

# **OptiLink**

# **User's Guide**

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**V 2-3**

**OptiLink 3.4.21**

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## *Introduction*

One of the main issue that concerns Internet marketers is the search engine ranking of their page. If a page is returned within the top 10 sites by a search engine for a particular niche, more people will click on that page than on a page ranked number 30. As any Internet marketer knows, getting top ranking with the search engines doesn't just happen.

In the "old days" word counting was enough. Web page marketers waged a constant battle to get the right keyword density while search engines tried to trap a hundred different "keyword stuffing" schemes. Then the search engines added a new wrinkle: "link popularity." The more links to a site, the easier it was to get top ranking, so of course, internet marketers put up huge "link farms". Search engines had to do something or the indexes would be choked with millions of meaningless links. The solution was "Link Analysis." Now instead of just counting the links, the search engines really want know what you're about. Keyword counting (still important) defines your "Topic" -- what *you* say you're about. Link analysis defines your "Reputation" -- what others say you're about.

OptiLink is a specialized browser that allows you query search engine results and to analyze a web page's link structure and reputation-- the links it has to other pages, and the links other pages have to it. This is not guesswork-- this is what the search engines actually say about a site.

Whether you are researching your own site or one of your competitors, OptiLink brings together, all in one place, the very same information that the search engines use in analyzing your site. In a series of specialized views the linking structure of any page you desire is taken apart and presented in a way that exposes inconsistencies and opportunities for improvement.

There might be a hundred ways you can use that information to increase your traffic and improve your business, but here are just a few:

- Look at your own pages and your own sites and be consistent in how they link to each other;
- Add and modify keywords on your pages to make the best use of the links you are getting;
- Discover and quantify undesirable links and seek to have them removed or changed;
- Identify the Hubs and Authorities in your subject area so you can ask for links where it really counts;
- Show you where to narrow the focus of each of your pages for more effective linking;
- Reverse engineer linking structures and strategies that successful marketers are using.
- View reports others have generated.

OptiLink will cause you to see your pages in a new way and to think about optimization and traffic building in different terms. Just as you **re-think**, you will probably **re-link**

## Changes

There have been several changes to OptiLink since the last version.

### 1. System Requirements:

	Previous	Current
<b>Additional System Software</b>	Sun JAVA runtime version 1.4.1 or later	Windows/Linux: Sun JAVA runtime version 1.5 or later. Macintosh: most uptodate Sun JAVA runtime for your OS.

2. Added documentation on copying text from the Log View
3. Added documentation on getting information from specific rows in Pages View, Domain View, and Links View.
4. Modified Tutorial to use windrosesoftware.com

## System Requirements

### Computer

<b>CPU</b>	1 GHZ or faster recommended
<b>Memory</b>	512 Mb RAM minimum
<b>Free space</b>	70 Mb minimum prior to install
<b>Operating System</b>	Windows 2000 or later Linux, any version Macintosh OS-X 10.2.6 or later
<b>Additional System Software</b>	Sun JAVA runtime version 1.4.1 or later.

### Proxy Support

OptiLink optionally supports internet access via a proxy. Proxy support is limited to basic authentication, which is the most common type used. See the description of the Setup menu for setup instructions.

### Firewalls

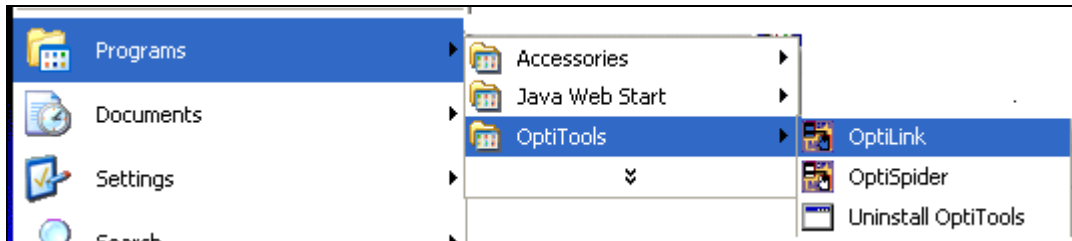
These are a common problem with programs, such as OptiLink, that access the internet. Refer to your firewall vendor documentation for instructions.

# Tutorial

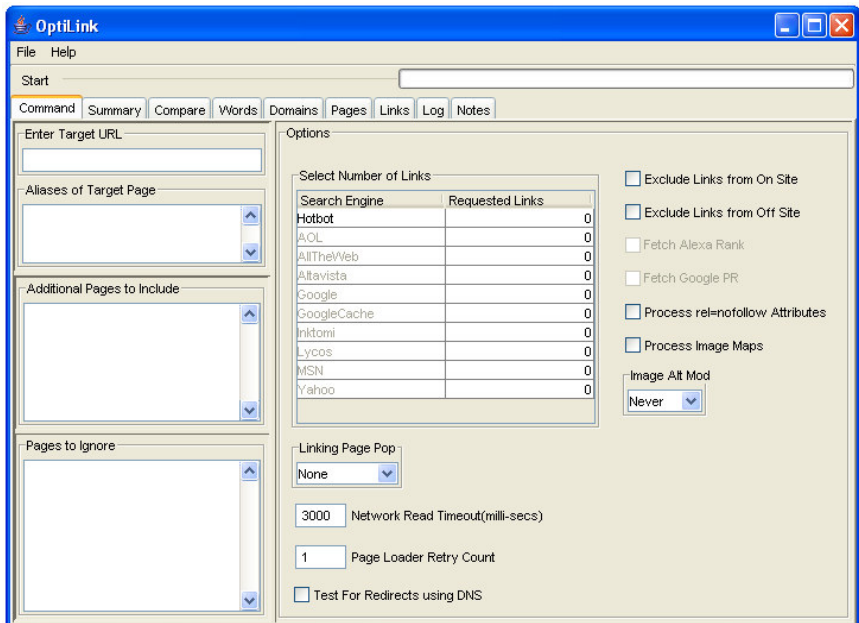
The tutorial gives you a quick overview of OptiLink. You should also view the 5 Minute Tour which may be seen online by opening the OptiLink program and clicking on Help/Online Tour. This tutorial does not explain every option in OptiLink because the purpose is just to get you started.

**Step 1:** If you have a dial up connection, connect to the Internet now. If you have a direct connection, you do not need to do anything.

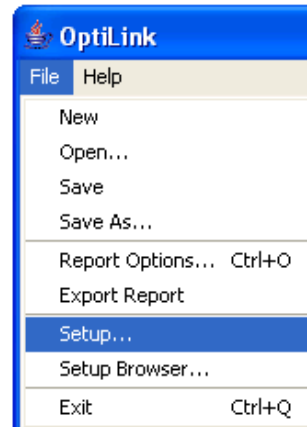
**Step 2:** Open the OptiLink program by clicking on the Start Menu, then selecting the OptiTools group, then clicking on OptiLink.



**Step 3:** The first time OptiLink is executed after installation it will come up in Demo mode with only HotBot enabled, and the number of links fixed to 10. If you have purchased OptiLink, the "thank-you" email will contain the authorization key and instructions.



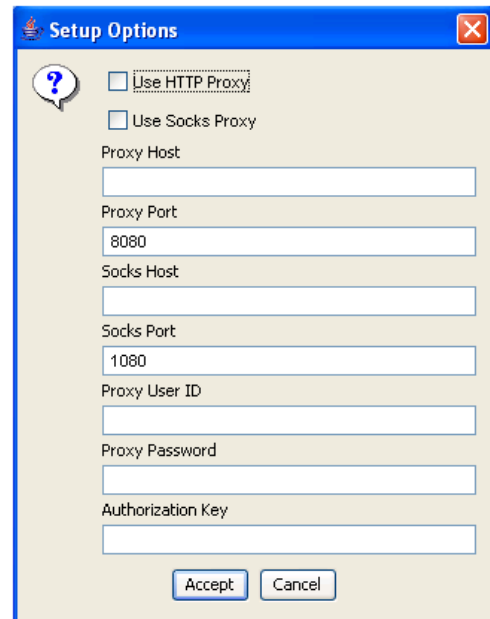
**Step 4:** Setup OptiLink with proxy settings and the authorization key. Click Setup on the File menu. The Setup window will appear.



If you use a proxy server, enter the proxy server settings here. The browser you are currently using is a good source for how to set these correctly, or ask your system administrator for assistance.

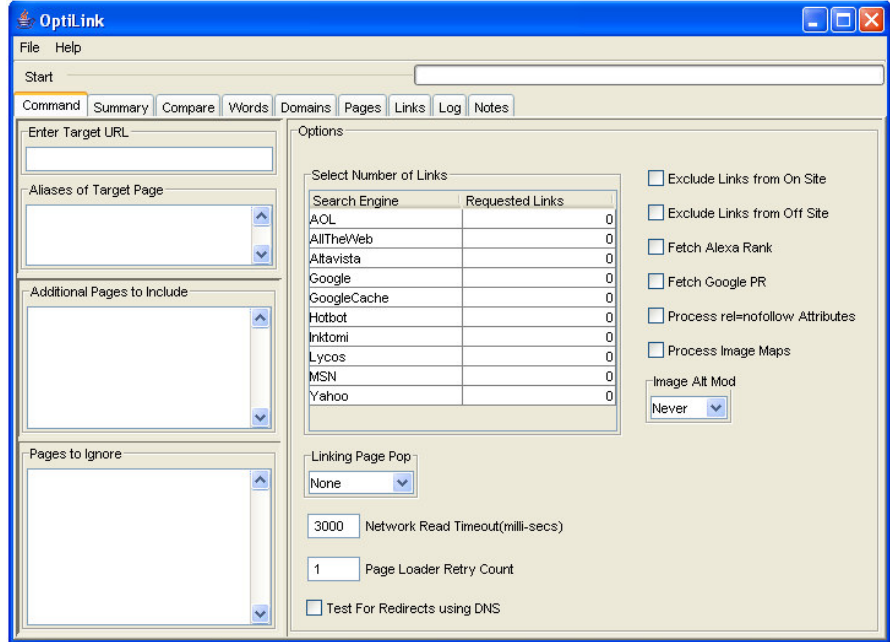
**Authorization Key:** This is a string that was sent to you if you purchased OptiLink. This key enables the software. Without an authorization key, the OptiLink software allows you to do limited analysis using only 10 links at Hotbot. You can also open and view a saved analysis from another copy of OptiLink.

After entering the authorization key, hit “accept”, quit the software, and reopen it. The only time OptiLink looks at the authorization key is when the software starts.

