



Optimize Your Content to Improve Google Search Rankings



Google for Communicators

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#powerofPR

Improve Google Search Rankings

- ▶ Google's Ranking Factors
- ▶ Onsite vs. Offsite SEO
 - ▶ Differences & tactics for each
 - ▶ Use keywords, links and meta tags effectively without harming your page ranking
- ▶ Site Analysis (determine if it is optimized)
 - ▶ Screaming Frog, GA, Search Console
- ▶ Content
 - ▶ Develop compelling, in-depth and timely content that is relatable and raises your search ranking on Google
 - ▶ Establish a process for structuring content that gets traction
 - ▶ Adapt your content to Google's latest mobile-friendly algorithm changes
- ▶ Sharing Results
 - ▶ Communicate your communications goals to your web team so you can work together to make your site and your content findable on mobile devices.
 - ▶ Dashboard Creation
- ▶ Trends in SEO
- ▶ Tools



Ranking Factors in 2015

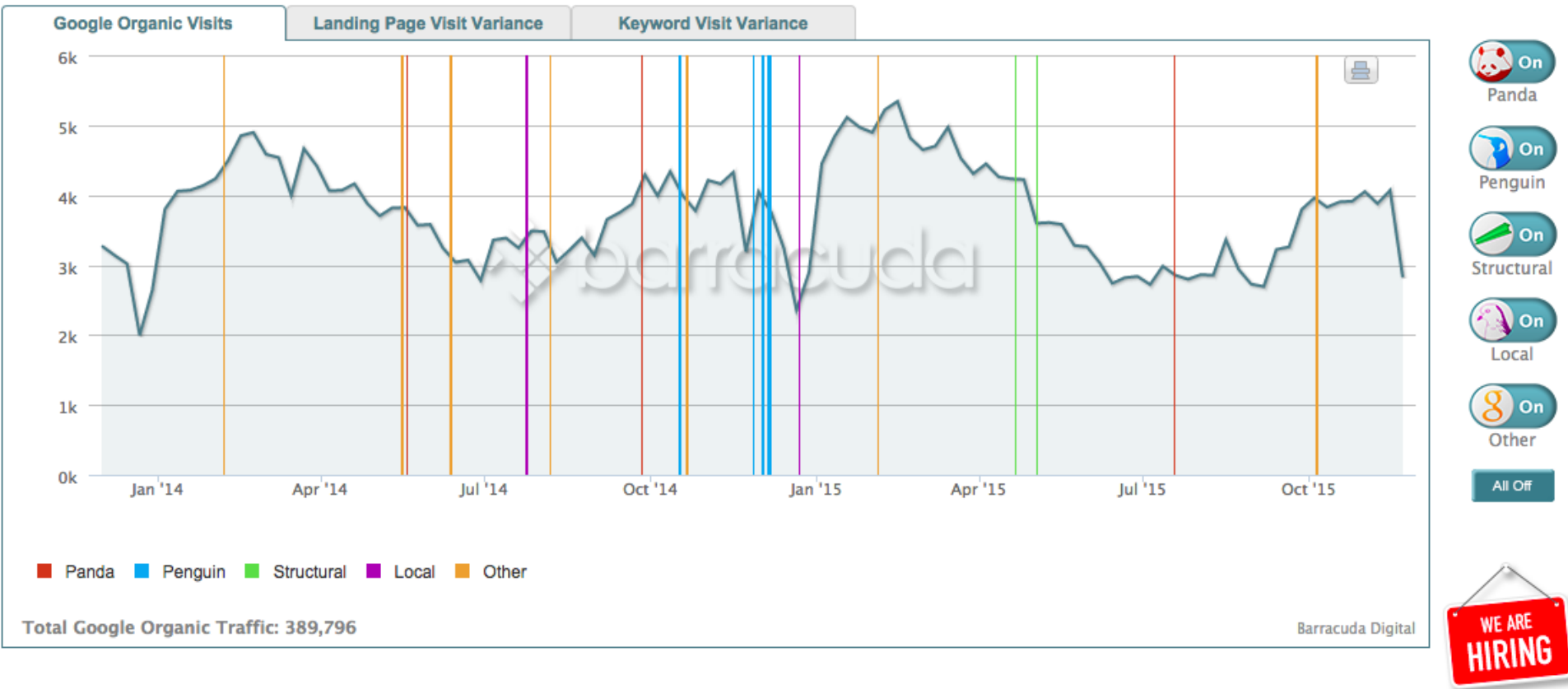


A Guide to Google Algorithm Updates

- ▶ **Pre-Hummingbird SEO:** How do I rank for these terms?
- ▶ **Post-Hummingbird:** How do I best answer the questions my users have?
- ▶ **Mobilegeddon (April 2015)**
 - Did Mobilegedden affect your site?
 - Find out here: <http://bit.ly/CheckMobile15>
- ▶ **The Phantom Update/Quality Update**
- ▶ **Panda 4.2**

Being Punished by Panda?

