

The Organic Growth Playbook: Building Brand Authority in the Age of AI

Prepared By:

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A Little Bit About Me



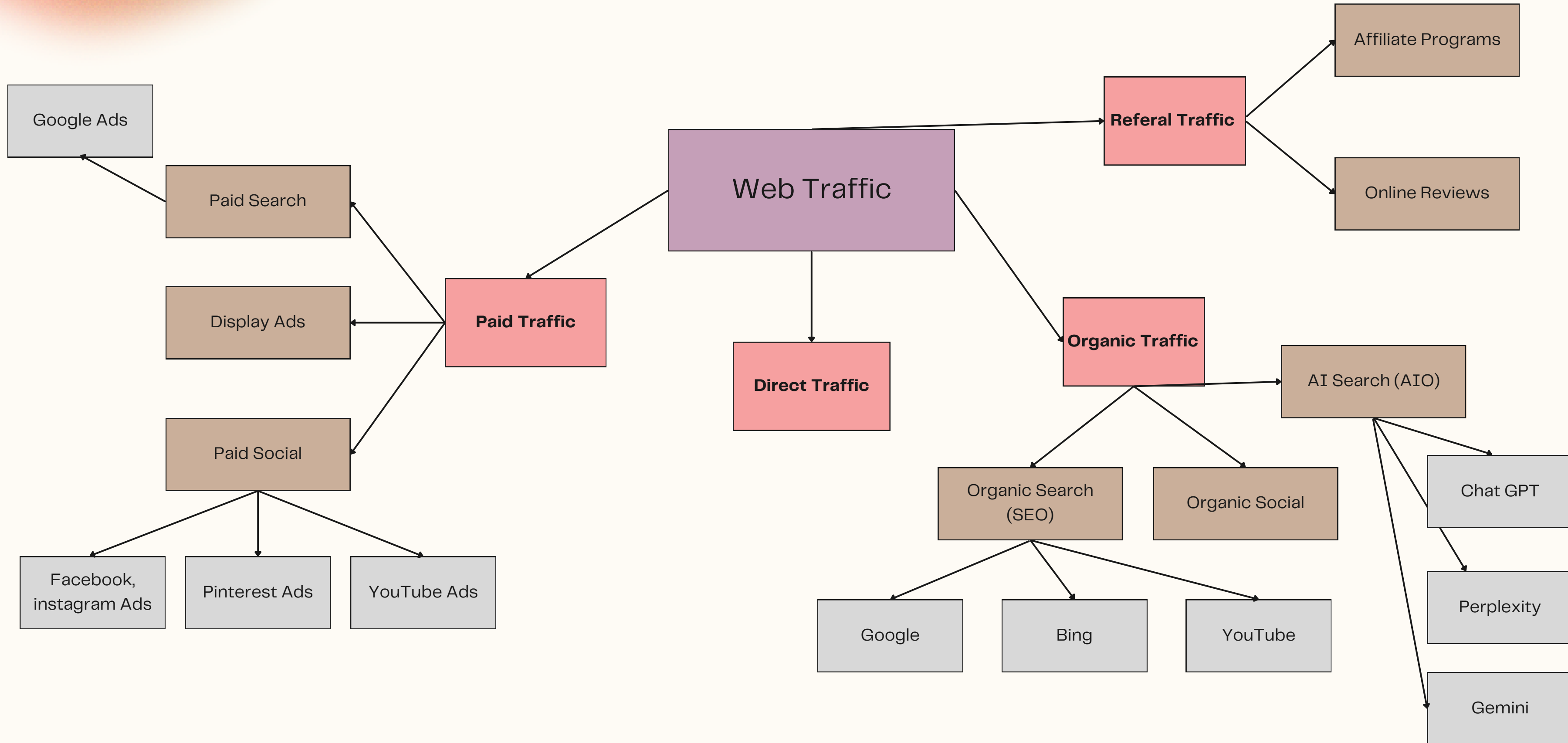
Agenda

- Why is SEO Still Important in 2026?
- Types of Web Traffic
- How Search Engines & AI Search Work
- Search Behaviour is Evolving
- Things that Matter in SEO
- Content Strategy
- Website Architecture
- Technical SEO
- Case Study – Hudson's Bay
- Digital PR
- Why Build with WordPress
- Key Takeaways