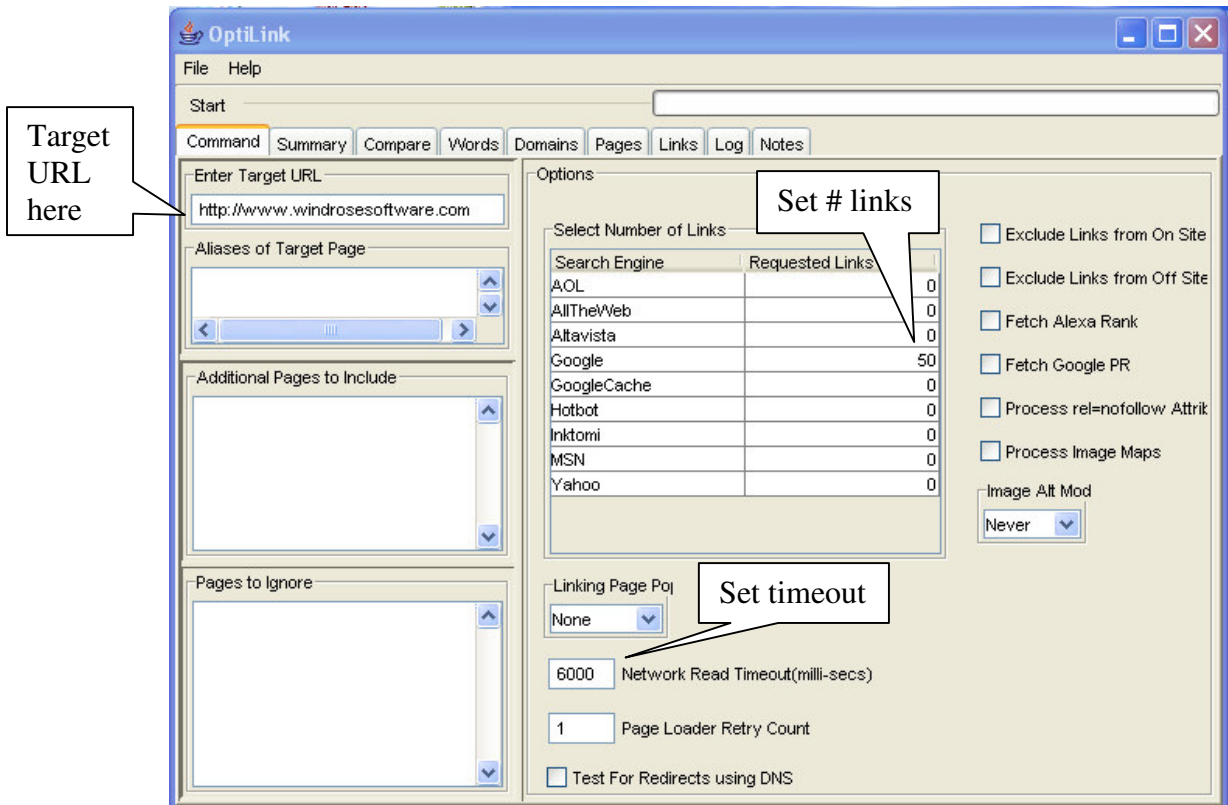


**Step 5:**

When you return to the Command View, you will see the search engines enabled and all of the counts shown as 0's. To run OptiLink, you will have to select a non-zero count for one or more search engines.



**Step 6:** On the Command View (click the command tab) You will set criteria for the example analysis as shown in the following window. Enter `www.windrosesoftware.com` as the Target URL, and set the Requested Links for Google to 50. Set the Network Read Timeout to 6000. An explanation of each of the fields is shown on the following page.



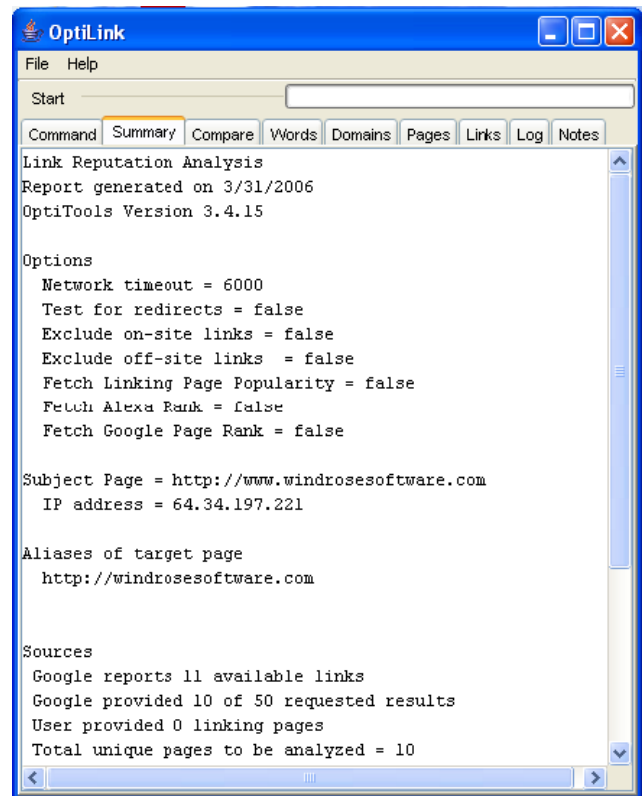
<b>Enter Target URL</b>	Enter the url of the target page you wish to analyze. For this tutorial set this to <a href="http://www.windrosesoftware.com">www.windrosesoftware.com</a>
<b>Aliases of Target Page</b>	Enter any urls that resolve to the same page as the target page. For this analysis, you do not need to enter any aliases. For more information on aliases, see the description of Target Page Aliases in the Resource Section
<b>Additional Pages to Include</b>	Enter urls of pages that link to your target page, but which the search engines do not yet know about because they have not yet been spidered. This example doesn't have any, so leave this blank.
<b>Pages to Ignore</b>	Enter urls of pages that link to your target page, but which you wish to ignore – possibly because you are considering deleting them from your site. Again, for this example there are one, so leave this blank.
<b>Options –</b>	For this tutorial leave all options blank (the default). Note: Leaving the options in default mode will cause the 3.3 version of OptiLink to operate exactly as the previous version.
<b>Select Number of Links</b>	For each search engine you wish to analyze, enter a link count greater than 0. click in the Link Count cell next to the search engine you want to analyze. A drop down menu will appear. Highlight the number of links you want  The number of links controls the level of "precision" you get in your measurements. For a "quickie" check of what a page is about and what kind of sites link to it, 10 or 20 sites will do. 100 links will give you a picture of the page that is much closer to what the search engine actually uses in responding to user searches.
<b>Exclude Links From Onsite</b>	For this tutorial, set AOL to a count of 10 Ignore links from the same domain as the target page. If checked no links from the target site will be included in the analysis. Leave it blank for now.
<b>Exclude Links From Offsite</b>	Ignore links from outside the target page domain. If checked no links from outside the target page domain will be included in the analysis. Leave it blank for now.
<b>Fetch Alexa Rank</b>	The traffic ranking for a site returned by Alexa.com. Leave it blank for now. A full description of the use of this option is in the Resource section.
<b>Fetch Google PR</b>	Page rank (a number between 0 and 10) is a unique feature of Google that is critical to ranking at the top of the Google results. Leave it blank for now
<b>Process rel=nofollow Attributes</b>	This will cause OptiTools to honor the rel="nofollow" attribute on links as proposed and being implemented by the major search engines. Leave it blank for now

<b>Process Image Maps</b>	This will cause OptiTools to spider links in the <area> tags that implement HTML image maps. Leave it blank for now
<b>Image Alt Mod</b>	This controls how OptiTools treats text in the alt attribute of images that are contained in links. The default is “never” which means the text is ignored. The “if no text” setting will cause OptiTools to use alt text as link text if there is no plain text in the link. “always” will cause OptiTools to always include alt text as link text. Prior versions of OptiTools operated as “never”.  Leave it blank for now
<b>Linking Page Pop</b>	OptiLink queries this search engine to determine the linking page popularity. This search engine does NOT have to be one of the engines from which you requested links.
<b>Network Read Timeout (milli-secs)</b>	This is the time allowed for search engine response. Set this to 6000 milli-secs (3 secs).  If you find that pages are failing to load, increasing this number to something greater than the default may help.
<b>Page Loader Retry Count</b>	The number of times that OptiTools will retry a page load. The Default is 1, which means a single attempt following a failed load. Zero means it will not retry at all. This is useful in marginal or slow connections or with websites that are heavily loaded, generally slow to respond or unreliable.
<b>Test For Redirects Using DNS</b>	This is used for tracking affiliate linking, (affiliate links are redirected so that sales can be tracked). Leave it blank for now. A full description of the use of this option is in the Resource section.  This option is renamed in the 3.3 version of OptiLink to make its function more clear.

For additional information of each of the fields in the Command View, refer to the Resource Section of this document.

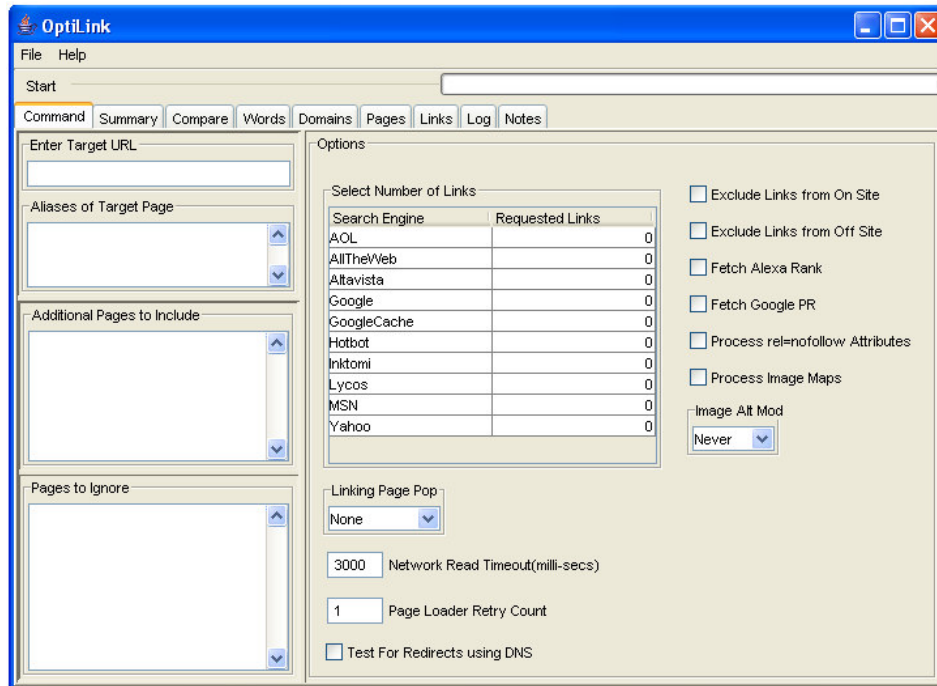
**Step 7:** Press the start button. The user interface will switch to the "Log" window and you will start seeing web results almost immediately. As OptiLink processes your command it displays progress and error messages in the Log view. Any network or data errors will be listed here.

