SEO & Search Strategy / Internal Linking

Generate internal linking recommendations specifically designed to connect pillar pages with supporting cluster content in both directions.
Difficulty: Intermediate → Advanced
Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini
Use Case: Topic Clusters, Pillar Strategy, Authority Distribution
Updated: May 2026
Why This Prompt Exists
Most topic clusters fail because the linking between pillar and cluster is missing or one-way.

You get:

- pillar page with no links to cluster content (no authority distribution)
- cluster content with no links back to pillar (no relevance signal)
- one-way links instead of bidirectional
- cluster content that doesn’t connect to each other
- topic clusters that aren’t actually clusters

But pillar-cluster linking is not optional.

It is what makes a cluster a cluster.

- Pillar → cluster: distribute authority to subtopics
- Cluster → pillar: signal relevance back to core topic
- Cluster ↔ cluster: show semantic relationships
- Bidirectional linking: creates the cluster structure

Without both directions, you have isolated pages, not a cluster.

This framework forces AI to build bidirectional pillar-cluster links.

The Prompt

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Assume the role of a topic cluster architect who builds bidirectional links between pillars and clusters.

Your task is to create pillar-to-cluster linking recommendations.

Generate:

1. PILLAR → CLUSTER LINKS
   For each cluster page:
   - Where in pillar to add link
   - Anchor text to use
   - Rationale

2. CLUSTER → PILLAR LINKS
   For each cluster page:
   - Where in cluster to add link
   - Anchor text to use
   - Rationale

3. CLUSTER ↔ CLUSTER LINKS
   - Cross-links between related cluster pieces
   - When to add them

4. LINKING COMPLETENESS CHECK
   - Which pages have both directions
   - Which pages are missing links
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5. MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS
   - When to add links to new cluster content
   - How to update pillar as cluster grows

INPUTS:

Pillar Page URL or Topic:
[INSERT]

Cluster Pages (list URLs or topics):
[LIST]

Current Links (existing pillar ↔ cluster):
[DESCRIBE OR "UNKNOWN"]

Topical Relationships (which cluster pieces are related to each other):
[DESCRIBE]

Priority:
[IMMEDIATE / PHASED / ONGOING]

RULES:
- Pillar → cluster: link from relevant sections (not just a list at the end)
- Cluster → pillar: link early in the content (establish relationship)
- Cluster ↔ cluster: link where content naturally connects
- Bidirectional linking required for each pillar-cluster pair
- Anchor text must be descriptive (not "click here")

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- If a cluster page has no pillar link, it's not part of the cluster
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How To Use It

- Add pillar → cluster links first (distribute authority).
- Then add cluster → pillar links (signal relevance).
- Add cross-links between related cluster pieces.
- Update the pillar page whenever you add new cluster content.
- Verify bidirectional linking for every pillar-cluster pair.

Example Input

Pillar Page: Freelance pricing guide (ultimate guide)

Cluster Pages: How to calculate hourly rate, value-based pricing guide, when to raise rates, how to tell clients about rate increases, handling price objections, hourly vs project pricing, retainer models, package pricing

Current Links: Pillar links to 3 of 8 cluster pages; 2 cluster pages link back to pillar

Topical Relationships: Value-based pricing relates to hourly vs project; retainer models relate to package pricing; price objections relate to all pricing topics

Priority: IMMEDIATE

Why It Works
Most topic clusters are one-way.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- pillar → cluster links (authority distribution)
- cluster → pillar links (relevance signals)
- cluster ↔ cluster links (semantic relationships)

- completeness check (coverage)
- maintenance plan (scalability)

Great topic clusters are bidirectional — authority flows both ways.

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