



# WHO LEADS THE PACK FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY WEBSITES IN THE UK?

A SERIES OF ARTICLES

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## PART 1: WEBSITEGRADER

If you are a commercial property agent, have you asked yourself the following questions?

1. **Am I falling behind in the fight for the digital space?**

We strongly suspect you may not even know how you stack up. We certainly couldn't find a good analysis of who the winners and losers in the online UK commercial property space are.

2. **Who is winning and what are they doing right?**

Hopefully this article will help you to understand who is winning a lot better. We have looked at a number of data sources to come up with a list.

3. **What are my opportunities to win online?**

Now that's the hard question. Albert Einstein once said *"Computers are incredibly fast, accurate and stupid; humans are incredibly slow, inaccurate and brilliant; together they are powerful beyond imagination."* Winning online is usually a combination of client passion, an excellent technology partner, and the appropriate business resources (both money and human).

At [The Technology Studio](#) we believe that websites are only really about two things:

1. Getting as many of the right people to visit your site as you can
2. Making it as easy as possible for those people to find what they are looking for

The first is all about Search Engine Optimisation or SEO and this is what this article focuses on. The second is all about usability. For example, you can have a site with a great Google [page rank](#) and great SEO but is hated by users and is very poor at converting visitors to leads. That site will still rank highly on the lists below as there are many more objective metrics for SEO (e.g. visitors, [page rank](#), back links) than for usability.

Anyway, onto the analysis.

## THE ANALYSIS

### **Methodology**

This is normally the long boring part that you had to write in science reports at school. To make it easy for the reader, we will put a lot more detail in the final blog article in the series (for any insomniacs) but suffice it to say that we used a number of sources to get a representative list of more than 100 significant players in the

commercial property marketing sector in the UK and then ran a lot of data queries over a period of a week to identify the top 100 and their key data and statistics.

### Marketing Effectiveness

We didn't want to just do some analysis on who got the most traffic (though we have that later in this series of articles) but wanted to give you a view on the marketing effectiveness of the websites. We looked around for an independent assessor and decided to use [Websitegrader.com](http://Websitegrader.com). In essence, WebsiteGrader looks across many of the parameters that Google uses to assess the value of your website and analyses how effectively it implements technology and content. It then turns this into a score out of 100 to rank a website vs. the 2m+ other sites it has already analysed. These are the top 22 from the list of UK commercial property websites we analysed.

#	Company	Website	Company Type	Website Grader.com Score ( / 100)	Google Page Rank
1	Chesterton Humbert	www.chestertonhumberts.com	Agent	98	4
	Cushman & Wakefield	www.cushwake.com	Agent	98	7
3	NovaLoca	www.novaloca.com	Portal	97	5
	Shop Property	www.shopproperty.co.uk	Portal	97	4
	Workspace Group	www.workspacegroup.co.uk	Landlord	97	4
	Land Securities PLC	www.landsecurities.com	Landlord	97	6
	DTZ	www.dtz.com	Agent	97	6
	Knight Frank LLP	www.knightfrank.co.uk	Agent	97	6
9	Regus	www.regus.com	Landlord	96	6
	Strutt & Parker	www.struttandparker.com	Agent	96	5
11	Commercial Route	www.commercialroute.com	Portal	95	2
	Property Mall	www.propertymall.com	Portal	95	4
	GVA Grimley	www.gvagrimley.co.uk	Agent	95	5
14	Pearl & Coutts	www.pearl-coutts.co.uk	Agent	94	3
	Paramount Investments	www.paramountinvestments.co.uk	Agent	94	3
	Instant Offices	www.instantoffices.com	Serviced Offices	94	4
17	SEGRO	www.segro.com	Agent	93	5
	Cluttons	www.cluttons.com	Agent	93	4
	CB Richard Ellis	www.cbre.com	Agent	93	6
	Vail Williams	www.vailwilliams.com	Agent	93	3
	The Crown Estate	www.thecrownestate.co.uk	Landlord	93	5
	Gerald Eve	www.geraldeve.com	Agent	93	4

Some surprises? We think so. It is worth noting a few on the list.

[NovaLoca](http://NovaLoca) – this site didn't exist 30 months ago yet has risen to 3rd on this list in that time. We are biased ([The Technology Studio](http://TheTechnologyStudio) built [NovaLoca](http://NovaLoca)) but it is a triumph that this is possible despite lower traffic levels, a lower

number of back links and a UK only presence unlike many of the top 20. From our point of view this is directly due to the tenacity and innovation in the team and frankly a lot of hard work but we are pleased it is paying off.

[Land Securities](#) – this is a great success story and we commend everyone working on this site as it scores 97/100 (and a Google [page rank](#) of 6/10) and this despite it only being ranked 51<sup>st</sup> in the list for UK traffic. We also like the layout and usability of the site – a really good all round success story and one others should aspire to and could learn from.

[EGPropertyLink](#) – being careful to be fair, 30 out of the 100 sites have a score of 90 or more putting them in the top 10% of sites in the world according to [WebsiteGrader](#). However, whilst EPropertyLink is the dominant UK portal with the most properties, it only comes in 23<sup>rd</sup> on this list.

