The Definitive Guide To SEO In 2019

BACKLINKO

BACKLINKO.COM

This is the ultimate guide to SEO in 2019.

And let me be clear about something:

This is NOT a lame “SEO in 2019” predictions post.

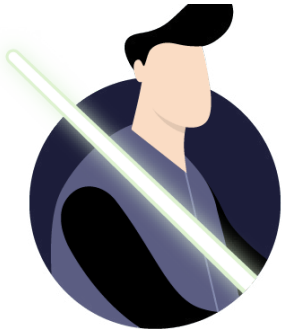
Instead, you’re going to see tested strategies that are working right now... and will work even better in 2019.

So if you’re looking to up your SEO game this year, you’ll love this guide.

Let’s dive right in.

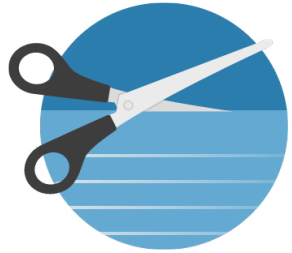
CHAPTER 1

RankBrain & UX Signals



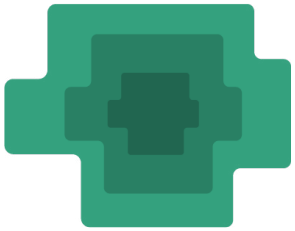
CHAPTER 2

Become a CTR Jedi



CHAPTER 3

Rank Content In The Featured Snippet



CHAPTER 4

Comprehensive, In-Depth Content Wins

CHAPTER 5

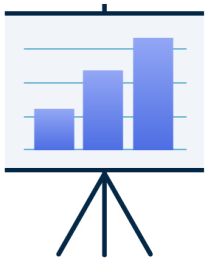
Optimize for Google's Mobile-First Index

CHAPTER 6

Go All-In With Video (Or Get Left Behind)

CHAPTER 7

Optimize for Voice Search



CHAPTER 8

Don't Forget: Content and Links Are Key

BONUS CHAPTER

Quick Tips for SEO in 2019

Chapter 1

RankBrain & UX Signals

User experience signals were HUGE this year. And I expect them to be even more important in 2019.

In fact, Google previously announced that RankBrain was their third most important ranking factor:

“In the few months it has been deployed, RankBrain has become the third-most important signal contributing to the result of a search query.”

The question is:

What is RankBrain, exactly? And how can you optimize for it?

Google RankBrain: a Dead-Simple Explanation

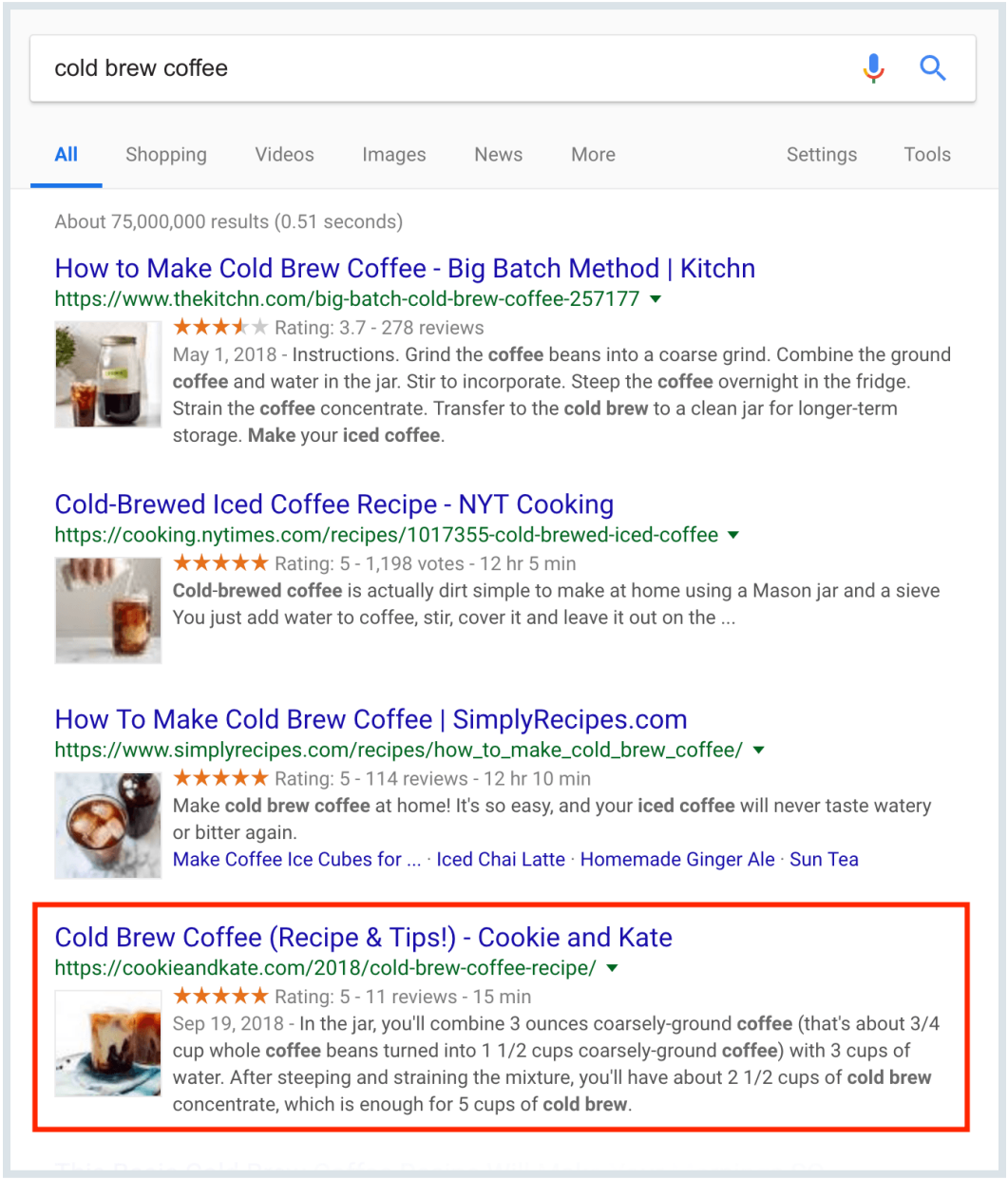
RankBrain is a machine learning system that helps Google sort their search results.

That might sound complicated, but it isn't.

RankBrain simply measures how users interact with the search results...

...and ranks them accordingly.

For example, let's say you search for "cold brew coffee" in Google.



The #4 result looks especially enticing. So you quickly click on it.

And when you get there...wow! It's the best darn article about coffee you've ever read. So you devour every word.

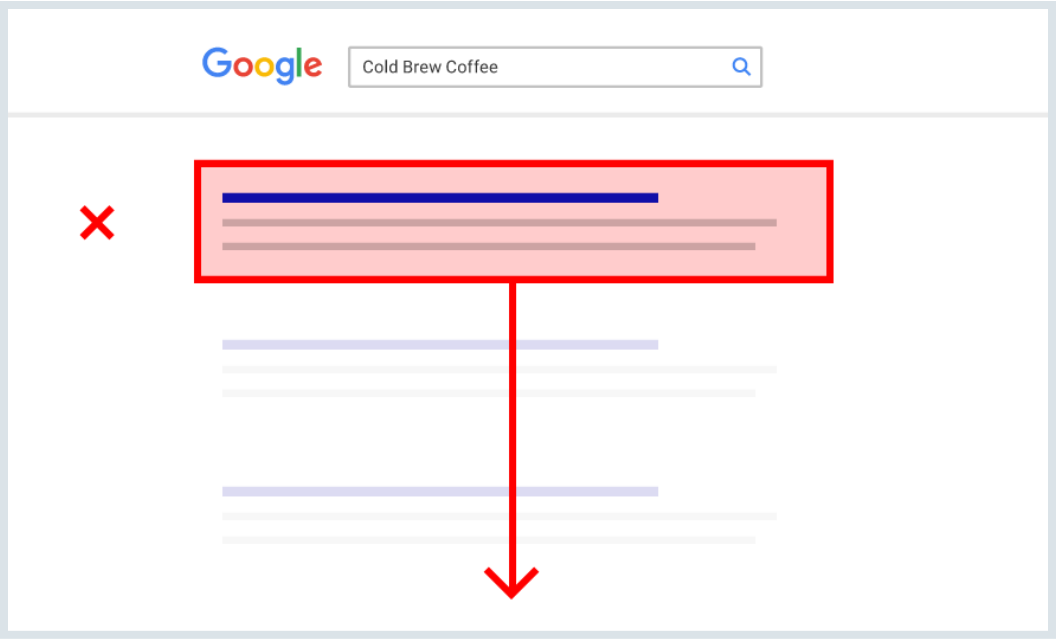
RankBrain is going to take note...and likely give that #4 result a rankings boost.

On the other hand, let's say that you do the same search. But this time, you click on the #1 result without even looking.

But the content is TERRIBLE. So you bounce from the page after a few seconds.

And you click on the #4 result to find something about coffee that's actually worth reading.

RankBrain will also notice this. And if enough people quickly bounce from that result, Google will boot it from the #1 spot.



As you can see, RankBrain focuses on two things:

1. How long someone spends on your page (Dwell Time)
2. The percentage of people that click on your result (Click Through Rate)

Let's break each of these down.

RankBrain and Dwell Time

Dwell Time=how long a Google searcher spends on your page.

As it turns out, RankBrain pays A LOT of attention to Dwell Time.

In fact, the head of Google Brain in Canada recently confirmed that Google uses Dwell Time as a ranking signal.

He stated that RankBrain measures when:

“someone clicks on a page and stays on that page, when they go back”

And a recent industry study by SearchMetrics supports this statement. They found that the average Dwell Time for a top 10 Google result is **3 minutes and 10 seconds.**

If you've spent any time digging through your Google Analytics, you know that a 3+ minute Dwell Time is legit.

And it's no coincidence that pages with awesome Dwell Time tend to rank best. In fact, RankBrain is upranking these pages for that exact reason.

This makes sense if you think about it:

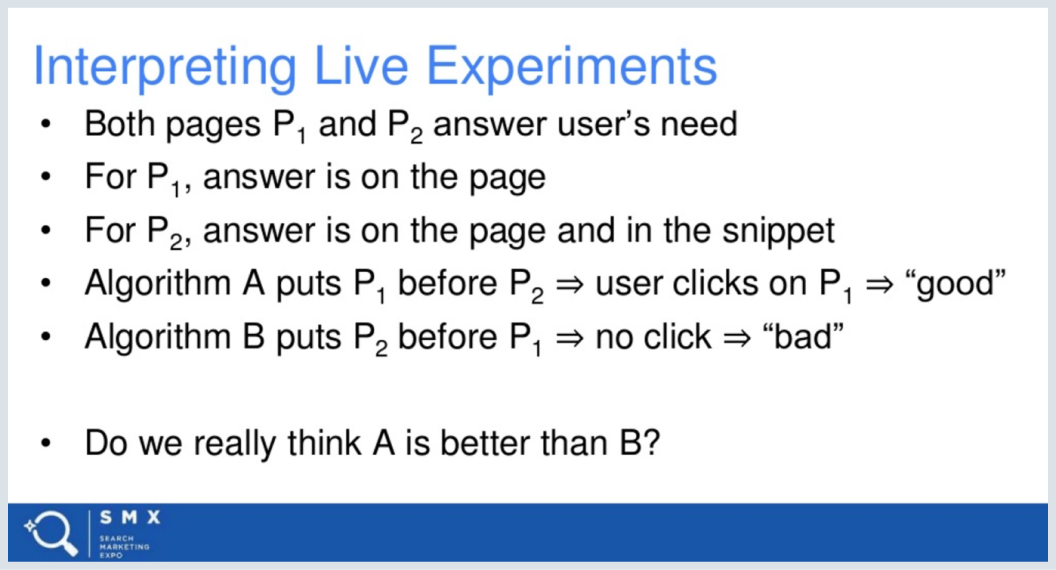
If you spend a long time on a page, **you probably like the content on that page.**

And if enough people feel the same way, Google will uprank that content to make it easier to find.

If you want to improve your site's Dwell Time, check out this video:

RankBrain and Organic Click Through Rate (CTR)

Google Engineer Paul Haahr caused a stir in the SEO world when he put up this slide at a conference:



This slide basically says:

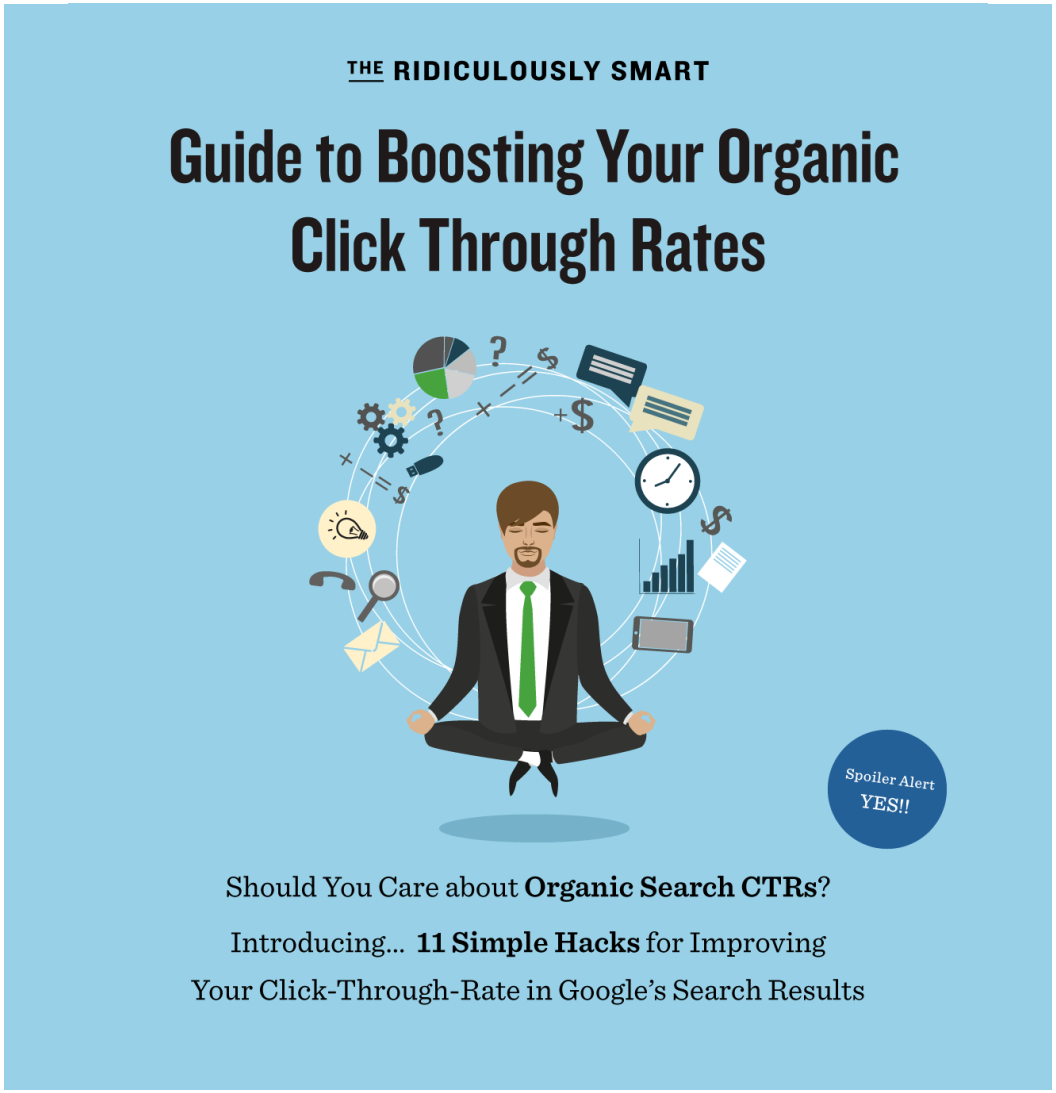
"RankBrain sometimes ranks pages higher up than they "should" rank.

And if that page gets an above-average CTR, we use that as a sign that the page should get a permanent rankings boost."

This shouldn't come as a surprise. After all, if no one clicks on your result, why would Google keep it on the first page?

And if your site is getting clicked on like there's no tomorrow, why would Google keep it buried in the #9 spot?

If you want a few simple strategies that you can use to boost CTR, check out this infographic that I made with Larry Kim.



It will help you create title tags and meta descriptions engineered for clicks.

(Click Here for Full Image)

Speaking of click through rate...

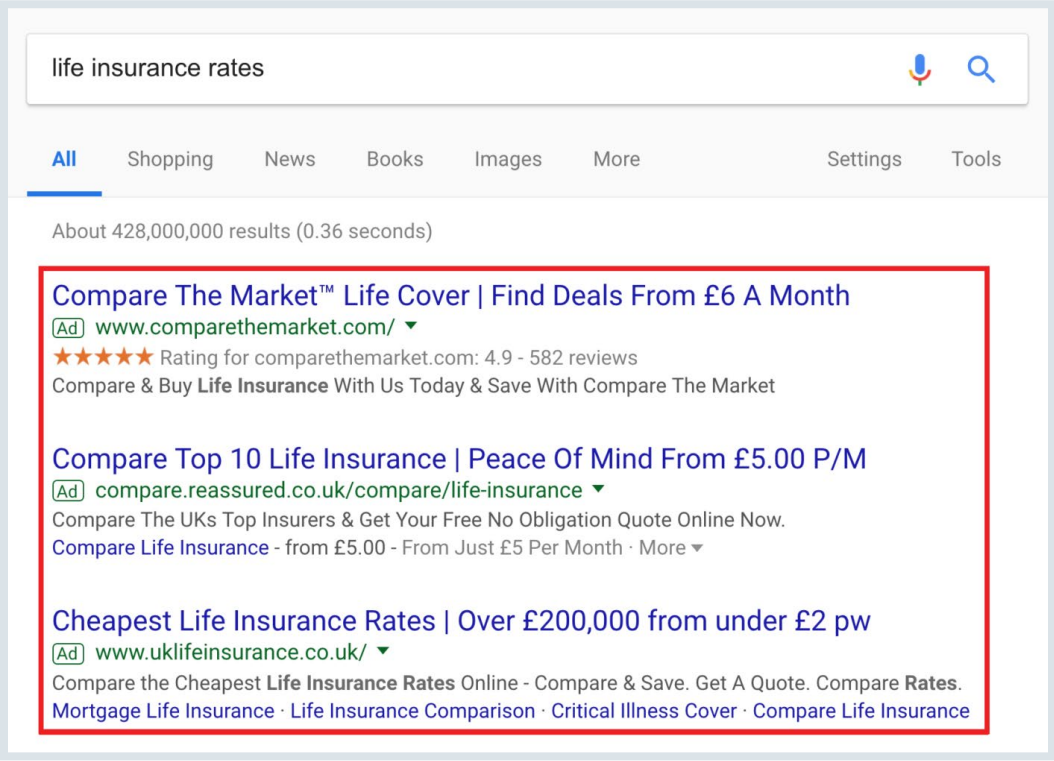
Chapter 2

Become a CTR Jedi

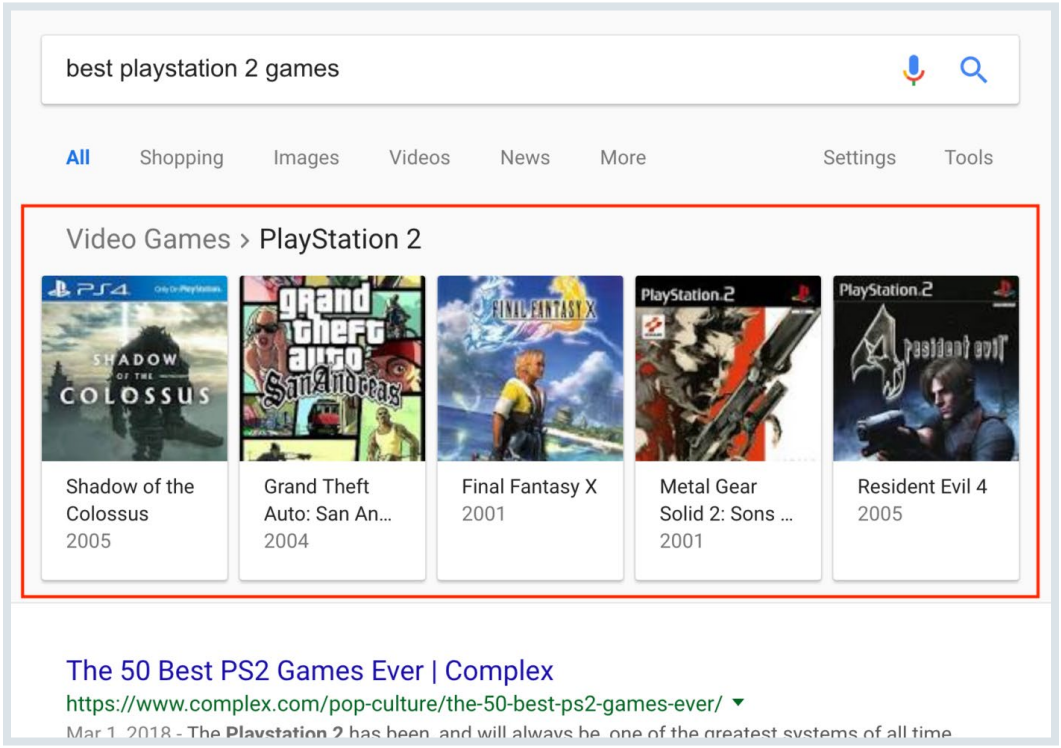
If you want to master SEO in 2019, you need to become a CTR Jedi.

Yes, because of RankBrain.

