

How to Be Smarter Than Your PR Agency: New Research on News Release Best Practices

Mike Volpe

VP Inbound Marketing
HubSpot

Twitter: [@mvolpe](#)



Rebecca Corliss

Inbound Marketing & PR Specialist
HubSpot

Twitter: [@repcor](#)

Agenda



- What is Inbound Marketing
- Press Release Experiment & Findings
- Inbound Marketing News Release
- Using Press Releases for Links
- How to Measure ROI

Outbound Marketing



Outbound Marketing is Broken



What is Inbound Marketing?

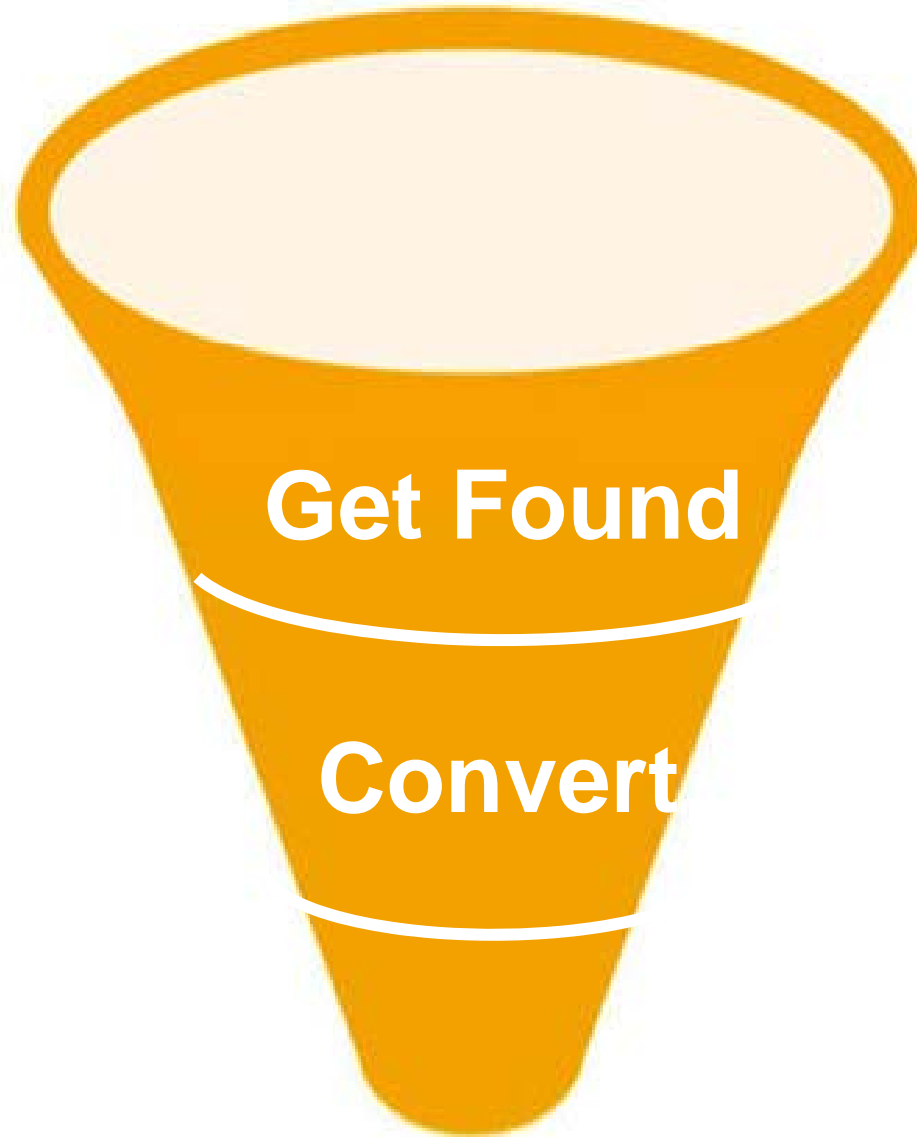
Process

Get Found

- Publish
- Promote
- Optimize

Convert

- Test
- Target
- Nurture



Tools

Get Found

- Content Management
- Blogging
- Social Media
- SEO
- Analytics

Convert

- Offers / CTAs
- Landing Pages
- Email
- Lead Intelligence
- Lead Mgmt
- Analytics

This Webinar is **NOT** About...

How to get PR coverage

Why you should fire your PR agency

This Webinar IS About...

A **new way** to think about press releases to get the most out of them

How to optimize press releases and get the most value out of your PR efforts

Reasons Most People Decide to Do Press Releases

- 1) Send traffic to company website
- 2) Get journalists and bloggers to write about your company's story
- 3) Publish “ceremonial announcements” over the wire
- 4) SEO and link building to help your website rank better in Google

Houston, We Have a Problem: Press Releases Are a Saturated Market

There are nearly 50,000 press releases issued each MONTH!

- 2,500 per business day
- 300 per business hour
- One every 12 seconds


We Are Forced to Ask Ourselves:

What other value can we get out of press releases?

AND

What can we learn about press releases to use them to our best advantage?

Agenda

- What is Inbound Marketing
-  Press Release Experiment & Findings
- Inbound Marketing Press Release
- Using Press Releases to Get Links
- How to Measure ROI

HubSpot Press Release Experiment

Experiment Goal:

Compare traditional press releases to social media press releases to discover the best format to build links into your website.

Traditional vs. Social Media Formats

Traditional	SMNR
Two fully-written URLs (one in release, one in boilerplate)	Two fully-written URLs (one in release, one in boilerplate)
*No anchor text (only URLs) Ex. http://www.hubspot.com	*3-4 links with anchor text Ex: inbound marketing
Traditional paragraph formatting	News bullets
Quote within the body of the release	Attributable quote at end of the release
Includes logo	Includes logo
No multimedia	Embedded video
No sharing options	Sometimes includes tags and sharing options

SMNR Template by SHIFT:

http://www.pr-squared.com/2008/04/social_media_release_template.html



Traditional vs. Social Media Formats

HubSpot Announces Lead Tracking Tool for its Internet Marketing System

— Lead Tracking and Intelligence Help Users Qualify Leads and Close Sales —

Cambridge, MA, January 22, 2008—HubSpot has announced Lead Tracking and Intelligence (<http://www.hubspot.com/products/lead-tracking>) for its internet marketing system, allowing users to track leads' paths through their sites and capture intelligence about them to help qualify leads and close more sales.

