

## Online PR – Search Engine Optimisation Plus?

There is an old “joke” about the difference between advertising and PR. An advertiser and a PR both want to ask someone out. The advertiser goes straight up to the person and says “I’m great you should go out with me!” The PR gets other people to talk about them so that the person comes up to them and says “I’ve heard your great. Please go out with ME!”

How does this apply to Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) you ask? Well a traditional approach to SEO focuses on trying to get your company’s website a high organic search ranking in Google and other search engines. Preferably page one or even the No.1 spot. Organic search results are those that a search engine delivers based on its assessment of relevance as opposed to Paid (or Sponsored) search results where you pay to get your web address listed.

That sounds great on the face of it, and it is. Your website being ranked top of Google for relevant search terms is potentially a very valuable thing. However back to our joke this is your website so it is you saying that you are great. Also getting your own organisation’s website to the top of Google is a potentially very difficult thing to do for a lot of generic search terms.

Now imagine a different scenario. Imagine a third party publication, be that editorial, blog or publisher, posting a positive article about your organisation or its products/services. If that publication is seen by Google et al as an authoritative source of information in relation to the relevant search term then this article has a good chance of appearing high in the rankings. So you have the best of both worlds – high ranking in Google for information about your organisation, but with the added benefit of third party endorsement. SEO Plus one might say!

To take an example relevant to RealWire lets look at some Google results that are relevant to our [Online Media video](#). If you do a search for just the words “The Online Media” in [Google.co.uk](#) you will find that of the 321,000,000 results the third result is a blog post on [www.prblogger.com](#) about the RealWire video. PRBlogger is a blog written by RealWire’s ex Social Media Manager [Stephen Davies](#) and is ranked as the No.1 PR blog in the UK. Clearly Stephen knows us well and so could perhaps be expected to talk about our video. However it illustrates that for a highly relevant but difficult search term – 321 million results remember – RealWire now has a top three result that relates to it from a third party source. A search term that the RealWire website itself does not appear in the top 100 results for.

If you focus the search more by [searching](#) for the exact phrase “The Online Media” not only does the PRBlogger result now come top, but you find that the third result on Andrew Girdwood’s blog (Head of Search at bigmouthmedia) is also in relation to our video. In this case RealWire’s website does appear in the top 100 search results, but not until the fourth page!

Of course there is a darker side to this analysis. Such results are great when they are saying positive things about your organisation, but what about where the articles are negative? For example a [search](#) for “land rover discovery” in Google.co.uk finds that the second result after the Land Rover website is a blog that is all about the bad experience an owner of a Land Rover Discovery 3 had.

This is where it is important to have invested in an outbound online PR strategy so that you can try and influence the stories that are told about you online and increase the likelihood that not only do people find stories about you when they look for information, but that these are stories you want them to read.