LinkMachine

User Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to **LinkMachine**! This guide was written for the purpose of getting you up and running quickly, so you can start exchanging links right away.

Section 1 looks at the process of installing **LinkMachine** on your site. Section 2 is a step-by-step guide, to walk you through the most important aspects of the link manager. Sections 3 and 4 then delve deeper into some of **LinkMachine**'s more advanced features. Section 5 will introduce you to **LinkMachine**'s powerful SEO toolset.

A quality link directory and a solid SEO strategy increasingly play important roles in the development of a successful web site. We believe you'll find **LinkMachine** to be a powerful tool to help you build the effective link exchanges that you need.

Thank you for choosing **LinkMachine**!

Section 1: Installation

There are two ways to install **LinkMachine**. You can use the automatic Online Installer on the **LinkMachine** site, which uses FTP to install **LinkMachine** directly to your web site. This is usually the easiest option.

If you're technically savvy and would like to handle the installation yourself, or if your site is not compatible with the Online Installer, you can download the **LinkMachine** installation script, upload it to your site, and run it using a web browser.

Automatic Online Installation

You can install **LinkMachine** directly to your website automatically, and be up and running in just moments!

All Platforms: **Click Here to Install Automatically**

Or, if you'd prefer to download **LinkMachine** and install it yourself...

Download LinkMachine

Requirements: LinkMachine is a PHP based application that will run on any web server that supports PHP version 4 or later.

Windows Users: **Click Here to Download LinkMachine**

Mac/Linux/Other: **Click Here to Download LinkMachine**

Installation Instructions

1) The installation archive contains a file called **readme.txt** and a directory called **linkmachine/**. Using your FTP program, upload the **linkmachine/** directory to your site's home directory. Then set all of the write permissions on your site's **linkmachine/** directory to true. (See below for more information about doing this.)

2) Open a web browser and enter the URL of the file **install.php** within your site's **linkmachine/** directory. For instance, if your site is called **www.widget-world.com**, you'd enter the URL:

http://www.widget-world.com/linkmachine/install.php

3) Follow the instructions that appear to complete the installation.

Using LinkMachine

To access **LinkMachine**, enter the URL of your site's **linkmachine.php** script in the URL bar of a web browser. For example, if your site is called **www.widget-world.com**, you'd enter the URL:

http://www.widget-world.com/linkmachine/linkmachine.php

You may wish to bookmark your site's **LinkMachine** page for easy access in the future.

Now you're ready to use **LinkMachine**! You may find it helpful to read the next section, *Getting Started*, for an overview of how **LinkMachine** works.

Changing Write Permissions

After uploading the **linkmachine/** directory to your site, it's important to set the write permissions for that directory to true, so that **LinkMachine** can save new files in the directory. If you do not know how to use your FTP program to change a directory's write permissions to true, please consult your FTP program's documentation. One common method used by many FTP programs is to select the directory, choose **Change Permissions** from a right-click or pop-down menu, and turn on all write permissions. In other FTP programs you would select **chmod** instead, and set the permissions number to 777.

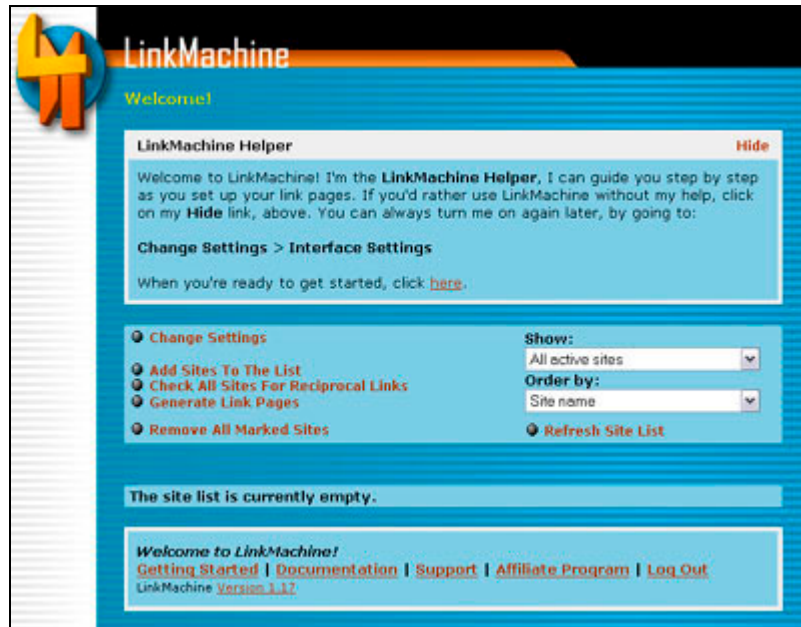If you don't have an FTP program, we recommend **SmartFTP**, which can be downloaded for free at this site:

http://www.smartftp.com/

Section 2: Getting Started

The following is a step-by-step guide to introduce you to LinkMachine's most important features.

Step 1: Introduction

Once you've created your **LinkMachine** account and logged in, you'll see the main **Site List** page:

*The empty **Site List**.*

Toward the top of this page is the **LinkMachine Helper** box. If you're new to **LinkMachine** you may find the Helper box handy, it offers step-by-step guidance for setting up your link pages. You can hide the Helper at any time by clicking on its *Hide* button.

Below this is the control panel, which contains the buttons used to perform various actions such as changing settings, generating your link pages, and adding and deleting sites. Notice that when you first log in, two of these buttons are flashing. **LinkMachine** lets you know that something needs to be done by flashing the button for that action. When you start using **LinkMachine**, the first things that need to be done are changing your site settings, and adding sites to the **Site List**.

The **Site List** in the middle of the page displays all of the sites that you exchange links with. Later on we'll see how to change the order that the list displays the sites, and how to have it show only the sites that match certain criteria. But first we'll have a look at how to add sites to the **Site List**.

At the bottom of the page is a set of helpful links to the **LinkMachine** documentation and website. There is also information here about how much time is remaining in your free trial, and a link to upgrade to **LinkMachine Premium**.

Step 2: Changing Settings

The next step is to give **LinkMachine** some information about your site. From the Site List page, go to the Settings page by pressing the *Change Settings* button in the control panel.

The Settings page.

The Settings page has links to several categories of settings. Click *Site Settings* at the top of the list to go to the page where you'll enter information about your site. Go through this section and fill in each of the items. Each item is explained on the Site Settings Page.


The top of the Site Settings page.

After filling in the site settings, click the *Submit Changes* button at the bottom of the page. This will save the values that you've entered. If **LinkMachine** finds any problems with the settings you've entered, it will let you know with a message at the

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top of the page.

Next, click the *Back* link to return to the Settings Page, and from there go to the *Link Categories* page. Your site's link pages can be organized into any number of categories (and subcategories) of your choosing. Here is where you enter the names of your link categories. Think of what sorts of websites you'll be inviting to exchange links with your site. **LinkMachine** will only display a category on your link pages if there's at least one site in that category to list, so don't worry about adding categories that may remain empty for a while.
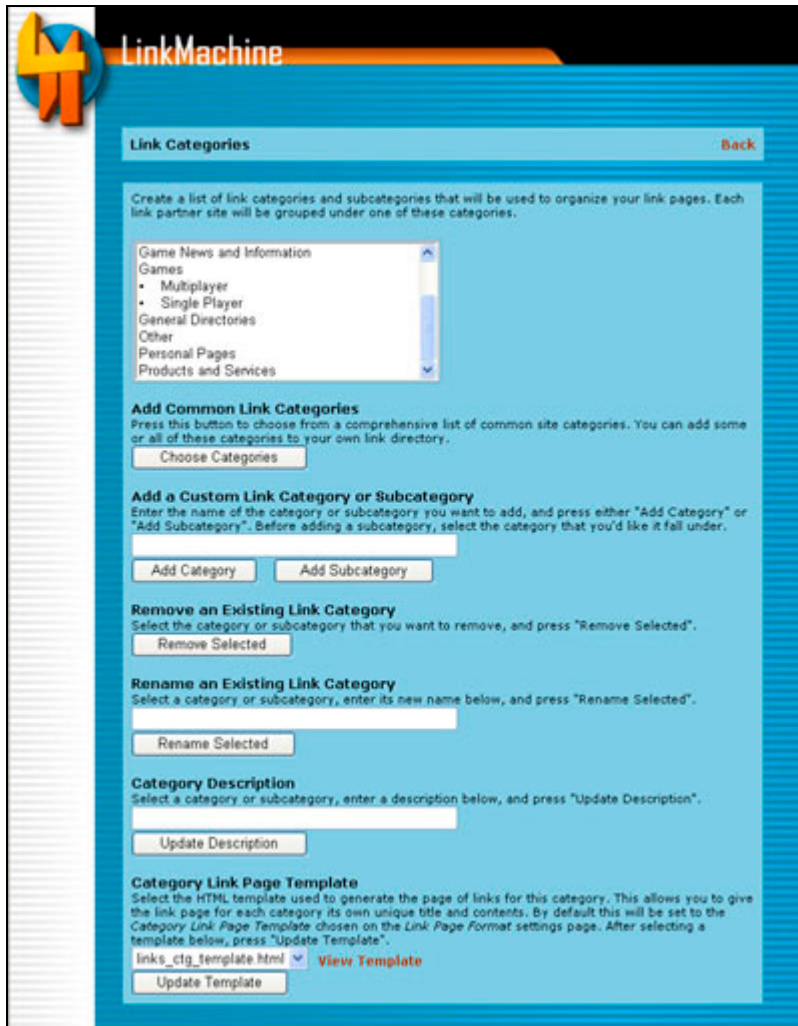
The Link Categories page.

If you'd like a diverse assortment of site categories in your link directory, you can save time by adding categories from **LinkMachine**'s list of hundreds of common categories. To add any number of these categories to your link directory, click the button *Choose Categories* under *Add Common Link Categories*.

To add a category of your own, enter its name under *Add a New Link Category or Subcategory* and click the *Add Category* button. To add a subcategory, select the category for it to fall under, enter its name, and click *Add Subcategory* instead. To remove a category, select it from the list of categories and click the *Remove* button.

Take a moment to add a few link categories. You can always add more or remove categories later.

To rename an existing category, select the category from the list, enter its new name under *Rename an Existing Link Category*, and click the *Rename Selected* button.

Under *Category Description* you can enter descriptions of your categories and subcategories, if you wish. The *Category Link Page Template* section is only used if you'd like each category's link page to have its own unique look. You can skip this for now.

Press the *Back* link to return to the Settings Page. The *Link Page Format* page is used to customize the look of your site's link pages. The *E-mail Templates* page is used to customize the e-mails that you'll be sending out to webmasters of sites you'd like to exchange links with. We'll look at these sections in detail a bit later.

Near the bottom of the list is the *Backup Data* link, to the page where you can download a backup copy of your site's **LinkMachine** data, and upload a data file to replace your site's current data. It's a good idea to download a backup copy of the data every so often, especially after adding a bunch of sites or making other significant changes, just in case anything goes wrong. From the *Backup Data* page you can also export all of your links as a *.csv* file, which can be loaded into a spreadsheet application such as Excel. You can use this to generate reports, or to transfer your links from one copy of LinkMachine to another.

The last link on the Settings page, *Upgrade LinkMachine*, leads to the page where you can upgrade to **LinkMachine Premium**. If you've purchased **LinkMachine Premium**, you can use it on up to 3 different web sites. To use your **LinkMachine** account on more than three websites, you'll need to purchase additional site licenses. This page is also where that can be done.

Return to the main site list page by clicking on *Return to Admin Home* at the top of the Settings page. Now, it's time to find some sites to exchange links with!

Step 3: Adding Sites

The next step is to find a number of web sites that you'd like to invite to exchange links with your site. You can start off with just a few, and add more later.

To add sites to your site list, click on *Add Sites To The List* at the top of the Site List page. You'll then be given several options for how you'd like to add sites. Each of these are followed by an explanation. The choices include:

- **Exchange InstantLinks with other LinkMachine users** - Choose this option to find other **LinkMachine** users that you can exchange links with easily, without the need to exchange e-mails. Search by category for sites that are related in topic to your site.

- **Add by keywords** - Say your site sells tennis equipment. Then you may want to pick this option, and enter keywords that would bring up sites like yours - for instance, "tennis equipment" or "tennis gear sale". From the *Search Type* menu, you can choose whether you'd like **LinkMachine** to find sites that match the keywords you enter, or sites that *link to* sites that match the keywords you enter, and so may also be interested in linking to your site. Both of these options can produce good results and are worth trying out.

- **Add the sites that link to a particular site** - You may want to ask some of the sites that link to a site like yours, whether they'd like to exchange links with your site. If a site links to a site like yours, even to your competition, it may also be interested in linking to you.

- **Add a site by hand** - Use this option if there's a particular site that you want to add to your site list. **LinkMachine** will bring up a form and allow you to enter all of the relevant information about that site.

- **Add the links on a web page** - This option is handy if you already have a link page on your site, and you'd like to import the links on that page into **LinkMachine**.

- **Add the links from an *html* file** - This is also handy for importing links from an existing page. This option lets you upload the web page file from your computer, so it's useful if the page with the links to import is not on the web.

- **Add the links from a *.csv* file** - This option allows you to import the links from a *.csv* (comma separated values) spreadsheet file. This can be useful for importing links from another copy of **LinkMachine** (installed on another site), or from another link exchange application such as **Arelis**.

If your site already has a links page, and you'd like to import those links into **LinkMachine**, you can do that now. Next, use the *Exchange InstantLinks with other LinkMachine users* option to find other **LinkMachine** users to exchange links with. Then, you may want to use the *Add by keywords* option to add 10 or 20 new sites to your site list.