HubSpot's tool tracks detailed information about every visitor to a website. This information turns into valuable intelligence when visitors convert to leads. For each potential lead, HubSpot tracks the number of visits, the referring source and details about activities such as commenting and watching webinars. When an individual fills out a form on a user's website, all of the intelligence is captured in the HubSpot lead backer.

"When it comes to marketing, we've all heard about how important it is to understand our audience," says Brian Halligan, CEO and Founder of HubSpot. "The more you understand your customers, the better you can tailor your marketing and sales strategies. Our Lead Tracking and Intelligence tool allows our users to understand the ways in which their customers navigate their sites to determine their most effective marketing initiatives."

With detailed information about every lead, users are able to convert more leads into sales and use the data to determine which marketing programs, search terms and blog lines are doing the highest-quality prospects into their sales funnel.

HubSpot's Lead Tracking and Intelligence is available to HubSpot Owner customers on HubSpot-hosted websites only. Lead Tracking and Intelligence is available on external websites for HubSpot Marketer customers. HubSpot offers an internet marketing system that integrates SEO, social media and marketing analytics to help customers drive traffic to their websites and convert a greater percentage of them into customers.

About HubSpot

HubSpot is an internet marketing system that helps your company get found online, generate more inbound leads and convert a higher percentage of them into paying customers. HubSpot helps companies get found by more prospects using search engine optimization and marketing, leveraging blogs and the blogosphere and engaging in online social media. By using landing pages, lead intelligence and marketing analytics, HubSpot customers convert more prospects into leads and paying customers. Based in Cambridge, MA, HubSpot can be found at <http://www.hubspot.com>.

2008

HubSpot Announces Landing Page Wizard for its Internet Marketing System

— Landing Page Wizard Creates Custom Landing Page and Conversion Forms —

(Cambridge, MA, January 22, 2008)

News Facts

- HubSpot has announced the [Landing Page Wizard](#) for its [internet marketing system](#) to guide users through the process of setting up custom landing pages and conversion forms.
- For marketers, the landing page is the place on a site where prospects are captured as leads. A landing page is the page to which a user's call-to-action link directs, or where the user makes an offer and captures lead information. HubSpot's Landing Page Wizard offers users a simple drag-and-drop interface and content management system that makes it quick and easy to create custom landing pages.
- The Landing Page Wizard's step-by-step process allows users to choose a page layout, as well as manage and edit the content existing landing pages via the landing page dashboard.
- By providing a tool to quickly and easily create targeted landing pages and conversion forms, a user can convert more visitors to their website into actual lead sales and sales.
- The Landing Page Wizard is available in the [HubSpot Owner](#) and [HubSpot Marketer](#) systems.
- HubSpot offers an [internet marketing system](#) that integrates SEO, social media and marketing analytics to help customers drive traffic to their websites and convert a greater percentage of them into customers. HubSpot also offers free marketing resources at <http://www.hubspot.com/marketing-resources>.



Quote, Attributable to Brian Halligan, CEO and Founder, HubSpot

"Attracting visitors to your website is great, but really, it's only half the battle. It makes no difference whether 1,000 people or 100 people are visiting your site if you can't convert any of them into sales. Our Landing Page Wizard simplifies the process of converting those website visitors into leads and eventually sales."

About HubSpot

HubSpot is an internet marketing system that helps your company get found online, generate more inbound leads and convert a higher percentage of them into paying customers. HubSpot helps companies get found by more prospects using search engine optimization and marketing, leveraging blogs and the blogosphere and engaging in online social media. By using landing pages, lead intelligence and marketing analytics, HubSpot customers convert more prospects into leads and paying customers. Based in Cambridge, MA, HubSpot can be found at <http://www.hubspot.com>.

