

## **My Site: The Knot.com**

### **Web Site Overview**

- General Site/Company Information:

TheKnot.com is a website developed by the company XO Group, Inc., and was started in 1997, making the website 15 years old (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). However, The Knot.com also has many subsidiaries. Some of these include: Weddings.com, a site that is dedicated to providing information to engaged couples about the leading wedding planning topics and honeymoon destinations; TheNest.com, a site dedicated to helping young married couples organize their life while moving into a home; TheBump.com, a site that focuses on helping first-time parents, and; GiftRegistry360.com, a site that offers a gift registry list to couples so they can register for wedding gifts from a multiple of retailers (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). Additionally, XO Group, Inc. has the site TheKnot.com, which focuses on up-to-date wedding planning for couples who are engaged (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). On TheKnot.com, there are personalized interactive tools for couples to use, such as a wedding checklist, a tool to help manage the guest list, a budget worksheet, and more (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). Couples can also use this site to search for pictures of actual weddings to use for ideas and inspiration for their own wedding (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). There are thousands of articles on The Knot's website that offer helpful information on every possible wedding topic, including question-and-answer

articles about wedding customs (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). This website also serves as a honeymoon-planning tool, a gift registry, and an online wedding shop (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012).

But that's not all! TheKnot.com is also available in magazine, book, and television formats (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). The magazine format of TheKnot.com is available in bookstores and online, and offers smart advice from wedding experts, photos of every wedding topic possible, and serves as guide to finding the perfect bridal gown, bridesmaids' dresses, honeymoons, and more (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012).

The book format of TheKnot.com is very similar, but each is written by Carley Roney, who provides her readers with all the information they need to know about every stage of wedding-planning (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). She provides her readers with true stories of past weddings, advice, ways to cut wedding costs, how to deal with wedding stress, and more (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012).

And lastly is the television format of TheKnot.com, which airs on the Style Network, and is the first wedding TV channel to stream 24/7 – ever (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). On this channel, style experts from TheKnot.com team together to show wedding-related programs, such as videos from real weddings, runway shows featuring fresh bridal fashion from the hottest fashion designers, tours of the world's best honeymoon destinations, and more (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012).

- Competing Site: BridalGuide.com

A competing site of TheKnot.com is BridalGuide.com.

BridalGuide.com is a website that is extremely similar to TheKnot.com in many ways. First of all, BridalGuide.com was also launched in 1997, and provides many wedding planning tools, tips, a bridal fashion guide, honeymoon ideas, and a gift registry (BridalGuide.com). BridalGuide.com also offers blogs and chat rooms where brides can communicate with other brides to discuss wedding issues and ideas (BridalGuide.com). Additionally, this site also provides wedding checklists, a budget manager, a jewelry gallery, photos from real weddings, honeymoon traveling tips, and more (BridalGuide.com).

BridalGuide.com is also available in magazine format, and is available in bookstores and online (BridalGuide.com). The Bridal Guide magazine offers up-to-date advice and helpful information for young brides, and provides useful tips for the day of the wedding, ideas and planning advice for the honeymoon, and more (BridalGuide.com).

### **Traffic Analysis**

- Traffic Source: Quarkbase.com

- [TheKnot.com) Unique Visitors: **1,572,757 per month**
- Analysis: According to this traffic source, I think that TheKnot.com is doing very well. Considering that it has over 1 million unique visitors per month, I feel that TheKnot.com is a very successful website. Additionally, the internet traffic for TheKnot.com is both high and increasing, meaning that the amount

of unique visitors per month will continue to increase (Quarkbase.com). The number of visitors was highest during the months of April through August, which I think is because these might be the months when most weddings occur (Quarkbase.com). TheKnot.com is most visited by people in the United States, but also has visitors from China, India, Canada and the United Kingdom (Quarkbase.com). The page that is most visited on TheKnot.com is the “Weddings” page (Quarkbase.com). I think that the “Weddings” page is visited the most often because most visitors come to TheKnot.com to specifically get information and tips for their own weddings.

