What to look for in a technical SEO audit

According to Techradar, there are more than 547,200 new websites every day. Google has to crawl and store all these sites in their database, therefore occupying physical space on their servers.

The sheer volume of content available now allows Google to prioritize well-designed, fast sites and provide helpful, relevant information for their visitors.

The bar has been raised, and if your site is slow or has a lot of jargon in the code, Google is unlikely to reward your site with strong rankings.

If you really want to jump ahead of your competitors, you have a huge opportunity to be better than them by optimizing your site’s code, speed and user experience. These are some of the most important ranking signals and will continue to be as the internet becomes more and more inundated with content.

Auditing your website’s technical SEO can be extremely dense and with many moving pieces. If you are not a developer, it may be difficult to comprehend some of these elements.

Ideally, you should have a working knowledge of how to run an audit to oversee the implementation of technical SEO fixes. Some of these may require developers, designers, writers or editors.

Fortunately, various tools will run the audits for you and give you all the comprehensive data you need to improve your website’s technical performance.


Keyword Research
Links Building
Website Optimization
Sitemap Optimization
Ranking
SEO Audit
Traffic Monitoring
HTML
Software Development
Content
Web Design
Social Network
Q
A
FeedBack
Strategy

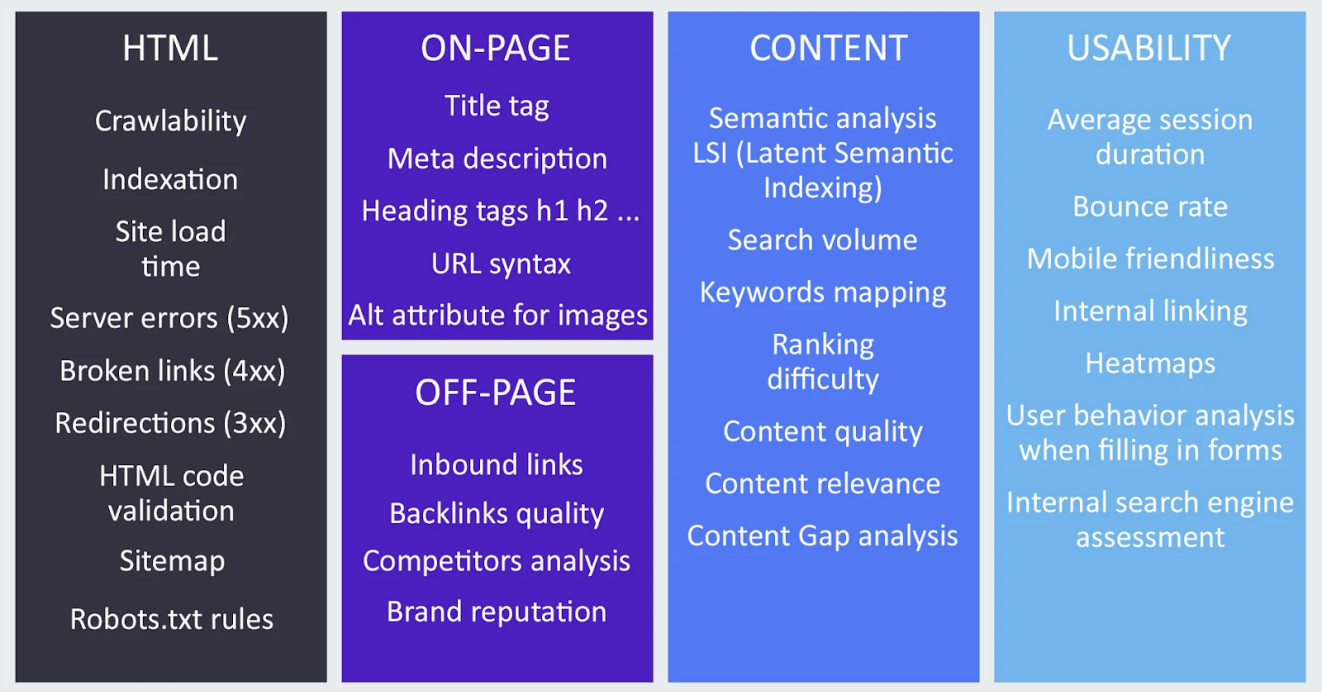

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Strategy

Let’s review some of the data points that will come up, regardless of what technical SEO audit tool you use:

Structure

- **Crawlability:** Can Google easily crawl your website, and how often?
- **Security:** Is your website secure with an HTTPS certificate?
- **On-page SEO elements:** does every page have the keyword in the title tags, meta description, filenames, and paths? Does it have the same on-page elements as sites ranking in the top 10 for your target keywords?
- **Internal links:** Does your site have internal links from other site pages? Other elements you can consider are site structure, breadcrumbs, anchor text and link sculpting.
- **Headings**: Is the primary KW in the H1? Do you have H2s with supporting keywords?
- **Compliance issues:** Does your site’s code include valid HTML? What is the accessibility score?
- **Images:** Do your images load quickly? Are they optimized with title, keywords and srcset attribute? Do you use some new image formats such as webP and SVG?
- **Schema and semantic Web:** Are your schema tags in place and set up properly? Some schema tags that you can use include WebPage, BreadcrumbList, Organization, Product, Review, Author/Article, Person, Event, Video/Image, Recipe, FAQ and How-To.
- **Canonicals:** Do you have canonical tags in place, and are they set up properly?
- **SiteMap:** Do you ONLY have valid pages in the site map, and are redirects and 404 pages removed from the sitemap?

These are simply a few of the elements you’d want to look into that most tools will report on.



HTML
Crawlability
Indexation
Site load time
Server errors (5xx)
Broken links (4xx)
Redirections (3xx)
HTML code validation
Sitemap
Robots.txt rules
ON-PAGE
Title tag
Meta description
Heading tags h1 h2 ...
URL syntax
Alt attribute for images
OFF-PAGE
Inbound links
Backlinks quality
Competitors analysis
Brand reputation
CONTENT
Semantic analysis LSI (Latent Semantic Indexing)
Search volume
Keywords mapping
Ranking difficulty
Content quality
Content relevance
Content Gap analysis
USABILITY
Average session duration
Bounce rate
Mobile friendliness
Internal linking
Heatmaps
User behavior analysis when filling in forms
Internal search engine assessment

User experience

Google has been placing more focus on ranking factors revolving around user experience. As the web collectively becomes more organized, Google is raising the bar for user experience. Focusing on user experience will ultimately increase their advertising revenue.

You'll want to audit the user experience of your website.

- Is it fast?
- How quickly is the page interactive?
- Can it be navigated easily on mobile devices?
- Is the hierarchy of the site clear and intuitive?

Some of the ways of measuring this include:

- Site speed
- Web Core Vitals
- Mobile-friendliness
- Structured navigation
- Intrusive ads or interstitials
- Design

Make sure you are working with a developer that is well versed in the latest technical SEO elements and who can apply the changes required to raise your SEO performance score.

