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LEXI MOSTEK : Welcome everyone to part two of our three-part webinar series. This session two is focused on practical SEO applications, and we've got an amazing panel for you all. Lots of love in the chat. You all are welcome to continue to use the chat. We also have the question and answer open. If you have any questions for our panelists throughout the webinar, feel free to continue to send those, and we will take question and answer at the end.

My name is Lexi, and just as a quick reminder, I'm here to just kick off the event. This is a three-part webinar series. Yesterday we focused on specialized SEO markets like international and eCommerce. That was a great panel. Today, we're gonna talk about practical SEO applications. And then tomorrow, we're gonna just do a little bit more of a fireside chat on technical SEO.

All of these webinars are being recorded, as well as, we've got the transcripts for them and any resources mentioned during the webinar. We will be posting those post webinar recordings. So if you miss yesterday's webinar and you want to watch it now, it is on Youtube as well as it will be, or this webinar will be accessible on Youtube directly following when we wrap and then we will post everything to our resources page after tomorrow's webinar wraps.

This is the Resource Center which hopefully, you all are familiar with, and that's where we'll post all of the resources. There, now, enough of me. With that being said, I'm going to hand this over to Whitney who is going to be your lovely host for the webinar. And Whitney, you can take it away.

WHITNEY BERBER: All right, thanks, Lexi. Hi, everyone. I'm Whitney Berber and I will be your host for today. A quick intro to me, I've been at WP Engine a little over six years now. And I lead our website acquisition team, which obviously plays a huge role within SEO. So this is an exciting topic for me to be a part of today.

With that, let's get started with getting to know our panelists. Welcome, all four of you. Thank you so much for taking the time today to be with us and share your experience. Let's go around and have each of you just introduce yourself. Tell us a little bit about your role in your company, and then one quick tip of your number one SEO recommendation that you would give someone.

Jeff, you want to kick us off?

JEFF COYLE: Sure, I'm the Co-founder of [MarketMuse](#). I've been the content strategy search engine product design information retrieval world about 25 years. MarketMuse is a content strategy and intelligence platform that really focuses on content quality. And that aligns with my best recommendation, it's you know whether you're starting out or you're in the middle, or you've been doing this for a very long time. Always aim to exhibit expertise with your site and

never compromise content quality to get there. If you can be unique and differentiated, that's gonna come through in the success of your sites. What, regardless of how you set up your site, the way it's structured, or anything in between.

Thanks, Whitney.

WHITNEY BERBER: Absolutely, James. You want to jump in?

JAMES GIBBONS: I'm James. I lead the customer success team over at Quattr Inc. We are an AI technology company for search. I've been working in the SEO space the past 10 years or so, a mix of large and small agencies, working in-house, and now, in the SaaS World building SEO technology.

And historically, I would say, one of my top tips is, you know, don't forget those title tags. They really can have a lot of high impact quickly. But now I would say, especially with kind of AI just coming, hitting the SEO world, very, very fast is definitely, you know, do something new.

A lot of times people are trying to optimize. They're optimizing sometimes because they see others that they want to follow. But when you get all your data sources together and whatnot, you can actually place these bets and be kind of a leading example when it comes to content that people will want to optimize towards. And when you get some experience with that, you can really grow whatever you want to grow pretty fast.

WHITNEY BERBER: Absolutely. That's a great point. Andrew, you want to go next?

ANDREW SHERMAN: I'm the founder of the Virtual Window. We're a development agency, development of digital marketing agency, located here in Washington, DC, we deal with a lot of brick and mortar clients, fitness in particular, and a lot of municipal clients. So we see the whole range of availability when it comes to SEO resources, and my number one tip for every company that we come across is, don't bite off more than you can chew, because it's important to do a few things good than a lot of things not so great.

So we always advise people to think about what your capacity is and be realistic within that and what you're aiming to do, and then scale up from there.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, that's wise advice, hard to do sometimes. Jonas, last, but not least. Do you want to go next?

JONAS SICKLER: Sure. So I'm a former children's book illustrator, which kind of started my 4a into SEO. From there I moved on to Terakeet. I've been with Terakeet. I've been with about 9 years now. Terakeet is an owned asset optimization company that uses organic search data to understand customer needs and then use that data to create better brand experiences.

Over the years I've shifted from SEO strategy to content strategy. And now into a digital marketing analyst role. My go to recommendation, I'd say, is to understand search intent, because not only does it drive your content strategy to and makes it more efficient, but it also can inform all of your marketing efforts, and even into your business strategy and products.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, those are. Those are great points. It's a good way. So excited to have all of you guys here. Good way to kick off the panel with our top tip. Now, let's go ahead. And, Andrew, if we can start with you. I know one of the big burning questions, I bet a lot of our attendees have today on: top of people's minds is, where do you start with a brand new SEO project, and I know Andrew, being at an agency, this is probably a routine practice for you. You want to share with us?

ANDREW SHERMAN: Yup. So, following up on what I said earlier, one of the first things we asked people to figure out is, Are you gonna manage your SEO yourself as a one person team? Are you gonna hire an agency to do it? And if you're gonna manage it as a one person team, is that one person only gonna be doing SEO, or are they going to be wearing multiple hats? And even more important, if you're gonna hire an agency, do you have somebody inside of your organization who can implement the recommendations of the agency?

I can't tell you how many times we've sat on calls, agency recommendations come in. They're amazing jobs that the agencies have done. However, there's nobody to implement those recommendations. So right off the bat, the first thing we ask all people is, what are you gonna do? That always follows on to content. Everybody who knows enough about SEO to be dangerous has heard content this king.