- [BridalGuide.com] Unique Visitors: **47,814 per month**
- Analysis: BridalGuide.com is not doing as well as TheKnot.com. I believe this because the internet traffic for BridalGuide.com is only moderate, and is continuing to decrease (Quarkbase.com). BridalGuide.com is also rarely bookmarked, and has a significantly less amount of unique visitors than TheKnot.com does (Quarkbase.com). BridalGuide.com is mostly popular in the United States, but also has visitors from India, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and Australia (Quarkbase.com).
- Traffic Source: Quantcast.com
  - [TheKnot.com] Unique Visitors: **510,578 per month**
  - Analysis: According to Quantcast.com, The Knot has 510,578 unique visitors per month (Quantcast Corporation, 2011). Additionally, there are 939,537 visits, or individual sessions, per month (Quantcast Corporation, 2011). Quantcast also states that the number of visits per person every month

averages out to be 1.84 visits every month per person (Quantcast Corporation, 2011). I am not positive, but these numbers seem to reflect that TheKnot.com is fairly successful. However, the line chart for TheKnot.com on Quantcast seems to reflect that TheKnot.com is decreasing in number of visitors, as the line goes down from January through December of 2011 (Quantcast Corporation, 2011).

- [BridalGuide.com] Unique Visitors: **17,640 per month**
- Analysis: Once again, BridalGuide.com does not seem to be doing as well as TheKnot.com. I believe this because the number of unique visitors to BridalGuide.com is significantly lower than the number of unique visitors to TheKnot.com. According to Quantcast.com, Bridal Guide only has 17,640 unique visitors per month, and 469 visits, or individual sessions, per month (Quantcast Corporation, 2011). Additionally, the average number of visits every month per person is only 0.03 visits (Quantcast Corporation, 2011). This is much smaller than the average number of visits per person every month on TheKnot.com, so I think this means that BridalGuide.com is still not as successful as TheKnot.com. According to the line graph on Quantcast, Bridal Guide visits per month constantly go up and down, varying month to month (Quantcast Corporation, 2011). I'm not sure why the number of visits would go up and down constantly over the year, but I think it means that there are certain times each month that users visit the site.

- Media Kit/Advertiser Info Analysis
  - Unique Visitors: **over 3 million per month**
  - Analysis: According to The Knot's media kit, they have over 3 million unique visitors per month (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). Their media kit also states that TheKnot.com is the leading wedding network out of all other wedding networks, and that 5,300 new members join every day (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). TheKnot.com also claims that 8 out of 10 brides from the United States are active users of TheKnot.com, and 75% of the pages viewed are seen by brides who are active users of the network (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). The media kit also says that active members spend an average of 16 minutes on TheKnot.com every time they use it (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012).

- Traffic Conclusions

As I compare the numbers of the information above, I see some major differences right away. First of all, according to Quarkbase.com, TheKnot.com has 1,572,757 unique visitors per month, whereas according to Quantcast.com, TheKnot.com only has 510,578 unique visitors per month. This is the same for BridalGuide.com; according to Quarkbase.com, BridalGuide.com has 47,814 unique visitors per month, whereas according to Quantcast.com, BridalGuide.com has only 17,640 unique visitors per month. I'm not really sure why these numbers differ so greatly, but I think it just means that Quarkbase.com and Quantcast.com calculate their numbers differently.

Additionally, the media kit for TheKnot.com has numbers that are very different than the numbers that are presented on both Quarkbase.com

and Quantcast.com. The media kit for TheKnot.com states that The Knot has over 3 million unique visitors per month (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). However, that number is a great deal higher than the numbers on both Quarkbase.com and Quantcast.com. I believe that the media kit for TheKnot.com has much higher numbers than the other two sites because XO Group, Inc., the owners of TheKnot.com, want to make their site seem as successful as possible to viewers who have not become members yet, or to people who want to invest in the site. This makes sense because if a site seems successful and popular to a visitor, they are likely to spend more time there, to use the tools that it offers, or even invest in it.