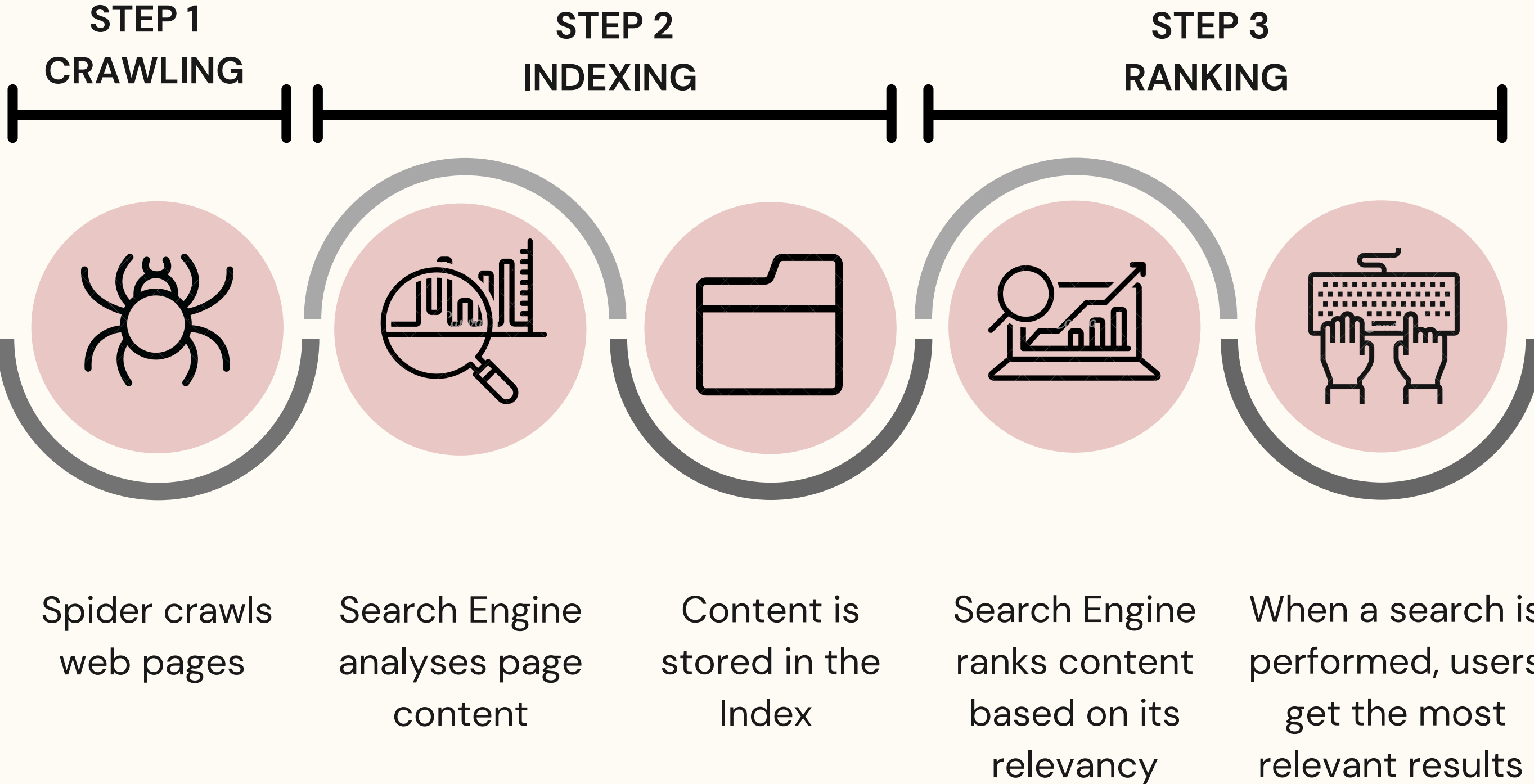


Why is SEO Still Important in 2026?

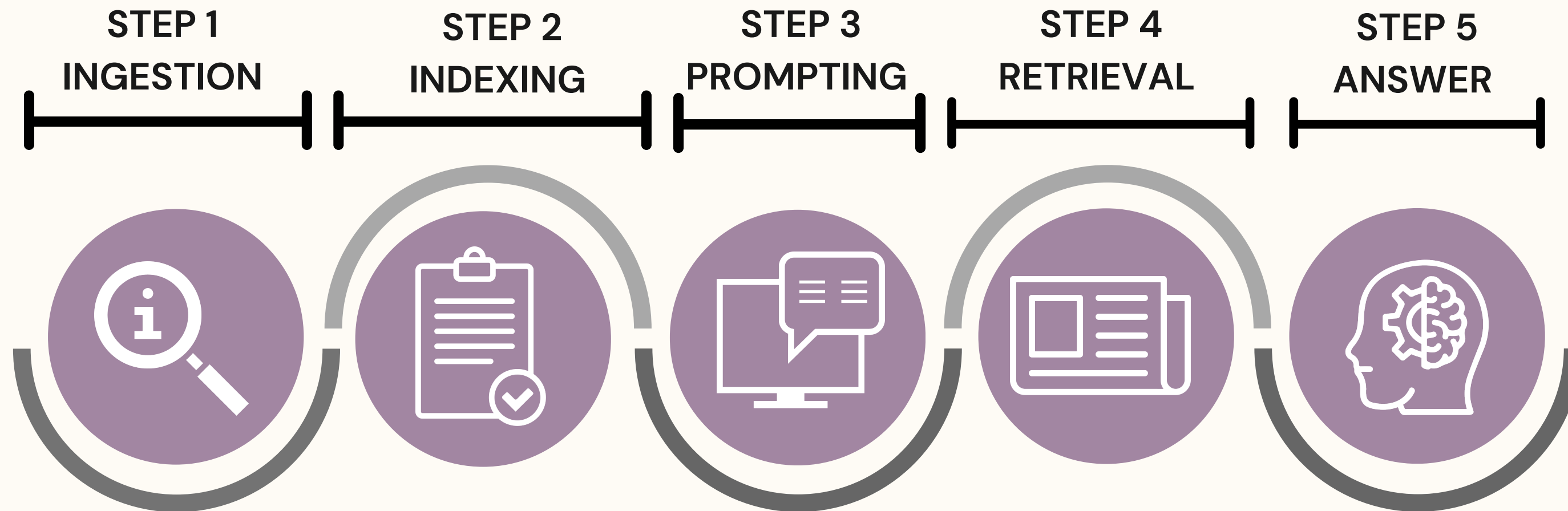
Types of Web Traffic



How Search Engines Work



How LLM Search Works



LLMs are trained on vast amounts of public and licensed text

Text is broken into tokens and embedded into a multi-dimensional vector space

When a user enters a query, LLM searches its library semantically

LLM finds the closest "conceptual matches" based on meaning, tone, and context

The LLM assembles a natural-language response based on the most relevant patterns

Why is SEO Important?

For Businesses:

- It's a relatively cheaper way to get web traffic = customers.
- SEO is a long-term strategy, and the traffic you get is evergreen.
- Organic traffic is usually highly relevant and converts at a higher rate.

For You:

- It's a great Entrepreneurial tool.
- Knowing SEO will give you a competitive advantage in the world of business since you'll know how to acquire customers cost-effectively.

Search Result Examples

Paid Search:

- “Pay to play”
- Biddable, auction-based media
- Listed as “sponsored” listings
- Flexibility in traffic: max bids, quality score

The screenshot shows a search engine results page for the query "car insurance toronto". At the top, there is a search bar with the query and navigation icons. Below the search bar, the results are categorized into three sections:

- AI Overview:** A summary of car insurance in Toronto, mentioning that it is mandatory and high, with provincial averages near \$1,927. It lists key insurers like Intact Insurance, Co-operators, TD Insurance, and Sonnet Insurance. It also mentions options for bundling, telematics, and standard liability coverage. Rates vary based on vehicle, driver age, and experience. A small "Intact Insurance +5" badge is visible.
- Sponsored Results:** Two sponsored listings are shown. The first is from TD Insurance, titled "TD Car Insurance - Buy Car Insurance Online", with a sub-headline "We've Made Things Easy And We'll Provide Help & Support To Guide You..." and a deal of "5% off Eligible Coverage*". The second is from Square One, titled "Toronto Auto Insurance - Only Available In Ontario", with a sub-headline "Your time matters, and so does your car. Get a personalized auto insurance quote in 5 min."
- Organic Search Results:** Two organic results are shown. The first is from TD Insurance, titled "1 Car Insurance Toronto: Get a Quote", with a sub-headline "Are you looking for car insurance in Toronto? Get a 5% discount on eligible coverage* by completing an insurance quote online." The second is from Ratehub.ca, titled "2 Compare the Best Toronto Car Insurance Quotes for Free", with a sub-headline "Jan 17, 2024 — The best car insurance companies in Toronto ; Economical Insurance, 121 King St W Suite 1400, Toronto, ON M5H 3T9, 1-800-268-8801 ; Intact ...".