Once you tell **LinkMachine** to find some sites to add, it gets to work. It visits each

site that it adds, to determine the site's title and description. If you choose, it will also look through each site searching for a contact e-mail address. Depending on how many sites you ask **LinkMachine** to find, it may take several minutes to finish. Every 20 seconds or so **LinkMachine** will let you know how many sites it's added, and how close it is to finished. If at any point during the process of adding sites **LinkMachine** seems to "hang" and stop updating for a minute or more, just press your browser's *Refresh* button to get it back on track. Once it's found as many sites as you've asked it to (or it can't find any more), it will return you to the Site List page.

Step 4: The Site List

The Site List displays an entry with some information for each of the sites that you've added. On the left side of a site's entry is the title of the site. You can click on a site's title to view the site itself in another window - this can be very handy when reviewing sites. If a site has a reciprocal link back to your site, there will be a small "chain link" icon beside the site's title. You can click on this icon to view the page containing that reciprocal link.

Below the site's title is the date that this site's information was last changed, either by you or by that site's webmaster. Below this are two links, *Modify* and *Remove*. Press *Modify* to go to a page where you can change this site's information. Press *Remove* if you'd like to change the site's status to *Removed*, so that it will no longer appear on your link pages.
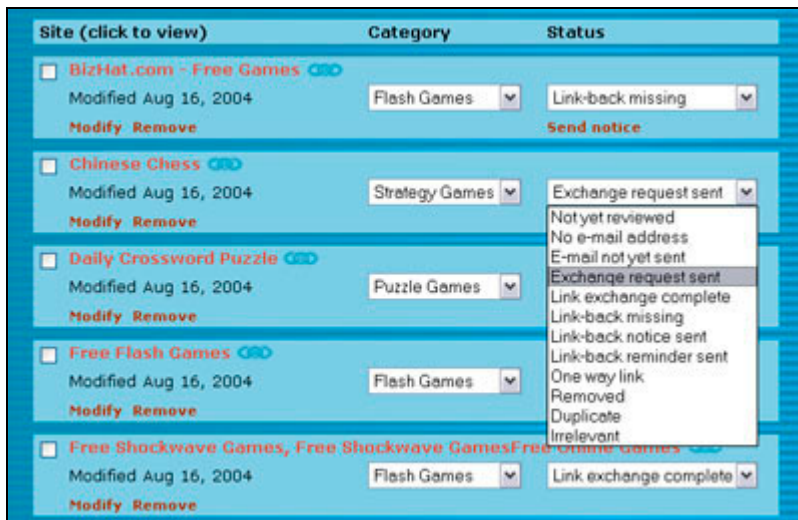
The **Site List**.

On the right side of each site entry are two drop-down menus, one for the site's category and the other for its status.

The category menu contains each of the category and subcategory names that you've entered on the Settings page. Use this menu to choose which category this site will be displayed under, on your link pages.

The status menu contains a list of the various states that a site can be set to. A site's status determines whether it will be listed in your link pages, as well as what actions are available for it. Here's a description of each possible site status, and how it is used:

- **Not yet reviewed** - A site that is added by a webmaster without an invitation from you (via your site's exchange_links.html page - more about that later) is initially given this status. A site with this status will not be listed in your link pages. When you review the site, if you decide that you'd like to exchange links with the site, you can click on the site's *Approve* link to change its status to *Link exchange complete*.

- **No e-mail address** - When **LinkMachine** adds a site to your list, it gives that site this status if it did not find a contact e-mail address for the site. If a site has this status, you will probably want to open the site in a browser (by clicking on the site's title in the Site List) and look for an appropriate e-mail address, or another way to contact that site's webmaster. If you find an e-mail address, you can add it to the site's information by clicking on the site's *modify* link, or on its *Enter e-mail address* link. Doing this will automatically change the site's status to *E-mail not yet sent*. A site with the status *No e-mail address* will not be listed in your link pages.

- **E-mail not yet sent** - A site has this status if **LinkMachine** has a contact e-mail for the site, but a link exchange request e-mail has not yet been sent to the site's webmaster. The entry for a site with this status has a *Send exchange request* link. Click on this link to send an exchange request e-mail to the site's contact e-mail address. (More about sending e-mails later). A site with the status *E-mail not yet sent* will not be listed in your link pages.

- **Exchange request sent** - When you send a link exchange request e-mail to a site's webmaster through **LinkMachine**, the site's status will automatically be changed to *Exchange request sent*. Sites with this status will be listed in your link pages if the option *List Potential Link Partners* is seleted, on the *Link Page Format* settings page. By default this option is selected.

- **Link exchange complete** - A site with this status will be listed in your link pages. A site gains this status when the site's webmaster submits information about the site through a link that you've sent them. You can also manually change any site's status to *Link exchange complete*, if you'd like the site to be listed regardless of whether you've contacted the site's webmaster.

- **Link-back missing** - When you have **LinkMachine** check each site that you're exchanging links with to make sure that they have reciprocal links back to your site, **LinkMachine** will change the status of each site that should have a link back to your site but does not, to *Link back missing*. The entry for a site with this status has a *Send notice* link. Click on this link to send a notice to the site's webmaster, alerting them that the reciprocal link is missing. Sites with the status *Link-back missing* will continue to be listed in your link pages.

- **Link-back notice sent** - When a site has the status *Link-back missing* and you click on the site's *Send notice* link to alert the site's webmaster, the site's status changes to **Link-back notice sent**. The entry for a site with this status has a *Send reminder* link - click on this link to send another e-mail to the site's webmaster, reminding them that the reciprocal link is missing. Sites with the status *Link-back notice sent* will continue to be listed in your link pages.

- **Link-back reminder sent** - A site has this status if it's been sent more than one notice that its reciprocal link to your site is missing. If a site's webmaster does not respond to the reminder after several days, you may want to remove the site from your site list. Sites with the status *Link-back reminder sent* will continue to be listed in your link pages.

- **One way link** - Set a site to this status if you want to post a link to this site on your link pages, regardless of whether the site has a reciprocal link back to your site. If a site has this status, **LinkMachine** will not check it for a reciprocal link.

- **Removed** - Set a site's status to *Removed* if you don't want the site to be listed in your link pages, but you also don't want to delete the site from your list entirely. For instance, if a site no longer links to you and has not responded to a notice that you sent the site's webmaster, you may want to set the site's status to *Removed*. Setting a site's status to *Removed* will stop it from being listed in your link pages, and it will also keep it from being inadvertantly re-added to your Site List. In addition, should the site's webmaster finally replace the reciprocal link to your site sometime later, the site can easily be put back into your link pages.

- **Duplicate** - If you add sites by keywords, sometimes **LinkMachine** will add more than one site to the Site List that are really part of the same site, but have different URLs. You can remove the duplicate entries from your link pages while at the same time keeping them from being inadvertantly re-added later, by setting the status for these redundant site entries to *Duplicate*.

- **Irrelevant** - Sometimes **LinkMachine** will find a site that really isn't relevant to your site, and that you do not want to exchange links with. For instance, adding sites by the keywords "tennis equipment" may end up adding a site that has to do with a tennis video game rather than real tennis. By setting the status for such an unwanted site to **Irrelevant**, you prevent the site from being listed in your link pages and at the same time keep it from being inadvertantly re-added to your Site List later.

- **InstantLink Exchange** - A site has this status only if it a completed InstantLink exchange - that is, a link exchange with another **LinkMachine** user.

- **InstantLink Invitation Sent** - If you have invited a site that uses **LinkMachine** to exchange links with you, the site will have this status. If you choose to withdraw the invitation, you can do so by clicking on the site's *Withdraw* link.

- **InstantLink Invitation Received** - If you've received an invitation to exchange InstantLinks with another site that uses **LinkMachine**, that site will have this status. After reviewing the site and deciding whether you'd like to exchange links with it, you can respond to the invitation by clicking either the *Accept* or the *Decline* link.

In the upper left corner of each site's entry in the Site List is a checkbox. An easy way to remove multiple sites from the Site List at one time is to check the checkbox for each site you want to remove, and then click the *Remove All Marked Sites* button in the Control Panel.

The Control Panel contains two drop-down menus that control how the Site List is displayed: *Show* and *Order By*.

The **Control Panel**.

The *Show* menu controls which sites are displayed in the Site List.

You can display all of the sites that have a particular status. This can be handy in many situations. For instance, if you want to remove all of the sites that do not link back to your site and that you've already sent multiple notices to, you can display only the sites with the status *Link-back reminder sent*. If you want to review any sites that were added without being sent invitations, you can display only those sites with the *Not yet reviewed* status.

There are also a few options for displaying sites with any of several statuses. You may want to display just the *Newly added sites* to review them and send out link exchange requests. You may want to display *All Active Sites* to have **LinkMachine** check which ones have reciprocal links to your site. Perhaps most useful of all is to display all of the *Sites requiring action* - these are sites that you need to do something about, be it find an e-mail address or send a link-back notice to the webmaster, etc.

You can also quickly find a specific site in your Site List by choosing *Search* from the *Show* Menu. A search box will appear. Enter the text to search for, and click on the *Search* button. *LinkMachine* will display only those sites that contain the text you entered in their title, URL, description, contact name, category title, or e-mail address.
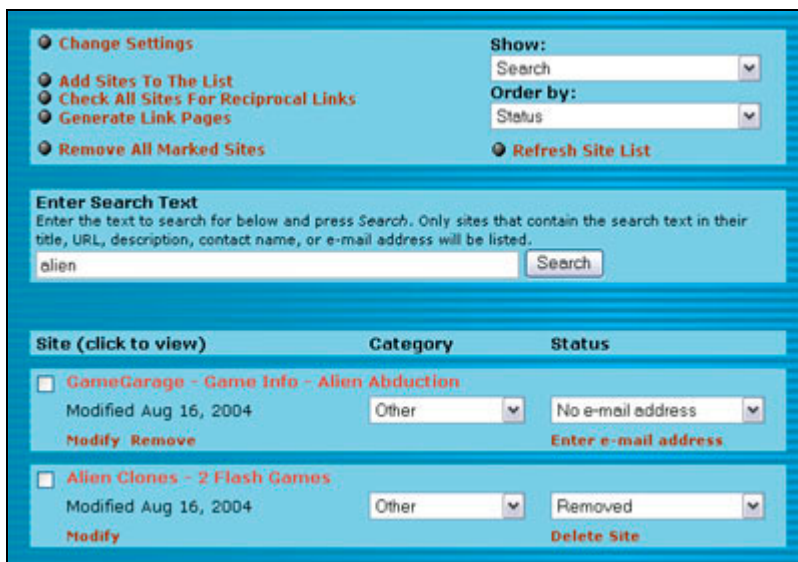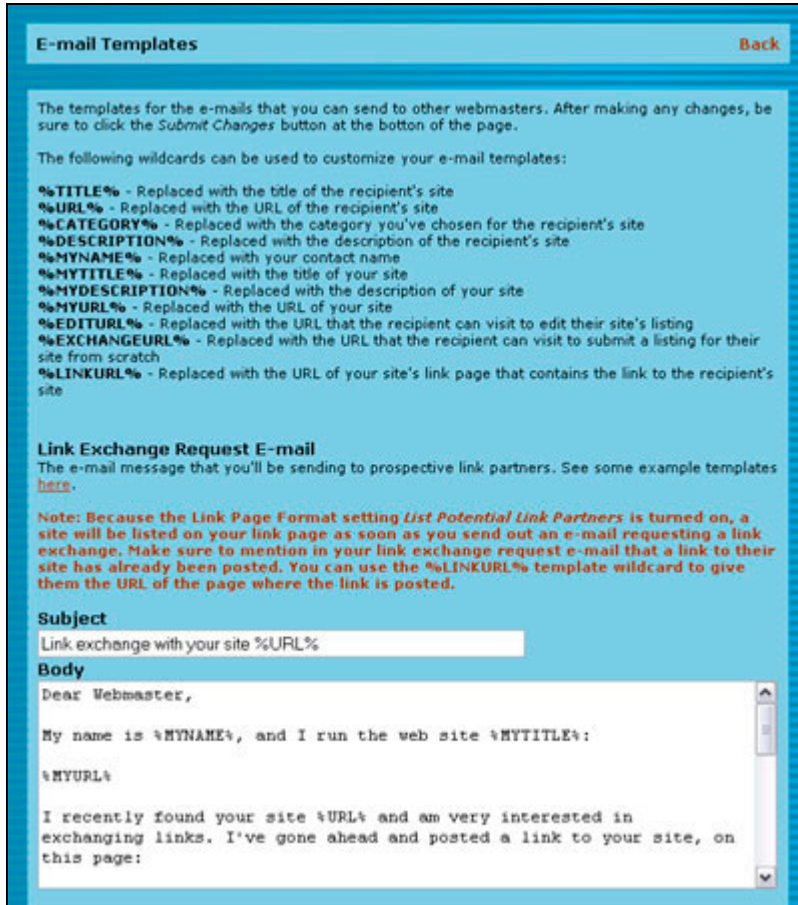

The **Search** feature.

Finally, you can choose what order the sites in the Site List will be displayed in, by selecting an option from the *Order By* drop-down menu.

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So, in the previous step you added several sites to your Site List. Now that you know how to use the Site List, go ahead and review each of these sites. Some may be irrelevant to your site, and some may be duplicates of each other - set their statuses appropriately. The sites that are left should all be sites that you'd like to exchange links with. **LinkMachine** may not have found a contact e-mail address for all of these sites - look through those sites for a contact e-mail address and add each address to the site's information. Now you're ready for the next step - contacting each site's webmaster and inviting them to exchange links with your site.