But they don't realize that somebody has to create that content, that content has to be created in a particular way. And once again, the amount of people that you have and the resources available helps educate what strategy you should take. So before you get into all that stuff, that's our first thing that we do.

Then, after that, if you have an existing site, we love to do an audit. Both a technical and a content audit to understand just where you are at. Now you know. How are you doing with your backlinks? Do you have a lot of toxic links? Are we looking at starting over, or do we have to just tweak what exists there. So those are some of the things that in the beginning we always try to do. But before we get really deep. It's just always understanding what you can and can't do, and trying to to operate within those parameters

WHITNEY BERBER: absolutely goes back to that capacity question or that capacity point we are making earlier. How much capacity do you have to actually implement what we're looking to do? that's a great point.

Jonas. You want to jump in?

JONAS SICKLER: Sure. Those are fantastic points. And all of those things you have to do when evaluating a new project. I also like to think, before you even get to the SEO side. Some of the things that drive the SEO program include defining your audience. Who are they, and what are their interests, and what are their search behaviors online? Where, where are they going? And what does their user journey look like? What questions are they asking as they move through that journey? And then, who owns the conversations during those questions?

I mean, is it something that you have the right to rank for on your own website? Is it something that's generally driven by affiliates or partners? And is there a way that you can kind of move into that space potentially by launching another domain that competes with those spaces.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, that's a good point. It's good. It kind of plays off of what Andrew is talking there about first taking the technical audit and seeing what even exists there. Jeff, do you want to jump in?

JEFF COYLE: No, it resonates with me for Andrew, because I've been a part of many of those situations as well. Where you get a little. Here's your top 10 things, and you know, I might get to item 10 in four years. so part of that gets into. Why haven't things worked? Why haven't things worked in the past? And sometimes it is resources. Sometimes, you know, they hadn't completed an effective audit in the past or prioritized well. So if you get ahead of understanding whether it was operations and execution where you fell down or was there something else in your past, like you mentioned toxic links? Was there a significant migration? Maybe someone tried to move real fast and do something a little bit aggressive or risky getting through that early on. We'll make sure that when you get that prioritized list from Andrew, and it's only three things. So you actually can get it done. They're actually going to be impacted. And you don't have a governor on your engine causing to go, not go as fast as you could go.

Really critical to go through that forensic audit.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah. Absolutely. James. Anything to add?

JAMES GIBBONS: yeah, you know, assuming some of the technical items are kind of dealt with and then you're left with kind of what to do next. One of the things that I highly recommend is Yes, there are times when you are doing things completely net new. You know, there's no historical data at all. But sometimes there is a lot of relevant historical data that can be used to inform whatever you're doing. Specifically when it comes to kind of creating something new. So there could be other domains that have a lot of historical keyword data. There could be pages on your site that have a lot of important keyword data, mined from Google search console. There could be historical ad campaigns. All of those kinds of keyword signals can be gathered, and those are data sets that none of your competitors have.

So configuring that the right way could allow you to have kind of an unlock of sorts. in terms of guiding you with some type of content strategy. There could be these random long tail keyword variations that could be that impetus for the content team having a whole new revelation of

something to create. So you know, when starting something new, really evaluate if there is any type of historical data. That could even be customer questions, form fill data, onsite search. All that data can go into AI systems. And sometimes there can be a lot of magic that can come from that.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, super close to home for you being at Quattr. Yeah those are all really great points. I mean everything from capacity to what? What is the capacity when you're taking on a new project, what does your technical audit look like? And then also just leveraging those past insights and data that everyone has, instead of always trying to create net new right?

All right, let's shift gears here a little bit. Speaking of capacity. All of us have had to go through this one time or another. But looking at CMS redesigns or even just migrating your site to WordPress. I know, Jonas, I believe you recently just went through a website redesign. Do you mind speaking to how you maintained a really strong SEO presence during that project?

JONAS SICKLER: Yeah, I'd say it seems like we're doing this every maybe every three years or something. There's always some kind of tweaks to go through. This was one of the first really major overhauls as we launched into a new brand new category and marketing and needed to reconfigure everything. Fortunately, a lot of the blog content that we had, nothing was really changing there. One of the things we were keeping in mind is, you know, we don't want to break things unnecessarily. You don't need to. If you don't need to change your URL structures don't do it. You know, if that's definitely true, an eCommerce based website where you might be completely destroying your entire IA information architecture and reorganizing all of your product listings and categories.

If you're doing it for a good reason, then absolutely. But I suppose the main things to remember just always involve your SEO team or your SEO point of contact, or your agency. Whoever you're working with from the very beginning, bring in your UX people or work with a consultant because the UX and the SEO need to be hand in hand. Sometimes the UX side gets overlooked, because, you know, folks are trying to target certain keywords, and they're not thinking about the functionality of something like a table of contents, menu? Or how does your nav going to be working between Mobile and desktop? You want to do something sticky. But then, is the sticky going to cause something to break.

So it's just always important to make sure that you've got the right people at the table from the very beginning all the way through. And don't change things unnecessarily. Always make sure that you're doing it for a reason and the reason should be centered on your users, first and foremost.

WHITNEY BERBER: right people in the room and keeping it simple. What's needed? Right? Jeff?