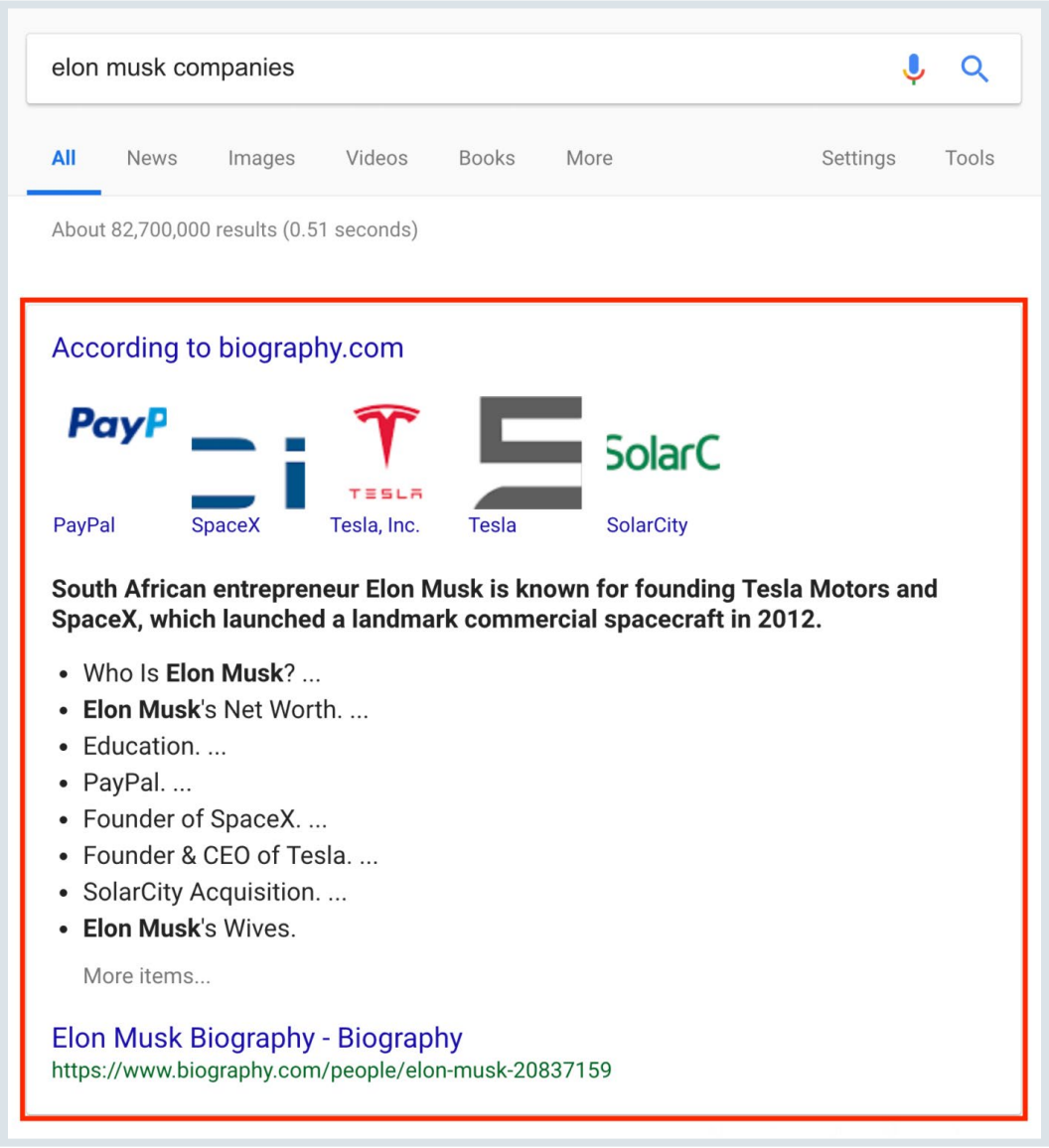
But also because of:



And:

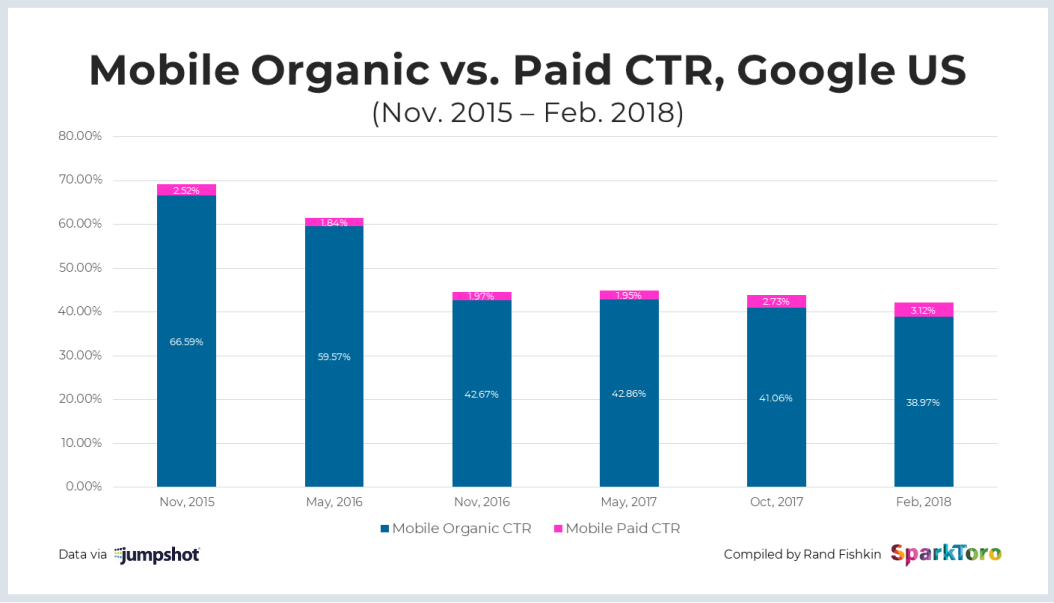

best playstation 2 games
All
Shopping
Images
Videos
News
More
Settings
Tools
Video Games › PlayStation 2
Shadow of the Colossus
2005
Grand Theft Auto: San An...
2004
Final Fantasy X
2001
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons ...
2001
Resident Evil 4
2005
The 50 Best PS2 Games Ever | Complex
https://www.complex.com/pop-culture/the-50-best-ps2-games-ever/
Mar 1, 2018 - The Playstation 2 has been, and will always be, one of the greatest systems of all time

And most deadly of all... The Featured Snippet:



(More on that in Chapter 3)

In fact, one industry study found that organic CTR on mobile search is down 41.4% since 2015.



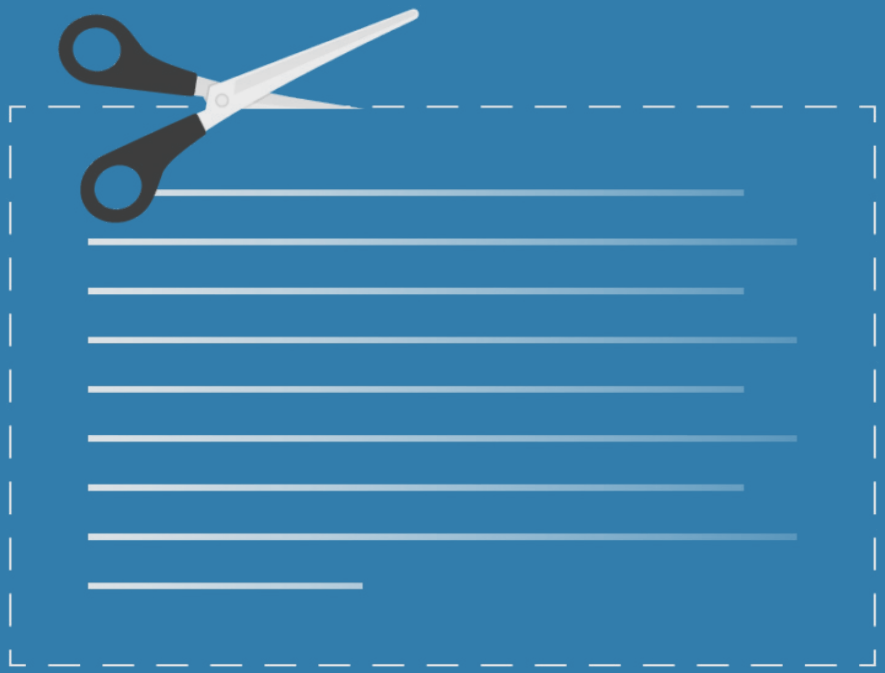
It's no secret why: Google is crowding out the organic search results with Answer Boxes, Ads, Carousels, "People also ask" sections, and more.

And to stand out in the SERPs, your result needs to scream "click on me!"... or else it'll be ignored.

This video will help you boost your CTR using what I call “The Click Magnet Method”:

Chapter 3

Rank Content In The Featured Snippet



Google

According to SEMrush, 11.3% of all search results now have a Featured Snippet.

And yes: Featured Snippets are stealing A LOT of clicks from the #1 spot.

(As I like to say: "#0 is the new #1")

The question is:

How do you get your content to appear in the Featured Snippet?

Well, that's what this chapter is all about.

First, find Featured Snippet opportunities

Your first step is to find:

1. Keywords that you already rank for
2. Keywords that have a Featured Snippet

Why is it important to focus on keywords that you rank for already?

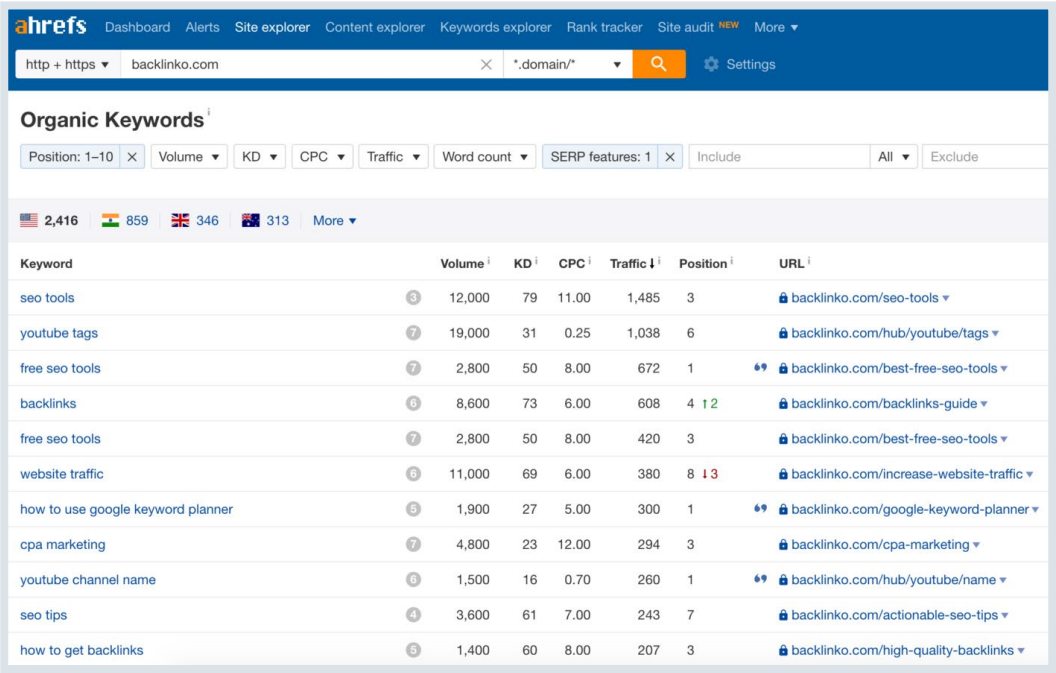
99.58% of all Featured Snippets are from pages **that rank on the first page for that term**.

So if you don't already rank in the top 10, you have no chance of getting in the Featured Snippet spot.

How do you find Featured Snippet Opportunities?

Ahrefs "Organic Keywords" report.

It shows you keywords that you rank for... that have a Featured Snippet:



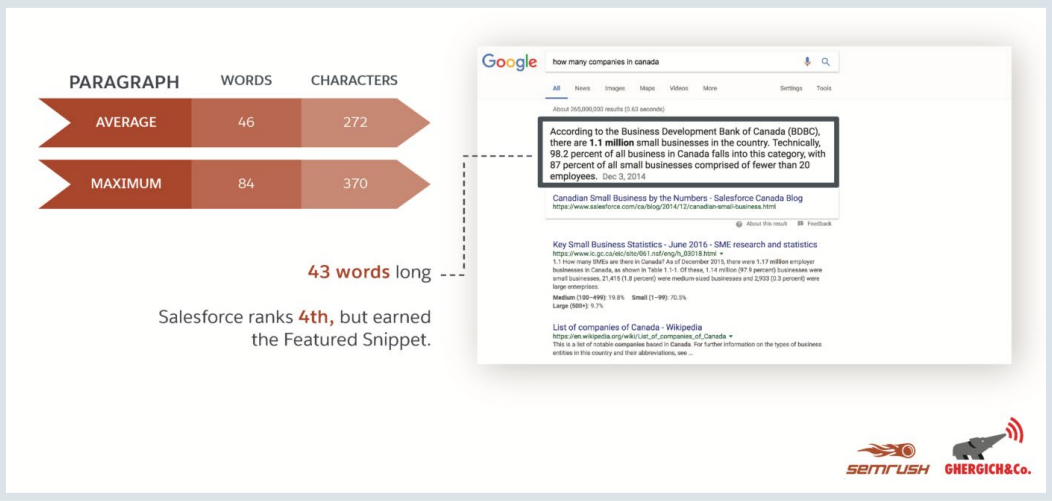
2,416 keywords? Looks like I have some work to do.

Next, create “Snippet Bait”

“Snippet Bait” is a 40-60 word block of content specifically designed to rank in the Featured Snippet spot.

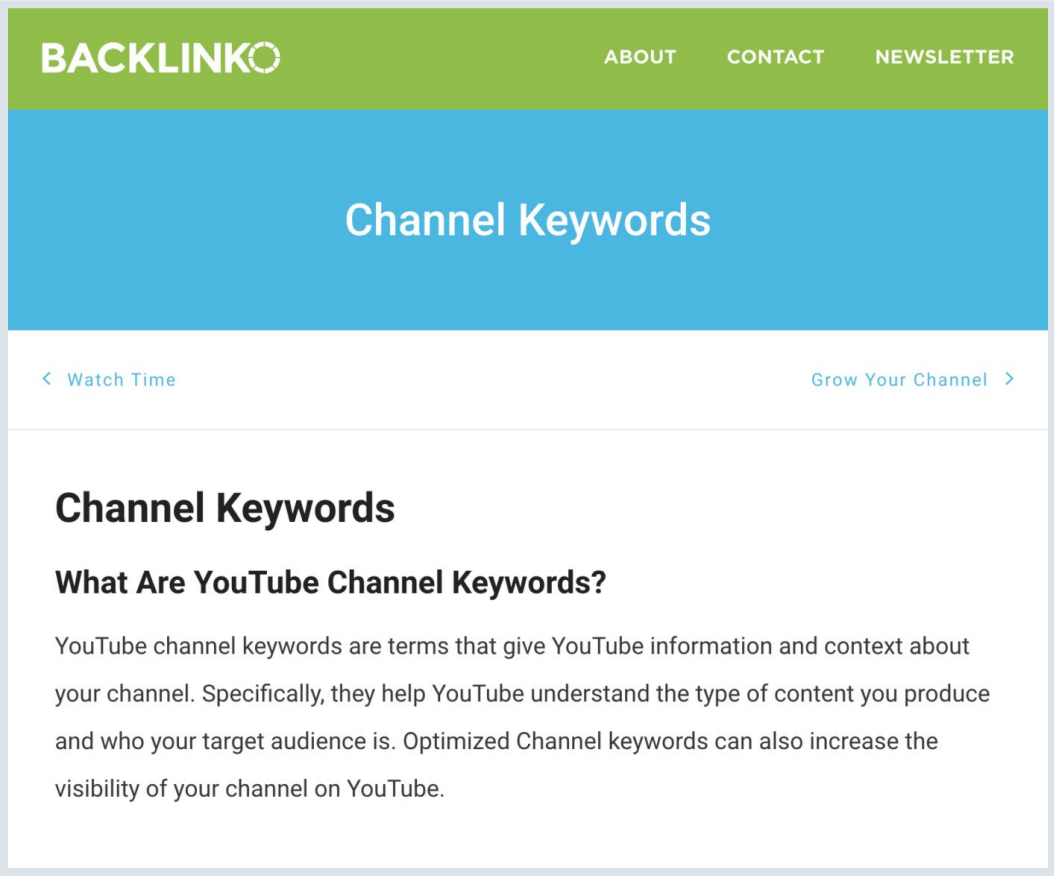
Why 40-60 words?

Well, SEMrush analyzed nearly 7 million Featured Snippets. And they found that the most Featured Snippets are **40-60 words long.**

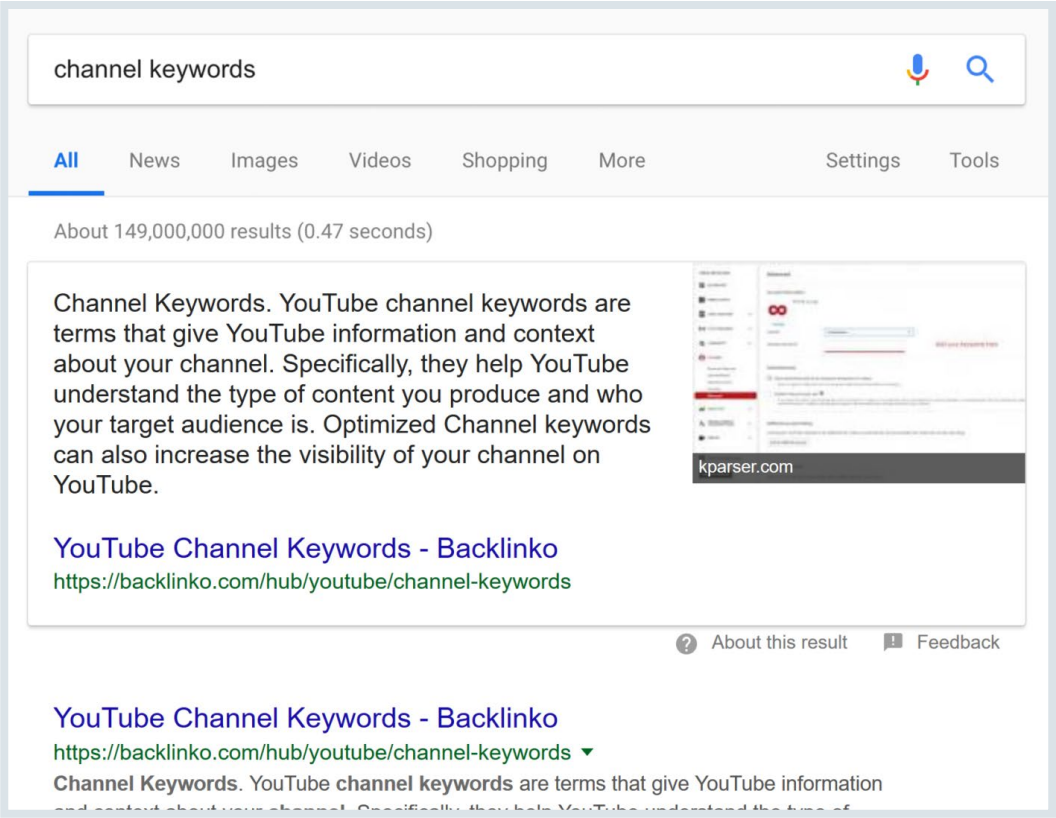


For example:

I wrote short Snippet Bait definitions for every page of The YouTube Marketing Hub.



And these helped my content rank in the Featured Snippet spot for lots of definition keywords.



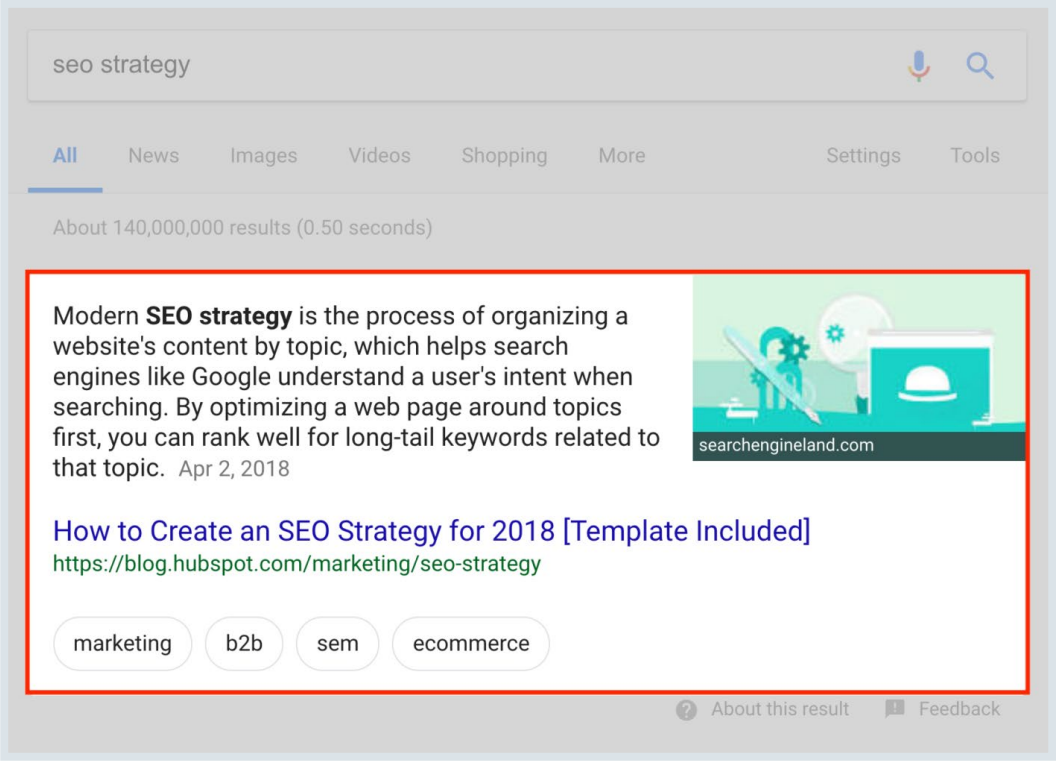
HubSpot takes Snippet Bait to another level.

They add little boxes to their posts **that actually look like Featured Snippets:**

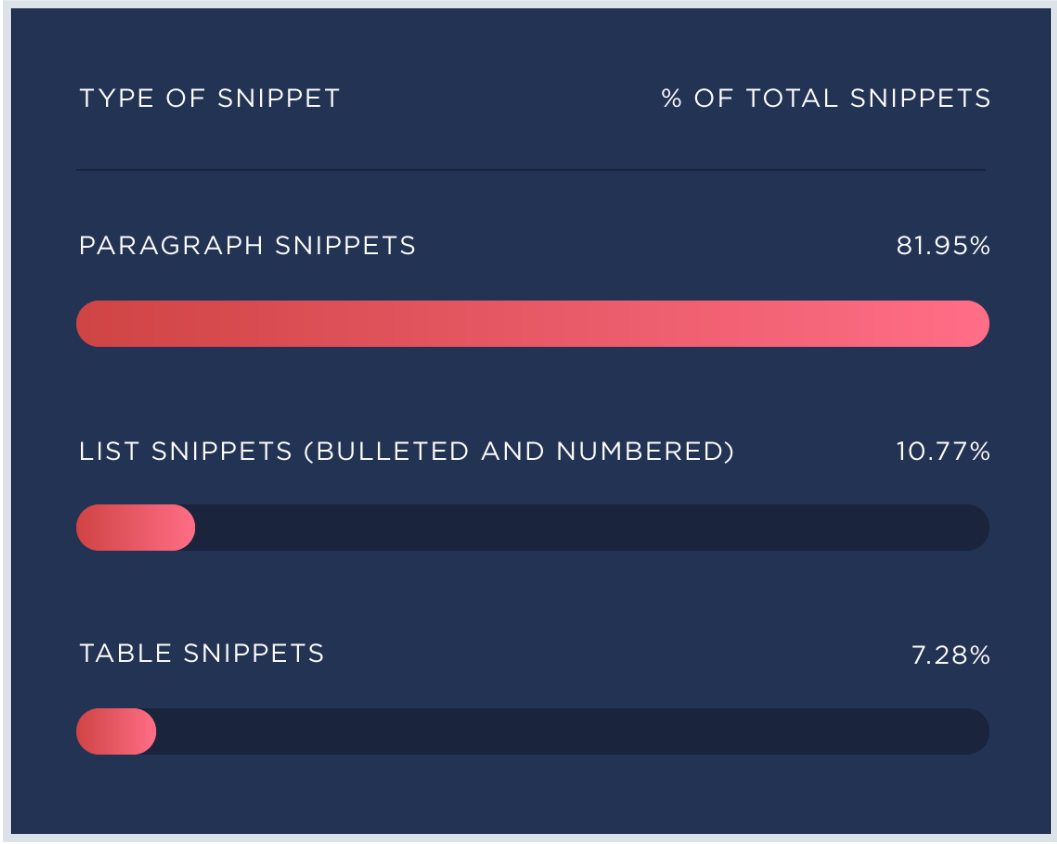
Finally, format your content for other types of Featured Snippets

Snippet Bait works best for so-called “Paragraph Snippets”.

