

SEO GUIDE

# The SEO Audit Checklist

A systematic, page-by-page framework to find and fix every SEO issue on your site

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by Rook

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## The Complete SEO Audit Checklist

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## CHAPTER 01

# Score Your Site in 30 Minutes

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A structured, weighted framework for evaluating any website's search performance — from technical foundations to AI-readiness.

## ► How to Use This Checklist

This audit is divided into **six weighted categories** that together produce a score out of 100. For each item, mark it as **Pass**, **Partial**, or **Fail**. Tally your points at the end of each section, then calculate your final score using the weighting table.

### Scoring per item:

RESULT	POINTS
Pass	Full points for that item
Partial	Half points (round down)
Fail	0 points

**Time estimate:** 25–35 minutes with the right tools open.

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## CHAPTER 02

# Scoring Overview

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#	CATEGORY	WEIGHT	MAX RAW SCORE	WEIGHTED MAX
1	Technical SEO	25%	30	25
2	On-Page SEO	25%	28	25
3	Off-Page SEO	15%	18	15
4	Content Quality & E-E-A-T	15%	18	15
5	Local SEO	10%	14	10
6	AI & GEO Readiness	10%	16	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>		<b>100</b>

Your weighted score formula:

Category Score = (Your Raw Points ÷ Max Raw Score) × Weight

Final Score = Sum of all Category Scores

## CHAPTER 03

# Score Interpretation

SCORE	RATING	WHAT IT MEANS
90–100	Excellent	Best-in-class. Focus on marginal gains and emerging trends.
75–89	Strong	Solid foundations. Address the gaps to pull ahead of competitors.
55–74	Needs Work	Significant opportunities being missed. Prioritise red items.
35–54	Weak	Fundamental issues present. Likely losing traffic to fixable problems.
0–34	Critical	Major structural failures. Treat this as a rebuild, not a tune-up.

## CHAPTER 04

# Category 1: Technical SEO (25%)

The invisible architecture that determines whether search engines can find, crawl, and understand your site.

Max Raw Score: 30

## ► Core Web Vitals (12 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.1	<b>Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)</b> — Is LCP $\leq$ 2.5s on mobile? Test via PageSpeed Insights or CrUX.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.2	<b>Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)</b> — Is CLS $\leq$ 0.1? Check for images without dimensions, injected content, and web fonts causing layout jumps.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.3	<b>Interaction to Next Paint (INP)</b> — Is INP $\leq$ 200ms? Test interactive elements (menus, forms, accordions) on mobile.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	

■ **Tool tip:** Run your homepage and a key landing page through [PageSpeed Insights](#). Use field data (real users) over lab data where available.

## ► Crawability (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.4	<b>Robots.txt</b> — Does it exist, allow critical paths, and block only what's intended? No accidental <code>Disallow: /</code> directives.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.5	<b>XML Sitemap</b> — Is a valid sitemap submitted to Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools? Does it include only indexable, canonical URLs?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.6	<b>Crawl Errors</b> — Are there fewer than 5 critical crawl errors in Search Console? No 5xx responses on important pages.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.7	<b>Site Architecture</b> — Can every important page be reached within 3 clicks from the homepage? No orphan pages.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Indexation (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.8	<b>Index Coverage</b> — Run <code>site:yourdomain.com</code> . Is the indexed page count within 10% of your expected total? No unexpected pages indexed.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.9	<b>Canonical Tags</b> — Does every page have a self-referencing canonical tag? Are duplicate/variant pages canonicalised correctly?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.10	<b>Noindex Audit</b> — Are any important pages accidentally noindexed? Check meta robots tags and HTTP headers.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Schema Markup (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.11	<b>Structured Data Present</b> — Does the site implement relevant schema types (Organisation, Product, Article, FAQ, BreadcrumbList, LocalBusiness)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.12	<b>Schema Validation</b> — Does all structured data pass Google's Rich Results Test with zero errors and zero warnings?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

💡 **Tool tip:** Use [Schema.org Validator](#) and [Google's Rich Results Test](#) side by side.

