

Content Audit Checklist



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If you're new to the concept of doing a content audit, then the following checklist will help you get a basic one done and suggest ways for increasing the scope of your audits moving forward. If, on the other hand, you have done one before then it should provide you with inspiration and ideas ahead of your next audit.

How often should you do a content audit?

The answer to this question will depend on how much you rely on your content to achieve your business goals. If you place a lot of focus on content marketing then you need to make sure you have an ongoing audit process in place, so you are regularly checking that what you are doing is effective.

However, if you use content marketing on a smaller scale and your main concern is that any content you have on your website is fully optimized, then you will only need to do an audit once in a while.

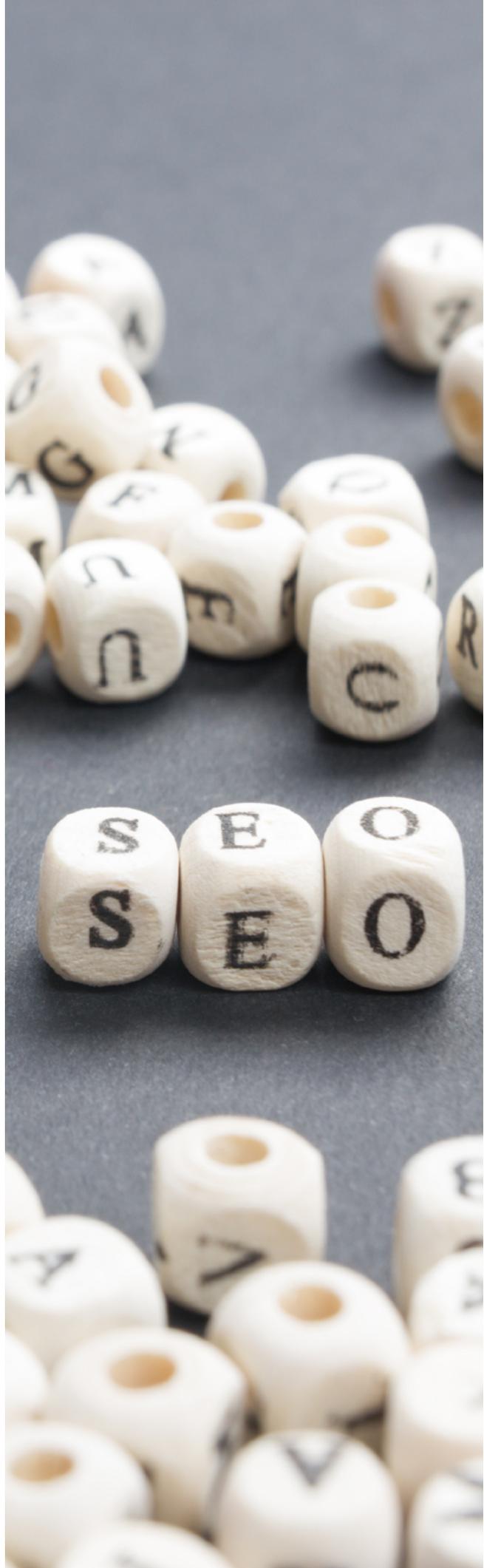
What are common reasons to do a content audit?

The primary reason for doing a content audit will usually be to make sure there are no issues with your SEO and that your content can be easily found on search engines. A comprehensive audit will help you enormously in improving your search rankings.

When you use content marketing to generate leads it is vital to check the performance of your content assets regularly. In order to drive your content strategy, you need to know what's working and what's not. Only by doing an audit of current and past performance will you be able to develop a working strategy moving forward.

Often companies will start producing content without any real thought or strategy in place. They then find themselves with a huge pile of content but little idea for what they're going to do with it.

For all of these reasons, it is advisable to do a content audit.



What is the scope going to be and how are you going to do your audit?

You need to decide how deeply you want your audit to go. Always be wary of any so-called "quick audits", as they just simply don't exist. Unless you do it properly it will be like trying to judge how good a cake may taste, just by looking at it.

Doing a comprehensive audit not only takes a lot of time, but will also need a specific set of skills. Think carefully about whether it makes sense to do it yourself, or whether you should outsource it to an agency or freelancer with relevant knowledge and experience.

The most commonly looked at information in a content audit

Here is a list of things you should look at when it comes to each piece of content. You can then decide, based on your reasons and goals, whether you need to broaden the audit, its data points, and any timelines.

- Accuracy: is your content still true, relevant and up to date
- Performance: what is the content's aim and is it achieving it
- Professionalism: could it do with a redesign or being updated
- Organization: how well is the content organized and how easy is it to navigate within the content and overall
- Style: is the tone of voice and style of the content right for the company and brand
- SEO: are all the SEO basics covered
- Gaps: have you [mapped your content with your buyer personas](#) and are there any gaps that need filling

An example small scale content audit

Step 1 - Find out what is there

Do a content inventory. List all the pieces of content you currently have published and also those that are in the pipeline and not yet published.

Include everything from simple content pages on your website, to blog posts, downloadable assets, and presentations. They all need to be listed and categorized.



Step 2 - Gather your data

Next start to pull out all the relevant information. The data you need will depend on the goals of your audit. It may include things like specific page and content KPIs (conversion rates, time on site, bounce rate, etc.) and meta data about your content (titles, keywords, categories).

Some of the most commonly used tools in this phase are: Screaming Frog and Google Analytics as well as your preferred social media and marketing automation tools, such as Hootsuite.

In most cases you'll probably choose to record all the relevant information on a spreadsheet, starting with the URLs that you can easily gather with a tool like Screaming Frog.

Step 3 - Analyze and draw conclusions

Once you have gathered together all your data it's time to look at the story that it is telling you. Keep your audit goal firmly in mind and start to scan the data to pull out the relevant insights.

In most cases, with content marketing you will want to compare specific pieces of content to analyze why one may be performing well, while the other is not. Based on your analysis you should be able to draw certain conclusions.

It's important to record all of your findings in some form of report, even if it is just very informal for you and other team members working closely with you.

This will help you greatly next time you do an audit, as you'll be able to compare your findings.

Step 4 - Take action

Your analysis should generate feedback and insights that you can use to help guide you in making changes and seeing where you may need to do things differently.

At this phase, it is always good to have multiple eyes look over the results, in order to ensure you're staying focused on the facts and not letting any bias slip in.

Formulate a plan of action that feeds into your overall content strategy. Keep a log book in which you note all the changes you make and when. That way, next time you do an audit you will be able to look at the changes implemented and get a better understanding of what may have been an influence.





Taking it further

If you rely heavily on content marketing then you may wish to include some other kinds of information in your audit:

- Offsite information: everything that is happening away from your website, e.g. social media channels, PR coverage, sales content, etc.
- Analogue content: all the other types of content you are using, such as brochures, books, and reports.
- Competition: it's also never a bad idea to look at and get a feel for what others are doing. Just don't worry too much about what you find.

Helpful Guides

Doing a content audit is a necessary but time-consuming task. It takes a lot of effort and skill to get it right. If you are going to tackle it yourself then here are some more useful sources of information, including further advice and a detailed step-by-step guide:

- One of the most comprehensive guides there is: [How To Do a Content Audit - Step-by-Step - Moz](#)
- Buffer is known for their great actionable content and this audit guide is no difference [A Complete Content Audit and Spreadsheet Template](#)
- SEO focused [Step by Step Guide to Performing a Content Audit](#)
- Includes content marketing examples [The Step-by-Step Guide to Conducting a Content Audit](#)
- A bit more technical [Why You Need a Content Audit \(And How to Run One\) - Mightybytes](#)

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