<http://panguintool.barracuda.digital/>

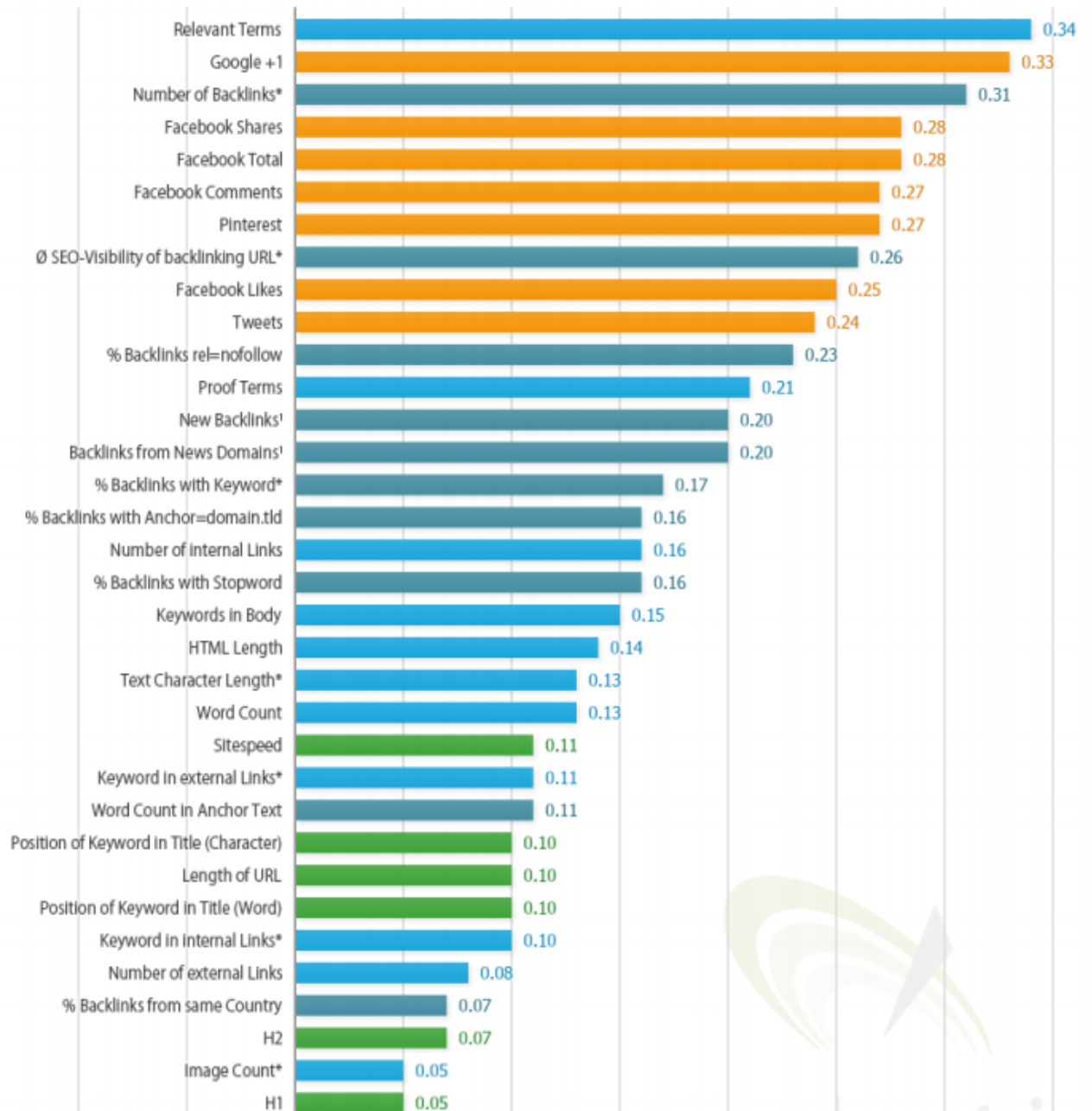


How to Respond?

Create Quality Content



Ranking Factors





Onsite vs. Offsite SEO



Onsite vs. Off Site SEO

- ▶ Titles are unique for each page? Title length is between 50 – 65 characters?
- ▶ Description tag is between 150-160 characters?
- ▶ Description tag is not keyword stuffed & is unique?
- ▶ Permanent Link structure (URL) format?
- ▶ Proper use of Heading Tags (H1, H2, H3..)
- ▶ Content on the web site is fresh? Updated regularly?
- ▶ Content length on post pages?
- ▶ Internal linking – Do you link internal pages?
- ▶ Internal linking – Use of anchor text (is it varied?)
- ▶ Is there an ALT tag for all images?
- ▶ Are image files names descriptive?
- ▶ Image file size is optimized?
- ▶ Code minimized?
- ▶ Use of media queries/responsive design?
- ▶ Blog comments have the 'nofollow' tag?
- ▶ External links have the 'nofollow' tag? Banner ads have the 'nofollow' tag
- ▶ Are pages with duplicate or no content, noindex and nofollow (or use canonical urls)?
- ▶ Too many ads above the fold?
- ▶ Checked for invalid use of 301 and 302 redirects? Site checked for broken links?
- ▶ Page speed: Average time to load home page?
- ▶ Page speed: Average time to load other pages?
- ▶ Is there a user sitemap (html) in the main menu?
- ▶ Is there a 'related posts' section below each detail page?
- ▶ Is there an About, Contact and Privacy policy page?
- ▶ Is there a breadcrumb on all pages?
- ▶ Is there a custom 404 page?

Onsite vs. Off Site SEO

- ▶ Links, Links & More Links
- ▶ Did I mention links?
- ▶ Is the web site registered on Google Webmaster tools?
- ▶ Is the web site registered on Bing Webmaster tools?
- ▶ Checked robots.txt?
- ▶ Is there a valid XML Sitemap?
- ▶ Is the web site registered with Google Analytics?
- ▶ Is there a Facebook business page? Is there a twitter account? etc.?
- ▶ Are social media profiles SEO?
- ▶ Content distribution? Influencer strategy?
- ▶ Wikipedia posting & linking
- ▶ Oh, and links.

How to Get Indexed

▶ CLEAN UP YOUR HOUSE

- ▶ Check that URL redirects send visitors to the correct locations.
- ▶ Use permanent (301) redirects where appropriate.
- ▶ Check for accurate title tags and meta descriptions.

▶ LAY GROUND RULES

- ▶ Set up robots.txt to allow your site to be indexed.

▶ GIVE DIRECTIONS

- ▶ Create a sitemap for the site.
- ▶ Submit the sitemap to Google and Bing.

▶ SEND THE INVITATION

- ▶ Use 'Fetch as Google' from Webmaster Tools aka Search Console.

Case Study: The Washington Center

- ▶ Opportunity: New Program to Administer
- ▶ Goals:
 - ▶ Build brand awareness
 - ▶ Convert new applicants
- ▶ Problem:
 - ▶ No keywords ranking, high competition, no original content
- ▶ Results:
 - ▶ Week 1 baseline: PA 1, 0% organic search traffic, 0 links
 - ▶ Week 3: PA 1, 5% organic search, 20 links
 - ▶ Week 6: PA 39, 10.17% organic search, 127 links, 20% overall conversions

How Did We Do This?

▶ On site:

- ▶ New pages with unique content (& a press release)
- ▶ Unique title and meta descriptions
- ▶ Internal linking
- ▶ Optimized images
- ▶ Email campaigns

▶ Off site:

- ▶ Link building campaign starting at week 2
- ▶ Social media promotion starting at week 4
- ▶ Influencer outreach online and on social week 4

▶ Up coming:

- ▶ Custom content (blogging and story telling)



Conducting a Site Audit



Is Your Site Optimized?

- ▶ Do you rank on the first three SERPs for key words and phrases?
- ▶ Does a large percentage of traffic come from organic search?
- ▶ Is your site mobile friendly?
- ▶ Is your site load time under two seconds?
- ▶ Have you focused too much on technical SEO and not enough on content optimization?

Non-relevant keywords

Using multiple H1s on a page

Non-branded, keyword-dense URLs

Keyword-rich anchors for internal links

Keyword-stuffed footer

Pointing all internal or external links to top-level navigation pages

When to Worry...

- ▶ Have you noticed fluctuations in search engine page and link count numbers?
- ▶ Falling traffic from multiple engines?

TO DO:

1. Check links in Google Webmaster Tools (Search Console)
2. Crawl the site and check for indexing errors (Hint: look in the robots.txt or meta robots tags)
3. Check for DNS issues

Conduct a Content Audit

- ▶ 1. Run a [Screaming Frog](#) analysis of your blog
- ▶ 2. Filter out all links that might not be necessary for your audit
- ▶ 3. Input all URLs into [Shared Count](#)'s bulk uploader, export, add to spreadsheet
- ▶ 4. Grab Google Analytics data & append
- ▶ 5. Pull in some keyword and search data
- ▶ 6. Add the day of the week that each post was published
- ▶ 7. Add post length (word count)

Here's How It Looks

Address	Action	Strategy	Content	Status Code	Status	Title	Title 1 Length	Title 1 Pixel W	Meta Descript	Meta Descript	Meta Descript	Meta Keyword 1	Meta Keyword	H1-1	H1-2	
http://blog.bufferapp.com/idea-to-pay-customer-in-7-weeks-how-we-did-it		ing-customer-in-7-weeks-how-we-did-it	text/html; charset=utf-8	200	OK	Idea to Paying Customers in 7 Weeks: How We Did It	50	423		0	0			0	Idea to Paying C	
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What We Did With The Results

- ▶ Found that longer-form articles with 2,000+ words made better landing pages for evergreen content. We created 8 long-form landing pages for our top terms and industries and increased inbound links by 45% and organic traffic by 89%.
- ▶ Found old articles on the blog that kept bringing in the organic traffic and optimized them fully. Then updated the pages with new images and added internal linking to other, similar articles.
- ▶ Found that Monday and Thursday were the top days to post on the blog for social shares.
- ▶ Shortened page titles (found that 60% of our titles had over 55 characters in the audit) and added unique meta descriptions.
- ▶ Discovered that images weren't optimized, then fixed it (minimized for speed & added alt tags).



