

Evidence log and LINK worksheet

Record the evidence behind every backlink decision. A decision log, not a toxicity score or a disavow recommendation.

THE LINK EVIDENCE FRAMEWORK

L

Link context

What are the source, paragraph, page purpose, placement and destination?

I

Intent

Earned, paid, partner, user-generated, editorial or manipulative?

N

Network and pattern

Are several links coordinated by anchors, templates, domains or campaigns?

K

Known evidence

What do history, agreements, policies or manual checks actually establish?

How to use this log

1. Export links from Search Console (add a third-party index for breadth) and keep the observation date.
2. Read the source page before you judge it. Record context, intent, network pattern and known evidence (L, I, N, K).
3. Note your confidence and its limits. Missing evidence means investigate or monitor, not disavow.
4. Choose a decision, name an owner and a follow-up date, and write the rationale in one sentence.
5. Recheck on the follow-up date and record what you validated.

Decision key

KEEP	A natural editorial link worth recording.
IGNORE	Unwanted but not manipulative.
MONITOR	Watch a pattern that has not formed yet.
INVESTIGATE	Evidence is incomplete.
REMEDIATE	Ask for removal or rel=sponsored/nofollow.
DISAVOW	Only under Google's stated conditions, with review.
RESTORE LINK VALUE	Redirect or fix a lost editorial link.

Evidence log: five worked sample rows

Rows 1 to 5 use fictional .example domains. They are not real backlink data and set no benchmark.

Date	Source URL	Anchor	Attr.	L: context	I: intent	N: pattern	K: known evidence	Conf.	Decision	Rationale	Owner
2026-10-20	industry-journal.example/seo-research-roundup	SEOAnalyst.me backlink audit guide	Followed	Body paragraph in a relevant roundup	Earned: author cited the guide	Single link, no pattern	No outreach or payment history	High	KEEP	Relevant editorial citation, brand-style anchor	SEO analyst
2026-10-20	best-deals-blog.example/seo-to-ols-list	cheap seo services	Followed	Commercial anchor in a thin list post	Unclear: possible paid placement	Same anchor on 14 domains	No agreement or invoice found yet	Medium	INVESTIGATE	Repeated commercial anchor needs checking first	SEO lead
2026-10-21	growth-magazine.example/sponsored/seo-guide	hire seo consultant	Followed	Advertorial with no disclosure	Documented paid placement	One of 6 purchased placements	Invoice and placement list on file	High	REMEDIATE	Paid followed link: ask removal or rel=sponsored	Partnerships
2026-10-21	scraper-directory.example/page/48213	seoanalyst.me	Followed	Auto-generated directory listing	No sign we acquired it	Isolated, no repeated anchors	No manual action in Search Console	Medium	IGNORE	Unwanted but not manipulative; no disavow	SEO analyst
2026-10-22	trade-weekly.example/features/seo-audits	SEO audit guide	Followed	Editorial feature citing a retired URL	Earned editorial link	Single link, destination changed	Old URL confirmed in link export	High	RESTORE LINK VALUE	Redirect retired page to closest replacement	Website owner

The downloadable CSV on the page carries the same rows plus the full column set (target URL, evidence reference, follow-up date and validation notes).

Your evidence log

Replace the sample rows with your own links. One link or one pattern per row.

Date	Source URL	Anchor	Attr.	L	I	N	K	Conf.	Decision	Rationale	Owner	Follow-up