Technical SEO audit tools

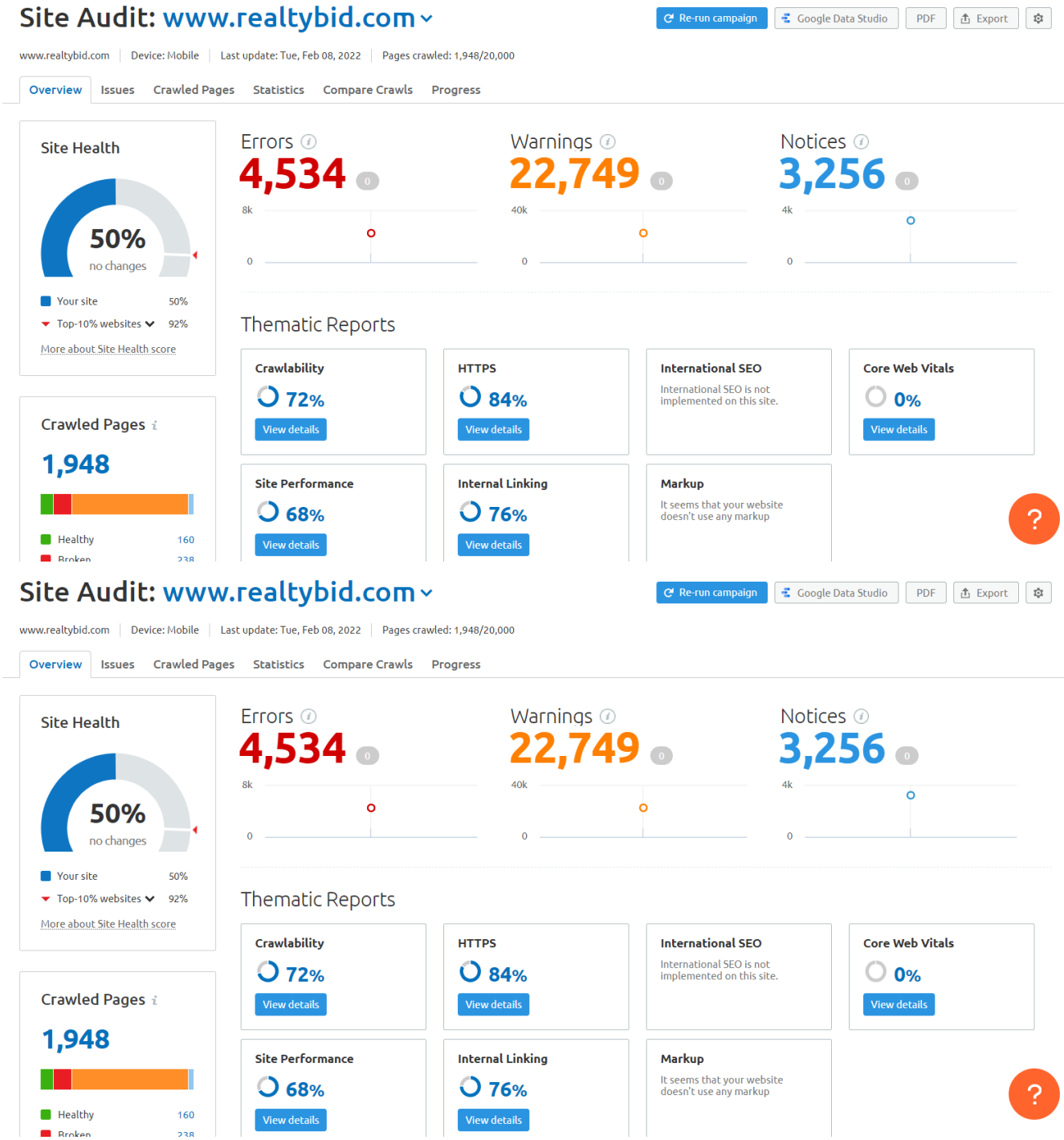
Some of the most popular SEO audit tools include:

- Semrush Site Audit
- Screaming Frog
- SiteBulb
- Website Auditor
- ContentKing App
- GTMetrix
- Pingdom
- Google Lighthouse
- Google Page Speed Insights

We'll look at a couple of these tools and the data points you can gain from them.

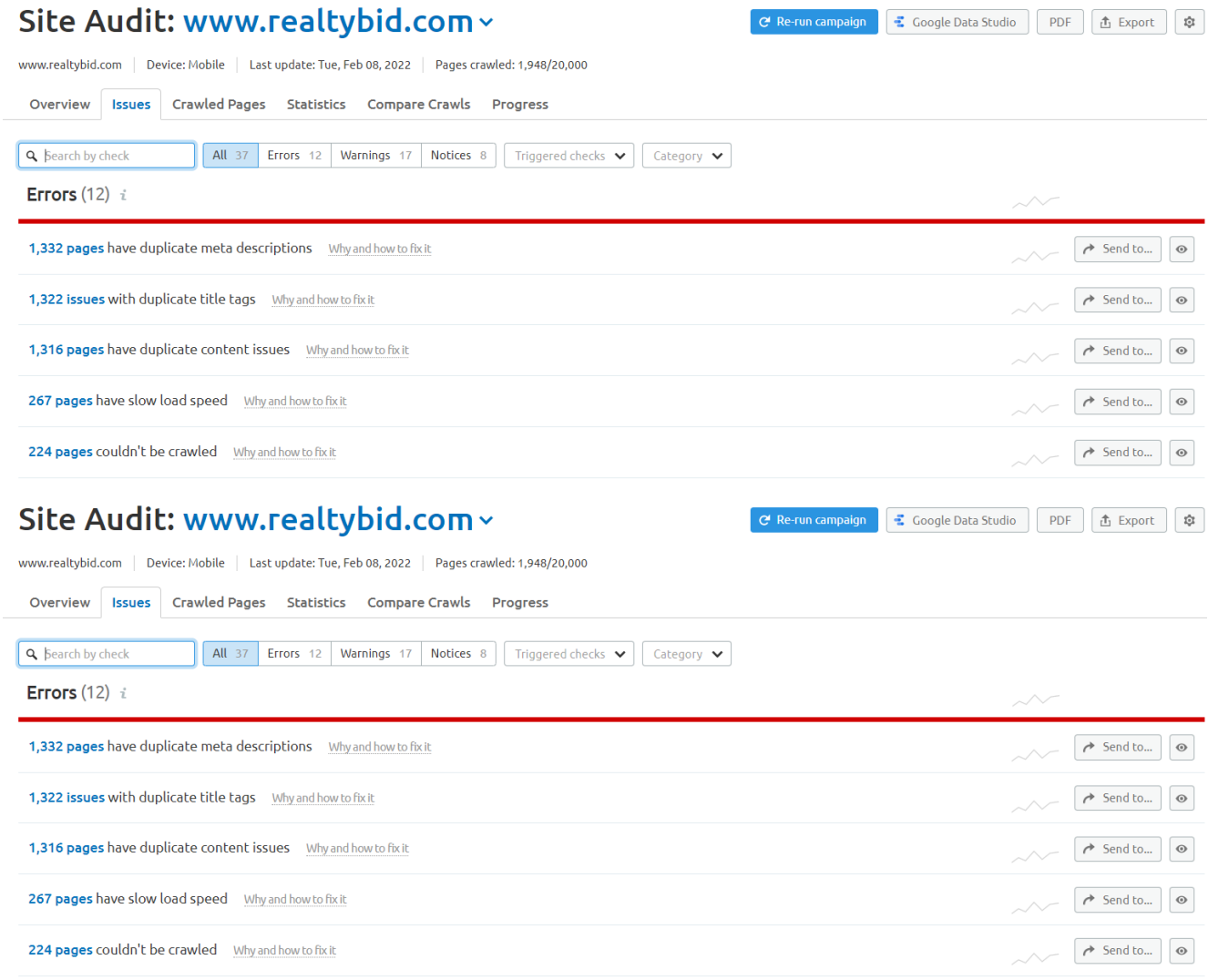
Semrush site audit

Once you create a project in Semrush, you can run a site audit. Your overview will look like this:

