For more competitive keywords you could be looking at 12 mths or more, so you need to know if it's worth the investment. There various methods to determine this, but that's another subject..

Meanwhile, **can I give you a heads-up that we're in for a rocky road in Google**, and indeed online in general. As more and more updates are released, your rankings may bounce around all over the place, changing even from day to day, and week to week. The best remedy is to do the steps I outlined above.... or get them done for you 😊

Also don't forget to diversify your leads and sales channels, so you don't have all your eggs in one basket.

Here's a useful, article about the "[Google Dance](#)"

Cheers

Peter

PS. PLEASE take to heart, and ponder upon what I've written above. And most importantly, ask the question: "What do I need to implement TODAY, that could save me dramas tomorrow"

Don't say I didn't warn you!

If you think you might benefit from a conversation about how all the above interfaces with your website and business, drop me a line [here](#).

