



# Have I been penalized..?

Date – 25 November 2010

## New campaign to abolish secret search ranking penalties

UK, London - A new campaign has been launched to gather examples from website owners who feel they may have been unfairly penalized by leading search engines. Named “Have I been penalized..?” the campaign aims to abolish secret search penalties.

The campaign website – [www.havebeenpenalized.com](http://www.havebeenpenalized.com) – asks website owners to submit brief histories of when Google or other search engines have unfairly cut their site traffic or page ranking.

Commanding over 80% of the internet search market, Google in particular has a huge influence over almost every website’s success or failure. Without Google’s traffic, most web businesses have little chance of commercial success.

Yet, Google makes it almost impossible for site owners to find out if a drastic fall in site traffic or page ranking is the result of penalties it has introduced.

With a large number of case studies, [www.havebeenpenalized.com](http://www.havebeenpenalized.com) will ask leading search engines such as Google to introduce three transparency measures on penalties.

- First, to bring in a simple mechanism that tells the site owner that they have suffered a search penalty
- Second, to establish a communication mechanism which allows site owners to find out more about the nature of the penalty
- Third, to instigate a fast and efficient appeals process if site owners wish to challenge the penalty

The new “Have I been penalized..?” campaign is spearheaded by One News Page, a news aggregator which suffered a seven-month Google penalty, causing a 96% fall in Google organic site traffic. The campaign is supported by ICOMP, the Initiative for a Competitive Online Market Place, an industry consortium promoting fairer competition on the Internet.

**Dr Marc Pinter-Krainer, Chief Executive Officer of One News Page Ltd., said:**

“We are not alone in facing a huge fall in our Google traffic. Despite writing to Google eight times, our frustration stemmed from being unable to find out why we were penalized and the nature of the penalty. After seven months it went away, and in two days, our traffic shot back up to pre-penalty levels.

“Today, we are launching our new “Have I been penalized..?” campaign at [www.havebeenpenalized.com](http://www.havebeenpenalized.com). Given the importance to the economy of online businesses, it’s vital that website owners can operate in a fair, fully transparent online marketplace, where the fruits of their efforts cannot be destroyed on the whim of search engines that don’t even allow them to know if they’ve been penalized.”

To upload a case study, please click on <http://www.havebeenpenalized.com/submit.php>

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**Notes**

**About One News Page**

One News Page is an international news navigator website featuring original news coverage and syndicated news content from major trusted news sources around the world. The One News Page portal provides users with a powerful search engine to locate relevant news coverage easily. Users are referred to the source website directly by clicking on a news headline.

Users can access the One News Page website for the latest news headlines at <http://www.OneNewsPage.com>.

One News Page is free of charge.

**About ICOMP**

ICOMP, the Initiative for a Competitive Online Marketplace, is an industry initiative for businesses and organisations involved in the online marketplace. Its overall objective is the sustainable growth of the Internet and key goals are to encourage competition,

transparency, data privacy and respect for intellectual property rights as well as the adoption of best practices to promote creativity, innovation and trust.

Over 50 companies, trade associations, consumer organisations and individuals have endorsed ICOMP's principles. These members represent 14 countries across Europe, North America and the Middle East.

ICOMP is funded by member contributions as well as sponsorship from Microsoft. Burson-Marsteller acts as its secretariat and Lord Alan Watson is ICOMP's first Chairman.