Step 5: Contacting Sites

Now that you have a list of some web sites that you'd like to exchange links with, the next step is to write e-mails to the webmasters of these sites, inviting them to exchange links with your site. **LinkMachine** makes it easy to do this by allowing you to enter an e-mail template and then sending customized e-mails based on that template.

To begin, go to the Settings Page by clicking on *Change Settings* in the control panel. From there, go to the *E-mail Templates* page. This page contains several e-mail templates: one for the *Link Exchange Request E-mail* (the e-mail you'll be sending webmasters to invite them to exchange links with you), another for the *Link-Back Missing Notice E-mail* (the e-mail you'll send to webmasters whom you've already exchanged links with, but whose link back to your site is missing from their site), and a few others. The purpose of each template is described on the *E-mail Templates* page.

The top of the **E-mail Templates** *page.*

Each of these templates consists of a subject line and body (message) text. **LinkMachine** comes with default e-mail templates built in, but you're encouraged to personalize these templates as much as you'd like, to make them your own. You can also find more ideas for e-mail templates here.

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There are certain special words that you can include in an e-mail template that act as *wildcards* - when you send an e-mail, these wildcards are replaced with the values that apply to the specific site you're sending the e-mail to. For instance, if you use the wildcard **%TITLE%** in a template, it will be replaced with the title of the website you're sending the e-mail to. **%URL%** will be replaced with the URL of the site you're contacting. There is a complete list of the available wildcards at the top of the *E-mail Templates* page.

Two of these wildcards are special. **%EDITURL%** will be replaced by the URL of a **LinkMachine** script that will give the webmaster a form that comes pre-filled with the data you already have about their web site. They can use this form to fill in the rest of the information about their site. Once they submit this form, the status of their site is changed to *Link Exchange Complete* and their site will be listed in your link pages immediately.

The wildcard **%EXCHANGEURL%** will instead be replaced with the URL of the page **exchange_links.html** that **LinkMachine** generates on your site. This page is a blank site submission form. When a webmaster submits their site's information using this form, the site's status is set to *Not Yet Reviewed* and the site will not be listed in your link pages until you review the site and change the status to *Link exchange complete*. The disadvantages to using this link are that the webmaster has to fill in all of their site's information, and their site is not posted on your link pages until after you've reviewed it. The advantages are that it gives you a chance to personally review each submission before it is added to your link pages, and the process may seem more personalized and less "automated" to prospective link partners.

Also note that you can place a link to your site's **exchange_links.html** page anywhere on your site, to allow anyone to submit a potential site to exchange links with. **LinkMachine** generates this page in the same directory where you tell it to generate the link pages, under *Site Settings*.

Once you've customized your e-mail templates to your satisfaction, click the *Submit Changes* button at the bottom of the *E-mail Templates* page to save your changes. Then click *Back* to return to the Settings Page, and click *Return to Admin Home* at the top of the Settings Page.

Each site in your Site List that you have an e-mail address for, but that has not been sent a link exchange request e-mail, should have the status *E-mail not yet sent*. You may want to choose this status from the *Show* menu in the control panel, to display only the sites with this status. In the site entry for each site with this status is a link labeled *Send exchange request*. Click on this link to send an exchange request e-mail to that site.

*A site entry with the status **E-mail not yet sent**.*

When you click on *Send exchange request*, you are shown exactly what your e-mail to this site's webmaster will look like. You can make any final changes to the address, subject line, or body of the e-mail now, before it's sent. Just as you'd rather receive a personalized e-mail that talks about your own site in particular rather than a form letter, so would the webmasters you're e-mailing. So now is when you can put in a line or two about their specific website, if you wish. Then click the *Send E-mail* button to send it off, and return to the Site List page. The status of the site you've just sent an e-mail about will automatically change to *Exchange request sent*.

Now do this for each site that you'd like to invite to exchange links with your site. Some sites don't have a posted e-mail address - instead they have an online contact form to fill out. For these sites, you can still click *Send exchange request* on the site's entry, and then copy the e-mail body that **LinkMachine** generates from your template, into the web site's contact form. You can then click *Return to Admin Home* and manually change that site's status to *Exchange request sent*.

With **LinkMachine Premium** you also have the option of sending out link exchange invitations in bulk - sending an invitation to each site with the status *E-mail not yet sent*. If you have any sites in your Site List with this status, a new option will appear in the control panel: *Send All Link Exchange Requests*. Click this link to see an example of how the e-mails you send out will look. You can then choose whether you'd like **LinkMachine** to also send link exchange invitations to sites with the status *No e-mail address*; for these it would make educated guesses at each site's e-mail address. Finally click *Send All* to send out all of your link exchange invitation e-mails in bulk.

Now you've sent out your first link exchange invitations. Over the next few days some of the webmasters you've contacted will likely take you up on your offer and submit their site's info. If the form link that you used in your template was **%EDITURL%**, these sites will then be added to your link pages immediately, and their status will become *Link exchange complete*. If instead you used **%EXCHANGEURL%**, the status of these sites will change to *Not yet reviewed* and they won't be posted to your link pages until you've reviewed and approved them.

Some webmasters may e-mail you asking for more information. Others, you'll never hear back from. That's okay - there are plenty of relevant sites out there that are potential link partners.

Now that you'll soon have links up on your link pages, you'll want those pages to look appealing. The next step is to customize your link pages.

Step 6: Your Link Pages

LinkMachine does all the work of creating the HTML files for your link pages. All you have to do is tell **LinkMachine** what you'd like these pages to look like.

Not all of the sites in your Site List will appear on your link pages. Only those with the status *Exchange request sent*, *Link exchange complete*, *Link-back missing*, *Link-back notice sent*, *Link-back reminder sent*, *One way link*, or *InstantLink Exchange* will be compiled into your link pages. So if you don't yet have any sites in your Site List that have one of these statuses, you may want to manually changes the status of a few of your sites to *One way link*, just temporarily, to try out different looks for your link pages.

When you've sent an e-mail to a site's webmaster and they respond by filling out a form to submit their site's information to **LinkMachine**, your link pages are instantly updated with the latest information. When you make changes to your Site List through **LinkMachine**'s interface, the link pages are not updated right away, because doing so could cause delays. When you make a change that requires that the link pages get updated, the *Generate link pages* button in the control panel will start flashing. Press this button to update your link page files. If you'd like you can make many changes and then generate your link pages once when you're all done. When you generate your link pages, **LinkMachine** gives you a link that allows you to preview your new link pages in a browser.

There are two aspects to customizing your link pages: customizing the design of your link pages, and customizing the layout of the link tables themselves. You design the look of your link pages by creating a web page template for your link pages. This is simply an HTML web page file with the text **#CONTENT#** someplace in it. This text will be replaced with your tables of links. By using a template page, you can make your link pages match the other pages on your site.
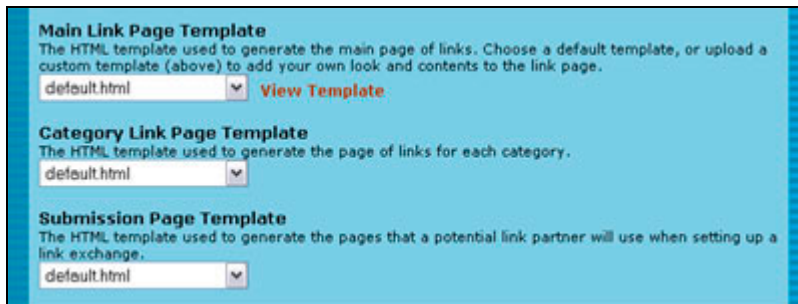
You can create a template page the same way you'd create any other web page - using a WYSIWYG editor such as Frontpage or DreamWeaver, or using an HTML editor. All you need to do to make a page into a **LinkMachine** template page is to place the word **#CONTENT#** somewhere on it.

Once you've created a template page you need to upload it to **LinkMachine**. On the Settings page, click on *Link Page Format*. At the top of this page is a section titled *Upload HTML Template*. Press the *Browse...* button and select the template page file that you've created. Now press the *Upload* button to send the file to LinkMachine.

*The **Upload HTML Template** section*

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Once you've uploaded a template page, you need to tell **LinkMachine** to use it. Near the top of the *Link Page Format* settings page are four pop-down menus: *Main Link Page Template*, *Category Link Page Template*, *Submission Page Template*, and *Search Results Page Template*. Choose the name of the template page that you've uploaded, from each of these menus. You can also create different templates for the different types of pages. Notice that **LinkMachine** comes with a variety of simple template pages built in. You can click on the *View Template* link to view any page template.

Main Link Page Template
The HTML template used to generate the main page of links. Choose a default template, or upload a custom template (above) to add your own look and contents to the link page.

default.html   **View Template**

Category Link Page Template
The HTML template used to generate the page of links for each category.

default.html

Submission Page Template
The HTML template used to generate the pages that a potential link partner will use when setting up a link exchange.

default.html

Choosing which templates to use.

The three template menus allow you to set the main link page, the sub-pages for the various categories, and the link exchange submission pages, to use different templates from one another. In most cases you'll probably want to have them all use the same template. But occasionally you might want to add special content to one page but not another. For instance, you could add special instructions to the submission pages.

The rest of the *Link Page Format* page is devoted to the appearance of the link tables that **LinkMachine** inserts within your link pages. The most important of these options is the *Layout Style* menu - choose one of the predefined layout styles from this menu.

Each of the link page format options are explained within the *Link Page Format* section. Try out different layout styles and different colors, and choose a look that works for your site. Each time you make changes to the *Link Page Format* settings, press the *Submit* button at the bottom of the section to save the changes. Your link pages will be updated automatically.

Below are a few examples of a link page, demonstrating different layout styles:

Single Page, Descriptions

Single Page, No Descriptions

Featured Sites
    Affiliate Hangout   Amadeus Translations
    Mike's Marketing Tools   Russian Linguist Agency
    The Smiry Webdirectory

Internet Products and Services
    Affiliate Hangout   Vincent Computer Services

Link Partners
    The Smiry Webdirectory

Search Engine Optimization
    Mike's Marketing Tools   Search Engine Marketing
                                    Forums

Sites Using LinkMachine
    Amadeus Translations   Play-Free-Online-Games.com
    Russian Linguist Agency

2 Columns, Categories

Featured Sites

Affiliate Hangout
Your one stop affiliate program directory, discussion board and link exchange.

Amadeus Translations
A leading international translation agency with a worldwide network of translators.

Mike's Marketing Tools
Quality products and services for online marketing

Russian Linguist Agency
A team of qualified Russian to English and English to Russian translators specializing in Russian translation services.

The Smiry Webdirectory
A complete web directory.

Internet Products and Services

Affiliate Hangout
Your one stop affiliate program directory, discussion board and link exchange.

Vincent Computer Services
Computer Consultant in the RI and Southern Massachusetts area. Computers, networks, phones, and websites!

Link Partners

The Smiry Webdirectory
A complete web directory.

Search Engine Optimization

Narrow, Categories, Centered

Compact, Single Page, Categories

Compact, Single Page, No Categories

Single Page, No Categories, Descriptions

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A customized layout style

Congratulations! Your link pages are now ready to be seen by the public. **Be sure** to add a link to your main link page from somewhere else on your site - preferably from the home page. Webmasters will only want to exchange links with your site if your site's visitors (and search engines) can easily find the link to their site.

The final step is to make sure that the sites that you've exchanged links with, continue to link to your site.

Step 7: Checking Links

You now know all the basics about setting up link exchanges with **LinkMachine**. The final step is to check occasionally to make sure that the sites that exchanged links with your site continue to link back to your site. Normally this would be a time consuming process, but **LinkMachine** does all the work for you.

When a webmaster submits their website for a link exchange, one of the pieces of information they're asked for is the URL of their web page that contains the reciprocal link back to your site. This is the URL where **LinkMachine** will look to check that the site continues to link back to your site.

To check all of the sites you've exchanged links with for their reciprocal links back to your site, press the *Check All Sites For Reciprocal Links* button in the control panel. The check may take several minutes if you've got a lot of sites in your site list. When finished, **LinkMachine** will tell you how many reciprocal links it found newly missing, and how many were missing previously but have now been restored.

The next step is to contact the webmasters of these sites with missing reciprocal links, to let them know that you don't find the link. To view only the sites in your site list that are missing reciprocal links back to your site and have not yet been contacted about it, select *Status: Link-back missing* from the *Show* menu in the control panel. You may wish to use the *Order* menu to list the sites in your site list by order of date modified, to see at the top of the list all of the sites that were most recently found to be missing a reciprocal link.
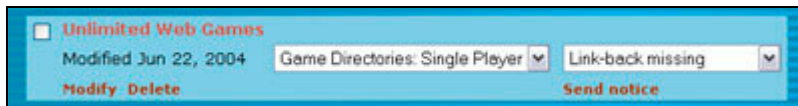
*A site with the status **Link-back missing**.*

The entry for each site with the status *Link-back missing* includes a link labeled *Send notice*. Click this link to send an e-mail notifying the webmaster of that site that their reciprocal link to your site is missing. Just as when you sent your link exchange request e-mails, you'll be shown the address, subject line, and body text of your e-mail before it's sent. Here you can make any final changes to your e-mail before you send it out. The e-mail's text is based on the *Link-Back Missing Notice E-mail* template that you can change on the Settings page if you'd like.

Send a notice to each site that is missing its reciprocal link back to your site. If there are any sites that you choose to link to even though they don't link back to your site, set their status to *One way link*.