I have also come to the conclusion that TheKnot.com is much more successful and credible than BridalGuide.com. I believe this because all of the traffic information for TheKnot.com is much higher in numbers than BridalGuide.com. I also believe this because according to Quarkbase.com, the traffic for TheKnot.com is both high and increasing, while the traffic for BridalGuide.com is both moderate and decreasing (Quarkbase.com).

### **Popularity Analysis**

- Link Popularity Source: Blekko.com
  - [TheKnot.com] No. of Referring Domains (from “Domain SEO”): **11,410**
  - Analysis: For TheKnot.com, there are many good quality inbound referring domains. For example, the number one referring domain is Twitter.com, which is extremely popular today, and is becoming even more so as time goes on (Blekko, Inc., 2012). Other good quality referring domains for

TheKnot.com include: Microsoft.com; Apple.com; LinkedIn.com; Google.com; NYtimes.com; WashingtonPost.com; USAToday.com, and; CNN.com (Blekko, Inc., 2012). These sites suggest high quality because many of them are news websites, like Nytimes.com, or are well-known websites, like Twitter.com, that are already known for their good quality and credibility.

- [BridalGuide.com] No. of Referring Domains (from “Domain SEO”): **1,329**
- Analysis: For BridalGuide.com, there is also a number of high-quality, inbound referring domains. For example, the number one referring domain for BridalGuide.com is Twitter.com, just like with TheKnot.com (Blekko, Inc., 2012). Other high quality referring domains for BridalGuide.com include: LinkedIn.com; upenn.edu; LATimes.com; ABCNews.com, and; Yahoo.com (Blekko, Inc., 2012). These sites are considered of high quality because they are either news sites, like abcnews.com, educational sites, like upenn.edu, or are well-known sites, like Yahoo.com, that are already known for their good quality and credibility. Furthermore, websites that have “.edu” at the end are always considered high quality because only educational institutions and the like can be allowed to have that URL for their websites.
- Link Popularity Source: MajesticSEO.com
  - [TheKnot.com] No. of Referring Domains (from “Domain SEO”): **25,865**
  - Analysis: On MajesticSEO.com, it states that TheKnot.com has 25,865 referring domains, and 1,639,695 external backlinks (MajesticSEO.com, 2012). It also says that of the 25,865 referring domains, 136 are educational, and 5 are governmental (MajesticSEO.com, 2012). Additionally, it says that

of the 1,639,695 external backlinks, 646 of referring backlinks are educational, and 10 referring backlinks are governmental (MajesticSEO.com, 2012). I think that the fact that a large amount of the referring domains and backlinks are educational, and some are governmental, is a sign that TheKnot.com is of high quality and credibility.

- [BridalGuide.com] No. of Referring Domains (from “Domain SEO”): **2,180**
- Analysis: On MajesticSEO.com, it states that BridalGuide.com has 2,180 referring domains, and 61,746 external backlinks (MajesticSEO.com, 2012). It also says that of the 2,180 referring domains, 12 are educational, and of the referring backlinks, 22 are educational (MajesticSEO.com, 2012). When I compare these numbers to the other numbers listed, I think that this means that BridalGuide.com is of much less quality and credibility than TheKnot.com. Something else that indicates that BridalGuide.com is of much less quality than TheKnot.com is the fact that none of the referring domains or backlinks are governmental, which would suggest high quality and credibility. However, since none of the referring domains or backlinks are governmental, it suggests that BridalGuide.com is of less quality and credibility.

- Social Media Analysis

	<b>TheKnot.com</b>	<b>BridalGuide.com</b>
Facebook Page Likes	125,444	15,547
Twitter Followers	64,797	13,098
Delicious Bookmarks	705	53
Blog mentions	1,218	110