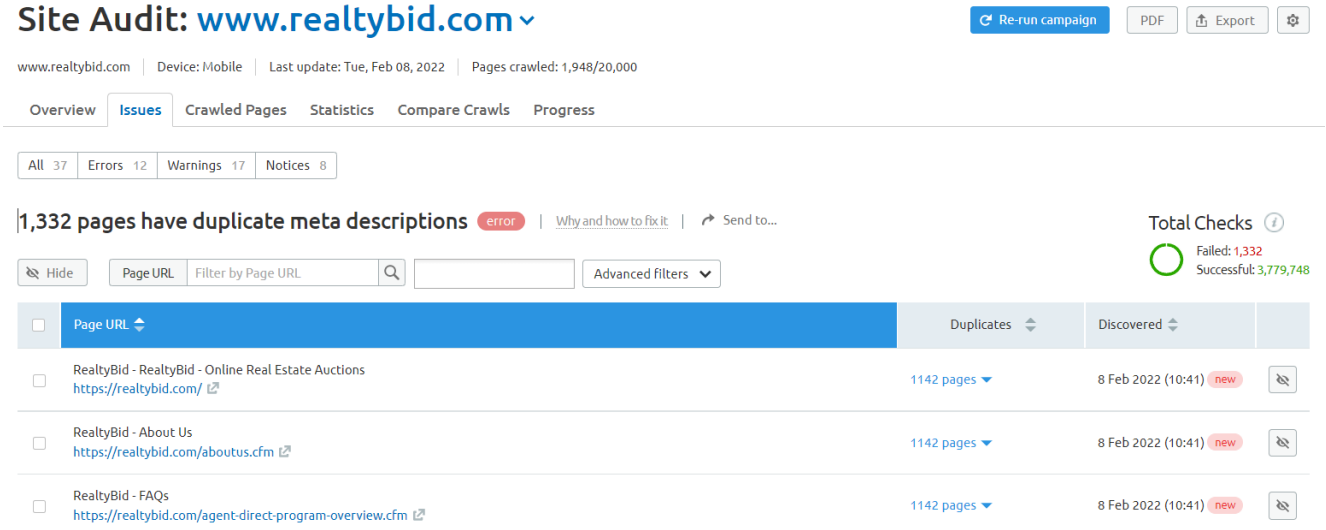


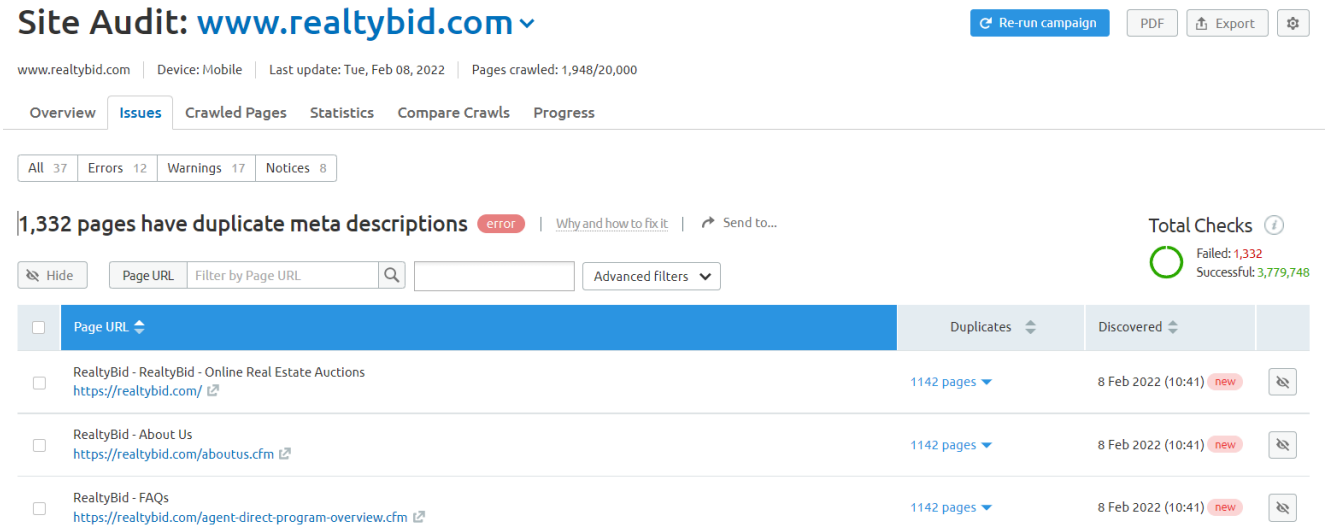
Site Audit: www.realtybid.com
Re-run campaign
Google Data Studio
PDF
Export
www.realtybid.com | Device: Mobile | Last update: Tue, Feb 08, 2022 | Pages crawled: 1,948/20,000
Overview
Issues
Crawled Pages
Statistics
Compare Crawls
Progress
Site Health
50%
no changes
Your site 50%
Top-10% websites 92%
More about Site Health score
Errors
4,534
Warnings
22,749
Notices
3,256
Thematic Reports
Crawlability
72%
View details
HTTPS
84%
View details
International SEO
International SEO is not implemented on this site.
Core Web Vitals
0%
View details
Site Performance
68%
View details
Internal Linking
76%
View details
Markup
It seems that your website doesn't use any markup
Crawled Pages
1,948
Healthy 160

Click on the “Issues” tab, and you’ll see a detailed list of the issues that were uncovered, divided by Errors, Warnings and Notices:



If you click on an item, you'll see a list of the pages affected by each issue.