JEFF COYLE: Yes, having been through not not less than hundreds of migrations, and even from things like Vignette 6 to Vignette 8 right? And those types of processes. And now a lot of

the time, you're going to a WordPress or a WordPress vip implementation. Even large publishers very recently migrated a you know, site sites that get over 100 million visits as a collective to vip and all those pains. Some big things to think about is, get anyone internally in your organization, or you- document your possible assumptions right? We don't need these old pages right? Or, Oh, these aren't even worth updating. right? Or you know, you go through that list, and you know, document them and see. You know vet them with somebody who's done this before make sure those aren't going to cause you some problems. Those are the most common ones.

By the way, if you're going from a Cms that is a little bit less modern to wordpress. You could be in a situation where you're going to be going through a URL migration. Be sure you get your entire list of current URLs, even diving deep, if you're a relatively big site getting to your logs. Get all the ways people are accessing your URL too, go through your historical migrations, build the tone for today that big list of Urls. You know why? Because then, after you launch the Via the for the WordPress site, you can go hit all those old Urls and see if they all work right?

Right? So you can do some basic stuff there. you don't have to be an expert to go hit every URL you have now, after you launched, just in case you didn't tie up any of those loose ends. be thinking about that, that and your current internal link structures, because you could change what the location of a page on your site and how prominent it is within your site's architecture and have a major impact in either direction.

WHITNEY BERBER: Absolutely, I think this is a common theme that we're seeing here right. Understanding the total technical audit of what exists today? What's the long term vision that you're moving towards? And are those changes absolutely necessary to make? Sorry Jonas, I think I cut you off?

JONAS SICKLER: Yeah, no, I just wanted to chime in. Also, because I know, Jeff, you're a huge believer in the topic cluster as well. And I think there's a lot of times that one of the big mistakes that you know, somebody might make when they're jumping in and they're pulling all this data. They might say, well, you know, here's all these pages that are getting 0 traffic, and or they don't, you know, they don't target a specific keyword. So let's just get rid of those pages, they're not converting. They get no traffic. They're worthless. But they're not realizing that those might be vital pieces of a bigger topic cluster that's building overall website authority for that entity, that topic. And if you just remove them, then all of a sudden, Google doesn't see you as the expert that you once were. or they might be you know, low volume, long tail, something that still answers a a very typical user question. And you want to be able to send people to those pages, whether or not they're getting organic traffic. They might still be a valuable touch point on the website. So those are things just to be careful of when doing a topic or overall content audit

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. understanding user behavior. And where they're going, how they're using it, how they're getting there. James, you want to jump in?

JAMES GIBBONS: Yeah. Jeff was saying collecting an inventory of all your Urls.

One way to do that effectively is, you know, going right through Google Search Console and the API. Brands have the opportunity to pull the previous 16 months of data. The smaller your website, the more comprehensive your data will be. The larger the website, Google begins to sample a little bit, but you could pull, you know, whatever Google finds, even if there may be one impression of a URL surfacing, and we pull this all the time at Quattr. And people are, there's random Dev site Urls, sub domain urls that get clicks and even impressions that brands have no idea about. So those are all ready to go. And you can run the status check on those to see if those have been broken and whatnot. Another good data source is, you know, one of the link tools: [Ahrefs](#), [Majestic](#), for example. Of course, there's the broken backlinks check to see which 404 pages have, you know, broken links.

But keep in mind all of those pages that have accumulated link equity on them, are going to be really key in some type of migration type of scenario. You know, they are kind of other doorways where Google is going to be coming in and kind of learning about the site. So sometimes they may be forgotten about, kind of in a new build. but this is where, of course, make sure the SEO team is involved. So they can really kind of champion those types of assets, because there's ways to make them even better. if they are getting those types of signals.

WHITNEY BERBER: Andrew, I know you've had your hand up.

ANDREW SHERMAN: I just want to add one little quick thing to that. So oftentimes, when we get asked to rebuild the CMS into WordPress, we're replacing another firm, and often what happens when we're replacing another firm is the right hand doesn't always know what the left hand is doing. So there's two pieces, just two things I want to add to all the excellent information everybody's given.

One is at the very beginning of your process, develop all your links, figure out what your structure is going to be your 301s. Don't wait till the end. If you wait till the end, you're going to delay your product, or it's going to be too late. And then the other thing I just want to reiterate is when you're redoing this, or if you're starting a new project with new vendors. How important it is to make sure that everybody is in communication and I can't overstate the benefit of having an initial kickoff meeting with all the stakeholders.

Because you want everybody to be talking, because otherwise things get missed. And as everybody's mentioned, even the smallest miss during that transition can tank your SEO.

JEFF COYLE: Yeah. Just want to add one thing to what Andrew said. Everything he said is super critical and illustrates that he's done this a lot. it's key, though. There's no reason why this development process with the agency should be different from an In-house Development project. If it is, that development team is going to treat you differently then maybe they treat something that was internally prioritized.

So make sure, get on the same page of how they manage development projects and see if your agency is going to be able to be an aligned fit, or if they expect something different. I'll give you a great example. When in the development process, should we have usable, mock ups, right? Some developers don't need that till later in the process, some of them required upfront in a document set. So just be aware of some gotcha there, because I can slow you down months.

WHITNEY BERBER: absolutely. Those are great points of how we can apply these and how companies and agencies can apply and work together. So let's shift gears a little bit over into the SEO tech stack. James, start with you giving your experience at Quattr.

What would you recommend to someone who's basically a one-person show, running their SEO strategy. So they got a lot on their plate. How do you recommend they work?