Here’s an example:



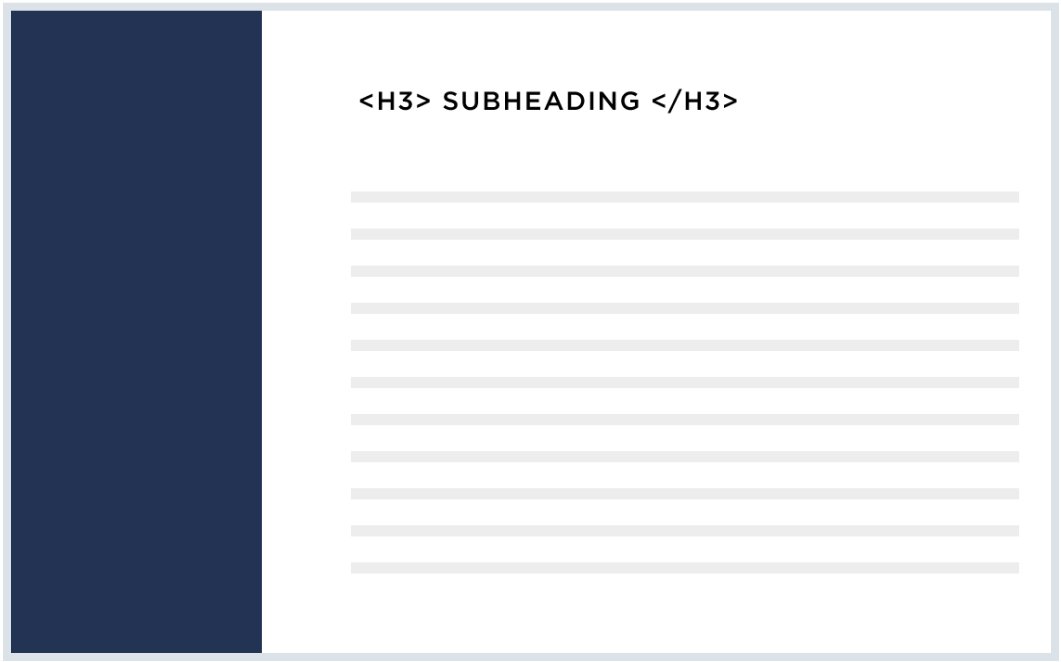
Even though paragraph snippets are by far the most common type of Featured Snippet...



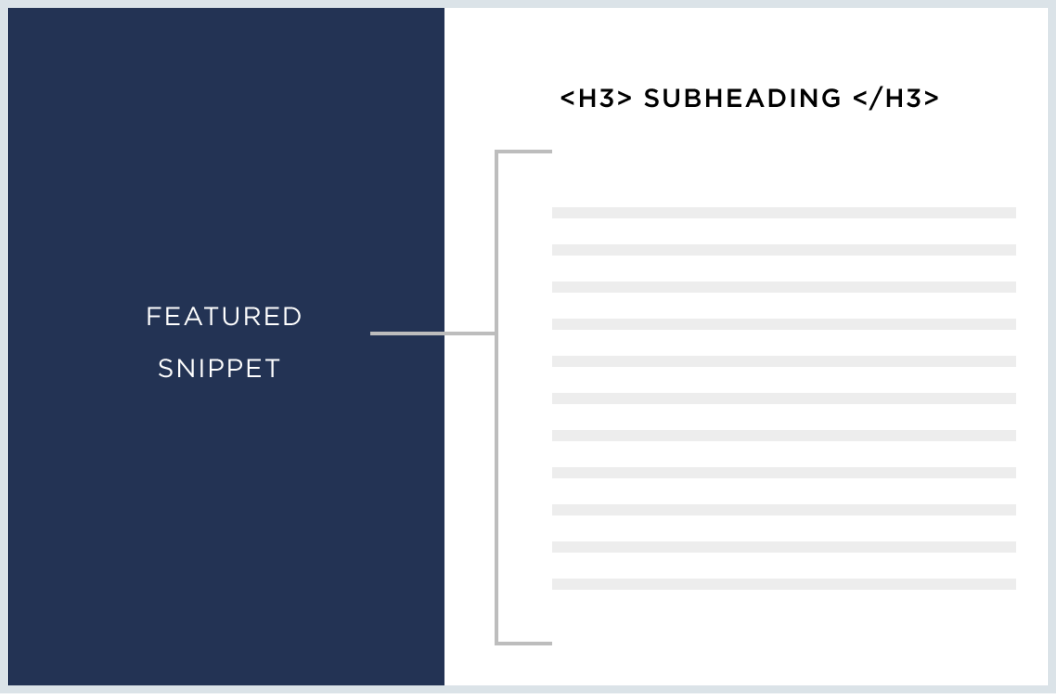
they're not the only one.

If you want to rank in List Snippets...

Use H2 or H3 subheaders for every item on your list.



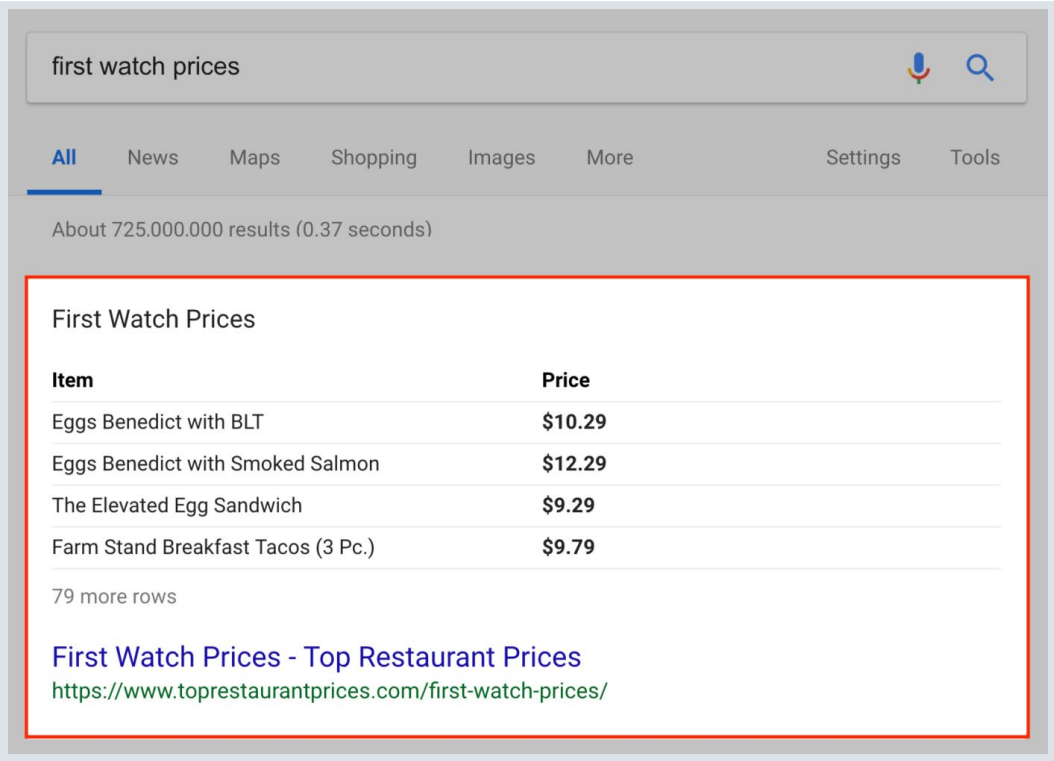
Google will pull those subheaders from your content... and include them in the Featured Snippet:



If you want to rank in Table Snippets...

You need to create a table that Google can easily pull data from.

For example, the content from this Table Snippet...



...is pulled directly from a well-formatted table.

Egg-Sclusives	
Chickichanga	$9.99
Eggs Benedict Classic	$10.29
Eggs Benedict Florentine	$10.29
Eggs Benedict with BLT	$10.29
Eggs Benedict with Smoked Salmon	$12.29
The Elevated Egg Sandwich	$9.29
Farm Stand Breakfast Tacos (3 Pc.)	$9.79
Skillet Hash Farmhouse	$10.49
Skillet Hash Parma	$10.49
Skillet Hash Market	$10.49
Biscuits and Turkey Sausage Gravy with Eggs	$9.79
Power Bowls	

So yeah, I'm just getting my feet wet with Featured Snippets.

But it's going to be a big focus of mine in 2019.

And now it's time for...

Chapter 4

Comprehensive, In-Depth Content Wins

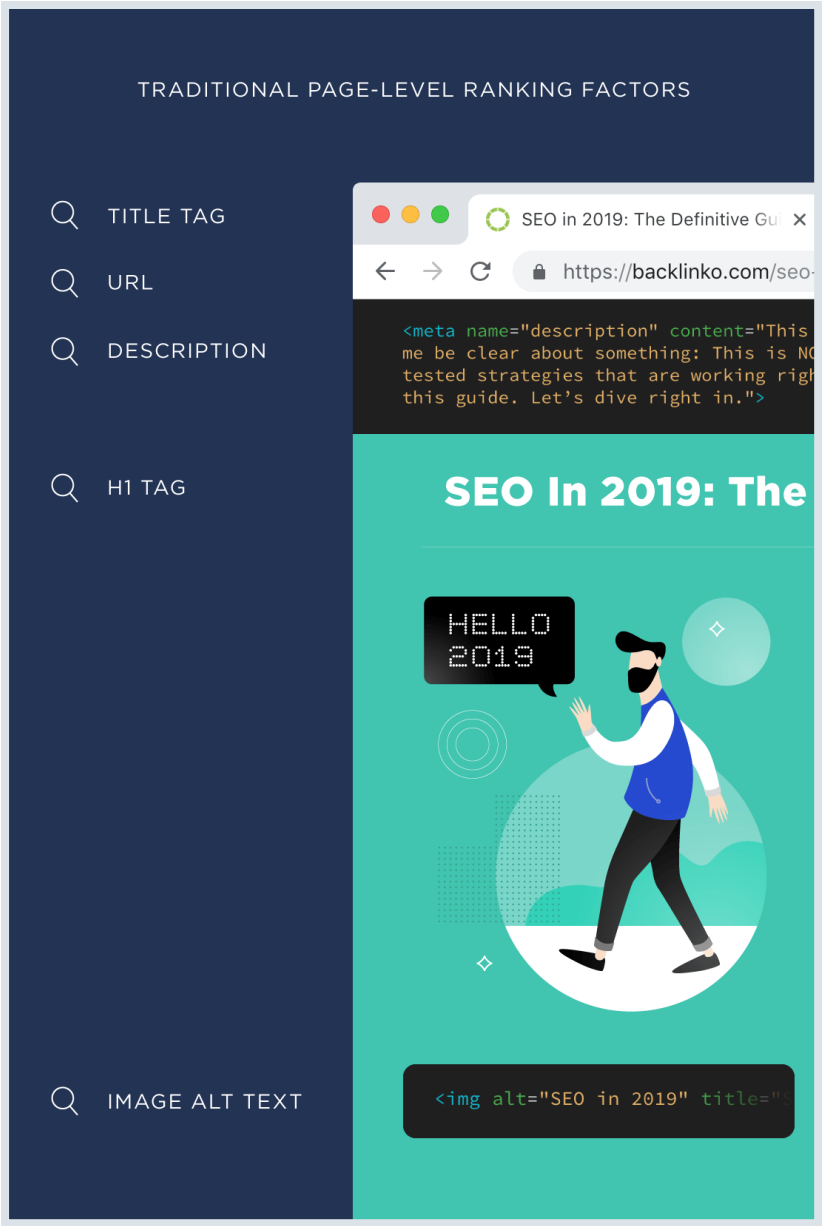
In the old days, Google would analyze your page's HTML to see how many times you used a specific keyword.

In other words, they focused 100% on your page's content. So the Google spider would visit your page to check if your keyword appeared in your:

- Title tag
- URL
- Image ALT text
- Description tag
- H1 tag

To be fair, they still look at that stuff. But today's Google is MUCH smarter than it used to be.

So instead of only measuring **content**, they now focus on **context.**



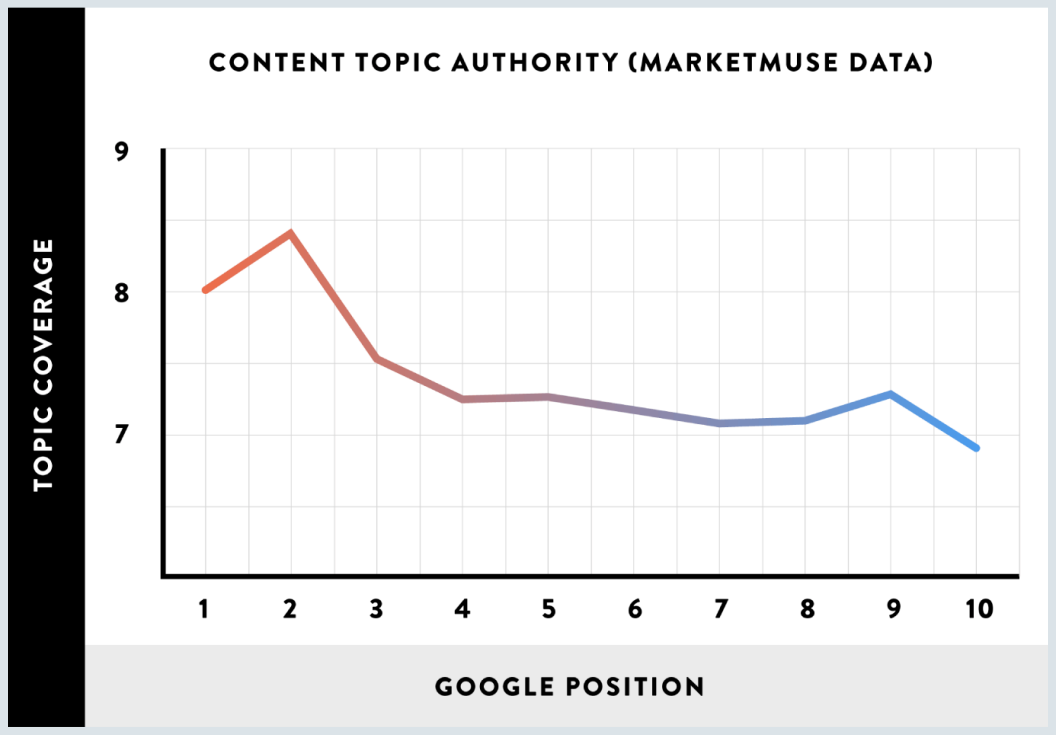
What do I mean?

Remember: Google's #1 job is to show their user the BEST result. And in most cases, the "best" result isn't a piece of keyword-stuffed content.

Instead, **the best pages cover an entire topic in-depth.**

With in-depth content, a Google searcher gets everything they need in one place (one stop shopping).

In fact, our ranking factors study found that in-depth content tends to rank best in Google.

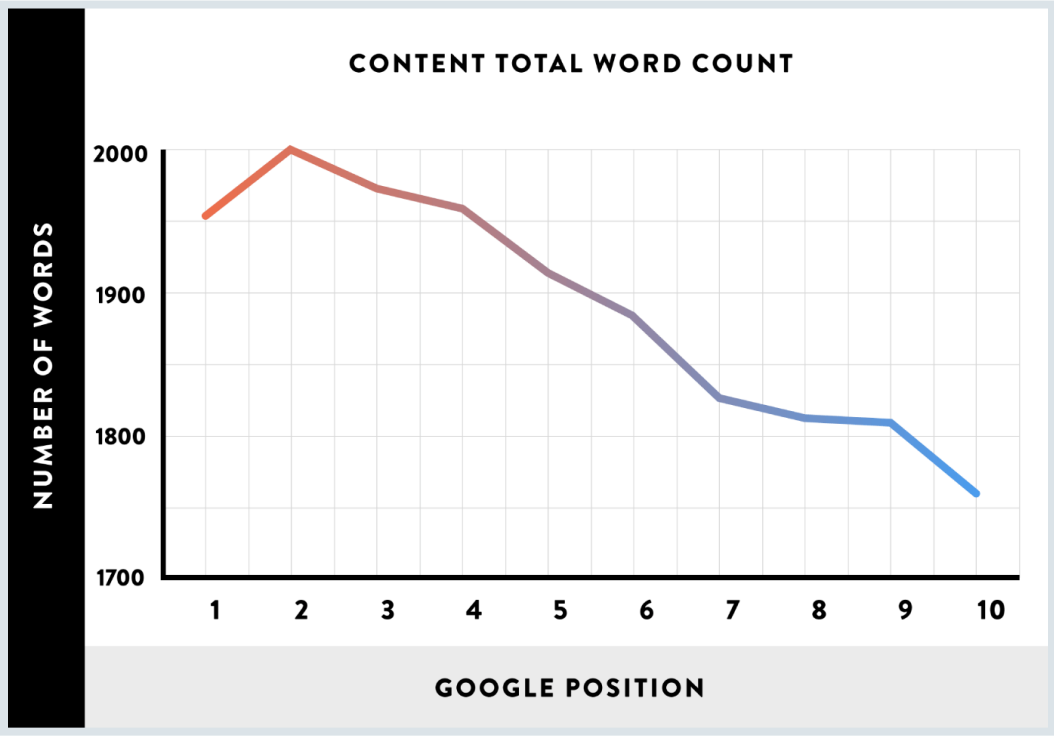


How To Write Comprehensive, In-Depth Content

So: how can you write the type of in-depth content that Google wants to see?

First, publish content that's **at least 2,000 words**. That way, you can cover everything a Google searcher needs to know about that topic.

In fact, our ranking factors study found that longer content (like ultimate guides and long-form blog posts) outranked short articles in Google:



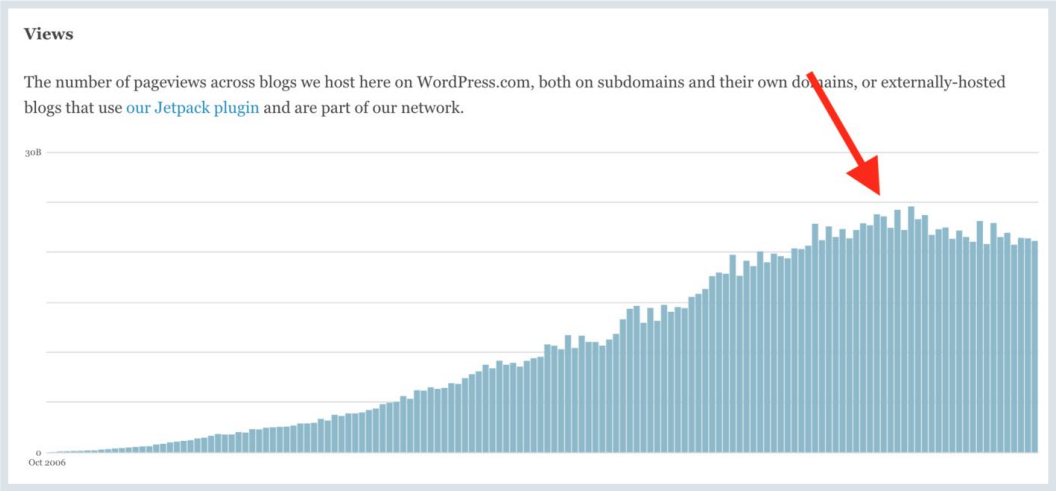
Publish Authoritative Evergreen Content

Earlier this year BuzzSumo analyzed 100 million articles.

What did they find?

First, the bad news:

- The average blog post gets a grand total of FOUR total social media shares
- Facebook traffic is down 50% since 2015
- 70% of all online content gets ZERO backlinks
- Pageviews are down across the board:



Now for the good news:

Certain TYPES of content are killing it right now.

As BuzzSumo founder Steve Rayon concluded from his research:

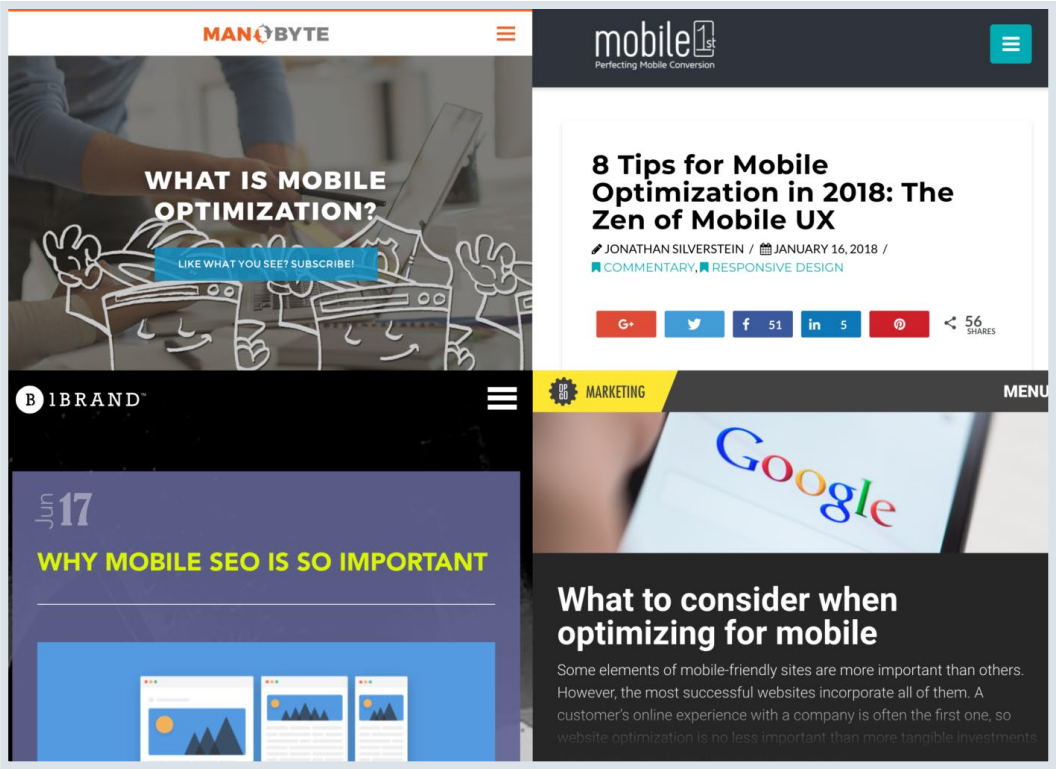
> "The majority of content gets zero backlinks but authoritative research and reference content continues to gain links. In particular, **authoritative evergreen content consistently gains shares and links over time."**

Lucky for me, that's exactly the kind of content that I publish at Backlinko.

And it works GREAT.

For example...

Earlier this year I noticed that lots of digital marketing blogs were publishing content about mobile optimization.



These posts were OK.

But I didn't see anything that you'd call "authoritative evergreen content".

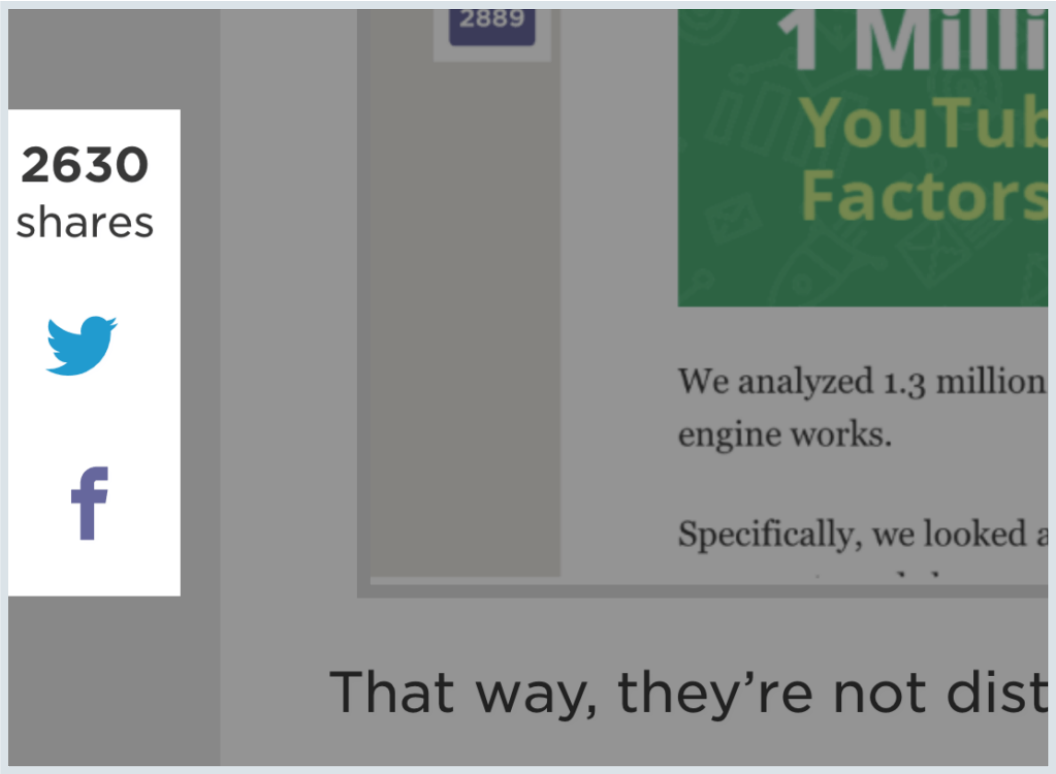
So I decided to create just that.