Optimizing Content



The Golden Rule

Content should be developed
for the readers and optimized
for the search engines.

Step 1: Research

- ▶ Competitive – What are your key competitors up to? What keywords do they use? Site speed? Links? Social sharing? PA & DA?
- ▶ Keyword – What terms bring visitors to your site? Monthly search volume? Competition? Ranking? Branded vs. non?

**CREATE BEANCHMARK REPORTS FOR
ALL OF THE ABOVE**

Understand Your Business & Your Customers



Get to know your audience. At the end of the day SEO and online marketing are about connecting with customers and prospects.

Step 2: Create Personas

CUSTOMER PERSONAS intricately define a company's target customers beyond shallow characteristics such as age, sex, income, education and location.

Although certainly a good start, a customer empathy map is a helpful exercise that more fully describes the person – **motivations, concerns** and **behaviors**.

Ultimately, complete customer profiles include an understanding of **their identity, needs** and **digital behavior**.

Step 2: Create Personas



Name: Jane

- Female / 38 years old – Gen X Alpha Mom
- Employed full-time but very involved in her kid's life – works as a public relations vice president
- Is very proud of her child and talks about him constantly - he is the most important person in her life
- She makes most of the important decisions in the family around purchases, vacations and child activities
- She likes things that are quality and easy / She dislikes poor quality and wasting her time

Marketing Messaging

- Open to advertising but the message should be personal and focused on the relationship she has with her child specifically, how to help him succeed and make friends, rather than just on children in general
- "I want my child to have friends, succeed at school and be prepared for life's challenges" – "I want him to be happy"
- "Tell me why you are better than anyone else – I want the best for my child"

Content she shares

- Parenting information, movie & TV, and technology information with her friends
- Content she consumes
- Movies & TV, parenting information and plays casual games online and on her phone/tablet

Where she finds information in order of importance

1. Word of mouth
2. Internet (search, parenting sites)
3. Mobile
4. Radio
5. Magazines
6. Television

Relevant Action Habits

- Giving back is very important to Jane. She has selected 3 charities she feels strongly about (her church, children's charity and animal welfare)
- Jane gives to charity online, but also gives at grocery checkouts and buys product that "give back"

Hurdles

- She wants to find information fast
- It has to be easy for her to find what she needs, sign-up and share
- It has to be "qualified", "approved", "best in class"
- Information or technology has to answer a problem

Technology

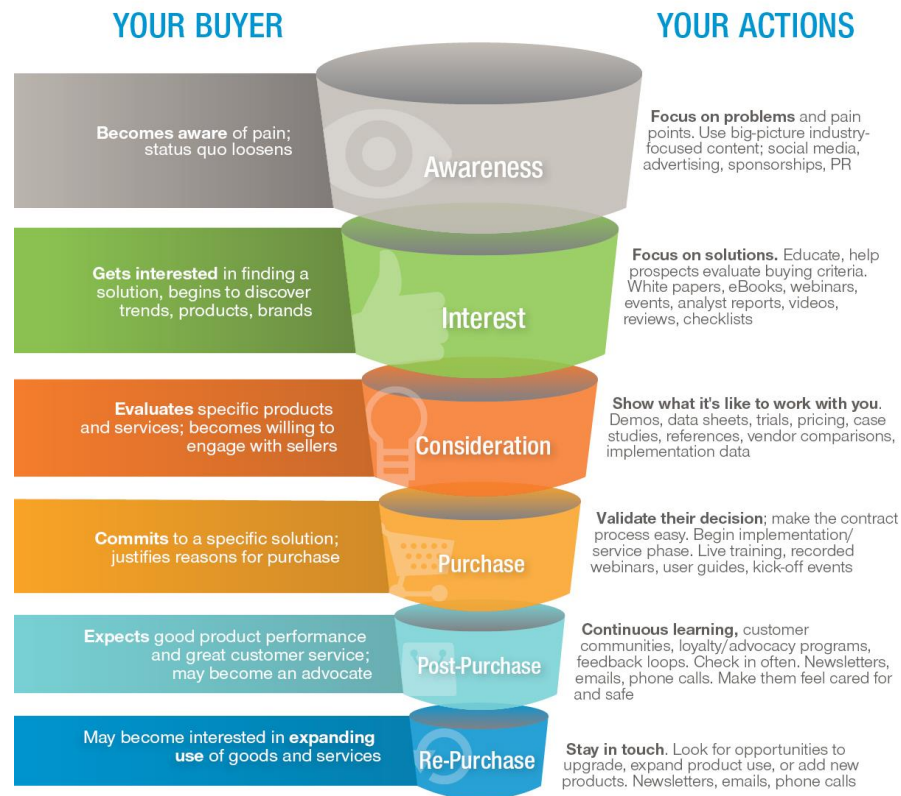
- Jane is a technology Adept and spends most of her time on:
 1. Mobile
 2. Tablet
 3. Computer



Step 3: Create Content for the Buyer Journey

THE NEW BUYER'S FUNNEL

Let the buyer's concerns guide your content strategy



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Step 3: Create Content for the Buyer Journey



Step 4: Optimizing Content for Mobile

- ▶ Page Speed
 - ▶ Minify code, leverage browser caching, reduce redirects
- ▶ Allow crawling of CSS, JavaScript and images
- ▶ Don't use Flash
- ▶ No pop-ups, please
- ▶ Consider fat fingers
 - ▶ Large font & buttons, clean design, clear CTA
- ▶ Optimize for local search
- ▶ Mobile site configuration
 - ▶ Responsive, dynamic, or separate site

Structured Data

Inbound Marketing - Google Books

[books.google.com](#) › ... › [Marketing](#) › [General](#) ▼ [Google Books](#) ▼

★★★★★ Rating: 4 - 36 reviews

Oct 2, 2009 - **Inbound Marketing** is a how-to guide to getting found via **Google**, the blogosphere, and social media sites. • Improve your rankings in **Google** to ...

Inbound Marketing: Get Found Using Google, Social Media ...

[www.amazon.com](#) › ... › [Industries](#) › [Retailing](#) ▼ [Amazon.com](#) ▼

Inbound Marketing: Get Found Using Google, Social Media, and Blogs [Brian Halligan, Dharmesh Shah, ... Find all the books, read about the author, and more.