**Step 8:** Once OptiLink finishes processing your command, it displays the Summary view, the first of six result views that show different aspects of link reputation for your target page. Here you'll see your target page listed along with its IP address, the number of inbound links to the page reported by the search engine and a few other important particulars. A detailed description of the Summary view along with the other 5 views may be found in the Resource section



# Resource Section

## Main Window

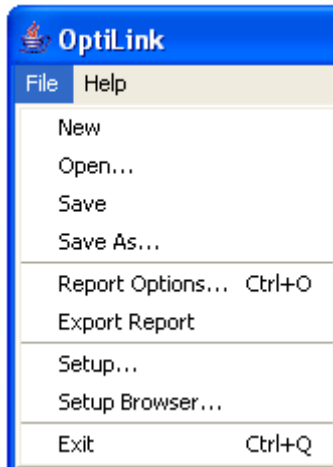


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The main window of OptiLink contains the File and Help menus, and 9 tabs. When a tab is selected it reveals a “view”. The views allow the user to enter information to define the analysis he wants to do or provide different views of the data that has been gathered by OptiLink about the target site.

## Menus

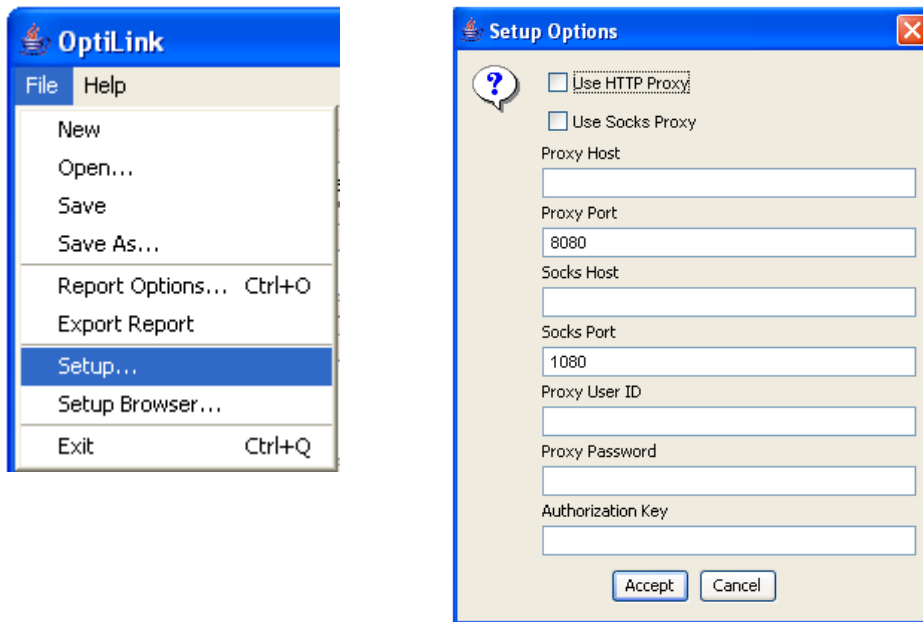
### File Menu



<b>New</b>	Begins a new report.
<b>Open</b>	Reads in a previously created OptiLink analysis.
<b>Save and Save As</b>	Saves an OptiLink analysis to a file.
<b>Report Options</b>	Control which of the results views appear in the exported report
<b>Export Report</b>	formats the information from an OptiTools program in an html file in a temporary folder on your machine, and launches the default browser to display the user report. The report can then be printed, or saved, or mailed. The Report Options control which results views are included in the report.
<b>Setup</b>	Define internet parameters and authorization key
<b>Setup Browser</b>	An expert feature for modifying the browser that will be accessed by the OptiTools.

## Setup

Clicking on Setup in the File Menu brings up the Setup Window which allows the user to define parameters for a proxy server as well as enter your authorization key. Whatever browser you are currently using is a good source for how to set these correctly, or your system administrator.

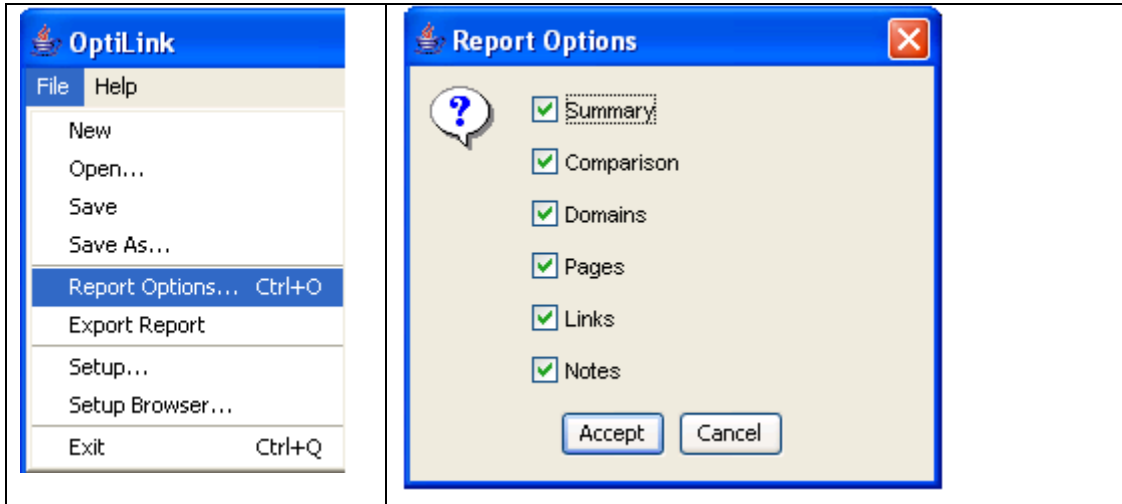


**Authorization Key:** This is a value that was sent to you if you purchased OptiLink. This key enables the base features and optional features in the program. If this field is blank, you are operating the OptiLink Viewer which is free software that you can distribute as you like, but it cannot perform an analysis. It can only view an existing analysis built by others. You can do File Open to view results someone else created, but you don't have the ability to create new analyses. If there is an authorization key, then you have purchased a copy of OptiLink and possibly one or more optional plug-ins.

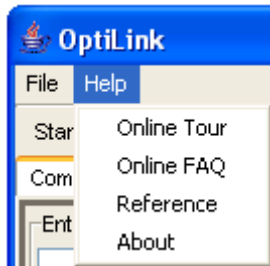
As soon as OptiLink is installed, it will come up in Demo mode where the extent of analysis and some features are disabled. If you have purchased OptiLink, the welcome method will contain the authorization key and instructions. To do file setup enter the authorization key, hit "accept", quit the software, and reopen it. The only time OptiLink looks at the authorization key is when the software starts. The authorization key will contain information about what options you have purchased. You have the base program, the base program plus some additional search engines, the spider, or any combination. If you want to purchase additional options in the future, you can do that on line and you are immediately enabled for the options you have purchased.

## Report Options

Brings up a window that lists the report views. Click the view or views you wish to include in your report.



## Help Menu



- Online Tour**      Take a 5-minute tour of OptiLink features.
- Online FAQ**      This page provides answers to some of the most common questions and solutions to the most common problems for the OptiLink product.
- Reference**        A link to OptiLink reference material.
- About**            Items that may be requested if a problem is reported.
- The software version
  - The operating system version
  - The JAVA runtime version
  - The support email and phone number

## Tabs

Clicking on a tab brings up a “view”. A view is selected by clicking on the tab, which brings the selected view in front of the others.

<b>Command</b>	Defines the target page you want to analyze.
<b>Summary</b>	Provides a brief outline of the results found. Once an analysis is completed, the Summary view is automatically displayed.
<b>Compare</b>	Compares the Topic of the selected page with the Reputation of the page. The Topic is measured by what words, and combinations of words, occur most frequently on the page. The Reputation of a page is a measure of what other pages say the subject page is about. Reputation is measured by the number of incoming links that use various words and combinations of words. The "best" pages in any given category are those that have Topic and Reputation measures that are in close agreement.
<b>Words</b>	The words pane shows every single word found either on the page being analyzed, or in the text of links referring to the page being analyzed and shows where and how many times each word occurs
<b>Domains</b>	Shows all the domains that contributed links to your subject page and the IP address of each.
<b>Pages</b>	Lists the pages that link to your subject page in terms of Hubs and Authorities. An authority page can thought of as a very popular destination, with many inbound links and relatively view links to other pages. What links there are of course, would be very important. A Hub page is just opposite-- more like a train station with numerous outgoing links. Hubs may have many incoming links as well if they are "very well known" hubs. Use the Pages View to decide which page links are more important than others, and why.
<b>Links</b>	Shows the precise text used to link to your page. The text of links to your page determines your “Reputation”-- what others think your page is really about. Maybe they're right? It could be that you should change or enhance your page measures to move your Topic closer to your Reputation.
<b>Log</b>	Provides a blow-by-blow monolog of progress. This can also be reviewed after the fact for error conditions should the results displayed in the other views appear incorrect.
<b>Notes</b>	Make whatever notes you want here and then send the OptiLink report, along with your notes, to the next viewer.

