

## What Impact does ahrefs.com has on Search Engine Optimization

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**Abstract.** Search engines optimization is the number one method for guaranteeing exposure on the world wide web. There are many tools out there used by Search Engine Optimizers (SEO's). Search Engine Optimization involves using tools and techniques to improve the ranking and visibility of websites by search engines. Ahrefs is a useful tool used to investigate the Search Engine Optimization of websites by reviewing back links to and from websites. This research explores the hidden benefits and advantages of using Ahrefs as a tool for optimizing a website search engine indexing.

**Keywords:** Search Engine, SEO, Meta Tags, Backlinks

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Search Engine Optimization is gaining popularity among webmasters and researcher. This paper explores the use of Ahrefs tool for Search Engine Optimization (SEO). SEO's rely on different tools to analyze websites suitability for search engine indexing (Wang, et al 2011).

There are many search engine optimizations tools in the market. Some are reliable some are still in its infancy. Webmasters are always looking for new tools to optimize their search engine visibility, one of the new tools is the Ahrefs.co which is an independent tools used for SEO optimizations (Wang, et al. 2011). The service provides a variety of features that helps SEO professionals achieve their site optimizations goals (Lewandowski, Dirk 2011).

Ahrefs has its own website crawler and index system, meaning they don't need third party tools or software to collect and manage data. Ahrefs crawlers indexes around a trillion website connections each day and the index is updated in a 15 minutes interval, which is reflected in the updated results produced by their tools (ahrefs.com 2014). This is quite a challenge for tools used by Google and other SEO optimization tools. Google needs at least one month to get the results of optimization which makes it impractical to manage and SEO operation (Su, et al 2010).

Ahrefs name is extracted from the hyperlink tag used in HTML Anchor Link tag <a href="http://google.com">Visit Google</a> which indicates the destination of the page the link leads to (Google-Analytics 2014). Ahrefs use a versatile back links discovery technique to help SEO optimize their search engine ranking (Lewandowski, Dirk 2011).

Additionally, pages with huge ranks are continuously visited by the Ahrefs tools and this allows SEO professionals perform required amendments and check the results in short time (Li-Hsing, et al 2010). The tools also provides social metrics from Social Networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

The data Ahrefs use is stored in their own database and it is not linked or extracted from other search engines or database services such as Alexa, Goolge, Altavista, etc. in addition other services are relying on Ahrefs data such as webometrics.net.

Ahrefs reports reflects realy statistics about links and site owners and SEO professionals can see any LinkSpam and any imitative links on their domain (Lewandowski, Dirk 2011).

The tools allows SEO's review the data and see how search engines see their sites in order to take corrective measures when needs to enhance the ranking (Wang, et al 2011).

Ahrefs provide a free account that enables the users to collect information about any sites, however, a paid plan is available that provides in depth analysis and review of websites.

The tools is available currently in 8 languages and shall be expanded soon to include other languages . The default language is English and the system is installed on dedicated serves although they use cloud servers from time to time for testing purposes.

Webmasters usually can block a search engine crawling using the robots.txt file and Ahrefs provides the ability to block their crawler by following simple instructions displayed on their website. By using the robots.txt file overtime block the Ahrefs from crawling into the site and prevent it from collecting any further information (Neshat, Hamed Sadeghi 2011). However, they still show any external links leading to the site. The tools is very reliable and is updated more frequently and this is shown on the site as the latest partial update that took place on the server.