Category 1 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 30

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## CHAPTER 05

# Category 2: On-Page SEO (25%)

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*The elements on each page that tell search engines — and humans — what your content is about.*

Max Raw Score: 28

## ► Meta Tags (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.1	<b>Title Tags</b> — Does every key page have a unique title tag, 50–60 characters, containing the primary keyword near the front?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.2	<b>Meta Descriptions</b> — Does every key page have a unique, compelling meta description, 140–160 characters, with a clear call to action?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.3	<b>Open Graph Tags</b> — Are <code>og:title</code> , <code>og:description</code> , <code>og:image</code> , and <code>og:url</code> set correctly for social sharing?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.4	<b>Twitter/X Cards</b> — Are Twitter Card tags present with a valid <code>twitter:card</code> type and preview image?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Heading Structure (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.5	<b>H1 Tag</b> — Does every page have exactly one H1 that includes the primary target keyword?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.6	<b>Heading Hierarchy</b> — Do headings follow a logical H1 → H2 → H3 structure with no skipped levels?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.7	<b>Keyword Placement</b> — Do H2/H3 headings naturally incorporate secondary and related keywords?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Internal Linking (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.8	<b>Contextual Internal Links</b> — Does each piece of content contain at least 2–3 contextual links to related pages on the site?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.9	<b>Anchor Text Variety</b> — Are internal link anchor texts descriptive and varied (not just “click here” or “read more”)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.10	<b>Broken Internal Links</b> — Are there zero broken internal links? Run a crawl to check for 404s.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.11	<b>Link Equity Flow</b> — Do your most important pages receive the most internal links? Check with a crawl tool’s internal link distribution report.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► URL Structure (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.12	<b>Clean URLs</b> — Are URLs short, lowercase, hyphen-separated, and human-readable? No query parameters, session IDs, or unnecessary folders.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.13	<b>HTTPS</b> — Is the entire site served over HTTPS with a valid SSL certificate? No mixed content warnings.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.14	<b>Redirect Chains</b> — Are there no redirect chains longer than one hop? Every redirect goes directly to the final destination.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

■ **Tool tip:** Screaming Frog (free up to 500 URLs) will catch most on-page issues in a single crawl: broken links, duplicate titles, missing headings, redirect chains, and more.

Category 2 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 28

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## CHAPTER 06

# Category 3: Off-Page SEO (15%)

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Your site's reputation and authority as perceived through external signals.

Max Raw Score: 18

## ► Backlink Profile (10 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
3.1	<b>Domain Authority / Domain Rating</b> — Is your DA/DR competitive with the top 3 ranking competitors for your primary keywords?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.2	<b>Referring Domains Growth</b> — Has the number of unique referring domains grown (or remained stable) over the past 6 months?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.3	<b>Toxic Backlinks</b> — Have you audited for spammy or toxic backlinks and disavowed where necessary? Less than 5% of links flagged as toxic.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.4	<b>Anchor Text Distribution</b> — Is your anchor text profile natural? A healthy mix of branded, naked URL, generic, and keyword-rich anchors.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.5	<b>Link Relevance</b> — Do the majority of your backlinks come from topically relevant domains?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Brand Signals (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
3.6	<b>Brand Mentions</b> — Is your brand mentioned (linked or unlinked) on relevant industry sites, publications, or forums?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.7	<b>Branded Search Volume</b> — Does your brand name generate measurable search volume? Check Google Trends or Search Console.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Directory & Citation Presence (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
3.8	<b>Key Directories</b> — Is your business listed on the top 5 relevant directories for your industry (e.g., Yelp, Trustpilot, G2, Capterra, industry-specific)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.9	<b>NAP Consistency</b> — Is your Name, Address, and Phone number identical across all directory listings?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

■ **Tool tip:** Use Ahrefs, Semrush, or Moz (free tiers available) for backlink analysis. For brand mentions, try Google Alerts or BrandMentions.

Category 3 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 18

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## CHAPTER 07

## Category 4: Content Quality & E-E-A-T (15%)

Google's quality rater guidelines emphasise *Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness*. This is how your content stacks up.

Max Raw Score: 18

## ► Content Depth (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.1	<b>Search Intent Match</b> — Does each key page clearly satisfy the dominant search intent (informational, navigational, commercial, transactional) for its target keyword?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.2	<b>Content Comprehensiveness</b> — Does your content cover the topic as thoroughly as (or more than) the current top 3 ranking pages?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.3	<b>Freshness</b> — Has key content been reviewed and updated within the past 12 months? Are “last updated” dates visible?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.4	<b>Multimedia</b> — Does content include relevant images, videos, charts, or infographics (not just walls of text)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► E-E-A-T Signals (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.5	<b>Author Information</b> — Do articles/content pages display author names with linked bios showing credentials and experience?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.6	<b>About &amp; Trust Pages</b> — Does the site have a comprehensive About page, Contact page, and Privacy Policy? Are they easily accessible?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.7	<b>External Citations</b> — Does content reference and link to authoritative external sources where appropriate?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► User Experience (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.8	<b>Readability</b> — Is content formatted for scannability? Short paragraphs, bullet points, clear subheadings, adequate white space.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.9	<b>Mobile Experience</b> — Does content render well on mobile without horizontal scrolling, tiny text, or overlapping elements?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

■ **Tool tip:** Use Google's "People Also Ask" and "Related Searches" to check if your content covers the subtopics users actually care about. Clearscope or SurferSEO can score content comprehensiveness.