Once you've sent out notices to the webmasters of these sites, allow them a week or so to respond. Then have **LinkMachine** check for new reciprocal links by pressing the *Check All Sites For Reciprocal Links* button again. Some of the sites that had no reciprocal link earlier may have replaced their reciprocal link to your site. Others may still not link back to your site. You may decide to send these sites a reminder e-mail, or to remove their links from your link pages.

You now know everything you need to know to create and maintain an effective

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reciprocal link exchange program, using **LinkMachine**! We hope you find **LinkMachine** to be a powerful tool to help you build the popularity of your website. To delve deeper into some of **LinkMachine**'s most useful features, you can go on to read about its SEO Features and its Advanced Options. And for more information, you may want to take a look at the **LinkMachine** FAQ and Tips.

Section 3: SEO Features

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the art of getting a web site to rank high in search results. Because so many people rely on the top search engines (especially Google and Yahoo) to find what they're looking for, ranking near the top of the search results for keywords that are relevant to the focus of your site can have a tremendous impact on the number of visitors your site receives.

There are two types of SEO techniques, on-site and off-site. On-site techniques involve making changes to your own web site. These include filling your site with quality content that mixes in the right balance of keywords, and choosing the right page titles, meta tags, and internal link structures. Off-site SEO is about link popularity - search engines judge how useful a site is largely by how many other sites link to it, and by the quality of these incoming links.

LinkMachine is about helping you exchange links with other high quality sites that are relevant to the topic of your site. This is a very effective method of building a site's link popularity. This section focuses on some of **LinkMachine**'s advanced features that are especially focused on helping you to increase your site's search engine ranking.

The Site List Display

By default, each site's entry in **LinkMachine**'s Site List begins with the site's title (clicking on the title launches the site in a new window), followed (if the site has a reciprocal link to your site) by a chain link icon that when clicked will launch the reciprocal link's page in a new window.

It's possible to display additional useful information here as well. Click on *Change Settings >> SEO Settings*. To change what information is shown in each entry in the Site List, select an option from the *Site List Display* drop down menu. You may choose to show each site's title, its URL, or its title, URL, and rank. Examples of these three variations are shown below.

*The **Site List Display** options.*

Displaying each site's rank in the Site List can be useful for helping you decide which link submissions to accept and which to reject. A reciprocal link on a sites with a higher Google PageRank will do more to increase you own site's PageRank than a

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site with a lower PageRank. The Alexa Rank is Alexa's estimate of where the site ranks in its list of web site popularity. The lower this number, the more visitors the site receives - and so the more visitors that a link from the site is liable to send to you.

Displaying Google PageRank

By turning on the option *Show the Google PageRank of Each Site* on the *SEO Settings* page, you can have **LinkMachine** keep track of the Google PageRank of the home page and the reciprocal link page of each site that you exchange links with. If this option is turned on and your *Site List Display* (above) is set to *Title, URL, and Rank*, then each site's PageRank will be displayed in your Site List. If the site has a reciprocal link to your site, then the PageRank of the site's reciprocal link page will be shown after the PageRank of the site's main page, separated by a slash. The PageRank of the site's main page and its reciprocal link page are also shown on the site's Modify page.

Having instant access to each site's PageRank can be useful in helping you decide whether to exchange links with a site. Note, however, that in order to find out each site's PageRank, **LinkMachine** must send automated queries to Google, which is against their terms of service. Because of this, this option is turned off by default.

Flagging Sites with PageRank 0

Google has been known to sometimes penalize a web site that uses "black hat" SEO practices - "cheats" such as setting up "doorway" domains that have no purpose other than to link to the main site, in hopes of increasing its PageRank. When Google penalizes a site, the site's PageRank is reduced to zero and that site no longer shows up in Google's search results.

Some people believe that a site's PageRank can be hurt if that site links to a site that's been penalized in this way. If this is the case, then it is important to check the sites that you exchange links with, to make sure that none of them have been penalized.

If you've turned on the *Show the Google PageRank of Each Site* setting, then there will be a new option added to your Site List's *Show* drop-down menu. Select to show *Sites with PageRank 0* to display only those sites in your list with PageRank 0.

However, keep in mind that it's not only penalized sites that will have a PageRank of 0. More commonly, brand new sites that have gone online since Google's last PageRank update will also have a PageRank of 0. If you want to exchange links with high quality new sites but avoid exchanging links with sites that Google has penalized, you can get a rough estimate of a site's age by checking its listing in the *Internet Archive*. You can find a link to a site's Internet Archive page at the bottom of the site's Modify page (see below).

Alternate Site Profiles

When you use **LinkMachine** to exchange *InstantLinks* with other sites that use **LinkMachine**, the reciprocal link created on the other site (the link that points to your site) will automatically use your Site Title for its anchor text, your Site

Description for its description and your Site URL as the address that the link points to. These three pieces of information, which we'll call your site's "primary profile", are entered on the Site Settings page.

When a visitor submits a link using your site's link exchange submission form, they are encouraged to post a reciprocal link on their site, pointing to your site. Again, the information that they're given for the reciprocal link comes from your site's primary profile.

Finally, your site's primary profile information is used to replace the **%MYTITLE%**, **%MYDESCRIPTION%**, and **%MYURL%** wildcards in the link exchange invitation e-mails that you send out.

The benefit of this is that you have control over the anchor text, description, and URL used in the reciprocal links to your site. The tradeoff is that all of the reciprocal links to your site may end up using the same anchor text, description, and URL as one another.

However with **LinkMachine**, you no longer have that limitation. On the *SEO Settings* page you can enter any number of alternate profiles - alternate sets of title, description, and URL for your site. If you enter one or more alternate profiles, then when an *InstantLink* is created between your site and another, the information for that site's reciprocal link to your site will come from one of your alternate profiles - **LinkMachine** chooses randomly. Your primary profile will not be used. Likewise when a visitor submits a new link, the information they're given as a suggestion for their reciprocal link will come from one of your alternate profiles, and when you send out a link exchange invitation e-mail, the information about your site will be filled in using a randomly chosen alternate profile. By creating alternate profiles, you can ensure that there will be variety among the reciprocal links to your site - while still having control over them.

Why would you want any variety among the reciprocal links to your site? For one thing, the anchor text of the links to your site (the actual clickable link text, which comes from your Site Title) goes a long way toward determining what searches your site will rank well for. If a lot of links to your site have the anchor text "fishing tackle", for example, this will generally help improve its rank in search results when people type "fishing tackle" into a search engine. You can create alternate profiles with different titles, to help your site rank well for a few different related keywords. For instance, you could have some links to your site use the keywords "fishing tackle", while others use "fishing equipment" and others use "fishing gear".

*Several **Alternate Profiles** with varying titles.*

In addition, some people believe that the percentage of the links pointing to your site that include a particular keyword will determine how well you rank in searches for that keyword. While you might rank better for a keyword in some search engines if all of the links to your site contain that keyword, in other engines you might rank best if just 40% of the links use that keyword. By using alternate profiles, you can determine roughly what percentage of reciprocal links to your site will use a given keyword. If you want keyword A to appear in twice as many links to your site as keyword B, create two alternate profiles with keyword A in the title, and one with keyword B.

Another use of alternate profiles is to make it so that the reciprocal links to your site point to a variety of different pages. Usually you'll probably want reciprocal links to point to your site's main page. But in some cases, you may want to get links to point to particular other pages on your site as well. You can do this easily using alternate profiles, by setting the URLs of several alternate profiles to point to several different pages. In fact you can even enter the URL of an altogether different site of yours into an alternate profile, allowing you to set up "non-reciprocal" link exchanges: "I'll link to you from my site A, if you place a link on your site to my site B".

In addition, on the *Link Categories* settings page you can select for any (or every) category a single alternate profile that will be used for all links that are assigned to that category. This way you could, for example, have all of the "jewelry" related sites in your link directory link back to a jewelry related page on your site, using jewelry related anchor text.

When **LinkMachine** checks each site for its reciprocal link back to your site, it will consider a reciprocal link valid if it points to the URL in your primary profile, or any of your alternate profiles.

Checking Anchor Text

When you have **LinkMachine** check each site for its reciprocal link, it records the anchor text of each reciprocal link pointing to your site. To view the anchor text of a site's reciprocal link, go to that site's Modify page (Click the *Modify* link on the site's entry in the Site List). You will see the reciprocal link's anchor text under the label *Reciprocal Link URL*.
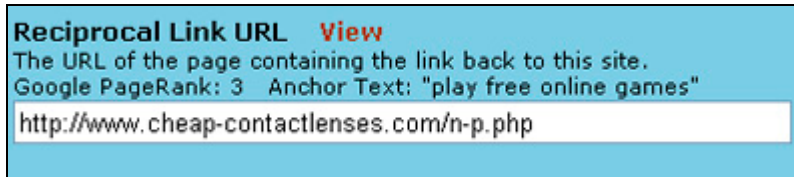
*A reciprocal link's anchor text, on a site's **Modify** page.*

You can also have **LinkMachine** show you just which sites use irregular anchor text in their reciprocal link. In the Control Panel, select *Sites with Irregular Anchor Text* from the *Show* menu. A reciprocal link is considered to have irregular anchor text if the anchor text differs from the Site Title that you specified in your site's primary profile (on the *Site Settings* page) and the titles you specified in any of your alternate profiles (on the *SEO Settings* page).

Alternate Link Text

Normally when you move your mouse over a link, the URL that the link points to will appear in your browser's status bar. This is usually the case for all of the links on the link pages that **LinkMachine** generates.

In a few cases, however, you may wish to hide the actual URL that a link points to, from the average visitor to your link pages. Why? Say your link pages include affiliate links. For whatever reason, some people seem to want to avoid following affiliate links, as if by giving due credit to an affiliate they would somehow be put at a disadvantage. This mistaken perception causes some people to avoid clicking on affiliate links, or to place the mouse over an affiliate link, read its URL in the status bar, and then type the URL into the address bar, leaving out the affiliate information.

You can hide the URL that a link points to by specifying alternate text for that link. To do this, go to the site's Modify page by clicking on the site's *Modify* link in its Site List entry. Then, under *Alternate Link Text*, enter the text that you'd like to have appear in a visitor's status bar when they move the mouse over this link. You may enter a version of the site's URL that leaves off the affiliate information, or the site's title, or anything else you wish.

This feature works differently depending on the browser that is being used to view the link in question. As of this writing, moving the mouse over a link with alternate link text will display the alternate text in the status bar on Internet Explorer, and leave the status bar blank in FireFox.

Site Information Links

At the bottom of a site's Modify page is a list of useful links that will display various information about the site. These include the site's Alexa information page, its Internet Archive history page, and its list of backlinks (links pointing to that site from other sites) according to Google or the MSN search engine.
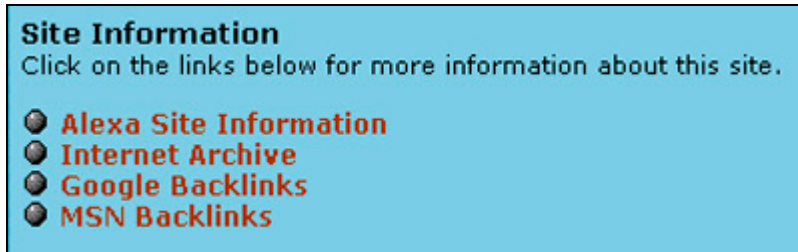
*The set of information links on a site's **Modify** page.*

Category Specific Page Templates

LinkMachine allows you to create highly customized link pages that match the look of the rest of your site. This is done using page templates. Normally you would create a page template, then upload it and select it for use, on the *Link Page Format* settings page.

In addition, you can choose to create a different page template for each category of links, if you'd like. To do this, create and upload each category's page template as usual. Then go to the *Link Categories* settings page, select a category that you've created a special page template for, and select that category's page template from the drop-down menu under *Category Link Page Template* at the bottom of the page. Then click *Update Template*. Repeat this process for each category for which you've created a special page template. Any categories that you don't specify a page template for will use the *Category Link Page Template* specified on the *Link Page Format* settings page, as usual.

Why would you want to create special page templates for some (or all) of your link categories? As an example, you could include an article about dating services in the page template for your dating services link category. This relevant content accompanying your links would make the page more useful to visitors, and more appealing to search engines. In this way, you could create a "niche" site featuring pages of categorized affiliate links accompanied by informative articles relevant to the topic of those links.

Google Web API Key

LinkMachine uses the Google search engine to find potential link partners. Making automated queries of the Google engine in this manner is not in compliance with Google's terms of service. To comply with the terms of service, you may register for a free Google Web API Key at Google's site. Once you've received your key, enter it on the *Site Settings* page, under *Google Web API Key*, and press *Submit Changes*. Now that you are using a Web API key, your searches for potential link partners will

be in compliance with Google's terms of service.

Note that having **LinkMachine** display each link partner's Google PageRank (by turning on *Google Web API Key* on the *SEO Settings* page) also involves making automated queries of the Google search engine. Using a Google Web API key will not make a difference in this case, because Google does not make PageRank information available via their Web API.

Section 4: Advanced Options

This section discusses several additional features of **LinkMachine** that not everyone will have occasion to use, but are worth noting.

Automation

LinkMachine offers the option of automating the link management process. It can automatically check all of your reciprocal links on a regular basis; e-mail reminders to webmasters who have been sent link exchange invitation e-mails; e-mail notices to the webmasters of sites that are missing their reciprocal link back to your site, and remove a site from your link page if its reciprocal link has been missing for an extended period of time. All of these options are available via *Change Settings >> Automation Settings*.

In order to enable the automation features on your site, **LinkMachine**'s automation script must be called on a regular basis - preferably at least once per hour. This can be done by running a *cron job* on your web server, or by inserting code into one of your site's more heavily trafficked pages (such as the home page) that will call the automation script whenever a visitor views the page. Both of these options are explained under *Enabling Automation* at the top of the *Automation Settings* page.

