



The State of SEO: Adapting to a Changing Landscape

October 5, 2023

Agenda

- 01** Intro to SEO
- 02** Industry and Algorithm Updates
- 03** How to Adapt
- 04** Looking to the Future of SEO
- 05** Open Discussion



What is SEO?

SEO stands for **Search Engine Optimization**

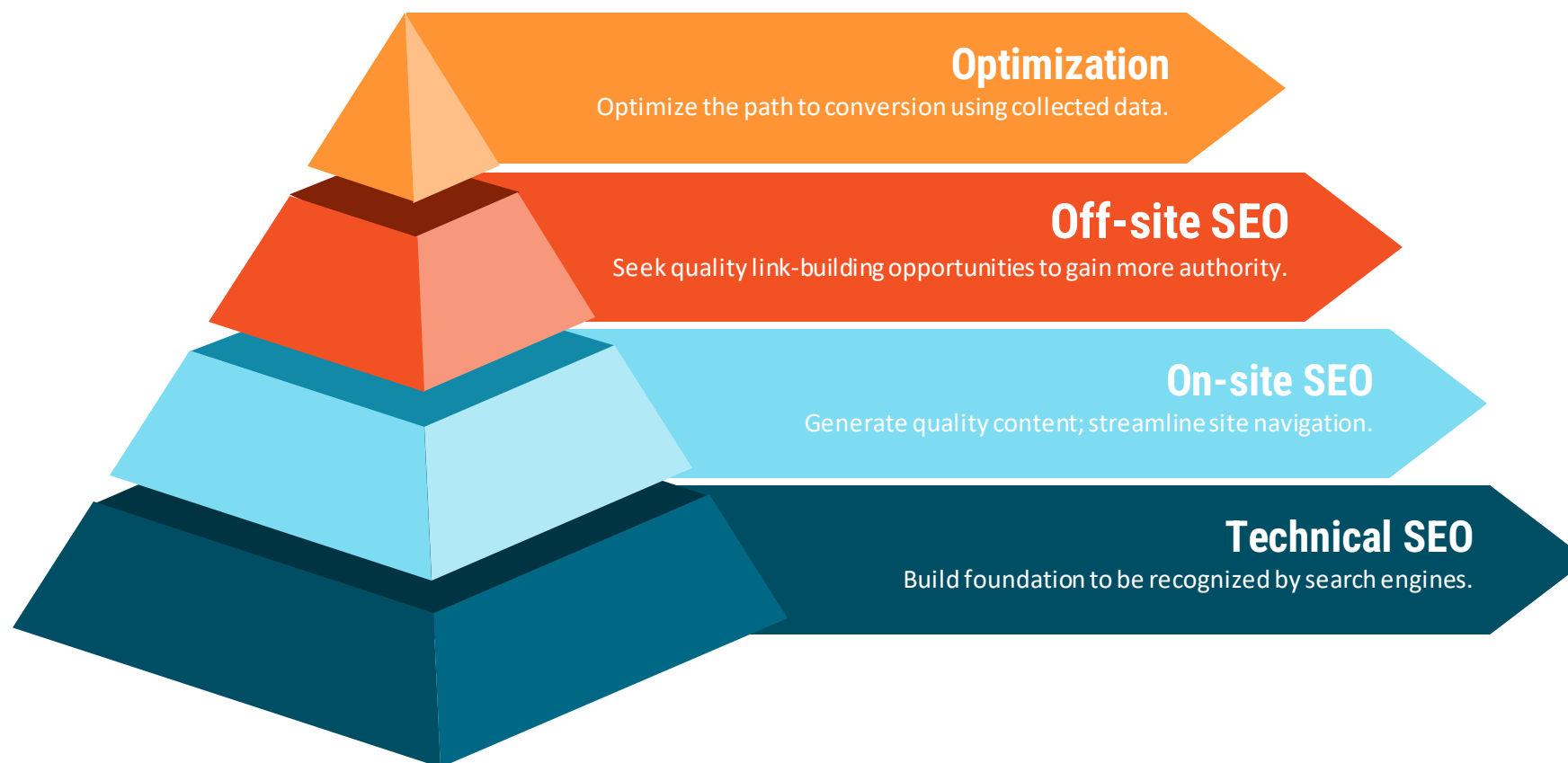
The purpose of SEO is to improve a site's **rankings in a search results page (SERP)** with a variety of strategic optimizations, with the end goal of **driving traffic from high-intent users clicking on organic listings**.

