



You Get What You Pay For:

6 Drawbacks of Cheap SEO Companies

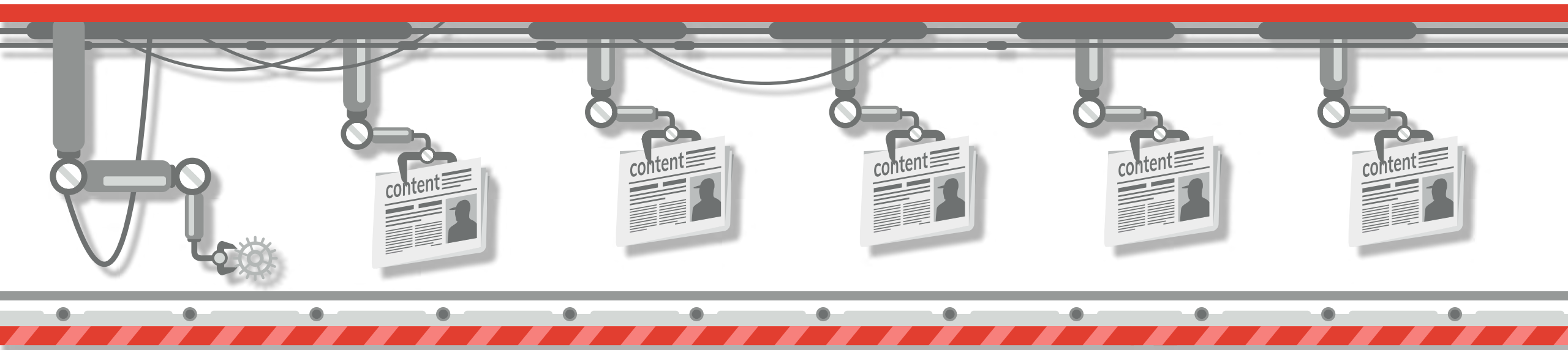
In the constant struggle to get noticed on the Interwebs, search engine optimization (SEO) is important. Like, really important. For proof, look no further than the thousands of SEO companies out there offering outsourced SEO packages.

Choosing the right SEO company, however, can be a challenge, especially with so much competition. The old saying goes, you get what you pay for. And tempting as it might be to outsource search engine optimization (SEO) to “affordable,” get-ranked-quick shops, you might end up with more headaches than you would have if you didn’t hire an SEO agency at all.

Why a Cheap SEO Package Probably Isn't Worth It

Okay, we admit it: we're a little biased—SEO is one of our specialty services. But we share because we care! And things have changed.

Gone are the days of gaming the system in the name of fast results. Search engines have gotten wise to things like mass-produced “SEO content”, keyword stuffing, and questionable backlinks. People have, too. Both your target audience and Google recognize the same thing: value. Unfortunately, most cheap SEO packages fail to deliver on this demand. Here are 6 reasons why:



REASON 1

Crappy, mass-produced content doesn't cut it anymore

Now more than ever, content is king. Check that: semantically rich, well-structured, high-value content is king. Most cheap SEO agencies and content mills can't deliver great content because they don't have great content writers. Instead, you often get generic, outsourced content that reflects poorly on your brand and doesn't help your SEO game at all.