The result?

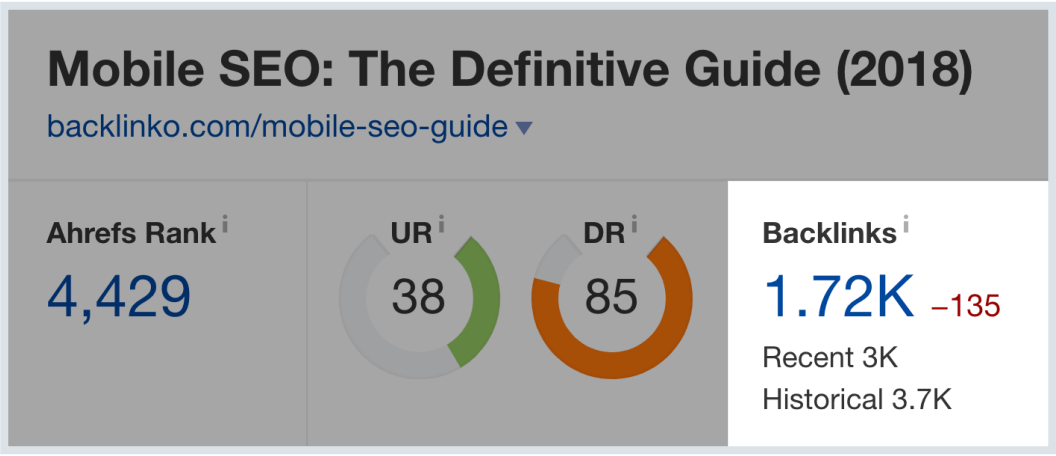
Mobile SEO: The Definitive Guide.

I published this post in March.

Since then that post has racked up 2,630 social shares:



And backlinks from 1.7k domains:



Add LSI Keywords to Your Content

Once you've put the finishing touches on your 2,000-word monster, add LSI keywords to it.

LSI keywords are words and phrases that are strongly associated with your page's topic.

For example, let's say that you just published an article about The Paleo Diet.

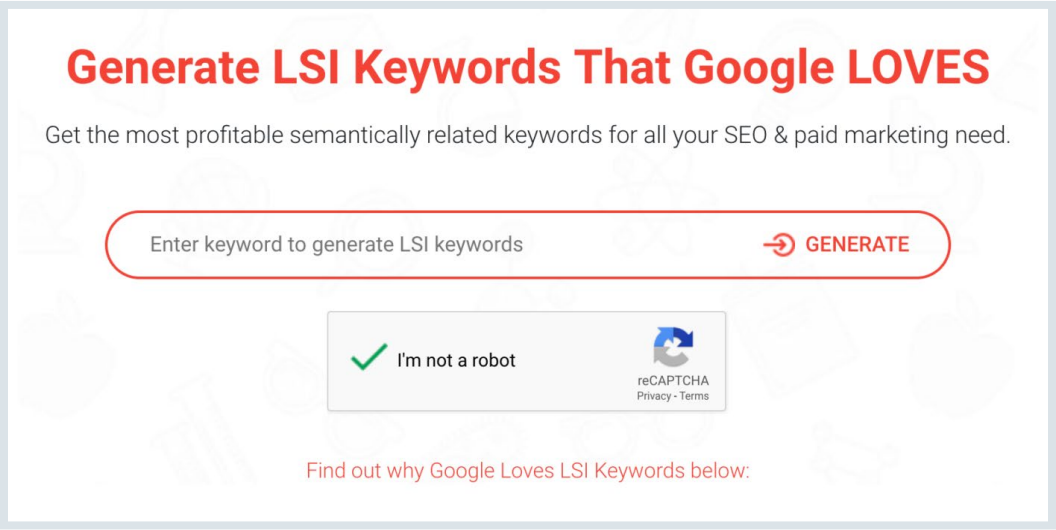
LSI keywords would be terms like:

- Nutrition
- Caveman
- Weight loss
- Recipes
- Grains

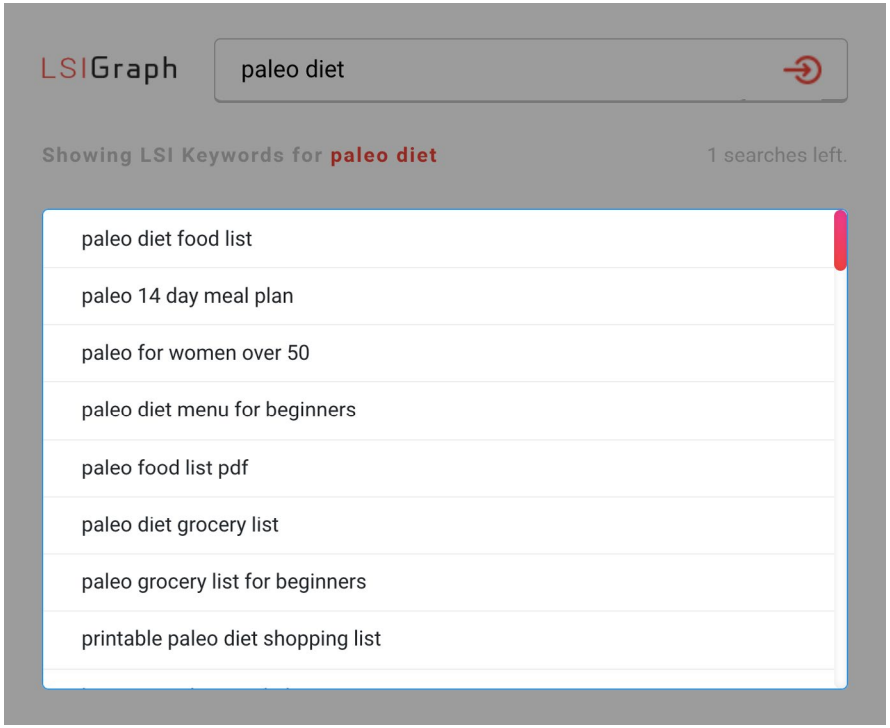
And when Google sees these LSI keywords on your page, they think: "Awesome! This page obviously covers this topic really well."

How do you actually do LSI keyword research? Here are three simple strategies:

First, use a nifty free tool called LSI Graph.

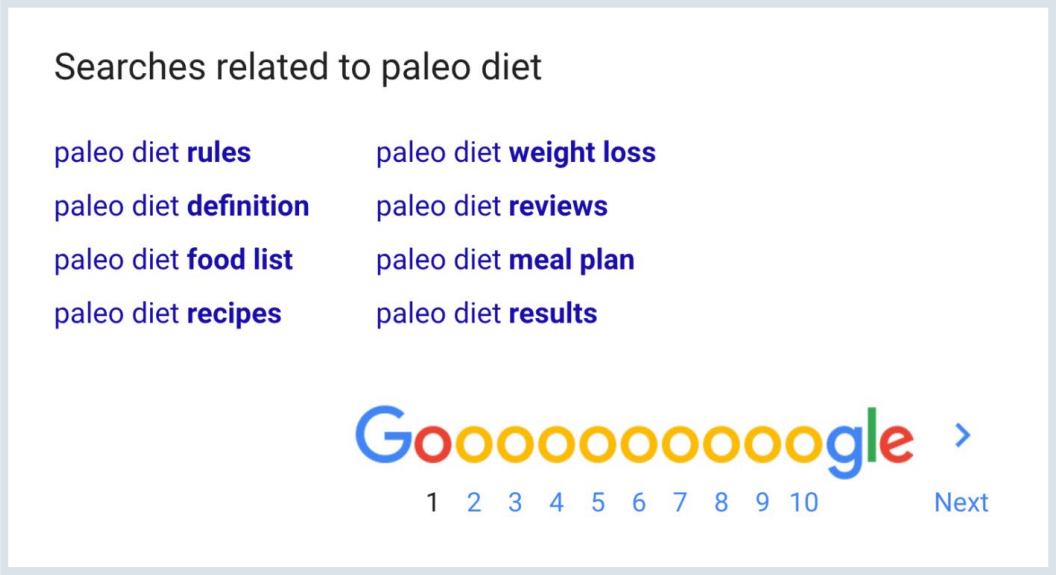


Just enter your target keyword into the tool, and it'll show you a bunch of LSI keywords that are associated with that term:



Add any of these that make sense to your content.

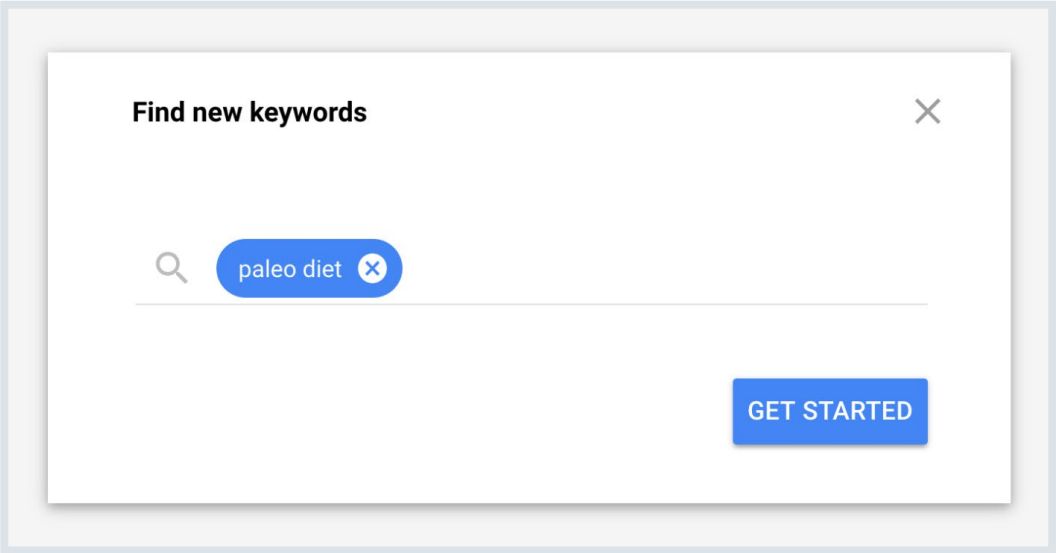
Second, use good ol' Google. Just search for your target keyword. Then check out the "Searches related to..." section at the bottom of the search results.



The words in bold here are LSI keywords.

Finally, you can hack the Google Keyword Planner for LSI keyword ideas. Here's how:

Pop your keyword into the Google Keyword Planner. And click "Get Started".



Then, scan the results. Many of these are LSI keywords.

Found 1194 keyword ideas

Show broadly related ideas; Exclude adult ideas Add filter

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Ad impression share	Top of page bid (low range)	Top of page bid (high range)
the paleo diet	1K – 10K	Medium	–	$0.08	$0.32
paleo foods	1K – 10K	Medium	–	$0.51	$2.60
paleo cookbook	1K – 10K	High	–	$0.40	$4.18
paleo diet food list	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.05	$0.97
paleo diet recipes	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.23	$1.20
paleo diet book	1K – 10K	High	–	$0.28	$0.78
paleo food list	1K – 10K	Low	–	$0.07	$2.44
paleo meals	1K – 10K	Medium	–	$1.16	$4.51
caveman diet	1K – 10K	Low	–	$0.07	$0.94
what is paleo diet	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.07	$0.50

Just like with the other strategies I showed you, sprinkle LSI keywords from the Google Keyword Planner into your content.

Chapter 5

Optimize for Google's Mobile-First Index

A few months ago, millions of people got "Mobile-first indexing enabled" messages.

Which means: Google now considers the mobile version of your site the "real" version. And this is the case even if someone searches from a desktop.

This move makes sense. Today, 60% of Google searches are from a mobile device. And mobile searches are growing fast.

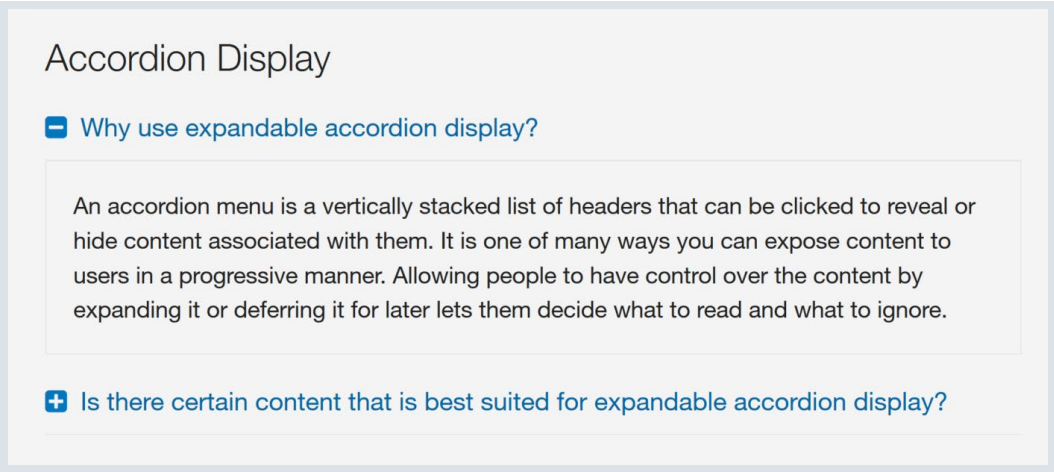
Even though Google's Mobile-first index isn't live for everybody yet, it's rolling out as we speak. So whether you got the heads up from Google yet or not, it's time to get ready.

How to Optimize for Google's Mobile-First Index: 3 Simple Steps

1. Make Your Content Consistent Across Desktop and Mobile

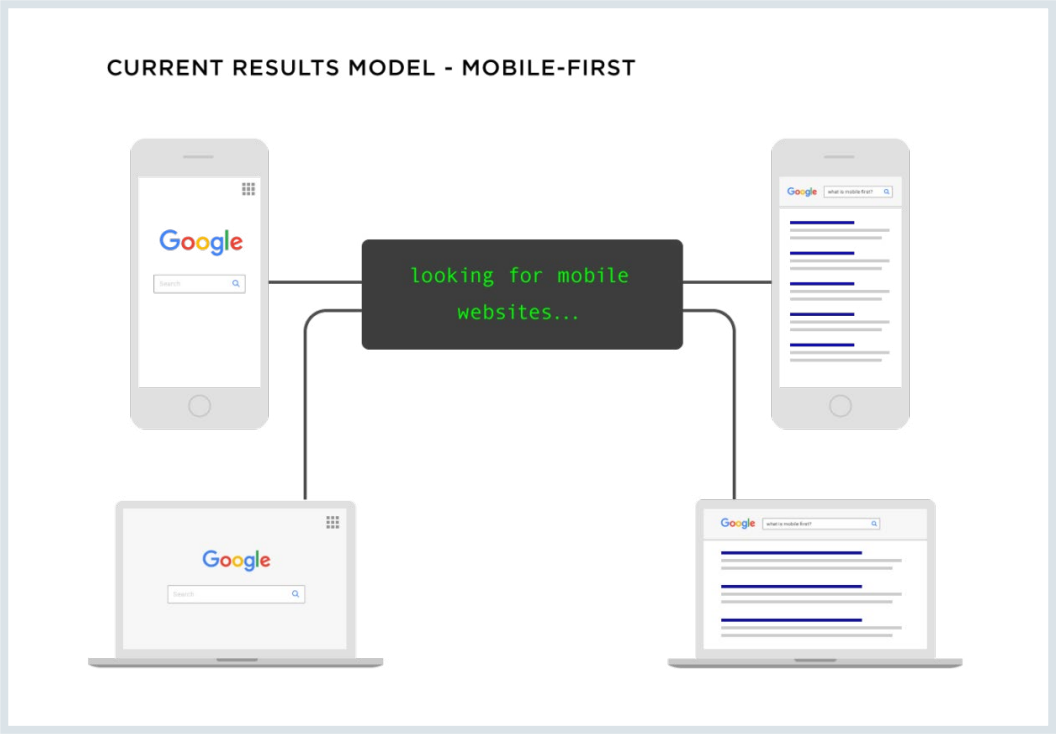
You know how sometimes people hide content on the mobile version of their page?

Here's an example:



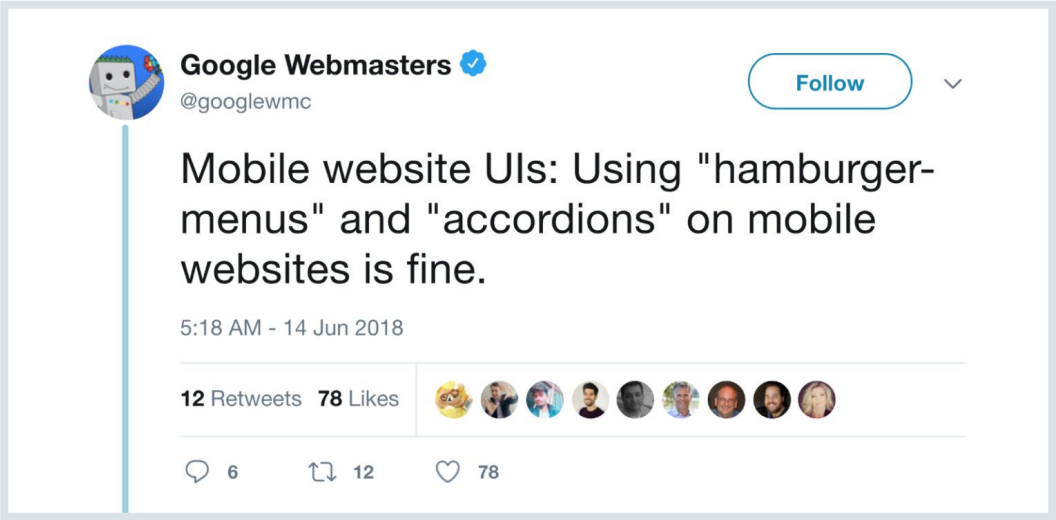
Well, that's a BIG problem with the Mobile-first Index.

That's because Google considers the mobile version of your page the "true" version.

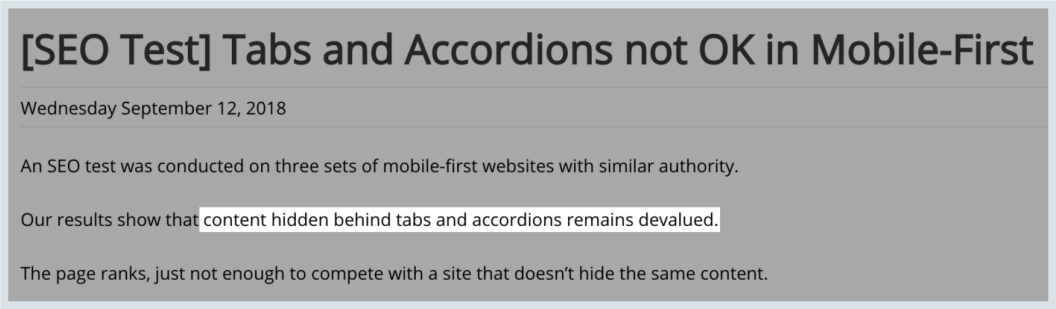


Which means that hidden content is 100% ignored by Big G.

Yes, even though Google has said that tabs, accordions and other features that hide content on mobile is OK...



...one recent industry study found that “hidden content appears to be devalued in mobile-first index.”:



[SEO Test] Tabs and Accordions not OK in Mobile-First

Wednesday September 12, 2018

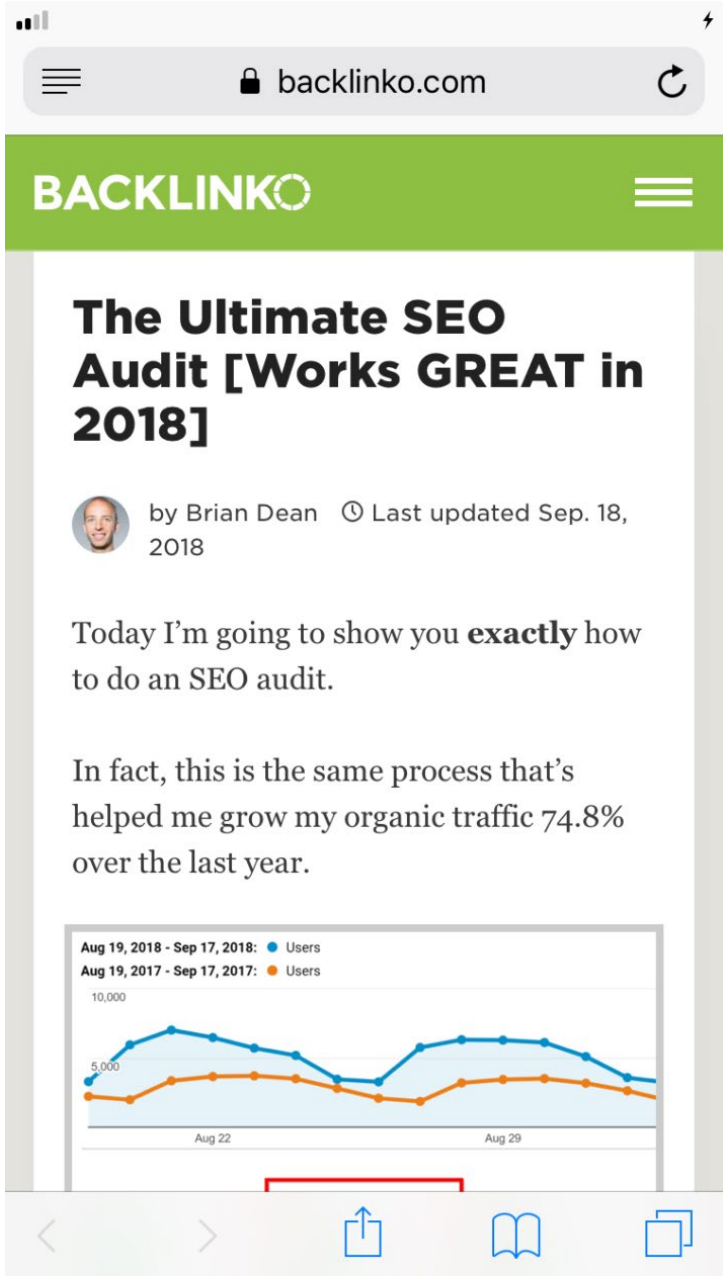
An SEO test was conducted on three sets of mobile-first websites with similar authority.

Our results show that content hidden behind tabs and accordions remains devalued.

The page ranks, just not enough to compete with a site that doesn’t hide the same content.

For example, when you visit this post on the Backlinko blog from an iPhone, you get the same high-quality content that desktop users get.

As you can see, there's nothing hidden behind buttons, menus, or expandable sections.



2. Move From m. to Responsive Design

Do you have a mobile "M." version of your site? Google recommends switching over to responsive design.

So do I.