2008



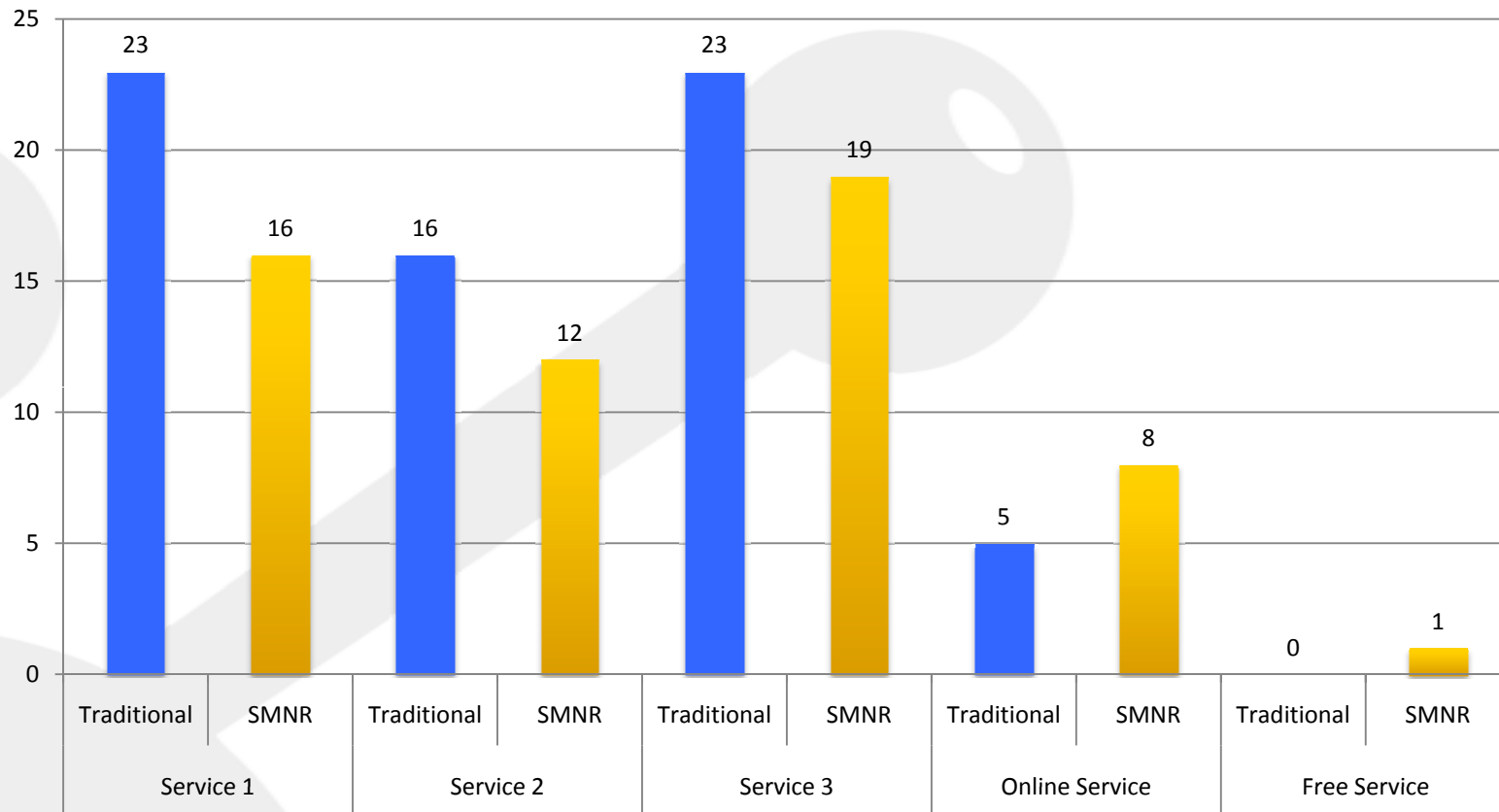
What We Will Learn from Experiment

- Which press release type gets syndicated more often?
- Which press release type gives more links to your website?
- Are all link types syndicated the same?
- What happens behind-the-scenes after you submit a release?

What We Will Learn from Experiment

- Which press release type gets syndicated more often?
- Which press release type gives more links to your website?
- Are all link types syndicated the same?
- What happens behind-the-scenes after you submit a release?

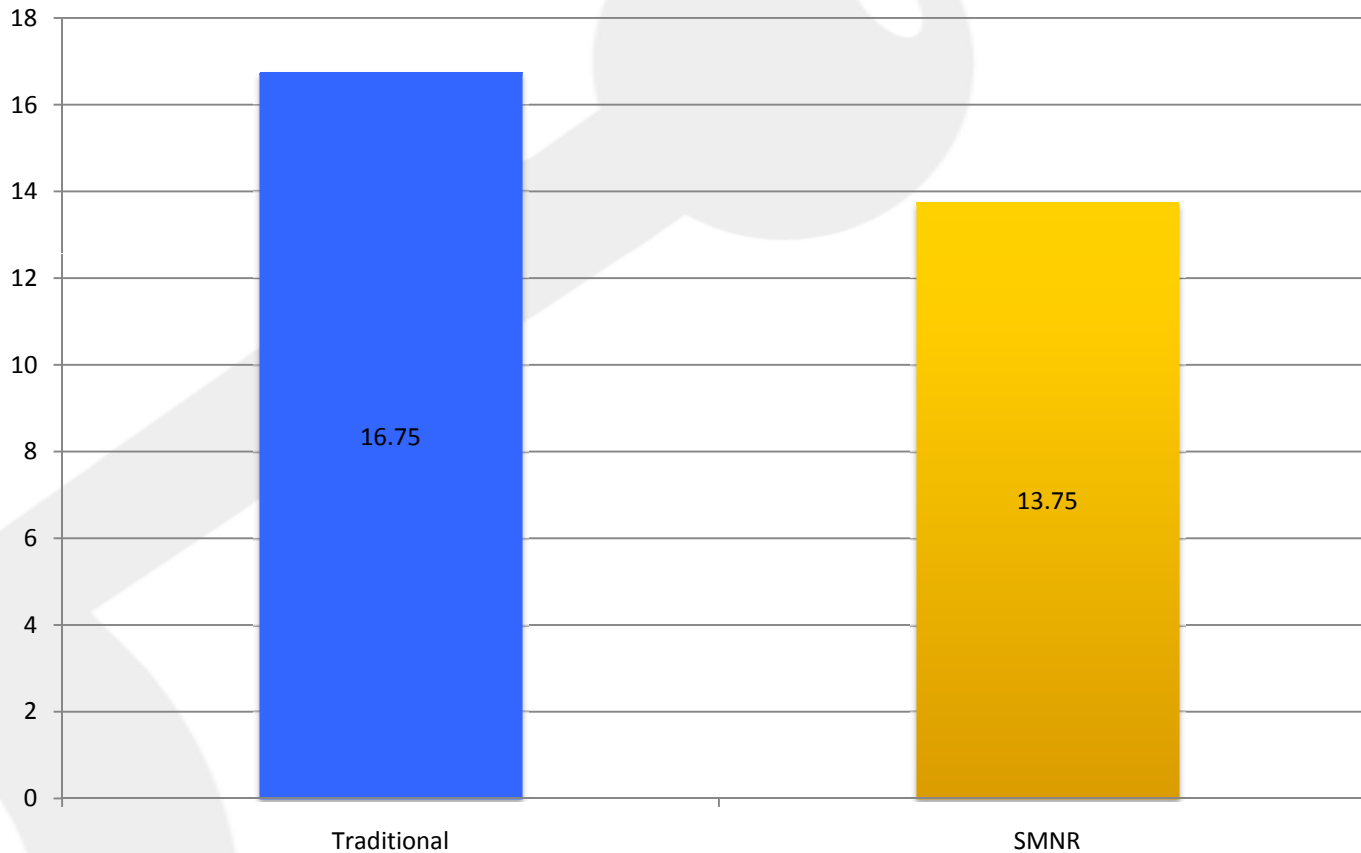
SMNRs Syndicated Less Frequently



Syndication: An instance in which a press release is published in full on another website

