For a digital conscious business in the 21st century, site auditing is no longer a choice. With more competitors now than ever before waiting to take as much of your share of the market as possible, you should have all plugs in your business in place so there won’t be any loose ends.

Site auditing is you basically finding and tying every loose end on your business website. It involves you looking through different aspects of your website and fixing any problem you can find and which you feel are affecting your website performance.

For most site owners, after a site audit, they find a significant increase in organic traffic and better website loading speed as well as increase general performances and better user experience.

All those are some of the benefits you'll get after completing your website audit following this simple guide.

This guide is written in the most basic grammar, and we've tried to keep out the technical terms of website audit as much as possible.

In as much as site auditing is essential, too many a times the guide for auditing sites are either too advanced with confusing technical terms or make use of complicated and expensive tools that most site owners will not be willing to invest such amount of time and money in.

That's why we have come up with a much more simplified guide on how to audit a website. The guide is as simple as any can get. The tools we recommend here are all free, and the ones that are paid have trial versions which you can use if you have a smaller website.

And there’s nothing technical about this guide. You don’t need a degree in computer science to follow this guide. In fact, you can leave this tab open and start practicing this guide on your website right now!

**Tools you'll need:**

* [Google search console](https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home?hl=en)
* [Google Mobile-Friendly Testing Tool](https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly)
* [Word Counter](https://wordcounter.net/website-word-count)
* [Web Page Test](https://www.webpagetest.org/) or [GTMetrix](https://gtmetrix.com/)
* [PageSpeed Test](https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/)
* Google’s [Structured Data Testing Tool](https://developers.google.com/structured-data/testing-tool/).
* [Backlink checker](https://ahrefs.com/backlink-checker) tool by Ahrefs or [Small SEO Tools](https://smallseotools.com/backlink-checker/)
* Google Search Console’s “[Index Report](https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7440203?hl=en)” or [Broken Link Check](http://www.brokenlinkcheck.com/).
* [Google Analytics](https://www.google.com/analytics/)

**Unify your URLs**

Your domain URL is one of the first things you'll want to check out when conducting a site audit. Website URLs can come in four different formats for any website, all of which can be seen as a separate domain though they are the same.

For instance, a website like [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) can have four possible URLs:

* http://google.com
* http://www.google.com
* https://google.com
* https://www.google.com

When users type any of these in their browser address bar, the browser will see each of them as a different domain and will look at different resource location just as search engines would.

Your site audit journey should begin with the unification of the different versions of your website URL. Start by typing each of the above possible variations of your website URL and see that the only one version of your website is possible for a user to access and all other variation redirects to the version you prefer.

Google hates all other HTTP and prefers https. As such, it'll be a lot safer for you to do a 301 redirect for all the different URL variation to an https version of your website.

Https contains an extra layer of security. This comes with most domain options today. If however, you don’t have an SSL security script installed on your website, you can download one for free from [Let’s Encrypt](https://letsencrypt.org/).

**Check for Google indexation**

Not being indexed by Google means no traffic at all.

Google is the king of search engines, and more than 70% of organic traffic comes from it. As such, the next step you might want to take is to check and see if your website has been indexed by Google.

To do this, you'll need to go to your [*Google search console*](https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home?hl=en) and navigate to *Search Index* and then to *Index Status.*

This will show you all the pages Google have indexed from your website – it could be zero, some or all.

If you do not use the Google webmasters tool, you can conduct a simple search using the search engine. This will bring a result with all the pages Google has indexed on your website pretty much the same way as the webmaster's tool.

Simply open Google search engine and type *site:yourdomain.com* and click on the search button. This will bring up a number of pages indexed by Google or nothing at all if your domain has not been indexed by Google.

If you’ve previously submitted your site to Google and still can’t find any of your pages, you may want to check your x‑robots-tag HTTP header as it may be blocking Google’s spiders from crawling and indexing all pages on your website.

**Check and see if your website is mobile-friendly.**

Mobile-friendliness is a big number in the ranking factors outlined by Google in 2019. More than half the traffic from Google comes from mobile devices. As such, Google is always on the lookout to rank mobile-friendly websites higher on its search result pages.

Mobile-friendliness is something you don't want to consider leaving out of your audit if you want more traffic to your site or want to improve users experience on each of your pages.

Finding out if your site is mobile friendly is not very difficult. In fact, Google already provided a free tool; [Google Mobile-Friendly Testing Tool](https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly), which you can use to test the responsiveness of your website design.

Just type in your website URL in the search space provided and Google will let you know if your website is mobile-friendly or not.

**Check to see if you rank first for your brand name.**

Ranking for your brand name is a good indicator of the health of your website. It makes perfect sense that when someone searches for 'Amazon' on Google, the search result pages should be dominated with results from amazon.com.

This not only indicates that amazon has built a worldwide brand. It also shows that Amazon has a sufficient internet presence and that its SEO tactics are working.

A lot of times, when you search for your brand name on Google, the first result should be your homepage and then a number of other indexed pages from your website.