LinkMachine keeps a record of every action performed via automation. You can view this *Automation History* at the bottom of the *Automation Settings* page.

Spidering for Reciprocal Links

When checking a site for its reciprocal link, **LinkMachine Premium** can spider the site's pages in search of the link if its isn't found at the site's Reciprocal Link URL (or if no such URL is provided). This causes the reciprocal link check to take longer, but allows **LinkMachine** to find links that have been moved. The *Maximum Number of Pages to Spider for Link Check* can be specified on the *Automation Settings* page. The higher this number the more likely **LinkMachine** will find a link that's been moved, but also the longer the reciprocal link check will take.

Link Page Filenames

By default, the filename of your main link page generated by **LinkMachine** will be "resources.html", and the file will be located in your site's "linkmachine/resources/" folder. However, you can change the filename of each page that **LinkMachine** generates, and you can change the location on your site where they are placed. This is especially useful if you'd like **LinkMachine** to replace existing link pages that have already gained PageRank and been indexed by search engines.

Under *Change Settings >> Site Settings*, you can change the *Filename of Main Link Page* and the *Filename of Link Submission Form*. You can also change the *Location of Link Pages* to refer to any directory on your web server. Make sure that the directory you specify here has its write permissions turned on, so that **LinkMachine** will be able to generate the files within that directory.

By default, the link page generated for each category of links is based on the

Filename of Main Link Page. For example, if your *Filename of Main Link Page* is set to "resources.html", the filename of the link page for the category "Real Estate" would default to "resources_real_estate.html". You can however specify a custom page filename for each category, if you wish. To do so, go to *Change Settings >> Link Categories*, select a category from the list, enter the new filename under *Category Link Page Filename*, and press *Update Filename*.

Text Settings

Under *Change Settings >> Text Settings*, you have the option to change any of the standard text that **LinkMachine** adds to the link pages and site submission form that it generates. This includes the standard link page navigational links, the titles and descriptions of the entry fields on the site submission form, and other standard text used on the link pages and site submission form.

This can be especially useful if the target audience for your site speaks a language other than English; you can translate the standard text to the appropriate language. You can also modify the standard text however you would like to better fit the personality of your site.

Submission Page Header

By default, a title, a few sentences instructing a visitor to place a reciprocal link on their own site, and a box containing sample html code for that link, are included at the top of the site submission page.

You can change the text of the title or the reciprocal linking instructions, under *Change Settings >> Text Settings*. You can also remove the entire standard submission page header (if you'd prefer to include this information in your own page template) by un-checking the checkbox labeled *Show Submission Page Header*, under *Change Settings >> Link Page Format >> Advanced Options*.

Note that if you use *alternate profiles*, the standard submission page header is especially handy because each time it is displayed, it will choose randomly from among your site's primary profile and all of its alternate profiles, to determine what information to show in the suggested reciprocal linking code.

Submission Result URL

When a visitor submits a link and their submission is accepted, they are shown a standard "thank you" page. If you'd like to provide your own page for a visitor to be directed to after successfully submitting a site, you can specify the URL of this page under *Change Settings >> Link Page Format >> Advanced Options >> Submission Result Page URL*.

Smart Template Linking

A common problem when uploading a page template to **LinkMachine** is that the images and links on the template don't work. This is because a page template created with an editor such as Frontpage will usually use relative links (such as "images/logo.gif") rather than absolute links (such as

"http://mysite.com/images/logo.gif") and so the links depend upon the page being located in a particular directory, in order to work correctly. The link pages that are generated based on the template end up in a directory that's often different from the one that the relative links in the template are relative to, so the links don't work.

LinkMachine's *Smart Template Linking* feature addresses this problem by replacing the relative links in a page template with absolute links, before generating the link pages. To do this, it assumes that the template was created as if it were to be placed in your site's main directory.

Smart Template Linking can be turned on or off under *Change Settings >> Link Page Format >> Advanced Options*, using the checkbox labeled *Use Smart Template Linking*. It is turned on by default on new **LinkMachine** installations.

Filtering Link Submissions

Under *Change Settings >> Link Approval Settings* you'll find several options for having **LinkMachine** automatically reject link submissions that do not meet certain criteria.

Check the box labeled *Require Reciprocal Link Before Accepting Submission* to have **LinkMachine** require that a submitted link have a working reciprocal before it will be accepted. Check the box labeled *Require That Each Reciprocal Link Is Unique* to reject a link submission if its reciprocal link URL is the same as that of any other link already in your database.

Using the drop down menu labeled *Required Minimum PageRank For Reciprocal Link*, you may choose to reject link submissions if their reciprocal link is located on a page whose PageRank is below the value you specify. You can also choose the *Required Location For Reciprocal Link*, to require that a reciprocal link be located on the same page that your site will be linking to, or at most one link away, or that it be somewhere on the same domain. You can also allow the reciprocal link page to be located anywhere.

Finally, you can enter any number of words or phrases in the *Content Filter* text box. Each word or phrase should be on its own line. A submitted link will be rejected if the page at that URL contains any of the words or phrases that you list in the content filter. This is a handy way to keep unwanted types of sites out of your link directory.

Requiring Admin Approval of New Submissions

Normally **LinkMachine** will set the status of a newly submitted site to *Not Yet Reviewed*. You will then need to approve the site before it will be added to your link directory. This allows you to filter out any unwanted sites before they are added.

If you would prefer the additional automation and do not wish to pre-approve all links before adding them to your directory, you can turn off the approval requirement under *Change Settings >> Link Page Format*, using the checkbox *Require Admin Approval Before Posting Submitted Links*. With this turned off, submitted sites will automatically have their status set to *Link Exchange Complete*.

Private Categories

Normally, each link category that you create on the *Link Categories* settings page is open to visitor link submissions. If you would like to create a private link category that only you (as the admin) can add links to, select that category from the list on the *Link Categories* settings page and check the box labeled *Exclude Selected Category from Submission Form*.

Link Page Bullets

You may choose to have **LinkMachine** place a bullet point graphic before each category, subcategory, and/or link in your link directory. Under *Change Settings >> Link Page Format >> Advanced Options* you may choose for each of these, whether to show no bullet, the standard round bullet, or a custom bullet image. If you choose Custom, you may enter the URL for your custom bullet image. Bullets can be useful for visual organization and to further incorporate the look of your site into your link directory.

E-mail Settings

Under *Change Settings >> E-mail Settings*, you can change various e-mail options. You can select whether to have **LinkMachine** send e-mails directly through your web server, or (if your server is not set up to send e-mails) you may send them yourself. You can choose whether to send HTML or plain text e-mails. You can also choose which events you would like to receive automatic e-mail notifications about. Finally, you can select whether you would like to receive a copy of every e-mail that **LinkMachine** sends out to anyone else (link exchange invitations, etc.)

InstantLink Settings

Under *Change Settings >> InstantLink Settings*, you can set a maximum limit on the number of your InstantLink exchanges (link exchanges with other **LinkMachine** users) that can be automatic exchanges. An exchange can be automatic if it is with another site that shares at least one category with your own site. If you would prefer to make no automatic link exchanges (and instead require approval of each InstantLink exchange before it's completed), you may set this number to zero.

Site Licenses

After purchasing **LinkMachine Premium**, your account is licensed to be used on up to three different web sites. If you would like to use **LinkMachine** on more than three sites, you may purchase additional site licenses. Under *Change Settings >> Upgrade LinkMachine*, you will be shown the number of site licenses you own, and how many are currently in use. You are also given the option to purchase one additional site license for $10, a block of eight site licenses for $50, or 50 for $200.

To install **LinkMachine** on a new site, simply install it as you did on your first site, using either the automatic online installer or the installation script. Then log into **LinkMachine** on the new site using the same account information that you use to log in to your original **LinkMachine** installation; do not create a new account for the

new installation. This way, if you upgrade your **LinkMachine** account the upgrade will apply to all installations where you use that account.

The Modify Page

A site's *Modify* page is where a site's information can be changed. To go to a site's Modify page, click on the *Modify* link on the site's entry in the Site List.

You can have **LinkMachine** attempt to automatically retrieve a site's title, description and e-mail address, by entering the site's URL and clicking the *Fetch Info* link. **LinkMachine** will only fill in fields that are blank, so as not to overwrite any information that you've already entered.

Below the label *Site URL* is displayed the site's Alexa rank. If you've opted to have **LinkMachine** show a site's Google PageRank, then the PageRank of the site's main page will be displayed here as well, and the PageRank of the page containing the reciprocal link to your site will be shown under the label *Reciprocal Link URL*.

You can use the *Check Link* option beside the label *Reciprocal link URL* to check this individual site's reciprocal link.

On the Modify page you many enter an *Administrator Memo*. This is a note to yourself, and will not be displayed on your link pages or anywhere else besides this admin page.

You may choose to display a special icon or image beside a link. On the Modify page, under *Link Icon Image*, you can choose whether to display no image, a custom image, or a previously used image beside the site's link. If you choose Custom, enter the URL of the custom image. This can be useful for showing rating graphics, attention getter icons such as "New" or "Hot", or custom images containing, for instance, the logo of the particular site.

By default every link has a *weight* of 0, but you can make a link appear toward the top of its list by increasing its weight, or toward the bottom of the list by decreasing its weight.

You may also enter *Alternate Link Text* for a site. The text you enter here will display in the browser's status bar when a visitor moves the mouse over the site's link in your link directory. This can be useful for hiding affiliate links.

Next is the URL of the page where the site's webmaster can go to edit the link's information and the URL of the page in your link directory where that site's link can be found.

Finally, at the bottom of the Modify page are several useful information links about the site. These include the site's Alexa information page, its Internet Archive history page, and its list of backlinks according to either Google or the MSN search engine.

Advanced Link Directory Customization

For most sites, customizing the look of the link directory pages using page templates as described earlier will be sufficient. For webmasters who would like to customize their pages even further, there are advanced customization features.

Normally a page template will include the keyword #CONTENT#, which **LinkMachine** will replace with the full contents of that link directory page. But if you would prefer to arrange the various elements differently than the standard arrangement, you can leave out #CONTENT# altogether and instead use any combination of the following keywords in your template, each of which will be replaced with its corresponding element: #CTG_LIST#, #FEATURED_LIST#, #SEARCH_BOX#, #LINKS#, #STYLES#, #ALIGNMENT_OPEN#, #ALIGNMENT_CLOSE#, #PAGE_NUMBERS#, #NAV_LINKS#, #AUTOMATION_TAG#, #INSIGNIA#, #CTG_NAME#, #CTG_DESC#.

In addition, you can modify the very Php code that is used to generate some of the elements that make up your link directory pages. This is done on the *Link Page Format* settings page, under *Advanced Options*, by modifying the *Element Templates*. For example, you could change the *Link Template* so that each link displays the site's URL below its description.

Transferring Link and Category Data Using *.csv* Files

Sometimes it is handy to be able to transfer your links or link categories from one **LinkMachine** installation to another, for example if you want the same links or categories to appear on multiple sites. To do this, go to *Change Settings >> Backup Data*. From this page you can export **LinkMachine**'s link and category data as a *.csv* file. This is a text file that can be opened and modified in a text editor such as Notepad or a spreadsheet program like Excel. You can add, change or remove links or categories this way if you'd like. You can then import category data from a .csv file into **LinkMachine** from the *Backup Data* page, or import links from a .csv file by going to *Add Sites To The List* and selecting *Add the links from a .csv file*.

Section 5: Premium and SEO Tools

This section covers the additional components that come with **LinkMachine**'s **Premium** and **SEO** upgrade packages.

SEO Wizard

The SEO Wizard is a powerful tool that can produce complete step-by-step instructions for improving your site's search ranking. It's practically the equivalent of hiring your own SEO expert.

SEO Wizard does this by looking at your top ranking competitors' sites. It examines both the on-page factors (the contents of the pages themselves) and the off-page factors (the number, PageRank and anchor text of incoming links). It then compares the results for your top ranking competitors' sites to the results for your own site, and breaks down exactly what you need to do to match their success.

No approach to search engine optimization is infallible, and search engine algorithms can change at any time. But SEO Wizard produces successful results by applying a scientific method - it looks at exactly what already does work for your successful competitors, rather than using abstract rules that someone thinks should work, which is exactly what a lot of other SEO software out there does.

To open the SEO Wizard, select it from the *Go To...* menu at the top of the screen.

If you've already started any SEO Wizard projects, you will be presented with the options to start a new project or to open an existing project. If you have not yet started any projects, you will be brought immediately to the *New Project* page.

*The **SEO Wizard**'s New Project Page.*

To create a new SEO Wizard project, enter the URL of the web page that you would like to optimize, and the keyword or set of keywords that you want this page to rank well for in search results. Then choose which search engine you would like to optimize your page for. You may want to compare the results for a few of the top search engines. Finally, select your target search results rank - Top 30, Top 20, Top 10, or Number 1. You may find it more practical to start with the less ambitious goal of getting into the top 30, and work your way up from there over time.

Note that in the free trial version of SEO Wizard, the only search engine option available is *AllTheWeb*, and the only available target position is *Top 30*. To activate all of the options, upgrade to LinkMachine's SEO package by selecting *Upgrade* from the *Go To...* menu.

After filling in all of the project's information, click on *Start SEO Wizard*. SEO Wizard will then begin churning away, examining potentially tens of thousands of different web sites as it researches the ingredients for success used by the competing sites that have already obtained the search ranks that you want. Depending on the popularity of the keywords you are looking to rank well for, this process can take up to several hours. Imagine doing all of this research yourself - it could take months to put together the same information.