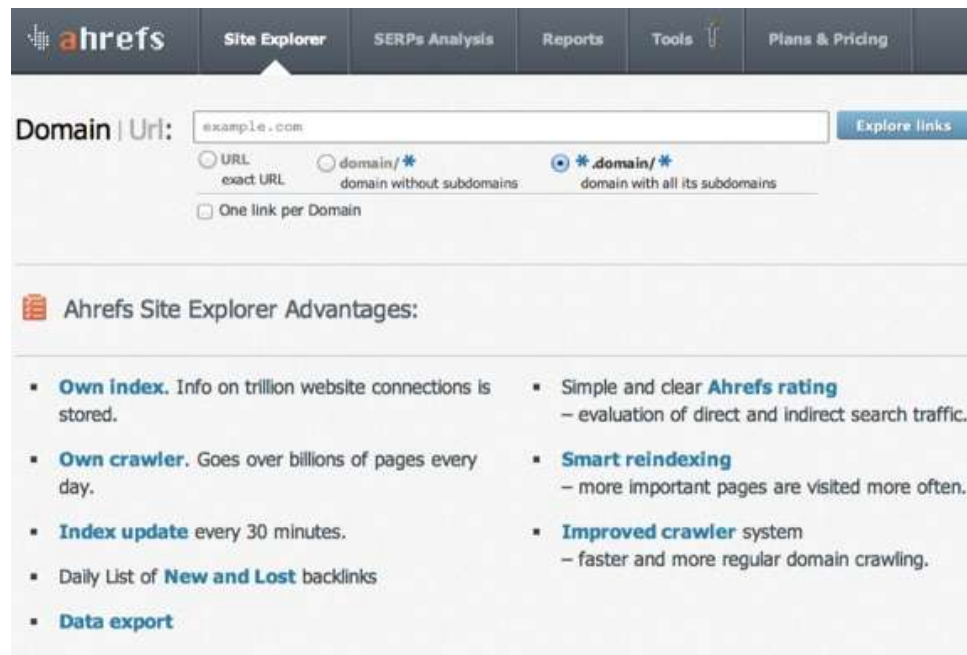
## 2 AHREF SERVICES PROVIDED

Ahrefs uses a ranking database of around 45 million keywords collected from 9 different countries (United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, Germany, Spain, Italy, Australia and Brazil). The tools provided by Ahrefs are:

- Site Explorer
- SERPs Analysis
- Reports
- Labs/Tools

### 2.1 SITE EXPLORER

Site Explorer work in a similar fashion to other SEO tools such as SeoMoz's Site Explorer and Majestic's Site Explorer. Ahrefs Site Explorer allow the SEO to work on a specific URL, the full domain or the domain excluding all sub domains, or a domain including all its sub domains (Figure1).



(Figure1) AHREFS.COM 2014

Site Explorer results displays a summary of the last 45 days from Ahref's crawl history (Figure2):



(Figure2) AHREFS.COM 2014

The results page show statistics about the total back links, referring IP addresses and subnets such as class c blocks and others, the unique domains, and the backlinks types the site contains such as (text, image, redirects).

Ahrefs also allow the SEP to choose from a list of search criteria such as (new links, lost links, anchor text profile, pages crawled, referring domain, SERP positions, and raw export of data).

## 2.2 NEW LINKS TAB

On the Back Links section there is a New Link tab (Figure 3) that helps SEO's move back and forth between months views, SEO's can look for data for a specific month and view recently found links on the day level.

By Clicking on a particular day SEO's receives a list of all linking urls, the target link page, and the anchor text used for that link.



(Figure3) AHREFS.COM 2014



(Figure 4) AHREFS.COM 2014

The Back links report (Figure 4) help SEO's make addition and amendments to the sites in order to run a link building task that shall move their sites up the ladder relative to the competitors. It is also a good tool for evaluating the on going process of link building on a day to day basis. It is a great tool to observe where are the links coming from and who are the site visitors locally, regionally and globally. However, SEO's need to be careful not to fall into the penalty zone if their link building growth has exceeded the amount sit by the search engines internal algorithm.

Search engines use algorithms that follow links coming from stronger sites and ranks sites as popular as such and this leads to more crawling by search engines than spam links that has poor exposure in search engines. Some SEO's look for tools such as Majestic SEO and Link Status Checker like Advanced Link Manager to deep evaluation of historical data. The good think is that Ahrefs allow you to export all the data available using a special download tool and you can save the data files as Comma Separated Value CSV to be opened by Excel or any CSV tool.

### 2.3 LOST TAB

Looking at the Lost tab in the Back links view, SEO's shall get similar results to the New Links tab which show what are the links that are not following or pointing to a particular website. The tools is useful in two ways, the first is investigate why sites stopped pointing to a site and the second is for SEO's to contact their sales department to follow organizations that stopped flowing the competition.

### 2.4 ANCHORS TAB

The Anchors tab (Figure 5) shows all the anchor text of external website links. It also shows the pages links comes from and the pages linked go out to for a particular website. The report shall be very big for large sites and it has tabs for several pages for SEO's to brows, however the data can be downloaded by SEO's for further analysis using statistical tools.

Ref. Pages	Anchor text	Crawled pages
156738	seobook.com	
18983	keyword information tool from seobook	
6289	seobook.com	
5324	seobook.com	
3189	free seo tools	
4943	seobook.com	
2777	seo from seobook.com	
1845	seobook.com	
1731	seo for seobook.com	
1744	seo from seobook.com	

(Figure 5) AHREFS.COM 2014

## 2.5 CRAWLED PAGES

The Crawled Pages tab (Figure 6) shows all the pages for a particular site that has been crawled by Ahrefs. It shows the Page URL and Title, the Page Date, The page Size, The Internal Links and the External Links.

Page url	Page title	Crawl date	Page size	Internal links	External links
seobook.com/keyword-density/	Free Keyword Density Analyzer Tool	20 Jan '12	25 KB	54	8
seobook.com/spelling-keyword-typos/	Spelling Typo Generator - Keyword Mapping Tool	19 Jan '12	25 KB	53	1
seobook.com/keyword-tool/	Free Keyword Suggestion, Research & Analysis Tools: Seobook.com	20 Jan '12	37 KB	83	38
www.seobook.com/archive/501111.shtml	Link list 1: SEO book.com	20 Jan '12	57 KB	89	27
seobook.com/seo/seo-metrics/	seo	20 Jan '12	301		
www.seobook.com/seo/	http://www.seobook.com/seo/	20 Jan '12	301		
community.seobook.com/showthread.php?p=11171	SEO Community Forums	20 Jan '12	14 KB	79	0
www.seobook.com/seo/seo-1-22.html	seo	19 Jan '12	301		

(Figure 6) AHREFS.COM 2014

This tool is very handy for checking the site's internal links and external links. It gives SEO's a clear idea about how their site is linked internally and its link to other more visible sites.