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## PART 2: GOOGLE PAGE RANK AND INBOUND LINKS

In the previous part of this blog series we looked at the marketing effectiveness ratings of UK commercial property websites according to WebsiteGrader.com. In this part we will be looking at how Google views the value of commercial property web sites using Google [Page Rank](#) as the metric for doing this. Please note that we could look at other search engines but given Google is the dominant player, we assume that if you rank well for the Google search term it follows you probably will for other search engines.

### *Google Page Rank*

Now a lot has been written about [page rank](#) and its importance (or otherwise) but there is no doubt that this is the most public indicator of the value of a site to Google. However, it does not automatically follow that a site with a [page rank](#) of 5 will listed above a site with a [page rank](#) of 3 on a search results page. A search on the term "Commercial Property" in google.co.uk today (22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2010 @15:10) shows [www.ukbusinessproperty.co.uk](http://www.ukbusinessproperty.co.uk) as second on the list despite it having a [page rank](#) of 2 (and despite 74 of this list having a [page rank](#) of 3 or above). There is a lot more to SEO than a good [page rank](#) for one keyword or term. However, the companies in the list with a [page rank](#) of 5 or above are listed below:

#	Company	Website	Company Type	Website Grader.com Score ( / 100)	Google Page Rank
1	Cushman & Wakefield	www.cushwake.com	Agent	98	7
2	Land Securities PLC	www.landsecurities.com	Landlord	97	6
	DTZ	www.dtz.com	Agent	97	6
	Knight Frank LLP	www.knightfrank.co.uk	Agent	97	6
	Regus	www.regus.com	Landlord	96	6
	CB Richard Ellis	www.cbre.com	Agent	93	6
	Jones Lang LaSalle	www.joneslanglasalle.com	Agent	87	6
	Savills	www.savills.com	Agent	81	6
9	NovaLoca	www.novaloca.com	Portal	97	5
	Strutt & Parker	www.struttandparker.com	Agent	96	5
	GVA Grimley	www.gvagrimley.co.uk	Agent	95	5
	SEGRO	www.segro.com	Agent	93	5
	The Crown Estate	www.thecrownestate.co.uk	Landlord	93	5
	Carter Jonas	www.carterjonas.co.uk	Agent	91	5
	King Sturge	www.kingsturge.com	Agent	90	5
	Dreweatt Neate	www.dreweatt-neate.co.uk	Agent	78	5
	BNP Paribas Real Estate	www.atisreal.com	Agent	70	5

Some surprises again?

[EGPropertyLink](#) – doesn't even feature on this list as it has a [page rank](#) of 4. Despite this, it still commands a lot of traffic and when searching on the term "[Commercial Property](#)" in [Google.co.uk](#) today (22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2010 @15:10) it shows first on the list. However, it does probably mean that for less popular, more local, keywords such as "[Industrial units in Aldershot](#)" (we promise we picked this at random) it doesn't rank as highly as [NovaLoca](#), [ComProperty](#) and many local agents ([EGPropertyLink](#)'s first entry is 26<sup>th</sup> on the list).

[The Crown Estate](#) – this is similar to [Land Securities](#) as it seems to punch well above its weight in terms of [page rank](#) (and [WebsiteGrader](#) result). Looking more carefully this high ranking is probably mainly due to the quantity and quality of the [221 inbound links from other websites according to Alexa.com](#) (which include high ranking sites such as Google.com, BBC.co.uk, Guardian.co.uk, Economist.com, and sky.com). It really shows the importance Google places on inbound links.

But not such a surprise ...

The top 20 here are probably more representative of a list of top commercial property organisations in the UK than the previous section. This is almost certainly because the larger the company, the more likely you are to have inbound links to your site from well viewed sites (news stories, blogs etc.). It shows how hard it is for smaller organisations to break in and how much effort this really takes.

To give you an example of what we mean, the table below lists the top 20 websites from the list in terms of inbound links (often referred to as back links) as measured by [Alexa.com](http://Alexa.com):

#	Company	Website	Company Type	Website Grader.com Score ( / 100)	Google Page Rank	Sites linking in (vs.)
1	CB Richard Ellis	www.cbre.com	Agent	93	6	954 (1)
2	Regus	www.regus.com	Landlord	96	6	825 (2)
3	Jones Lang LaSalle	www.joneslanglasalle.com	Agent	87	6	565 (3)
4	Cushman & Wakefield	www.cushwake.com	Agent	98	7	529 (4)
5	DTZ	www.dtz.com	Agent	97	6	381 (5)
6	EA Shaw & Partners	www.eashaw.com	Agent	67	4	266 (6)
7	Instant Offices	www.instantoffices.com	Serviced Offices	94	4	244 (7)
8	Knight Frank LLP	www.knightfrank.co.uk	Agent	97	6	222 (8)
9	The Crown Estate	www.thecrownestate.co.uk	Landlord	93	5	221 (9)
10	Workspace Group	www.workspacegroup.co.uk	Landlord	97	4	182 (10)
11	Aitchison Raffety	www.argroup.co.uk	Agent	78	4	143 (11)
12	Property Mall	www.propertymall.com	Portal	95	4	143 (11)
13	Savills	www.savills.com	Agent	81	6	134 (13)
14	Cluttons	www.cluttons.com	Agent	93	4	126 (14)
15	Commercial Property Register	www.compropregister.com	Portal	87	2	118 (15)
16	UK Business Property	www.ukbusinessproperty.co.uk	Portal	91	2	115 (16)
17	King Sturge	www.kingsturge.com	Agent	90	5	110 (17)
18	Pearl & Coutts	www.pearl-coutts.co.uk	Agent	94	3	108 (18)
19	Strutt & Parker	www.struttandparker.com	Agent	96	5	106 (19)
20	Land Securities PLC	www.landsecurities.com	Landlord	97	6	106 (19)

If you want a very full explanation on Google [Page rank](#) and the Google algorithm, you may want to refer to the article "[Page Rank Uncovered](#)" by Chris Ridings and Mike Shishigin but beware; it is not a short document.

