

**SECRET 8**  
**USE INTERNAL  
LINKS - THE  
MISSING LINKS**

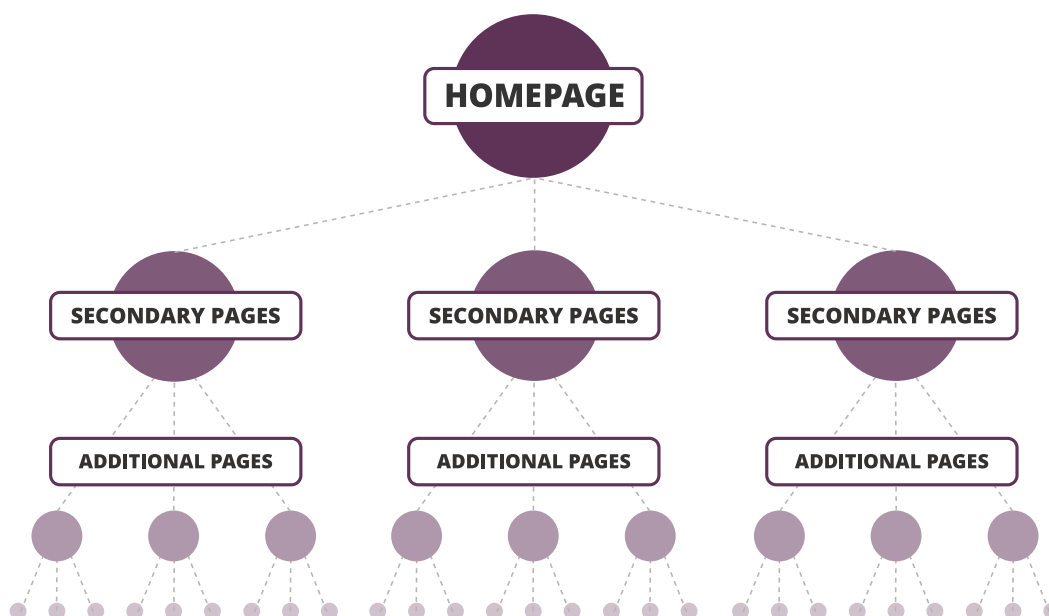
## Use Internal Links - The Missing Links

When people think of linking, the first thing that comes to mind are backlinks pointing to your site. However, internal links (links between pages on your site) can really help to boost the authority of your website.

Internal links help visitors and the Google crawler find all the pages on your website. These internal links show the search engine crawlers the hierarchy and the value (link equity) of the pages on your site.

An effective SEO strategy begins by designing a site's architecture. The best structure for a website is a pyramid, with the homepage being at the top of the pyramid. The category pages that link from the homepage have less link power (link equity), and as we get further and further from the homepage, link value diminishes.

When you build out the structure of your site, you want to make sure that you have the least number of clicks from the homepage to internal pages. This ensures that ranking power flows throughout the website. The structure illustrated below is a typical website structure with category and subcategory pages.



## Impacting Page Relevance Through Internal Linking

The power of internal linking is not typically well understood by digital marketers. It is the secret weapon that, if unleashed correctly, can be used to increase the value or relevance of any page on your website.

There are two factors that can boost the relevance of a page:

- 1 How it links to the homepage or top level pages. The higher the page is linked in the hierarchy, the more important Google considers it.
- 2 By grouping like pages together. Here's an example for a dentist:

**STEP 1:** Link all cosmetic dentistry pages to the homepage.

**STEP 2:** Link each cosmetic dentistry page together.

**RESULT:** This strengthens cosmetic dentistry topic and keyword.

## Ensuring Your Web Pages Are Discoverable

One of the most important goals of any SEO campaign is to make sure Google makes a copy of your pages on their servers — known as the Google Index. Only once your pages are indexed can they be returned in the search results.

Make the search engine crawlers' job easier and ensure that all pages on your site are indexed. How? By including a physical sitemap, an XML sitemap, and by submitting your sitemap to Google through Google's Search Console.

Further Internal Linking Tips:

- 1 Link your most important categories to the homepage.
- 2 Make sure that you build out subcategory pages that can support the category pages.
- 3 Make sure you have a reasonable number of links from your homepage and footer.
- 4 Make sure these pages are all logically linked to one another.
- 5 Overdoing any strategy can backfire.
- 6 Make sure that each page is relevant and helpful in your hierarchy.
- 7 Remove any pages that are low quality and add little or no value to the hierarchy.
- 8 Make sure you have a page for each of your locations if you have a multi-location business.
- 9 Make sure your content looks natural and none of your pages are over-optimized.



Use programs like **Screaming Frog** to review your current site architecture. Redesign your website where necessary to make sure that your most important pages are linked from the homepage or top category pages.

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