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If you want to make your website into a big hit then there are various routes and avenues you can take in order to ensure that this happens. It's no mystery what makes a website successful â€“ it's all about knowing where to spend your money and being persistent and hard working until you start to see the results you want.

However this can get a little disheartening if you have been labouring away for a long time and not seeing the results you want to, and in these situations it can become tempting to find other ways to help your site achieve rapid success.

That's when some people might get tempted by the 'dark side' of online marketing and might try to take some short cuts. As we have regularly learned from episodes of Whacky Races however, where Dick Dastardly always ends up finishing last â€“ cheating never pays and these less than honourable strategies are nothing more than a fast track to being penalised by Google.

Black Hat SEO

So what are we talking about here? The answer is 'black hat SEO' which is a form of online marketing that uses aggressive and even illegal strategies in order to achieve success â€“ which invariably will backfire.

A good online marketing company will help to promote your website by trading links with good, relevant sites. By researching keywords and then writing genuinely unique and interesting articles for your site around those themes, and by promoting your site through social media with offers and deals and other strategies.

What a black hat company will do on the other hand, and some webmasters get tempted by, is to research those keywords and then stuff their articles full of them so that they end up cropping up every other word. They'll steel content and spin it so that they can produce hundreds of articles a day with no effort, and they'll swap links with every kind of website under the sun â€“ 90% of which will be completely irrelevant. Worse they may even use hacking and other strategies to break into forums and websites and to post their links against the owners' will.

Why Evil Never Pays

But Optimus Prime always beats Megatron, and Lex Luthor never defeats Superman. Ultimately these black hat strategies are nothing more than the 'fad diets' of the weightlifting world and will help you to see rapid success followed by immediate and final failure.

The first reason for this is that you are likely to see your site penalised by Google which will view your site as spam. Google knows that no one wants to read articles that are full of keywords so they won't bring your site up â€“ plain and simple. And worse, if you get caught hacking and using other illegal methods you can end up being sued or even doing time in jail. Is it really worth it?

The upsetting thing is that many of these 'evil' strategies are actually little short of genius. People write codes that beat spam filters and that can index the web as well as Google. Had they turned those skills to creating a useful tool for their site that people would genuinely want to use they would most likely be very wealthy.

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