

How To Use Majestic's Platinum Subscription For Client Reporting: A Case Study

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There are many things you can do with access to backlink data, but let's focus on something which a lot of content marketers and SEOs struggle with: reporting.

More specifically, let's use third-party backlink discovery services to collate and pool links and mix in the Google Analytics API to not only report on new links, but also to provide context and find the worth to the customer from this new link.

It is beneficial when gathering link data to use as many sources as possible. I am only going to be focusing on the process with the Majestic API, but this can also be extended to Moz and Ahrefs APIs, as the more quality metrics, the better.

Getting Started

For this tutorial we will be using a Majestic Platinum Subscription, which allows us to use the full Enterprise API internally.

After allowing API access to your account, the quickest way to start exploring is to download the relevant library for your server side language of choice from the [connectors](#) page.

Process

We want to present the client with a list of backlinks generated from our content, and highlight which links are providing real value through referral traffic directly from the source, or a high quality link which will boost organic traffic.

A high level process of what we want to do is as follows:

1. For a given item (a resource page we have created, for example), identify backlinks via the Majestic API
2. Collate backlink with other sources and remove duplicates
3. Get a full list of referral data from Google Analytics API
4. Compare analytics data against our backlink list to see which links have provided traffic
5. Check the source URL to ensure the backlink still exists
6. Compile the results

Step 1: Identify Backlinks

First off what we want to do for our item is gather together the backlinks using the **GetBackLinkData** command in the API.

We set the **MaxSameSourceURLs** to 1 as there is no need to return multiple entries per source URL. You may want to check the number of links to your item on a page as an indicator of backlink worth (to identify if the site is a spammy directory, for example), but it is best to do that later and reduce the number of Majestic API calls wherever possible.

You can download 50,000 backlinks at a time, but if your item has more (indicated by the **TotalBackLinks** property returned in the API response), then you can use the **From** parameter to indicate an offset and continue downloading.

By setting the **ShowDomainInfo** parameter to 1, we also get an extra results table with information about each backlink source domain.

This allows us to cross-reference this new data with our backlinks and see the Trust/Citation Flow for each linking domain, as well as TopicalTrustFlow_Topic, anchor text, linking domains and external backlinks.

Which data you want to use is up to you, but it doesn't hurt to collect as many metrics as possible.

Fresh or Historical?

If you were creating a monthly report, then I would recommend running this process on the fresh index every 2 weeks or so and saving the data to reduce the amount of URLs to process each time.

Otherwise, if this is the first time you are running this process for an item, you would have to gather both the fresh and historical backlinks and merge them for a fully comprehensive list.

Step 2: Identify more Backlinks

Now we have a list of backlinks and quality metrics from Majestic, you could now extend your data set. This is the step where I use backlink data collected from Google Webmaster Tools and Mozscape for the widest pool of backlinks possible. While Majestic can provide the biggest index to pull data from, no service can crawl 100% of the links on the web as a matter of fact, so it is best to gather from as many sources as we can.

The scope for adding extra quality metrics at this point is huge: you could do a keyword or semiotics analysis of each linking domain if you had the resources, or use Mozscape /Ahrefs to collect additional quality metrics and link information to compare against the initial dataset returned by Majestic.

Step 3: Add Google Analytics Data

Ok, now we have a pretty comprehensive list of every backlink that could be found, and a huge amount of information about the relative worth of each link. From an SEO's perspective we have all we need to tell the quality of the backlink, but for a content marketer, we want to know how these links are directly helping our client through visits and ultimately conversions.

Using the Google Analytics API , we make a query to the **Core Reporting** endpoint with the following parameters:

- **start-date** = a far distant date such as January 1st, 2005
- **end-date** = yesterday
- **metrics** = ga:sessions
- **dimension** = ga:fullReferrer, ga:landingPagePath
- **filters** = ga:landingPagePath == URL of our item (relative to the root domain)

This will return a list of URLs which have referred traffic to our item.

Step 4: Merge it all Together

We can cross reference this list of referrers against our backlinks, and if a match is found for a referrer, we should add the Analytics data to that backlink entry.

There is every possibility that the referral data from Analytics will contain links which are not in our backlink data. You may want to perform additional Majestic API calls at this point to collect quality metric data for these links, so they can be added to your main pool.

Step 5: Check Backlink Status

The final step in this process is checking each backlink still exists. I won't go into too much detail, but the basic idea is as follows:

1. Use cURL or a similar method to check the backlink URL and grab the source HTML, or status code if it no longer exists.
2. Parse the source for all <a> tags
3. Check this list of links for a href attribute which is the same as your original item URL (or something which will resolve to your URL such as a different protocol)
4. Count how many instances of these links you find

This step might not concern you as Majestic will eventually detect the link has gone, but if accuracy is something you give great importance to, then this step will keep your data as relevant as possible.

As I personally use this whole process for backlink removal, this step greatly reduces the time taken to complete by removing dead or broken links for me. It will also help you to identify spam links, and provide an extra layer of information to base your reports on.

Step 6: Finished! (Not Quite)...

So there is the basic process of gathering everything you would need to report on backlinks. The only outstanding issue now is the actual reporting. After tailoring this process to your needs, it can be automated to generate all the data for your clients without any manual input.

This process really can be expanded indefinitely to suit any need:

For instance, if you are using this process to track your offsite content, why not use Analytics to find out how likely a referral is to convert from a piece of content? Or you could find offsite content which is producing the best conversion results, and attempt to recreate those results with your own content.