JAMES GIBBONS: Yes, of course, I'm a little biased because I work for the company. But I stand by the product as I've been in SEO for the past 10 years. But you know there's a lot of complexity at times in the SEO tool set. You know. You have all these things coming at you. You know, backlinks, technical, content, keywords, paid, all all these things.

And so, having kind of really robust workflows with real data and actionable insights along the way, on top of kind of the AI co-pilot, can really allow you to maybe create a multiple of content higher than you normally would.

And when brands are kind of writing that expertise and putting all of their original insights out there and beginning to build a brand, you're collecting that keyword data, that again, only you have access to. You know. No other company at times can have access to your own Google Search Console data. So when that is a, you know, clustered appropriately prioritized appropriately. You can be guided along the way. and so, you know, Quattr.com highly recommend to check us out if you haven't heard of us. and we're building solutions so that you don't have to be an SEO expert to navigate these things and still produce content and optimize your pages and kind of report on everything, with your own first party data sources instead of kind of third party keyword data sets. When you know there's an element of randomness in those data sets as well.

WHITNEY BERBER: Absolutely. That makes a lot of sense. Jonas, at Terraaket, what SEO tech stack are you all using? And what would you recommend for a one person SEO show?

JONAS SICKLER: Gosh, well, I mean one person SEO shows would certainly need the, you know, cheaper and tools that are still so flexible. So I kinda look at some of the tools that I mean, I love. I love using Google search console and I'm hesitant to say Google analytics four at this point. I won't stir that too much, but I'm in the process of learning it. But an analytics tool. So essentially, what I look for is you know, a keyword research tool. it doesn't matter which one.

You need to have something to be able to analyze keyword data. You need to have something to analyze what's happening in the Serp. So whether that's a Serp stat or it's a Google search

console or something to tell you how you're appearing. And then you'll need to be able to measure what's happening on your website. Any type of an analytics tool. And I think there's some room for some from CTA optimization. I use [Optinmonster](#). It gives me a lot of flexibility in terms of being able to generate AB tested things in the background without having to pay attention to them.

Some sort of an auditing tool. I know [Content King](#), as a great live feature [Screaming Frog](#) So anything that you can go back and look at afterwards and pull data from. I love using things like Google sheets, which is just a super simple, you know, it's free. It's cheap. And you have a lot of flexibility without having to get into subscription models and using the formulas for that.

So you know, I kinda like have a broad spectrum of things, and in terms of actual plugins I've I've used [Yoast](#) just. I want something that gives me flexibility to be able to change title tags. Do redirects, just do things that you know that'll help me not go through a developer to make things happen on the page.

Then I'm a fan of Gutenberg blocks. Because I think it, we get a lot of flexibility in design. If you use those within a WordPress blog, especially if you have access to a designer and a developer to create great functions.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, there's a common thread, and all the ones you're listing there noticing is what are ones that you can self-service right? Set up, and then you also have access to and the power and the autonomy to be able to use them right. Jeff, do you want to jump in?

JEFF COYLE: Yeah, sure. And I, everything that's been mentioned is, you know, going to be very valuable. Something that James said earlier for Google search, console. Look at Google data studio. Look at the new capabilities with the API. They may be a little bit intimidating at first. but so just put a note in there. You need to learn GSC and then the opportunities, because you can't get all the data out of Google search console without those additional add ons or software that is next to it.

Same thing with analytics and data studio, Google data studio. Be thinking about that. It was mentioned in the chat [Screaming frog](#). [Sitebulb](#) would be good comparable, check out both of those offerings.

I have a [webinar recording with the founder of sitebulb](#), which we will link to. It talks through how to do content audits with that. The screaming frog is really intuitive as well. as far as content audits and content inventories on the fly, you know, it's [MarketMuse](#). Obviously. But you really, if you want to understand where you're strong and weak where you have opportunities to build those are things that we uniquely provide. And we provide personalized metrics for difficulty. And how much investment you're gonna need to make. So that when Andrew gives you your top three priorities from his audit. You know how much is going to cost for you to have to build a successful content strategy.

But really, investments in time efficiency when you're a one person team—most important. So you may use something, and it just doesn't work for you. Don't give up on it. If it doesn't work for you. If you're going to invest in something, make sure you can get to adoption on that product before you give up on it. It's seen so many people try to use seven or eight different tools. They put in a half hearted effort into them. And they don't ever become experts using those solutions. That's a really, really, really big path to lose. So don't spread out your time on seven different products that use one thing, make a bet. If, after you adopt it doesn't work, then move on.

Do a quick evaluation. Don't do a long evaluation, because a long evaluation, if it doesn't work, is a long loss.

WHITNEY BERBER: Andrew, I saw you unmute yourself.

ANDREW SHERMAN: Oh, no, I I was just going to add that a very basic or a very good tool that we use for companies of all sizes is [SEMRush](#)

Just in general for keyword. I'm a big fan of Google search console for this. I think it's underused. I think most people. So we've come across many clients who didn't when we were first introduced them, didn't even know what it was let alone have it installed, and the wealth of information that they realized that they were missing out on once they got it, and you can connect SEMRush to all these tools.

So that's the only thing that all the other tools everybody's mentioned is great. I think it was Jeff who said, though the effect of whatever tool you use, stick with it and try to become an expert in it, because it's better to know one or two tools really well, then, six or seven tools kind of meh. You'll get much further if you can focus in on what's achievable as opposed to trying to achieve what you can't do as one person.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, the learning curve is real for all of these technologies. For all of us.