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## PART 3: SITE TRAFFIC

In the previous parts of this blog series we looked at the marketing effectiveness ratings of UK commercial property websites according to [WebsiteGrader.com](http://WebsiteGrader.com) and at Google [Page Rank](http://PageRank) and inbound links (according to [Alexa.com](http://Alexa.com)). Now we turn our attention to website traffic.

### Traffic

Using [Alexa.com](http://Alexa.com) (established as the most used website for traffic stats) we looked at the rank (in terms of traffic) both globally and for UK based visitors. The following table looks at the global traffic rank (e.g. google.com is ranked at number 1):

#	Company	Website	Company Type	Website Grader.com Score ( / 100)	Google Page Rank	Alexa.com	
						Global Traffic Rank (vs.)	Sites linking in (vs.)
1	Regus	<a href="http://www.regus.com">www.regus.com</a>	Landlord	96	6	29,154 (1)	825 (2)
2	CB Richard Ellis	<a href="http://www.cbre.com">www.cbre.com</a>	Agent	93	6	61,686 (2)	954 (1)
3	Cushman & Wakefield	<a href="http://www.cushwake.com">www.cushwake.com</a>	Agent	98	7	81,214 (3)	529 (4)
4	Instant Offices	<a href="http://www.instantoffices.com">www.instantoffices.com</a>	Serviced Offices	94	4	97,912 (4)	244 (7)
5	Estates Gazette Property Link	<a href="http://www.egpropertylink.com">www.egpropertylink.com</a>	Portal	92	4	117,065 (5)	79 (24)
6	Jones Lang LaSalle	<a href="http://www.joneslanglasalle.com">www.joneslanglasalle.com</a>	Agent	87	6	131,780 (6)	565 (3)
7	Knight Frank LLP	<a href="http://www.knightfrank.co.uk">www.knightfrank.co.uk</a>	Agent	97	6	159,048 (7)	222 (8)
8	Chesterton Humbert	<a href="http://www.chestertonhumberts.com">www.chestertonhumberts.com</a>	Agent	98	4	184,104 (8)	37 (38)
9	Strutt & Parker	<a href="http://www.struttandparker.com">www.struttandparker.com</a>	Agent	96	5	191,622 (9)	106 (19)
10	Shop Property	<a href="http://www.shopproperty.co.uk">www.shopproperty.co.uk</a>	Portal	97	4	214,396 (10)	33 (41)
11	Workspace Group	<a href="http://www.workspacegroup.co.uk">www.workspacegroup.co.uk</a>	Landlord	97	4	226,497 (11)	182 (10)
12	DTZ	<a href="http://www.dtz.com">www.dtz.com</a>	Agent	97	6	253,644 (12)	381 (5)
13	Cluttons	<a href="http://www.cluttons.com">www.cluttons.com</a>	Agent	93	4	309,982 (13)	126 (14)
14	NovaLoca	<a href="http://www.novaloca.com">www.novaloca.com</a>	Portal	97	5	321,962 (14)	53 (32)
15	Carter Jonas	<a href="http://www.carterjonas.co.uk">www.carterjonas.co.uk</a>	Agent	91	5	339,354 (15)	84 (22)
16	Aitchison Raffety	<a href="http://www.argroup.co.uk">www.argroup.co.uk</a>	Agent	78	4	437,273 (16)	143 (11)
17	Property Mall	<a href="http://www.propertymall.com">www.propertymall.com</a>	Portal	95	4	438,493 (17)	143 (11)
18	Commercial Route	<a href="http://www.commercialroute.com">www.commercialroute.com</a>	Portal	95	2	452,939 (18)	22 (54)
19	Pearl & Coutts	<a href="http://www.pearl-coutts.co.uk">www.pearl-coutts.co.uk</a>	Agent	94	3	457,734 (19)	108 (18)
20	The Crown Estate	<a href="http://www.thecrownestate.co.uk">www.thecrownestate.co.uk</a>	Landlord	93	5	558,340 (20)	221 (9)

This definitely weights towards the multinational commercial property organisations such as [CBRE](http://CBRE), [Cushman & Wakefield](http://Cushman & Wakefield), [Instant Offices](http://Instant Offices), [Jones Laing LaSalle](http://Jones Laing LaSalle) & [Chesterton](http://Chesterton). This therefore begs an obvious next question:

“What does this table look like if we looked at UK traffic figures?” (which is what we are focusing on in this analysis). Does this change the list much?