AI Search:

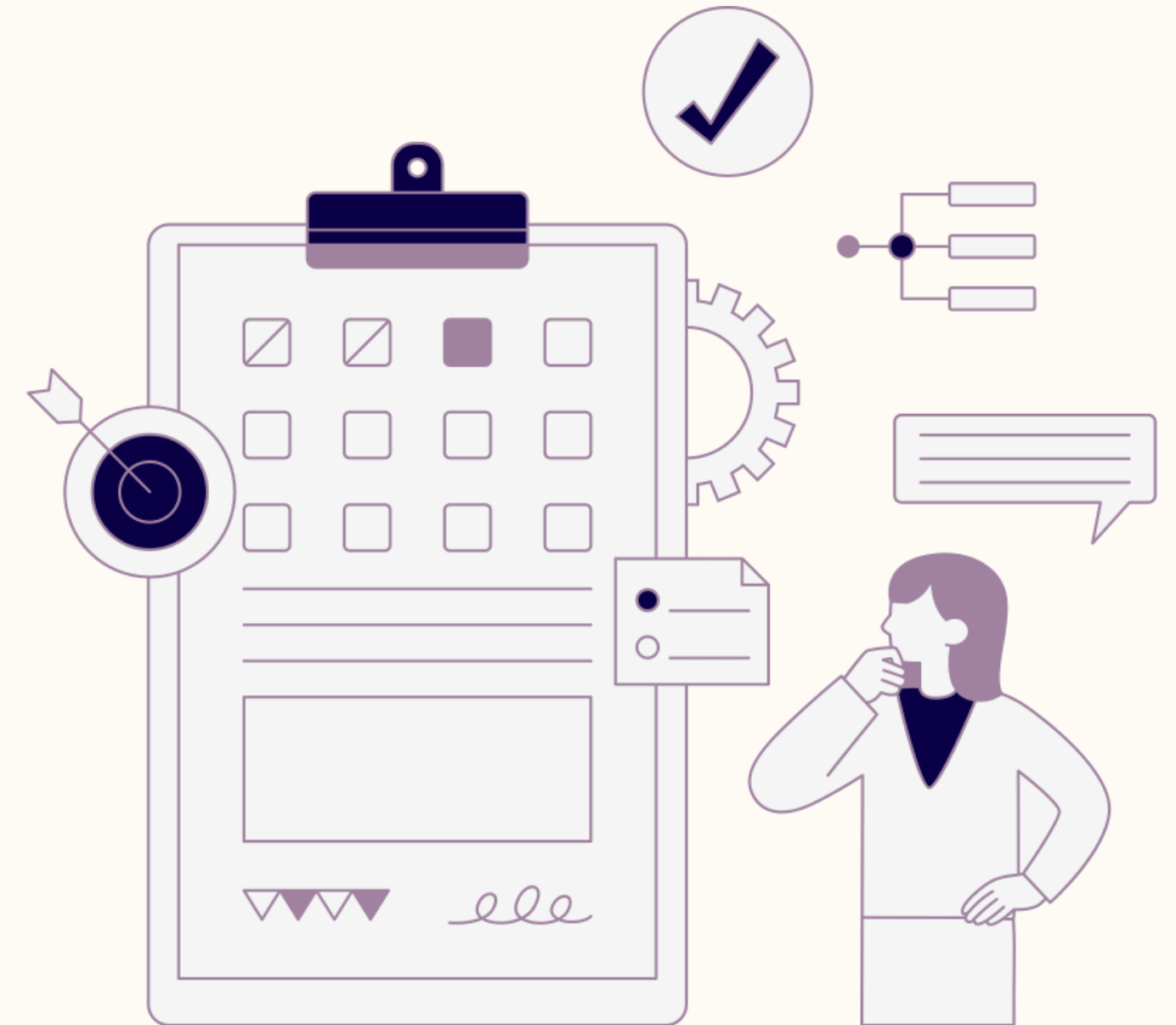
- Show up naturally (FREE)
- High-quality content that satisfies E-E-A-T standards
- Content formatting and schema is important

Organic Search Results:

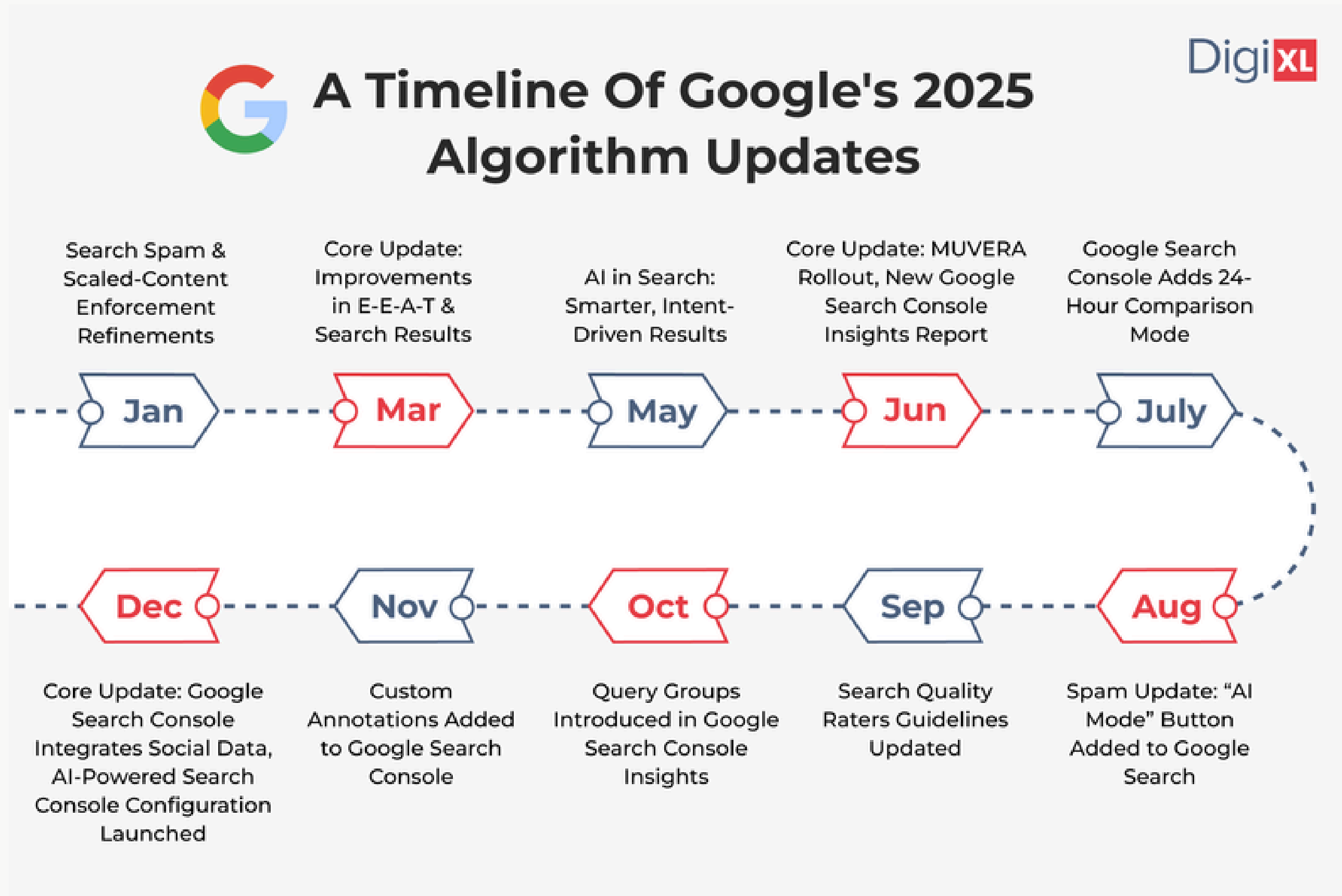
- Show up naturally (FREE)
- Content quality and website authority drive rankings
- Higher CTRs (click-through-rate)
- Harder to control

E-E-A-T Importance

- **Experience:** Considers the creator's first-hand, real-world involvement with the topic, such as personally using a product or visiting a location.
- **Expertise:** Evaluates the extent of knowledge, skills, or credentials the content creator possesses.
- **Authoritativeness:** Refers to the reputation of the creator or website as a go-to source within their specific field.
- **Trustworthiness:** The most critical pillar, focusing on the accuracy, transparency, and security of the content and site.