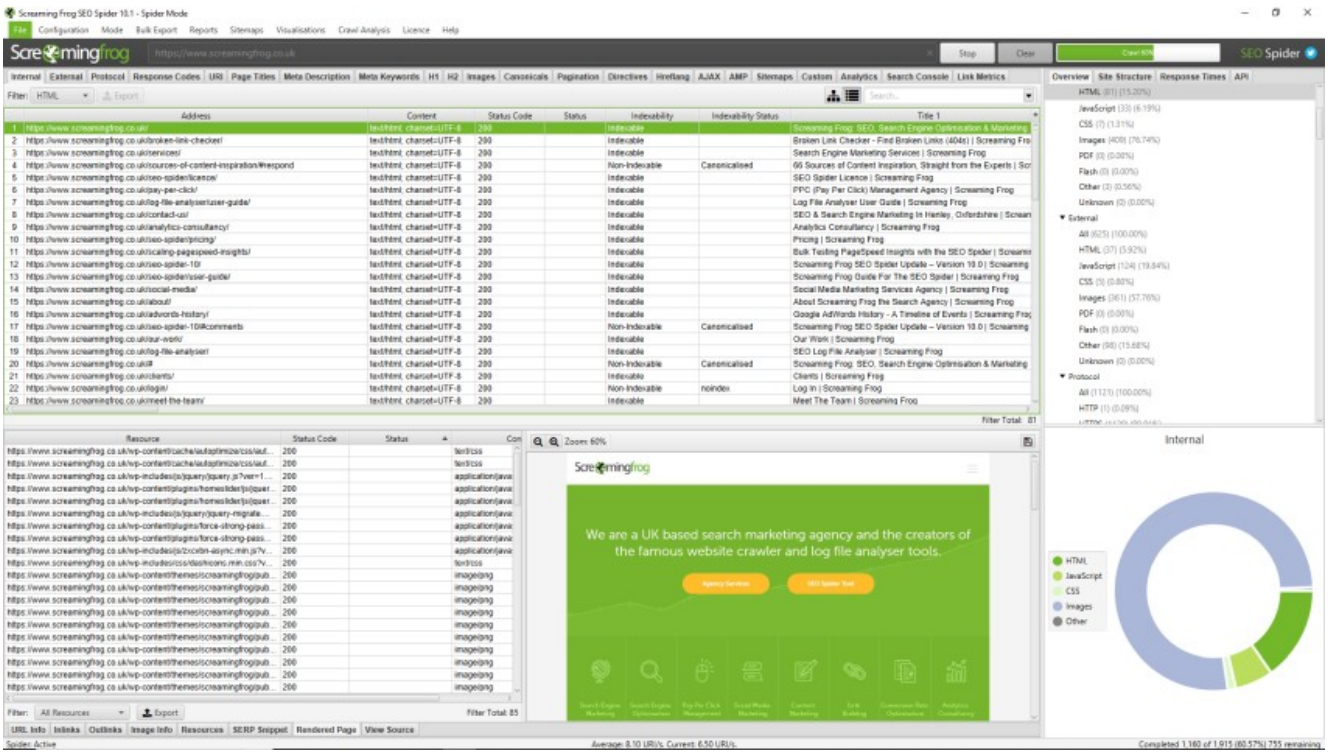


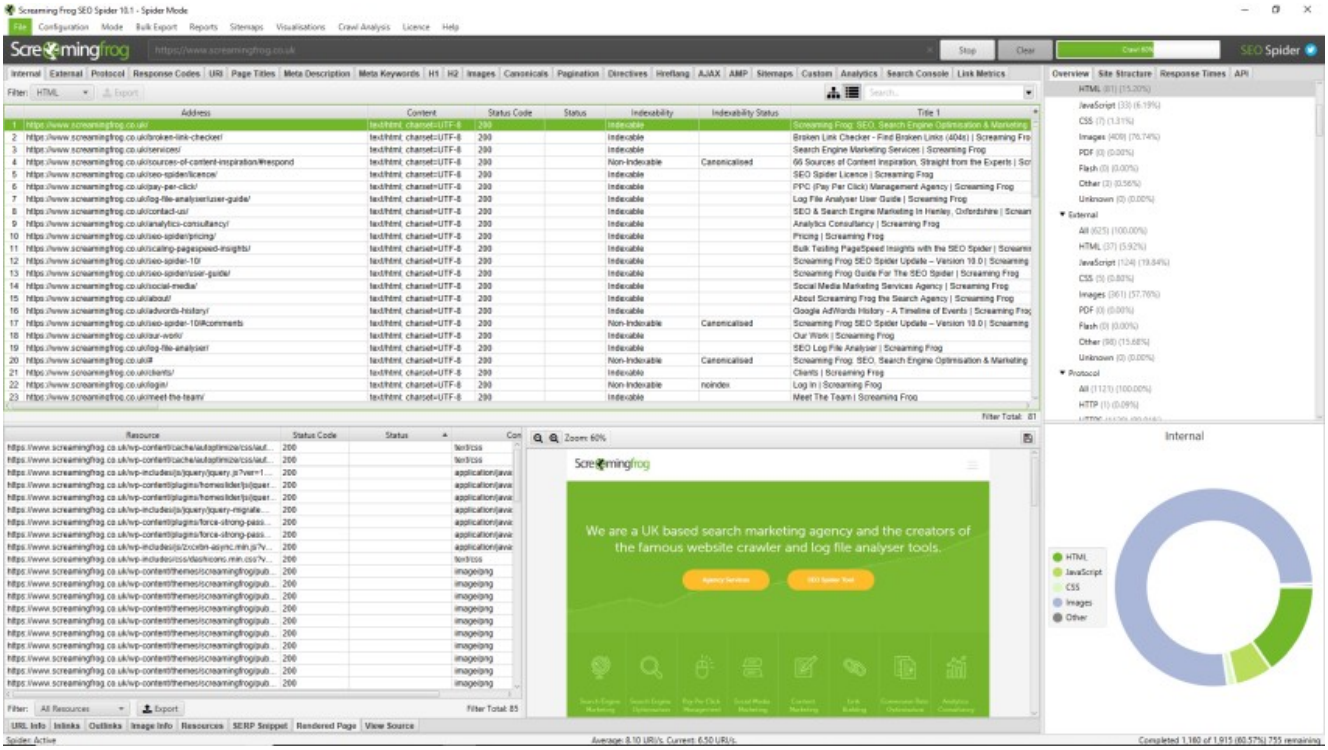
Review these as sometimes the data points are not valid.

Ideally, you should export the CSV for each of these issues and save them in a folder.

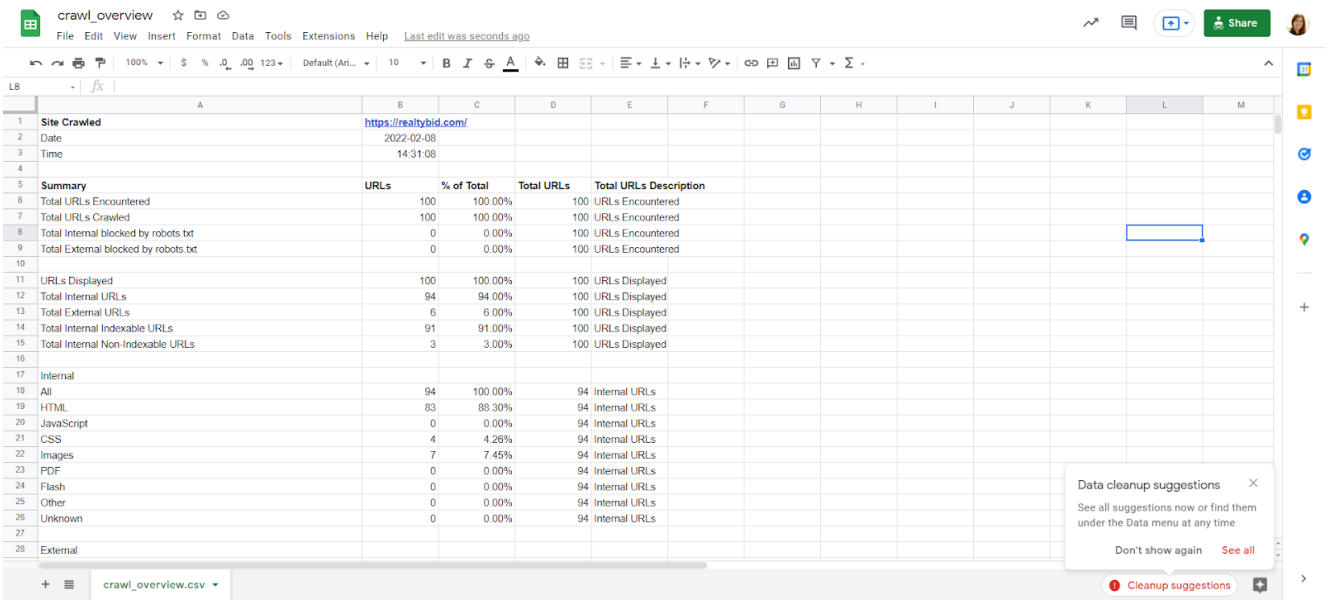
Screaming Frog

This desktop tool will use your computer and IP to crawl your website. Once completed, you'll get various reports that you can download.





Here are a couple of example reports:



crawl_overview

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help Last edit was seconds ago

Share

	A	B	C	D	E
1	**Site Crawled**	https://realtybid.com/			
2	Date	2022-02-08			
3	Time	14:31:08			
4					
5	**Summary**	**URLs**	**% of Total**	**Total URLs**	**Total URLs Description**
6	Total URLs Encountered	100	100.00%	100	URLs Encountered
7	Total URLs Crawled	100	100.00%	100	URLs Encountered
8	Total Internal blocked by robots.txt	0	0.00%	100	URLs Encountered
9	Total External blocked by robots.txt	0	0.00%	100	URLs Encountered
10					
11	URLs Displayed	100	100.00%	100	URLs Displayed
12	Total Internal URLs	94	94.00%	100	URLs Displayed
13	Total External URLs	6	6.00%	100	URLs Displayed
14	Total Internal Indexable URLs	91	91.00%	100	URLs Displayed
15	Total Internal Non-Indexable URLs	3	3.00%	100	URLs Displayed
16					
17	Internal				
18	All	94	100.00%	94	Internal URLs
19	HTML	83	88.30%	94	Internal URLs
20	JavaScript	0	0.00%	94	Internal URLs
21	CSS	4	4.26%	94	Internal URLs
22	Images	7	7.45%	94	Internal URLs
23	PDF	0	0.00%	94	Internal URLs
24	Flash	0	0.00%	94	Internal URLs
25	Other	0	0.00%	94	Internal URLs
26	Unknown	0	0.00%	94	Internal URLs
27					
28	External				

