

The Back-links Strategy

By [Dick Greenberg](#)

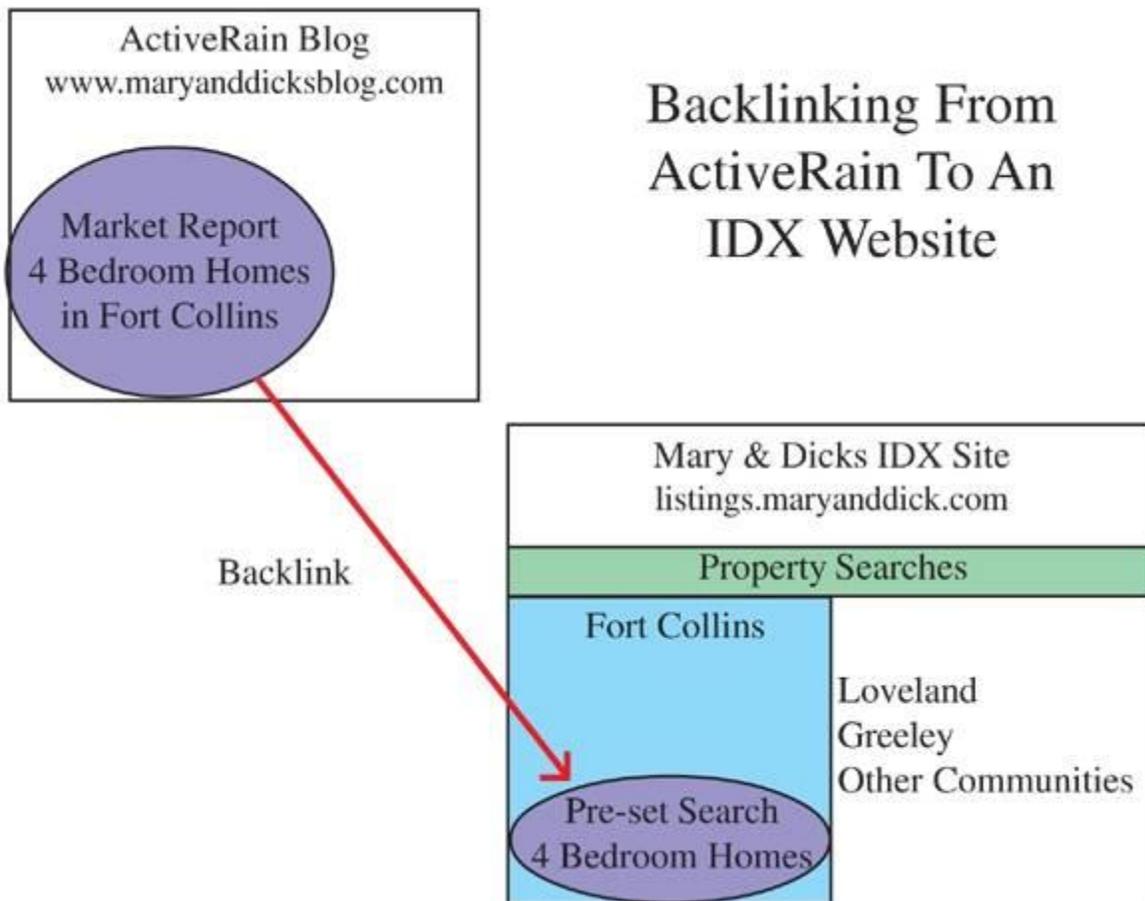
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We have seen a lot of good information lately about the best way to implement various blogging strategies, so I thought it might be the right time to revisit one that hasn't gotten a lot of recent discussion - using long-tail searches and an IDX website to generate leads and business. While this approach isn't free, it is relatively inexpensive, and our results since we joined AR 4 & ½ years ago have been excellent.

This is probably a good time for a disclaimer - I'm not an SEO expert, and I don't even play one on the internet. I'm just doing what was suggested to me by the real experts, and repeating their explanations about how and why it works.

We all realize that it's more or less futile to try to compete with the big guys on very general search terms, things like "Fort Collins Real Estate" or "Fort Collins Homes for Sale" - they have those pretty well wrapped up. But the field is considerably more open for specific terms like "4 bedroom homes for sale in Fort Collins" or "homes for sale in Fossil Lake Fort Collins CO" - so-called long-tail searches.

So we have an IDX website - listings.maryanddick.com - that covers our entire northern Colorado market area, with 56 preset long-tail searches, arranged by community. Once every quarter, we publish market reports for each of those searches (see one of our recent ones [here](#)), and in each of those reports, we include a back-link to the related search page on our IDX website.



Here's where it gets interesting. Our market reports don't really rank well - they start showing up around page 3 or 4 of a Google search. But the back-linked search page generally winds up on page 1 (and we're usually the only local agents on page 1, hanging out there in the midst of all of the big guys, and sometimes at the very top of the heap).

It was explained to me that, with Google considering AR a very authoritative source on real estate issues, an AR backlink is very powerful. Google sees that back-link, crawls it to see if it's relevant, and says, "Hey, if AR thinks this linked page is important on this topic, we'll give it some juice."

Frankly, I don't care if the market reports don't rank that well. Buyers looking for 4 bedroom homes in Fort Collins probably aren't that interested in market reports - they want to look at homes. And that's exactly where that page 1 result takes them - to our search page that shows them all the 4 bedroom homes currently for sale (and, incidentally, since it's directly linked to MLS, only those homes that are currently for sale). I want those buyers searching for their next home on our website, having an easy way to contact us for more information, and maybe setting up an account so they can save and manage their searches.

And that's what happens. From there, we can work the leads, just convert the ones that initiate contact, or do anything in between. In the time we have done this, it has grown to amount to about a third of our business volume. And all it takes is the very reasonable costs of a website (we built our own using WordPress and excellent advice - thank you, Tammy Emineth), an IDX service (we use and like **IDXBroker**) and the willingness to slog through 20 or so boring market reports every month. It's a pretty effective strategy for blogging for business results, and well worth taking a serious look at.

Posted by



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