

 SCAM
ALERT

Five Warning Signs that You May be Considering an SEO Scammer.

With big money on the line, there are always going to be crooks that try to scam the search engines and scam unsuspecting clients. While most firms are reputable, it's not always easy to differentiate between legitimate service providers and these scammers. If you experience any of the following warning signs, your "scam-meter" should sound an alarm.

1. Guaranteeing search rankings

Unless you are talking to Larry Page or Sergey Brin (Google's founders), no one can guarantee first position ranking, first page ranking, or any other rankings for a keyword. Reputable providers will, instead, show you examples of results that have been able to produce for their clients.

2. Being vague about the tactics they will employ on your behalf

Truth is, there are no silver bullets and there are no secrets in the SEO business. If you are not getting a clear account of what they will do (both on and off-page) to increase your rankings, look elsewhere.

3. Promising to quickly secure 100s or 1000s of inbound links

RUN - don't walk away if you hear this. Providers that claim to maintain a "large network of related sites" are participating in what are called link farms. Search engines do not approve of this tactic. They have algorithms to detect the practice, and it can quickly get your site de-listed all together.

4. Imply that your site will be punished in some way if you decide to leave

This is scare tactic, and it's only partially true in cases where the SEO provider is hosting content on your behalf (which they should not be doing). A reputable provider will ensure YOUR site is being viewed favorably by the engines and that inbound links go directly from the referring site to your site.

5. Offering a price that is just too good to be true

I know. This one stinks! We all want something at a great price. However, the reality is that good SEO requires REAL PEOPLE putting in the time and effort to realize results. Monthly fees for legitimate SEO providers is usually \$1,500 and up. If you see anything less than \$750 per month, it's probably not a wise choice (or at least make sure you see a verifiable track record of results and talk to several of their clients before making any commitments).