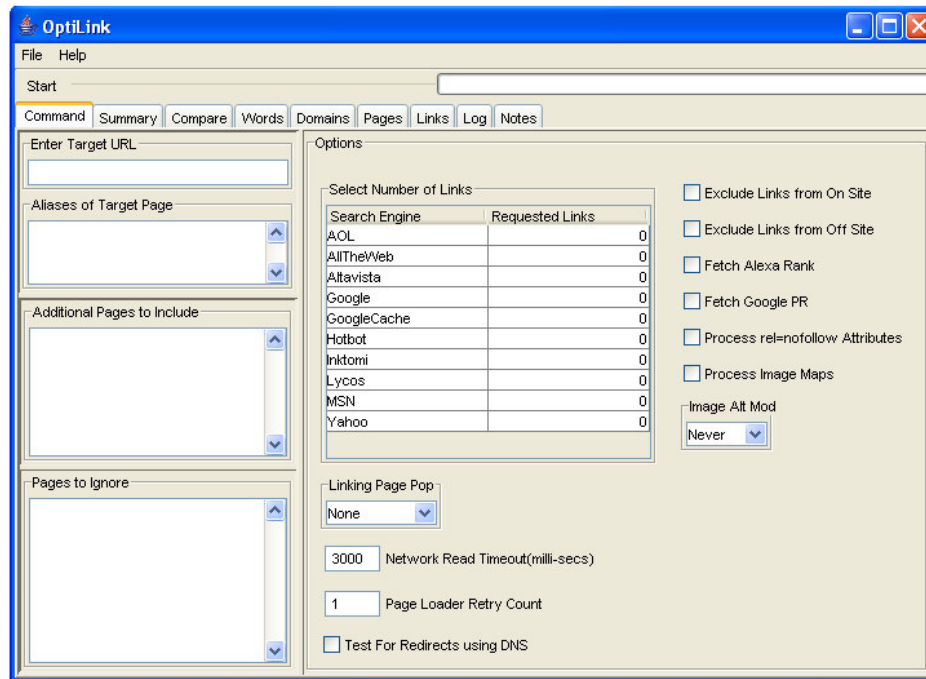
## Table Operations

Each of the views that presents data (Summary, Compare, Domains, Pages, and Links) present that data in the form of tables. Each of the tables can be manipulated to reorder and sort the columns to provide the most helpful format for the data.

<b>Sort Ascending</b>	Right click in the column name cell to sort alphabetically if the column contains strings. If the column is numeric, this will sort in descending numerical value.
<b>Sort Descending</b>	Shift/Right click in the column name cell will sort in reverse alphabetical order. If the column is numeric it will sort in ascending numeric value.
<b>Resize Column</b>	Move the cursor over the dividing line between two columns. When the right/left arrow appears, depress the right mouse button, and move the edge of the column to the desired width.
<b>Reorder Columns</b>	Depress the right mouse button in the column name cell and drab the column to the position you wish.

## Command View

The Command View is where you set up the criteria for the analysis you wish to run.



### Enter Target URL

This is the URL of the page you wish to analyze. OptiLink reports will contain information on links from and to this page.

OptiLink takes the url you provide, such as `www.nothing.com`, prefaces it with "link:http/", and uses that as the search string for the url you selected. This causes the search engine to return a list of urls that link to your site. Some engines will also be given additional parameters to make the output results more appropriate to OptiLink's use. When "Show Query Results" is selected, the precise query OptiLink issued will be shown in the location field of your default browser.

### Aliases of Target Page

The Target Page Alias list is a way to tell OptiLink the explicit names of pages that are linking to the site. OptiLink will search for your target page, but anytime it finds a link that matches either the target or an alias, it will use that link.

- **Implied Page Names**

When you enter `www.splat.com` as the target page name, that is really the host name and not a page name--the page name is implied. When the web server sees an incomplete path – the host name and a directory for that web domain—it will provide the top level page which might be `index.html`, `default.htm`, `home.htm`, `default.asp`, etc. The web server configuration determines what the name is, and there is no way for OptiLink to know.

- **The same set of pages could be known by more than one name**  
Multiple domains could be directed to the same set of pages, or you could have changed your domain name and you have your old domain name pointing at the new domain name through a redirection service.

A common example of an alias for splat.com is www.splat.com. Www.splat.com is actually not the same url as splat.com, but it is commonly treated the same by making two entries in the domain name server and then configuring the web server so that it serves the same content. This would be duplicate content, but the search engine will detect that this is actually the same site with two different urls.

As OptiLink runs, it may encounter aliases for the page you are analyzing. After OptiLink has finished running, it updates the 'Aliases of Target Page' box with the list of aliases it has found. OptiLink may not find an alias that it should. If this occurs, you can provide the URL explicitly in the Aliases List and rerun..

## **Additional Pages To Include**

In the field *Additional Pages To Include*, you list pages that you would like to have considered in results just as though they were found in the search engine. These might include pages that you have reason to believe link to your target page, but have not yet been listed in the search engine. These pages must be accessible on the web-- you have already put on your web site. They are not just files on your local hard drive.

### **Why List Pages Here:**

- **Police Your Reciprocal Link Agreements**  
This is an agreement with some other web site for a link. By entering zero link counts for all search engines (you are not asking the engines for links at all) and listing a bunch of pages in the Additional Pages To Include. You are telling OptiLink, "I'm going to give you the list of pages to look at." You could just have a saved OptiLink report with a list of those pages on which you are expecting to have links. You would rerun this occasionally to make sure those links are still there and still say what they are supposed to.
- **Do A "What If" Analysis When Developing New Linking Structures.**  
Suppose you have an existing site, and you add some more pages to the site, or you add some pages to another site, or you build a new site that links to your target page. Those new pages are not yet in the search engine, so you can't tell what your reputation is going to be once those are spidered without waiting six weeks. By listing pages in the Additional Pages field you are able to do a "what if" analysis.

## **Pages to Ignore**

This is a list of pages that should not be analyzed. OptiLink may have trouble parsing and loading a page-- there is a lot of bad html on the web. In the unlikely event that this happens, the page can be ignored by listing it here. You might also use this feature if you are doing a "what

if” analysis and want to get rid of the link on this page. Combined with the “Additional Pages” feature, you can both add and delete links in doing what-if analyses.

## Select Number of Links

### Selecting a search engine:

For each search engine you wish to analyze click in the Requested Links column next to the search engine you want to analyze. A drop down menu will appear. Highlight the number of links you want

The link count controls the level of "precision" you get in your measurements. 10 or 20 sites will give you a "quickie" check of what a page is about and what kind of sites link to it. 100 links will give you a picture of the page that is much closer to what the search engine actually uses in responding to user searches.

## Command View Options

**Requested Links:** If the target page is linked to by pages A, B, and C, the engine checked as the primary engine is the one that is queried for the popularity of pages A, B, and C. This information will indicate how important those links are. This information is shown in the Pages View under the “Links In” column

**Exclude Links From Onsite and Exclude Links From Offsite:** OptiLink starts out with a group of candidate linking pages. These come from the search engine the user has designated and from the list of pages the user enters in the Additional Pages To Include text box. Some of the links to the target page will be from the same domain that the target is on. These are onsite links. Some of the linking pages will be from other domains. Those are offsite links. If you are interested in optimizing your own links, you could choose to exclude all off site links – those that are not from your own domain. OptiLink would simply ignore them. Conversely if you are interested in what other sites say about you, you could choose Exclude On Site Links.

**Fetch Alexa Rank:** Alexa.com maintains the relative traffic rank of a few million sites on the internet. The Alexa Page Rank is like a golf score, a lower number is better. If you go out to alexa.com and type in the url of a site, it will return the relative rank of that site against all the sites it has measured. You will notice that Yahoo.com is number 1.

Alexa is just another way of analyzing potential linking partners. Bear in mind that ranking is not the goal. Traffic and sales are the goal. One way to generate traffic is to have your page rank highly in the search engines. Another way to generate traffic is to have linking partners who have high traffic. It may also be that in searching for the best linking partners you may find that there is a site that has good traffic according to Alexa, but doesn't have very good search engine ranking.

When you run an analysis, there will be a column in the Pages View where the Alexa rank is displayed for each page linking to your target page. There are a couple of peculiarities relating to Alexa rank. Zero is not a valid result – it means the page is not in the Alexa index. When you are looking at the Alexa rank remember that zero means that Alexa doesn't rank that page, which implies that it is a low traffic page, not a high traffic page. If you sort on that column you end up with the pages with no rank at all appearing before the pages that are ranked the highest. Keep in mind that lower numbers are better than higher numbers, and zero means no ranking at all.

**Fetch Google Page Rank:** PR (Page Rank) is one of the features that is important in getting top rank in Google, however it is “baked in” to the result, so you don't have to have the Page Rank information other than what you can get from the Google Tool Bar in Internet Explorer. The Fetch PR option in OptiLink is intended to help qualify potential linking partners, not to assist in linking analysis. When this option is turned on, for each linking page that is processed, OptiLink will show the page rank reported by Google, much like the fetch linking page popularity option, or the fetch Alexa Rank option—it provides information about the linking pages. It also reports the page rank of the target URL. In the Pages View, you will find the page rank of each of the pages listed in one of the columns. The Applications Secrets Guide includes a chapter on link partner selection using the Google Page Rank, and the Alexa Rank in the selection of linking partners and in the use of expired domains.

**Process rel=nofollow Attributes:** This will cause OptiTools to honor the rel=”nofollow” attribute on links as proposed and being implemented by the major search engines.

Links to SE announcements about nofollow:

[Yahoo Search Blog Notes](#)

[MSN Search Blog](#)

[Google Search Blog](#)

**Process Image Maps:** This will cause OptiTools to spider links in the <area> tags that implement HTML image maps.

**Image Alt Mod:** This controls how OptiTools treats text in the alt attribute of images that are contained in links. The default is “never” which means the text is ignored. The “if no text” setting will cause OptiTools to use alt text as link text if there is no plain text in the link. “always” will cause OptiTools to always include alt text as link text. Prior versions of OptiTools operated as “never”.

**Linking Page Pop:** The Search Engine chosen here is used to determine the number of links that the search engine has in its index that point to the linking pages (which in turn point to your page). The target page is pointed to by linking pages, and the linking pages are pointed to by some number of other pages. That number is the link popularity of the linking page.

In the Pages View, this number appears in the Links In column.

The search engine chosen here does not have to be one of those you have selected above it in the Select Number of Links box. Linking Page Popularity is primarily used to evaluate linking partners, or to compare the ranking of pages in MSN and Yahoo, both of which use page popularity as part of their ranking algorithm.

This option is useful if you are looking for linking partners. Naturally the linking partners you want will be the ones with higher linking popularity as well as higher Alexa Rank.

If you are optimizing your link text, then you don't care about the popularity of the pages linking to you. In this case you don't need the linking page popularity, and OptiLink runs faster with this option turned off.

**Network Read Timeout (milli-secs):** This is the time allowed for all http page loads. If an http request takes longer than this time, the page will be skipped.. Often servers will have temporary delays, so OptiLink automatically retries failed page loads for the target page and all linking pages. Additionally, OptiLink will retry search engine results page load twice.