91%

Of all search traffic goes through Google

SEO success begins with a strong foundation

Start with **technical SEO** to ensure crawlers and users can effectively navigate the site. Then use keywords and analytics to create **data-driven content**. From there, we want to ensure that content gets the appropriate attention it deserves through **off-site SEO initiatives**. Finally, we continually work to improve conversion paths for users on site through **conversion rate optimization**.



Why SEO is important to your brand



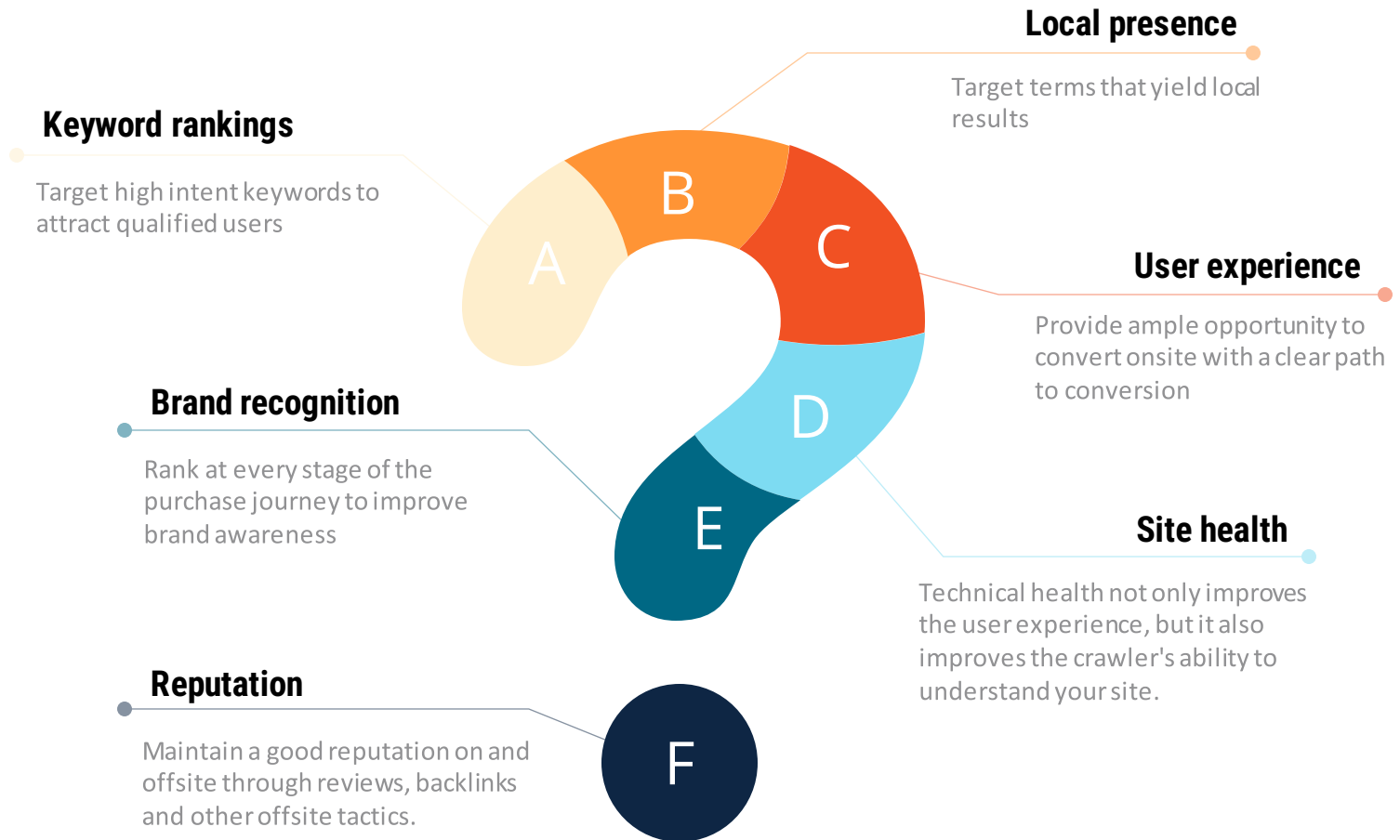
SEO improves a website's visibility and rankings driving **organic traffic**, resulting in **increased brand exposure** and **potential conversions**.