3. Make Sure Your Site Kicks Butt On Mobile

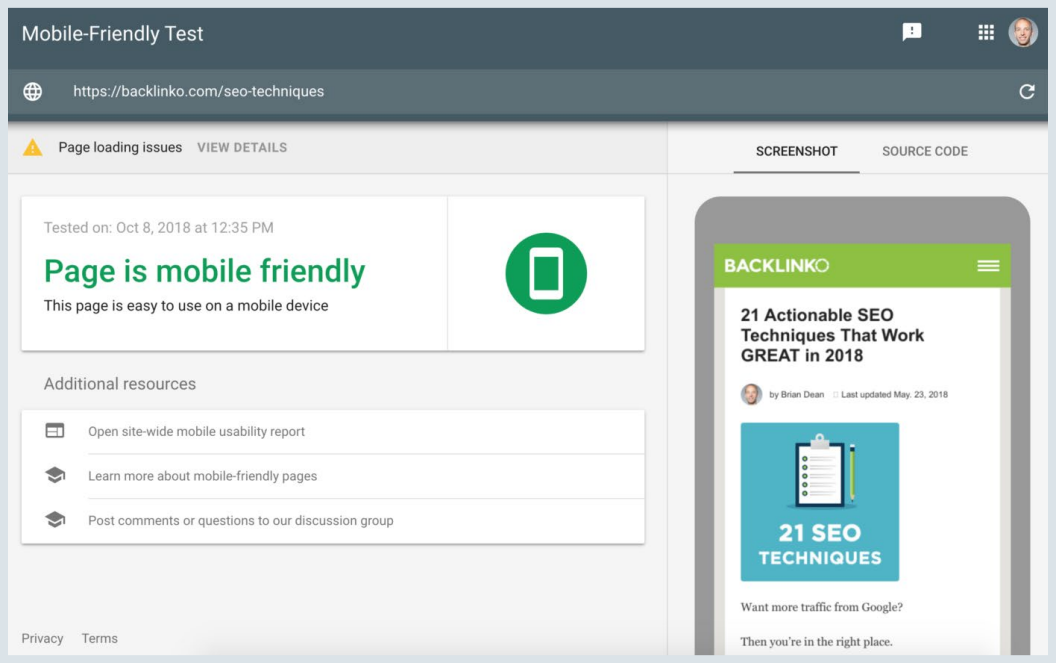
I see lots of sites that technically work on a phone or tablet. But they're a huge pain to actually use.

As I talked about in Chapter 1, RankBrain closely measures how Google users interact with your site.

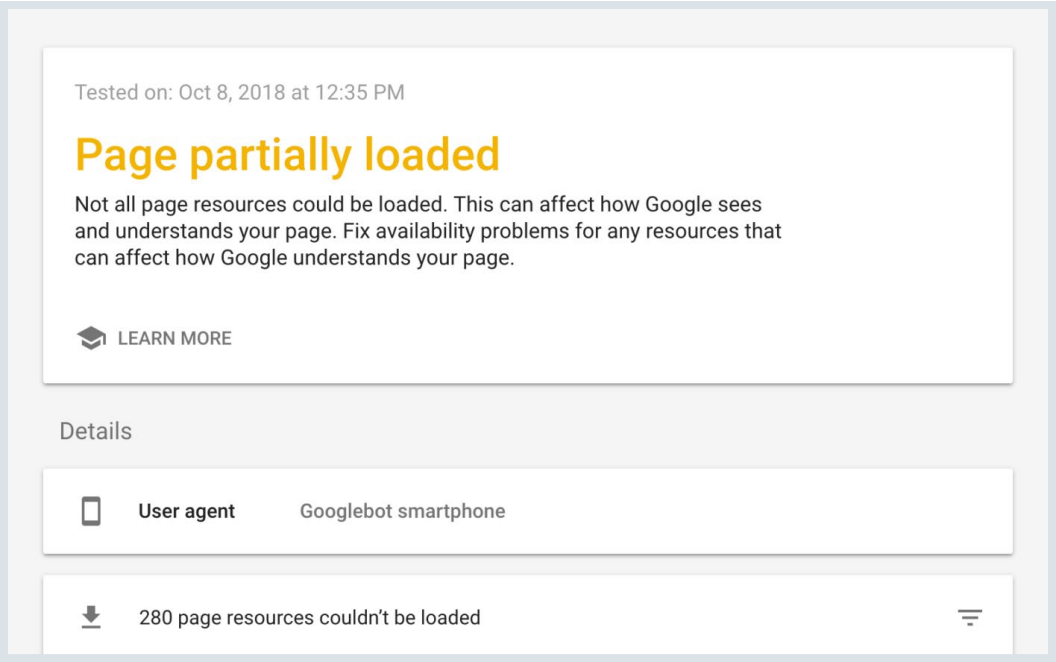
And if peeps have a hard time using your site with their phone, they're going to hit their "back" button without thinking twice.

How do you know if your site is legit mobile friendly?

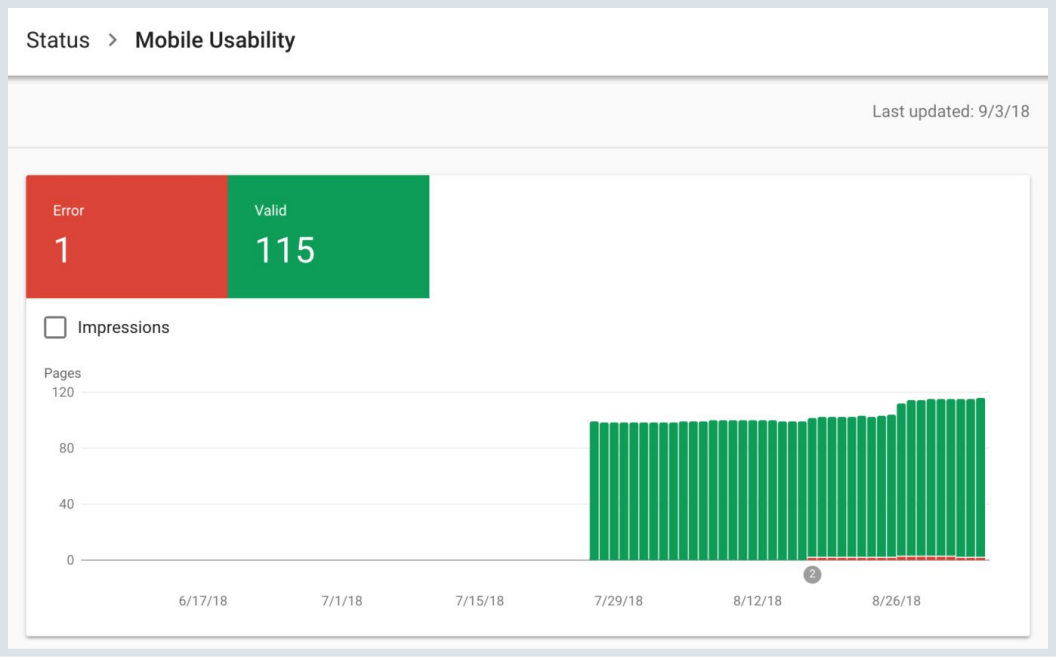
I recommend checking out the nifty Mobile-Friendly Test tool from Google. Just enter a URL into it, and the tool will let you know if your site is mobile-friendly:



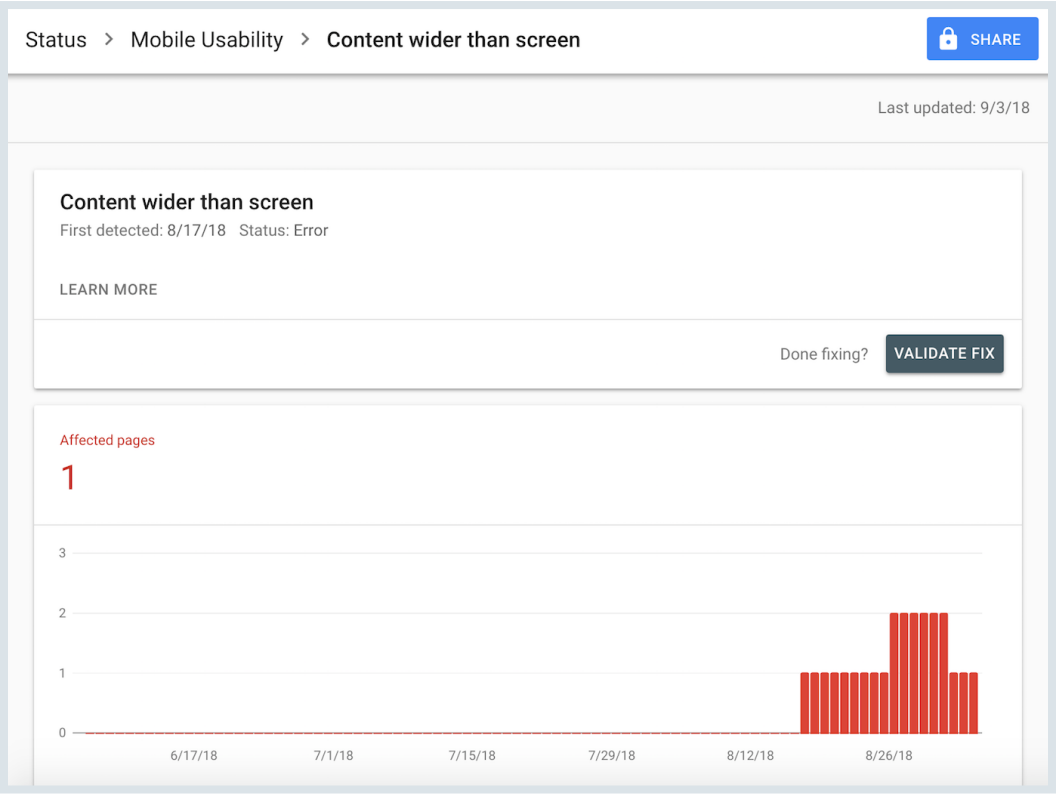
They'll even hook you up with recommendations that you can use to up your mobile game.



You can also check out the Mobile Usability report in the Google Search Console:



It lets you know about pages on your site that aren't mobile-friendly... and how to fix them:



Chapter 6

Go All-In With Video (Or Get Left Behind)

Online video is EXPLODING right now.

In fact, according to Cisco, online video will make up 80% of all online traffic by 2021.

80%!

And that may still not satiate the world's demand for video.

Despite the fact that there are more videos out there than ever, HubSpot states that 43% of people want to see MORE video content.

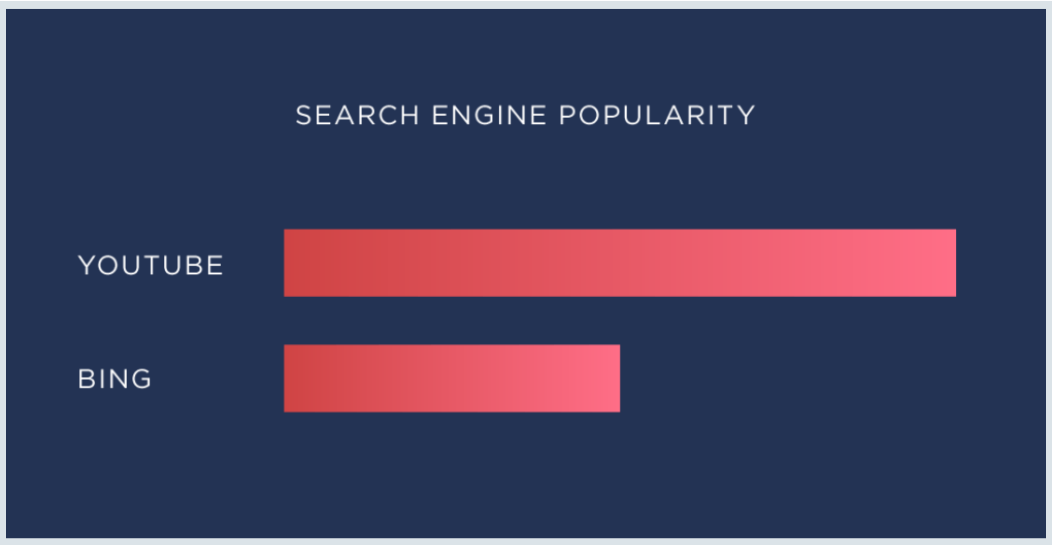
In short:

If you're not creating video content, you're missing out. Here's how to take advantage of video's SEO benefits in 2019:

Tap Into YouTube

YouTube is already the world's 2nd largest search engine.

(In fact, according to a study by JumpShot and Moz founder Rand Fishkin, YouTube's search engine is 2x more popular than Bing)



And like any online video platform, it's growing fast (The Huffington Post reports that the amount of time that people spend on YouTube is up 60% compared to last year).

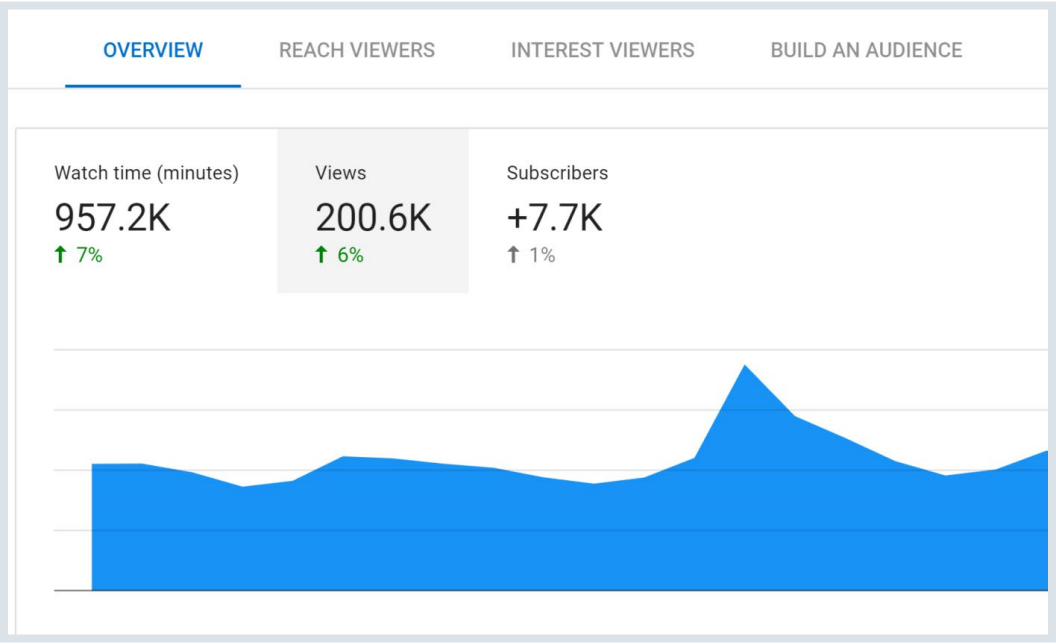
In short, more and more people are searching for stuff on YouTube... and skipping Google altogether.

So if you want to get more traffic from SEO in 2019, I recommend creating and optimizing content specifically for YouTube

It's a search engine that's too big to ignore.

The best part? Most marketers are too lazy to make videos. So it's pretty easy to get your videos seen (assuming you know what you're doing).

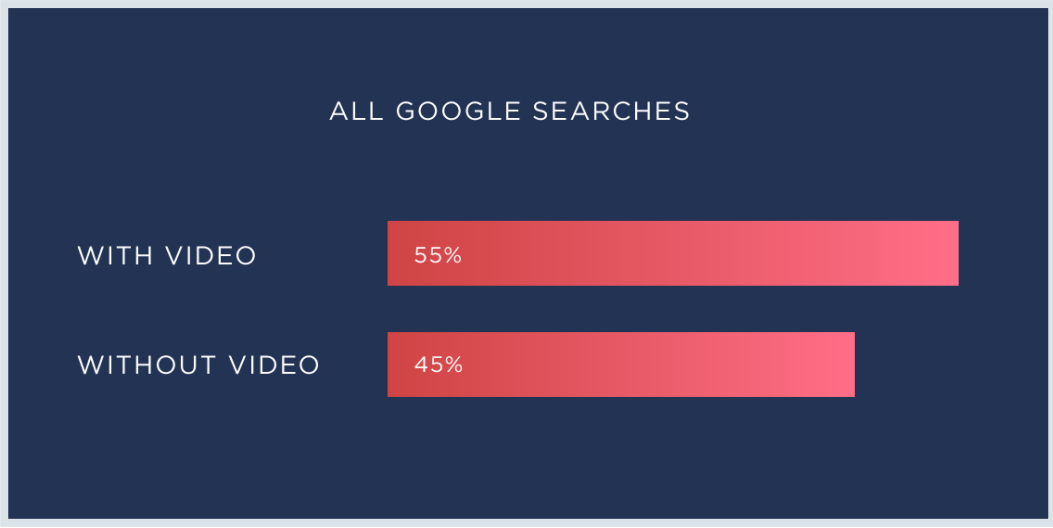
For example, my channel has 25 total videos. And those 25 videos generate over 200k views per month.



(And as you might expect, a good chunk of those viewers turn into website visitors, leads and customers).

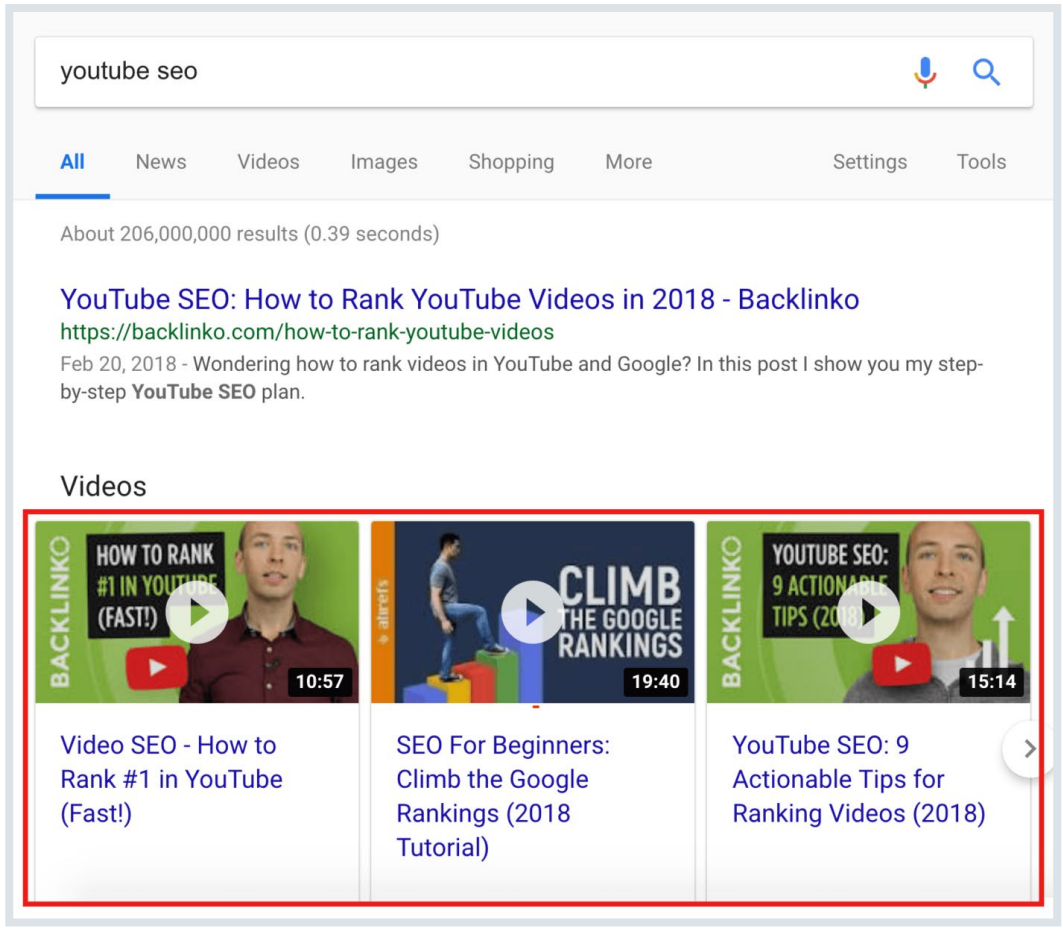
It gets better: when you publish SEO-optimized YouTube videos, you'll own more Google real estate.

Why? Well, for starters: 55% of all Google search results contain at least one video.



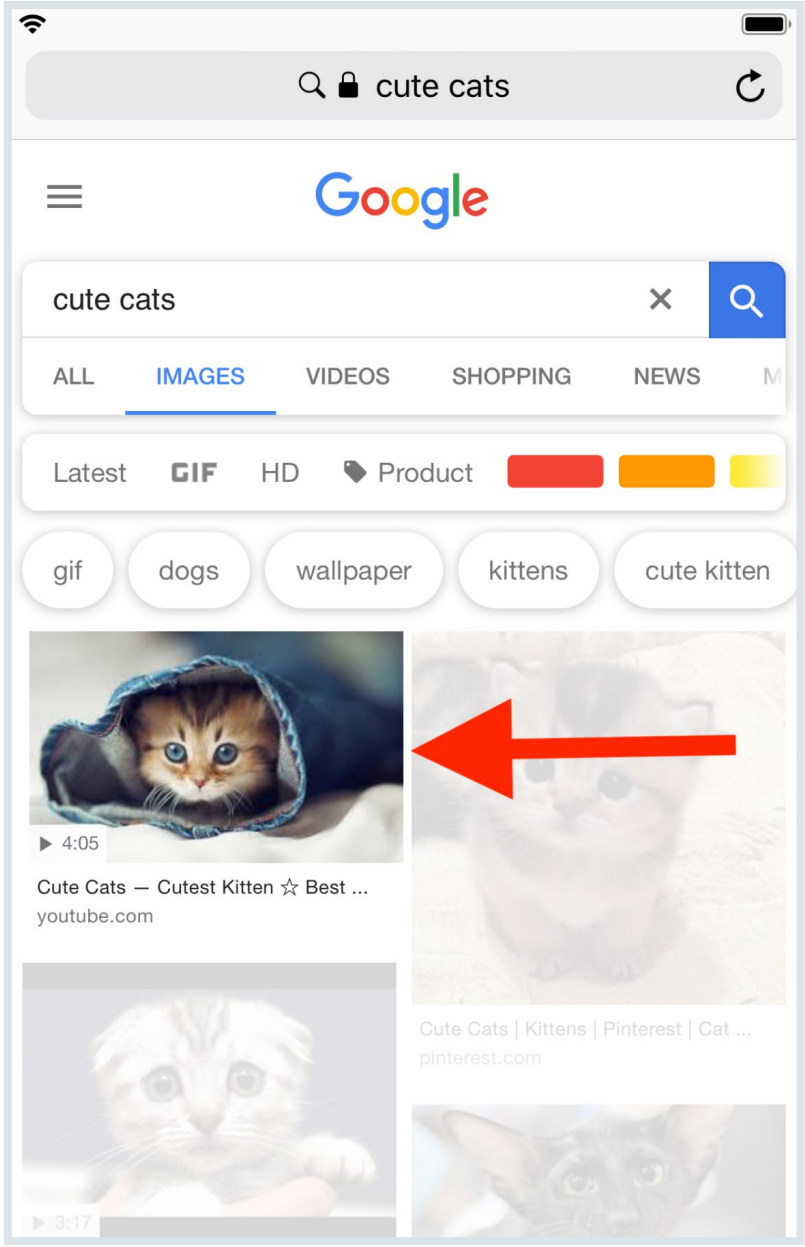
(And almost all of those videos are from YouTube).