Category 4 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 18

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## CHAPTER 08

# Category 5: Local SEO (10%)

If your business serves a specific geographic area, these signals are non-negotiable. If you're a purely online/global business, score each item you've optimised or mark N/A and redistribute the weight to Category 4.

Max Raw Score: 14

## ► Google Business Profile (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
5.1	<b>GBP Claimed &amp; Verified</b> — Is your Google Business Profile claimed, verified, and actively managed?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2	<b>Complete Profile</b> — Are all fields filled: business name, category, address, phone, hours, website, description, attributes?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.3	<b>Photos &amp; Posts</b> — Have you uploaded recent photos (last 90 days) and published Google Posts (last 30 days)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
5.4	<b>Reviews &amp; Responses</b> — Do you have ≥10 reviews with a ≥4.0 average rating? Are all reviews responded to within 48 hours?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Local On-Page (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
5.5	<b>Location Pages</b> — If you serve multiple areas, does each have a unique, content-rich location page (not just swapped city names)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.6	<b>Local Schema</b> — Is <code>LocalBusiness</code> schema implemented with correct NAP data, geo-coordinates, and opening hours?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.7	<b>Localised Content</b> — Does your content reference local landmarks, events, or context where relevant?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

💡 **Tool tip:** Use the [GMB Everywhere](#) Chrome extension to audit competitors' Google Business Profiles alongside your own.

Category 5 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 14

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## CHAPTER 09

## Category 6: AI & GEO Readiness (10%)

Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO) is the emerging discipline of optimising for AI-powered search (ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Copilot). These checks position your site for the next era of search.

Max Raw Score: 16

## ► Structured & Machine-Readable Content (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
6.1	<b>Clear, Quotable Answers</b> — Do key pages contain concise, direct answers to common questions in the first 100 words or in a clearly marked summary?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.2	<b>FAQ Sections</b> — Do relevant pages include FAQ sections with <code>FAQPage</code> schema markup?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.3	<b>Data Tables &amp; Lists</b> — Are comparisons, specifications, and structured information presented in HTML tables or ordered lists (not just prose)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Authority & Citableability (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
6.4	<b>Original Research &amp; Data</b> — Does your site publish original statistics, surveys, case studies, or data that AI models might cite?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.5	<b>Topical Authority</b> — Do you have a content cluster with 5+ interlinked pieces covering a single topic in depth?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.6	<b>Brand Entity Presence</b> — Does your brand appear in knowledge panels, Wikipedia, Wikidata, or Crunchbase?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Technical AI Accessibility (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
6.7	<b>AI Crawler Access</b> — Does your <code>robots.txt</code> allow (or intentionally block) AI crawlers (GPTBot, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot, Bytespider)? Is this a deliberate decision?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.8	<b>Semantic HTML</b> — Is content structured with semantic HTML5 elements ( <code>&lt;article&gt;</code> , <code>&lt;section&gt;</code> , <code>&lt;aside&gt;</code> , <code>&lt;figure&gt;</code> ) rather than generic <code>&lt;div&gt;</code> soup?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

💡 **Tool tip:** Search for your brand on [Perplexity.ai](#) and [ChatGPT](#). If neither mentions you, your GEO signals need serious work. Check your [robots.txt](#) for lines mentioning GPTBot, ClaudeBot, or similar.

Category 6 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 16

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## CHAPTER 10

# Final Score Calculation

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Use this table to calculate your weighted score:

CATEGORY	YOUR RAW SCORE	÷ MAX RAW	= RATIO	× WEIGHT	= WEIGHTED SCORE
1. Technical SEO	____	÷ 30	= ____	× 25	= ____
2. On-Page SEO	____	÷ 28	= ____	× 25	= ____
3. Off-Page SEO	____	÷ 18	= ____	× 15	= ____
4. Content & E-E-A-T	____	÷ 18	= ____	× 15	= ____
5. Local SEO	____	÷ 14	= ____	× 10	= ____
6. AI & GEO Readiness	____	÷ 16	= ____	× 10	= ____
Final Score					/ 100