Traditional Releases Syndicated 20% More Often

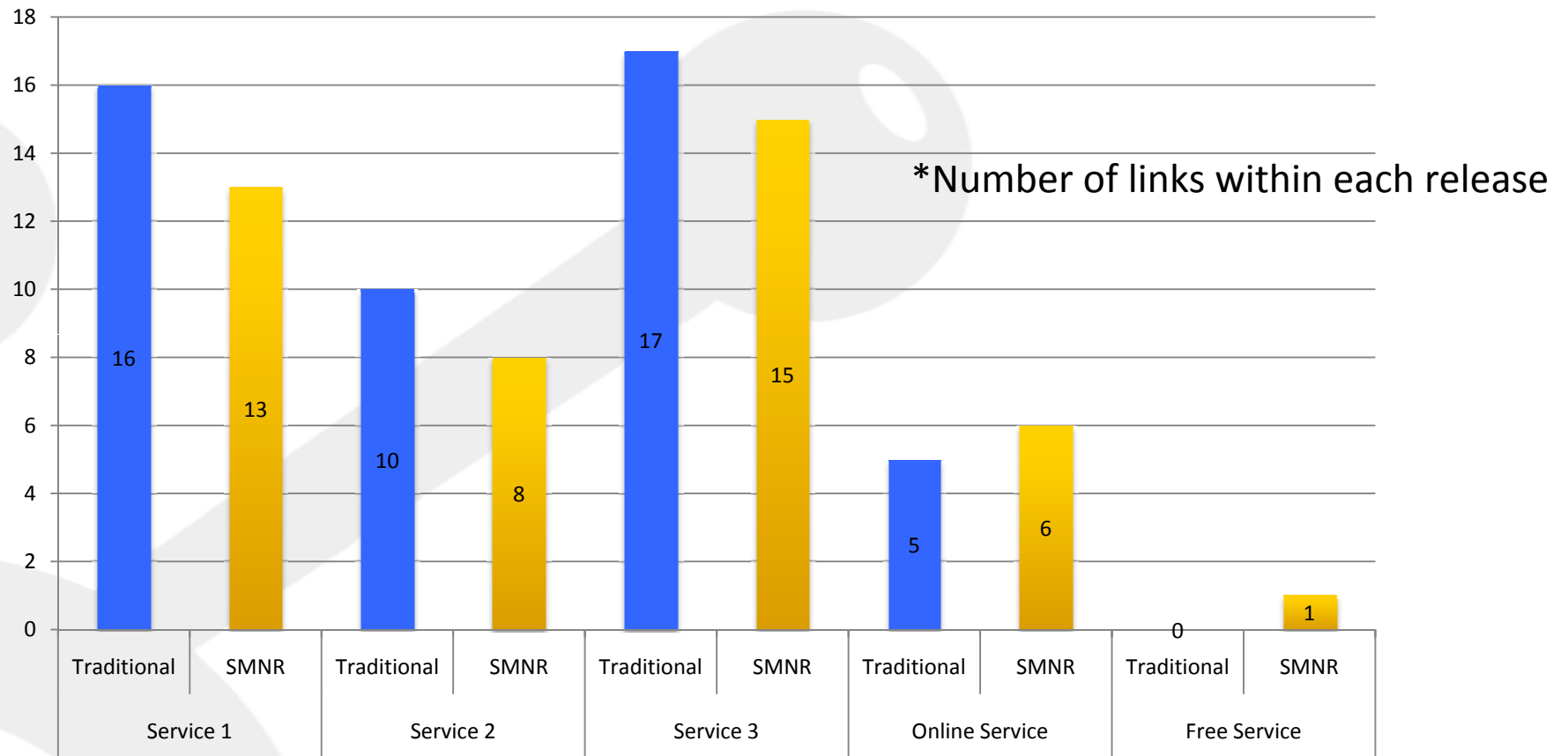
Average Number of Syndications



What We Will Learn from Experiment

- Which press release type gets syndicated more often?
- Which press release type gives more links to your website?
- Are all link types syndicated the same?
- What can we learn to discover the best press release format?