Here's an example of what I mean:

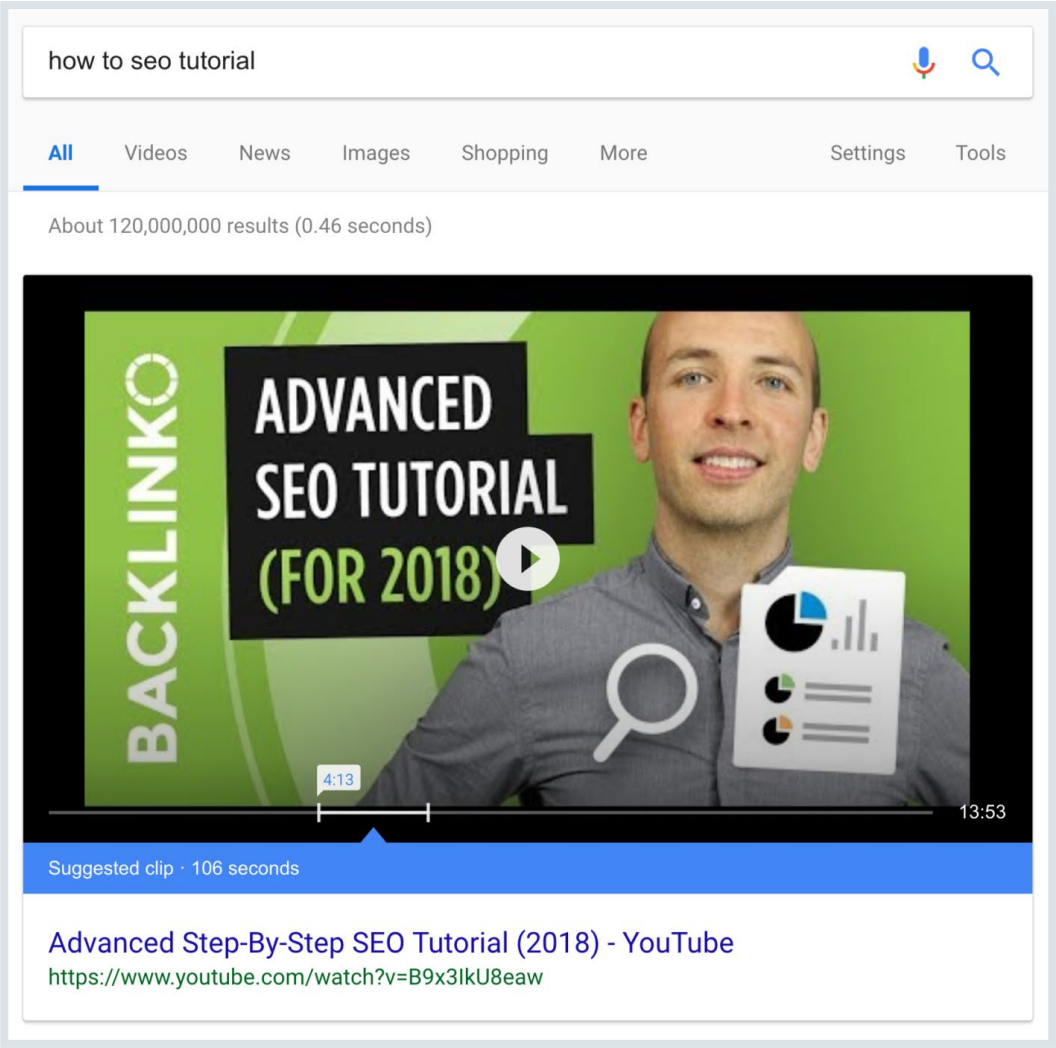


And considering that Google owns YouTube, expect even MORE YouTube videos in the search results in 2019.

In fact, Google has started to blend YouTube results into Google Image search:



And use massive “Video Featured Snippets” to answer people’s questions:

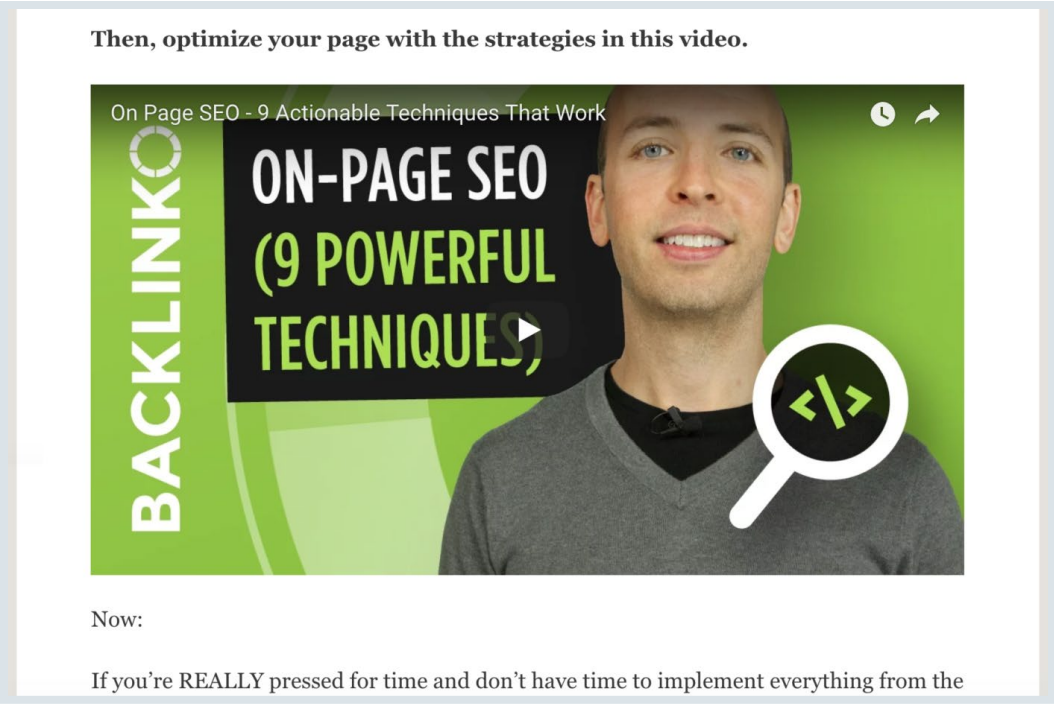


Embed Video Content Into Text-Based Blog Posts

If people want to see more video, why not give it to them?

That's why I recommend embedding video content into your blog posts. In my experience, this can give you a serious dwell time boost.

Here's an example of this in action:



Chapter 7

Optimize for Voice Search

Is voice search "the next big thing" in SEO? It certainly looks like it.

For example, check out these eyebrow-raising facts:

- 41% of adults perform at least one voice search every day (source)
- Voice searches performed in Google are up 35x since 2008 (source)
- 20% of all searches on mobile are voice searches (source)

Knowing that, smart SEOs are starting to optimize some of their content for voice search.

Including me.

How to Optimize for Voice Search

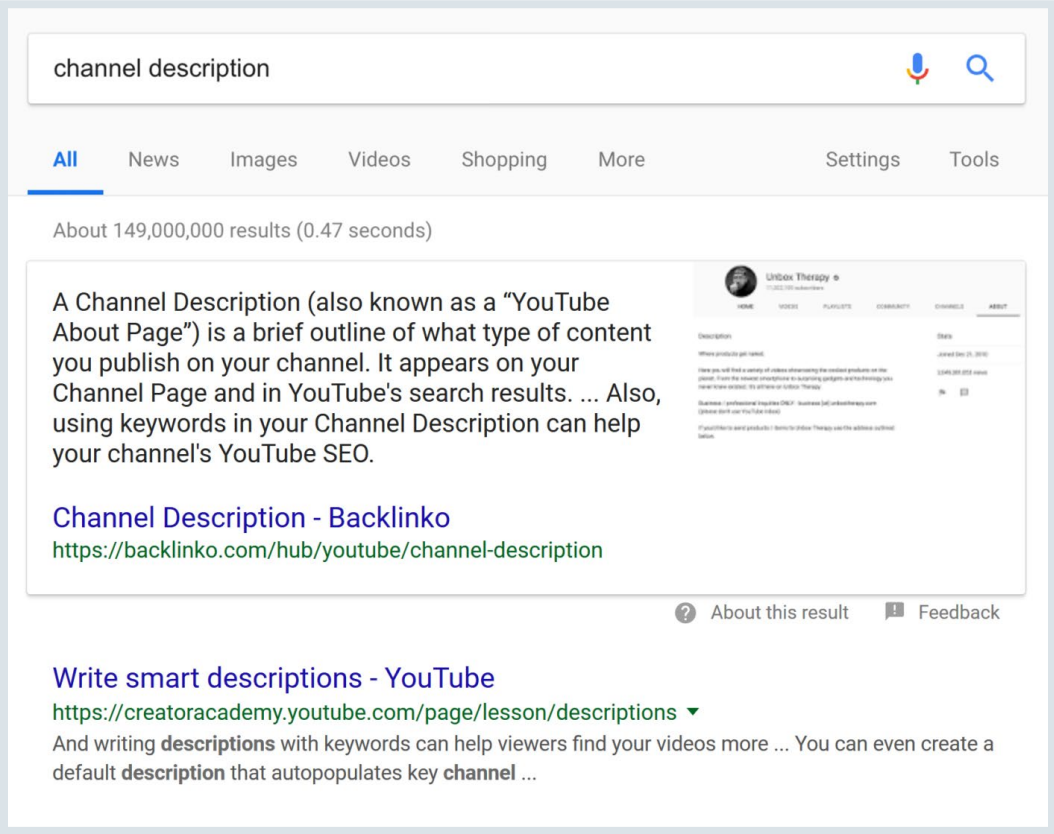
In early 2018 we conducted the largest voice search SEO study to date.

Here's what we found:

1. First, your content needs to rank high in the search results.

We found that Google tended to source voice search answers from content that ranked in the top 3 search results:

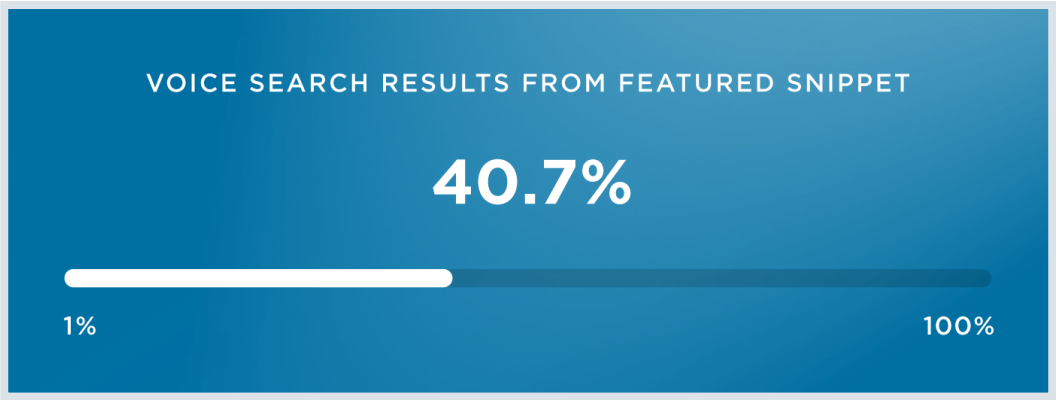
2. Next, it helps A LOT if your content appears in a Featured Snippet, like this:



Google's algorithm has already put together a convenient little snippet.

So it makes sense that they would use that snippet in their voice search results.

In fact, our data revealed that 4 out of 10 voice search results come directly from a Featured Snippet.



3. Finally, include a question (and answer) in your content.

The vast majority of voice searches are question based ("How do I do a pullup?" or "Who starred in Shawshank Redemption"?).

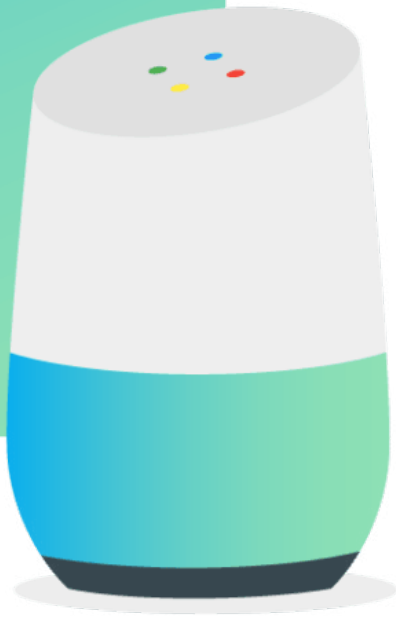
When that happens, Google usually picks a page that contains a) the question and b) the answer.

For example:

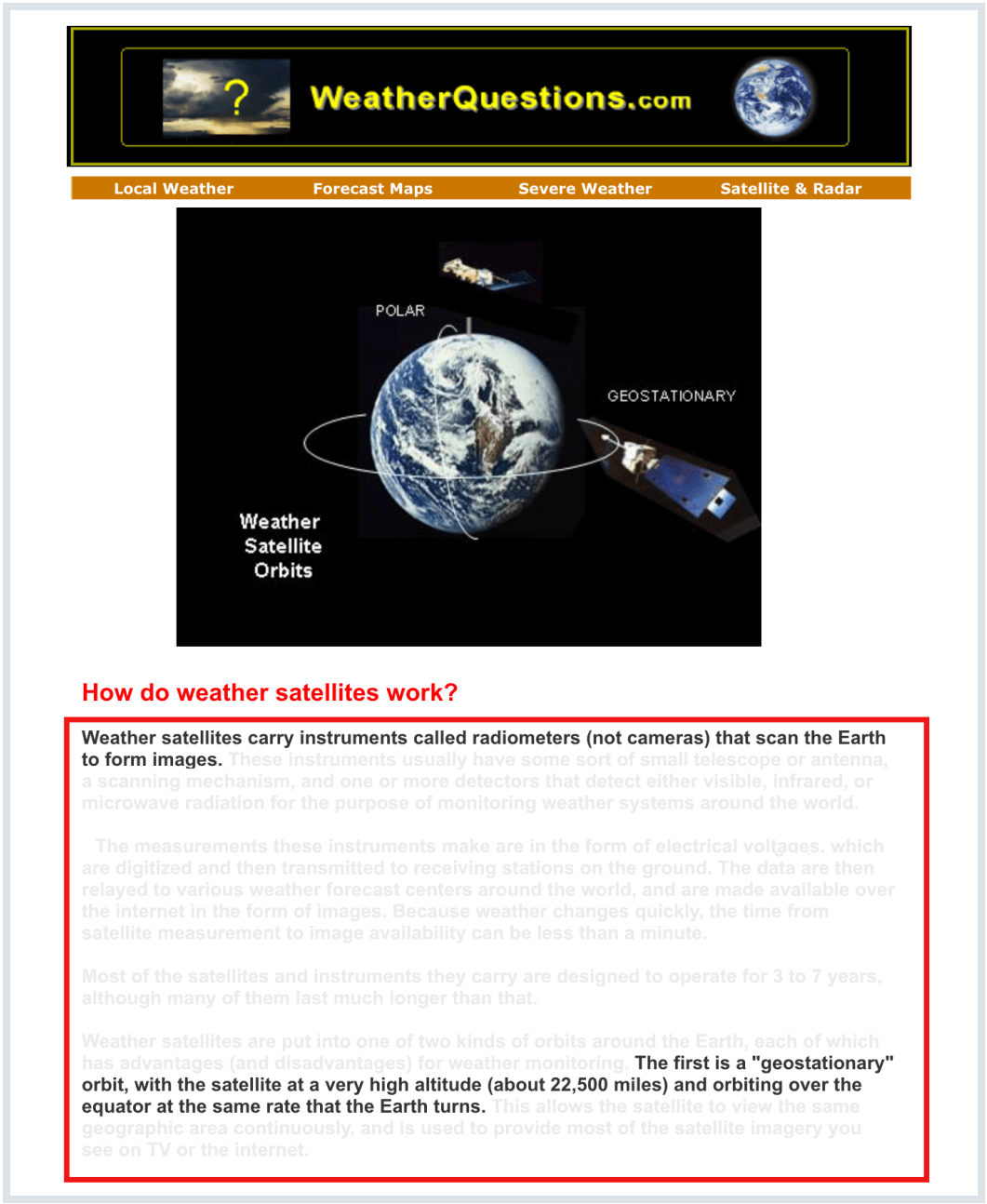
When I search for:

I get this answer:

Here's a summary from the website weatherquestions.com: Weather satellites carry instruments called radiometers that scan the Earth to form images. The first is a "geostationary" orbit, with the satellite at a very high altitude and orbiting over the equator at the same rate that the Earth turns.

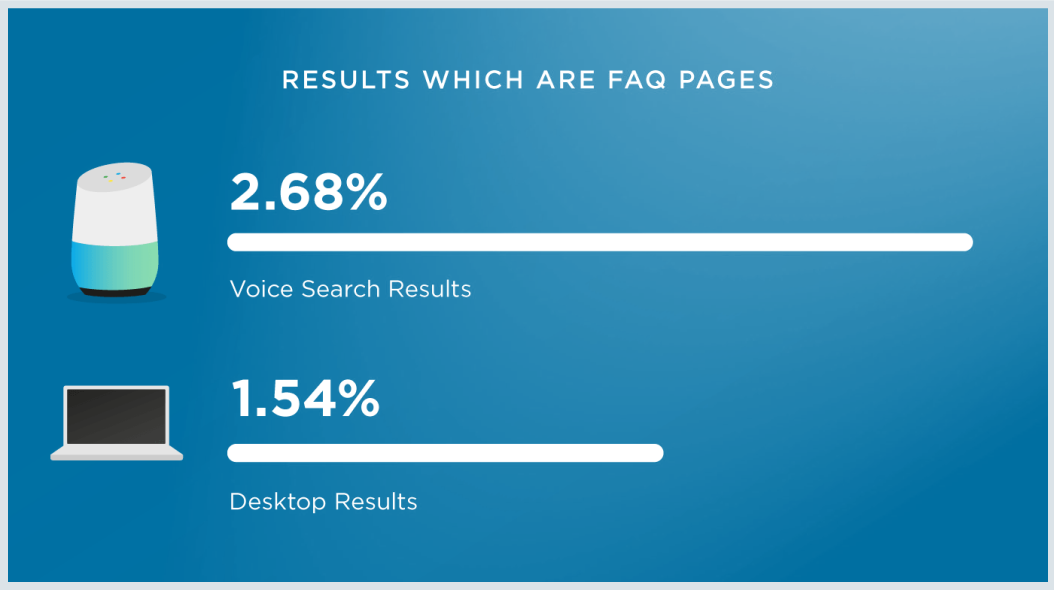


And when I go to the actual page, I see that the content includes my question and a short answer:



Just what Google's voice search algorithm wants to see.

In fact, that's one of the main reasons that FAQ pages are GREAT for voice search SEO:



Very cool.

Chapter 8

Don’t Forget: Content and Links Are Key

With all that said...SEO is still all about content and links.
Without amazing content, you'll never get links.

And without link building, you won't crack the first page.

Also, if you're not on Google's first page, RankBrain, Voice Search and the Mobile-first algorithm won't matter.

Those only come into play once you already rank on page 1.

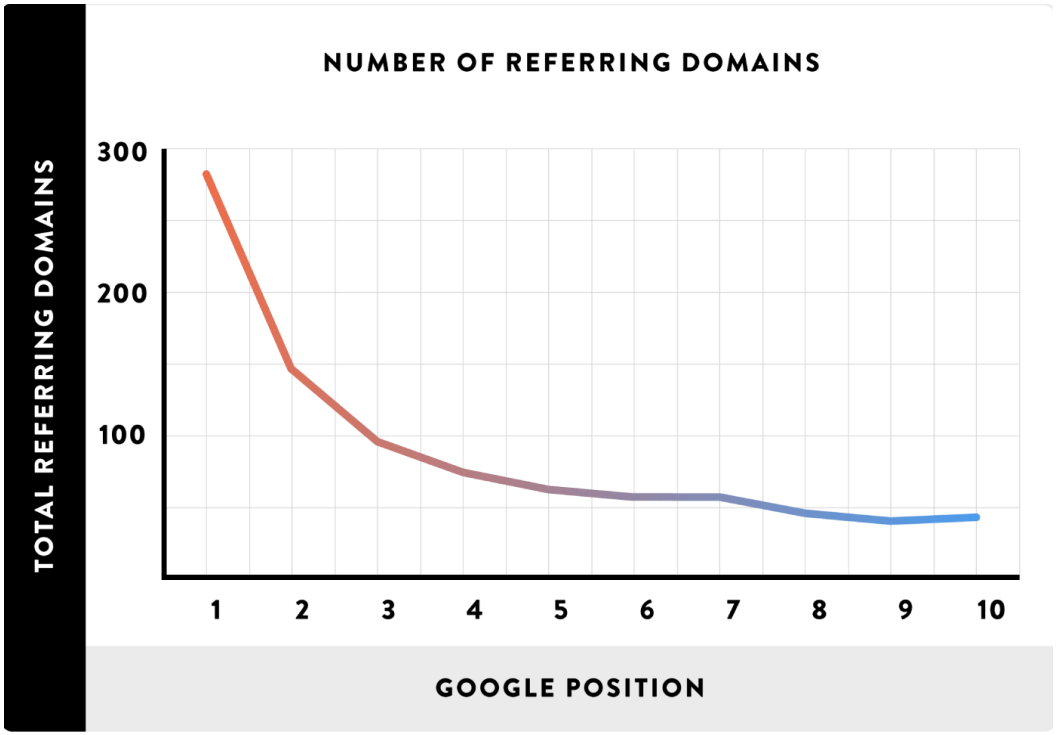
In fact, Google recently came out and said that content and links are their #1 and #2 ranking factors:

Now we know: Here are Google's top 3 search ranking factors

Google's Andrey Lipattsev reveals links, content and RankBrain are the top three ranking signals in Google's search algorithm.

Barry Schwartz on March 24, 2016 at 7:32 am

And when we analyzed 1 million Google search results, we found that the number of sites linking to a page correlated with rankings more than anything else.



In short, quality content and links will still be the foundation of SEO in 2019.

And once you have a handle on that, it's time to optimize your site for the new SEO trends that I outlined in this guide.

Bonus Chapter

Quick Tips for SEO in 2019

In this chapter I'll show you a few quick win tactics that will work especially well in 2019.

Improve Your Site's E-A-T

On August 1st, Google rolled out a new "core update" to their algorithm.

This update was a biggie.

(In fact, it's the biggest change I've seen in the SERPs since Penguin in 2012).

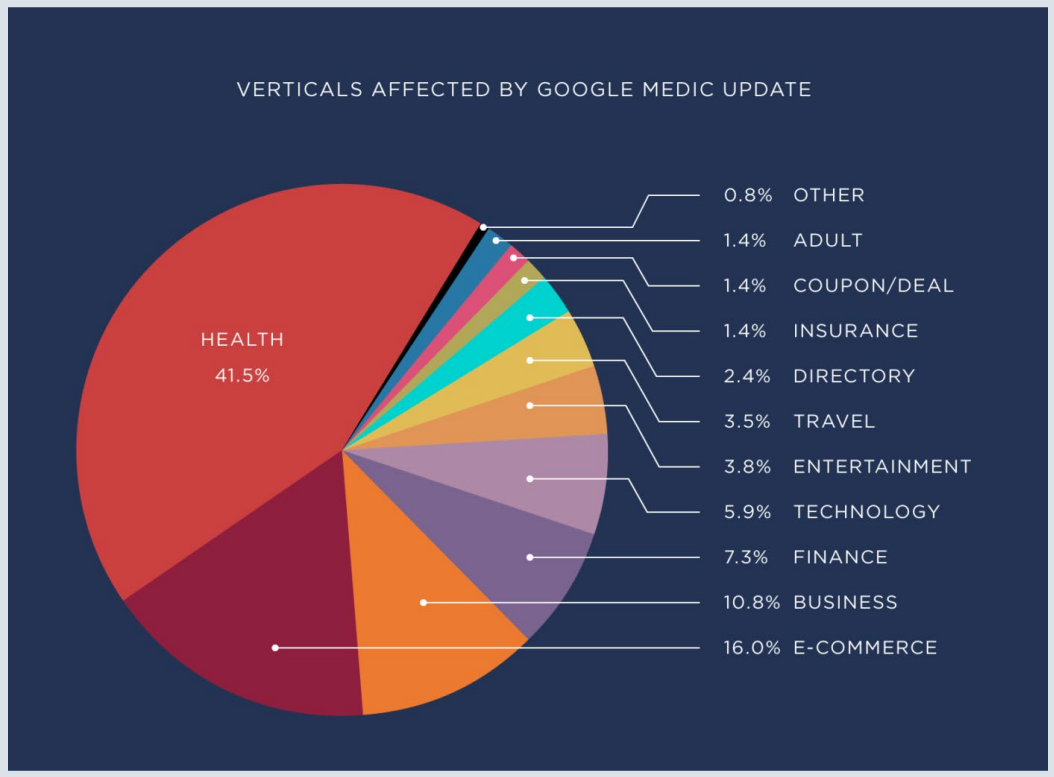
There are 2 really interesting things about this update.