## 2.6 REFERRING DOMAINS

The referring domains tab (Figure 7) shows all the domains that are referring to the site and how many links are pointing from that site or domain. The tool also allows SEO's to follow the links coming from each domain.

ADL	Alias Rank	Ref Pages	Domain	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
1. 793 M	4	1	yahoo.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
2. 698 M	1	2	google.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
3. 53 M	24	2	google.co.uk	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
4. 18 M	2752	1	webstatsoft.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
5. 11 M	788	1	howstuffworks.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
6. 5.5 M	278	1	washingtonpost.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
7. 4.7 M	580	1	businessweek.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
8. 3.8 M	1499	3	abc.nl	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
9. 3.8 M	2793	3	en.wikipedia.org	Site explorer	SERPs analysis
10. 2.9 M	132	4	indiatimes.com	Site explorer	SERPs analysis

(Figure 7) AHREFS.COM 2014

## 2.7 SERP POSITIONING

This is yet an amazing tool (Figure 8) which allow SEO's to view keywords ranking indexed by Google, Yahoo and Bing. The data shown includes, CPC, Estimated Cost, Position, Global Search Volume, Keywords, Last Date Checked, Rating and Ranking URL.

Keyword	Rating	CPC	Cost	URL	US Volume	Global Volume	Cost	Updated
seo	4.9/5.0	\$1.25	\$1789.40	www.aasrc.org	110700	621000	\$1.25	12 Dec '11
keyword tool	2.9/5.0	\$1.60	\$1034.80	tools.aasrc.org/keyword-tool	74000	340000	\$1.60	18 Dec '11
link building	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	www.aasrc.org/link-building	61000	321000	\$1.60	18 Dec '11
seo tools	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	tools.aasrc.org	61000	321000	\$1.60	07 Dec '11
rank checker tool	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	tools.aasrc.org/rank-checker	71000	39000	\$1.60	12 Dec '11
rank checker	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	tools.aasrc.org/rank-checker	71000	39000	\$1.60	12 Dec '11
seo link building	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	www.aasrc.org/link-building	71000	39000	\$1.60	18 Dec '11
free seo tools	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	tools.aasrc.org	71000	39000	\$1.60	18 Dec '11
seo tools	2.7/5.0	\$1.60	\$1794.00	tools.aasrc.org	71000	39000	\$1.60	18 Dec '11

(Figure8) AHREFS.COM 2014



## 2.8 STATS PAGE



(Figure 9) AHREFS.COM 2014

This page (Figure 9) shows the daily statistics for a site listed as shown in the (New Keywords, Lost Keywords, Total Keywords that moved up, Total Keywords that moved down, Total Positions up, Total Positions down, Rating Change, Cost Change.

## 2.9 REPORTS GENERATION

Ahrefs report generation (Figure10) is awesome and it is free for as many site as desired. This helps in making comparisons between website.

**Standard domain report(s)** You've got 19 reports left

Domain address \* Report title Tags

max length: 50 separate with ", "

+ Add a domain + Add a batch

Create report(s)

\* mandatory field

Correct domain name: "example.com", "mail.example.com"

Title and Tags: use alphabetic symbols, digits, "\_", "-", "." and "space"

long tags will be shortened to 50 symbols

(Figure10) AHREFS.COM 2014

The report overview is shown in Figure11:

Domain reports ppcblog.com

Overview Backlinks Pages Subdomains Referring: Countries Anchors TLDs Domains IPs Subnets

Site explorer SERPs analysis

Top subdomains		Top referring domains		Top anchors	
1	ppcblog.com	1	www.memebribe.com	1	PPC Blog 3.1 K
2	www.ppcblog.com	2	feeds.feedburner.com	2	Pay Per Click Blog 89
3	training.ppcblog.com	3	www.search-marketing.info	3	How Does Google Work 32

(Figure11) AHREFS.COM 2014

## 2.10 AHREFS LABS

Ahrefs tool comes equipped with three lab tools (Figure1) that can help SEO's search Top one million domains by number of back links, compare domains from different statistical viewpoints and use a Batch Domains for large number of URLs.

## 3 CONCLUSION

Reviewing Ahrefs tools proved to be a very reliable and helpful in Search Engine Optimization in terms of delivering outstanding an up to date data that helps webmasters work on enhancing their site back links which shall improve their search engine ranking.

The Ahrefs tool is user friendly and is worth investing in. It provides data export in CSV format and this by itself provides flexibility in date analysis for SEO's. The site provides online help support and forums for dealing with issue that may arise during site



evaluation. Forums are covering several topics from general SEO to technical discussions. API tools are also available for advanced accounts.

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