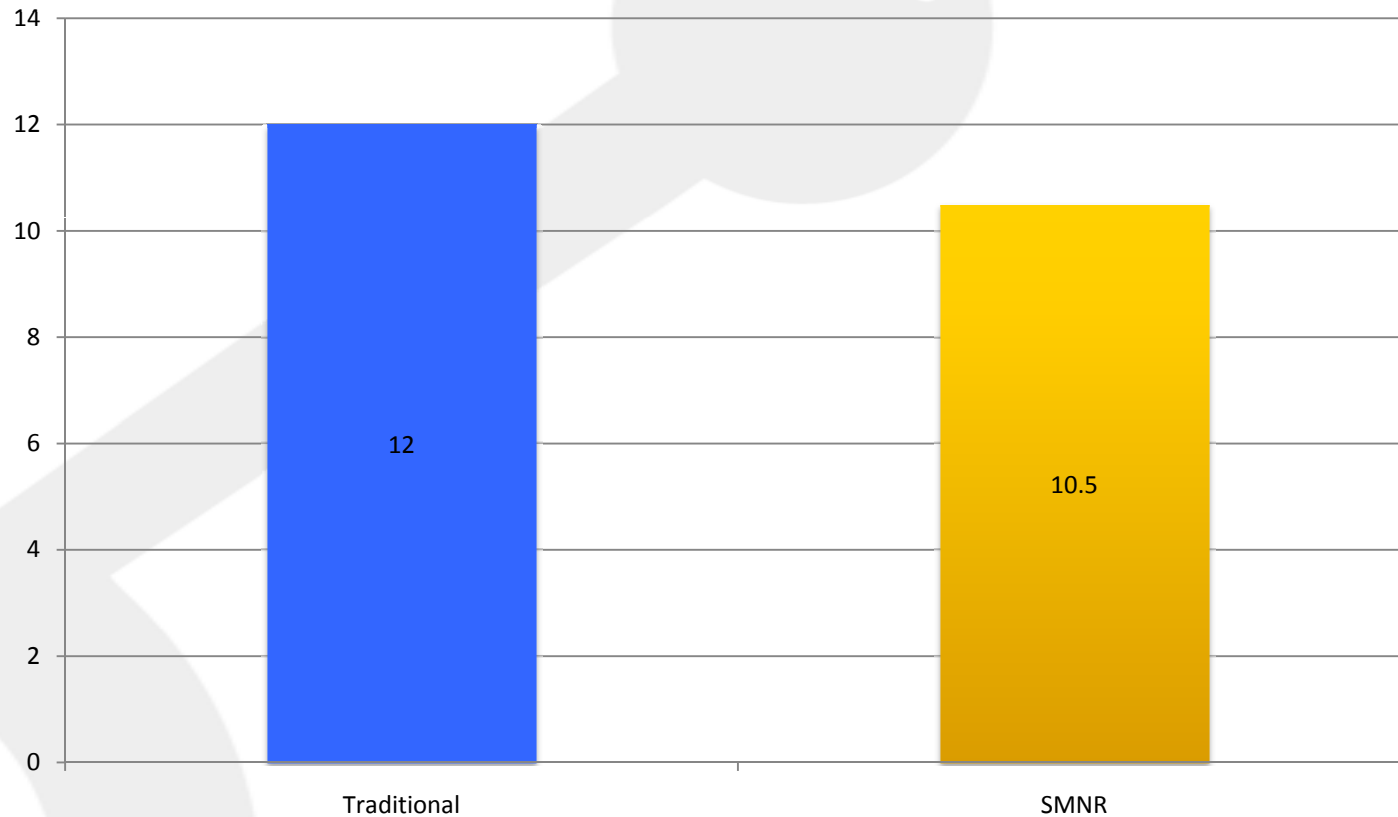
SMNR Links Syndicated Less Frequently



Syndicated Link: An instance in which a link is published and active in a syndicated release

Links in Traditional Releases Syndicated 14% More Often

Average Number of Syndications



What We Will Learn from Experiment

- Which press release type gets syndicated more often?
- Which press release type gives more links to your website?
- Are all link types syndicated the same?
- What happens behind-the-scenes that influences syndication?

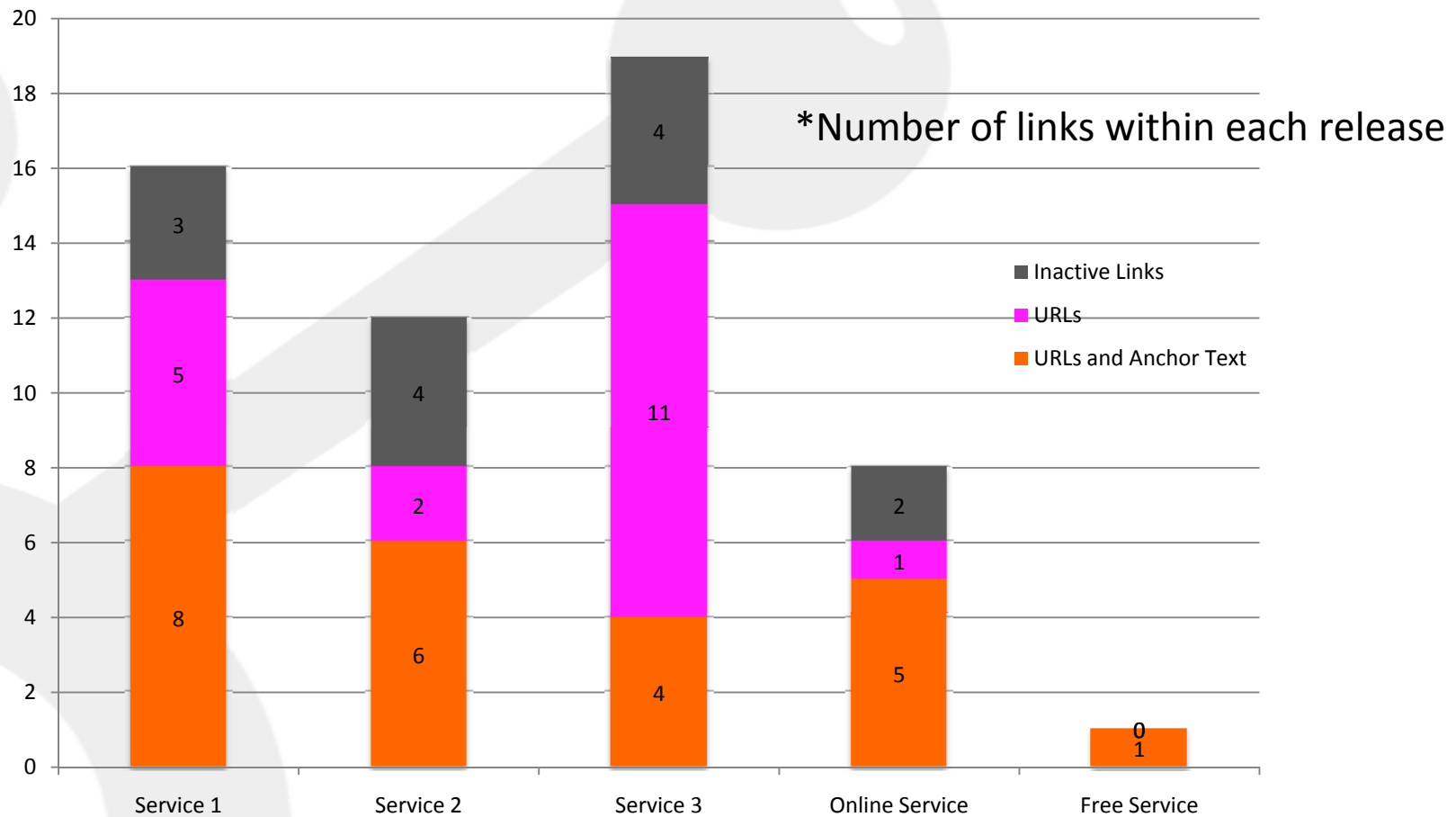
Types of Links

URL: <http://www.hubspot.com>

Anchor Text: [HubSpot](#)