Adding Rich Snippets

To get the review rich snippet, you would use the following code:

```
<div itemprop="aggregateRating" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/AggregateRating">  
<span itemprop="ratingValue"> [Aggregate rating given] </span></span> stars – <span  
itemprop="reviewCount">[Number of reviews] </span></span> reviews  
</div>
```

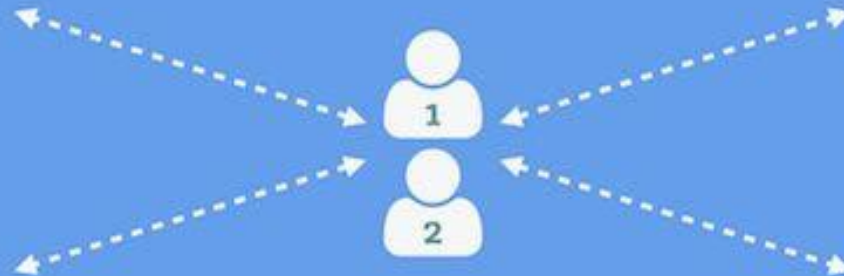
Step 5: A/B Testing

SEO A/B Testing is Page Oriented

Control Pages



Variant Pages



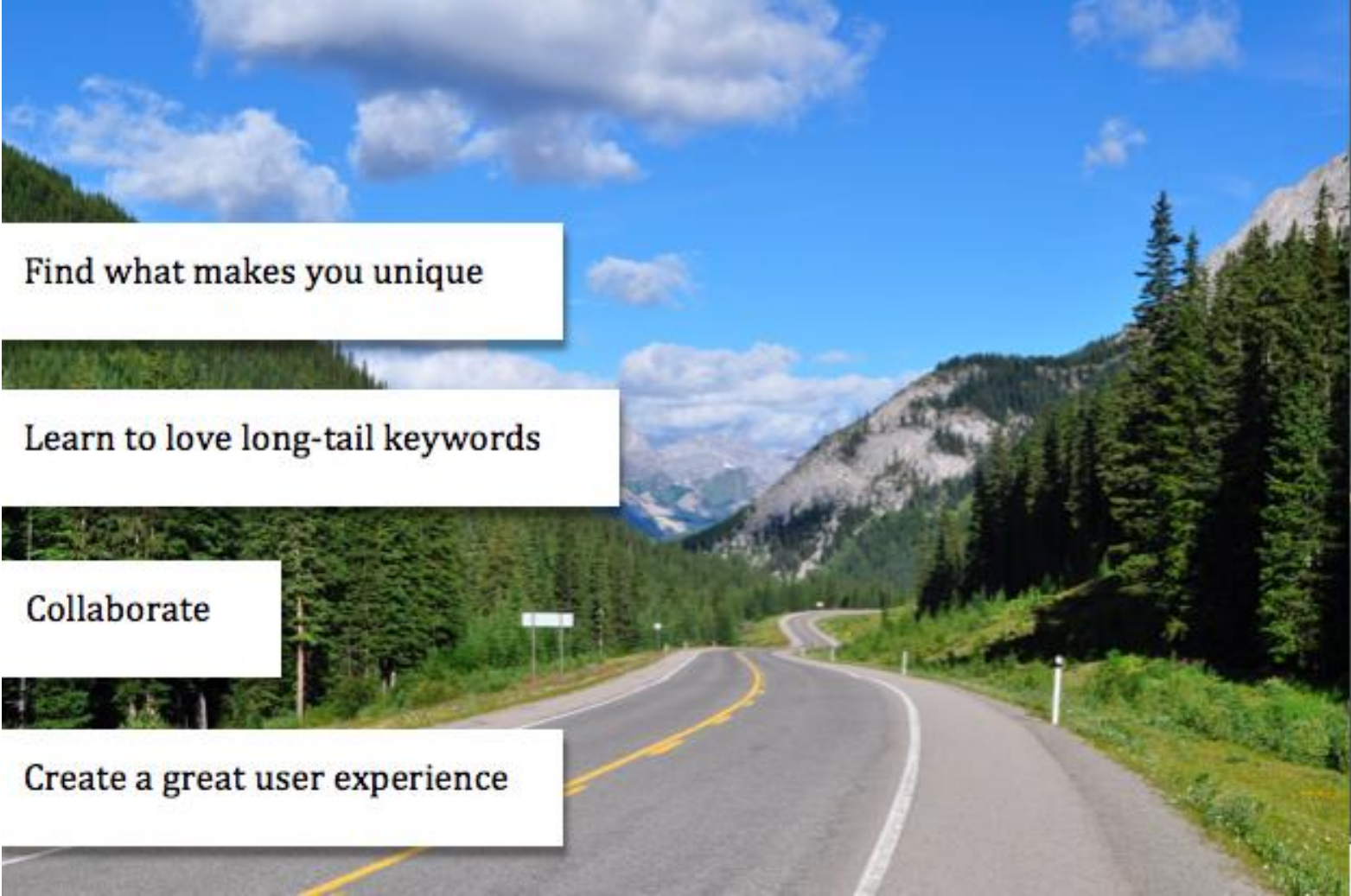
Pages are split into two groups, with one group being altered to include an SEO-focused recommendation. A user looking at any specific page sees the same page as all other users.

Moz.com

How to Structure Content for Traction

- ▶ Solve a problem, answer a question and/or educate your audience
- ▶ Nail the headline every time
- ▶ Pay attention to post length, day of week and time of day
- ▶ Master your promotion/distribution plan
- ▶ Reach out to influencers
- ▶ Test, measure, tweak, repeat
- ▶ Conduct regular audits, as well as spot checks

