

SEO X, a search engine placement program, provides customers with keywords, meta tags, advertising pages, directory submission, link building strategies, online tracking and free customer support with the promise of higher search engine placement. Recent customer complaints, however, hint that SEO X is nothing more than an SEO dark carnival.

Various forums indicate SEO X tends to cold call potential customers with sales pitches. The promises of high rankings may sound tempting but "a good SEO has enough ideas in their head and enough things to work on to not need to call you," warns Aaron Wall. "If they are calling you it most likely means that they do not understand the concepts of reverse broadcast networks and they are no good at their job."

Indeed, many customers have watched in horror as their sites dropped from search engines after signing up for SEO X services. At Bill Hartzler's forum, SEO X customers reported unprofessional customer service after growing suspicious that SEO X was creating doorway pages in disguise. Representatives yelled at and argued with the customers, calling at least one claim "ridiculous." One member was even "berated" by a manager.

"No, we do not make doorway pages and no, we do not rip off our clients," said a SEO X employee in discussion. She believes jealous competitors are simply trying to ruin the company's name. "We are one of the largest optimization firms in the world and I take pride in what we do. ... I am very disappointed in the statements that are made about us."

SEO X has a page vaguely explaining the differences between doorway pages and its own advertising or "attraction" pages. It defines its advertising pages as "individual Web pages that attract a search engine for one keyword. These pages are designed using a computer-generated analysis to conform to the ranking criteria of the top search engines." Like doorway pages, these pages are designed to draw search engine attention to keywords; however, because advertising pages have more "substantial" content and "naturally integrated keywords," SEO X claims they are different from doorway pages.

Google seems to disagree. The company "pulled the plug on some specific spam pages recently," according to GoogleGuy, who added, "I believe that one SEO had convinced clients either to put spammy Javascript mouseover redirects, doorway pages that link to other sites, or both on their clients' sites. That can lead to clients' sites being flagged as spam in addition to the doorway domains that the SEO set up."

Despite its claims of innocence, SEO X has certainly developed a number of loyal haters. Just search for "SEO X" on your favorite search engine and see what pops up. The SEO X site doesn't even appear on the first results page of Google, but instead you'll see angry forum threads with titles such as "SEO X.com = Crap." There's even an official hate website - SEO Xsucks.com - and at least one lawsuit in the works.

While all of this sounds suspicious, you can't always believe what you hear. Just to be fair, it should be pointed out that in this discussion several sites claiming to be banned due to SEO X seem to be misleading. For instance, some used hidden text and others don't appear to be banned at all. As moderator 'cbp' says, "Who is being unethical here?"

That's not to say all SEO X horror stories are exaggerated. If you fear you have been a victim of blackhat SEO, GoogleGuy suggests: "First, you need to make sure that you've removed any redirecting/spammy pages that were on your site. Make sure that every junky page like that is completely gone before you write, then you can send an email to [webmaster@google.com](mailto:webmaster@google.com) with the subject line "reinclusion request" and give us as much detail as possible about the situation." Google also recommends reporting deceptive SEO behavior to the FTC.