ANDREW SHERMAN: Yes, and constantly shifting. And that's another challenge.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, and knowing what all exists with them. Well, I think, Jonas, you kind of teed up our next topic a little bit. and your answer discussing. Yes,

But I think let's talk a little bit about SEO plugins. We all know that there's a lot of them within the WordPress Plugin Directory. So Jeff, what is MarketMuse successfully using these days that you'd like to call out to this crowd?

JEFF COYLE: oh, gosh for SEO so many things. My gosh, What are we using for plugins on our sites? We've used [all in one SEO](#) we've used [Yoast](#), we've used [RankMath](#).

We've had plugins, for, you know we've tried to evaluate all of them. you know, because we need these things to be effective. I think for us, for a smaller team, these things you want to get into the details of the functions that you're going to use or that you know you have a need for. And I think the only other exception would be cost. How many sites are you managing to decide on these all in one plugins?

If you're going to evaluate software solely whether it has a WordPress plugin or not, separately. I would caution against that. You really want to build it based on the merit of the outcomes, and how you can integrate it into your workflow.

That's where I've had the most success with some of these platforms, Yoast specifically, is pairing it with some data from other solutions. Don't expect that you know the 15 point oil change car checkup to actually provide actionable insights as well. Some of those are made for people just starting out to find, you know, you know, a dead body in the yard. It's not necessarily something that's going to provide value all the time. It's that one time check. Is that really worth your ongoing support?

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, I mean, would you say it's a little bit of pairing to our previous question. The martech that you're using, along with which plugins make the most sense based off the data that you're looking into. Right?

JEFF COYLE: Yeah. Well, you gotta understand. For those three solutions, specifically, they're playing a bloody war in one space, right? So they will all have promoted features, and they'll all be constantly evolving and from a product management perspective, trying to get to feature parity. And then why, we're different. So know the features that are parity, and then know the features that make them unique. As those get more mature, what happens is the price comes down right? And so that's keep. Keep an eye on those things, because you may see one feature as it doesn't really matter, or I've already got that in good in a good place. So it's not adding unique, differentiated value. So you want to find the features that are differentiated, unique value for you.

And when you do, that's gonna allow you to pick your weapon.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, that's great advice. Probably speaking to a lot of people on the Webinar.

JEFF COYLE: These solutions specifically, sorry to get a little bit. But to add on, when you're a newer. A newer entry is going to have a lower price point as well, so really, this is a big deal. This is, you know, the thing that you're going to rely on for managing your URL structures for managing your redirects, for managing your breadcrumbs. You know these are important baseline items that if you don't get right, plan for many of them, us on this call isn't gonna work. So keep that in mind.

WHITNEY BERBER: Jonas.

JONAS SICKLER: yeah. And I was gonna say, like, when evaluating any kind of plug in or tool, don't look at the plugins complete feature list because they're gonna sell you on all kinds of cool stuff that you're never probably gonna use.

So think about how you're gonna use the tool feasibly. If you're a one man show, you know one woman show, you're not gonna have time to be able to do a lot of that stuff, so don't don't buy it just because you see all these bells and whistles. But think you know, how am I actually going to use this? And how is it going to get me results?

WHITNEY BERBER: yeah, that makes a lot of sense, Andrew. Sorry. I think I cut you off.

ANDREW SHERMAN: Oh, no. But I I was gonna just kind of reiterate. I'll tell a quick story. I have a brother who loves technology and he'll spend like nine months looking for a TV that has all these features, and when he finally gets the TV, all he does is turn it on and watch it.

So he's wasted a lot of time. He's spent a lot of time for a lot of features, a lot of integrations that he's never going to use, and the same is true with the Plugins. And I know that sometimes people, Yoast being the most popular. There's always the question, do I get Yoast premium? And Yoast premium has a lot of really really good features.

But if you're not going to use them, or you're just gonna have to use them. You're gonna do harm to your SEO. So you have to again go back to that original principle. Are you going to use the content analysis tools? Are you like, Yoast Academy, which comes with your premium for a one person shop, has great videos and great diy tools, and you could, if you're trying to teach yourself, those are really really good.

But again, I think it just comes back to when deciding which Plugin you're going to use is, try to narrow down to the features and the things that you can achieve. Look for scalable plugins that may do some of the things you want in the future. But don't overshoot in the beginning, because there's nothing more frustrating than those clients we try to go all in. They think they can do everything, and then they hit that wall of frustration when they don't get those results because they haven't done the basic things like, Alt tag all their images

Because they miss out on the very basic, low-hanging fruit.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, absolutely. I think I probably helped a lot of people today on the call. The Plugin world is vas. and you just very much simplified it. What are you gonna use? What's insightful? What's helpful for you personally?

All right, let's jump into the million dollar question. What are each of you currently doing to improve your search engine readings? Andrew, do you want to start with where you're focused at, either with your own agency or you want to talk about the advice you're giving your clients?

ANDREW SHERMAN: So, it's pretty much the same. First of all we are obviously constantly trying to update our technology and coding to make sure it's unified and we get as much value from it on the technical side. Updating our images to improve performance. Looking at, you know, reorganizing our page structure. One of the things we do for a lot of brick and mortar clients is, we lean a lot more into local search using, you know, all my business and other things that can enhance your organic SEO beyond just the keyword world.

And then finally, particularly in a lot of these worlds like fitness and marketing. These are very, very crowded verticals, and there's only so much room on the first page, and a lot of people have a lot of authority that they've been working on for decades. And so, sometimes what we'll do is just using Google itself will look for long tail search terms that aren't as popular, but may be more refined and try to go after those and own those spaces rather than coming in 50th on something that we have very little chance of competing against because of who else is there.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, that's great advice. A lot of really crowded verticals and spaces. How do you differentiate yourself? Especially in those long tail keywords.

