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May 2023

SEO Audit Report for www.clarkstate.edu

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Report Overview

What is an SEO Audit?

SEO Audits are a process used to determine how well your website is optimized for popular search engines. SEO audits can yield a high return on investment for businesses by improving their revenue from organic, or unpaid, search results.

Many aspects of your website will be analyzed during the audit to determine how your website is crawled and indexed. Understanding how your website is performing allows you to identify strengths and weaknesses. By optimizing your SEO, you will drive more traffic to your website and increase your online presence.

SEO Audits Analyze:
- Content Relevance
- Keyword Placement
- Page Load Speed
- Image Optimization
- Meta Data
- And more!

Audit Results Summary

A brief overview of what I found:

Overall, I find Clark State's website to be a very well-rounded, content-rich website. The site is mobile responsive, loads quickly, and all the information is accessible to current and prospective students. I believe with some minor changes, we can make www.clarkstate.edu even more successful. By improving SEO, we can drive more people to the website which may result in a boost in enrollment!

Some recommendations I would make to optimize the site include editing the title tags, ensuring appropriate keywords are used, including a robot.txt file, among a few others. These changes will allow the right pages to be indexed by Google and other popular search engines, such as Bing. Read through this report for a closer look at my audit results for Clark State's website.

Content Inventory

Here is where we view all the on-site pages found on Clark State's website.

Click here to view the full list.

1	Clark State Home Page URLS - https://www.clarkstate.edu/
2	/admissions/enroll-now/
3	/admissions/virtual-tour
4	/admissions/making-your-decision/
5	/admissions/general-admissions/
6	/admissions/admissions-for-college-credit-plus/
7	/admissions/admissions-for-healthcare-programs/
8	/admissions/admissions-for-military-students/
9	/admissions/admissions-for-international-students/
10	/admissions/admissions-for-transfer-visiting-students/
11	/admissions/admissions-for-online-students/
12	/admissions/tuition-and-fees/
13	/admissions/new-student-orientation/
14	/admissions/placement-testing/
15	/admissions/academic-advising/
16	/admissions/credit-for-life-experience/
17	/admissions/transferring-credits/
18	/admissions/consumer-information-student-right-to-know/
19	/admissions/ask-a-question/
20	/admissions/interest-form/
21	/financial-aid/applying-for-federal-financial-aid/
22	/financial-aid/grants/
23	/financial-aid/loans/
24	/financial-aid/scholarships/
25	/financial-aid/military-benefits/

SEO Technical Audit

Some Title Tags Are Too Long!

For good SEO, title tags should be under 60 characters, this includes spaces. We identified all the title tags that exceed this limit. We recommend shortening them for better results.

Pages Do Not Have a 200 Response Code!

Several pages are missing this vital code. A 200 response code allow crawlers to access and index your webpages. If a page does not already have it, this code should be added.

Some Webpages Are Missing an H1 Tag!

H1 tags should contain the most important information about a site, bots look at these tags while indexing. We identified the pages that are missing an H1 tag, we recommend adding them.

Look at the following spreadsheet. The highlighted cells are the areas where our recommendations can be applied for improved SEO.

Clark State's Technical Audit

I used the web tool Google Trends to evaluate trends in search results for the word "college". I found that more people are searching for this keyword in July and August more than any other time of the year.

- My recommendation is to include the terms "local college", "community college", "associate degree", "bachelor degree", "graduate program", "degree", "certificate", "financial aid" to URLs, site titles, and within the meta descriptions of the website. These terms are particularly important to have during the Summer and Fall months.

Note: If possible, refrain from using the single keyword "college". This term is not specific enough to add to our SEO. The word "college" could be indicative of college sports, for example. Our keywords should indicate what the content on the webpage is about.

Competitive Keyword Analysis

Let's Compare Keywords from Neighboring Schools:

Franklin University

online college
nonprofit university
online degrees

Sinclair Community College

community college
degree programs
associate programs
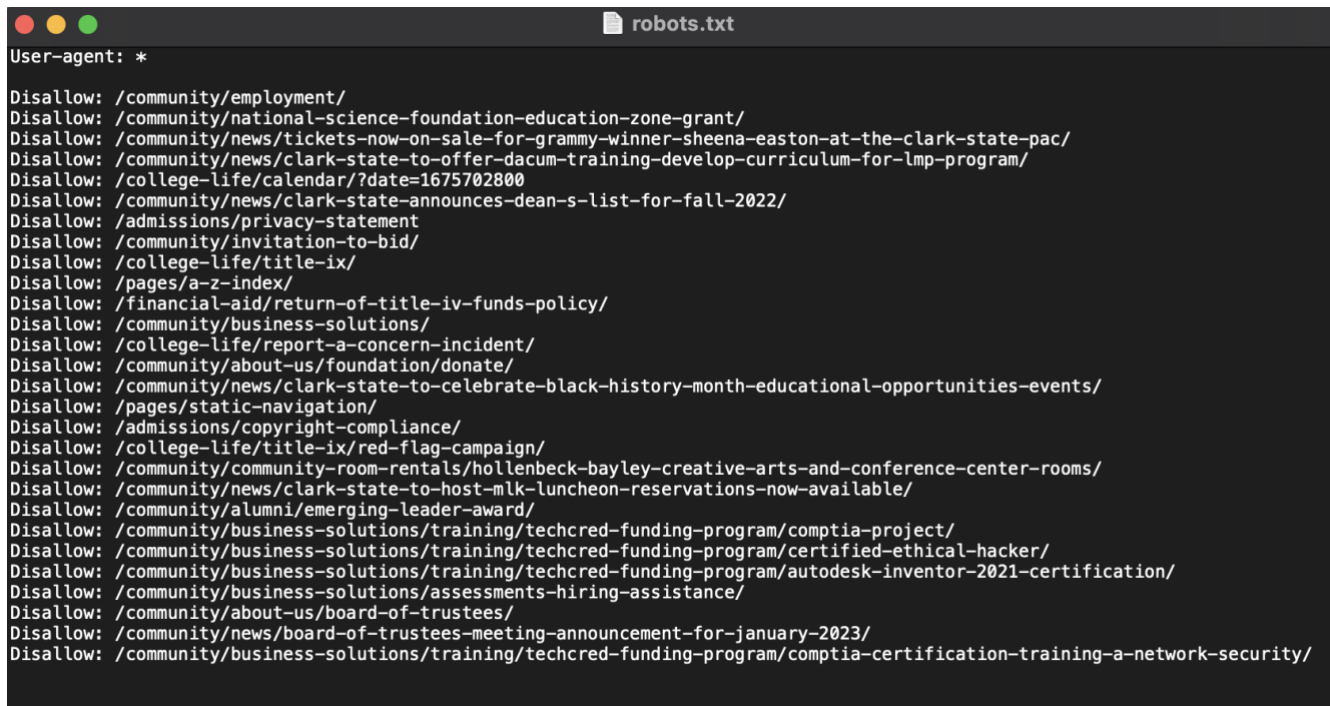career training