Creating Quality Content




Find what makes you unique

Learn to love long-tail keywords

Collaborate

Create a great user experience

What to Avoid



Thin content and keyword stuffing

Annoying ad formats

A bad user experience

Bad code, 404 errors, clutter



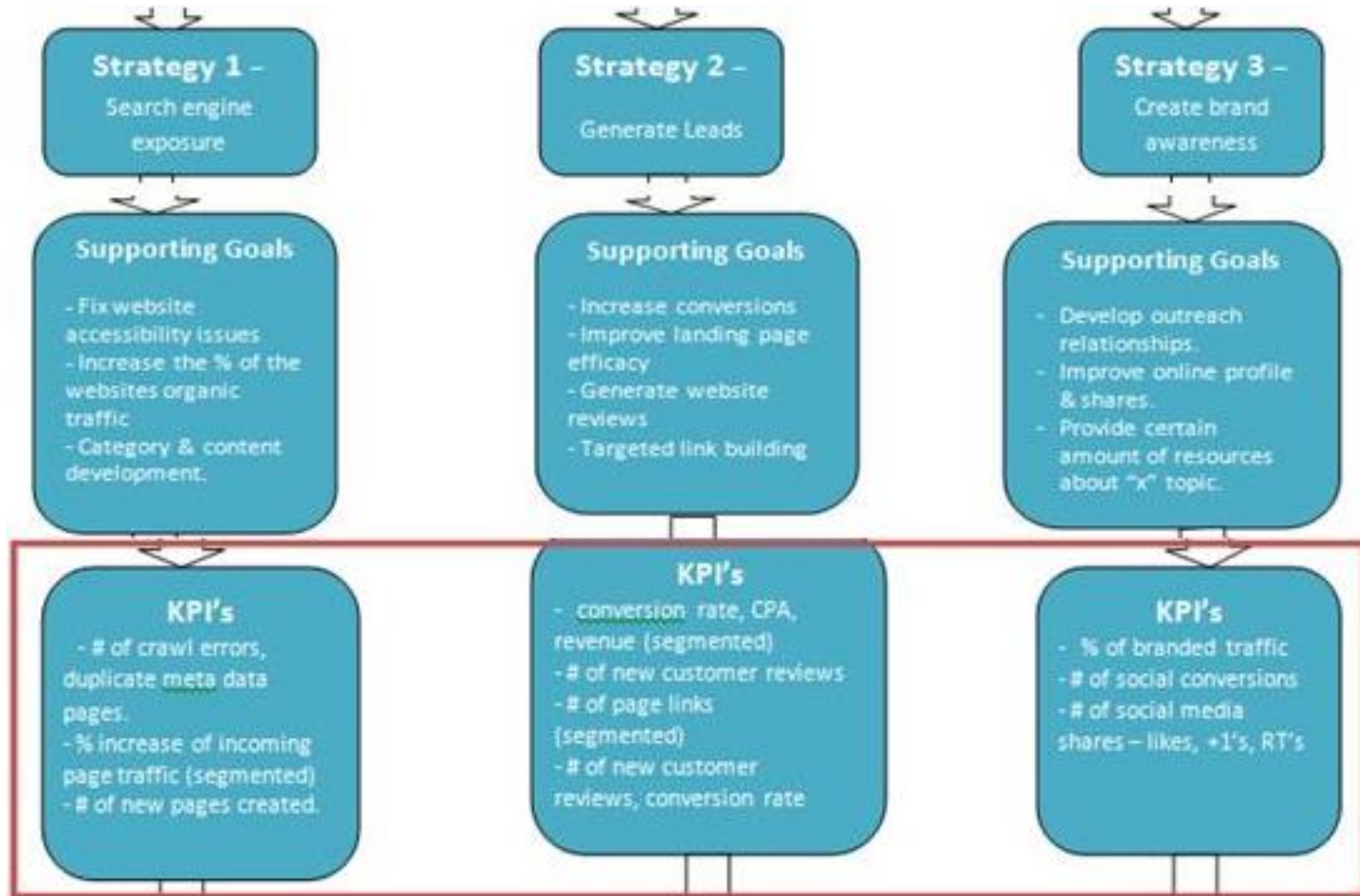
Communicating Goals & Results



Goals

Problem > Goals > KPIS > Metrics

What Does This Look Like?



Google Dashboard

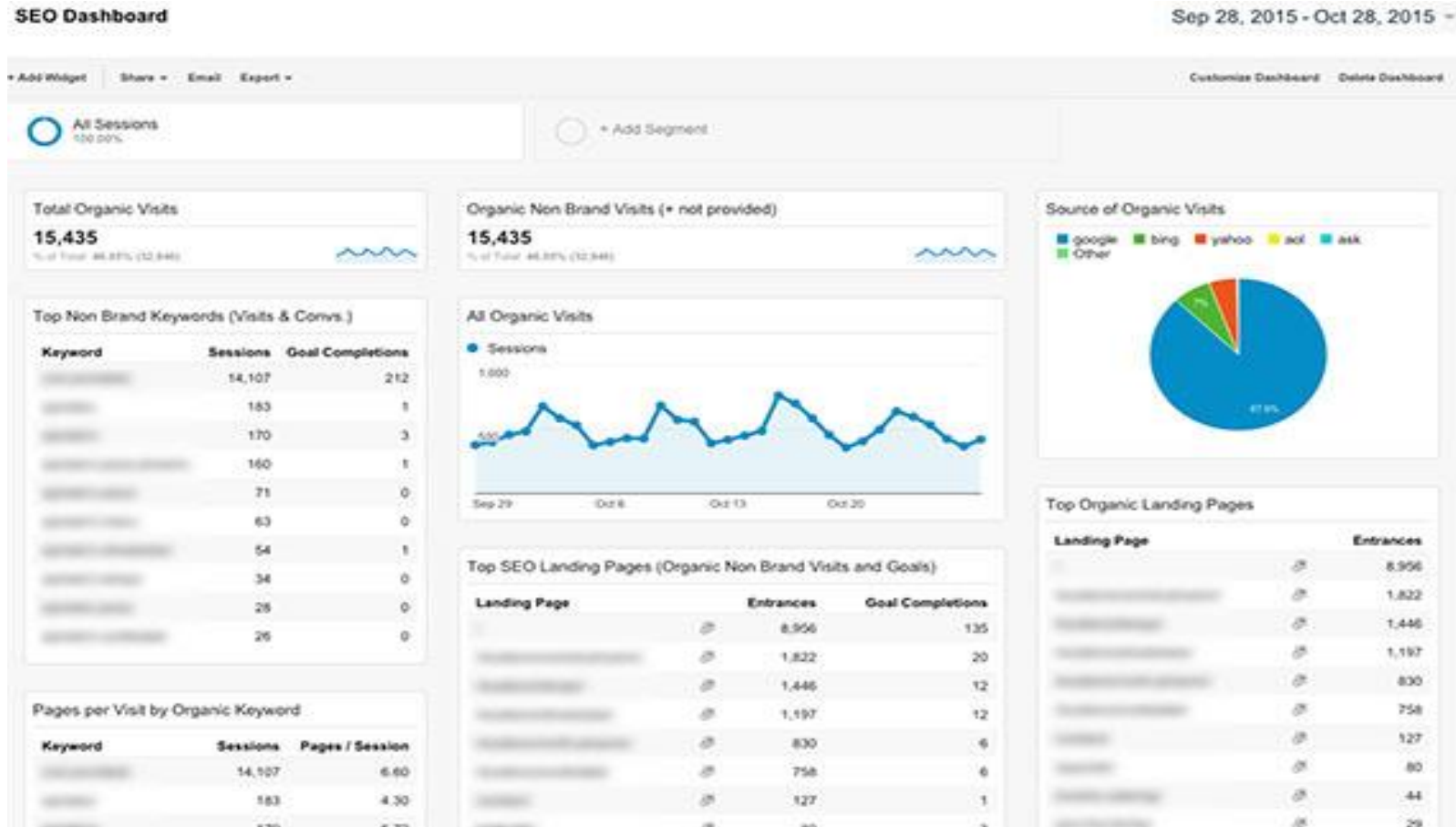
What's important?

- ▶ All Organic Visits Over Time (Timeline)
- ▶ Top SEO Landing Pages
- ▶ Top Organic Keywords & % of New Visits
- ▶ Pages per Visit by Organic Keyword
- ▶ Most Successful Keywords by Goal Completions