The following table outlines ranking for UK traffic only:

#	Company	website	Company Type	Website Grader.com Score (/100)	Google Page Rank	Alexa.com	
						UK Traffic Rank (vs.)	Sites linking in (vs.)
1	Regus	www.regus.com	Landlord	96	6	3,224 (1)	825 (2)
2	Estates Gazette Property Link	www.egpropertylink.com	Portal	92	4	3,582 (2)	79 (24)
3	Chesterton Humbert	www.chestertonhumberts.com	Agent	98	4	6,169 (3)	37 (38)
4	Knight Frank LLP	www.knightfrank.co.uk	Agent	97	6	7,140 (4)	222 (8)
5	Strutt & Parker	www.struttandparker.com	Agent	96	5	7,202 (5)	106 (19)
6	Shop Property	www.shopproperty.co.uk	Portal	97	4	7,764 (6)	33 (41)
7	Workspace Group	www.workspacegroup.co.uk	Landlord	97	4	9,555 (7)	182 (10)
8	Carter Jonas	www.carterjonas.co.uk	Agent	91	5	12,189 (8)	84 (22)
9	NovaLoca	www.novaloca.com	Portal	97	5	12,470 (9)	53 (32)
10	Cluttons	www.cluttons.com	Agent	93	4	13,151 (10)	126 (14)
11	Instant Offices	www.instantoffices.com	Serviced Offices	94	4	14,245 (11)	244 (7)
12	Commercial Route	www.commercialroute.com	Portal	95	2	18,308 (12)	22 (54)
13	Scottish Property	www.scottishproperty.co.uk	Portal	81	4	20,877 (13)	47 (34)
14	Eddisons	www.eddisons.com	Agent	90	3	22,402 (14)	38 (36)
15	Pearl & Coutts	www.pearl-coutts.co.uk	Agent	94	3	24,760 (15)	108 (18)
16	Aitchison Raffety	www.argroup.co.uk	Agent	78	4	25,223 (16)	143 (11)
17	Commercial Property Database	www.cpd.co.uk	Portal	67	2	25,293 (17)	37 (38)
18	Goadsby	www.goadsby.com	Agent	91	3	26,796 (18)	32 (42)
19	Property Mall	www.propertymall.com	Portal	95	4	27,326 (19)	143 (11)
20	Bidwells	www.bidwells.co.uk	Agent	92	4	28,534 (20)	75 (26)

The simple answer is that 75% of the companies are the same as the global list. However, you do see significant differences. For example:

Scottish Property, [Eddisons](#), Commercial Property Database, [Goadsby](#), and [Bidwells](#) make it onto the list despite their UK only focus. However, as an example we would like to use [Paramount Investments](#) which comes in 23rd on the list. Paramount Investments are a commercial property investment consultancy based in London whose online marketing is an example of what it takes to punch well above your weight on this list. They track and monitor their search engine positioning on keywords such as "Freehold Pubs for Sale" and publish market leading blogs with the latest news and information on their specialist [commercial property investment](#) niches. Then they collate their KPIs (traffic sources, conversions, leads, click through rates) and implement changes that impact on their top and bottom line.

It is probably those that disappear from the list that are more interesting. These are [CBRE](#) (#2), [Cushman & Wakefield](#) (#3), [Jones Lang LaSalle](#) (#6), [DTZ](#) (#12) and [The Crown Estate](#) (#20). This really demonstrates the value of localised SEO activity and how Google’s algorithm is very specific to search terms and location. Just because you have a Google [Page Rank](#) of 7, [WebsiteGrader](#) score of 98/100 and rank #3 on the global traffic list (as [Cushman & Wakefield](#) do), you are not guaranteed a first page slot on Google when searching for “[Offices in Basingstoke](#)”.

This list also shows how UK focused portals really come into their own, probably due to their targeted SEO efforts, combined with their nationally distributed, larger property portfolios. [EGPropertyLink](#), [ShopProperty](#) and [NovaLoca](#) all appear in the top 10 sites for traffic in the UK.

# WHO LEADS THE PACK FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY WEBSITES IN THE UK?

## PART 4: THE TOP 100

In the previous parts of this blog series we looked at the marketing effectiveness ratings of UK commercial property websites according to [WebsiteGrader.com](#), at Google [Page Rank](#) and at inbound links (according to [Alexa.com](#)). We then looked at traffic both globally and from the UK (again according to [Alexa.com](#)). Now it's time to put all these together and reveal the top 100 UK commercial property websites.

### The Full List

But, before revealing the list, let me explain how we came up with it: Firstly, we have ordered it by the web sites' [WebsiteGrader](#) ranking (as this series of blog articles was really about who excels at marketing UK commercial property in the digital space and not who has the biggest company). We then included their Google [page rank](#), global traffic rank, UK traffic rank and the number of inbound links they have (according to [Alexa.com](#)). So, sit back and enjoy...