More visibility **enhances brand credibility** and **trust**, leading to **higher conversion rates** and **repeat business**.



By monitoring and optimizing the outlined elements, SEO provides a **cost-effective approach** where you don't have to "pay to play".





Increasing performance & efficiencies with an SEO/SEM combined strategy

Consolidating paid and organic management:

1. Both channels can compliment each other
2. Paid search campaigns can deliver results quickly while SEO focuses on long-term growth
3. Improve visibility at the top-fold of the SERP with paid ads and organic listings ranking next to each other
4. Leverages content built for blogs, podcasts, media and allows the paid team to complement the efforts with new paid keywords, ad copy, landing page testing, and more.

Testing is critical across all channels, and working synergistically together with the paid and organic teams helps consolidate keyword testing and drive quicker, more accurate results.



#1

MAINTAINED FIRST
POSITION IN THE
SERPS

+37%

INCREASE IN ORGANIC
CLICKS

\$38K

IN REVENUE FROM UPPER
FUNNEL TERMS

Case study

A Holistic Approach to Performance

GOAL:

1. Maintain organic rankings on keywords that we were no longer receiving a paid budget
2. Bid on more expensive upper funnel, seasonal terms

SUCCESS METRICS:

- Primary KPI – Branded keyword rankings
- Secondary KPI – Organic clicks

BOOYAH PROCESS:

Travel Client X engages in Paid and Organic services with Booyah. The paid team, wanted to do more with Travel Client X in paid search however, had no additional budget to work with. The Organic team maintained high-ranking positions for branded terms in order for the paid team to reduce their budget on these terms and bid on upper funnel non-brand terms instead. This allowed for a balance between strong brand coverage, as well as attaining brand growth on otherwise inaccessible keywords due to budget restrictions.

This cohesive strategy opened the opportunity for the Paid team utilized Organic insights and data in order to accomplish their goal while the Organic team continued to optimize and maintain a highly visible brand presence in the SERPs.

booyah

Ongoing management is necessary

SEO requires hands-on management as well as SEM



Algorithms change

Search engines regularly update their algorithms to provide relevant search results to users. This means that the **strategies and techniques that work today may not be as effective in the future**. Therefore, ongoing optimizations are necessary to adapt to changes to maintain and improve rankings.



Competitors optimize

Competitors are also investing in SEO, making it crucial to **stay proactive and continuously optimize your website and content**. By targeting specific keywords that match your customer's intent, you can increase your visibility within your target audience and remain competitive.



Content gets outdated

Overtime, content naturally becomes outdated or no longer relevant to current trends, information, or user search queries. **Search engines prioritize fresh and up-to-date information** when rankings websites in the SERPs.



Regularly monitoring, analyzing, and optimizing are required to ensure performance and sustained visibility in search engine results.



Industry and Algorithm Updates

Organic search in 2023 and beyond

When we say Google is constantly updating its algorithm...