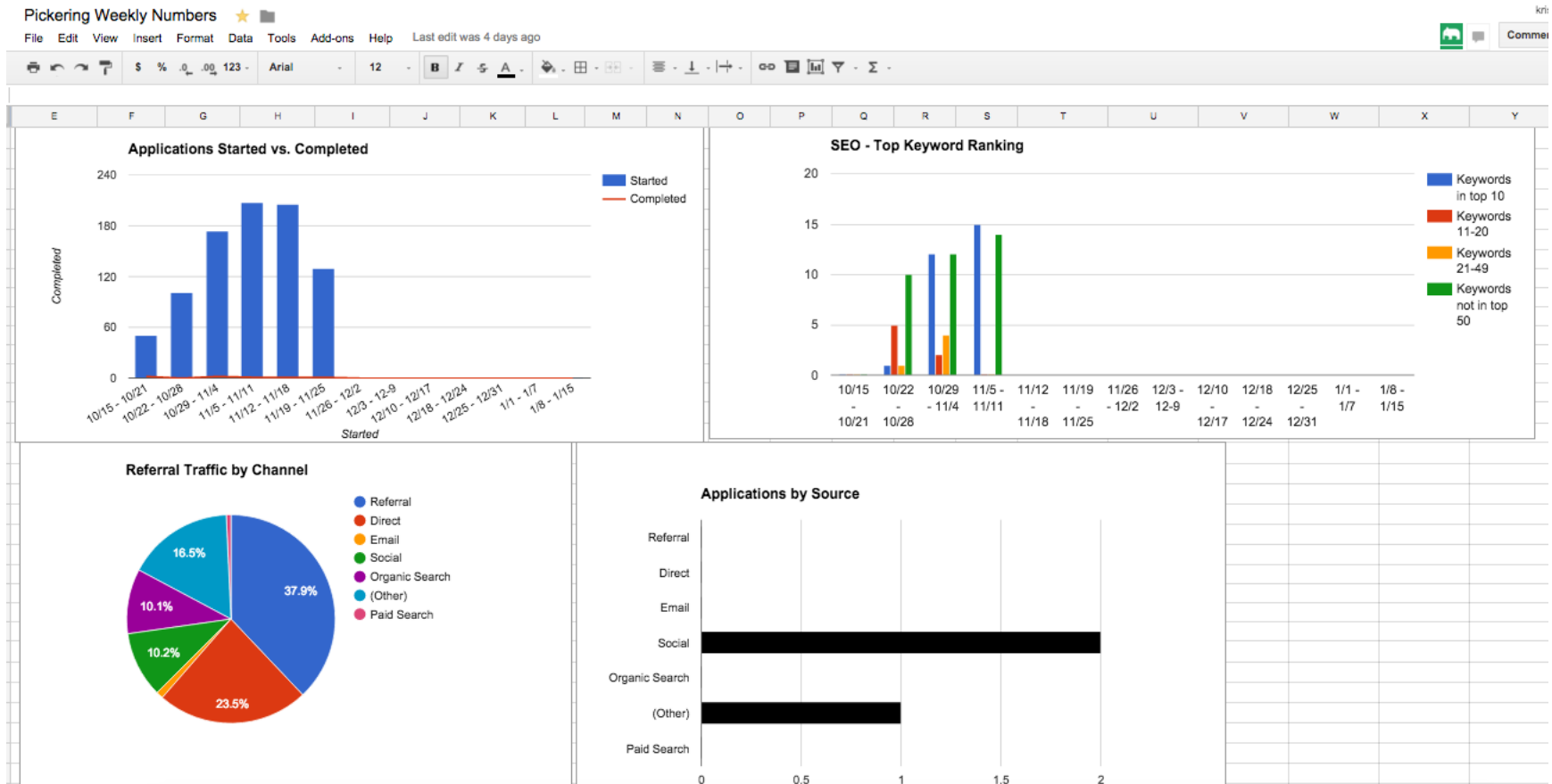
***Report on Your KPIs and Metrics**

Google Analytics

Create Your Own SEO Dashboard



Sharing is Caring: Google Drive





Looking Forward at Trends



Real-time Penguin is Coming



Onsite Trends

- ▶ Structured data mark-ups will most likely become a ranking factor
- ▶ User experience, solid technical structure and navigation (logical IA) are key and will be measured by on page metrics – think CRO
- ▶ Internal linking
- ▶ Seamless mobile/responsive design
- ▶ Local identifiers
- ▶ Regular, newsworthy and shareable content

Offsite Trends

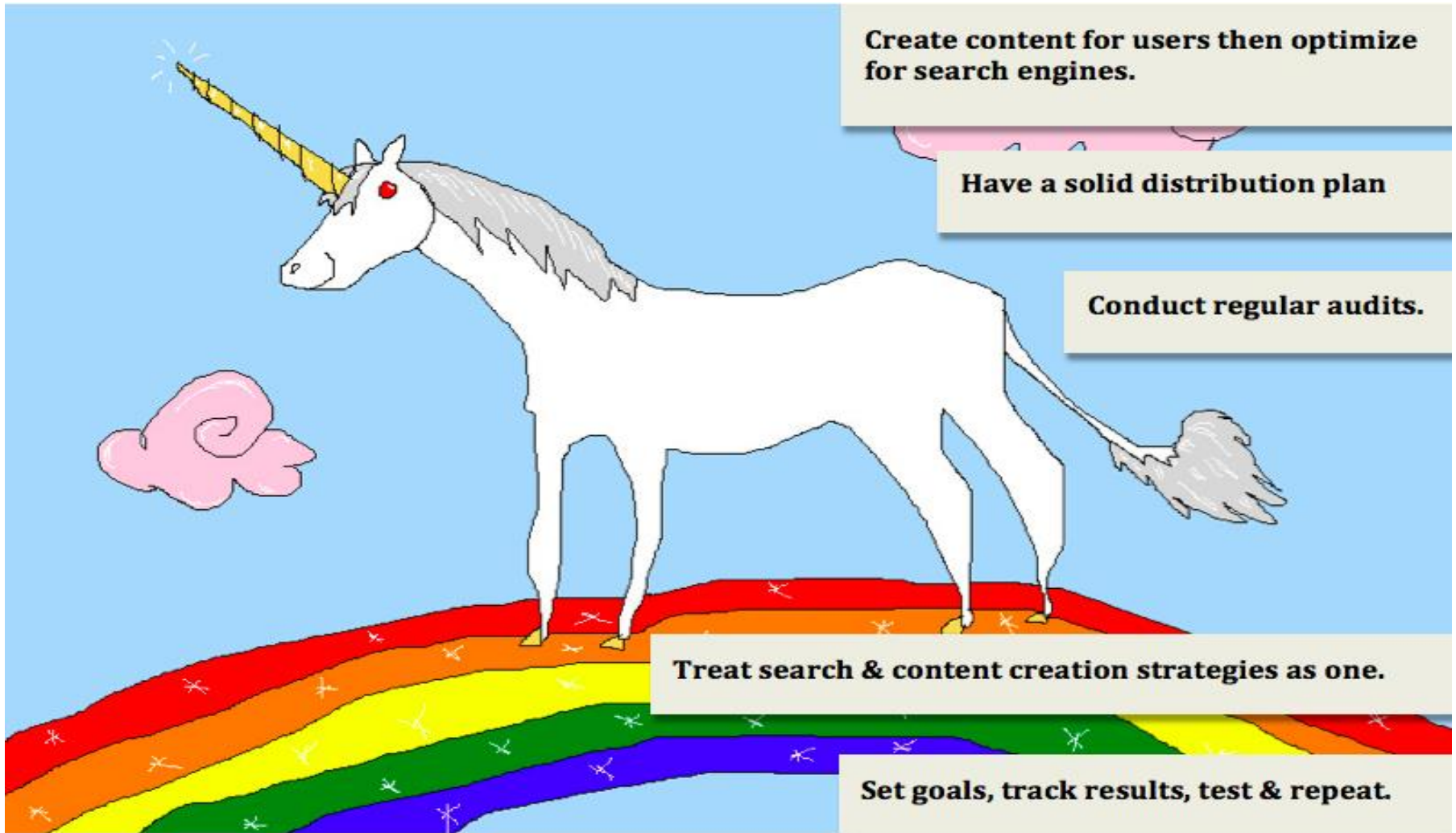
- ▶ Digital assistants will change the way we think about search queries
- ▶ Keywords vs. intents
- ▶ Social content will be more readily indexed
- ▶ Deep links in apps will become more important
- ▶ The Knowledge Graph and traffic drops
- ▶ “Micro-moments” and the fractured user journey