If this is not the case, then Google thinks the other results are a better ranking website for your brand name than your website, and this will consequently hurt the brand you're trying to build.

One of the best tactics to start building your brand name and be recognized by Google on its search result page as the best option for the first position is by building more backlinks to your homepage and posts.

This, of course, means getting mentions and high-quality links from high authority websites. This, of course, can only be possible through guest posting and creating superb contents for your website.

**Manual review of your on-site SEO**

Nothing beats a manual review of your on-site SEO techniques. On-site SEO is the most crucial aspect of any website SEO techniques.

Without good on-site SEO, getting good organic traffic would be almost impossible. As such, it makes perfect sense that you manually review your on-site SEO from time to time and not just once in a while. This should be done more like a mini-site audit.

When performing a manual review of your on-site SEO, some of the best parts to look into are your website

* Title tags – do the pages have well crafted, clickable title tags? And are the title tags shown fully in the search results page or truncated because they are lengthy? Can you make it better and improve the call to action?
* Meta descriptions – the Meta descriptions is one of the most critical parts of the contents search engines display on the search result pages. For starters, you'll want to create custom Meta descriptions for each page. By custom, we mean writing a description solely for this purpose and not packing keywords into it or copying a section of the page.
* Meta keywords – the keyword is where you insert all the keywords you want the page to rank for on search engines. It's best you use only those keywords that are related to the content of the page and avoid spamming it as much as possible to avoid Google's penalty.
* Headers and subheaders – Google likes a page with well-structured content. It analyzes the structure of the content of your page using the various headings and subheadings present on the page.

Generally, you'll want to make use of only one header (the H1 tag) in your content. The H1 tag should be used for your page title, and the H2 tag should be for subheadings. As a guide, the more content breaks down into lower sections, the lower the heading tags you should use.

**Do a website crawl**

After a manual review of your website, it’s often best that you use a crawler to crawl your website.

A website crawler will crawl your website much in the same way as the Google search engines and will provide useful information about the problems with your current SEO strategies as well return any errors it finds in your site code.

There are many crawlers on the internet. Most Keyword research tools such as Ahrefs offers site crawlers in their package. You can also make use of [Beaming us Up](http://beamusup.com/) which is a free site crawler.

**Analyze and fix the crawl result**

After scanning your website, most site crawlers will present a result with different recommendations on what is wrong and how to fix it.

Most times, it is almost impossible to keep a site 100% free of errors. But in as much as a small percentage of site errors can be allowed without affecting your site ranking, you might want to take care of any point that appears with a red alert button.

This should be done immediately even before moving to the yellow warning and notice buttons which could be ignored without any significant consequences.

**Check for plagiarism and thin content.**

Duplicate contents will harm your website. Google detest duplicate contents and will not hesitate to penalize you if it detects them on your website.

As such, it makes perfect sense that you'll want to check for plagiarism when conducting an audit of your website. It doesn’t matter if all your contents were written manually by you or outsourced to a freelancer writer; going extra miles during your site audit will never hurt.

Checking for plagiarism is very easy. Most plagiarism checkers requires just copying and pasting your content to the scanning box, or you can even make use of your page URL.

Copyscape is the most popular plagiarism checker tool. It is a premium tool and cost 3 cents per search. If you're not up for paid tools, you can also make use of other free plagiarism checker tools like smallseotools.com, duplichecker.com, and many others.

If you find duplicate contents of your page on other websites, it's best you rewrite that section or the whole content again and make sure it is 100% unique and free of plagiarism.

Duplicate contents are not the only thing you should be concerned with. You should also be wary of thin contents as they usually provide no real value or information and tend to struggle when it comes to ranking on search engines.

One of the easiest ways to tell if your content is thin and will need more meat is to make use of a tool like [Word Counter](https://wordcounter.net/website-word-count). This shows the number of words your content has. Avoid posting any content that's less than 200 words.

**Check your site and individual page loading speed.**

In 2010, Google announced an update of its search algorithms, which will now include the loading speed of a website as criteria for taking it higher on its search result page.

This is a significant update as users today are no longer anxious to wait for websites to load for more than 30 seconds.

Google is a user-focused search engine and looking to provide the best value for its users have now included this vital aspect of SEO to its search algorithm.

Fixing your website loading speed is not the toughest of tasks. First off, you may want to check the loading speed of your website by using [Web Page Test](https://www.webpagetest.org/) or [GTMetrix](https://gtmetrix.com/). Both tools are pretty easy to use and will conduct a test on your webpages and return the load time for them.

If you found your website speeding is lagging or very poor, you may want to take a few steps to improve its loading speed.

One of the best places to start from is by fixing your site's HTML code. The HTML code is the bone on which your website is structured. If there are multiple errors in this code, then your page will take a longer time to load in web browsers. This is because web browsers rely on these codes to render your websites on users’ device screen.

You can easily find problems with your site’s HTML code using [PageSpeed Test](https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/). This will show you all the errors in your code. You can fix as much as you can and leave the rest of the percentage error is not very high.