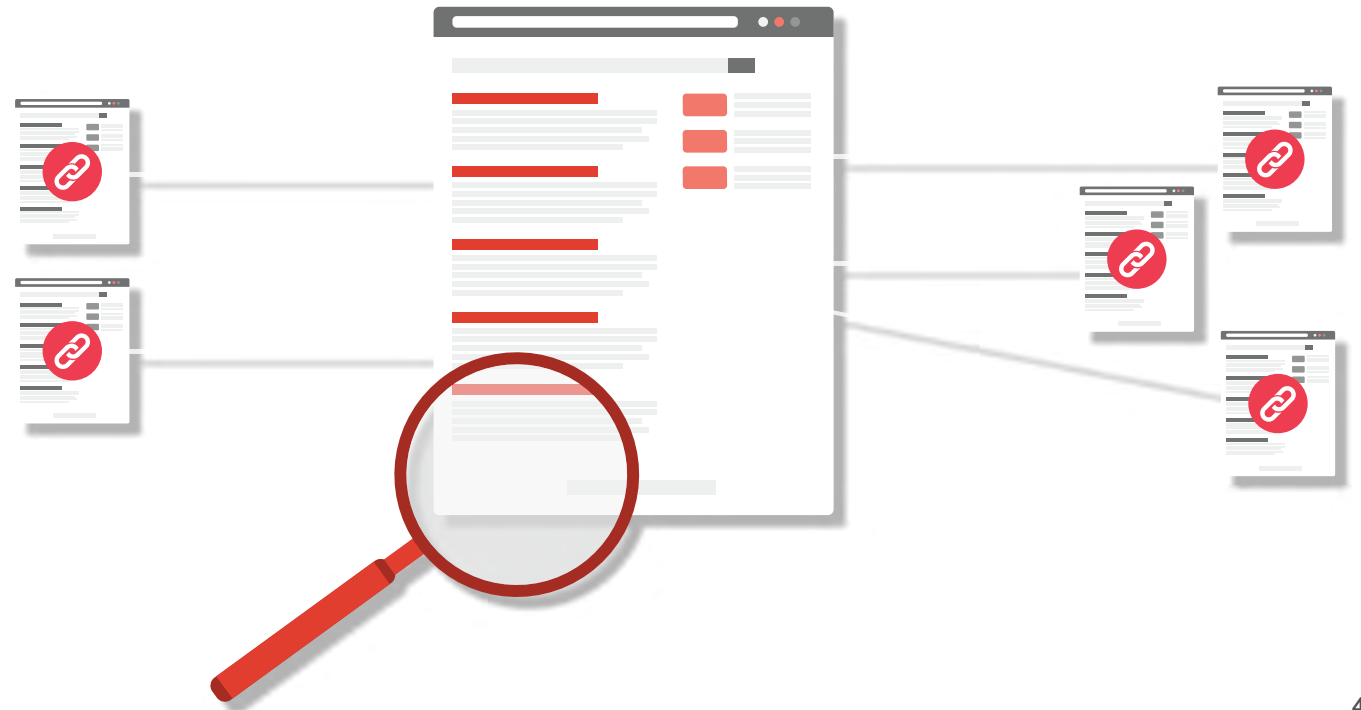


REASON ②



What, no backlinks!?

Securing quality backlinks to your website is an essential part of your SEO strategy. The keyword here is quality: securing good backlinks from reputable sources requires a human to reach out, establish a relationship, and communicate. Most cheap SEO agencies don't have a link-building specialist on staff, or they can only deliver sketch backlinks that actually hurt your search visibility.



Where's a digital marketing expert when you need them?

Cheap SEO agencies are typically small, understaffed, and overbooked. That means your important SEO initiatives might be relegated to the owner herself, who'll be too busy to make you a priority; or you'll be assigned to someone in a junior role with limited experience.

REASON 3



REASON 4

Google really (really) cares about your technical SEO

Your SEO health is about more than backlinks, on-page tinkering, and keyword optimization. The Google algorithm also takes into account your technical SEO, things like site structure, performance optimization, and site health. Cheap SEO agencies, assuming they look at technical SEO at all, might do more damage than good, and screwing up your technical SEO is tough to recover from.

A good SEO company will set up attribution tracking so you understand a customer's path to conversion. This helps you make smarter marketing decisions and investments.

REASON 5



If you can't measure it, it didn't happen

Setting up an SEO campaign is one thing, but setting up proper attribution to measure results is wholly another. Most cheap SEO companies simply don't have the resources to set up the kind of attribution you need to measure how much revenue you are generating (or losing) from your SEO initiatives. Without that, you're fighting blind.



Good SEO is not “set it and forget it”

Show me the money? No, show me the results. Cheap SEO companies love to set it and forget it; they're content to send a simple monthly report. But what work did they actually do on your account? What kind of content did they create? What backlinks did they generate? And how did all of this activity perform in terms of lead generation? A good SEO company will follow up and stay engaged long after your campaigns are established.

What to look for when shopping for an SEO agency

Now, don't get us wrong: just because an SEO agency is small doesn't mean it is cheap or bad. It's the depth and quality of their work—how thorough they are, and how well they can execute sustainable SEO strategies—that makes all the difference.

As you poke around Google looking for a good SEO company, here are a few things to keep in mind:



If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Reputable SEO companies never promise quick results or guaranteed #1 rankings. Instead, look for an SEO company that dedicates experienced pros to your account, communicates honestly and clearly, and has a plan to demonstrate results.



HOLD THE FLUFF!

Be sure to ask the agency for examples and case studies specific to your business. You don't want fluff either; the case studies should contain real metrics.



It's about what happens after the campaign is launched.

No company wants to throw money at temporary SEO gains. What kind of plan does your SEO agency have for monitoring, measuring, and optimizing campaigns so you can continue to see success down the road?



The proof is in the pudding.

Don't just show me the money, show me how you've generated revenue for other companies just like mine. Ask your agency for relevant [SEO case studies](#) that demonstrate their ability to deliver results for projects and verticals like yours.

The struggle to get noticed is real (we're still waiting to blow up on YouTube!). When resources are limited, the lure of cheap SEO agencies can be a strong one. As you consider an agency for your own initiatives, keep this guide in your back pocket. And remember: ultimately, you get what you pay for.

Of course, you can always [call Cardinal to talk shop](#).

Considering hiring a digital marketing agency, but not sure what to do next? Feel free to reach out to us, we're happy to answer any questions. We also offer a [free digital marketing assessment](#) that may shed a little light on what services will help improve your bottom line.

Sign up for a free digital marketing assessment

