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The Effect Of Google's Panda 4.0 On PR Professionals

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==Top newswires lost between 60% to 85% of their SEO visibility overnight==

With their recent series of search algorithm updates, Google have created quite a stir within the marketing environment, and it seems as though their latest update, Panda 4.0, will directly impact the way some PR professionals work when it comes to distributing news.

As indicated in our recent Google Panda 4.0 rollout post, this latest algorithm was implemented to help remove "thin" and low-quality content from its search rankings. More recently, however, an analysis of how Panda 4.0 has affected press release sites, was conducted by Barry Schwartz. ==His report found that sites including PRWeb, PR Newswire, BusinessWire and PRLog, lost between 60% and 85% of their SEO visibility overnight== following this update. He further considered that it could be a result of many press releases consisting of "thin content", something which is now considered "spammy" by Google.

This significant drop in visibility indicates just how important it is for PR professionals who rely on newswire sites, to take action in ensuring their press releases not only include quality content, but are also being distributed via the most effective channels.

==The reality is that the majority of European journalists within the trade and technical press no longer subscribe to newswires (although journalists in some other regions still use them), and the most effective way in securing coverage from your press release is through tailored and targeted PR distribution. Developing and maintaining accurate and targeted media lists as part of an effective press office, is key to PR success.== ← TechWire's proprietary media database

It is important to remember that the channel is only as effective as the content it carries, and that press releases should include content that is of interest to both the journalist and the customer. To avoid creating low-quality press releases, you should clearly conveying the benefits and the most important features in a language that the editor understands.

The creation and distribution of press releases isn't the only things PR professionals should be considering following the Panda 4.0 rollout. Content is the key driver in SEO success, and with this in mind, here are some tips that will help mitigate the potential effects of Panda 4.0 on your PR and marketing strategy and ensure you stay panda friendly:

Focus on the relevance and quality of content

Gone are the days where search engines solely focused on the presence of keywords – this focus has now shifted to the quality and relevance of the content. One way to avoid "thin content" is by using longer content, something which helps Google understand the context. Typically, longer form content ranks higher than shorter content, therefore try and aim for at least 600 words.

Avoid duplicate content

Sites with duplicate content experienced a significant decrease in traffic following the Panda 4.0 update. Many marketing communications professionals have been successful in re-purposing content from articles and press releases into infographics, blog posts, slideshare presentations etc., and while this is still highly effective, it has never been more important to ensure that headlines and text across these multiple pieces of content are different.

Avoid scraping content from third party sites

Just as it was at University, plagiarism has consequences, and in this case it faces both ethical and SEO-related issues. If you come across a brilliantly written piece of content, by all means quote it, reference it or re-word it, just avoid scraping it from other sites. Either that or you'll be penalised by Google.