Columbus State University

transfer programs
short term certificate
community college

Wright State University

undergraduate degree
degree programs
four-year college

Robots.txt

I created a robot.txt file for www.clarkstate.edu. This file blocks specified webpages from being indexed by web crawlers. Any information that potential students would want to know, was not included in this file. These topics include college life, financial aid, academics, admissions, and health information. This file will help prevent the website from getting overloaded with requests.

```
robots.txt
User-agent: *

Disallow: /community/employment/
Disallow: /community/national-science-foundation-education-zone-grant/
Disallow: /community/news/tickets-now-on-sale-for-grammy-winner-sheena-easton-at-the-clark-state-pac/
Disallow: /community/news/clark-state-to-offer-dacum-training-develop-curriculum-for-lmp-program/
Disallow: /college-life/calendar/?date=1675702800
Disallow: /community/news/clark-state-announces-dean-s-list-for-fall-2022/
Disallow: /admissions/privacy-statement
Disallow: /community/invitation-to-bid/
Disallow: /college-life/title-ix/
Disallow: /pages/a-z-index/
Disallow: /financial-aid/return-of-title-iv-funds-policy/
Disallow: /community/business-solutions/
Disallow: /college-life/report-a-concern-incident/
Disallow: /community/about-us/foundation/donate/
Disallow: /community/news/clark-state-to-celebrate-black-history-month-educational-opportunities-events/
Disallow: /pages/static-navigation/
Disallow: /admissions/copyright-compliance/
Disallow: /college-life/title-ix/red-flag-campaign/
Disallow: /community/community-room-rentals/hollenbeck-bayley-creative-arts-and-conference-center-rooms/
Disallow: /community/news/clark-state-to-host-mlk-luncheon-reservations-now-available/
Disallow: /community/alumni/emerging-leader-award/
Disallow: /community/business-solutions/training/techcred-funding-program/comptia-project/
Disallow: /community/business-solutions/training/techcred-funding-program/certified-ethical-hacker/
Disallow: /community/business-solutions/training/techcred-funding-program/autodesk-inventor-2021-certification/
Disallow: /community/business-solutions/assessments-hiring-assistance/
Disallow: /community/about-us/board-of-trustees/
Disallow: /community/news/board-of-trustees-meeting-announcement-for-january-2023/
Disallow: /community/business-solutions/training/techcred-funding-program/comptia-certification-training-a-network-security/
```

How we can improve the mobile site.

- On some screen sizes the font becomes very small, almost difficult to read. For example, on the https://my.clarkstate.edu/admissions/virtual-tour page, when viewed under the iPad mini and Surface Pro 7 size, the font seems too small. A larger font would make the page more mobile friendly.

- The viewport of the website is currently set to <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width,initial-scale=1.0,maximum-scale=1.0">. This is the incorrect way to set a viewport for a fully responsive website. Setting the maximum-scale=1.0 prevents the user from being able to pinch-zoom. So on smaller screens, like the iPad mini, where the font is too small, you cannot increase the size to read it easier. To correct this, the viewport should be set to <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1.0">.

- At the top of the homepage in the mobile version, I think the video could be removed. While it looks nice on the desktop version, it doesn't have as much appeal in the mobile view. Removing the video can also improve loading speeds on mobile devices.

I used a Mobile-First Index Tool to analyze other areas of the site. There are problems with images sizes, there is unused CSS code, there are render-blocking resources present, and there is also unused/old JavaScript.

- Resize all images to reduce the file size and improve the load speed. The code needs edited so that there is not unused JavaScript or CSS. Render-blocking resources also slow down the webpage speed, so they should also be deleted. Minifying the JavaScript file is also a way to improve load speed, which enhances the user experience.

Overall Recommendations

High Priority:

- Ensure every webpage has a relevant H1 tag.
- Shorten all Title tags to under 160 characters. Make sure titles accurately describe the page they belong to.
- Add a robot.txt file to control what pages are indexable.
- Add keywords to meta data that relate directly to the specified page.

Mid Priority:

- Resize images to reduce page load speed.
- Eliminate any redundant or repeated content.

Low Priority:

- Remove the jumbotron video in the mobile version of the site.
- Reset the viewport on the mobile version of the website so all screen sizes are accessible.

Overall www.clarkstate.edu is a well-rounded website that is rich in content, visually appealing, and includes some great SEO techniques. With a few improvements, we can boost the effectiveness of our SEO for even more. By ranking highly in search indexes, we are more likely to gain exposure to prospective students and boost enrollment!