5,000

Search algorithm updates in 2021

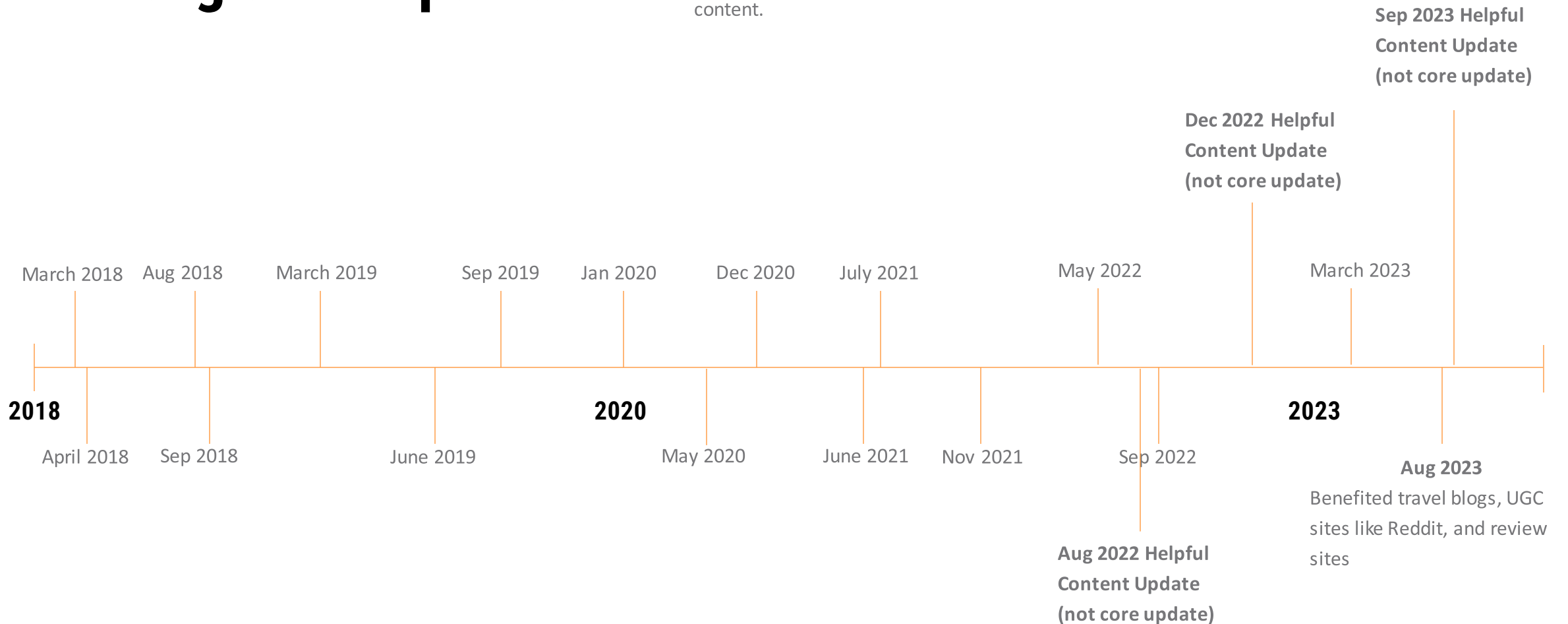
13

Average updates per day

A short history of Google core updates



Core updates are broad updates to Google's algorithm that help to ensure that **search results are reliable and helpful**, where helpful content updates tend to focus on demoting unhelpful content.



SEO market trends

The SEO market in 2023 is increasingly competitive, with a growing emphasis on user experience, AI, and voice search. Brands need to adapt to key market trends and continually update their SEO strategies to deliver an optimized user experience.



Core web vitals

Focus on UX & page performance to enhance user experience & improve search rankings.



Voice search optimization

Optimize content for voice search by using conversational language, long-tail keywords, & structured data markup.



AI / machine learning

Google has been using **machine learning to influence algorithms since 2015**. AI has become more prominent in tools and even in the SERP in recent months.



Mobile-first indexing

Since Google is mobile-first, it's critical for brands to prioritize mobile optimization.



Video content optimization

Video must be included in your marketing strategy, & video should be optimized with relevant keywords, descriptions, & video schema.



Featured snippets

Optimize content to target featured snippets by using structured data & answering commonly asked questions concisely. The result is a significant traffic increase to your site.



EAT – experience, expertise, authority, trust

Brands need to create **high-quality, authoritative, and trustworthy content**. Focus on establishing your brand as an **industry expert** & build a strong backlink profile.