#	Company	Website	Company Type	Website Grader.com Score (/100)	Google Page Rank	Alexa.com					
						Global Traffic Rank	(vs.)	UK Traffic Rank	(vs.)	Sites linking in (vs.)	
1	Chesterton Humbert	www.chestertonhumberts.com	Agent	98	4	184,104	(8)	6,169	(3)	37	(38)
	Cushman & Wakefield	www.cushwake.com	Agent	98	7	81,214	(3)	43,372	(24)	529	(4)
3	NovaLoca	www.novaloca.com	Portal	97	5	321,962	(14)	12,470	(9)	53	(32)
	Shop Property	www.shopproperty.co.uk	Portal	97	4	214,396	(10)	7,764	(6)	33	(41)
	Workspace Group	www.workspacegroup.co.uk	Landlord	97	4	226,497	(11)	9,555	(7)	182	(10)
	Land Securities PLC	www.landsecurities.com	Landlord	97	6	1,349,188	(39)	168,953	(53)	106	(19)
	DTZ	www.dtz.com	Agent	97	6	253,644	(12)	84,226	(35)	381	(5)
	Knight Frank LLP	www.knightfrank.co.uk	Agent	97	6	159,048	(7)	7,140	(4)	222	(8)
9	Regus	www.regus.com	Landlord	96	6	29,154	(1)	3,224	(1)	825	(2)
	Strutt & Parker	www.struttandparker.com	Agent	96	5	191,622	(9)	7,202	(5)	106	(19)
11	Commercial Route	www.commercialroute.com	Portal	95	2	452,939	(18)	18,308	(12)	22	(54)
	Property Mall	www.propertymall.com	Portal	95	4	438,493	(17)	27,326	(19)	143	(11)
	GVA Grimley	www.gvagrimley.co.uk	Agent	95	5	931,383	(30)	55,472	(26)	94	(21)
14	Pearl & Coutts	www.pearl-coutts.co.uk	Agent	94	3	457,734	(19)	24,760	(15)	108	(18)
	Paramount Investments	www.paramountinvestments.co.uk	Agent	94	3	962,459	(31)	39,583	(23)	19	(57)
	Instant Offices	www.instantoffices.com	Serviced Offices	94	4	97,912	(4)	14,245	(11)	244	(7)
17	SEGRO	www.segro.com	Agent	93	5	1,580,313	(45)	173,596	(54)	61	(28)
	Cluttons	www.cluttons.com	Agent	93	4	309,982	(13)	13,151	(10)	126	(14)
	CB Richard Ellis	www.cbre.com	Agent	93	6	61,686	(2)	89,523	(37)	954	(1)
	Vail Williams	www.vailwilliams.com	Agent	93	3	4,646,735	(72)	NA		23	(53)
	The Crown Estate	www.thecrownestate.co.uk	Landlord	93	5	558,340	(20)	39,357	(22)	221	(9)
	Gerald Eve	www.geraldeve.com	Agent	93	4	2,278,504	(51)	142,711	(47)	32	(42)
23	Estates Gazette Property Link	www.egpropertylink.com	Portal	92	4	117,065	(5)	3,582	(2)	79	(24)
	Bidwells	www.bidwells.co.uk	Agent	92	4	600,800	(22)	28,534	(20)	75	(26)
25	Beresford Adams	www.beresfordadams.co.uk	Agent	91	4	1,177,367	(34)	72,979	(29)	25	(51)
	Goadsby	www.goadsby.com	Agent	91	3	652,812	(25)	26,796	(18)	32	(42)
	UK Business Property	www.ukbusinessproperty.co.uk	Portal	91	2	1,191,778	(35)	92,724	(39)	115	(16)
	Carter Jonas	www.carterjonas.co.uk	Agent	91	5	339,354	(15)	12,189	(8)	84	(22)
	Drivers Jonas	www.driversjonas.com	Agent	91	4	1,008,656	(32)	47,414	(25)	77	(25)
30	Eddisons	www.eddisons.com	Agent	90	3	594,541	(21)	22,402	(14)	38	(36)
	King Sturge	www.kingsturge.com	Agent	90	5	811,991	(27)	75,713	(30)	110	(17)