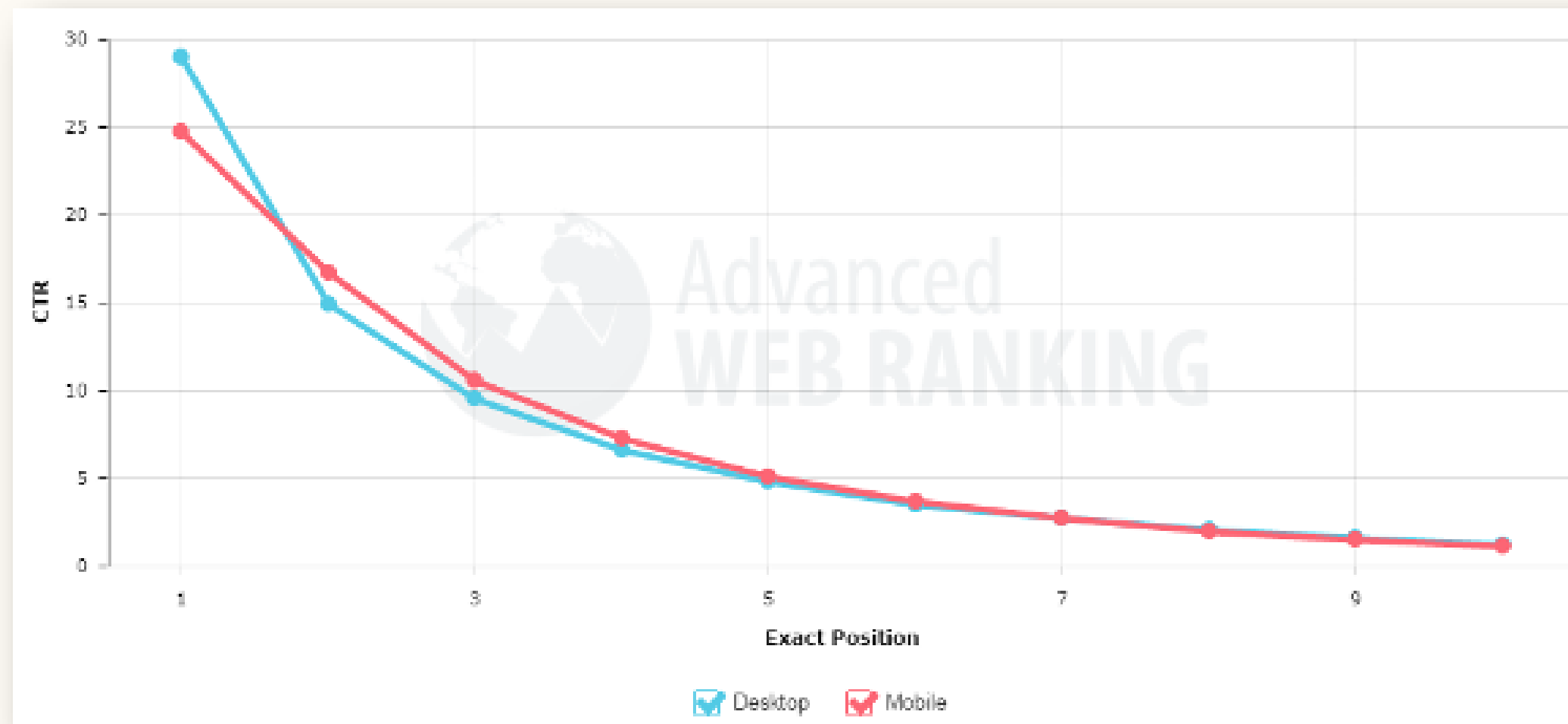
Google Constantly Changes its Algorithm



Ranking in the Top 5 Positions Is Crucial

Click-through rate decreases significantly with each increasing position in search engine results

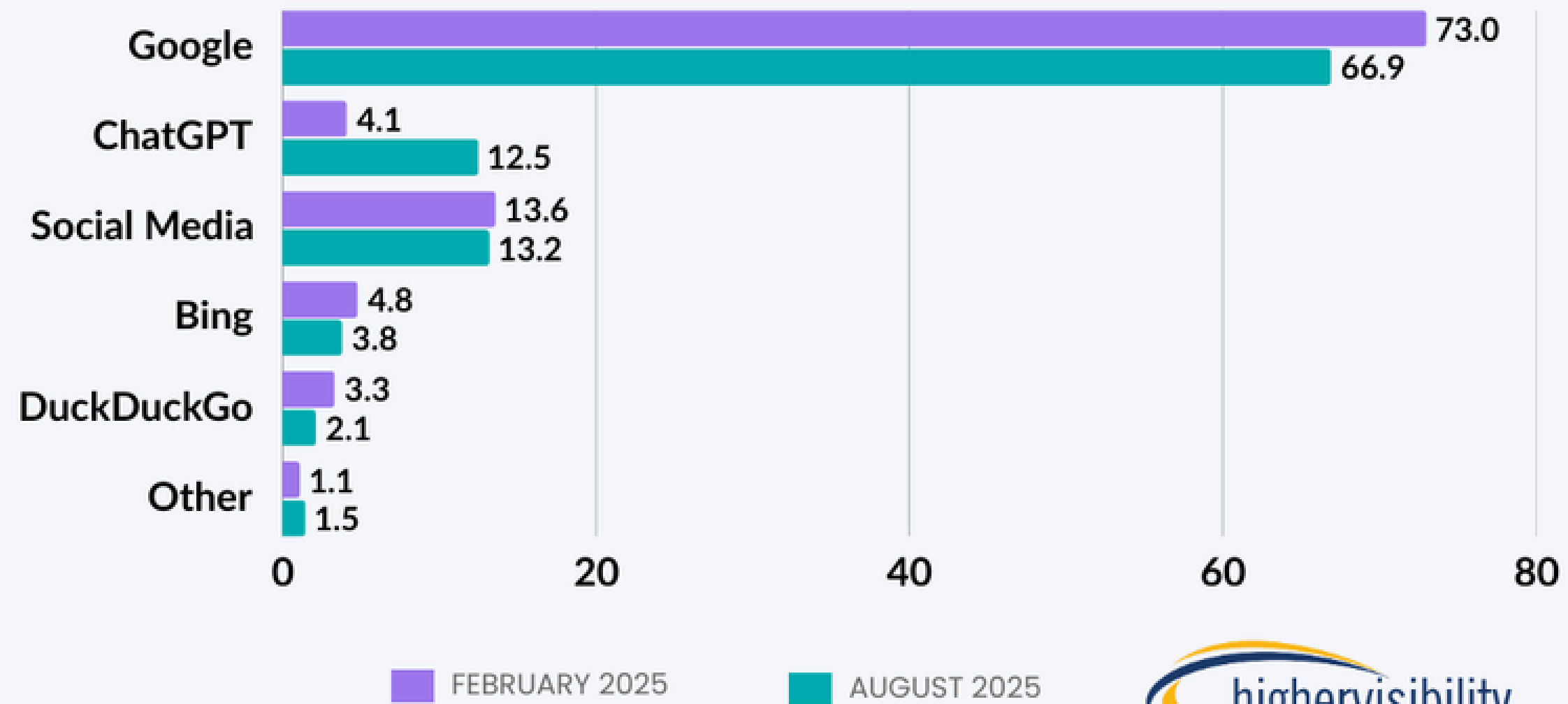
- 29% CTR on Desktop for top ranking position
- 25% CTR on Mobile for top ranking position



