The marketer's
PLAYBOOK

to drive your digital strategy in 2021

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**Five plays to improve the user experience
in today's digital-first environment.**

Siteimprove

JUST GET THROUGH

That's the mentality we all had in 2020. Living in the moment to tackle the immediate need. For marketers this often meant abandoning broader strategy to handle immediate issues with reduced budget.

But 2020 is gone and with-it marketers must step away from this maintenance mentality. Just getting through won't get you through any longer.

The digital habits accelerated last year remain and your website presence is more important now than ever before. This playbook helps you maximize the value of that solution by giving you actionable strategies to enhance your accessibility, invigorate your page performance, improve your SEO results, and power your analytics strategy.

We hope you find the insights offered by Siteimprove's panel of experts impactful and that you implement them into your organization today. Because 2020 is over and the strategy of just getting through is finally gone.

FIRST DOWN

Three steps to effective web accessibility management

By Kevin Rydberg
Managing Accessibility Consultant

As accessibility expectations evolve, those stop-gap compliance solutions are fading fast. Organizations are realizing these quick-solve options fail to overcome challenges, provide lawsuit protection, or avoid canceled programs.

Effectively managing accessibility to serve your customers and your business requires a long-term strategy. You can't get through with a quick fix. Here are three steps to drive your accessibility initiatives in 2021.

Step 1:
Understand where you stand

Accessibility is a big project that requires changes at the code level but first you must understand your environment and identify which team members will play a role in solving digital inclusivity challenges. A thorough audit of your website allows you to prioritize tasks and set your long-term strategy.

Step 2:
Set attainable, effective goals

Maybe your goal is to have 22 employees go through accessibility training in the next six months. Perhaps in eight months you expect all content to be accessible when it goes live. Recognize that accomplishing these goals requires effective project management and strive to make continual, incremental improvements.

Step 3:
Never stop improving

There's no beginning-to-end when it comes to accessibility. Your plan should always be evolving. As it does, you may notice your concerns surrounding compliance and SEO may also have been positively affected by your continued accessibility improvements. Keep accessibility front of mind and your entire organization will benefit.

SECOND DOWN

Four strategies to peak page performance

By Viktor Petersson
Product Expert, Web Performance

Website page performance is everyone's responsibility and for marketers, monitoring the utility of the site's page performance has never been more important.

Google's new Page Experience algorithm introduces metrics to better monitor the user experience. This is more than load times. The algorithm measures the visual stability of your web pages, the time required for main content to load, and the user experience when interacting with the page.

Perform poorly here and key website metrics suffer. Provide a better user experience and there's plenty to gain.

To achieve peak page performance, you must:

Understand your current environment

Formulate a baseline to understand growth opportunities. This review will identify what pages demand your immediate attention and how quickly improvements must be made.

### Secure easy wins to gain future investment

Ranking pages, landing pages, and purchase pages are paramount – and they can also be helpful KPIs. Start your improvements here and you'll generate returns to justify larger site revisions.

Tackle improvements you can handle yourself

Use your CMS to automate image compression and defer certain scripts. This allows you to make impactful improvements quickly and reserve developer time for more technical tasks.

Instill a culture shift

Most marketing teams routinely review rankings, but to achieve peak performance you need to go further, expanding your focus to your entire site. Google's engineers continually monitor website experiences, and they'll swiftly identify any decrease in your site's performance. Establish a culture of continually monitoring and improving your site to ensure your efforts – both present and past – are rewarded.
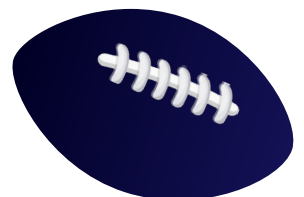
THIRD DOWN

Avoid short-term SEO solutions that lead to long-term problems

By Diane Kulseth
Senior SEO Consultant

Google is releasing its new page experience algorithm this year. This change will pair its focus on user experience, security, readability, mobile friendliness, and website performance with the release of the new Core Web Vitals metrics. With so many aspects under Google's microscope, marketers may feel the urge to quickly meet these demands with short-term, band-aid solutions.

Don't do it.

Temporary solutions often create long-term problems for your SEO. Remember, Google is constantly updating and each new improvement makes those temporary fixes more obsolete. That's best-case scenario.

Worst case scenario? Your organic improvements are held hostage, tied to this obsolete solution, and you sacrifice your own performance when you cancel your contract. It's a decision that sends you back to square one. And Google? Google keeps on improving.

Don't fall for this temporary trap. Incorporate your optimizations right into your code. This approach offers your team long-term support and helps to future-proof your organic search efforts.

Executives increasingly expect results from SEO. At the same time, marketing teams continue to shift strategies away from traditional ad spend and toward SEO initiatives thanks to the current climate.

An optimized website improves the efficiency of advertising budgets to generate results, better prepares your business for the future, and helps amplify your brand presence on search engines. Make a long-term investment now. It will still be paying dividends when all those temporary solutions are withered and gone.

TOUCHDOWN

Powering your analytics strategy through effective data usage

By Josh Miller
Solutions Engineer Manager

The power of your analytics strategy lies in its data. But what can you do when that data is declining?

While there's always room for improvement in all our analytics initiatives, current market challenges make adjusting your strategy for the long-term more important than ever.

How do marketers solve this data deficiency?

Server-based analytics are gaining some popularity, but they're apt to make your data more convoluted because they fail to filter out bots and website traffic to provide you with consumer metrics. Remember, user traffic beats "all" traffic every time.

Harnessing the power of your applicable user data requires enhancing – or adapting – your multi-channel strategy. You must get your systems talking to one another and sharing information.

Start by surveying staff to understand what data currently exists and where it travels within your organization. This may be more difficult than it initially seems as different data streams could be moving simultaneously through unique channels. For example, the data your marketing team uses could be earmarked for a very different goal than the data used by your PPC team.

Utilizing a cross-domain tracking strategy allows you to create a single source of truth, enabling you to track all your data in the same location while charting user journeys across your platforms.

It's important to note that collecting effective data is only possible if you tie your data collection to the conversions you are targeting. Select key drivers and focus on analysis later. Start small with these key drivers. Select a single campaign and make minor tweaks to your efforts as you go. If you continue finetuning your efforts, you'll ultimately get the results you've been seeking.

Finding the perfect balance to guide your next scoring drive

By Maria Eriksen-Jensen
Director of Digital & Demand Generation

Successful football drives often feature a mix of immediate gains and long-distance big plays. Your marketing initiatives should feature the same diverse strategy.

As we shift away from more of a "just get through it mentality" of the last year, we know that 2021 will still carry uncertainties. Living in the now is necessary but marketers cannot afford to ignore the future.

Accomplishing business goals means coming together as one team, collaborating across departments throughout the entire digital marketing value chain, and tearing down the silos that too often grew stronger in 2020. It means focusing on improving the triangle of accessibility, performance, and SEO and honing your channels and workflows to improve efficiency, especially those generating organic results.

Formulate a strategy that delivers quick wins while setting yourself up for those long-term big plays that achieve your campaign goals. And above all, don't take for granted that others will notice the business impact. Remember that the story must be told, both internally and externally. And finally, know that there is no one better equipped to tell it than you!

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Achieve your digital potential

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