32	Whittle Jones	www.whittlejones.com	Agent	89	2	2,907,896	(59)	NA		3	(92)
	FocusNet	www.focusnet.co.uk	Portal	89	3	1,431,036	(41)	113,712	(42)	38	(36)
	Lambert Smith Hampton	www.lsh.co.uk	Agent	89	4	1,126,618	(33)	75,735	(31)	72	(27)
35	Jones Lang LaSalle	www.joneslanglasalle.com	Agent	87	6	131,780	(6)	173,818	(55)	565	(3)
	Commercial Property Register	www.compropregister.com	Portal	87	2	1,245,726	(38)	76,779	(32)	118	(15)
37	Strettons	www.strettons.co.uk	Agent	86	4	894,593	(29)	57,430	(27)	31	(45)
38	ComProperty	www.comproperty.com	Portal	85	3	1,363,299	(40)	104,547	(40)	32	(42)
39	Stiles Harold Williams	www.shw.co.uk	Agent	84	3	1,509,740	(44)	72,129	(28)	6	(75)
	Ryden LLP	www.ryden.co.uk	Agent	84	3	3,242,665	(60)	184,515	(57)	17	(59)
41	Fisher Hargreaves Proctor	www.fhp.co.uk	Agent	83	3	1,883,643	(49)	107,355	(41)	5	(80)
	Ashtene	www.ashtenne-online.co.uk	Agent	83	3	3,666,254	(63)	NA		14	(62)
43	Gilmarc Associates	www.gilmarc.co.uk	Agent	82	2	3,432,080	(61)	192,343	(58)	4	(87)
	Matthews & Goodman	www.matthews-goodman.co.uk	Agent	82	4	6,777,111	(84)	NA		15	(60)
	Alder King	www.alderking.com	Agent	82	4	2,406,435	(55)	114,550	(43)	31	(45)
	Courtneys	www.courtneys-estates.com	Agent	82	4	4,539,314	(69)	NA		10	(68)
	Bruton Knowles	www.brutonknowles.co.uk	Agent	82	4	4,776,435	(75)	167,659	(52)	22	(54)
48	The Space Station	www.thespacestation.co.uk	Agent	81	3	2,516,097	(56)	214,198	(61)	58	(30)
	Scottish Property	www.scottishproperty.co.uk	Portal	81	4	632,590	(24)	20,877	(13)	47	(34)
	Savills	www.savills.com	Agent	81	6	821,927	(28)	87,908	(36)	134	(13)
	G L Hearn	www.glhearn.com	Agent	81	3	4,257,890	(67)	174,094	(56)	13	(63)
	D M Hall	www.dmhall.co.uk	Agent	81	3	1,957,209	(50)	165,930	(51)	19	(57)
53	Watson Day	www.watsonday.com	Agent	80	2	10,183,166	(90)	NA		1	(96)
	Sanderson Weatherall	www.sandersonweatherall.com	Agent	80	3	1,764,471	(48)	141,004	(46)	30	(48)
55	Kinney Green	www.kinneygreen.com	Agent	79	2	4,432,274	(68)	NA		4	(87)
	Colliers CRE	www.collierscre.co.uk	Agent	79	4	625,920	(23)	31,819	(21)	45	(35)
57	Aitchison Raffety	www.argroup.co.uk	Agent	78	4	437,273	(16)	25,223	(16)	143	(11)
	Duxburys Commercial	www.duxburyscommercial.com	Agent	78	3	4,638,975	(71)	NA		49	(33)
	Bizspace	www.bizspace.co.uk	Landlord	78	3	1,622,886	(46)	194,198	(59)	30	(48)
	Dreweatt Neate	www.dreweatt-neate.co.uk	Agent	78	5	5,241,767	(80)	NA		37	(38)
61	NB Real Estate	www.nbrealestate.co.uk	Agent	76	3	1,639,518	(47)	163,132	(50)	13	(63)
62	Mapeley Ltd	www.mapeley.com	Agent	74	4	19,599,905	(96)	NA		15	(60)
63	Barker Storey Matthews	www.bsm.uk.com	Agent	73	3	5,053,997	(78)	NA		6	(75)
	Goodsir Graham	www.goodsirgraham.co.uk	Agent	73	2	2,281,208	(52)	NA		4	(87)
	Howkins and Harrison	www.howkinsandharrison.co.uk	Agent	73	4	2,531,346	(57)	146,155	(48)	29	(50)
	Brasier Freeth	www.brasierfreeth.com	Agent	73	3	14,230,214	(94)	NA		7	(73)
	Butters John Bee	www.buttersjohnbee.co.uk	Agent	73	3	1,468,089	(42)	80,240	(33)	9	(70)
	Mason Owen	www.masonowen.com	Agent	73	3	5,140,325	(79)	NA		12	(66)
	Rapleys	www.rapleys.co.uk	Agent	73	2	3,600,547	(62)	205,347	(60)	8	(71)
	Glenny LLP	www.glenny.co.uk	Agent	73	3	2,400,868	(54)	149,898	(49)	7	(73)
71	Louis Taylor	www.louistaylor.co.uk	Agent	72	3	4,050,380	(66)	NA		8	(71)
	Edward Symmons	www.edwardsymmons.com	Agent	72	4	1,215,234	(36)	80,870	(34)	31	(45)
73	Whitmarsh Lockhart	www.whitmarshlockhart.com	Agent	71	2	11,234,387	(92)	NA		1	(96)
	Savoy Stewart	www.savoystewart.co.uk	Agent	71	2	2,288,278	(53)	NA		56	(31)
75	London Clancy	www.londonclancy.com	Agent	70	2	1,487,412	(43)	91,221	(38)	83	(23)
	BNP Paribas Real Estate	www.atisreal.com	Agent	70	5	9,755,369	(89)	NA		59	(29)
77	Robert Pinkus & Co	www.pinkus.co.uk	Agent	69	0	3,942,961	(65)	NA		12	(66)
	Innes England	www.innes-england.com	Agent	69	3	2,677,721	(58)	140,235	(45)	21	(56)
	Caxtons Commercial	www.caxtons.com	Agent	69	3	7,606,722	(86)	NA		13	(63)
	Altus Edwin Hill	www.edwinhill.co.uk	Agent	69	3	4,563,787	(70)	NA		25	(51)
81	Speirs Gumley	www.speirsgumley.com	Agent	68	3	5,408,573	(81)	NA		10	(68)
82	NG Natrass Giles	www.ng-cs.com	Agent	67	1	4,732,733	(74)	NA		5	(80)
	Commercial Property Database	www.cpd.co.uk	Portal	67	2	682,855	(26)	25,293	(17)	37	(38)
	EA Shaw & Partners	www.eashaw.com	Agent	67	4	1,230,184	(37)	120,460	(44)	266	(6)
85	Brown & Lee	www.browndlee.co.uk	Agent	65	1	NA		NA		5	(80)
	Haslams	www.haslams.co.uk	Agent	65	2	20,667,006	(97)	NA		3	(92)
87	Lamont	www.lamonts.co.uk	Agent	63	2	14,847,000	(95)	NA		4	(87)
	Stupples	www.stupples.com	Agent	63	3	23,280,915	(98)	NA		5	(80)
	Edwards & Co	www.edwardsandco.com	Agent	63	0	13,062,307	(93)	NA		1	(96)
90	PPH Commercial	www.pph-commercial.co.uk	Agent	61	2	6,927,906	(85)	NA		4	(87)
91	Legat Owen	www.legatowen.co.uk	Agent	60	3	5,561,749	(82)	NA		6	(75)
92	WT Gunson	www.wtgunson.co.uk	Agent	57	2	5,005,706	(76)	NA		5	(80)
	De Souza	www.desouza.co.uk	Agent	57	2	8,521,973	(87)	NA		1	(96)
94	Grant Mills Wood	www.grantmillswood.com	Agent	56	3	NA		NA		NA	
	Nettleship Sawyer	www.nettleshipawyer.co.uk	Agent	56	2	4,648,281	(73)	NA		2	(94)
	Kemsley	www.kwf.co.uk	Agent	56	2	5,042,884	(77)	NA		5	(80)