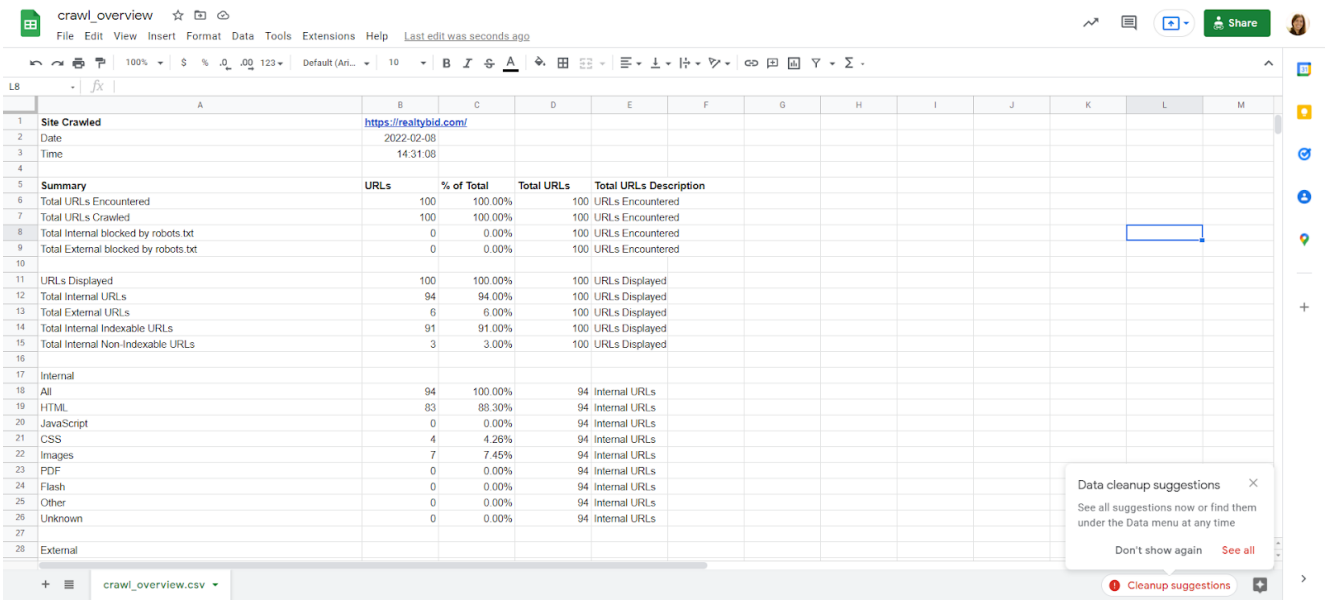
Data cleanup suggestions

See all suggestions now or find them under the Data menu at any time

Don't show again See all

crawl_overview.csv

Cleanup suggestions



crawl_overview

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help Last edit was seconds ago

Share

	A	B	C	D	E
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2	Date	2022-02-08			
3	Time	14:31:08			
4					
5	**Summary**	**URLs**	**% of Total**	**Total URLs**	**Total URLs Description**
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9	Total External blocked by robots.txt	0	0.00%	100	URLs Encountered
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26	Unknown	0	0.00%	94	Internal URLs
27					
28	External				

Data cleanup suggestions

See all suggestions now or find them under the Data menu at any time

Don't show again See all

crawl_overview.csv

Cleanup suggestions

This is an overview report that you can use to track technical audit KPIs.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
URL	**Title**	**Character Leng**	**Pixel Length**	**Description**	**Character Leng**	**Pixel Length**
https://realtybid.com/	RealtyBid - RealtyBid - Online Real Estate Auctions	51	461		0	0
https://realtybid.com/bidder/emailnotification.cfm	RealtyBid - Email Notification	30	262		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/nevada/	RealtyBid - Nevada Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	53	516	We are the leadi	406	2526
https://realtybid.com/auction/massachusetts/	RealtyBid - Massachusetts Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	60	584	We are the leadi	413	2573
https://realtybid.com/auction/Hawaii/	RealtyBid - Hawaii Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	53	510	We are the leadi	406	2520
https://www.realtybid.com/property-detail.cfm?itemId=7	RealtyBid - Details for Property - 2210 Lisa Avenue, Memphis, TI	70	647		0	0
https://realtybid.com/search-results.cfm?st=0&q=&pmin	RealtyBid - Search Results	26	242		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/louisiana/	RealtyBid - Louisiana Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	56	535	We are the leadi	409	2538
https://realtybid.com/search-results.cfm?q=&st=3&pmin	RealtyBid - Search Results	26	242		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/delaware/	RealtyBid - Delaware Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	55	534	We are the leadi	408	2538
https://realtybid.com/auction/wyoming/	RealtyBid - Wyoming Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	54	534	We are the leadi	407	2536
https://www.realtybid.com/property-detail.cfm?itemId=7	RealtyBid - Details for Property - 526 Post Oak Pl, Madison, MS	69	631		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/michigan/	RealtyBid - Michigan Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	55	530	We are the leadi	408	2534
https://realtybid.com/auction/virginia/	RealtyBid - Virginia Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	55	516	We are the leadi	408	2524
https://realtybid.com/faq.cfm	RealtyBid - FAQs	16	155		0	0
https://www.realtybid.com/property-detail.cfm?itemId=7	RealtyBid - Details for Property - 9726 Richmond Way, Live Oak,	72	674		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/georgia/	RealtyBid - Georgia Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	54	519	We are the leadi	407	2528
https://realtybid.com/auction/tennessee/	RealtyBid - Tennessee Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	56	547	We are the leadi	409	2549
https://realtybid.com/auction/utah/	RealtyBid - Utah Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	51	490	We are the leadi	404	2507
https://realtybid.com/privacypolicy.cfm	RealtyBid - Privacy Policy	26	229		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/oregon/	RealtyBid - Oregon Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	53	514	We are the leadi	406	2525
https://realtybid.com/auction/pennsylvania/	RealtyBid - Pennsylvania Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	59	567	We are the leadi	412	2562

