



An Advanced SEO Website Audit Checklist

Easy to download, print, and check off as you go.

A Top Level Overview

- ☐ **Test number of indexed web pages** - Typically businesses want their homepage showing as the first indexed result.
- ☐ **Test for organic landing pages** - **Google Analytics** can help you determine if the number of organic search results corresponds with a site search.
- ☐ **Check Google's cache to find your top-performing pages** - You want to know that your web content is both indexed and displaying correctly.
- ☐ **Test for the "mobile friendly" indicator** – After Google's deadline of April 21, 2015 for mobile compliance, those websites that are not mobile ready can expect to lose in search to competitors who do.
- ☐ **Search for the brand and branded terms** – Include your brand name in your home page's title tag to improve click-through rates. Check for appropriate use of brand terms on internal web pages, pdf's, infographics and landing pages.

On-page Content Optimization

- ☐ **Title tags are optimized** – every page should have a unique and relevant title tag that is optimized.
- ☐ **Test key pages for click-through rate optimized titles and meta data** -
- ☐ **Test on-page content for its primary keyword phrase** – To let viewers know what this page is about, the topic should be re-stated multiple times in different variations and by using alternate keyword phrases.
- ☐ **Test the pages' primary keyword phrase** – Your pages' main topic or keyword phrase should be contained in an H1 tag. And there should only be one such tag on each web page.

0 Scan for missing page titles and meta descriptions – If you use a web template to create a new page, it can be easy to forget to add unique page titles and meta data.

0 Test Images Optimization – Image file names should reflect the pages' keyword phrase, and alt tags should be optimized with the pages primary topic.

0 Test for descriptive and optimized URLs – Getting your URLs keyword phrase rich the first time around avoids how changing your URLs can negatively impact traffic. Too many 301 can hurt. Only optimize web page URLs when the existing ones are truly ill serving.

0 Test for URLs that are too lengthy - 115 characters or less is ideal while often shorter URLs generate better usability.

0 Landing pages are optimized – Content needs to be balanced with a simple format and yet sufficient content to give search engines an understanding of what the page is about.

0 Proper keyword targeting - Each landing page should match the intent behind the keyword search. Pages that target head terms, mid-tail, and long-tail keywords need to be balanced and avoid “keyword stuffing”.

0 Test to avoid keyword cannibalization - Do a site check for important keyword phrases.

0 Test Content value – The focus of the page should ensure that the content is of high value to users. While as the business owners want it to convert well, a focus on the users is best. Add in search engine optimized content and you will be leaps ahead.

0 Web page formatting – Your web pages should have a consistent format that visitors find easy to read and navigate to additional content.

0 Test for compelling content display - Page text should display with interesting and compelling use of bullets, number sequences, quotes, and paragraphs of digestible size. Lengthy content that gives no visual break is less compelling to readers.

0 Check for engaging headlines – Producing regularly schedule blog posts requires attention to choosing are well written and draw users in.

0 Test for percentage of code per copy - Ensure that you have a significant percentage of unique web content on each page to outweigh the amount of code needed to display it. Try displaying a sufficient amount of copy above the fold.

0 Watch for too much Ad Content – When your website's page contains fewer ads than content exclusive to that page, you circumvent potential problems.

Duplicate Web Content

- **Test for one URL per each piece of content** - URLs should not include parameters or tracking code as they cause multiple URLs for an individual piece of content.
- **Eliminate replicated content across different categories** - this can be particularly challenging when selling similar products or versions of a similar service.
- **Check to see if someone else has scraped your content** – If so, first request attribution or removal. If your efforts go unnoticed, you can file a web content removal request with Google.
- **Check for duplicate content on your site** - Use quotes around a web search for specific content to see how many times it is repeated on your domain. Replace duplicate content with unique copy.
- **Check multiple sites owned by the company** - Is the content replicated on additional company domains it will dilute your search visibility.
- **Test “print” pages** - If there are "printer friendly" versions available of your web pages, they may be generating duplicate content issues.