The Final Word



Key Takeaways





Resources & Tools



Sites, tools & other fun stuff

Resources & Tools

LINK BUILDING/RESEARCH TOOLS

- [MAJESTIC SEO](#)
- [MOZ](#)
- [UBER SUGGEST](#)
- [OPEN SITE EXPLORER](#)
- [AHREF BACKLINKS](#)

KEYWORD RESEARCH TOOLS

- [GOOGLE WEBMASTER TOOLS](#)
- [GOOGLE ANALYTICS](#)
- [GOOGLE ADWORDS](#)
- [GOOGLE KEYWORD PLANNER](#)
- [SEM RUSH](#)
- [MOZ](#)

Resources & Tools

TECHNICAL TOOLS

- [SCEAMING FROG SEO SPIDER](#)
- [GOOGLE WEBMASTER TOOLS](#)
- [BING WEBMASTER TOOLS](#)
- [MOZ](#)
- [SCEMA CREATOR](#)
- [PENGUIN TOOL](#)
- [STRUCTURED DATA TESTING TOOL](#)
- [XML SITE MAPS](#)
- [YOAST WORDPRESS PLUGIN](#)

Resources & Tools

ANALYTICS & REPORTING

- [MOZ](#)
- [GOOGLE ANALYTICS](#)
- [FRESH METRICS](#)
- [SERP FOX](#)
- [SERP BOOK](#)
- [SHARED COUNT](#)

ESSENTIAL CHROME PLUGINS/EXTENSIONS

- [MOZ BAR](#)
- [SEM RUSH](#)
- [WOORANK](#)
- [OPEN SEO STATS](#)
(Formerly Page Rank Status)