Inactive Link: <http://www.hubspot.com>
Or HubSpot

Not All Anchor Text Links are Syndicated



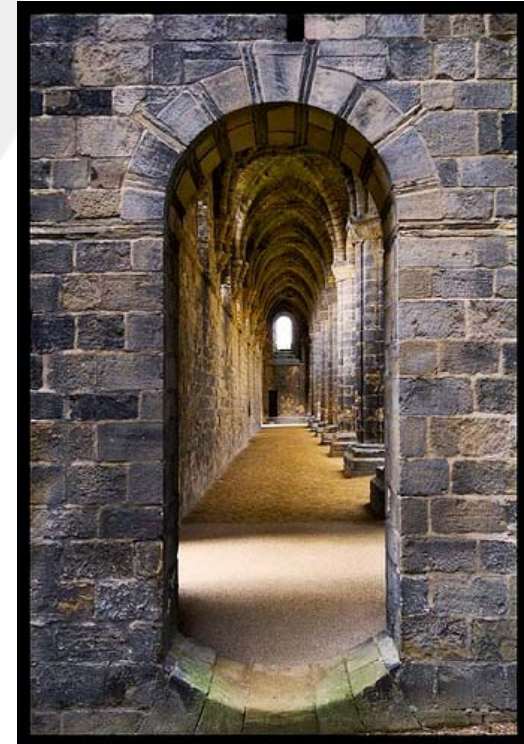
What We Will Learn from Experiment

- Which press release type gets syndicated more often?
- Which press release type gives more links to your website?
- Are all link types syndicated the same?
- What happens behind-the-scenes that influences syndication?

Newswire Media Relations Team Work With “Portals”

Media Relations Team:

- Develop solid relationships with portals
- Create processes that give portals the best releases for their websites



Portals Pick Content Differently

- Some portals republish every press release:
Examples: <http://finance.yahoo.com> & www.earthlink.com
- Some portals crawl metadata for relevant keywords
- Some portals “hand-pick” press releases they want on their website

Some Portals Don't Support Links

URL Links:

- Legacy Systems
Example: Reuters
- Don't want you to leave their website

Anchor Text Links:

- Some sites remove yours and add their OWN anchor text!

Some Portals Don't Support Formatting

- Again: Legacy Systems

Example: Reuters

- Don't accept XHTML

(Language to create: bullets, underline, **bold**, etc.)


Your Job is to Make Portals Lives' Easier



Flickr: isdky



Agenda

- What is Inbound Marketing
- Press Release Experiment & Findings
-  • Inbound Marketing News Release
- Using Press Releases to Get Links
- How to Measure ROI

Inbound Marketing News Release

Inbound Marketing News Release

Anchor text next to important URLs

Ex: [Website Grader](http://website.grader.com) (<http://website.grader.com>)

No formatting bullets

Includes logo

No embedded multimedia; *links to company website where multimedia is located*

Attributable quote at end of the release (optional)

HubSpot Announces Improved Website Editor for Its Inbound Marketing Software

— Website Editor Simplifies Content Management For Its Customers —

Cambridge, MA, February 27, 2008—HubSpot has announced an improved [Website Editor](http://www.hubspot.com/products/content-management) (<http://www.hubspot.com/products/content-management>) for its Internet marketing software. The improved version provides users with a simple way to make new pages, update old pages, create landing pages and build data-collection forms.

Website Editor helps marketers and business owners update their website themselves through an easy-to-use content management system. The editor makes website updating as simple as editing a Microsoft Word document. HubSpot customers can easily and quickly build landing pages and forms without taking time away from marketing programs.

With the flexibility HubSpot's Website Editor product, customers can create specific content relevant to a specific audience or current market dynamics, improving your chances of converting website visitors into customers. The Website Editor is available in the [HubSpot Owner](#) and is optional in the [HubSpot Marketer](#) product.

HubSpot offers an [inbound marketing](#) system that integrates SEO, social media and marketing analytics to help customers increase website traffic and convert a greater percentage of visitors into customers. HubSpot also offers free marketing webinars at <http://www.hubspot.com/marketing-webinars>.

Quote, Attributable to Brian Halligan, CEO and Founder, HubSpot

"To keep your website up-to-date with fresh content can be time consuming for any business owner or marketer. Our system's Website Editor helps our customers update their pages and make landing pages easily to bring in the best leads and convert them to customers."

About HubSpot

HubSpot provides [inbound marketing software](#) that helps your company get found online, generate more inbound leads and convert a higher percentage of those leads into paying customers. HubSpot helps companies get found by more prospects using search engine optimization, leveraging blogs and the atmosphere and engaging in online social media. By using landing pages, lead intelligence and marketing analytics, HubSpot customers convert more prospects into leads and paying customers. Based in Cambridge, MA, HubSpot can be found at <http://www.hubspot.com>.

see



Make Your Content Crystal Clear



Be direct and concise!

Discover Your Best Keywords

	KEYWORD	RELEVANCE	MONTHLY SEARCHES	DIFFICULTY	VISITS	HUBSPOT RANK	COST PER CLICK	
	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	social marketing webinar	<input type="range" value="1"/>	Low	20	5	2	<\$0.50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	social media marketing webinars	<input type="range" value="1"/>	Low	17	8	2	<\$0.50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	the marketing mavens	<input type="range" value="1"/>	Low	27	0	2	<\$0.50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	vp marketing summa cum laude	<input type="range" value="1"/>	Low	< 10	0	2	<\$0.50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	web marketing certification	<input type="range" value="1"/>	Low	22	1	2	<\$0.50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	web marketing company	<input type="range" value="4"/>	260	90	1	2	\$4.26	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	webinar marketing	<input type="range" value="3"/>	Low	77	25	2	\$8.80	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	website marketing company	<input type="range" value="5"/>	190	88	1	2	\$4.77	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Use a Descriptive Headline



Jan 15, 2009 09:05 ET

HubSpot Announces Page Grader SEO Analysis for Its Internet Marketing System

Page Grader Assesses the Optimization of Every Page on Users' Websites

- Be clear, interesting and use keywords
- Don't make your headline too long: 80 character limit
- Your headline is an `<h1>` (header) tag



Don't Use “Gobbledygook” Words



Cutting edge!
Flexible!
Next Generation!
Easy-to-use!
Scalable!
Groundbreaking!