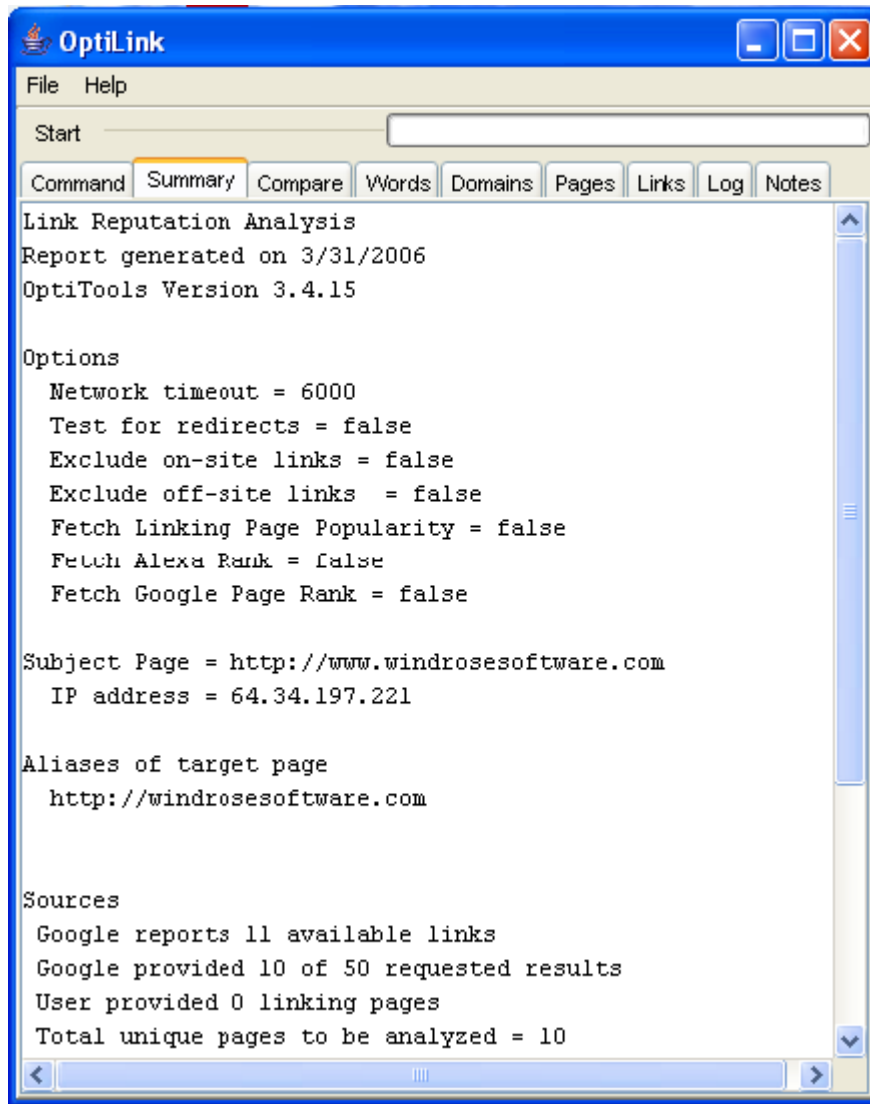
**Page Loader Retry Count:** The number of times that OptiTools will retry a page load. Default is 1, meaning that OptiTools will make a single attempt following a failed load. Zero means that OptiTools will not retry at all. This is useful in marginal or slow connections or with websites that are heavily loaded, generally slow to respond, or unreliable.

**Test For Redirects Using DNS:** There are 2 ways to detect links. In normal operation, OptiLink compares the href text to the target url. When the page is referred to by an alias or a redirection, this doesn't work. When Follow Links is checked, OptiLink does much the same thing that the search engines do--it loads the target page. This requires a domain name server lookup, and then a check to see if the page is the one it is interested in. This is very slow. However, this is the only way to get links which are redirections, which is oftentimes the case with big affiliate programs.

For example, a site like 123inkjets will have many links into it, but few of them will actually contain the text "123inkjets". Most of the links will be through an affiliate management program such as Commission Junction and will say something like qjsrv.cgi/ and some numbers separated by a hyphen, which is how Commission Junction tracks the link from the affiliate page to the inkjet cartridge manufacturer. If the search engine says that there are 500 pages linking to 123inkjet.com, and you ask to analyze all 500 of them, OptiLink will do the browser equivalent of clicking on every link on every one of those pages and seeing if the effective url is 123inkjets. The search engines do exactly this, and they have *many large computers*. Unless you want to have the same amount of compute power, or take a similar amount of time, you probably want to skip this unless you want to know exactly what the link text says. Even when OptiLink doesn't find a link, the Pages View will show all the information except it will show 0 links to target. It won't show the link text because it doesn't know which of the links are actually a link to the target page, but at least you will know that the search engine claims this page links to your target page, and that may be as much information as you need

## Summary View

The Summary View shows a brief synopsis of what was measured, when, how, and a general outline of the results found. When printing an OptiLink report, the summary view is printed first and serves to label the report.



## Compare View

This view shows on-page and link text word counts for the subject page. From these word counts we can determine the *Topic*, and *Reputation* of our page. The “Word” column lists all the words on the subject page or in links pointing to the page that are visible to the search engine. By default the words are not listed in alphabetical order. Instead, they are listed by word count (shown here as a percentage of total words on the page), with the most used word listed first. The “Page” column shows the count of the word as a percentage of total words on the page. By determining the most common words used, you can determine the page *topic*, or what the page thinks it is about. The “Link Text” column shows as a percentage, how often a word is used in the text of links that refer to that page. The “Link Text” column indicates what other pages think the page is about. Numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number. 6.42% becomes 6%, and 6.5% becomes 7%

In this example, after clicking on the Link Text column header to order the table by most used link text words, we can see that the page topic is ‘seo software’. The percentage use of these words is not optimal, however marketing for Windrose products is done through a network of affiliates rather than search engine ranking.

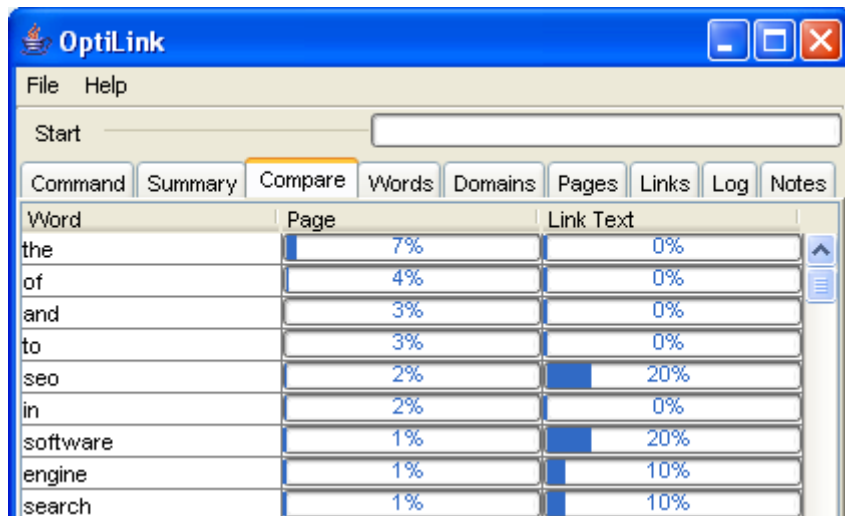
Word	Page	Link Text
seo	2%	20%
software	1%	20%
home	0%	20%
engine	1%	10%
search	1%	10%
page	0%	10%
tools	0%	10%
the	7%	0%
of	4%	0%
and	3%	0%
to	3%	0%
in	2%	0%
available	1%	0%
by	1%	0%
dynamic	1%	0%
first	1%	0%

- Word** The words appearing on the page, in link text leading to the page, and in the titles that contain the links leading to the page;
- Page** The frequency of occurrence of the words in the search engine accessible page text. In our example, ‘engine’ was the most frequently used word at 7%.
- Link Text** The percentage of inbound links to the subject page that contain the word at least once;

## Topic

The "Topic" is the subject of the page as determined from the text on the page itself. Search engines determine the topic by counting all the words on a page and computing the frequency of each word. So, a page of 100 words that contains the word "marketing" 5 times will measure 5% for the topic "marketing." In the "Page" column OptiLink shows the frequency of all words on the target page, measured as closely as possible to the way the search engine does. Actually, the on-page factors, such as "topic" have only a very minor effect on ranking. However, structuring your page so that it is actually about the subject that the user expects will definitely help your page convert visitors to sales.

## Example



The screenshot shows the OptiLink application window with the 'Compare' tab selected. The table below displays the frequency of words on the page versus the frequency in the link text.

Word	Page	Link Text
the	7%	0%
of	4%	0%
and	3%	0%
to	3%	0%
seo	2%	20%
in	2%	0%
software	1%	20%
engine	1%	10%
search	1%	10%

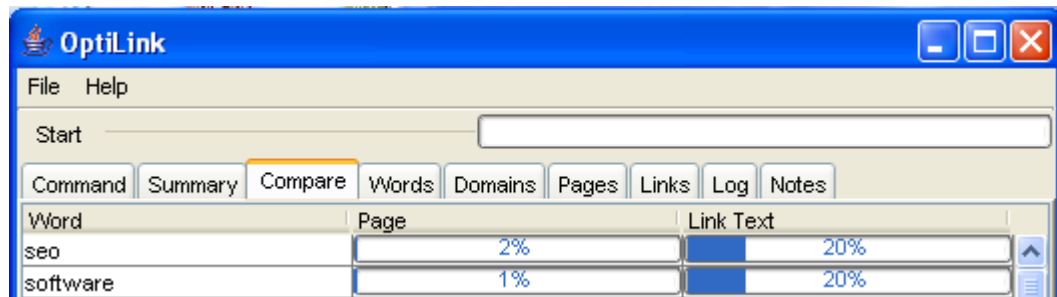
If you click on the Page column header to order words in most-used order, and ignore the connecting words, "the", "of", "and", "to", and "in", you will see that this page thinks it is about seo and search engine software.

## Reputation

The Reputation of a page is a measure what other pages think the target page is about as determined by the link text. That is the visible text that is part of the link to the page. (“Visible text” means visible to the search engine.) Be careful: a common practice is to use graphical links. Such links have no text (it’s a picture—the search engine can’t read the text if there is any), but they do count in the number of links, so your Link Text score is reduced.

For example, if there are 20 links to our page and just 2 of them contain the term "marketing" while 5 of them use the word "banana", we (and the search engines) might conclude that the page might be about marketing, but it is more likely about bananas (or even marketing bananas). For this "banana marketing" page, OptiLink would show 10% (2 of 20) for marketing and 25% (5 of 20) for banana in the Link Text column.