Thing #1: This update HAMMERED certain sites in the health niche.

Here's an example:

So even though this was a "broad" and "core" algorithm update, health sites really felt the heat.

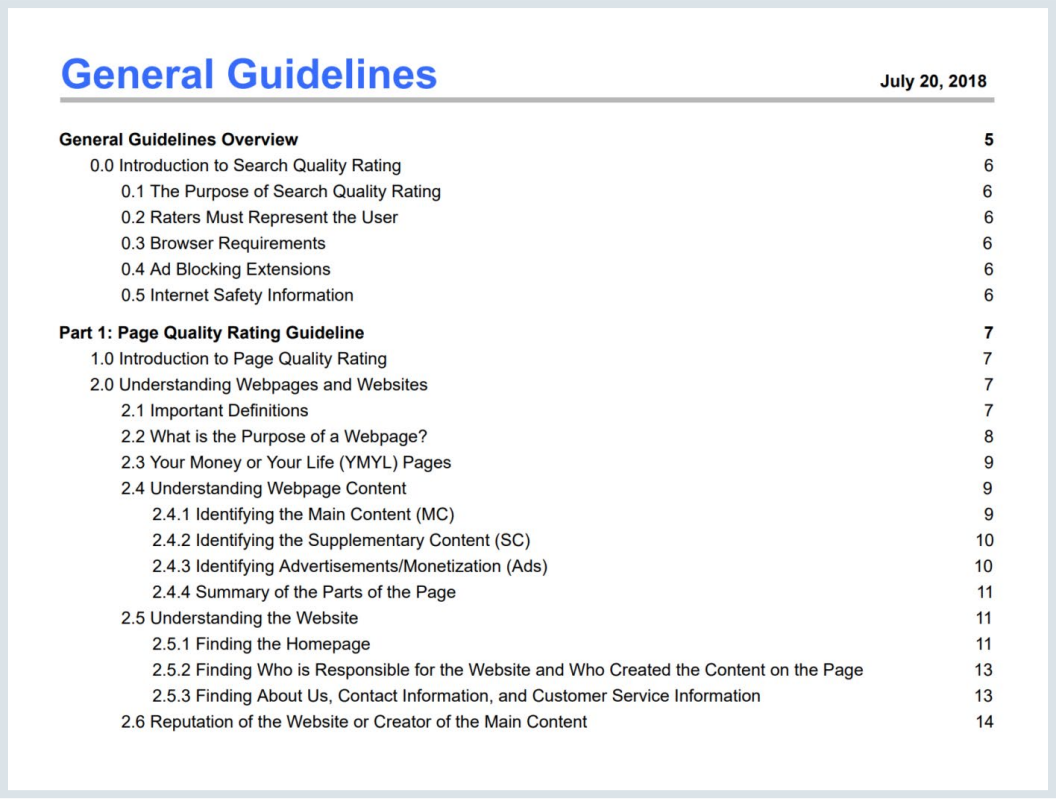
In fact, one small survey found that 41.5% of sites hit by this update were in the health niche:



(Compared to only 5.9% in the tech space. And 3.5% of sites in the travel niche).

Thing #2: Google updated their Quality Rater Guidelines right before this update.

On July 20th Google released their new Quality Rater Guidelines.



General Guidelines

July 20, 2018

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0.0 Introduction to Search Quality Rating 6
0.1 The Purpose of Search Quality Rating 6
0.2 Raters Must Represent the User 6
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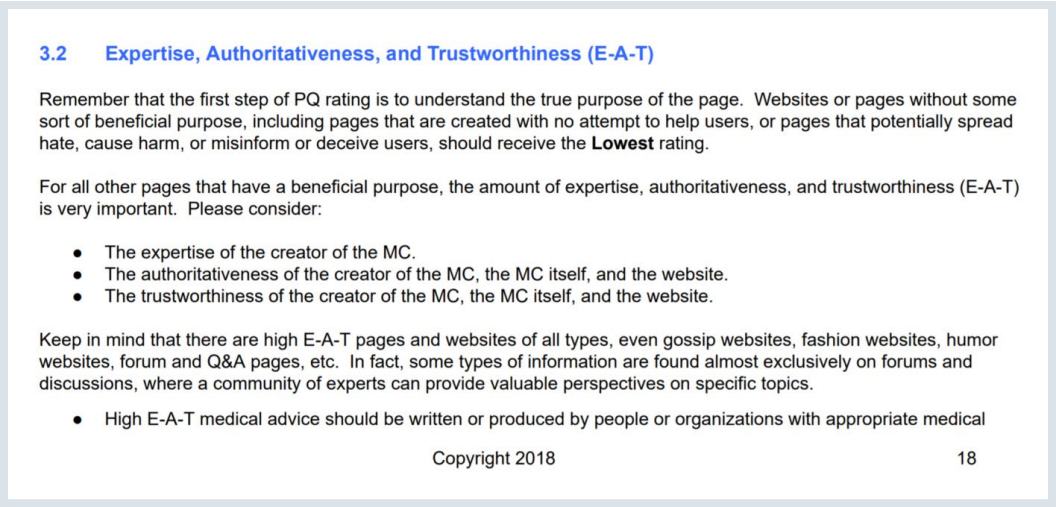
2.5.2 Finding Who is Responsible for the Website and Who Created the Content on the Page 13
2.5.3 Finding About Us, Contact Information, and Customer Service Information 13
2.6 Reputation of the Website or Creator of the Main Content 14

This document was pretty much the same as last year... with one major change:

A focus on E-A-T.

(Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness)



3.2 Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-A-T)

Remember that the first step of PQ rating is to understand the true purpose of the page. Websites or pages without some sort of beneficial purpose, including pages that are created with no attempt to help users, or pages that potentially spread hate, cause harm, or misinform or deceive users, should receive the **Lowest** rating.

For all other pages that have a beneficial purpose, the amount of expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness (E-A-T) is very important. Please consider:

- The expertise of the creator of the MC.
- The authoritativeness of the creator of the MC, the MC itself, and the website.
- The trustworthiness of the creator of the MC, the MC itself, and the website.

Keep in mind that there are high E-A-T pages and websites of all types, even gossip websites, fashion websites, humor websites, forum and Q&A pages, etc. In fact, some types of information are found almost exclusively on forums and discussions, where a community of experts can provide valuable perspectives on specific topics.

- High E-A-T medical advice should be written or produced by people or organizations with appropriate medical

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To be clear:

E-A-T has been a part of the guidelines for years.

But there was a new emphasis on E-A-T this year.

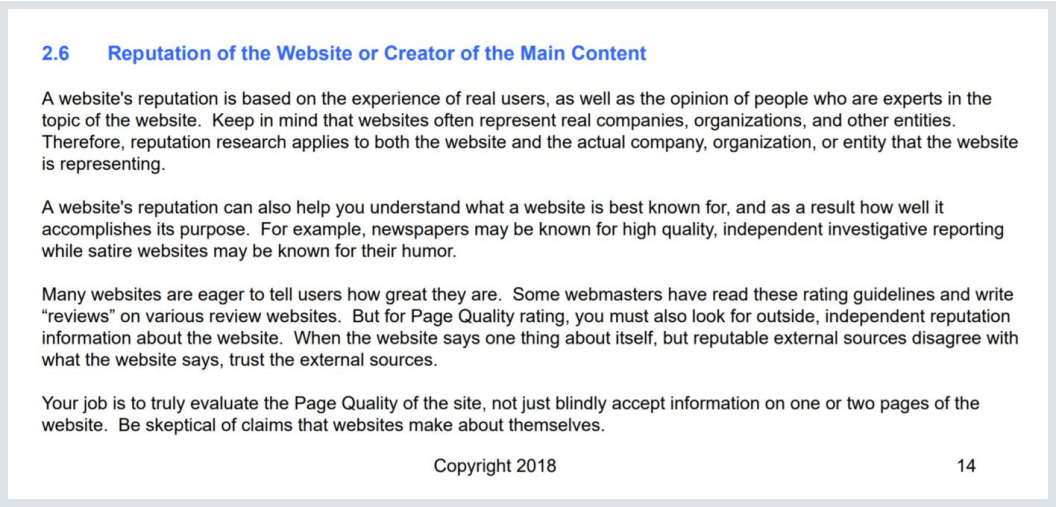
(Probably to train their raters for this update).

Here's how to bump up your site's E-A-T.

First, be an expert (or hire one).

If you hire random freelancers to write your content, you're in trouble.

That's because Google wants to feature content **written by experts.**



2.6 Reputation of the Website or Creator of the Main Content

A website's reputation is based on the experience of real users, as well as the opinion of people who are experts in the topic of the website. Keep in mind that websites often represent real companies, organizations, and other entities. Therefore, reputation research applies to both the website and the actual company, organization, or entity that the website is representing.

A website's reputation can also help you understand what a website is best known for, and as a result how well it accomplishes its purpose. For example, newspapers may be known for high quality, independent investigative reporting while satire websites may be known for their humor.

Many websites are eager to tell users how great they are. Some webmasters have read these rating guidelines and write "reviews" on various review websites. But for Page Quality rating, you must also look for outside, independent reputation information about the website. When the website says one thing about itself, but reputable external sources disagree with what the website says, trust the external sources.

Your job is to truly evaluate the Page Quality of the site, not just blindly accept information on one or two pages of the website. Be skeptical of claims that websites make about themselves.

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This is tough to fake.

In fact, Google might be using a form of Google Authorship to figure out whether or not an author is an expert in that space.

Next, be transparent.

Google probably focuses on **off-site signals** to figure out your site's E-A-T.

That said:

The rater guidelines spend **a lot of time** on evaluating the site itself.

For example, the guidelines point out that:

> “We expect most websites to have some information about who (e.g., what individual,company, business, foundation, etc.) is responsible for the website and who created the [content], as well as some contact information.”

This means having:

- Thorough about page
- Easy to find contact page
- References and external links to sources
- Privacy policy and terms of service

Create Visual Content (Especially "Embeddable Images")

Just like video, visual content is growing fast.

In fact, a recent poll found that 37% of marketers stated that visual marketing was the most important form of content for their business.

And thanks to social media sites like Pinterest and Instagram, visual content should continue to see growth in 2019.

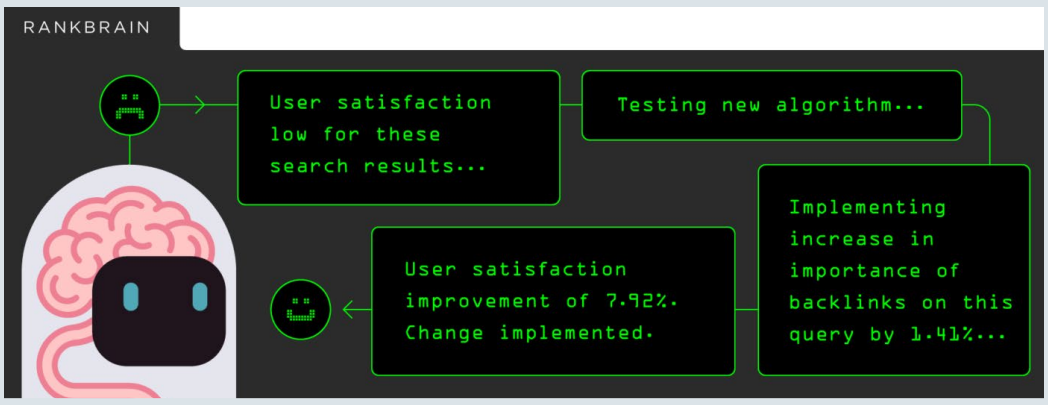
How can you take advantage of this trend?

Create more visual content... especially "Embeddable Images".

In my experience, "Embeddable Images" can do just as well as a fancy infographic...if not better.

(Embeddable Images are images that are easy for other sites to embed into their content. When they do, they'll usually link back to you).

For example, here's a simple visual that I included in one of my guides:



It's nice...but pretty simple.

Even so, people LOVE embedding this image in their content:

Image via Backlinko

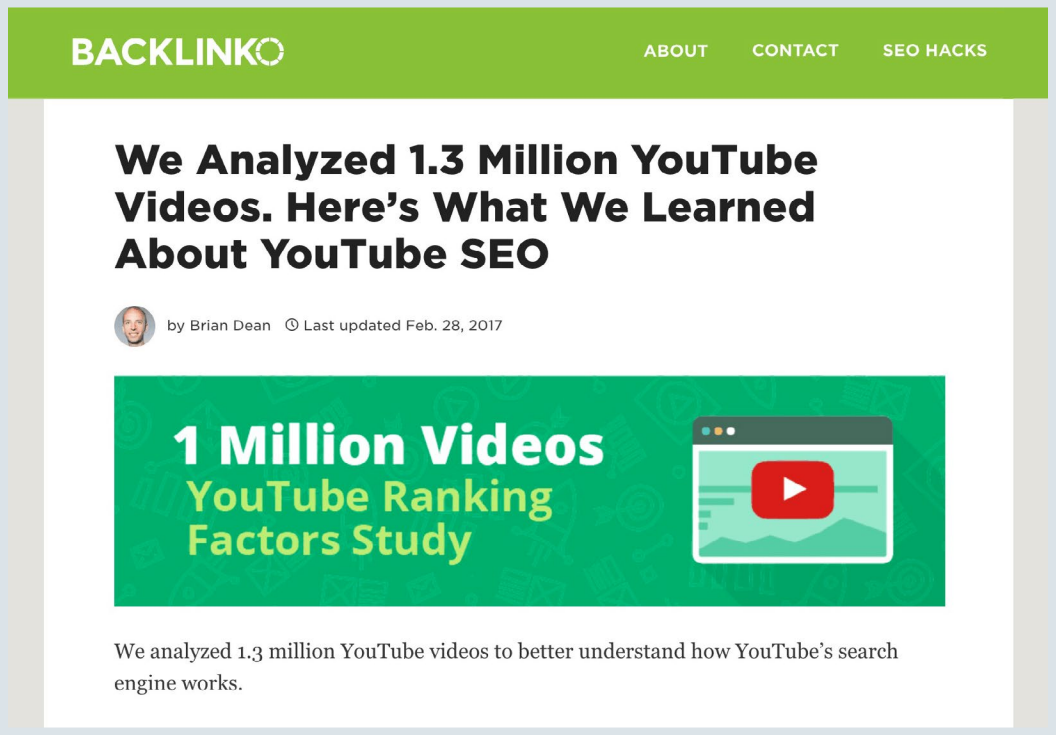
And because of that, that single Embeddable Image has generated a handful of high-quality backlinks to my site.

Publish Unique Data

Bloggers and journalists LOVE unique data.

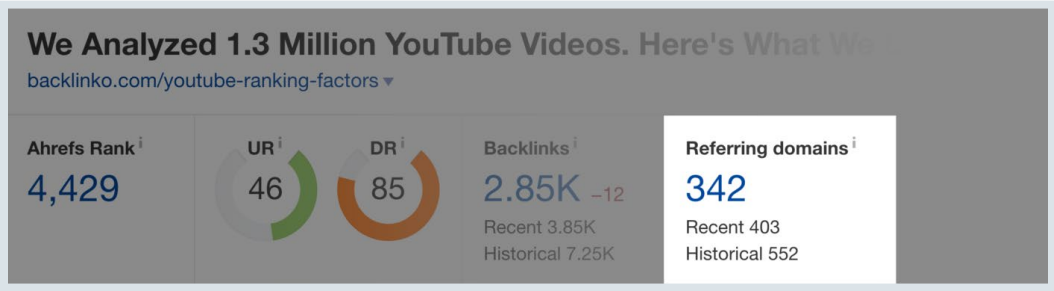
And if you can hook them up with a stat, a survey, or an industry study, they'll throw links at your feet like rose petals.

For example, last year we published this study of YouTube ranking factors:



This content contains has lots of data that people can cite (like the fact that the average video on the first page of YouTube is nearly 15 minutes).

And cite they do! This page has racked up backlinks from over 340 different domains in a little over a year:



And brought in a boatload of search traffic.

Encourage Comments on Your Site

Do blog comments help your rankings?

The answer seems to be: “YES!”.

In fact, Google stated that community (blog comments) can help “a lot” with rankings.

SEARCH ENGINE ROUNDTABLE

Google: Community Through Comments Help A Lot With Ranking

Apr 27, 2016 • 7:53 am | (15)
by Barry Schwartz | Filed Under Google Search Engine Optimization

Gary Illyes from Google said on Twitter that having a thriving community helps with rankings. He said "a healthy, thriving community on a site, that can help a lot" when it comes to Google rankings.

Here is the set of tweets in context:

And last year Google said that “Comments are better on-site for engagement signals for SEO than moving to social.”

> “Comments are better on-site for engagement signals for SEO than moving to social.”
>
> -Gary Illyes

In other words, Google wants to see that you have an active community on your site. And they’re likely to pay even more attention to this ranking signal in 2019.

Prune Zombie Pages

This is one of the few SEO techniques that seems to ALWAYS work.

I'll explain...

Every site has pages that provide **zero value.**

(aka "Zombie Pages")

To be clear: A handful of Zombie Pages is no big deal.

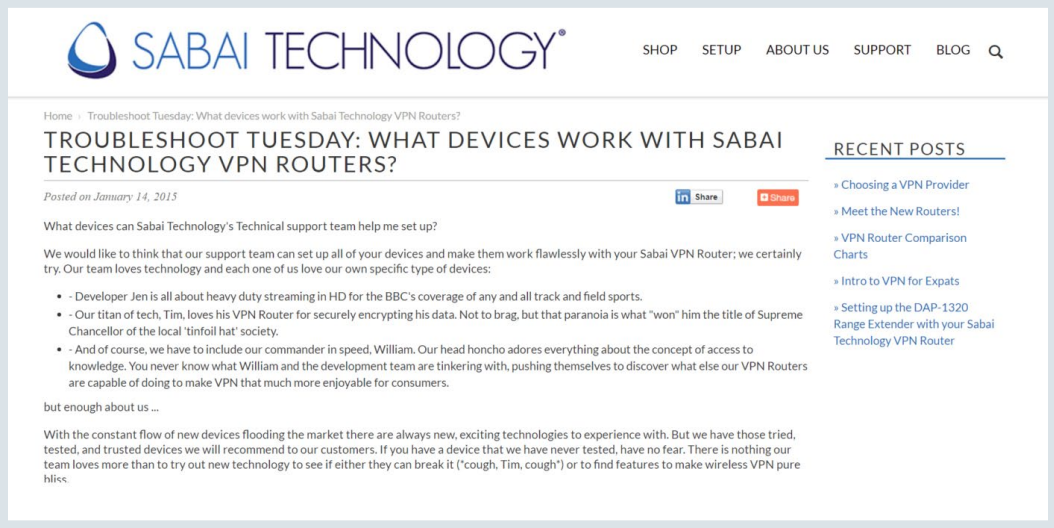
But when you have hundreds or thousands of Zombie Pages?

It can drag down your entire site's SEO.

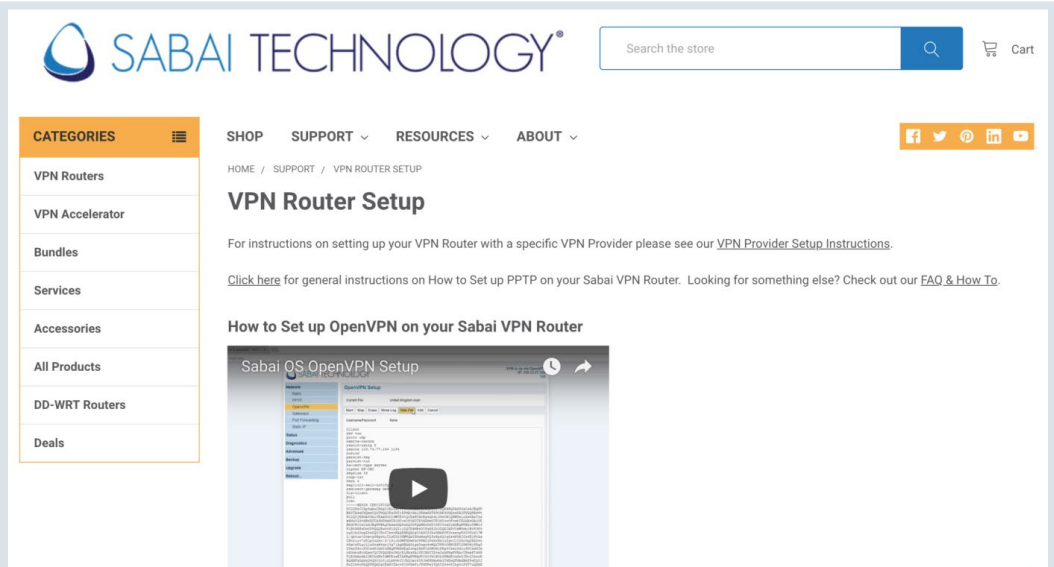
For example:

Joe Robinson is a Backlinko reader that runs the digital marketing agency, Kazu.

And Joe noticed that one of his clients had 76 thin, low-quality articles on their site:



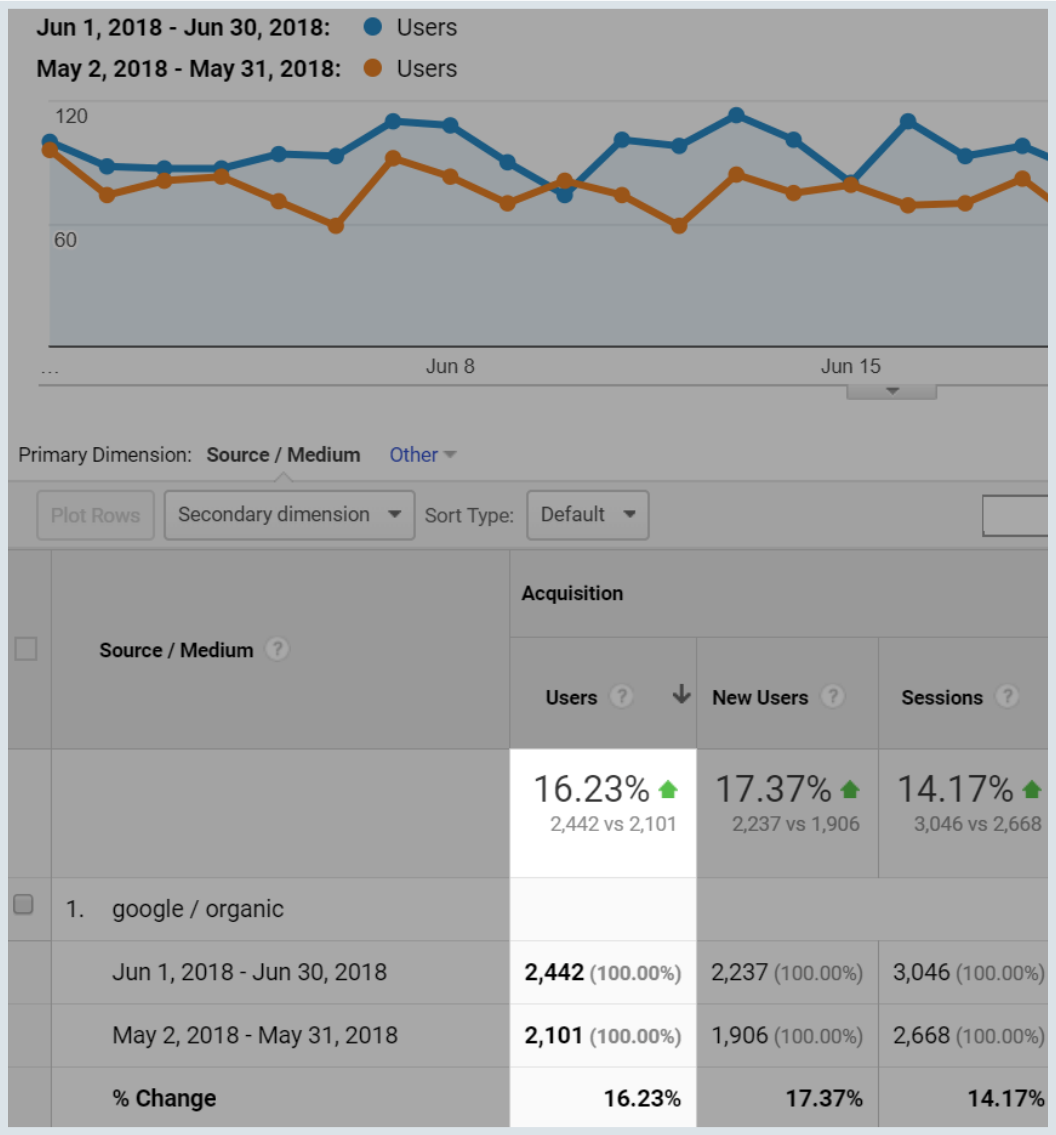
So he consolidated some of these articles into in-depth guides...