<http://gobbledygook.grader.com>




300-500 Word Range for Body

- Too long limits syndication
- A long release is a sign of verbose content



Agenda

- What is Inbound Marketing
- Press Release Experiment & Findings
- Inbound Marketing News Release
-  Using Press Releases to Get Links
- How to Measure ROI

Links Are Key



First Link in Beginning of Release



Feb 27, 2009 09:05 ET

HubSpot Announces Link Grader Inbound Link Tool for Its Internet Marketing Software

Link Grader Tracks Inbound Links and Identifies Opportunity for SEO Improvement

CAMBRIDGE, MA--(Marketwire - February 27, 2009) - HubSpot has announced Link Grader, a [link analysis tool](http://www.hubspot.com/products/link-grader-link-analysis) (<http://www.hubspot.com/products/link-grader-link-analysis>) for its Internet marketing software. Link Grader allows users to track inbound links to their websites and identify new opportunities to attract inbound links, thus improving their websites' search engine ranking.



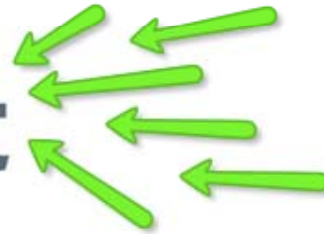
Link to Internal Pages Too

Quiz: Why does your website rank for the most keywords?

Home Page:

www.hubspot.com

HubSpot



Links

Internal Page:

www.hubspot.com/marketing-resources

Marketing Resources



[Marketing Webinars](#)

Collection of upcoming and archived Internet marketing webinars on a variety of topics, from blogging, to search engine marketing, to press releases.

Often never receives links



Always Use Anchor Text

CAMBRIDGE, MA--(Marketwire - March 20, 2009) - HubSpot announces the **Blog Analytics** Dashboard (<http://www.hubspot.com/products/business-blog-analytics>) for its Internet marketing software. The Dashboard is a comprehensive view of a customer's blog performance for marketing campaign analysis.

The dashboard sorts blog articles by authors, inbound links, comments, page grade and visitors. The tool helps customers understand which types of articles are most successful in order to make the blog an even more powerful marketing tool.

Blog Analytics is available in the **HubSpot Owner** and **HubSpot Marketer** systems. It can be used for blogs that use the HubSpot content management system and for blogs published on most other major blogging platforms.

HubSpot offers an **Internet marketing** system that integrates SEO, social media and marketing analytics to help customers increase website traffic and convert a greater percentage of visitors into customers. HubSpot also offers free marketing webinars at <http://www.hubspot.com/marketing-webinars>.

- **Tells Google what your link is about**
- **Opportunity to get your COMPANY WEBSITE to rank for your best keywords**
- **Press releases are a perfect opportunity; you control the content!**

Make Anchor Text the Same as Page Title



-- HubSpot has announced **Website Grader** for its **Internet marketing** system to allow users to measure the marketing effectiveness of their website and the websites of their competitors.

-- Search engine rankings are a zero-sum game. In order to get to the top spot, marketers need to push their competitors out. Website Grader provides a report containing the data and structure needed to make that leap.

-- Website Grader allows users to track key metrics such as search engine rank, traffic rank, blog rank, number of inbound links, bookmarks, ranked keywords and HubSpot grade for their site and competing sites.

-- Website Grader for the HubSpot system is a more robust, powerful version of the free tool available at <http://website.grader.com>.



Don't Repeat Links

- Repeating links dilutes value!
- Don't use the same anchor text twice

<http://www.HubSpot.com>

<http://www.HubSpot.com>

<http://www.HubSpot.com>

<http://www.HubSpot.com>

When Can You Repeat Links?

When **targeting** a link building campaign on a **specific internal link**, put the fully-written URL next to the anchor text link!

CAMBRIDGE, MA--(Marketwire - March 20, 2009) - HubSpot announces the **Blog Analytics** Dashboard (<http://www.hubspot.com/products/business-blog-analytics>) for its internet marketing software. The Dashboard is a comprehensive view of a customer's blog performance for marketing campaign analysis.

If the website doesn't support anchor text, at least it will publish the URL!

Optimize Press Releases On Your Website

Press Room:

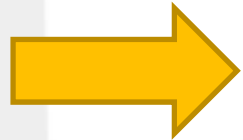
- RSS: Media can sign up to receive updates
- Blog: Make each release a unique page to be indexed in Google

Press Releases:

- Use a unique URL for each press release on your website
- Make your headline your page title
- Use Anchor Text: You control this content!

Agenda

- What is Inbound Marketing
- Press Release Experiment & Findings
- Inbound Marketing Press Release
- Using Press Releases to Get Links
- How to Measure ROI



Are Your Press Releases Helping Your Site?

Link Grader

Monitor & build inbound links

259

NEW LINKING DOMAINS
(IN THE LAST 30 DAYS)

23

AVERAGE LINK GRADE™
FOR THE NEW LINKING DOMAINS

2,960

TOTAL DOMAINS LINKING TO YOU
[31,634 LINKS FROM DOMAINS](#)