If for some reason SEO Wizard is interrupted while working on a project (for instance if your web browser is closed), you can return to the project and continue where it left off by choosing *Open an Existing Project* from SEO Wizard's main page, and clicking on the *Open* link for the project you would like to continue. You can also use the *Open Project* page to view the results of a project that has already been completed, or to remove an old project from the list.

SEO Wizard's Open Project Page.

When a new project has finished being researched, or when an existing project is opened, the SEO Wizard displays its results page for the project. At the top of this page is the information about this project: the URL of the page it is intended to optimize, the search query being optimized for, and the target search engine and results position for the project. If the project is more than one day old, there will also be a link here to refresh the project, re-starting its research from scratch.

SEO Wizard Results   **Return to SEO Wizard Home**

Project Info

Project Page URL: http://link-exchange.ws
Project Search Query: link exchange
Project Search Engine: Google
Project Target Position: Top 10
● Refresh Data (This project's data is 4 days old.)

PageRanks of Incoming Links

What is this?

This section will show you how many links there are to your page, and how many links there are to your competitors' pages. The links are divided by *PageRank* value. PageRank is Google's system for rating the popularity and influence of a web page. The scale ranges from 0 through 10; the higher the PageRank the more popular the web page. To increase your page's rank in search results, acquire as many incoming links as possible, with an emphasis on links from pages with higher PageRank values. The number and quality of incoming links to your page, as well as the anchor text of those links (see below), are the most important factors influencing how well your page will rank in the search engines.

Comparison

PageRank	Links to Your Page	Links to Competing Pages		
0	339 (35%)	High: 400 (34%)	Avg: 210 (15%)	Low: 0 (0%)
1	121 (12%)	High: 169 (12%)	Avg: 89 (6%)	Low: 0 (0%)
2	201 (21%)	High: 407 (23%)	Avg: 187 (13%)	Low: 0 (0%)
3	168 (17%)	High: 535 (37%)	Avg: 289 (20%)	Low: 0 (0%)
4	63 (6%)	High: 840 (47%)	Avg: 217 (14%)	Low: 0 (0%)
5	15 (2%)	High: 444 (25%)	Avg: 79 (5%)	Low: 0 (0%)
6	7 (1%)	High: 71 (4%)	Avg: 11 (1%)	Low: 0 (0%)
7	0 (0%)	High: 2 (0%)	Avg: 0 (0%)	Low: 0 (0%)

Actions

- Acquire 121 new PageRank 3 incoming links to your page.
  Click here to add potential PR 3 link partners to your site list.
- Acquire 154 new PageRank 4 incoming links to your page.
  Click here to add potential PR 4 link partners to your site list.
- Acquire 64 new PageRank 5 incoming links to your page.
  Click here to add potential PR 5 link partners to your site list.
- Acquire 4 new PageRank 6 incoming links to your page.
  Click here to add potential PR 6 link partners to your site list.

*Top of **SEO Wizard**'s Results Page.*

Below this is the first section of results for the project, dealing with the PageRanks of incoming links. For each PageRank value, the number of incoming links to your site is shown - along with the high, average, and low values for the number of incoming links to each of the sites that have succeeded in achieving the search engine placement you're after. Below this is a list of recommended actions to take - in this case, how many new incoming links you'll need to attain from pages with each PageRank value. A link is provided to a list of sites that link to your competitors from pages with each PageRank value; from there you can easily add these sites to your own Site List, so as to send out link exchange invitations. Many of the sites that are interested in linking to your competition may also be interested in linking to your site as well.

Anchor Text of Incoming Links

What is this?

The anchor text of a link is the actual clickable text of that link. For a page to rank well in search results for a particular query, it is very important that the words in that search query appear in the anchor text of many of the links pointing to the page. For example, to rank well for the query 'tennis gear', be sure that those two words are used in the anchor text of many of the links to your page. But, it is also increasingly important that there is variation in anchor text among the links to your page, so avoid having most of your incoming links use the same anchor text as one another. Search engines pick up on this as a sign of artificial manipulation.

Comparison

In Anchor	Links to Your Page	Links to Competing Pages		
war	1 (14%)	High: 7 (100%)	Avg: 1 (20%)	Low: 0 (0%)
of	1 (14%)	High: 1 (100%)	Avg: 0 (20%)	Low: 0 (0%)
conquest	1 (14%)	High: 2 (100%)	Avg: 0 (10%)	Low: 0 (0%)
affiliate	0 (0%)	High: 25 (100%)	Avg: 3 (20%)	Low: 0 (0%)
program	0 (0%)	High: 25 (96%)	Avg: 3 (10%)	Low: 0 (0%)
Full Query	0 (0%)	High: 0 (0%)	Avg: 0 (0%)	Low: 0 (0%)

Actions

- Right now 0% of incoming links include the keyword 'affiliate' in their anchor text. This should be increased to about 10%. Have the keyword included in the anchor text of most new incoming links until this target has been reached.
- Right now 0% of incoming links include the keyword 'program' in their anchor text. This should be increased to about 5%. Have the keyword included in the anchor text of most new incoming links until this target has been reached.

SEO Wizard's Anchor Text Report.

Next is SEO Wizard's report on the anchor text of incoming links. This section compares the anchor text of links to your page with that of links to your successful competition's pages. This section is very important; most search engines use the anchor text of incoming links as a major factor in determining how well a site will rank for a particular search query. At the bottom of this section, recommendations are given for what words should appear more or less frequently in links to your site. You can use LinkMachine's *Alternate Profiles* feature to vary the anchor text of incoming links to your page, and control how often each word is used.

The following several sections deal with on-page factors, such as page title, image alt text, meta tags, etc. The recommended actions in these sections can be undertaken right away, since they entail changes to your own page rather than building up new links. However, keep in mind that the most important factors tend to be the off-page factors.

At the bottom of the results page are links to the Link Analyzer results for each of the sites that SEO Wizard has analyzed for this project. These can be useful to give you a detailed look at the types of sites that are linking to your successful competitors, the number and PageRanks of their incoming links, and the anchor text of those links.

SEO Wizard gives you detailed instructions for improving your site's search rank by looking at what already works well for other sites. While no approach to SEO is perfect, SEO Wizard should help remove much of the uncertainty from the process of climbing the ladder of search engine ranks.

Link Analyzer

The Link Analyzer is used to illuminate important information about the incoming links to your own page, or to your competitors' pages. It uses multiple search engines to compile as complete a list as possible of incoming links, and organizes them to display important facts about their anchor text, PageRanks, and more.

To open the Link Analyzer, select it from the *Go To...* menu at the top of the screen.
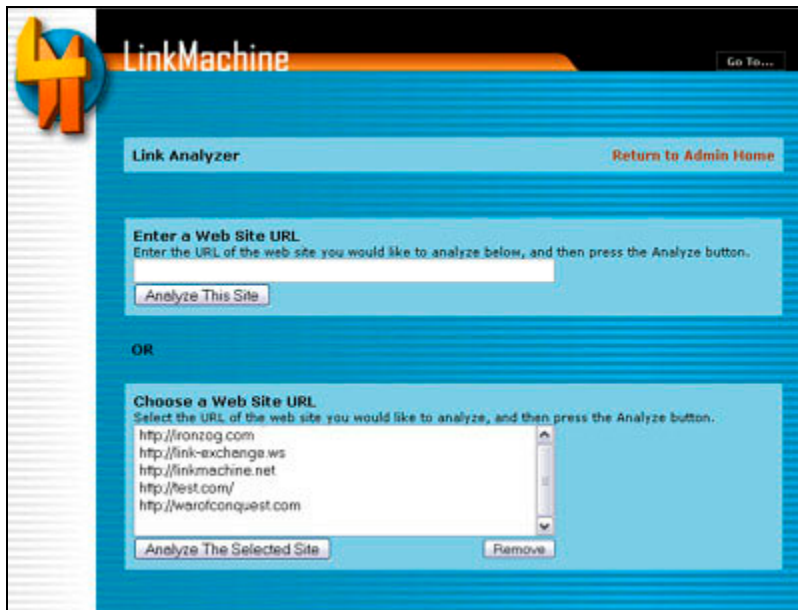
*The **Link Analyzer** main page.*

The Link Analyzer's main page consists of a text entry box for entering the URL of a page you would like to analyze. If you've already analyzed any pages with the Link Analyzer, this page will also show a selectable list of all pages you've analyzed. To proceed, enter a URL or select a URL that you've previously analyzed.

If you've entered a new URL, the Link Analyzer will go on to examine each of the links to that URL that it finds. Depending on the popularity of the web page you are analyzing, this could involve thousands of links and take up to several hours.

When the analysis is complete, the Link Analyzer Results page will be shown.

Links to http://warofconquest.com			PR0	PR1	PR2	PR3	PR4	PR5
All Links (264)			184	16	17	10	10	3

Anchor Text	As Anchor	In Title	PR0	PR1	PR2	PR3	PR4	PR5
war of conquest	151 (57%)	100 (37%)	119	5	6	2	5	3
ironzog	18 (6.8%)	1 (0.3%)	8	4	2	2	1	0
www.warofconquest.com	12 (4.5%)	0 (0%)	9	0	0	1	0	0
(no anchor text)	11 (4.1%)	0 (0%)	6	1	1	1	2	0
http://warofconquest.com/	9 (3.4%)	0 (0%)	3	0	1	2	1	0
printing press	6 (2.2%)	2 (0.7%)	3	0	3	0	0	0
warofconquest.com	4 (1.5%)	0 (0%)	3	0	1	0	0	0
home page	3 (1.1%)	0 (0%)	3	0	0	0	0	0
http://www.warofconquest.com	3 (1.1%)	0 (0%)	3	0	0	0	0	0
visit ironzog	3 (1.1%)	0 (0%)	2	1	0	0	0	0
war of conquest http://warofconquest...	3 (1.1%)	0 (0%)	2	1	0	0	0	0
download woc here	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	2	0	0	0	0	0
http://warofconquest.com	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	2	0	0	0	0	0
http://www.warofconquest.com/	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	2	0	0	0	0	0
linkmachine 1.12	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	0	1	1	0	0	0
visit mystery-player's homepage!	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
war of conquest	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	1	1	0	0	0	0
war of conquest click to open in a n...	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	2	0	0	0	0	0
war of conquest http://www.warofcong...	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	2	0	0	0	0	0
www.warofconquest.com www.warofconqu...	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Link Analyzer Results.

The first section of the Link Analyzer results breaks down the total number of incoming links by PageRank.

The next section lists each complete anchor text used by one or more of the incoming links; for each one, the number of times that anchor text is used as an incoming link anchor is shown, followed by the number of times it is used as the title of a page containing an incoming link, followed by a breakdown by PageRank of all incoming links using that anchor text.

The final section lists each word that appears in the anchor text of at least one of the incoming links. For each word, the number of times that word appears within an incoming link anchor is shown, followed by the number of times it is used within the title of a page containing an incoming link. This is followed by a breakdown by PageRank of all incoming links containing that word.

All of this information can be sorted by clicking on the various column headings. For example, click on the *In Anchor* heading to sort all of the anchor words according to how many times they appear within the anchor of an incoming link.

Any of the items within these tables of data can be clicked on to display a list of all links matching that item. For example, click on *All Links* to display a list of all the incoming links that were found. Click on *PR3* in the *All Links* row to display all of the PageRank 3 links that were found. Or click on *PR3* in the row for a particular anchor text, to display a list of all the PageRank 3 links using that particular anchor text that were found.

A List of Incoming Links.

When displaying a list of links in this way, you can order the list by clicking any of the column headers. You can also add any or all of the links to your **LinkMachine** Site List by marking the checkboxes beside the links you would like to add, and clicking *Add Selected Sites To Site List* at the top of the page. You can check all of the sites' checkboxes at once by checking the topmost checkbox on the header line.

The Link Analyzer can be very helpful in giving you insight into what kinds of sites are linking to your competition, and how the number, anchor text and PageRank of those links are contributing to their success in the search engines. You can easily use the Link Analyzer to add the best sites that link to your competitors to your own Site List, to invite them to exchange links with your site. Link Analyzer can also be used to keep track of the links to your own site.

Rank Tracker

The Rank Tracker can graph the progress of many important stats related to your site, including its search result rank for any query in a number of different search engines, its Google PageRank, Alexa Rank, number of incoming links, and Google *allinanchor*, *allintitle*, and *allintext* ranks for any search query.

To open the Rank Tracker, select it from the *Go To...* menu at the top of the screen.
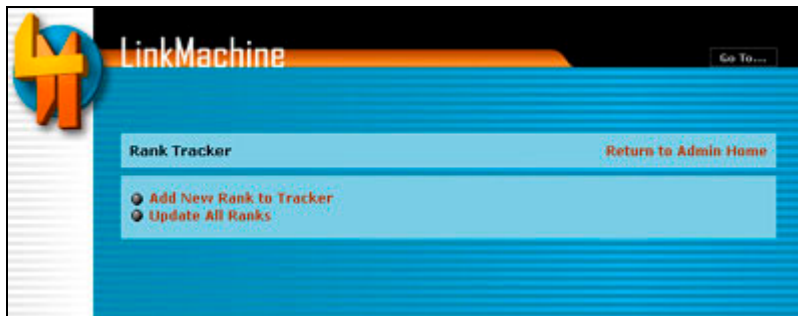
*The main **Rank Tracker** page before adding ranks.*

The first time you open the Rank Tracker, before adding any ranks, you will see only the options to add a new rank and to update all ranks. Click on *Add New Rank to Tracker* to go to the *Add Rank* page.

The Add Rank page.