Search Behaviour is Evolving

SEARCH PLATFORM PREFERENCE

INFORMATIONAL SEARCHES



The "Reddit & Social" Search Pillar

- **Why it Matters:** Google's "Hidden Gems" update and their \$60M/year Reddit partnership mean real human discourse often outranks traditional blogs.
- **The Trust Loop:** If users search "[Product] + Reddit," and your brand is being discussed positively, it acts as the ultimate E-E-A-T signal to Google.
- **Execution Strategy:**
 - **Listen First:** Use social listening to identify common pain points in subreddits.
 - **Add Value, Don't Spam:** Participate as experts (not marketers) to build brand "Entity" authority.
 - **The Content Mirror:** Use top Reddit threads to inform your next SEO content piece—answer what people are actually debating.
- **Outcome:** Owning the "Digital Shelf" where actual purchase decisions are made.



**How can We Control the
Organic Search Results?**

We Can't...
but We can Optimize Our
Websites to Have a Higher
Chance of Ranking
Organically.

Things In SEO That Matter

Content Strategy	Website Architecture	Technical SEO	Digital PR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keyword Research• Content Calendar• Content Production• On-page SEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build your website with a logical link structure• Internal Linking strategy• Avoid having “orphan pages”• XML Sitemap• Robots.txt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broken pages• Incorrect Redirects• Server Issues• Indexing Issues• Canonical tags	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domain Authority is one of the most important ranking factors• Backlinks from reputable sources help increase your domain authority

Keyword Research

Keyword research is the process of discovering words and phrases that people use in search engines with the ultimate goal of optimizing content around those terms.

Keyword research impacts every other SEO task that you perform, including finding content topics, on-page SEO, and outreach and promotion.



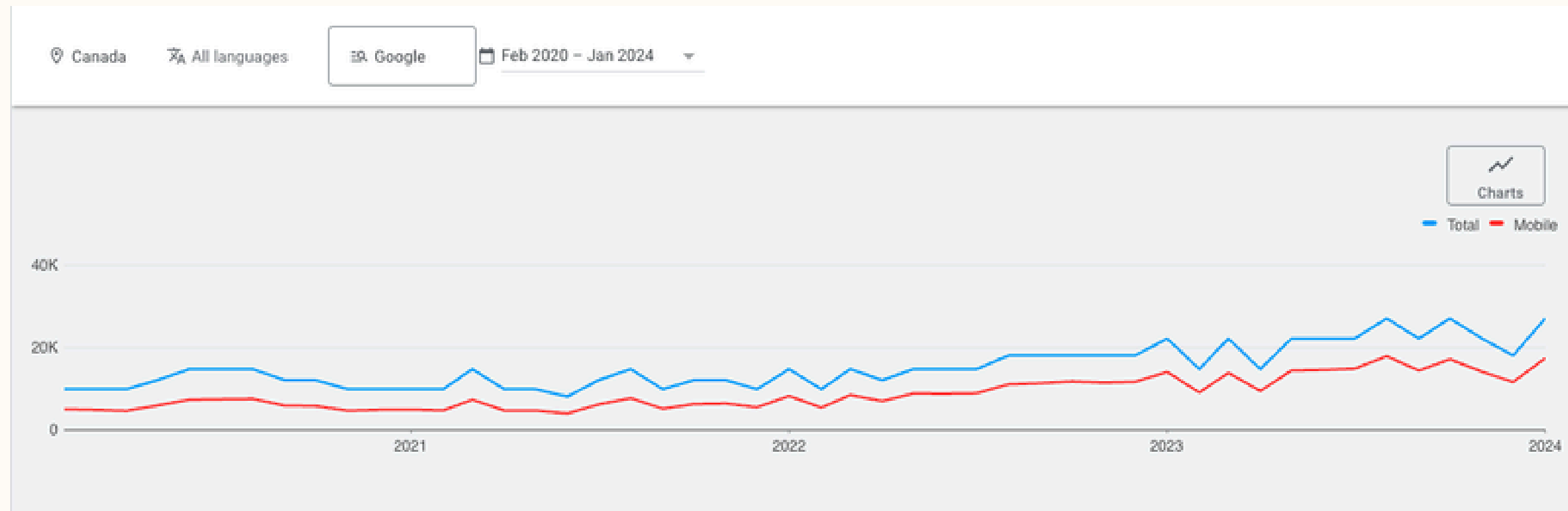
Keyword Research Example

Keyword	Topic	Keyword Intent	Monthly Search Volume
car insurance quotes	car insurance	commercial	14,800
how much is car insurance in ontario	car insurance	informational	1,000
license plate renewal	licensing	informational/commercial	14,800
ontario blood alcohol limit	driving rules	informational	590

Google Ads 360 Keyword Planner

Use **Google Keyword Planner** to conduct keyword research as well as look at the current trends.

It's a free tool.



Google Keyword Planner, 2026

On-Page SEO

Below are key on-page SEO elements you need to focus on:

Optimized URLs

Make sure your URLs have a clear structure and contain a focus keyword.

Title Tags

Keep your Title Tags under a 60 character limit, and make sure that your keyword and brand name is featured.

Meta Descriptions

Keep your meta descriptions brief and ideally under 160 character limit. Use your focus keyword, and shortly describe why a user should visit your page.

Heading Tags

H1 tag, the first heading of the webpage, should often mimic your title tag as it describes what the page is all about.

Use Google Extensions

Use **Google Extensions** to check the on-page SEO elements on the website quickly.

Our team at Juicebox created the Juicebox SEO Assistant to make that process simple and fast for everyone. It's a free extension.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `mychoice.ca/insurance/car/`. The page content includes the mychoice logo, navigation links for Auto, Home, and Life, a 4.9 star rating with 50+ ratings on Google, and a main heading: "Your Car Insurance. Your Choice." Below the heading is a form for entering a postal code (A1A 1A1) and a "View My Quote" button. A security notice states "Secure. No Spam. No Fees." and a section titled "Why You Can Trust MyChoice" is partially visible at the bottom.