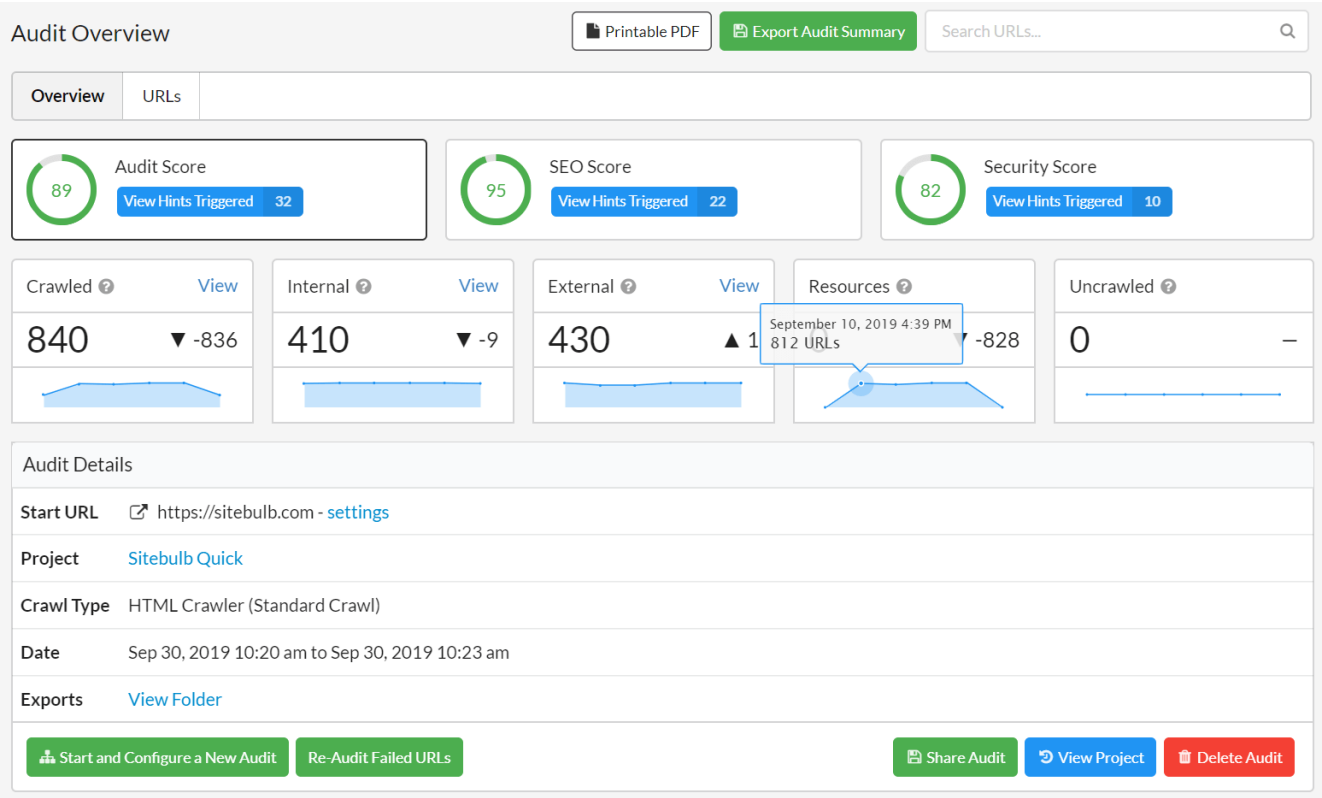
A	B	C	D	E	F	G
URL	**Title**	**Character Leng**	**Pixel Length**	**Description**	**Character Leng**	**Pixel Length**
https://realtybid.com/	RealtyBid - RealtyBid - Online Real Estate Auctions	51	461		0	0
https://realtybid.com/bidder/emailnotification.cfm	RealtyBid - Email Notification	30	262		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/nevada/	RealtyBid - Nevada Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	53	516	We are the leadi	406	2526
https://realtybid.com/auction/massachusetts/	RealtyBid - Massachusetts Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	60	584	We are the leadi	413	2573
https://realtybid.com/auction/Hawaii/	RealtyBid - Hawaii Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	53	510	We are the leadi	406	2520
https://www.realtybid.com/property-detail.cfm?itemId=7	RealtyBid - Details for Property - 2210 Lisa Avenue, Memphis, TI	70	647		0	0
https://realtybid.com/search-results.cfm?st=0&q=&pmin	RealtyBid - Search Results	26	242		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/louisiana/	RealtyBid - Louisiana Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	56	535	We are the leadi	409	2538
https://realtybid.com/search-results.cfm?q=&st=3&pmin	RealtyBid - Search Results	26	242		0	0
https://realtybid.com/auction/delaware/	RealtyBid - Delaware Homes for Auction REO Foreclosures	55	534	We are the leadi	408	2538
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https://realtybid.com/privacypolicy.cfm	RealtyBid - Privacy Policy	26	229		0	0
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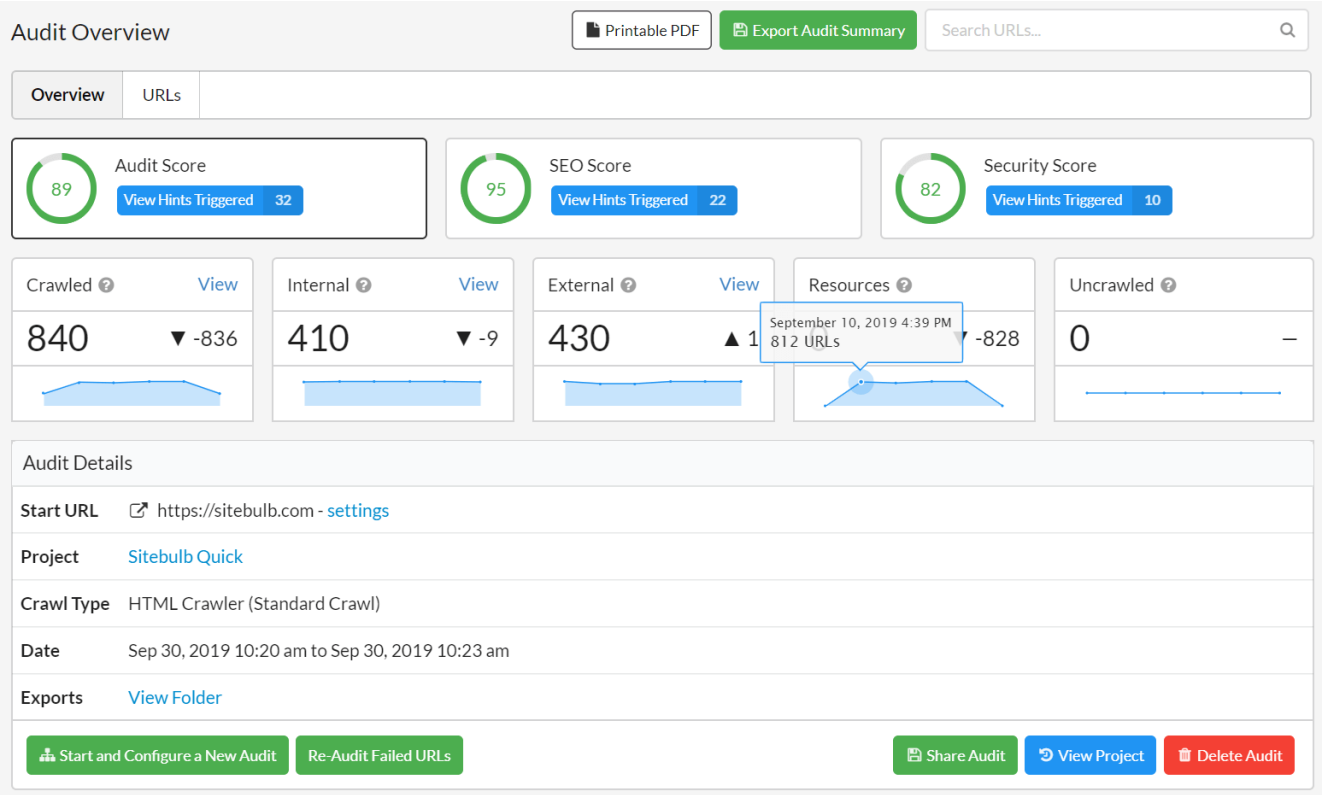
For example, this report gives you details of the meta titles for each of your pages.

You can use the Bulk Export feature to get all of the data points downloaded into spreadsheets, which you can then add to your Audit folder.

SiteBulb

Like the others, Site Bulb will do a comprehensive crawl of your website. The benefit of this tool is that it will give you more in-depth technical information than some of the other tools.