To add a new rank for the Rank Tracker to track, enter the URL of the page that you want to track a rank for. This can be your site's home page or any other page on your site (or any other site for that matter). Then choose the type of rank to track, and (if applicable for that type) the search engine to track it with. Finally, if you've chosen a rank type that requires a search query, enter the query under *Enter the Search Query* just as it would be entered in a search engine.

The Rank Tracker displaying several ranks.

After entering a new rank, the Rank Tracker will determine the current value for that rank and return you to the main page, where the rank's graph will now be shown. The graph for each rank shows a bar for each value of the rank (each time the rank's value was checked), along with the information about the rank and how much it has changed over the past week and over the past month (if it's been tracked that long). Hold the mouse pointer above any bar in a graph to see the bar's exact value and the date that the bar represents. If no value was found for a given date, a blank gray bar will be displayed in its place.
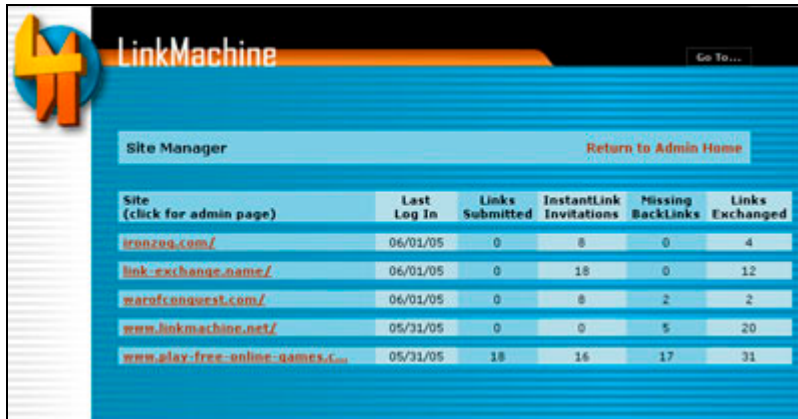
To remove a rank from the tracker, click on the rank's *Remove* link. To update just one rank, click on its *Update* link. To update all of the ranks you are tracking, click on the *Update All Ranks* link at the top of the page.

You can also set up **LinkMachine**'s automation options to update all of your ranks at regular intervals, automatically. To do this, select *Settings* from the *Go To...* menu, and choose *Automation Settings*. Check the box labeled *Automatically Update Rank Tracker* and choose a value for the *Number of Days Between Rank Tracker Updates*. Note that for **LinkMachine**'s automation options to be enabled, the automation script must be called on a regular basis. Information about this is given at the top of the *Automation Settings* page.

Site Manager

The Site Manager is a useful tool for webmasters who use **LinkMachine** on multiple websites. It allows you to view important stats about each of your **LinkMachine** installations and easily switch from one site's admin page to another's.

To open the Site Manager, select it from the *Go To...* menu at the top of the screen.

*The **Site Manager** page.*

For each site where you use the same **LinkMachine** account, a link to that site's **LinkMachine** admin page is provided, followed by several pieces of information: the date you last logged in to that site's admin page, the number of link submissions awaiting your approval, the number of InstantLink invitations awaiting your review, the number of missing backlinks, and the total number of completed link exchanges.

Section 6: Tips

Here are some helpful tips for improving the link popularity and search engine ranking of your website by creating successful link exchanges with **LinkMachine**.

• Personalize your e-mails

Most webmasters would rather receive a personalized e-mail that shows that the sender is familiar with their specific website, rather than a generic form letter. When you send out your link exchange request e-mails, make sure to add a personal touch to each one - complement a particular feature of the website, mention what kind of website it is, call it by name. Personalizing an e-mail before sending it out can take just a moment, but can make a big difference in how likely it is to generate a positive response.

• Invite relevant web sites to exchange links

Webmasters are most likely to choose to exchange links with your site if your site is relevant to their web site's audience. Also, the most effective link directories are those that are well organized and useful to your site's visitors. This means categorized links that are relevant to your visitors' interests, rather than a hodge-podge of unrelated links.

• The PageRanks of your link pages matter

The degree to which a link to your website can improve your website's PageRank depends on the PageRank of the page with the link on it. Because of this, many webmasters will pay attention to the PageRank of the link pages where you place the link to their site. New web pages start with a PageRank of 0, until Google finds out about them and indexes them. After adding a few sites in each category of your link directory, you may want to wait for a month or so until Google indexes your link pages and gives them a PageRank higher than 0, before adding a lot more sites.

• Be sure that your link pages are accessible from your main site

As soon as you've created your link directory, add links to your link page from your main site, preferably from your home page. You may even want to add a "links" link at the bottom of each of the pages on your website. It is only advantageous to other webmasters to exchange links with your site if the link page featuring their site is accessible, both to your site's visitors and to search engines. Also, the Google PageRank of your link pages will be best if you link to it from your site's front page, and any other pages on your site that have a high PageRank.

• Placing your links on your site's front page

You may want to place your list of link categories, or even all of your links, on your site's front page. The advantage to this is that webmasters like to have their link featured on another site's front page (which is liable to get the most traffic, and the highest PageRank, of any of a site's pages). The disadvantage of course is that it would take up space on your front page, but this can be minimized by displaying the

links in a small font toward the bottom of the page, and only showing the site titles, not their descriptions. Adding your links to your front page is simple. Design your front page with an area set aside for links, and place the word **#CONTENT#** there. Then upload this file to **LinkMachine** as a page template. Set **LinkMachine**'s *Location of Link Pages* and *Filename of Main Link Page* to the directory and filename that you'd like for your site's front page. **LinkMachine** will then generate your site's front page, adding your links to it. You can have it add just your list of link categories to your front page by turning off *Feature Latest Sites* and turning on *Separate Page for Each Category* in your *Link Page Format* settings. You can use these same techniques to add your links to any page on your site, not just your front page.

● **Placing your links on a dynamically generated page**

You can place your links inside of a dynamically generated page (for instance, a page generated by a Php script) in the same way as described above for placing your links on your site's homepage. But rather than using your home page HTML file as a **LinkMachine** page template, use your dynamic script file. For example, if you're using Php scripts, you can place the word **#CONTENT#** somewhere in an HTML section of a Php script and use that script as your page template. **LinkMachine** will then replace **#CONTENT#** with your links. In this case, make sure to set your *Filename of Main Link Page* to a name that ends in ".php".

● **Back up your LinkMachine data**

Unfortunately, mishaps do occur... and sometimes a data backup can keep a mishap from being a catastrophe. Occasionally web hosting providers have been known to lose their customers' files. So just as you'd keep backups of your web pages, it's a good idea to back up your **LinkMachine** data. It's simple and fast to download a data backup. Toward the bottom of the Settings page is a link to download the data file. Should you ever need to restore a backup, there is also a form for uploading a data backup to your website.

Section 7: Frequently Asked Questions

About LinkMachine

- **How can LinkMachine help my website or online business?**

- **How can LinkMachine help to increase my Google PageRank?**

- **How can LinkMachine help to increase my ranking in other search engines?**

- **How is this different from 'link farms'?**

- **Will search engines mind if my link pages are generated by a program?**

- **Is LinkMachine search engine friendly?**

- **Can I use LinkMachine on more than one website?**

- **What do I do with my site's existing link pages?**

- **Can LinkMachine be used to send spam?**

Installing LinkMachine

- **My site is created using FrontPage. Can I use LinkMachine with this site?**

- **The instructions for installing LinkMachine require setting the chmod permissions on my site's "linkmachine" directory to 777. Does that present a security risk?**

- **I've installed LinkMachine on my web site, but when I run the script linkmachine.php, I am presented with a page full of nonsense text that begins with a copyright notice. What is wrong?**

- **I use LinkMachine on one site, and I'd like to use it on a second site as well. How do I do this?**

Using LinkMachine

- **When I attempt to use LinkMachine I receive an error message, *"Please make sure that your site's 'linkmachine' directory has all write permissions set to true, then try again."* What should I do?**

- **How can I direct my visitors to a page where they can request a link exchange with my site?**

- **[I've created a custom template for my link pages. This template page has several images on it. However on the link pages that are generated based on the template, these images are broken and do not display. What's wrong?](#)**

- **[When I try to upload a page template file to LinkMachine, I get an error message saying "Invalid template filename". What's wrong?](#)**

- **[How can I back up my site's LinkMachine link data?](#)**

- **[All of my link pages include a link at the bottom, *"Powered by LinkMachine"*. Can I get rid of this link?](#)**

- **[Immediately after logging in to LinkMachine, I am logged out, and asked to log in again. Why?](#)**

- **[I've sent out some link exchange invitation e-mails - but the edit link included in these e-mails doesn't work. This is the link specified by %EDITURL% in the e-mail template. What's wrong?](#)**

- **[I've had LinkMachine check for reciprocal links, and there's one site that definitely does have a link back to my site, but LinkMachine set its status to *Link-back missing* anyway. Why isn't LinkMachine recognizing this reciprocal link?](#)**

- **[What if you go out of business? Will my copy of LinkMachine still work?](#)**

- **[Under Site Settings, what should I enter as the title of my site?](#)**

How can LinkMachine help my website or online business?

LinkMachine takes the hard work out of creating and maintaining reciprocal link exchanges. A reciprocal link exchange is simply when another web site posts a link to your site, and in return you post a link to theirs. The most popular search engines all consider a site's link popularity as a major factor in determining how high that site will rank in their search results. The most effective way to increase your site's search engine ranking is therefore to get a large number of high quality, relevant web sites to post links to your site. Webmasters like exchanging reciprocal links with other relevent, high quality site, because both sites stand to benefit.

LinkMachine makes it very easy to find any number of high quality sites that are relevent to your own site, and invite the webmasters of these sites to exchange links with your site. **LinkMachine** also allows anyone who visits your site to submit a link invitation to you - you can then accept or decline the invitation with a single click. And with **LinkMachine Premium**, you can instantly exchange links with other

LinkMachine users, helping you to quickly build up a strong reciprocal link exchange directory.

Reciprocal links lead to more visitors and higher search engine rankings, which lead to even more highly targeted visitors to your site who are interested in what you're saying or selling.

How can LinkMachine help to increase my Google PageRank?

Google's **PageRank** system is their way of trying to measure the importance of each web site. Sites with higher PageRank will tend to rank higher in search results, and so receive more visitors from Google. Since Google is the most popular search engine, raising your website's Google PageRank can be instrumental toward increasing the number of visitors your site receives.

The most important factors Google uses to determine a site's PageRank are the number of links pointing to that site, and the PageRanks of the pages that those links are on. So the more links there are leading to your site from other relevant, quality web sites, the higher your PageRank will grow. Inviting other webmasters to exchange reciprocal links is an effective way to gain more links to your site, because both of your sites benefit from the exchange.

How can LinkMachine help to increase my ranking in other search engines?

All of the most popular search engines, including Google, Yahoo!, and MSN, factor link popularity into their search ranking. And several other search engines take their results from one of these big three. So establishing an effective reciprocal link exchange program can increase your ranking in all of the most popular search engines.

How is this different from 'link farms'?

Link farms are sites that are set up to contain massive numbers of links to other sites, in hopes of raising the search rankings of the sites they link to. This doesn't work - in fact link farms can now have the result of lowering the search rankings of the sites they link to, because search engines penalize sites that try to use those kinds of tricks.

Personalized link exchanges like those set up with **LinkMachine** are very different -

they are completely search engine friendly. A link exchange is a legitimate agreement between two webmasters to exchange quality, relevant links with one another. These are the kinds of links that make the web as useful as it is, and search engines take these links to your site as confirmations of its quality.

Will search engines mind if my link pages are generated by a program?

LinkMachine generates your link pages as static HTML pages, just like the rest of your site. These pages may as well have been created by hand, from the search engine's point of view. A search engine finds **LinkMachine**'s generated link pages just as easy to crawl and index as hand-coded pages.

Is LinkMachine search engine friendly?

Absolutely.

There are two aspects to this. The first aspect is whether search engines will respond well to the link pages that **LinkMachine** generates. The link pages **LinkMachine** generates are indistinguishable from hand crafted pages, from the search engine's point of view. They're seen as directories of high quality, relevant links.

The second aspect is the method used by **LinkMachine** to generate its link pages. **LinkMachine** queries the Google search engine to look for relevant sites for you to exchange links with. **LinkMachine** allows you to enter a Google Web API key (which you can [obtain from Google](#) for free) so that it can query Google's search engine in full complaince with Google's [terms of service](#). **LinkMachine** will still work just as well without a Google Web API key, but will not be complying with Google's rule against automated querying. This rule has been enforced rarely and only against sites bogging down Goggle with thousands of automated queries. **LinkMachine** makes only a handful of queries in comparison, but if this concerns you, you can easily obtain a free Google Web API key and have **LinkMachine** use that.

Can I use LinkMachine on more than one website?

Yes. When you purchase **LinkMachine**, you are licensed to use it on up to three different websites. Additional website licenses costs $10 for one license, or $200 for a block of 50 licenses.

What do I do with my site's existing link pages?

You can quickly import the links on any link pages you already have, into **LinkMachine**.

Can LinkMachine be used to send spam?

No. **LinkMachine** makes it easy to send personalized e-mails to the webmasters of sites that you'd like to exchange links with. Most webmasters welcome link exchange invitations from quality, relevant websites. **LinkMachine** cannot be used to send bulk e-mail.

My site is created using FrontPage. Can I use LinkMachine with this site?

Yes you can. If you're using FrontPage we recommend that you install LinkMachine using the online installer, or else by downloading the installation file and then uploading it to your site using an FTP program, rather than using FrontPage.