## Example



The screenshot shows the OptiLink application window. The 'Compare' tab is selected. Below the menu bar, there is a search bar labeled 'Start'. A row of tabs includes 'Command', 'Summary', 'Compare', 'Words', 'Domains', 'Pages', 'Links', 'Log', and 'Notes'. Below the tabs is a table with three columns: 'Word', 'Page', and 'Link Text'. The table contains two rows of data:

Word	Page	Link Text
seo	2%	20%
software	1%	20%

If you click on the Link Text column header to order the table by link text percentage, you will see that the top two words in the text of links pointing to this page are “seo” and “software”. This indicates that what other pages think this page is about (its reputation) is seo software.

In the example above, for topic, we saw that the topic of the page is seo and search engine software. We can see that there is close agreement between the page topic (what the page thinks it is about) and the page reputation (what other pages think it is about.)

## Words View

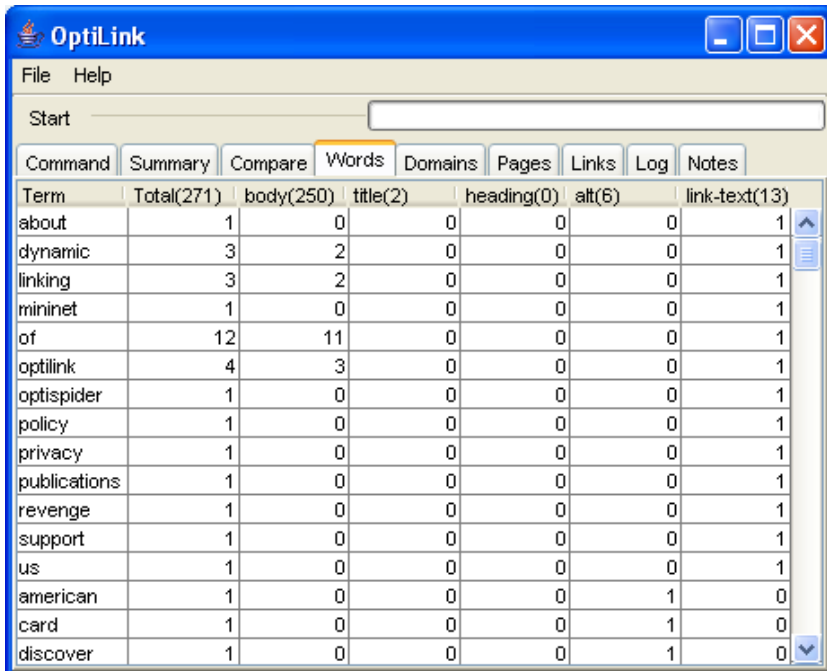
The words pane shows every single word found either on the page being analyzed, or in the text of links referring to the page being analyzed and shows where and how many times each word occurs.

The Term column lists all the words in the document. The other columns indicate areas of the document and show the count of specific words in that area. Shown in parenthesis following each column name is the total number of distinct words that appear in that area of the document.

<b>Term</b>	a list of all the words
<b>Total</b>	the number of times that word appears on the page in <i>counted text</i> . (Search engines vary in what text they count.) Shown in parenthesis is the total number of distinct <i>countable</i> words in the document.
<b>Body</b>	The number of times the word appears in body text.
<b>Title</b>	The number of times the word appears in the html title tag.
<b>Heading</b>	The h1 through h6 html tags. OptiLink doesn't differentiate between the different 'h' levels. It accumulates these together the text in all the heading tags because it is believed that this is what the search engines do.
<b>Alt</b>	Words counted in the alternate text on images.
<b>Link Text</b>	Text that appears in links on this page going to other pages. This is separated from the body text because some engines appear to provide higher weighting to that text than to just plain body text.
<b>Keyword Description</b>	If these appears they are the meta keyword and description fields from the <head> section of the html document. Appears only when the primary search engine selected is one that pays attention to the meta tags. For example, Inktomi based search engines do count those fields, whereas Google does not.

The on-page column in the Compare View shows the keyword density for each word in the visible text on the page. The percentage numbers in the Compare View can be derived from the count of terms in the Words View. For each term divide the number in the Total column by the total number of words in the document.

## Example



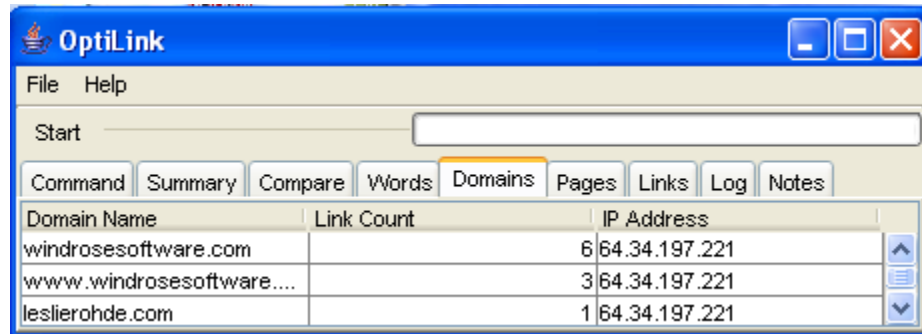
Term	Total(271)	body(250)	title(2)	heading(0)	alt(6)	link-text(13)
about	1	0	0	0	0	1
dynamic	3	2	0	0	0	1
linking	3	2	0	0	0	1
mininet	1	0	0	0	0	1
of	12	11	0	0	0	1
optilink	4	3	0	0	0	1
optispider	1	0	0	0	0	1
policy	1	0	0	0	0	1
privacy	1	0	0	0	0	1
publications	1	0	0	0	0	1
revenge	1	0	0	0	0	1
support	1	0	0	0	0	1
us	1	0	0	0	0	1
american	1	0	0	0	1	0
card	1	0	0	0	1	0
discover	1	0	0	0	1	0

In terms of on-page factors, this page is not optimized because the terms for which it would like to be ranked are actually a very low percentage. For search engines that consider on-page factors (at this time Yahoo is about the only one) where the text occurs on the page is important, and the Word view tells you this.

Actually, on-page factors hardly affect ranking. If you want to figure this out just how little on-page factors matter, this is the tool to use.

## The Domains View

This view lists every domain that contributes links to your target.



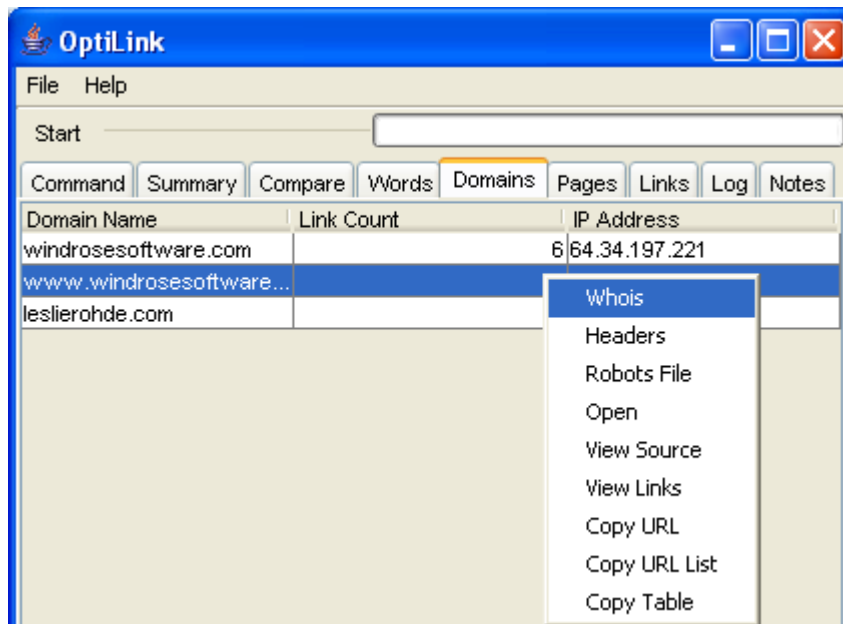
**Domain Name**      The domains where linking pages were found.

**Link Count**        The number of links to our target page that were found on pages in the listed domain.

**IP Address**        The Internet address of the domain.

## Getting Information About A Site

After selecting a site in the Domains View (row will be blue), then click the right mouse button anywhere on a site row to pop up a command menu to get information from this site.



<b>Whois</b>	Returns data for the domain.
<b>Headers</b>	Queries the http header from the server where that web page is hosted. Sometimes you can gain some useful information about the page such as the kind of server or when the page was last modified. This is definitely for the real geek.
<b>Robots File</b>	Displays the “robots exclusion file” named robots.txt, which may be optionally placed on a web server. This file is a guide to spidering programs such as search engine spiders not to spider certain directories or files on the server—for example, shopping cart systems that could create order sessions if accessed by the spider. Blocking private areas keeps the spider from getting a password challenge thus reducing the server load.
<b>Open</b>	Opens the page in your default browser.
<b>View Source</b>	Brings up a simple edit window on the html source of the page. This is only for a quick peek at the html source. A more complete editor is available by opening the page in your default system browser and then choosing “view source.
<b>View Links</b>	Opens a table of all of the link text and link urls on the page. This is useful in diagnosing missing links.
<b>Copy URL</b>	Copies just the page url from the currently selected row to the clipboard. This is convenient if you want to put this in the notes section, or in a report, or email.
<b>Copy Table</b>	Copy the table you are viewing to the clipboard.