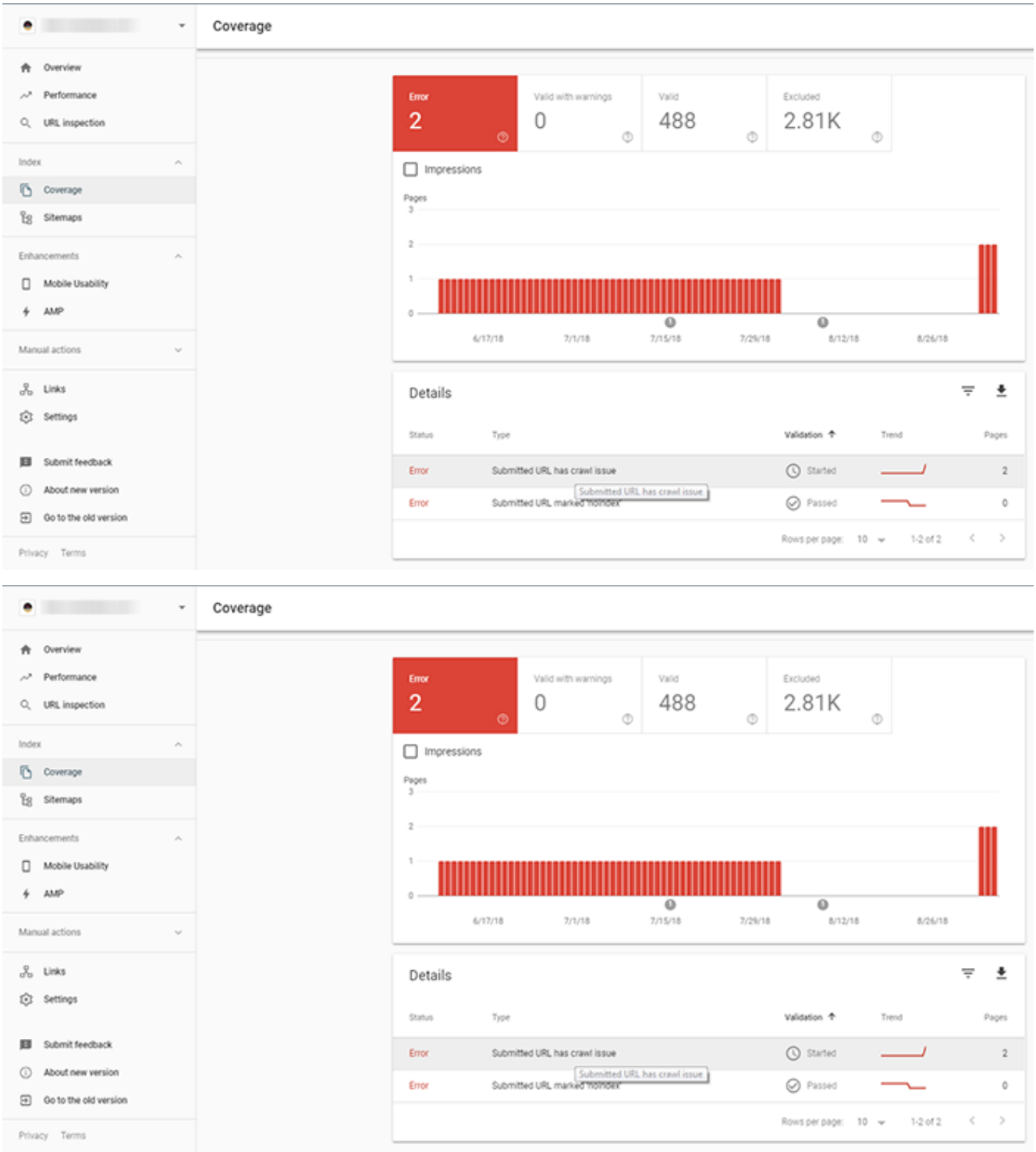


You'll get an Audit Score, SEO Score, and Security Score. As you implement fixes, you'll want to see these scores increasing over time.

Google Search Console

The Index Coverage report contains a treasure trove of data that you can use to implement the fixes that Google has discovered about your site.

In the details section, you'll see a list of the errors, and if you click through to each report, they will include the list of pages affected by each issue.



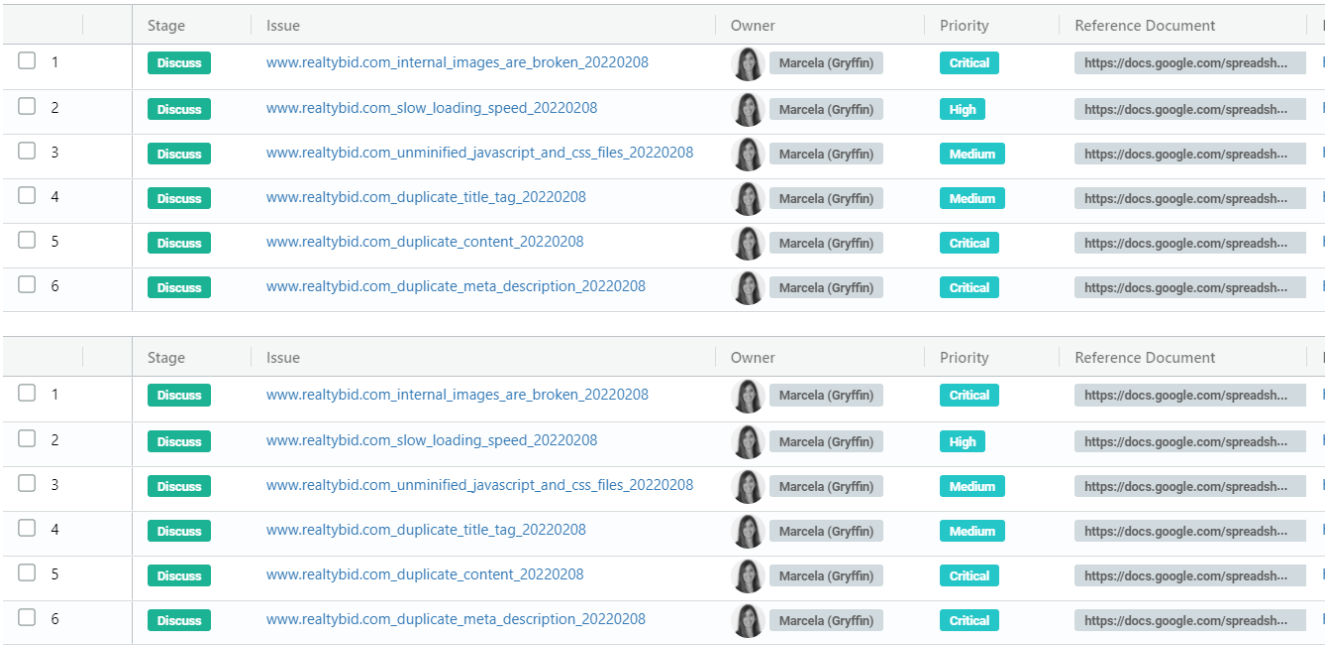
Implementing technical SEO fixes

Once you have all of your CSV exports, you can create a list of all of the issues and go through them to remove duplicate reports created by the different tools.

Next, you can assign what department each fix belongs to and the level of priority. Some may need to be tackled by your developer, others by your content team, such as rewriting

duplicate titles or improving descriptions with pages with low CTR.

Here’s what your list might look like:



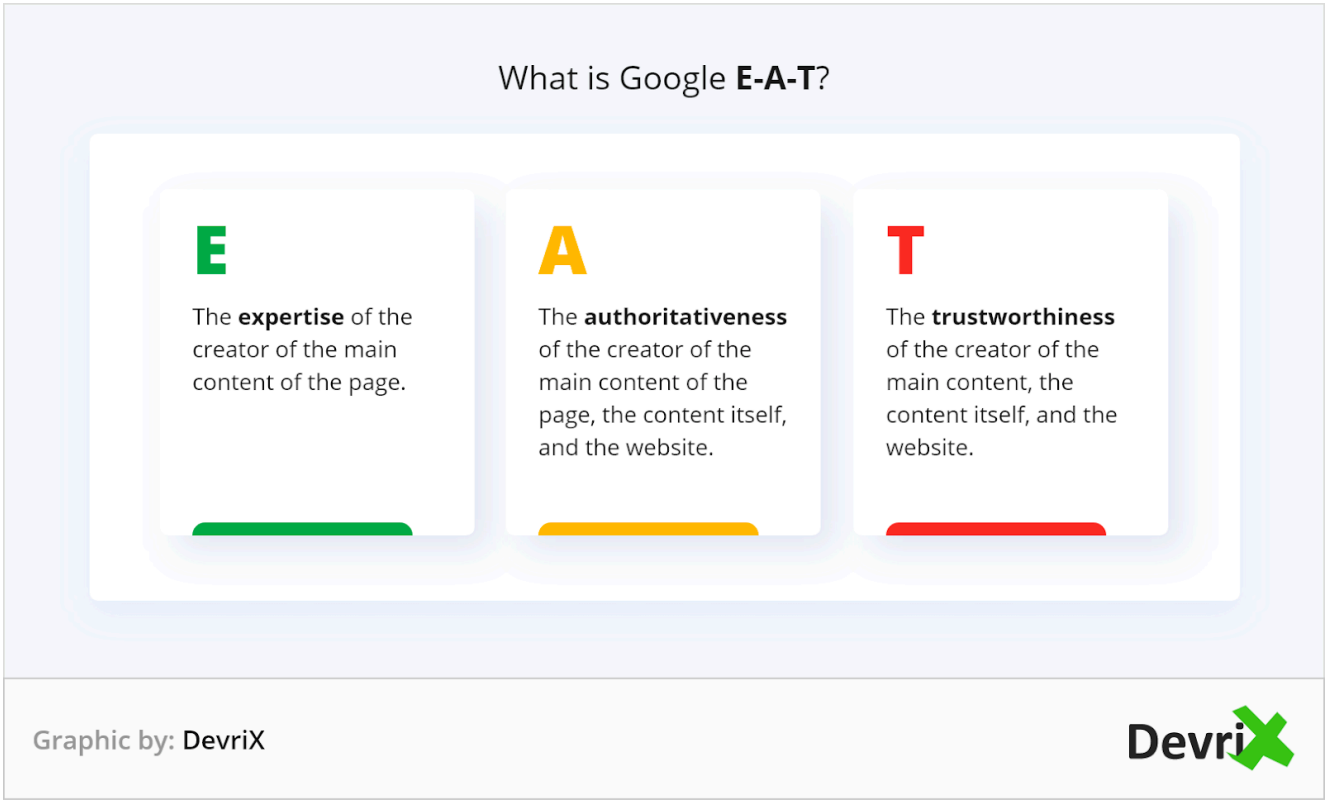
	Stage	Issue	Owner	Priority	Reference Document
1	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_internal_images_are_broken_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Critical	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
2	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_slow_loading_speed_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	High	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
3	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_unminified_javascript_and_css_files_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Medium	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
4	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_duplicate_title_tag_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Medium	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
5	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_duplicate_content_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Critical	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
6	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_duplicate_meta_description_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Critical	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...