97	Sibbett Gregory	www.sibbettgregory.com	Agent	55	2	9,417,949	(88)	NA	6	(75)
98	Dutch & Dutch	www.dutchanddutch.com	Agent	54	4	10,913,381	(91)	NA	6	(75)
	Chancerygate	www.chancerygate.com	Agent	54	3	5,778,747	(83)	NA	2	(94)
100	Smith Price	www.smithprice.co.uk	Agent	53	2	3,774,737	(64)	NA	5	(80)

## Overall Observations

This is the bit where we rant on about SEO and usability and how important they are... well maybe a bit. Here are a few thoughts for those trying to really succeed in the UK commercial property digital marketplace.

### 1. Being national helps, being international helps even more

The Google algorithm likes big sites with lots of indexed pages. It also likes well established sites.

However, it especially likes lots of relevant and high [page rank](#) sites linking to your site (non reciprocal links). It is much easier for you to achieve this if you have national, or better still international, presence or have another helpful way of doing this (e.g. being part of a publishing group like [EGPropertyLink](#)).

### 2. You have to fight really hard to beat the big boys and portals - but be smart and fight hard in your areas of strength

You can try and compete for the search term “commercial property” or “commercial property London” but good luck. If you are a regional or local agent you almost certainly can’t beat the big boys but you really CAN compete in your locality for search terms such as “Industrial Units in Accrington”. If you type this in (and we really did pick this at random) the first on the list is [www.taylorweaver.co.uk](#), the second is [www.thomasvshaw.co.uk](#) and the third is [Novaloca](#). This is because [Novaloca](#)’s SEO strategy was to target hundreds of thousands of keyword combinations rather than the most popular – it is no surprise therefore that only less than 10% of visitors arrive on [Novaloca](#)’s home page as most arrive on a page much more targeted to their search terms.

### 3. Marketing Effectiveness is not just about traffic

As we have mentioned before, it is one thing to appear as high as possible on a Google search, but it is quite another to create a compelling experience when a user makes it to your site. You need to think hard about page layout, calls to action, usability, language, ease of search, the right information at the right time, maximising conversions, tracking usage and ongoing development. A website is often seen as a product that can be launched and ignored for two or three years. This is not true if you really want to drive ROI.

### 4. There are 30 commercial property websites with a UK presence that Website Grader puts in the top 10% of marketing effectiveness worldwide

This means that the competition is challenging and improving all the time and it takes lots of effort to get further up this list. Emerging technologies are really playing a part in this too (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, iphone apps, blogs) and you really need to have a strong view on where you are going to focus your energies to maximise your returns. It really isn’t about building a pretty website and then putting it on a URL – “Build it and they will come” is alright for Kevin Costner ([Field of Dreams](#)) but it doesn’t work in the real world.

### 5. If you work really hard you can beat the odds

There is hope. We like stories like [NovaLoca](#), [Paramount Investments](#) and UK commercial agents like [Gerald Eve](#) who all beat [EGPropertyLink](#) in terms of their [WebsiteGrader](#) score. They may not beat them in terms of UK or global traffic but we bet you that where they focus their energies is their localities and their specialism's they are really winning. It takes initiative, innovation, focus and frankly a lot of hard work, but it is possible.

#### **6. If you are going to focus your energies on one thing, make it back links**

It has long been known that back links are massively important to Google. In many ways this is because they are the greatest compliment that can be paid in the impersonal world of the internet, but it is mostly because they are so difficult to get if you want them and don't have them. What's more, your web developers can't just get them for you no matter how much money you throw at them. Yes, you can register on press release sites and directories but generally people only link back to you if you have something valuable to say or offer. A good example is [NovaLoca](#) who launched Street Level View in the UK a full four months before Google did in partnership with a small Italian company called Seety. This didn't create the huge PR that Google did but it certainly provided some press coverage and some good back links.

#### **7. If you receive an email that says something like "We guarantee to get you to the top of Google", our advice is to delete it immediately**

It just isn't possible to guarantee anything with Google (or any other search engine) and anyone who promises to is just after your cash. [Page ranks](#) go up and down, back links are so important (but not under your control) and SEO is so much about what you do as a company and how much effort you are prepared to invest. The best strategy is to find a technology partner who knows what they are doing and who knows their limitations and then works extremely hard on both technical and non technical SEO activities. Then watch what happens. A good rule of thumb is try ten things and probably two will be really valuable – you just won't know which two until you try!