- Analysis: As I compare the social media numbers, it is obvious that TheKnot.com has much higher numbers than BridalGuide.com. For example, TheKnot.com has 125,444 Facebook Likes, while BridalGuide.com only has 15,547 Facebook Likes. I think that this is a really big indicator of popularity. Facebook.com is one of the leading social media sites today, and it is hard to find a person who does not use Facebook. If someone is a fan of something, it is likely that they have “Liked” it on Facebook.com. Furthermore, the fact that TheKnot.com has over 100,000 more Facebook page Likes than BridalGuide.com is a significant indicator of how much more popular TheKnot.com is than BridalGuide.com. Additionally, TheKnot.com has 64,797 Twitter followers, whereas BridalGuide.com only has 13,098 Twitter followers. I think that this is also a really big indicator of popularity between the two websites; Twitter has also become one of the most popular social media sites today, and it really shows how much less popular a website is when a competing site has a great deal more Twitter followers. TheKnot.com also has 705 Delicious bookmarks, while BridalGuide.com only has 53 Delicious bookmarks. Lastly, TheKnot.com has 1,218 blog mentions, while BridalGuide.com only has 110 blog mentions. As I compare the numbers, it is obvious to see that TheKnot.com is much more popular than BridalGuide.com because it has higher numbers in every category.

- Popularity Conclusions:
  - After comparing referring domains and social media numbers, I have come to the conclusion that TheKnot.com is much more popular than BridalGuide.com. I believe this because, first of all, BridalGuide.com has a significantly smaller number of referring domains than TheKnot.com on both Quarkbase.com and Quantcast.com, and I think that this is a very significant indicator of how much more popular TheKnot.com is than BridalGuide.com. Additionally, TheKnot.com has a great deal more Facebook Likes, Twitter followers, Delicious bookmarks, and blog mentions than BridalGuide.com. I feel that this is another very strong indicator of how TheKnot.com is much more popular than BridalGuide.com. I feel this way because these social media tools are used by almost everyone in the business world today, and if a website is not as successful in using them as one of their competing websites, it makes it easy to see which one is more popular. Therefore, since BridalGuide.com has a great deal fewer Facebook Likes, Twitter followers, Delicious bookmarks, and blog mentions, I feel strongly that TheKnot.com is much more popular than BridalGuide.com.

### **Credibility Conclusions**

- By doing thorough research of the websites TheKnot.com and BridalGuide.com, I have come to some conclusions about each site's credibility.
- First, I feel that TheKnot.com is a great deal more successful than BridalGuide.com. I feel this way because I found that TheKnot.com is both high and increasing in its number of unique visitors per month, which suggests

growing success of the website (Quarkbase.com). According to their website's media kit, TheKnot.com has over 3 million unique visitors per month, which is a great deal more than the number Quarkbase.com had (XO Group, Inc., 1997-2012). However, even though 3 million seems to be a bit high, I still feel that TheKnot.com is more successful than BridalGuide.com. BridalGuide.com, however, is only moderate in number of unique visitors per month, and is continuing to decrease in number of unique visitors as time passes (Quarkbase.com). Based on these statistics, I feel that TheKnot.com is much more successful, and will continue to be, than BridalGuide.com.

- Additionally, the popularity difference between the two websites is obvious. First of all, TheKnot.com has a great deal more referring domains than BridalGuide.com on both Quarkbase.com and Quantcast.com. TheKnot.com also has much higher numbers in Facebook Likes, Twitter followers, Delicious bookmarks, and blog mentions than BridalGuide.com. Based on these findings, I feel that TheKnot.com is much more popular, and will continue to be, than BridalGuide.com.
- Lastly, I will comment on a few other factors that make TheKnot.com much more credible than BridalGuide.com. First, TheKnot.com is much easier to navigate and much more user-friendly than BridalGuide.com, as I was unable to find many of the things I was looking for when I was browsing BridalGuide.com. With TheKnot.com, I found it was very easy to navigate, and I didn't have to look very hard to find the things I was looking for. For example, I found an "About Us" page for TheKnot.com right away, which made it very easy to describe the

website at the beginning of this report. With BridalGuide.com, however, I was unable to find an “About Us” page, or anything similar, making it much more difficult to describe. I felt that this was a big sign as to why I feel that BridalGuide.com is much less credible than TheKnot.com. Second, I found that the site design for TheKnot.com was very appropriate and attractive, whereas I found that the site design for BridalGuide.com was just mediocre in both appropriateness and attractiveness.

- Based on these findings, I feel that TheKnot.com surpasses BridalGuide.com in success, popularity, and credibility.

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