Jeff? Do you want to add?

JEFF COYLE: Well, I can speak to how to differentiate, especially in those tough worlds. But yeah, so effectively, you want to know what it means to be an expert. And you want to drag that expertise out of your brain or your teammates brains. Make sure that it's making its way to your website, right? That's how you're going to differentiate, differentiate knowing your customers.

So where your competitor maybe this as a basic guide and then clearly don't know what they're talking about. But maybe they're outperforming you? Well, you make a guide for every one of the user groups. So you dial one number higher when you're weaker, when you're going more consistently, when you're going to chop down those trees.

That's what we do every day. We build those foundations of authority on core topics by telling the story of expertise for the entire buyer journey. Don't be afraid to over cover something when you've got a lot to say. The differentiation is critical. That's what we do. That's what we live is we're constantly looking at our own inventory. It's not simply looking at our competitors, not to copy them, like some tools in the market might want you to do, right. We're doing that to be able to differentiate and to be able to say, I know, and I'm confident that every page that I create is equal to, or better than, all of my competitors. Every time.

WHITNEY BERBER: That's great, Jonas?

JONAS SICKLER: yeah. And I'll say that. You know one of the things that we're looking at right now on our own website at Terakeet, is just after having launched the new owned asset optimization marketing category. Now we have to go back and look at all of the content that we

created previously and say, Does this align with, Is it more SEO enterprise SEO focused? Or does it align with our current mission? How can we update and refresh that content because it doesn't help anybody. you know, if we get a lot of traffic to a page and we're ranking really well, but it's not aligned with our service. Who cares? They're not going to be. they're not. Gonna it's not going to resonate.

So now we have to go back. And not only, you know, is it important if you, if you're doing your job as an SEO, what you wrote two years ago, it sucks now, so you need to go back, and you need to re-evaluate it according to has intent. Changed. Is our people searching differently? We just came through a pandemic. Maybe what they were looking for previously is not what they're looking for now. Maybe it's gone from more product to more comparison, because they're not going in stores anymore where they can ask associates questions.

Now, they have to do that research online. So everything is kind of shifting. So I say, you know, going back and looking at what you've previously written. Is it up to snuff? And is it in line with your brand, and is it the best you can do for your audience to keep them engaged on your website, because, you know, we're also looking at navigation in terms of like blog navigation. So it's great if you rank really well, and you get somebody to your article. Now, what?

That's not the endpoint. The, you want to send them to the next article will anticipate their question, what's next? How can you help them find more of your content on your website, on your blog through strong search and strong navigation facet of navigation things that will help them discover more. So they don't have to go back to Google, and then hopefully return to your site, again.

WHITNEY BERBER: gosh! That's spot on, that's great, and also takes us back to what we were talking about, more towards the beginning of the webinar, just knowing what all exists. Always have an inventory out there. And how do you need to shift? Based on what's changing in the world? Right? James?

JAMES GIBBONS: Yeah. One of the things that we're doing on the Quattr.com website for our own purposes is just a lot of internal linking. We built a technology, you know, related from the Google Search Console work that we've done to leverage all of that keyword data, all that page data to semantically map and connect the pages via internal link mappings. And one really great use of the AI. The generative AI is with the anchor text creation as fed by the GSC Keywords per page. So this not only is good for SEO, building out those kind of topical clusters, but it's also good from a conversion standpoint, because the content is just so related. So we're deploying in on clients, deploying this contact for internal linking. But it's also driving sales because it is so semantically related.

One other thing, too. like, I said, with the pages that have high external backlinks, definitely prime those to identify where to link from because those are kind of powerful pages linked to from other websites. You definitely want to prioritize internal linking on those pages out to other parts of your website.

WHITNEY BERBER: Absolutely. It's a really good call. It feels like internal linking is one of those low hanging fruits you can do, but always gets missed right.

JEFF COYLE: Always gets missed. Let me just add one thing. WordPress default creates things called the clips, and the archives alright. So, WordPress default. If you don't optimize internal links as your pages get older, they will be devalue, because they are only available on page N of the archives.

Right? So you're gonna have to dive deeper and deeper. And what does that tell? The search engine tells them that those pages aren't as important anymore. So historically, some teams have gone. Okay. Well, old pages decay. They're just old. Maybe it's because of your internal linking. If something's important, it can be updated as Jonas mentioned. Make sure you tell the search engines it is important pointing links to it and wait for me to it. James mentioned, and I put it in the chat. answering those next questions elegantly, weaves your pages together so that you tell the story of which pages are important every time.

That's why his recommendation is spot on.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, you're you're actually, you're already teeing up our next topic here. I mean, we all know SEO results take time. sometimes a frustrating amount of time. Right? Let's see, let's Jonas, if you want to start here with us. What KPIs, are you consistently tracking that indicate success for your site?

JONAS SICKLER: I kind of tend to look at things from, you know, there's the traditional, you know. Are you getting impressions, then? Are you getting what's like? What's happening in the Serp? Are you getting impressions? Are you getting clicks? What's happening on your website? Are you getting page views? but I kind of like to think broader than that. or maybe the other way around. More narrow.

For us we don't have, we don't service customers outside of the United States. It doesn't make any sense for me to look at total page views. It's a vanity metric. if 99% of the traffic is coming from outside the Us. Then I'm not doing my job. So I report rather on the big metrics, I kind of look at the metrics that make the most sense for us, and so I guess that would be my recommendation. and maybe put less, put less focus on things that are vanity metrics like impressions that aren't actually business results.