Local SEO

Optimize your Google Business Profile listing, use local keywords, & focus on earning positive reviews.



Long-form content

Typically performs better in the search rankings. Focus on creating comprehensive, in-depth content that provides value to the users and covers any given topic extensively.



User intent & semantic search

Search engines understand intent & context much more effectively today. Create **content that aligns with user intent** & uses semantic search techniques like LSI keywords & structured data.



Adapting Your SEO Strategy

What to change, and what to continue doing

Ranking factors are weighted differently based on the search query



User intent

What a search user *means* by the word choice in their search query



Content relevance

Does the content on-site meet the needs of the search query



Content quality (EEAT)

Where content is prioritized based on experience, expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness (EEAT)



User experience

If all else is equal, the usability of a site comes into play to determine if the content is worth serving to users

Google foreshadowed the importance of “helpful” content back in 2018



Google SearchLiaison ✓

@searchliaison



There's no “fix” for pages that may perform less well other than to remain focused on building great content. Over time, it may be that your content may rise relative to other pages.

12:57 AM · Mar 13, 2018



“...a site doesn't just 'rank' on its own, it ranks for what it's relevant for. No ranking factor compensates missing relevance, or missing user interest.”

- John Mueller, Search Relations at Google

Timeless best practices

Despite algorithms **constantly changing** and new technologies shaking things up, the foundational **SEO principles have remained strong** over the years.



Increase visibility & awareness



By setting an SEO foundation

A solid SEO foundation will **improve visibility** in search engine results, drive organic traffic, and increase the likelihood of reaching our target audience at **every stage of the user's purchase journey**.



Improve nonbrand keyword profile



Through keyword optimizations

Incorporating keywords into the site's existing content will **build non-brand keyword ranks** and attract more users in the **discovery** phase of the purchase journey.



Expand Content



With audience insights

Expand content with a **data backed approach** that's based on **user intent and audience interests**.

Understanding what users are searching for will help us know what to prioritize to **rank higher, faster**.



+117%

Top 3 state keyword
rankings YoY

+132%

Page 1 state keyword
terms YoY

+50%

Page 1 offseason
keyword rankings
YoY

CASE STUDY

Local rankings

Ski Resort

Goal

1. Improve the visibility for local state keywords
2. Expand keyword presence outside of “ski” terms to maintain traffic in off season

Success metrics

- Primary KPI – Keyword rankings
- Secondary KPI – Traffic

Booyah results

In October 2021, with the start of an in-depth SEO Audit, Booyah was able to identify the largest ways the site could improve its SEO performance.

The site was ranking well for branded ski terms, but non-brand terms were not optimized locally. The site was also stuck relying on prime season traffic as the offseason saw large drop-offs, despite plenty of attractions in the offseason. There was a huge opportunity to improve two major offerings on the site.