47

AVERAGE LINK GRADE™
MEDIUM

Inbound Links

Internal Links

Other

Search

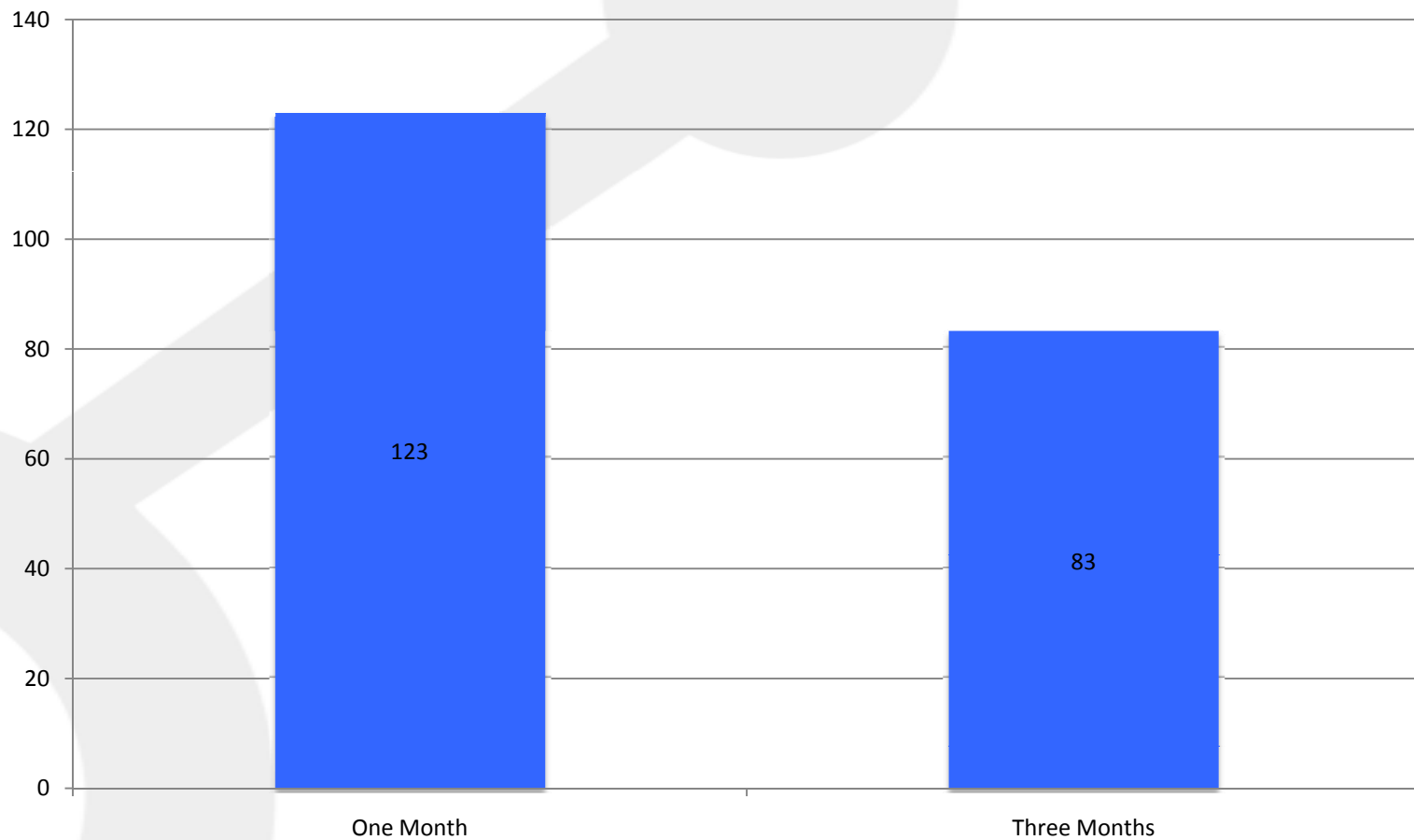
From domain: www2.marketwire.com

[<< back to all domains](#)

LINK	FRESHNESS ▼	LINK GRADE™	ANCHOR TEXT	PAGE RANK	SEO CREDIT	OUTBOUND LINKS
http://www2.marketwire.com/mw/mmframe?prid=500872&attachid=981686	Yesterday	99	Remove Frame	n/a	✓	3
http://www2.marketwire.com/mw/release_html_b1?release_id=500872&internal=YES	Yesterday	95	How to Be Smarter Than Your PR Agency	n/a	✓	19
http://www2.marketwire.com/mw/release_html_b1?release_ID=491062&internal=YES	1 month ago	95	Internet marketing software	n/a	✓	20

Syndications Decreased by 43% Over Three Months

Total Number of Syndications Across
Both Formats



NewsWire Price Comparison

Service	Distribution	Anchor Text	SMNR/Multi media	Logo	Total Price
MarketWire (Traditional)	\$140 (Boston)	\$75	-----	Included	\$215
MarketWire (SMNR)	Included (National)	Included	\$499	Included	\$499
BusinessWire (Traditional)	\$210 (Boston)	Included	-----	Included	\$210
BusinessWire (SMNR)	\$210 (Boston)	Included	\$395	Included	\$605
PRNewswire (Traditional)	\$180 (MA)	Included	-----	\$275 per release (or \$415 archive)	\$455
PRNewswire (SMNR)	Included (National)	Included	\$3750	\$275 per release (or \$415 archive)	\$4025
PRWeb (Traditional)	\$80 (MA)	\$120	-----	Included	\$200
PR Web (SMNR)	Included (National)	Included	\$360	Included	\$360

Purchasing Tips

- Negotiate prices (Vendors could discount with annual commitments!)
- Online distribution stays the same regardless of geographic distribution

\$\$\$

Free Press Release Alternatives: What Else Works?

1) Send traffic to your website

Alternative: Social media, interesting blog articles

2) Get journalists and bloggers to write about
your company's story

Alternative: Do something interesting, new, (or crazy?) and publish on
your own site. Build relationships through social media!

Free Press Release Alternatives: What Else Works?

3) Publish “ceremonial announcements” over the wire

Alternative: Company blog posts and updates

4) SEO and link building to help your website rank better in Google

Alternative: Produce interesting content (tips, videos, podcasts!) that people naturally want to link to.

Our Recommendation: Rethink PR

Think like a journalist. Not like a PR pro.

Promote your company's content through relationships.

Do small number of news releases when you have something worth saying!

Thank You!

Get the tools you need to publish, optimize, and promote content, and measure marketing.

www.HubSpot.com/Demo

Connect with us:

<http://Twitter.com/HubSpot>

<http://Facebook.HubSpot.com>

Mike Volpe

VP Inbound Marketing
HubSpot

Twitter: @mvolpe



Rebecca Corliss

Inbound Marketing & PR Specialist
HubSpot

Twitter: @repcor