	Stage	Issue	Owner	Priority	Reference Document
1	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_internal_images_are_broken_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Critical	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
2	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_slow_loading_speed_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	High	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
3	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_unminified_javascript_and_css_files_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Medium	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
4	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_duplicate_title_tag_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Medium	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
5	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_duplicate_content_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Critical	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...
6	Discuss	www.realtybid.com_duplicate_meta_description_20220208	Marcela (Gryffin)	Critical	https://docs.google.com/spreadsh...

Each project should include notes, observations, or details about how to implement the fix.

Most websites will have dozens of issues, so the key here is to prioritize the issues and make sure that you are continuously fixing and improving your site’s performance each month.

E-A-T Audit



What is Google E-A-T?
E
The expertise of the creator of the main content of the page.
A
The authoritativeness of the creator of the main content of the page, the content itself, and the website.
T
The trustworthiness of the creator of the main content, the content itself, and the website.
Graphic by: DevriX
DevriX

It's important that your website reflects topical authority and relevance. E-A-T means:

- **Expertise:** Are you an expert in your field? Are your authors authoritative?
- **Authoritativeness:** Are you considered authoritative in your field by industry organizations? Do your social

profiles, citations, social shares and link profile reflect this authoritativeness?

- **Trustworthiness:** Can visitors trust that your website is secure and that their data is safe? Does your site have an SSL certificate, including privacy disclaimers, refund information, contact info and credentials?

Google has an entire team of Quality Raters that manually review websites to assess them based on these parameters. Google has even published the Quality Raters E-A-T guidelines for site owners to reference.

If your website is in a YMYL (Your Money, Your Life) niche, these factors are even more important as Google attempts to protect the public from misinformation.

Analytics audit

		Grade	Where	Reference
2	**Do we have access and information for all accounts to be audited?**	Pass		
3	Is the Google Analytics structure logical?	Pass	Google Analytics	https://www.distilled.net/resources/google-analytics-audit-checklist/
4	Is there a raw data (filter-less) view?	Pass	Google Analytics	
5				
6	**Are the Google Analytics settings set correctly?**	Fail		
7	Time zone right	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
8	Currency right	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
9	Default page set correctly	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
10	Bot Filtering enabled	Pass	View Settings	http://www.lunametrics.com/blog/2014/08/07/bot-spider-filtering-google-analytics
11	Site Search enabled	Fail	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1012264?hl=en
12	AdWords account linked to Google Analytics	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033961?hl=en
13	Search console linked to Google Analytics	Pass	Property Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1308621?hl=en
14	Exclude URL query parameters used	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
15	Goals set and tracking correctly	Pass	Goals	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1032415?hl=en
16	Content grouping enabled and correct	Fail	Content Grouping	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2853423?hl=en
17	Internal / Agency IP's filtered	Fail	Filters	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1034840?hl=en
18	Self referrals excluded	Okay	Property --> Tracking Info --> R	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2795830?hl=en
19	Payment gateway referrals excluded	N/A		https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2795830?hl=en
20				
21	**Is tracking implemented and working correctly?**	Pass		
22	Tracking code version - ga.js, dc.js, analytics.js	analytics.js	Source Code/Tracking Info --> Tracking Code	
23	Tracking on all pages (check for pages with no or incorrect tracking code)	Pass	Crawl with Screaming Frog	http://www.seerinteractive.com/blog/screaming-frog-to-verify-google-analytics/
24	Mobile site being tracked	Pass	Crawl with Screaming Frog	http://www.seerinteractive.com/blog/screaming-frog-to-verify-google-analytics/
25	Tracking code in correct place in source code	Pass	Source code	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1008080?hl=en
26	Tracking on 404 pages	Pass	Source code of 404 pages	

		Grade	Where	Reference
2	**Do we have access and information for all accounts to be audited?**	Pass		
3	Is the Google Analytics structure logical?	Pass	Google Analytics	https://www.distilled.net/resources/google-analytics-audit-checklist/
4	Is there a raw data (filter-less) view?	Pass	Google Analytics	
5				
6	**Are the Google Analytics settings set correctly?**	Fail		
7	Time zone right	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
8	Currency right	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
9	Default page set correctly	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
10	Bot Filtering enabled	Pass	View Settings	http://www.lunametrics.com/blog/2014/08/07/bot-spider-filtering-google-analytics
11	Site Search enabled	Fail	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1012264?hl=en
12	AdWords account linked to Google Analytics	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033961?hl=en
13	Search console linked to Google Analytics	Pass	Property Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1308621?hl=en
14	Exclude URL query parameters used	Pass	View Settings	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1010249?hl=en
15	Goals set and tracking correctly	Pass	Goals	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1032415?hl=en
16	Content grouping enabled and correct	Fail	Content Grouping	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2853423?hl=en
17	Internal / Agency IP's filtered	Fail	Filters	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1034840?hl=en
18	Self referrals excluded	Okay	Property --> Tracking Info --> R	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2795830?hl=en
19	Payment gateway referrals excluded	N/A		https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2795830?hl=en
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23	Tracking on all pages (check for pages with no or incorrect tracking code)	Pass	Crawl with Screaming Frog	http://www.seerinteractive.com/blog/screaming-frog-to-verify-google-analytics/
24	Mobile site being tracked	Pass	Crawl with Screaming Frog	http://www.seerinteractive.com/blog/screaming-frog-to-verify-google-analytics/
25	Tracking code in correct place in source code	Pass	Source code	https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1008080?hl=en
26	Tracking on 404 pages	Pass	Source code of 404 pages	

- Is your Google Analytics code working properly?
- Do you have the proper goals and funnels to fully understand how users navigate your site?
- Are you importing data from your Google Ads and Search Console accounts to visualize all of your data in Google Analytics?

BrainLabsDigital has created a Google Analytics audit checklist that will help you review your Google Analytics account. The accompanying article will give you a straightforward and strategic approach to ensuring your Google Analytics is set up properly.

Prioritizing technical SEO fixes

Make sure you prioritize continuously improving your on-page SEO. Depending on your site, you may have a list of a dozen or a few hundred fixes. Try and determine which fixes will impact the most pages to see a greater improvement from your efforts.

It can be discouraging to see a list with 85 different technical SEO improvements. The benefit is that, as you go through these improvements, you will start seeing movement in your rankings. Over time, you'll want to have very few, if any, errors show up in all of your crawling tools.

If your content is relevant, targeted and well developed, and you're receiving new, quality links every month, these technical = optimizations will become the key differentiating factors for ranking better than your competitors.

Opinions expressed in this article are those of the guest author and not necessarily Search Engine Land. Staff authors are listed here.

New on Search Engine Land

About The Author





Marcela De Vivo is an industry veteran with more than 20 years of digital marketing experience, Marcela travels the world speaking about SEO, data-driven marketing strategies, and workflow automation and optimization. Marcela owns a digital marketing agency called Gryffin based in California.
https://searchengineland.com/technical-seo-audit-what-to-look-for-385213