The Juicebox SEO Assistant extension is overlaid on the right side of the browser. It features the Juicebox GROUP logo and the title "SEO Assistant". It has three buttons: "On-Page Summary", "Headings", and "Images". Below these buttons, it displays the following information:

- Page URL:** `https://www.mychoice.ca/insurance/car/`
- Title Tag:** Cheap Car Insurance Canada - Best Quotes Online | MyChoice (58/60 chars)
- Meta Description:** Your choice of auto insurance in Canada. Compare low rates from the best providers. Click and enter your postal code to start saving! (133/150 chars)
- Canonical Tag:** (The text is partially cut off in the image)

Using LLMs for Content Creation

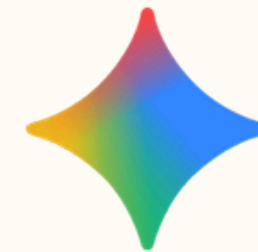
AI Content generation is technically not against Google's guidelines as long as you provide value to your website's visitors. However, you should tread carefully, content generated by LLMs leaves a trail that is detectable in some cases.

You can, however, use it to speed the process of your content briefing or data interpretation processes.

Use Midjourney and Dalle to create appealing digital graphics and images.

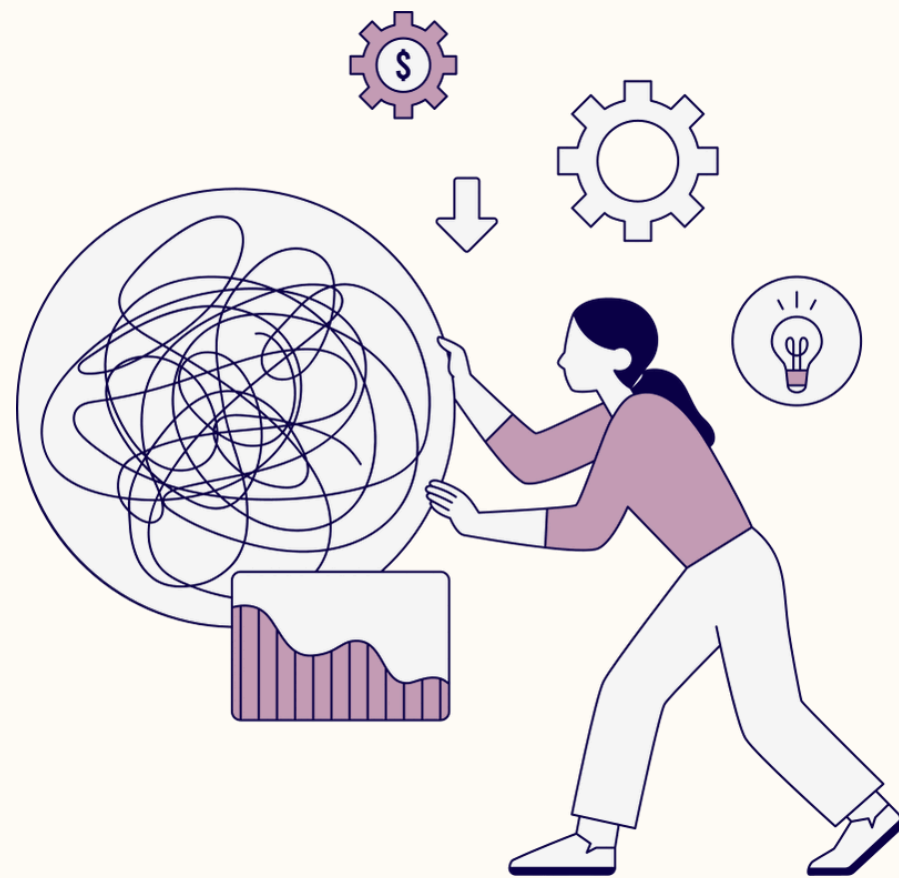


ChatGPT



Gemini

Website Architecture



Build your site with a logical link structure.

Every page should be reachable from at least one static text link.

Your site should make sense to navigate.

Your homepage should link to your other important pages (about, content, services).

Be Strategic about how you pass the link “value” from one page to another.

Your services page should list and link to pages describing individual services.

Robots.txt

The robots.txt file, also known as the robots exclusion protocol or standard, is a text file that tells web robots (most often search engines) which pages on your site to crawl. It also tells web robots which pages not to crawl.

You can check a website's robots.txt file by typing the domain in question and adding /robots.txt.

```
Sitemap: https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_index.xml

User-agent: *

Allow: /account/login
Disallow: /account/
Disallow: /search
Disallow: /cart
Disallow: /checkout
Disallow: /orderconfirm
Disallow: /wishlist
Disallow: /on/demandware.store/
Disallow: /c/*_*
Disallow: /*_*?cgid
Disallow: /*cgid*

# Search refinement URL Parameters
Disallow: /*pmin*
Disallow: /*pmax*
Disallow: /*prefn2*
Disallow: /*prefn3*
Disallow: /*prefn4*
Disallow: /*prefv2*
Disallow: /*prefv3*
Disallow: /*prefv4*
Disallow: /*srule*
```

<https://www.thebay.com/robots.txt>

XML Sitemap

XML Sitemap – file provides search engines with a clear and defined outline of each page on the website. This file assists search engines in crawling and indexing each URL on a website.

You can check if a website has a sitemap by typing the domain in question and adding /sitemap.xml.

This XML file does not appear to have any style information associated with it. The document tree is shown below.

```
▼<sitemapindex xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_0-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_1-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_2-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_3-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_4-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_5-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  ▼<sitemap>
    <loc>https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_6-product.xml</loc>
    <lastmod>2024-02-13T12:55:09+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
</sitemapindex>
```

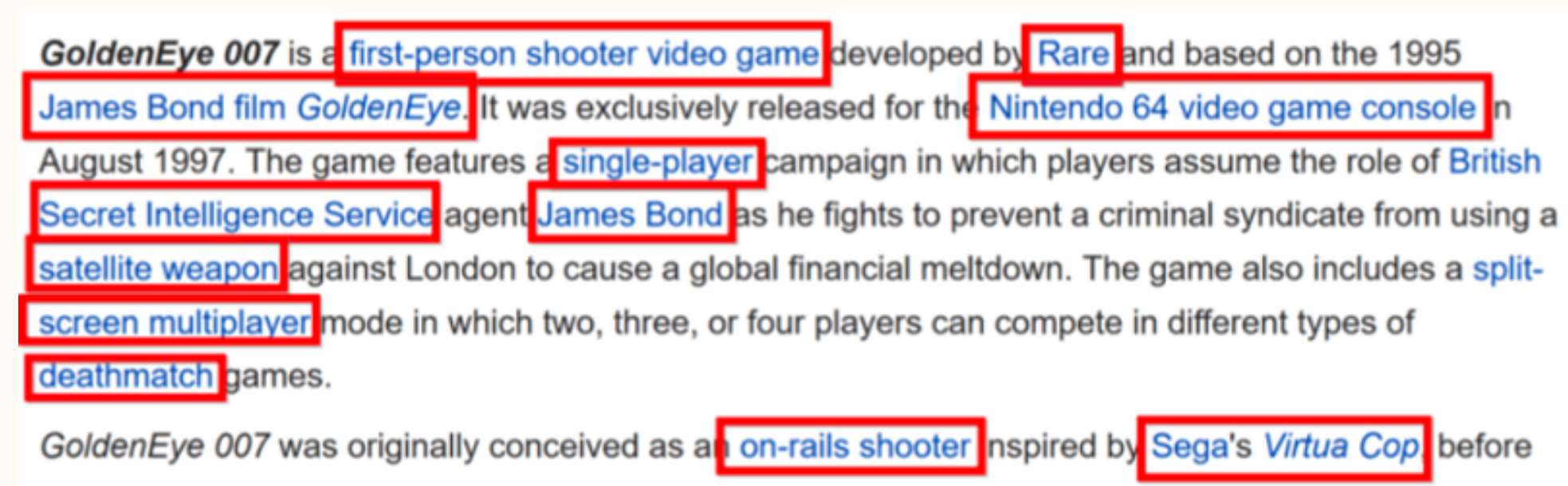
https://www.thebay.com/sitemap_index.xml