But understand them. Understand how they influence the rest of the funnel, because if you are getting impressions, then you know where you can influence to get clicks, and then, when you're getting clicks, you can understand, are they the right ones? And then, which pages are driving clicks from my target audience? And how can I filter out the noise and I think this is something that Andrew you were talking about earlier with prioritizing. All right. And don't you know, if you've got a whole lot of content, that is in one topic area and the first number of pages are

driving clicks that are outside of your target audience. Maybe you need to re-examine that and then deprioritize those and then prioritize things that are coming from your target audience. or if you're getting certain content that has almost no engagement.

It's highly informational, and those might end up being gobbled up by AI serp features in the future at some point and look at. Look at those trends and sort of figure out, how can I prioritize the things that are actually more important to my audience, whether those are downloads instead of form fills, or if their email subscribes, you know, look at the things that matter to your business model and don't try to use generic across the board signals that everyone else uses that might not apply to you.

It's not exactly. I know it's not an exact answer that everybody might have wanted they wanted which metrics. But it really does kind of depend on your business model.

ANDREW SHERMAN: Yeah, I couldn't agree with what Jonas is saying more about the importance of knowing what you're looking for, knowing what your conversion actually is. Is your conversion a page view? Is it a form field? Is it a form sign up? So a lot of times like Jonas said, people care about the wrong metrics. You don't care if you have a form, you're trying to get people to convert it, and you get tons of people to your page. That's not the important thing that you need to know.

The important thing is, why aren't? Why are they getting? They are not converting? So defining what you want to do upfront instead of, we like to say, building the plane as it's flying will give you a much smoother landing. It's really really important to just know what you're looking for. And I think that Jonas said it best when it's just. It's not just the default to narrate stats that tell the story. You need to look a little bit deeper and understand.

WHITNEY BERBER: James?.

JAMES GIBBONS: Yes, So of course, you know, eventually some executive. Cmo, CEO is gonna be like, Okay, are we making money? Are we driving leads? What is the impact? Right? But sometimes that takes time to get there. So you know, it's important to kind of have an awareness of some of these leading indicators that can really inform and forecast if that's even going to be possible against the target.

With Google search console again. It's a gold mine of data. But just going into the Google search for Google search console UI. You cannot find some of this information, you have to use your own scripting, or you know, great technology. And so, for example, yes, you may know all your money pages. You can analyze the keywords, mapping to those pages. And you can see the evolution of these keywords in Google. Are they still on page? Have they moved to page 5. Are they now on page 3? Are they now on page one. How do you time? That so you can know, moving forward if we make this blog according to all of our previous blogs last quarter, we got to page one, in 45 days, for example, so understanding kind of those leading indicators of search

with the real first-party GSC data, and even add sometimes to get that conversion early signal. it can be really insightful.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, that's just to reiterate. I think that's super important, like, what story are you trying to tell? And also, how do you wade through the noise of the vanity metrics. So know which metrics you're actually focused on, instead of what you're just trying to put a check mark next against to make you sound good. I think that was a really good point, Jonas, about looking at the US traffic rather than just what else is coming in from internationally, or else you could be looking really good, but not able to make strong business decisions.

Jeff, anything to add before we move on from Kpi perspective?

JEFF COYLE: Yeah, they would be. It really a lot of teams will measure pages by themselves instead of measuring them as groups. And they actually work together.

So when you're doing an effective reporting practice, for individual pages don't only report them as individual items because they work together. If they're all trying to achieve the same thing, they're all in one by our journey. Make sure that they're being reported as a group as well as individual. And that's gonna give you a solid, much more solid view. It'll also voids you know, team members, you know, trying to separate their pages versus your pages, the siloing, and all that kind of stuff. So well, you know you, you heard that if your demand, if you're a demand Gen. Lead or your lead, gently, it says, why are we creating this early stage awareness content? We're creating those definitions. They don't generate any leads. You know you got this problem that I'm describing right now. so you got to make sure you report. Well alright, get ahead of that, get ahead of them.

WHITNEY BERBER: Jonas?

JONAS SICKLER: I was just gonna add that that's awesome that is that is so true, because everyone does that, they do that they like, you know, we've recently dug into one of our customers. In the finance space.

We looked at all of the pages on their website. And we said, Well, which ones are driving revenue? What's the business value per page? And we noticed there was like for the top three pages. We're driving about 30, some 35% of all of the the revenue from the blog. Then the next 10 pages. We're driving about like 25%. But then there was some 30 plus percent of I think it was almost 40% of the next 1,400 pages. So the vast majority of pages on the site were contributing more value than the other ones. But they're smaller. It's incremental. So you have to think about, you know, this page might only be contributing a small bit. But you throw all those chips on the pile, and all of a sudden you realize that they have tremendous value outside of it,

And also, then you know the value that I think we need to remember to report against the sort of there's the value beyond metrics, things like customer insights, and the building of brand equity

and messaging control, and so many hard things to be able to you that you just can't put a number on, but those are an incredibly important piece of the marketing story. That SEO can help influence.