The instructions for installing LinkMachine require setting the chmod permissions on my site's "linkmachine" directory to 777. Does that present a security risk?

Setting the directory's permissions to 777 allows the LinkMachine script to write to files inside that directory. This doesn't allow anyone to upload files to your site, or change files on your site, without their having your FTP login information.

Permissions set to 777 is a security risk when there is a script on the site that can be used to upload a file to the site. Hackers could take advantage of this to upload a malicious script to the site. However, LinkMachine does not allow visitors to upload any files to the site, so it doesn't provide any opportunity for a hacker to place a malicious script on your site.

I've installed LinkMachine on my web site, but when I run the script linkmachine.php, I am presented with a page full of nonsense text that begins with a copyright notice. What is wrong?

What you are seeing is the **LinkMachine** script itself. The problem appears to be that your web server does not support Php scripts. So rather than running the script, it is simply showing you the script as text. Unfortunately the only way to get **LinkMachine** working on your site would be to move your site to a web host that does support Php. The majority of hosts do support Php - a couple that I recommend are Carpathia and 1&1.

I use LinkMachine on one site, and I'd like to use it on a second site as well. How do I do this?

First install **LinkMachine** on your second site, using either the installtion script or the online installer. When you run **LinkMachine** on your second site for the first time, do not create a new account; instead, log in using the same e-mail and password as you use on your first site. **LinkMachine** will then associate the two sites with the same account. If you have upgraded (or will upgrade) your account to **LinkMachine Premium**, that upgrade will be applied to both sites.

When I attempt to use LinkMachine I receive an error message, *"Please make sure that your site's 'linkmachine' directory has all write permissions set to true, then try again."* What should I do?

Using an ftp program, change the permissions on your site's *linkmachine* directory so that all of the read, write, and execute permissions are set to true. In some ftp programs, this feature is called *chmod*. If you don't know how to change a directory's permissions, refer to your ftp program's documentation.

If after doing this you still receive the same error message, use your ftp program to delete the file *lm.php* inside of your site's *linkmachine* directory.

How can I direct my visitors to a page where they can request a link exchange with my site?

LinkMachine generates a page with a form that your site's visitors can use to submit information about their site and request a link exchange. The file for this page is called *exchange_links.html*, and it is placed in the same directory where you have **LinkMachine** generate your link pages. You can link to this page from anywhere on your site to give visitors an opportunity to request a link exchange. By default, each link page that **LinkMachine** generates includes an "Add Link" link at the bottom. This link leads to the link submission page.

I've created a custom template for my link pages. This template page has several images on it. However on the link pages that are generated based on the template, these images are broken and do not display. What's wrong?

The image links in an HTML file can be relative to the location of the web page file itself. For instance, the image link "images/logo.gif" will refer to an image file located in a directory called *images* that is below the directory where the web page file is located. Of course this means that if the web page file is moved, the link to the image will no longer be valid.

The simplest way to solve this problem is to specify all of the image links in your template file as *absolute paths*, that is the full URL of the image. For the above example, that would be something like "http://mysite.com/images/logo.gif".

Another way to solve this problem is to make sure that the image files are located in the correct directory relative to the directory where your link page files are generated. So in this example, you'd want to make sure that inside of your link page directory, there is a subdirectory named "images" that has the file "logo.gif" inside of it.

When I try to upload a page template file to LinkMachine, I get an error message saying "Invalid template filename". What's wrong?

Most likely this means that your web server doesn't support Php's file upload feature. To get around this, simply use an FTP client to upload your page template file into **LinkMachine**'s "templates" directory on your site. The path for this directory is "linkmachine/templates" (unless you gave **LinkMachine**'s directory a name other than "linkmachine"). Once you've uploaded the template file into the "templates" directory, your template should be available from the pop-down template menus on the *Link Page Format* settings page.

How can I back up my site's LinkMachine link data?

Under *Change Settings >> Backup Data*, click on the link titled *Click Here to Download LinkMachine Data*. If the encrypted data file is displayed in your browser rather than being downloaded to your computer, then instead try right-clicking on the link, and choose *Save target as...* or *Save link as...* from the pop-up menu. You will then be able to save your link data file (linkmachine.dat) to your own computer as a backup.

You can also download your link data in a readable form, as a .csv file. This type of file can be opened as a spreadsheet in Excel and other similar programs. Under *Change Settings >> Backup Data*, click on the link titled *Click Here to Download Link Data as .csv File*.

All of my link pages include a link at the bottom, *"Powered by LinkMachine"*. Can I get rid of this link?

The free Basic version of **LinkMachine** adds this link to all of the link pages it generates. This link, which brings more people to the *LinkMachine* site, is all we ask in return for your use of the free software. You can remove this link from your link pages by upgrading to **LinkMachine Premium**.

Immediately after logging in to LinkMachine, I am logged out, and asked to log in again. Why?

LinkMachine uses browser cookies to keep track of whether you are logged in. First, make sure your web browser's cookie support is enabled. Next, make sure that your own computer's system clock is correct - especially the month and year. Finally, it's very rare but sometimes the system clock on the site's web server may be incorrect.

I've sent out some link exchange invitation e-mails - but the edit link included in these e-mails doesn't work. This is the link specified by %EDITURL% in the e-mail template. What's wrong?

Under *Change Settings >> Site Settings*, near the bottom of the page is a checkbox labeled *Site Supports HTTP Local Access*. Read the information below this checkbox and click on the test link. If the test shows that your web server does not support http local access, check the checkbox and click *Submit Changes*. Your %EDITURL% links should now work correctly.

I've had LinkMachine check for reciprocal links, and there's one site that definitely does have a link back to my site, but LinkMachine set its status to *Link-back missing* anyway. Why isn't LinkMachine recognizing this reciprocal link?

There are a number of possibilities:

1) **LinkMachine** checks each site for its reciprocal link on the page specified by the *Reciprocal Link URL* for that site. Does that URL point to the page where the reciprocal link is placed?

2) Is the reciprocal link valid? Does it contain your site's URL as you specified it in **LinkMachine**'s Site Settings, and is it spelled correctly?

3) Is the reciprocal link a direct link to your site? Right click on the reciprocal link and choose *Properties*. If the link is indirect - for instance if it points to a script on that other site rather than directly to your site, then **LinkMachine** has no way of recognizing this as a link to your site. (Neither do the search engines, so this link will not help your search rankings either). If you'd like to continue to link to this site, you can set the site's status to *One way link*.

4) If the reciprocal link is in a frame or an iframe, set the *Reciprocal Link URL* for that site to the address of that frame itself, not the address of the frameset that it is within.

5) Finally, some web pages are configured to disallow access by automated scripts such as **LinkMachine**. To determine whether the page containing the reciprocal link cannot be viewed by **LinkMachine** for this reason, go to [this page](#); enter the URL of the page with the reciprocal link and click *Load Page*. If the page with the reciprocal link does not appear, then **LinkMachine** is not being allowed to view that page. You could contact the webmaster of that site to try to resolve the problem, or set the site's status to *One way link* so that **LinkMachine** will not check it for a reciprocal link.

What if you go out of business? Will my copy of LinkMachine still work?

Yes. If we go out of business and the central **LinkMachine** server goes down, the only difference from your point of view would be that you could no longer exchange InstantLinks with other **LinkMachine** users. That is because the InstantLinks feature uses the central database to connect users. However, **LinkMachine** would continue to work fine in every other way. This has been tested under real world conditions, while the central server was down for maintenance.

Under Site Settings, what should I enter as the title of my site?

The title that you enter under *Site Settings* is very important - it will be used as the anchor text for most of the links to your site. Search engines give great importance to anchor text. If you want to rank high in searches for "flower pots", for example, you should include the keywords "flower pots" in your Site Title.

However, overly generic anchor text that's just made up of a collection of keyword can be considered spam. So it's advisable to include the name of your site or business in your Site Title. For example, "Garden Glory Flower Pots".

Section 8: E-mail Templates

The most important step in setting up a successful link exchange with another web site is simply to ask! **LinkMachine** simplifies this step by automatically plugging the values for each recipient web site into an e-mail template. Choose an e-mail template that fits the attitude of your website. And before you send off each e-mail, it's a good idea to add a personal touch that lets the recipient know you've paid attention to their web site.

Below are several example e-mail templates. You can choose one of these templates and use it as-is, by copying it from this page and pasting it into the appropriate e-mail template field on your **LinkMachine** Settings page. After copying the text over, you may want to make a few changes or additions to make the e-mail sound like it's uniquely your own.

In these templates, you should replace any text in parentheses, such as **(subject)**, with the appropriate words for your web site. Any text between percent symbols, such as **%TITLE%** or **%EXCHANGEURL%** can be left as is - these special markers tell **LinkMachine** to insert values that are specific to the recipient of each e-mail.

Link Exchange Request Templates

Dear Webmaster,

My name is %MYNAME%, and I run the web site %MYTITLE%:

%MYURL%

I recently found your site %URL% and am very interested in exchanging links. I've gone ahead and posted a link to your site, on this page:

%LINKURL%

As you know, reciprocal linking benefits both of us by raising our search rankings and generating more traffic to both of our sites. Please post a link to my site as follows:

Title: %MYTITLE%
URL: %MYURL%
Description: %MYDESCRIPTION%

Once you've posted the link, let me know the URL of the page that it's on, by entering it in this form:

%EDITURL%

You can also use that form to make changes to the text of the link to your site, if you'd like.

Thank you very much,

%MYNAME%

Dear Webmaster,

My name is %MYNAME%, and I run the web site %MYTITLE%:

%MYURL%

I recently found your site %URL% and am very interested in exchanging links with you. As you know, reciprocal linking will benefit both of us by raising our search rankings and generating more traffic to both of our sites. If you're interested, you can add your link to my site right away by filling out the form at this page:

%EXCHANGEURL%

In return, please add my link to your site as follows:

Title: %MYTITLE%
URL: %MYURL%
Description: %MYDESCRIPTION%

Looking forward to a positive reply,

%MYNAME%

Dear Webmaster,

My name is %MYNAME%, and I'm the owner of %MYTITLE%:

%MYURL%

I'd like to exchange links with your site, %URL%. Thanks for putting such a useful site on the web! If you're interested in exchanging links, you can verify the information I have about your site, here:

%EDITURL%

Once you've done this, the link to your site will be posted immediately. In exchange, please post a link to my site:

Title: %MYTITLE%
URL: %MYURL%
Description: %MYDESCRIPTION%

Thank you very much,

%MYNAME%

Hello,

I have visited your site and believe that its content about (subject) would interest visitors to my site, %MYURL%. I'm wondering if you would be interested in exchanging links?

To exchange links, you can fill in your site's information on this page:

%EXCHANGEURL%

The link to your site will be posted as soon as you've submitted your information. In exchange, please post a link to my site:

Title: %MYTITLE%
URL: %MYURL%
Description: %MYDESCRIPTION%

Thank you very much,

%MYNAME%

Hello,

I visited your site %SITETITLE% today and really liked it. I run a site that is also about (subject), and I'm wondering if you would like to trade links with me?

You can check out my site at %MYURL%. If you'd like to exchange links, please post a link to my site and fill in the form on this page:
%EXCHANGEURL%

The link to your site will be posted as soon as you've submitted your site's information. In return, please post a link to my site:

Title: %MYTITLE%
URL: %MYURL%
Description: %MYDESCRIPTION%

Thanks a lot,

%MYNAME%

Link-Back Missing Notice Templates

Dear Webmaster,

A while back we agreed to a reciprocal link exchange between my site (%MYURL%) and yours (%URL%). I've visited your site recently and have been unable to find your link to my site.

If you've moved the link to a different page, please let me know, or you can update the URL of your page that has the reciprocal link, on this form:
%EDITURL%

Thank you very much,

%MYNAME%

Hello,

Some time ago we agreed to a link exchange between our two sites. I visited your site today and didn't find your link to my site (%MYURL%). Please let me know if you've removed the link, or moved it to another page.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

%MYNAME%

Link-Back Missing Reminder Templates

Dear Webmaster,

Just wanted to make sure you got my last e-mail about the reciprocal link exchange between my site (%MYURL%) and yours (%URL%). I've visited your site recently and have been unable to find your link to my site.

If you've moved the link to a different page, please let me know, or you can update the URL of your page that has the reciprocal link, on this form:
%EDITURL%

Thank you very much,

%MYNAME%

Hello,

I'm writing to remind you that I've been unable to find the reciprocal link on your site (%URL%) to mine (%MYURL%). Please let me know if you've removed the link, or moved it to a different page.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

%MYNAME%

Link Submission Notice Templates

Dear Webmaster,

Thank you for submitting your link to %MYTITLE%! We'll review it shortly and let you know when we've posted it.

Thanks again,

%MYNAME%

Dear Webmaster,

Thank you for submitting your link to %MYTITLE%. We'll review it shortly and let you know when we've posted it.

This is the information that we have about your site:

Title: %TITLE%
URL: %URL%
Category: %CATEGORY%
Description: %DESCRIPTION%

If you'd like to change any of this information, please follow this link:

%EDITURL%

Thanks again,

%MYNAME%

Link Approval Notice Templates

Dear Webmaster,

Thank you for submitting your link to %MYTITLE%! We've reviewed your site and have posted your link here:

%LINKURL%

If you haven't already, please post a link on your site to %MYTITLE%:

%MYURL%

To let us know where you've posted the link to %MYTITLE%, or to change the information we have about your site, you can go to this page:

%EDITURL%

Thanks again,

%MYNAME%

Section 9: Support

If you encounter any problem using **LinkMachine**, support is available. If your question isn't answered in the [FAQ section](), please send us an e-mail at [contact@linkmachine.net]().