

The Outsourced Link Buyer's Checklist

How to check any link before you pay for it. A companion to Video 1: *What You're Really Buying When You Outsource Link Building*.

1. The 60-second link farm check

Run these six checks on any site a vendor offers you. Fail one, look closer. Fail two or three, move on. There are always better sites.

Check	What to look at	Red flag
☐ Traffic vs score	Does the site get real organic traffic, or just a high DR or DA? Open its top pages: do they rank for real industry keywords?	High score, a few dozen visits a month, or top pages ranking for off-topic terms
☐ Outbound links	Open a few recent posts. Who does the site link out to?	Every post links to a different business; casino, loan or pill sites
☐ Topic sprawl	Does the site have a clear focus?	Business, health, travel, pets and finance all on one site
☐ Selling footprints	Is there a "write for us" page with prices or a sponsored-post menu?	A public price list for posts
☐ Real people	Is there an about page with real names? Do the authors exist anywhere else?	No names, stock-photo authors, no engagement
☐ Traffic shape	Look at the organic traffic graph for the last 12 to 24 months.	A sudden spike followed by a cliff

2. The baseline quality bar

DR 20 or higher AND at least 1,000 organic visits a month. Both, not one or the other.

Flex it for local sites (a city guide or chamber of commerce with a few hundred visits can be exactly the right audience) and for a tight topic match. The closer the fit, the less the metrics matter.

Also check where the traffic comes from. If your client sells in the United States and the site's visitors are mostly elsewhere, those readers are not your client's customers.

3. The relevance ladder

Rank every opportunity by how closely it fits. Anything below the ladder gets skipped, no matter what the score says.

Step	What it means	Example
1. Same niche	The site covers your client's exact field	A software review site linking to a software company
2. Close neighbor	A topic right next to your client's	A business finance site linking to an accounting firm
3. Same place	A local site whose readers are your client's market	A city news site linking to a local roofer
4. Same audience	A different topic, but the readers are your client's customers	A site for new parents linking to a family dentist

4. Seven questions before you pay for any outsourced link

Ask these whether you're an agency, a marketing company or an in-house team. If your vendor can't answer them, that tells you something.

- ☐ Does the site get real organic traffic from industry keywords, not just a high score?
- ☐ Is that traffic steady, and from the right country?
- ☐ Does the site have a clear focus, or does it cover everything?
- ☐ Does it link out to random businesses in every industry?
- ☐ Are there real people behind it?
- ☐ Can someone explain in one sentence why this site would link to your client?
- ☐ Did you get to see and approve the site before you paid?

5. Outreach or inventory? Ask which one you're buying

	Inventory	Real outreach
How it works	Pick from a list of sites that already sell posts	Research the field, find sites that would care, pitch them one by one
Who else is there	Often hundreds of other buyers in unrelated fields	Sites that chose to link to your client
Speed	Fast and predictable	Slower, and less predictable
What search engines reward	Least	Most

6. Your one-sentence test

For every site on your list, write one sentence on why it should link to your client. If you can't, it doesn't belong on the list.

Site	Why it should link to my client (one sentence)

Want this done for you? Link Builders runs white-hat outreach for agencies, marketing companies and in-house teams, with every site approved before it's placed. link-builders.com