## Pages View

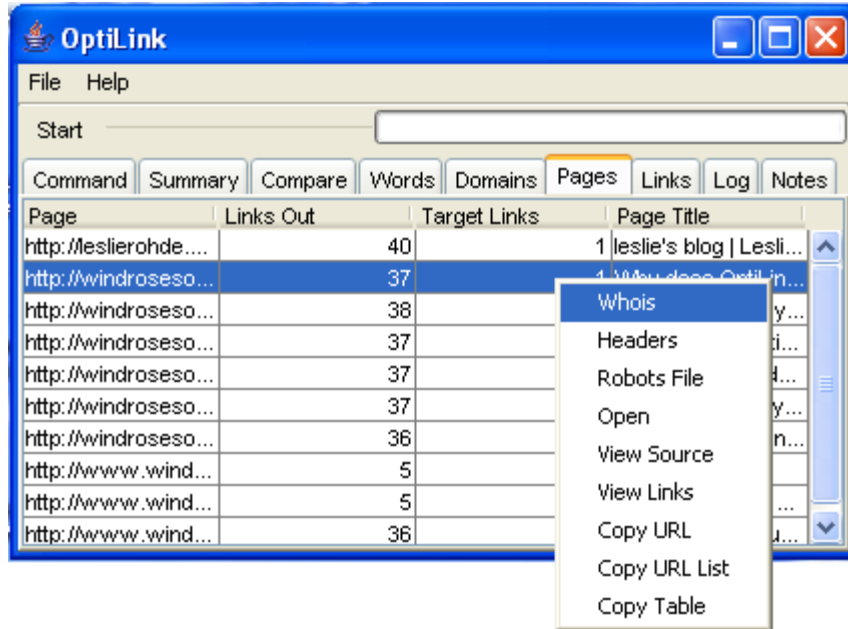
Page	Links In	Links Out	Links Ratio	Target Links	Alexa Rank	Google Rank	Page Title
http://www.infomerchant.net/smallb...	4	154	2	5	157088	3	Info Mercha...
http://refillkits.us/links.php	0	410	0	2	1303320	3	Links
http://www.canon-inkjetprinters.co.u...	0	85	0	2	NM	3	Canon Print...
http://kantoorapparatuur.start.nu/	11	166	6	1	71396	3	kantoorappa...
http://web.nu-z.net/~alyena/Links.html	2	40	5	1	885097	2	Links
http://www.aahssigns.com/products...	0	40	0	1	3559404	2	Aahs Signs ...
http://www.anandtech.com/ratings/d...	15	93	16	1	2560	0	AnandTech
http://www.business-journal.com/su...	1	120	0	1	300049	4	Getting Ahe

The Pages View shows every page that has one or more links to the target. The columns are:

<b>Page</b>	The URL of each page that links to the target page.
<b>Links In</b>	
<b>Links Out</b>	Links Out is the number of links the page has to other pages.
<b>Link Ratio</b>	The ratio of links in to links out expressed as an integer percentage
<b>Target Links</b>	The number of links from this page to the target page.
<b>Alexa Rank</b>	The Alexa traffic rank for the page. Like a golf score, lower numbers are better.
<b>Google Rank</b>	This is Google's proprietary Page Rank. (a number 1 through 10, higher is better)
<b>Page Title</b>	The text that appears in the html title tag of the target page

### Getting Information About A Page

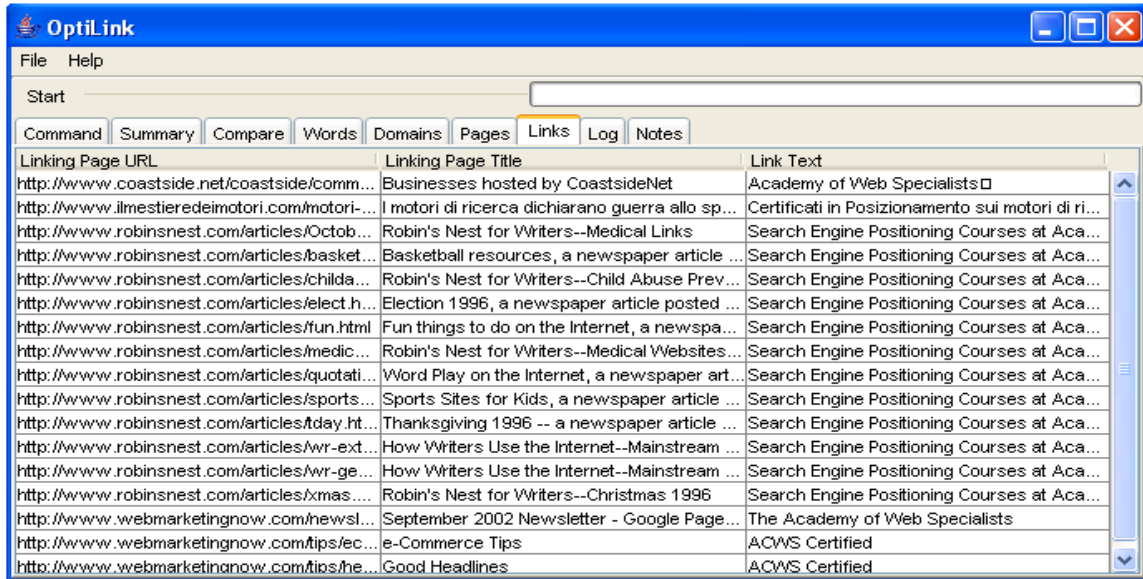
After selecting a site in the Pages View (row will be blue), then click the right mouse button anywhere on a site row to pop up a command menu to get information from this site.



- Whois** Returns data for the domain.
- Headers** Queries the http header from the server where that web page is hosted. Sometimes you can gain some useful information about the page such as the kind of server or when the page was last modified. This is definitely for the real geek.
- Robots File** Displays the “robots exclusion file” named robots.txt, which may be optionally placed on a web server. This file is a guide to spidering programs such as search engine spiders not to spider certain directories or files on the server—for example, shopping cart systems that could create order sessions if accessed by the spider. Blocking private areas keeps the spider from getting a password challenge thus reducing the server load.
- Open** Opens the page in your default browser.
- View Source** Brings up a simple edit window on the html source of the page. This is only for a quick peek at the html source. A more complete editor is available by opening the page in your default system browser and then choosing “view source.”
- View Links** Opens a table of all of the link text and link urls on the page. This is useful in diagnosing missing links.
- Copy URL** Copies just the page url from the currently selected row to the clipboard. This is convenient if you want to put this in the notes section, or in a report, or email.
- Copy Table** Copy the table you are viewing to the clipboard.

## Links View

The Links View shows every link to the target page found by OptiLink.



Linking Page URL	Linking Page Title	Link Text
http://www.coastside.net/coastside/comm...	Businesses hosted by CoastsideNet	Academy of Web Specialists
http://www.ilmestieredeimotori.com/motori-...	I motori di ricerca dichiarano guerra allo sp...	Certificati in Posizionamento sui motori di ri...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/Octob...	Robin's Nest for Writers--Medical Links	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/basket...	Basketball resources, a newspaper article ...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/childa...	Robin's Nest for Writers--Child Abuse Prev...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/elect.h...	Election 1996, a newspaper article posted ...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/fun.html	Fun things to do on the Internet, a newspa...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/medic...	Robin's Nest for Writers--Medical Websites...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/quotati...	Word Play on the Internet, a newspaper art...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/sports...	Sports Sites for Kids, a newspaper article ...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/tday.ht...	Thanksgiving 1996 -- a newspaper article ...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/wr-ext...	How Writers Use the Internet--Mainstream ...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/wr-ge...	How Writers Use the Internet--Mainstream ...	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.robinsnest.com/articles/xmas...	Robin's Nest for Writers--Christmas 1996	Search Engine Positioning Courses at Aca...
http://www.webmarketingnow.com/newysl...	September 2002 Newsletter - Google Page...	The Academy of Web Specialists
http://www.webmarketingnow.com/tips/ec...	e-Commerce Tips	ACWS Certified
http://www.webmarketingnow.com/tips/he...	Good Headlines	ACWS Certified

### Linking Page URL

The URL of each page that links to the target page.

### Linking Page Title

The title of the linking page—this tells us the topic of the linking page.

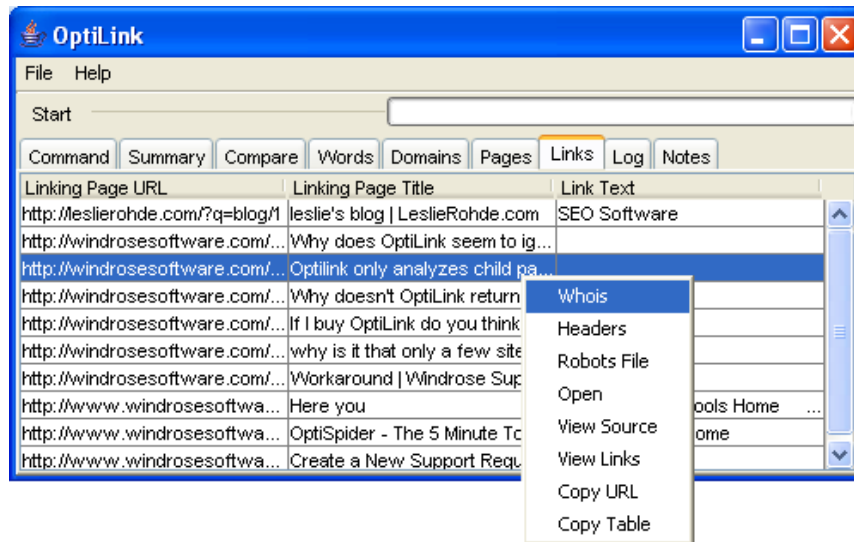
### Link Text

The text associated with the link on the linking page. This is what the linking page says the target page is about (reputation)

Click the column headers to sort alphabetically by any of the three columns.

## Getting Information About A Site

After selecting a site in the Domains View (row will be blue), then click the right mouse button anywhere on a site row to pop up a command menu to get information from this site.



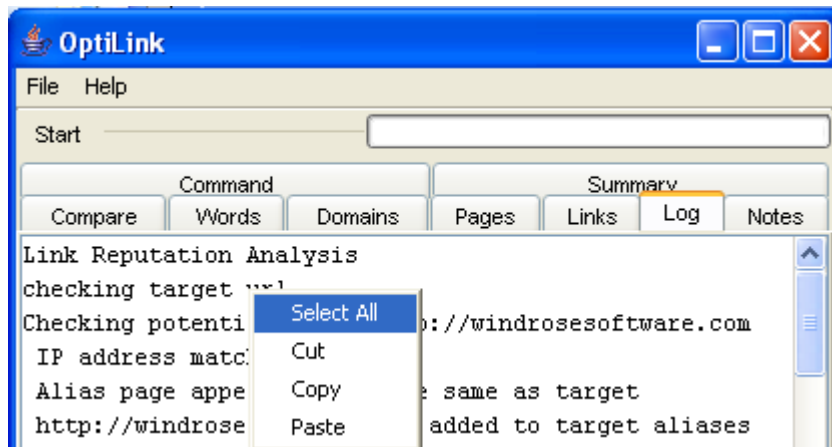
- Whois** Returns data for the domain.
- Headers** Queries the http header from the server where that web page is hosted. Sometimes you can gain some useful information about the page such as the kind of server or when the page was last modified. This is definitely for the real geek.
- Robots File** Displays the “robots exclusion file” named robots.txt, which may be optionally placed on a web server. This file is a guide to spidering programs such as search engine spiders not to spider certain directories or files on the server—for example, shopping cart systems that could create order sessions if accessed by the spider. Blocking private areas keeps the spider from getting a password challenge thus reducing the server load.
- Open** Opens the page in your default browser.
- View Source** Brings up a simple edit window on the html source of the page. This is only for a quick peek at the html source. A more complete editor is available by opening the page in your default system browser and then choosing “view source.”
- View Links** Opens a table of all of the link text and link urls on the page. This is useful in diagnosing missing links.
- Copy URL** Copies just the page url from the currently selected row to the clipboard. This is convenient if you want to put this in the notes section, or in a report, or email.
- Copy Table** Copy the table you are viewing to the clipboard.