To better reduce user wait time and improve your site loading speed, you might want to consider reducing the sizes of your images. Large images on a page are bound to increase your loading speed, as such; it makes perfect sense to use smaller images.

There are lots of free tools and WordPress plugins that can help you compress and reduce the size of your images without affecting its quality.

**Check for errors in structured data.**

Structured data needs regular checks as they often come in a separate format different from regular web pages.

A structured data page is one which contains contents such as reviews, product information, and reviews, etc.

These sorts of contents require special attentions as errors in the structures of these pages can easily break them up on the web browser and can result in poor display on the users' device screen.

One of the best tools to use to test the correctness of your website structured data is Google’s [Structured Data Testing Tool](https://developers.google.com/structured-data/testing-tool/).

This tool will scan your website and return a result containing errors in your structured data. You can read up to this [Google’s Structured Data guide](https://developers.google.com/search/docs/guides/intro-structured-data) on how to correct any structured data error that you may encounter after scanning your website.

**Analyze your organic traffic report**

Behind every website audit is the need to increase the traffic coming to the website. To do this, you'll need to analyze your traffic report and see if the traffic you are getting is actually to the targeted pages.

It doesn’t make much sense in terms of business for you to get a ton of traffic on a 'zombie pages' that will not actually convert to any reasonable lead in the future.

Analyzing your traffic also help you find the top-ranking pages on your website and also take necessary steps to boost the positions of these pages on the SERP page.

You may also want to build better high-quality links to your top-ranking pages and maybe update the content and re-launch these pages, so they move up higher on the search result page.

[Google Analytics](https://www.google.com/analytics/) offers you the best tools to check your organic traffic source as well as the pages these traffics originate from.

The tool is quite useful and easy to navigate and will give you a better insight on your sites organic traffic than any other tool out there.

**Analyze your backlink profile**

Backlinks are what Google uses to determine the authority of any given page on your website. Your backlink profiles are like votes to your 'authorityship’ from other authorities in your business niche.

Checking to see if this critical is either on the rise or declining is important as fewer backlinks or low-quality backlinks can harm your website.

You can make use of the free [Backlink checker](https://ahrefs.com/backlink-checker) tool by Ahrefs or make use of [Small SEO Tools](https://smallseotools.com/backlink-checker/) to check your backlink profile.

**Find and fix all broken links.**

Finding and fixing broken links on your website is more of a solution for your users than for Google search bots.

The truth is, Google bots don’t care much about broken links. In a statement, Google’s John Mueller wrote “the web changes, sometimes old links break. Googlebot isn’t going to lose sleep over broken links.”

As such, from the point of Google, broken links may not harm your website, but in practice, it does affect your website performance and users' experience.

It’s most frustrating from every experience when we click on a link we thought might be to a useful resource only to end on a dead page.

As such, finding and fixing your broken links borders more on improving your users' experience as well as passing link juices to the linked pages which can, in turn, increase the stay time of your website and consequently reduce your website bounce rate.

Finding and fixing broken links on your website is a simple and straightforward process. You can make use of Google Search Console’s “[Index Report](https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7440203?hl=en)” or another free tool like the [Broken Link Check](http://www.brokenlinkcheck.com/). Ahrefs also offers a premium tool that allows you to find and fix broken links on your website.

**Spy on your competitors**

One of the best ways to find high-quality keywords related to your niche is by spying on your competitors.

[Semrush](https://www.semrush.com/competitive-research/) offers you a tool which you can use to analyze the pages on your competitors' website and find ways to outrank them on search engine results. Most times, when analyzing your competitors' website, you may want to be on the lookout for the keyword they use as well as the quality and length of their posts.

By building better and lengthier posts and including those keywords, you stand a better chance of getting above them on the SERP page.

**Optimize high ranking pages**

If you have pages ranking in top positions on the search engine result page, you might want to take it higher.

When it comes to SEO, going higher should be the goal. You can’t afford to remain static. For a page that’s already ranking well, you may not want to tamper with it and damage the good traffic, the truth however is, that page is not really getting the real juice yet – wait until it move to the first position and you'll see the difference.

You can easily move a high ranking page higher by updating the content, republishing it or building more backlinks to the page from high authority domains.

**Find and bridge content gaps.**

Content is king on the internet. The relevance of quality content to organic SEO cannot be overemphasized. Remember, content is the reason why people visit the internet in the first place.

As such, it makes perfect that you produce content that is really of value to your users. The number of content you on your website is not as important as the quality of each content.

One of the most critical sites audits you can carry out regarding the content on your web page is to find and bridge the gaps between your contents.

Content gaps are the keywords which you mention in passing paragraphs which are relevant to your article. For instance, when creating content around internet marketing, there's every chance that you'll mention SEO, blogging, and other related keywords.

By creating contents around these other keywords, you bridge the gap between your original keyword and the ones you mention in the passing paragraphs.

This sort of bridging not only help provide a better understanding of the topic been discussed but will also help you build better links to other pages on your website as well as help you pass link juice to these pages and reduce the bounce rate of your web pages.