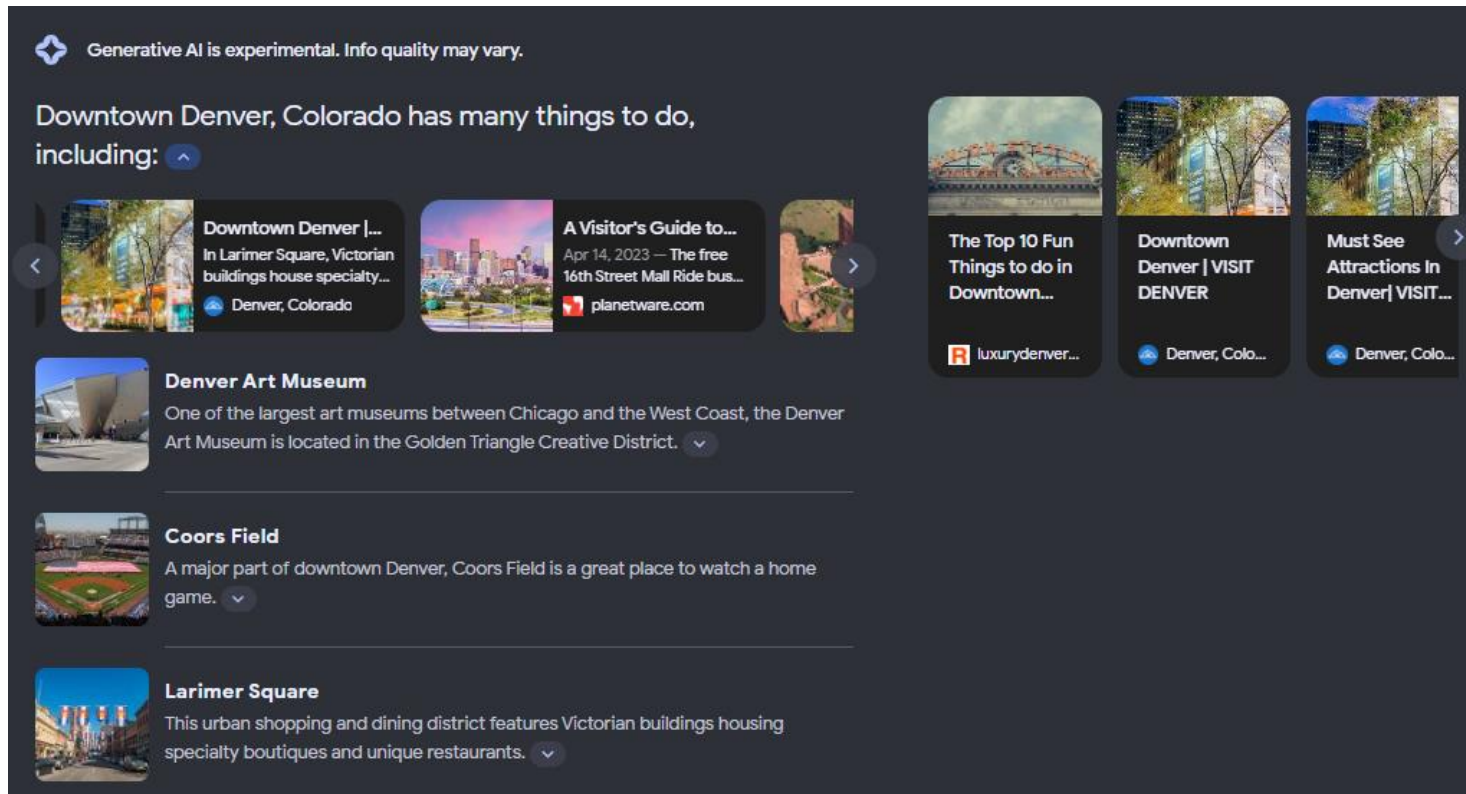
We provided the client with keyword research in order to identify priority pages to optimize. We provided the client with guidance on keywords to include and content to create to maintain traffic throughout the year.



The Future of SEO

What we know, what we don't

Search Generative Experience (SGE) with Search Labs by Google



SGE brings AI results directly into the SERP with AI-powered overviews and the option to click into web pages to learn more. It's likely that **SGE gathers information from real website content to generate these results.**



Both product and content listings are featured within SGE results



Creates **multiple entry points** for users at the top of the fold with horizontal scroll options

- **You can see that the Visit Denver URL is listed twice here**



Option to "ask a follow up" to modify current results instead of starting a new search

The Google SGE experiment is set to end December 2023

What we know

Google is ending SGE in **December 2023** to analyze the user feedback that has been collected over the past 7 months.

What we don't know

We don't know **when and how** this generative AI technology will re-enter the SERP and which parts of the SERP it will impact.



Stick to the foundational best practices of SEO and prioritize creating content for users, not search engines

26% of the top 100 websites are blocking GPTbot



250% increase in the past month

More and more sites don't want ChatGPT using their info without compensation



Any site can block this crawler

Blocking this crawler prevents ChatGPT from using your site's content



Websites want compensation

Sites allow search engines to crawl their sites because there is a benefit from organic listings



This can impact ChatGPT future reliability

An increase in sites blocking the ChatGPT crawler will limit the amount of information the tool can use for output



Open Discussion



Thank you

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