JEFF COYLE: James, before you hop in. I need you just need to report to Jonas. because he had mentioned me. It's one of my favorite things to do when I see a competitor go through a migration. and they delete a bunch of pages they shouldn't. or they deep prioritize a bunch of phases they shouldn't have and they are infrastructure. It was. It's like taking a big jack camera and cracking your foundation. because that gives me a unique opportunity. And you know, creating content strategies for hundreds and hundreds of companies when you see those things happening. And they might delete it because it doesn't get a lot of traffic, but it's critical to the infrastructure of their site. So just keep an eye on. Don't be the person cracking. Your own foundation happens all the time.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, there's gonna be a holistic view, right? That you're looking at can't just be 1, two metrics. How does it impact the whole business, James, do you want to add something before we move on?

JAMES GIBBONS: One quick thing I forgot to mention is, you know, with the paid data to you know, with the technology, you can kind of combine all of your Google Ads data completely with your Google search console data. And you get the revenue per keyword in the Ads data, and it checks. It just takes some engineering to extrapolate to your SEO keywords. So now you have, you know which keywords are actually having a purchase intent kind of lead generation intent.

And with the AI you can cluster that. So then you could literally model all of your Google acquisition Channel agnostic? So if you're not combining paid and organic together, that's definitely a milestone to cross at some point kind of on your journey through search.

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, great point, great point. Going back to the holistic user journey.

I feel like we should keep going out for many more hours, but we technically have less than five min left. There has been a lot of really good audience questions. Let's see if we can dive into a couple of those just whoever wants to answer, I'll throw them out. Whoever wants to jump in.

First one I really like, What bothers you the most about SEO? What? What annoys you?

JEFF COYLE: other than Twitter? No, But I, I'll say, is, is, is they're trying to rush to the end. This is my big thing. It's happening a lot right now.

Trying to go from a keyword to a draft. We forgot the entire editorial process. So maybe you don't know the editorial process. Maybe you don't have a content strategy. There's a lot of abuse happening by SEOs unfortunately, right now and trying to get to a finished content product without considering what I used to do it and trying to improve those processes. So if I give one

piece of advice. It's I don't think that you can go from word page and it's just going to be an editing process because you've never done a developmental edit yourself in 95% of the cases.

If you don't know what a developmental edit is, you shouldn't even go down that road until you learn a few editorial processes. I might sound a little preachy but it's because I've seen this happen at the largest editorial teams in the world all the way down to 1, two -person shows and they're all jumping to the end, and it's causing some irreparable damage.

So if you're going into, going to build lots of content. And you think you're just going to get there by editing graphs: that you're generating, you have another thing coming and feel free to reach out to me. If you have a specific use case, you want to talk about.

WHITNEY BERBER: Andrew?

ANDREW SHERMAN: I was just gonna say the one of the it's more of a frustration we run in from from our end is just making sure that people understand that SEO organic SEO is a marathon. It's not a sprint.

It's very, very different from pay. You can't expect to get the same results within a couple of weeks that you get for paying to get to the front of the line and also sometimes people don't understand. You know, we do a lot of restaurants, too, and they're like we sell pizza. I'm like, you're not gonna get past Papa John's, Domino's and all those—you have to understand where your audience. So the reality of what you can and can't do is often one of the challenges that we have. Like you. We all have those people come to and say, Hey, here's for \$500 a month. Could you get me on the first page of Google because I got an email that told me they could do it and explain to people. The reality of the labor that goes into doing SEO organically, properly. And then it's more than just keywords and title tags, it is a challenge.

WHITNEY BERBER: I feel like that should be, Lexi. The next title of our webinar, SEO is a marathon. Oh, I see. James Jonas any last few, I know we just got a minute left. Anything you want to add before we wrap up?

JONAS SICKLER: Yeah, I can say that I would love it if the entire content and SEO community started thinking about, when they create content, think about it as an investment, an equity building investment. It's not something like when you run an ad and somebody clicks the ad, and you get a return on that investment in that period of time. Creating a piece of content thoughtfully and publishing it that answers questions is something that you do once. And then, yeah, you have to go back and revisit it once in a while.

But the long term equity, measuring that against a year or two years, or five years, and start thinking about how much value you're going to get out of that single piece of content over the long term with minimal up to updates, potentially rather than just seeing it as you know, a one month it's been in live for a month. And how did it compare this one to our paid ads this month?

WHITNEY BERBER: Yeah, and building the last. James?

JAMES GIBBONS: Yeah, and real quick. You know, I would challenge people to. Let's say you're writing some long form content. Do you really need to start it with what is keyword? I think that that's becoming kind of a meme in my own mind at least, kind of with all this content coming out, and I think one excuse. You know some people may not be subject matter. Experts may not like to always write.

Now, you don't need to write, you could literally just do audio recording. Send it through to the tech, and the tech will transcode that into notes, outlines, even blocks. So you know, now, there's kind of no excuse to get that kind of subject matter expertise out of the brain, so to speak. Even the AI can track that now which is interesting. But yeah, if you can't write it, you can talk about it, potentially with a lot more velocity.

WHITNEY BERBER: Absolutely. Well, y'all this has been amazing. It's gone by super fast. Thank you so much for spending the past hour with us, and for sharing all of your knowledge and expertise. I know the chat has just been blowing up with ideas and questions. So thank you all, Lexi. Anything you want to call out before we wrap.

LEXI MOSTEK : Nope. Thank you again for everyone. great panel of experts and people that know SEO way better than I do myself. just a reminder. We've got one more webinar as part of this series tomorrow on technical SEO. how to address it, what to think, what to talk about. and then we'll be posting all of the recordings here. So if you missed anything, or what any of the resources mentioned But if not, thank you so much. Have a great rest of your Wednesday and catch all next time. Thank you.

WHITNEY BERBER: Bye, thanks. Y'all