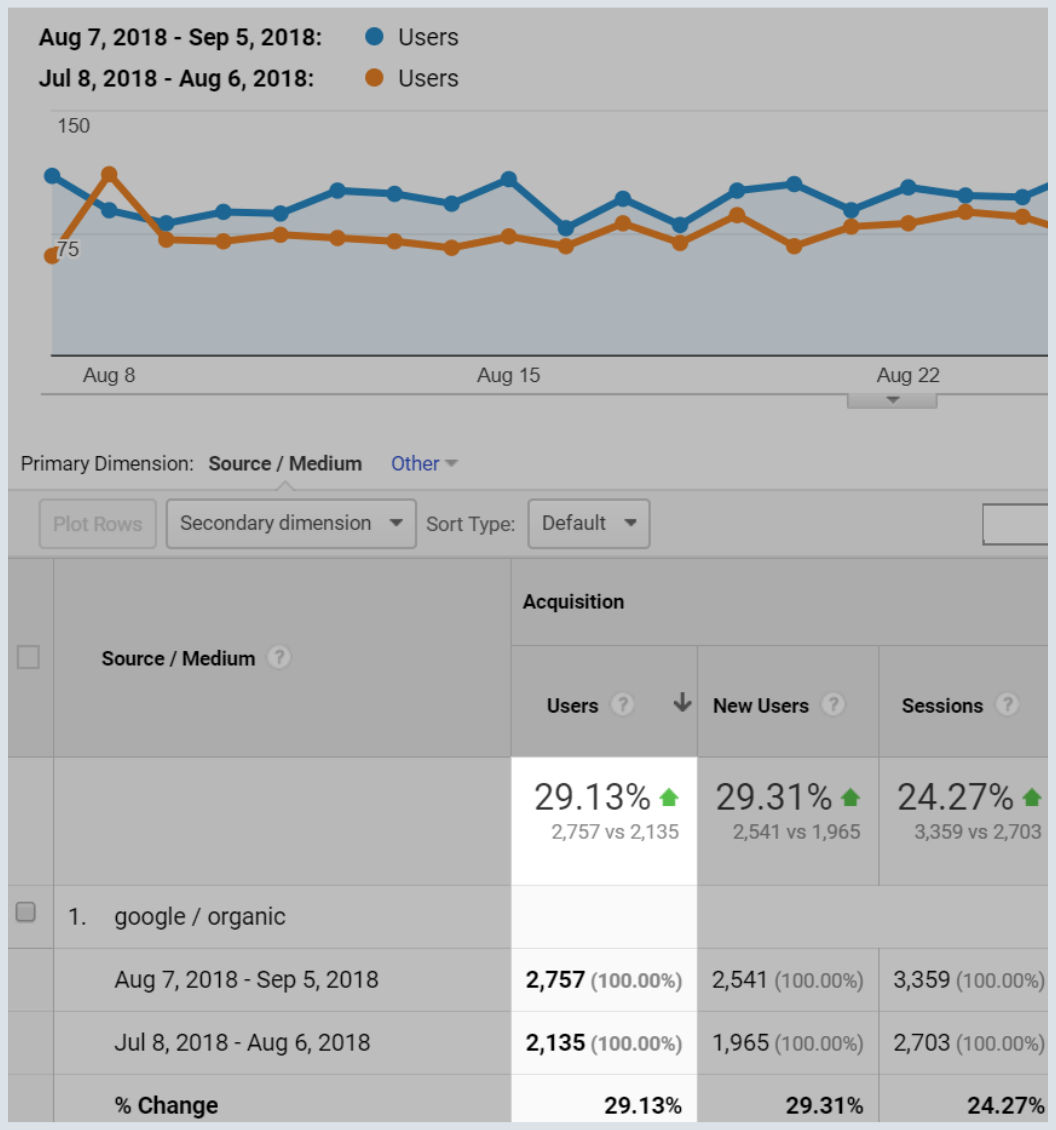
...and deleted or forwarded the rest.

What happened next?

His client's organic traffic increased by 16.23% in 30 days:



And traffic continued to climb as Google removed Zombie Pages from their index.

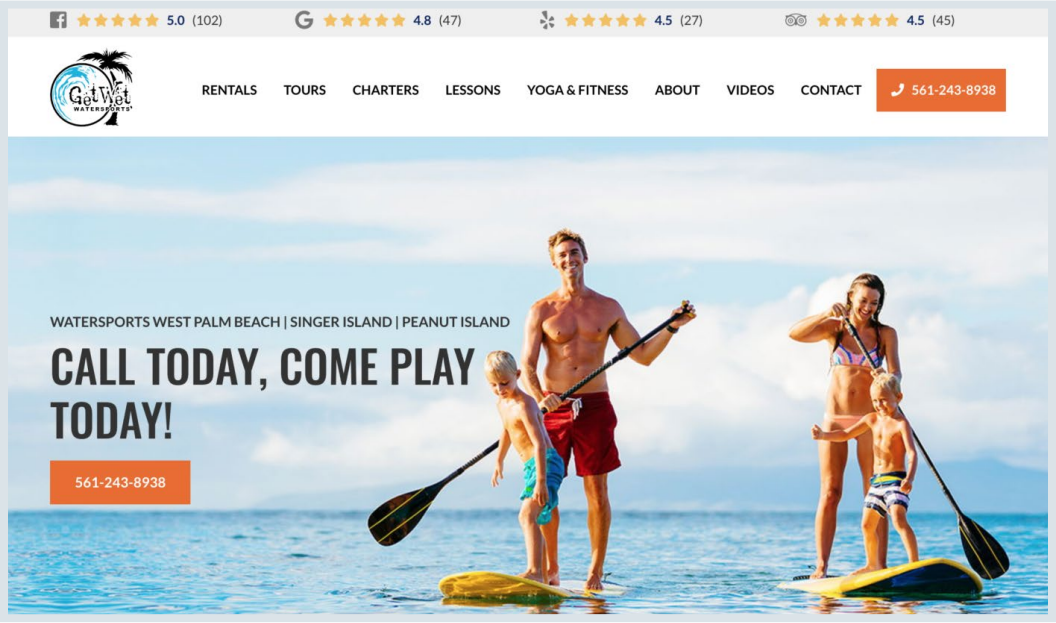


Source / Medium	Acquisition		
	Users	New Users	Sessions
	29.13% 2,757 vs 2,135	29.31% 2,541 vs 1,965	24.27% 3,359 vs 2,703
1. google / organic			
Aug 7, 2018 - Sep 5, 2018	2,757 (100.00%)	2,541 (100.00%)	3,359 (100.00%)
Jul 8, 2018 - Aug 6, 2018	2,135 (100.00%)	1,965 (100.00%)	2,703 (100.00%)
% Change	29.13%	29.31%	24.27%

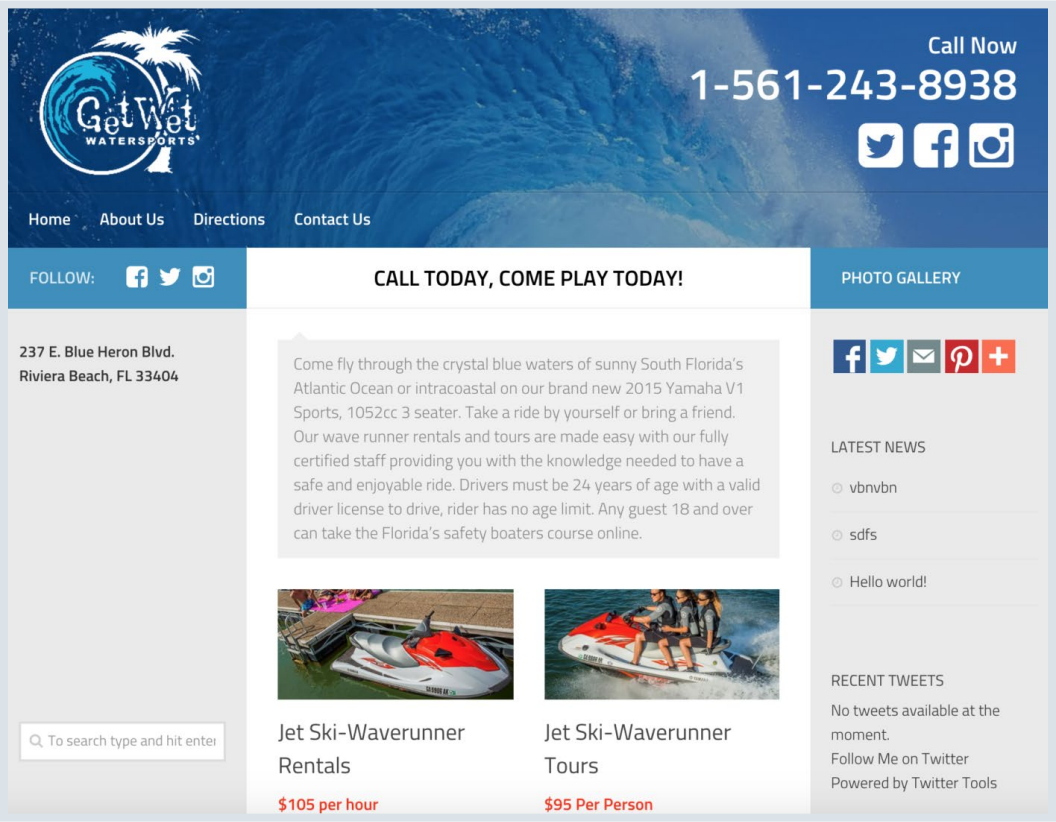
Joe isn't alone.

Alan Boyd emailed me a cool little case study last week.

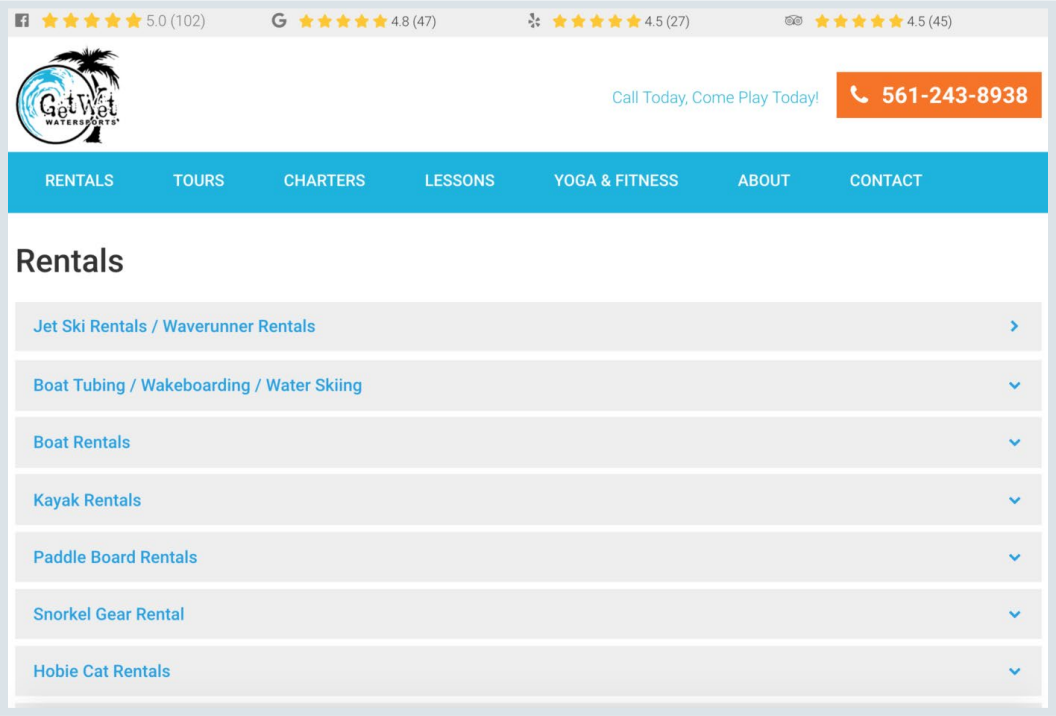
Alan's client is a tour company out of Palm Beach Florida.



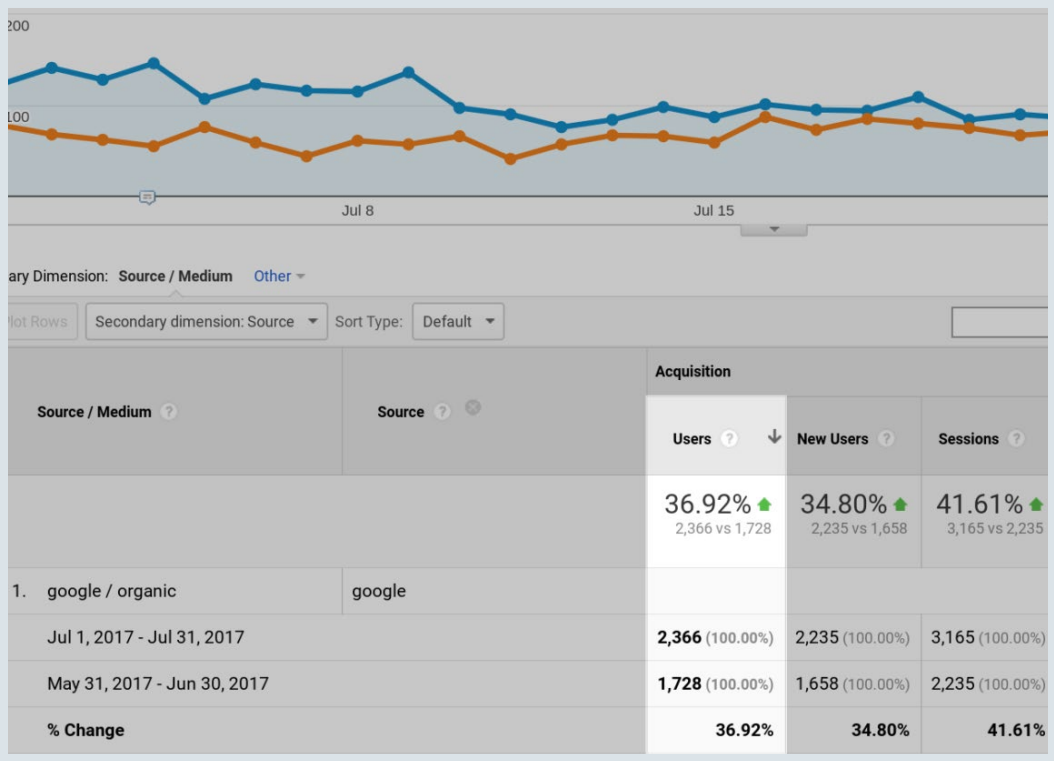
And he quickly noticed that this site had 50 service pages that all said pretty much the same thing:



So he combined the content from those 50 pages into 4 category pages:



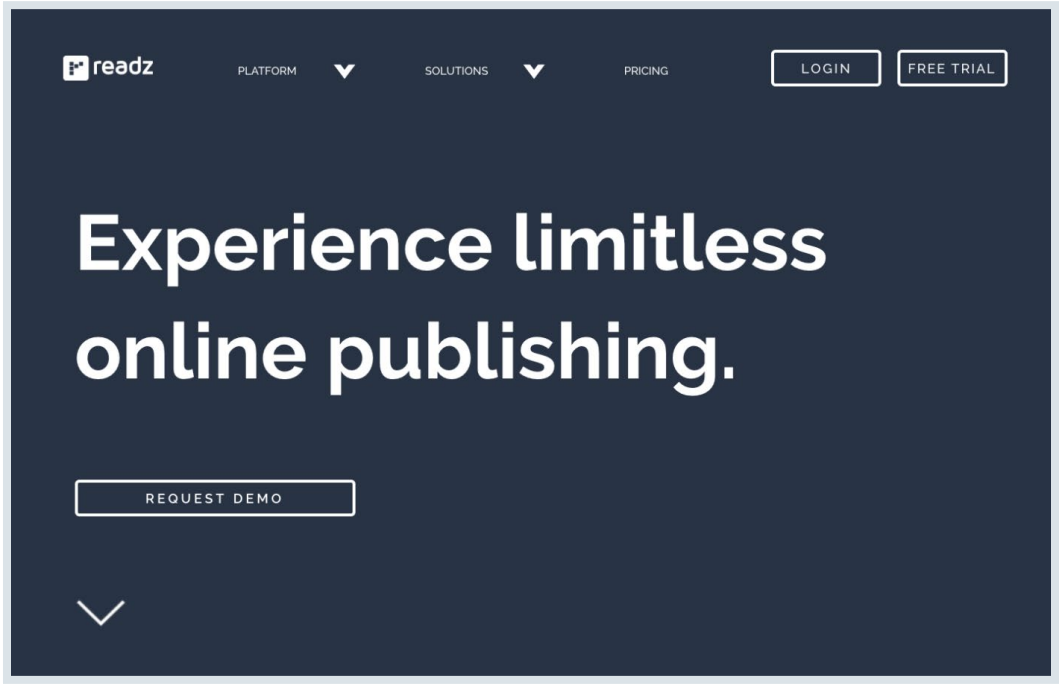
And that single tactic increased their search traffic by 36.9%:



Source / Medium	Source	Acquisition		
		Users	New Users	Sessions
		36.92% 2,366 vs 1,728	34.80% 2,235 vs 1,658	41.61% 3,165 vs 2,235
1. google / organic	google			
Jul 1, 2017 - Jul 31, 2017		**2,366** (100.00%)	2,235 (100.00%)	3,165 (100.00%)
May 31, 2017 - Jun 30, 2017		**1,728** (100.00%)	1,658 (100.00%)	2,235 (100.00%)
% Change		**36.92%**	**34.80%**	**41.61%**

Here's one more quick example to really drive this home.

Bart runs the web design SaaS company called Readz.



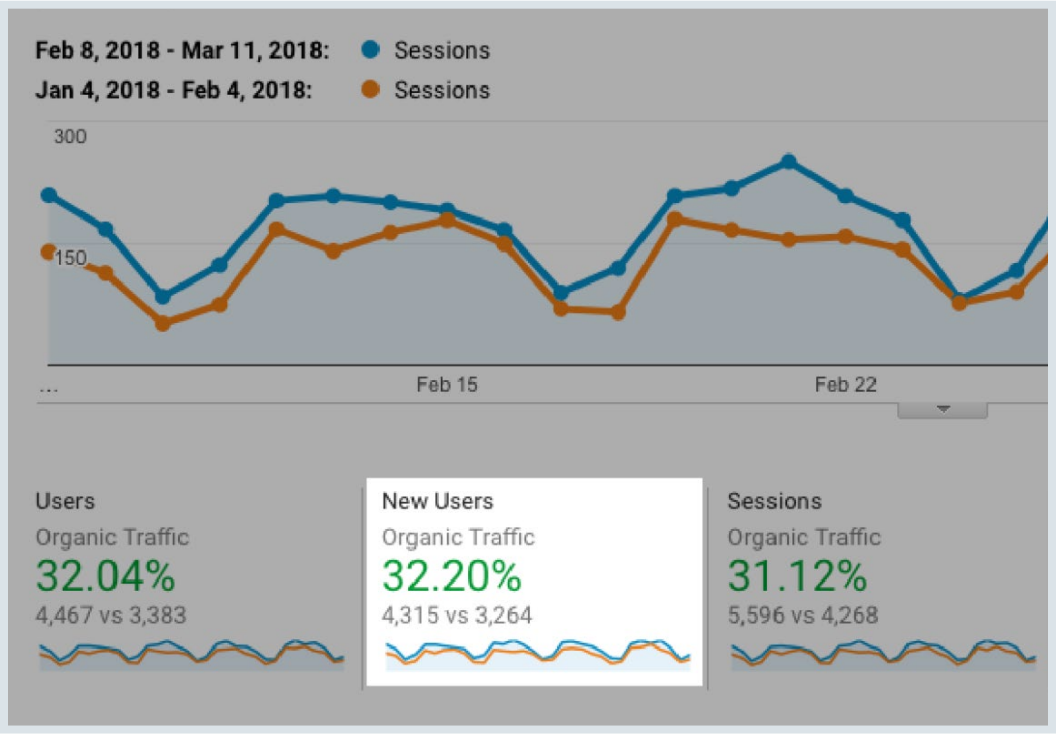
Back in the day, Bart would publish content just for the sake of publishing content.

And this bloated his site with low-quality posts, like this one:

Then, earlier this year? He deleted/consolidated 45 low-quality blog posts.

At first, his traffic dipped.

But as the algorithm kicked in, his organic traffic rapidly shot up by 32%:

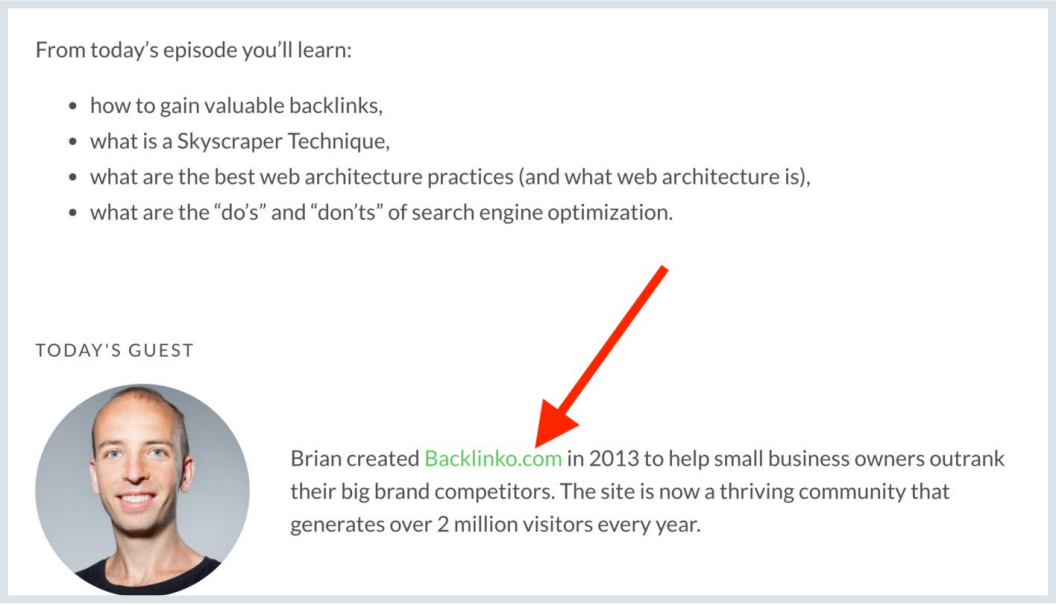


Pretty cool.

Go On Podcasts

Podcasts are one of my all-time favorite ways to build links.

It's like guest posting... without all the BS. Just show up, provide value, and you get a sweet backlink:



And podcasting's popularity is growing like a beanstalk. In fact, 67 million Americans listen to at least one podcast per month (that's up 14% vs. last year).

That means that there will be even MORE opportunities for you to get links from podcasts in 2019.

Want more actionable SEO content like this? Then make sure to subscribe to my YouTube channel right now.

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