Internal Linking Strategy

Internal links are hyperlinks that point to pages on the same domain. Internal links help Google find, index and understand all of the pages on your site.

If you use them strategically, internal links can send page authority (also known as Page Rank) to important pages.

Example: Wikipedia is a good example of a site that uses internal links.



Technical SEO Analysis

Technical SEO analysis is the process of identifying issues that prevent your website from ranking. The intent is to find ways of making it easier for search engines to access, crawl, interpret and index your website without any problems.

The main goal of **technical SEO analysis** is to optimize the infrastructure of a website.

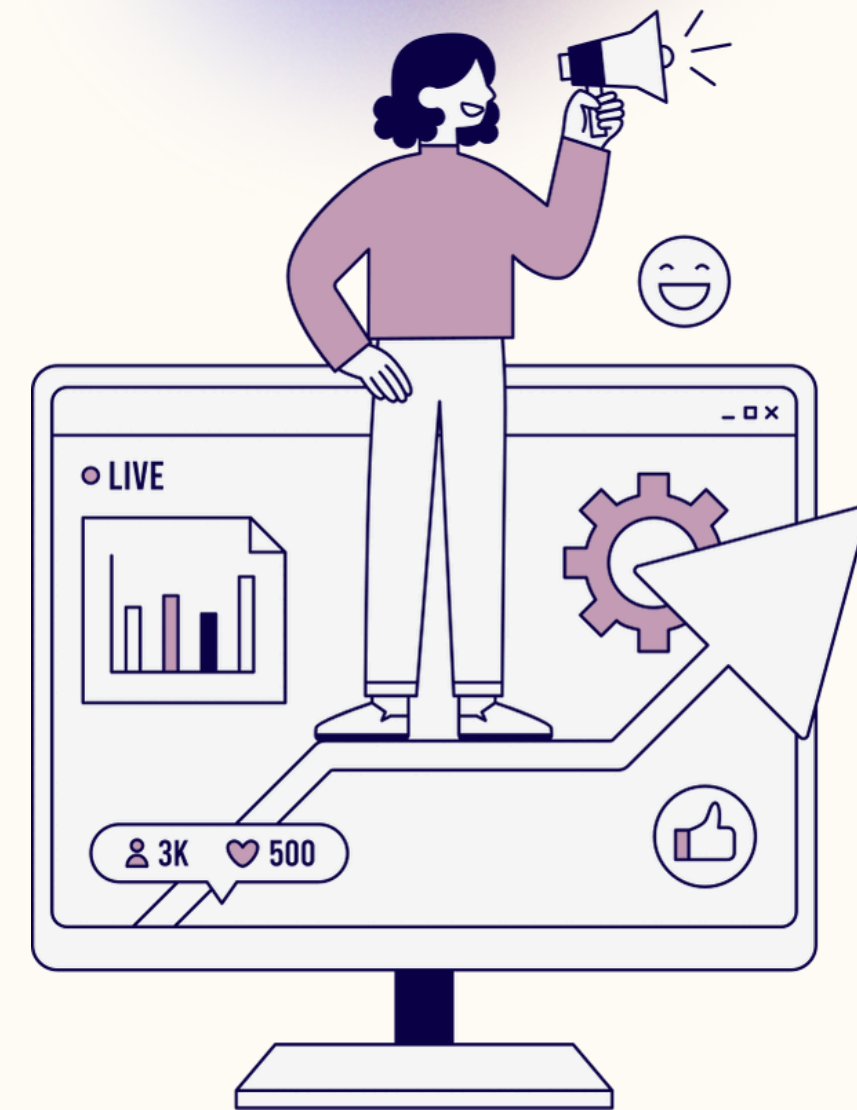


Broken Pages/Redirects

Broken pages, more commonly called "404" pages, are the pages you are trying to open that cannot be found on the server.

One way to fix broken pages is to redirect them to the next best page based on content relevancy.

Redirects with a status code "301" are used to communicate to a search engine that one page no longer exists, and that we want the search engine to index a different page that we are redirecting to.



Canonical Tags

A canonical URL refers to an HTML link element, with the attribute of rel="canonical" (also known as a canonical tag), found in the <head> element of your client's webpage.

It specifies their preferred URL to search engines and can be used when similar content is being displayed. If there is no similar content, it is best practice to self-reference a URL.

```
27 </script>
28 <!-- End Google Tag Manager for WordPress by gtm4wp.com -->
29 <!-- This site is optimized with the Yoast SEO Premium plugin v12.4 - https://yoast.
30 <meta name="description" content="On the lookout for Spring&#039;s trending fashion
31 <meta name="robots" content="max-snippet:1, max-image-preview:large, max-video-prev
32 <link rel="canonical" href="https://www.rakuten.ca/blog/trending-fashion/" />
33 <meta property="og:locale" content="en_US" />
34 <meta property="og:type" content="article" />
35 <meta property="og:title" content="Trending Fashion Finds - The Savvy Shopper" />
36 <meta property="og:description" content="On the lookout for Spring&#039;s trending
37 <meta property="og:url" content="https://www.rakuten.ca/blog/trending-fashion/" />
38 <meta property="og:site_name" content="The Savvy Shopper" />
```

Case Study – Hudson's Bay

OVERVIEW:

Juicebox Group has partnered with the iconic Canadian department store – The Bay, working on www.thebay.com from Jan 2022 until Jan 2023.

THE CHALLENGE:

We were tasked with increasing the Bay's organic traffic by improving their SEO. The Bay's website has tens of thousands of pages which would have taken us months to optimize manually.

THE STRATEGY:

After conducting a comprehensive content gap audit, we used our development resources to make all the necessary changes across tens of thousands of The Bay's PLPs.

THE OUTCOME:

The website's refinement organic traffic increased 10 times, bringing an incremental \$1.5 million in organic revenue to the brand.