If you want to know more about why your site appears where it does on the list, if you want to explore the data in more detail, if you want to complain about an inaccuracy or hopefully most importantly you want to chat about how you can get the most out of your digital marketing spend then please feel free to get in touch with me directly:

Neil Osmond

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call me at 0845 642 9885

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skype me at neil.osmond

or please feel free to comment on this blog article

# WHO LEADS THE PACK FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY WEBSITES IN THE UK?

## PART 5: METHODOLOGY

This is the final part in this blog series. Previously we have looked at the marketing effectiveness ratings of UK commercial property websites according to [WebsiteGrader.com](http://WebsiteGrader.com), at Google [Page Rank](http://PageRank) and at inbound links (according to [Alexa.com](http://Alexa.com)). We then looked at traffic both globally and from the UK (again according to [Alexa.com](http://Alexa.com)). For anyone still awake and interested this is how we went about compiling the list.

### METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

#### *Compiling the List of Companies*

We couldn't find a generic list of top 100 UK commercial property companies on the internet so the first challenge was to come up with a list of top UK based commercial property search engines. In order to do this we looked at three different things:

1. **Mailing List** – we were provided with a mailing list of commercial property companies by [MJM Marketing Ltd](http://MJMMarketingLtd) (who specialise in mailings and mailing lists for the UK commercial property marketplace) for which we are very grateful. We then compiled a list of all the companies that appeared on this list and that had 50 or more employees.
2. **NovaLoca** – we then asked [NovaLoca](http://NovaLoca.com) for a list of any agent that had over 100 properties listed on NovaLoca.com and added any that didn't appear on the mailing list data.
3. **Google** – we then undertook a few generic Google searches (“Commercial Property”, “Commercial Property UK”, “Industrial Property”) and looked at the first few pages of the search results and added any companies that did not already appear to the list.

We then made some decisions on which URLs to exclude from the list and used the following principles:

- For any company site where they had two sites, we used the higher rated site. An example of this would be [www.edwinhill.co.uk](http://www.edwinhill.co.uk) and [www.altus-edwinhill.com](http://www.altus-edwinhill.com) – we took [www.edwinhill.co.uk](http://www.edwinhill.co.uk)
- We excluded sites where they either have very few instances of commercial property or are a portal where the primary focus is residential property. An example being [www.findaproperty.com](http://www.findaproperty.com).
- We excluded any site where the predominant raison d'être is to market businesses rather than commercial properties. Examples being [www.rightbiz.co.uk](http://www.rightbiz.co.uk) and [www.daltonsbusiness.com](http://www.daltonsbusiness.com).
- We excluded sites which may be focused on commercial property but where they did not market commercial property. Examples being [www.rics.org](http://www.rics.org) and [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk).

Following the analysis we then drew an arbitrary line at a round number of companies close to a [WebsiteGrader](#) score of 50/100.

We are sure that we are missing some (probably obvious) companies for which we can only apologise and assure you that this is inadvertent. We may repeat this exercise on a regular basis and if we do we would like to improve the list so please email me at [neil@thetechnologystudio.co.uk](mailto:neil@thetechnologystudio.co.uk) if you have any suggested inclusions for next time.

### **Deciding What Metrics to Use**

When doing this analysis we were really looking to find a trusted independent third party who could provide data on all the commercial property websites. One obvious choice was [Alexa.com](#) which has become the gold standard in comparing website traffic. [Alexa](#) is a company owned by [Amazon.com](#) that has built a database of information about sites that includes statistics, related links and more. All of this information can be found on [Alexa's site overview pages](#), [traffic detail pages](#) and [related links pages](#). You can look at all the parameters over one month, three months, six months or a year. Balancing recency against a robust time period, we opted for last three months.

The next choice was to use Google's [page rank](#) which is an indicator of the relative value Google places on a website relative to a comparable website. This is available through the Google toolbar.

The last choice was less easy and we looked across the web to find a company that specialised in not just giving data on traffic but also analysed how good the site is for SEO. My theory was that you can have a poor site for a big international brand and a fantastic site for a small regional brand and based on traffic, back links, page rank etc, the bigger, poorer site would score better. However, it would be the small company that would be arguably the more successful in the digital marketplace. We looked at quite a few solutions but in the end arrived at [WebsiteGrader](#). [WebsiteGrader](#) is a free SEO tool that measures the marketing effectiveness of a website. It provides a score that incorporates things like website traffic, SEO, social popularity and other technical factors. It also provides some basic advice on how the website can be improved from a marketing perspective. It is owned and operated by [HubSpot](#) who are a specialist internet marketing company.

### **Timing**

[Alexa](#) traffic ranks, Google [Page ranks](#) and [WebsiteGrader](#) ranks can all change on a relatively frequent basis so we gathered all the stats over a relatively short period of one week between Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 25<sup>nd</sup> February 2010. Please note that if you go and check any of the data now, it will have changed at least slightly but this may be perfectly natural due to the ebb and flow of traffic etc.

### **Reporting Inaccuracies**

This is the first time we have looked at pulling together research such as this (though we may make it a semi regular thing depending on the feedback). If you find any errors or would like to make any comments on how we could have improved this, please let me know and we will endeavour to make restitution and to apologise in advance. Please contact me via email at [neil@thetechnologystudio.co.uk](mailto:neil@thetechnologystudio.co.uk)