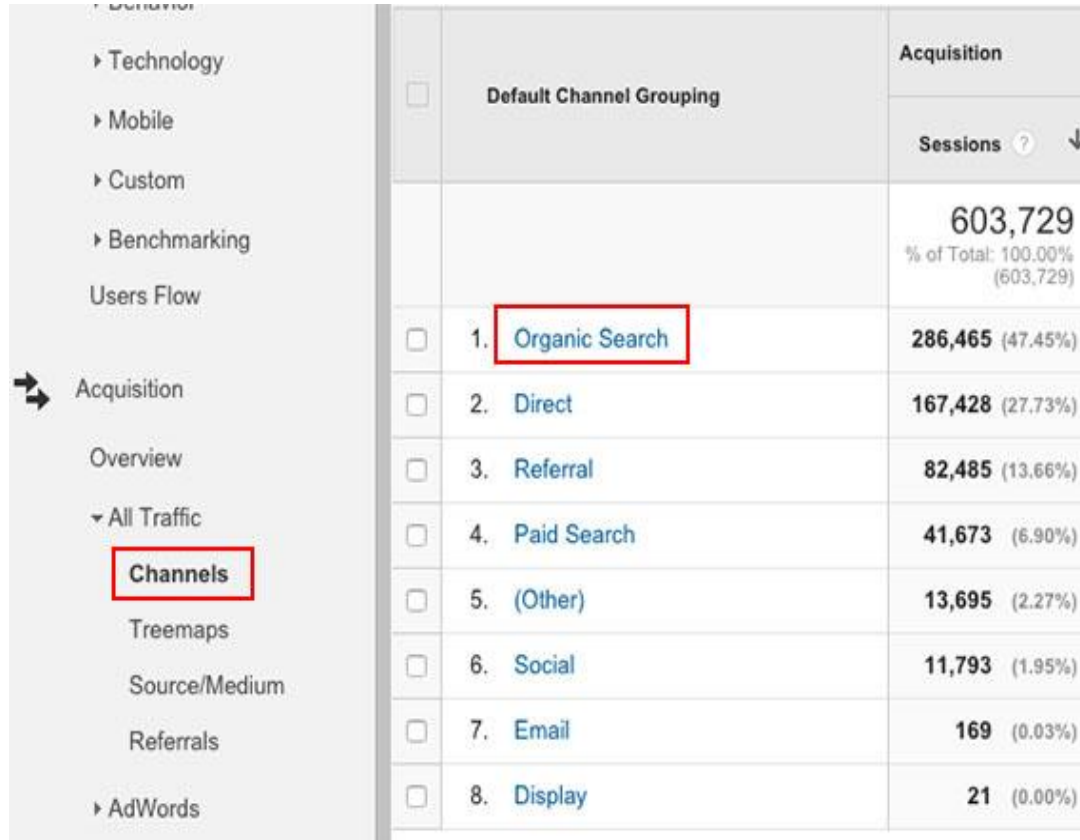
Resources & Tools



Google Analytics & Search Console

Using Google Analytics

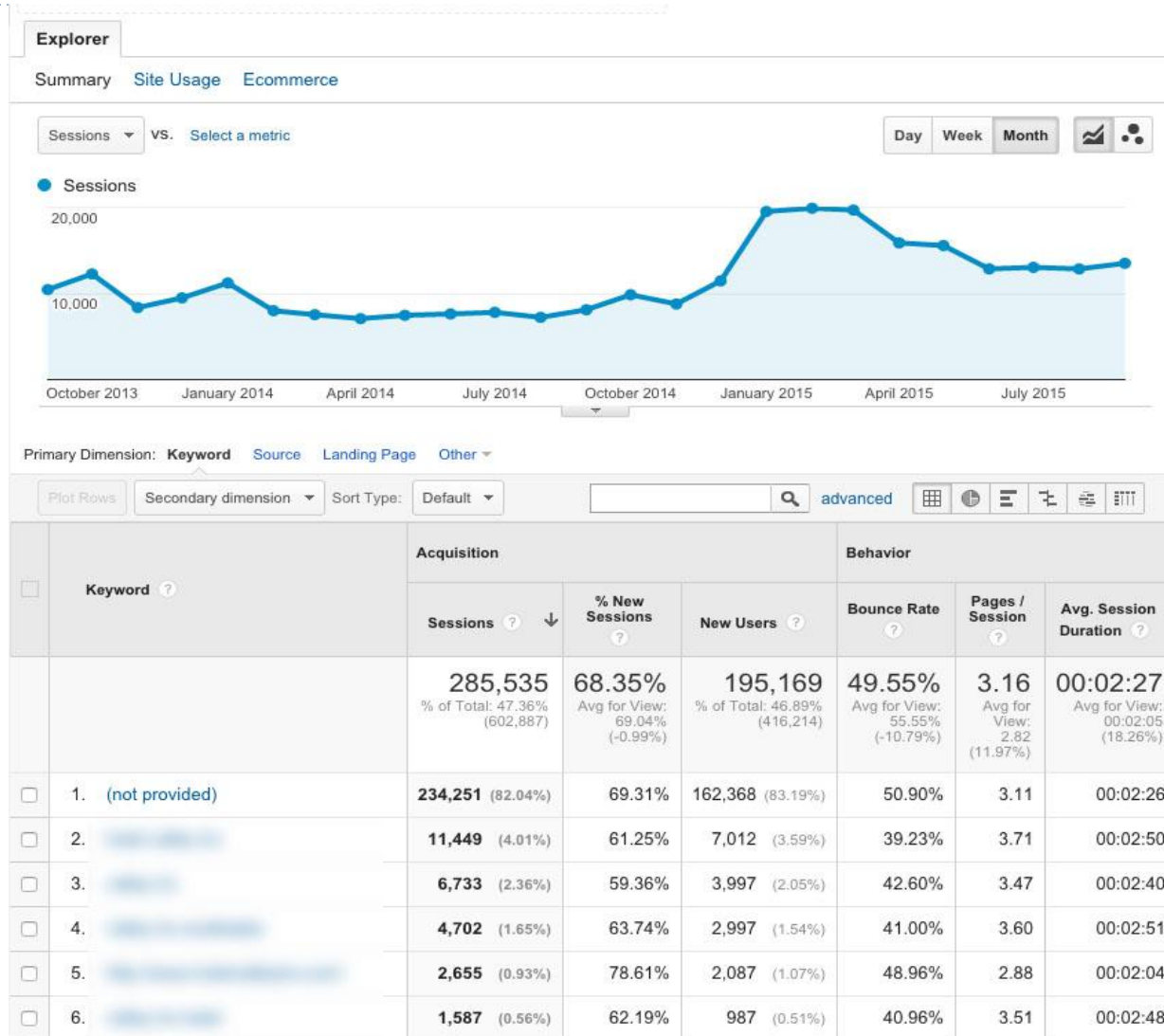
How to View Only Organic Search Traffic



Default Channel Grouping		Acquisition
		Sessions ? ↓
		603,729 % of Total: 100.00% (603,729)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Organic Search	286,465 (47.45%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Direct	167,428 (27.73%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Referral	82,485 (13.66%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Paid Search	41,673 (6.90%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. (Other)	13,695 (2.27%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Social	11,793 (1.95%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Email	169 (0.03%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Display	21 (0.00%)

Acquisition > All Traffic > Channels

Using Google Analytics



Using Google Analytics

How to Measure The Quality of SEO Traffic

<input type="checkbox"/> MCF Channel Grouping ?	Assisted Conversions ↓	Assisted Conversion Value	Last Click or Direct Conversions	Last Click or Direct Conversion Value	Assisted / Last Click or Direct Conversions
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Organic Search					
Sep 1, 2015 - Sep 30, 2015	60	—	201 (42.68%)	—	0.30
Aug 2, 2015 - Aug 31, 2015	19	—	83 (40.89%)	—	0.23
% Change	215.79%	-	142.17%	-	30.40%

Google Analytics & Search Console

Pulling Keyword Data

Query	Impressions ? ↓	Clicks ?
	208,458 % of Total: 13.90% (1,500,000)	38,625 % of Total: 51.50% (75,000)
1. [REDACTED]	5,500 (2.64%)	150 (0.39%)
2. [REDACTED]	4,500 (2.16%)	250 (0.65%)
3. [REDACTED]	4,500 (2.16%)	22 (0.06%)
4. [REDACTED]	3,000 (1.44%)	70 (0.18%)
5. [REDACTED]	2,500 (1.20%)	5 (0.01%)
6. [REDACTED]	2,500 (1.20%)	30 (0.08%)
7. [REDACTED]	2,500 (1.20%)	16 (0.04%)
8. [REDACTED]	2,500 (1.20%)	5 (0.01%)
9. [REDACTED]	2,000 (0.96%)	400 (1.04%)

Google Analytics

Total clicks

11,869

Clicks



Queries

Clicks ▼

1	2,422 >>
2	847 >>
3	134 >>

Google Search Console

Google Search Console/Webmaster Tools

Pulling Keyword Share of Search Data

Queries	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Position
	2422	3828	63.27%	1
	847	2250	37.64%	1.7
	134	197	68.02%	1
	122	145	84.14%	1
	118	157	75.16%	1
	89	131	67.94%	1
	65	130	50%	1.2
	64	71	90.14%	1
	62	1086	5.71%	6.1
	61	103	59.22%	1
	61	1172	5.20%	4.8
	60	987	6.08%	2.3
	53	98	54.08%	1.4
	52	63	82.54%	1
	49	694	7.06%	8.7
	48	805	5.96%	5.9
	44	609	7.22%	8.9
	43	78	55.13%	1.1
	42	763	5.50%	6
	37	52	71.15%	1
	33	54	61.11%	1
	32	622	5.14%	6.5
	30	2395	1.25%	10
	28	108	25.93%	2.2
	27	51	52.94%	1
	26	41	63.41%	1
	24	41	58.54%	1
	24	30	80%	1
	24	1204	1.99%	7.9

Google Keyword Tool

Assigning Dollar Values to Organic Traffic

Keyword (by relevance)		Avg. monthly searches ?	Competition ?	Suggested bid ?
keyword 1	📈	6,600	High	\$1.57
keyword 2	📈	1,000	Medium	\$1.31
keyword 3	📈	390	Medium	\$0.71
keyword 4	📈	40	High	\$5.21
keyword 5				

Keyword	Impressions	Clicks	CPC	Total Value
keyword 1	5,500	150	\$1.57	\$235.50
keyword 2	4,500	250	\$1.31	\$327.50
keyword 3	4,500	22	\$0.71	\$15.62
keyword 4	3,000	70	\$5.21	\$364.70
keyword 5	2,500	5	\$1.11	\$5.55
Totals	20,000	497	\$1.98	\$948.87

Google Analytics

Identifying Slow Loading Page Times

Secondary dimension: Medium ▼ Sort Type: Default ▼ Advanced Filter ON X edit

Include ▼ Medium ▼ Containing ▼ organic

and

+ Add a dimension or metric ▼

Secondary dimension: Medium ▼ Sort Type: Default ▼ Advanced Filter ON X edit

Page	Medium	Avg. Page Load Time (sec)	% Exit (compared to site average)
		6.80 <small>Avg for View: 7.47 (-8.95%)</small>	15.19% <small>Avg for View: 17.30% (-12.17%)</small>
1. [blurred]	organic	16.64	-5.96%
2. [blurred]	organic	16.60	-34.57%
3. [blurred]	organic	12.48	-50.13%
4. [blurred]	organic	8.17	-30.30%
5. [blurred]	organic	7.22	-19.65%
6. [blurred]	organic	7.05	25.34%
7. [blurred]	organic	6.74	26.95%
8. [blurred]	organic	6.38	27.60%
9. [blurred]	organic	6.24	35.95%

Discovering Links in Search Console

Dashboard

Messages

▸ Search Appearance ⓘ

▾ Search Traffic

Search Analytics

Links to Your Site

Internal Links

Manual Actions

International Targeting

Mobile Usability

▸ Google Index

▸ Crawl

Security Issues

Other Resources

Links to Your Site

Total links
56,959

Who links the most

carousel30.com	30,839
internsrockdc.com	6,450
wordpress.com	2,631
yellowpages.com	1,858
flickr.com	1,665
More »	

How your data is linked

alumni
corporations & foundations
alumni & friends
the internship experience
faculty
More »

Your most linked content

http://www.twc.edu/	15,768
/about/contact	3,229
/seminars/national-security	2,607
/alumni/rfi	2,594
/about/leadership/ryan-klang-mba	2,592
More »	

Chrome Plug-ins & Extensions



Open SEO Stats (Formerly: PageRank Sta...)

offered by www.chrome4fans.org

★★★★★ (5391) | [Developer Tools](#) | 338,893 users

OVERVIEW

REVIEWS

SUPPORT

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