Accessibility & Indexing your Website

- **Tobots.txt file test** - Some sites have a loss of valuable link equity due to orphaned pages that are blocked by the robots.txt file.
- **Turn off JavaScript, cookies, and CSS**
- **Check for web cloaking** – Cloaking is showing different content to users than GoogleBot
- **XML sitemaps are listed in the robots.txt file**
- **XML sitemaps are submitted to Google/Bing Webmaster Tools**
- **Test web pages for meta robots noindex tag** – It is too easy to have the wrong web pages accidentally tagged with the meta robots noindex command. At the same time, goal pages should have the noindex command applied.

Website Architecture and Internal Links

- **Test internal linking structures** Web pages should be bucketed by category and link to other relevant on-topic pages. Product pages should have additional links to other similar product choices.
- **Check use of Footer links** – Standard update on how to use blocks of footer links in place of proper navigation. Avoid linking to landing pages with optimized anchors.
- **Internal anchor text** – Test for current best practices for link anchor text.
- **How many links per page** - A well- optimized web page is typically limited to under 100 links per page.
- **Test for broken links** – Little hurts a website changes to be indexed properly like 404 broken links.

Technical issues

- **Check 301 redirects** - Too many 301s can cause a loss of link juice
- **Test for "Bad" redirects** - Use proper redirects in the proper place. Such as: 302s, 307s, meta refresh, and JavaScript redirects.
- **Test for damaging redirect chains** - Redirect chains can hugely diminish the amount of link equity credited to the final URL destination.
- **Test JavaScript Used to Display Website – Not everyone enables the use of JavaScript**, which can impact quality display and bounce rates.
- **Test Use of iframes** - Search engines frown on content that is pulled in via iframes. Clearly that indicated that the content belongs to someone else.
- **Look for a Sitemap** – Additionally check for any sitemap errors.
- **Test for outdated use of Flash** - Flash should be used sparingly – if at all - in a way that doesn't hinder crawling.
- **Review Canonical version of site** - Make sure it is specified in Google Webmaster Tools

○ **Test Rel canonical link tags** – Check to see that each one points to the page you want it to.

○ **Uses absolute URLs instead of relative URLs** – Eliminate a ton of problems when a root domain has secure sections.

Website Load Speed

○ **Review page load speed** – **Especially** check the time it takes to load your top performing key pages

○ **Test site compression** - a Gzip test will show if this is enabled.

○ **Enable browser caching** – Reduce the time it takes to load your website for a returning visitor.

○ **Test for image optimization** – Heavy images are typically a lead cause for a slow website.

○ **Minify CSS/JS/HTML** – Eliminate unnecessary code that bloats a website.

○ **Check Webhosting Package** - Quality web hosting services provide the ability to gain a better upload time.

Mobile Display

○ **Test for mobile Compliance** – ensure that your site offers a great mobile experience.

○ **Test for mobile analytics** – Google Analytics offers a unique mobile set up if separate mobile content exists.

○ **Test mobile experience matches** – the viewer should be lead content that matches the intent of mobile visitors.

○ **Test mobile redirects** – redirecting mobile viewers away from the URL they meant to find (often to the home page) often causes issues that lower mobile organic performance.

○ **Test mobile version canonical** - Establish how it varies from the desktop version.

Website Analytics

- **Current installation & Set up of Universal Google Analytics** – Also test to ensure that tracking code is on every page.
- **Check that only one GA property element exists per web page** - Having multiple instances of the same Google Analytics property will generate issues with some page view metrics which could inflate page views and pages per visit reports. It works alright to have more than one GA properties listed.
- **Analytics is correctly tracking** – as well as coding internal website searches.
- **Demographics and Interest Reports / tracking are correctly coded** – being able to better establish buyer personas is critical to achieving better score results and obtaining more conversions.
- **AdWords and AdSense are properly linked** - when the benefits of these platforms are engaged.
- **Internal IP addresses** – should be excluded when linking AdWords.
- **Unnecessary Meta refresh and JavaScript** – check that redirects are eliminated to gain more accurate bounce rates.
- **User specific tracking** – It should be set up to track user interactions.

For additional guidance, see [SEO Optimizer](#), [Ahrefs](#), and [Raven Tools](#).

For more insights on the benefits of a full website SEO audit by Hill Web Creations, read [Your Web Audit](#). Or return to our home page for more about [SEO Web Optimization](#).