## Log View

As the OptiLink analysis engine runs it writes informational and error messages to the Log View. Once OptiLink is finished, a COMPLETE message is written and the Summary View is displayed. You can view the log during execution to make sure the program is accessing the network without problem and to see that links are being discovered and processed. Upon completion, check the log if the results shown in the other views seems incomplete or incorrect.

### Copying Text From The Log View

Highlight the text you wish to copy, then right click to copy, or just right click without selecting to select all:



The Log View is read only, so you cannot paste into this window (in spite of the menu option).

### Notes View

The Notes View is an edit window where you can write whatever comments you wish about the report that was generated. This provides a convenient way for people who are reviewing the report to record information to pass along to the next reviewer.

## **Checking Results**

### **Are My Results Complete?**

After running OptiLink, you may be concerned that the results are either not correct or not complete. It is important to understand that the results will almost never be entirely complete. There are three reasons for this:

1. Some links to the target page may not be spidered by the search engine.
2. Search engines do not return all the links that are in their index. Google especially filters the links and does not return the pages with a lower page rank.
3. If the link is returned as an alias OptiLink will not process it unless you have listed the alias in the Aliases List Box in the Command View.

The only links that OptiLink uses are the link results returned by the search engine. If the search engine has not returned them, OptiLink isn't using them to compute the ranking.

### **Don't I need all the links for ranking analysis?**

If what we are analyzing ranking, that is we are trying to explain why one page ranks higher than another, we don't need all the links. We just need a representative sample so that we can compare the way the two pages are linked. Don't get hung up on not having "all the links".

### **Do I need all the links to find linking partners?**

If you are looking for linking partners, having all of the links is not really necessary. Enough links will be returned that you will easily be able to identify prospects. If you are trying to track down all of your linking partners, the search engine is not really the best way to do that. You can use data from the search engine and combine it with information from your own server logs. You can look in the referrer field in the server log to determine where your traffic is coming from. If you have done a reciprocal linking campaign, hopefully you have recorded who you traded links with and what page your link is on, so you can use that data as well.

### **How can I verify that OptiLink is processing all the links returned by the search engine?**

You can verify that OptiLink is operating properly by looking at the results page that the search engine displays.

### **Did all my pages get found?**

The linking pages that OptiLink is able to analyze are those returned by the search engine and those entered manually by the user in the "Additional Pages" box in the Command View. On the Summary View you will find the number of pages that did not load properly.

Take a look at the Log View and look for error messages, in particular the I/O exception message which means that OptiLink can't load the page because the page was not returned in time (possibly a problem with your internet connection, or a slow response from a web server), or there was such an error in the html of the page that it couldn't be parsed. OptiLink does its best to recover from html errors because html errors are a common occurrence on the web, but there are some cases where it is simply not possible to recover, and OptiLink has to ignore the page. When a server doesn't return with the page in time, you can adjust the Network Timeout

field in the Command View. The default, 3000 ms, is usually sufficient for a high speed connection and for fairly modern web servers, however you may need to raise it.

### **The page is loaded, but OptiLink did not find the link:**

The link may not be there. The usual cause is that the link used to be there, but isn't any more. Another cause is that OptiLink could not find the link because of the way the link is written—the form of the url is different. It is permissible for two entirely different urls to both point at the same web server. The search engines figure this out because they do domain queries, but doing a domain name query on every link OptiLink finds is way too time confusing, so OptiLink is not able to figure this out. If you think this could be happening, you can select the domain where you are not finding links, and look for a link that might be an alias for the target url. If you find one, you can add it to the aliases in the Command View and rerun the analysis. The answer to the question “How do I find aliases?” covered below may have helpful information.

### **Why doesn't OptiLink look for links the same way the search engines do?**

A search engine spiders every single link it finds. To do this, the search engine does a dns (domain name server) lookup on every name it finds, then it goes through the ip address returned from the dns, then loads the page. Since OptiLink is only interested in links to one particular page, it is undesirable to take the computational time and the bandwidth resources required to do dns lookups on every single link. Instead, when OptiLink finds a link, it looks at the domain pointed to in the link, and compares it to the target url. If the spellings of the strings don't match, then that link is skipped.

### **How do I find aliases?**

A lot of missing links to your page may indicate that the links are being returned as links to an alias of your page. If you haven't told OptiLink about that alias, it won't see the links. Go to the Pages View and sort by the Target Links column (the number of target links we found on that page). Look for the ones that have 0's for the target link count. If you believe a page should have a link, select that page with the left mouse button, then right click to get the context menu. Choose “view links”. This will bring up a dialog box that shows every single link on that page. None of them should actually match your target url, otherwise OptiLink would have reported it and you wouldn't see a 0 in that column. You may find that there is a link that is written in some different way, using an alias. You can discover those aliases doing View Links on a page that shows 0 links, inspecting the links one at a time, and find out if it actually ends up at the same page as your target page.

A good example of this would be a website that was formerly run by a friend of mine named Terry Plank. It's academywebspecialists.com. In order to fit that on a business card, he had also registered acws.com, and both of those domain name server entries, point to the same domain on the same server. The search engine spiders have no trouble recognizing that those were the same web pages, and so a web master who linked to academywebspecialists.com or to acws.com was, as far as the search engines were concerned, linked to the same set of pages. OptiLink doesn't recognize links to academywebspecialists.com as links to acws because the spelling is different. For this example, you would want to put the other form of the url in the aliases box in the Command View. .

## **Glossary**

This section contains definitions of many of the special terms that are used later in this document. The user will find it helpful to review these terms prior to studying the tutorial.

<b>Authority Page</b>	A page that has a large number of incoming links that use link text centered around a topic.
<b>Class C Block</b>	Refers to IP addresses and the way they are allocated to ISPs. Addresses are allocated to ISPs in a block of 256 addresses, so two IP addresses that are in the same block must be hosted on the same server. To see if two addresses are in the same block, just look at the first three groups of numbers in the IP address. If they are the same, then the addresses are in the same Class C block. For example, 216.122.64.13 and 216.122.64.155 are in the same block but 216.122.65.13 is in a different Class C block.
<b>Clique</b>	The “community” of pages a page seems to belong to. OptiLink shows us the titles of pages that link to us so we can understand what the subject matter of linking pages tends to be. Our assumption, and one the search engines might be making as well, is that “birds of feather, flock together” so a sense of what our page might be about or related to can be seen by looking at the subject of the pages that link to us.
<b>Directory</b>	A web index created by a human. A page is submitted to a human editor, and he manually enters a title and description for your page. The best known directories, and most highly regarded by search engines, are the Open Directory project at <a href="http://dmoz.org">dmoz.org</a> and the Yahoo! directory at <a href="http://yahoo.com">yahoo.com</a> .
<b>Doorway page</b>	A page whose purpose is to lead the surfer to another page. Doorway pages may be very short and even auto-generated or may be longer and provide meaningful content. The use of doorway pages is hotly debated and it seems clear that very short pages that contain little or no content do not rank well in the search engines. More lengthy pages arguably are not doorway pages at all, depending on whom you ask.
<b>External Link</b>	A link to a page coming from another domain. This is distinct from an Internal Link that is a link from a page within the same domain.
<b>FFA Link</b>	“Free For All”--This is a page full of (typically) unrelated subjects on which anyone may list their site. Links from such pages generally do little or nothing to boost page ranking.
<b>Hallway page</b>	Another name for a site map that contains links to all the pages of a web site. These are useful for end users looking for particular pages. They are also useful for search engine spiders as it makes the site easier to deep crawl.

<b>Inbound link</b>	A link to a web page as differentiated from Outbound Link which is a link on a page to another page.
<b>Internal Link</b>	A link from within the same domain, same as On-site link.
<b>IP</b>	Short for Internet Protocol, this is the addressing and messaging scheme used on the Internet. Every web site has an IP address.
<b>Link</b>	Slang for Hyperlink, this is where one page make reference to anther page using the HTML <A> tag.
<b>Link exchange</b>	Where two webmasters agree to place links to each other's pages.
<b>Link in</b>	A synonym for Inbound Link.
<b>Link Out</b>	A synonym for Outbound Link.
<b>Link popularity</b>	A simple count of the number of Inbound Links to a web page. This is a factor in ranking, but is by no means the end of the analysis.
<b>Link text</b>	The text used in a link. The link text occurs in the HTML code between the <A HREF="..."> and </A> tags.
<b>ODP</b>	"Open Directory Project" found at dmoz.org. It is a human built directory similar in concept to the Yahoo directory.
<b>On-page link</b>	A link from one portion of text to another portion of text all within the same page.
<b>On-page text</b>	The text of a page as differentiated from the text used in links to a page.
<b>On-site link</b>	A link between two pages within the same web site.
<b>Outbound link</b>	A link from a page to another page, either on-site or off-site.
<b>Reputation</b>	A measure of what a page is know for by analyzing the link text of inbound links. As distinct from Topic which is the measure of what a page is about by looking at the text on the page..
<b>Spider</b>	A piece of software that roams around the web. Used by search engines to analyze the content of a pages for insertion it into their index.
<b>Topic</b>	A measure of what a page is about in terms of the visible text on the page. See Word Density.
<b>Topical Directory</b>	A subject focused page that leads the searcher to many relevant resources.
<b>Width (of a topic or reputation)</b>	Refers to how broad or focused your page's topic or reputation is. "Marketing" is very wide. "Internet marketing" is more narrow.
<b>Word density</b>	Word density is measured using the visible text on a page. It is a percentage – a value of 3 means that out of every 100 words of text, the word occurs 3 times. This is the primary tool search engines use to measure a page's Topic.

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OptiSpider User Guide—provided to purchasers of OptiSpider

OptiLink Application Secrets Guide—provided to purchasers of OptiLink

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