Women's Sweaters

Women's Purple Sweaters

Womens Cropped Sweaters

Women's Cotton Sweaters



Digital PR

It's fair to say if you ever expect to make any real headway with SEO, **you need a link-building strategy.**

The question is, how do you create one?

There are a lot of ways to go about it, and everyone has their opinion on which aspects you should focus.



Link Building Fundamentals

Backlinks are the Key Ranking Factor

In 2026, building links is about sending trust signals for your brand.

Aim to Get Links from Trusted Resources

Google treats backlinks from .edu or .gov resources better than others as they come from an educational or governmental organization.

Not all Links have Equal Value

Dofollow links have more value than nofollow links.

Chose Backlinks Carefully

You don't want to get a backlink from a spammy resource (PBN) that doesn't have any real organic traffic. That will be considered a "red flag" in the algorithm.

How to Start Link Building Today

Q&A Websites

Sites like Quora and Reddit can build a few nofollow links that can also send you traffic. You obviously want to mention your website as a source in your answer.

Local Listings & Directories

Submit your site to local listings. You already know about the big ones (like Yelp). But there are literally thousands of these. Keep an eye out for sites that focus on your city or province.

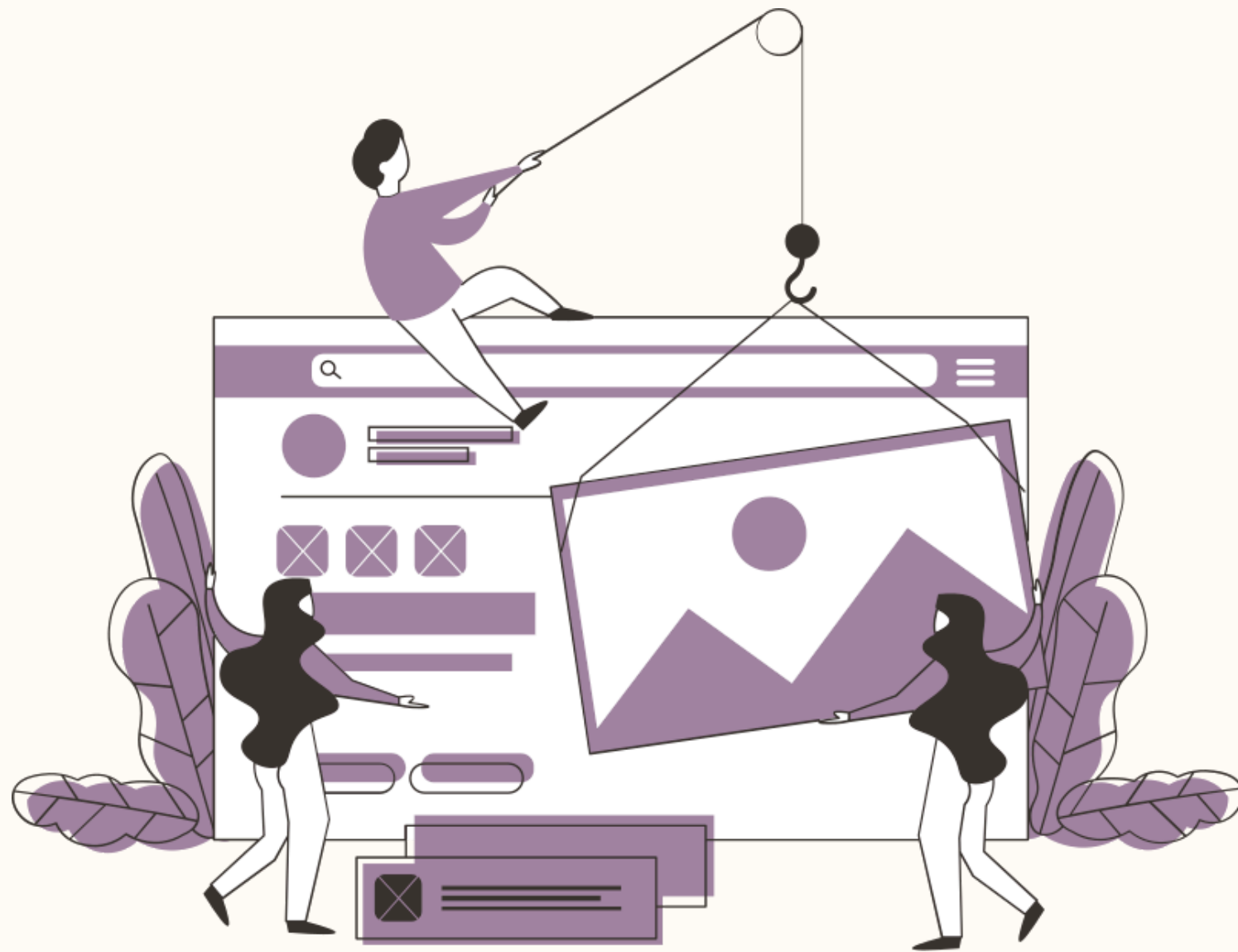
Guest Blogging

Guest posting still has its place as a link building tactic.

Associations and Organizations

Are you a member of an association or organization? If so, find out if they link out to their list of members. And ask them to add you to their list. In fact, it's sometimes worth joining an organization just to get a link.

Why Build With WordPress?



Security

Contrary to some misconceptions, WordPress is a secure platform when properly managed. While it uses PHP, which some consider outdated, it remains one of the most widely used programming languages in the world and is consistently updated.

SEO

WordPress is SEO-friendly right out of the box, offering tools and plugins such as Yoast SEO that help optimize on-page SEO elements like meta tags, sitemaps, and structured data.

Why Build With WordPress?

Page Speed

WordPress offers a range of optimization tools and plugins (i.e. WP Rocket) that can help enhance the loading speed, and it's possible to get good results with it.

Plugins

One of the standout features of WordPress is the extensive library of plugins available, offering endless possibilities for additional functionality.



Key Takeaways From Me

There are no Tricks in SEO

If someone's talking about a "cheatcode", the Google team might know about it and have implemented tweaks in its algorithm to try to catch it.

Creating Good UX is How you Win

Search Engines will always favour websites that provide the best experience to users because it's their job to do so.

Start Your Own Website/Project

The best way to learn is through practicing, testing and seeing how things work in the real world.

SEO is a Great Entrepreneurial Skill

Whether you want to work on your own projects or join a startup/ other businesses, knowing SEO will always be a great asset on your resume.

Good Reads & Podcasts

SEO Thought Leaders to follow:

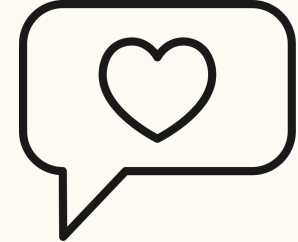
Matt Diggity
@mattdiggityseo

Charles Floate
@Charles_SEO

Business podcasts:

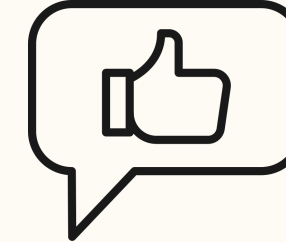


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Thank You!
Questions?