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## CHAPTER 11

# Quick-Reference Tool Stack

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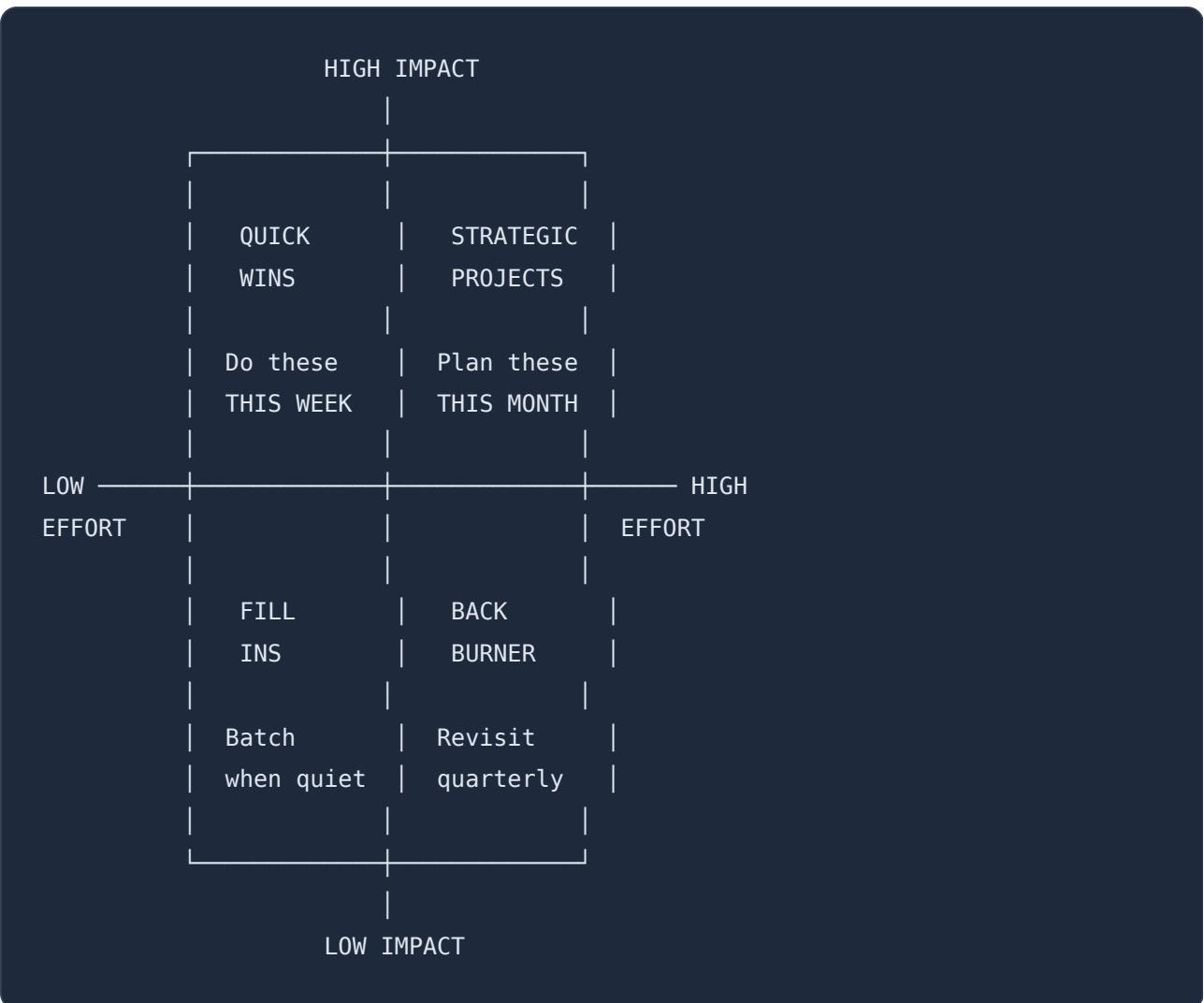
These free and freemium tools cover every check in this audit:

TOOL	WHAT IT COVERS	FREE TIER
<b>Google Search Console</b>	Indexation, crawl errors, Core Web Vitals, search performance	✉ Fully free
<b>Google PageSpeed Insights</b>	Core Web Vitals, performance diagnostics	✉ Fully free
<b>Screaming Frog SEO Spider</b>	On-page audit, broken links, redirects, meta tags, headings	✉ Up to 500 URLs
<b>Ahrefs Webmaster Tools</b>	Backlink profile, referring domains, technical SEO issues	✉ Limited free
<b>Google's Rich Results Test</b>	Schema validation, rich snippet eligibility	✉ Fully free
<b>Moz Link Explorer</b>	Domain authority, link analysis	✉ 10 queries/month
<b>Google Business Profile</b>	Local SEO management	✉ Fully free
<b>Perplexity.ai / ChatGPT</b>	GEO visibility check (search your brand)	✉ Free tiers
<b>GTmetrix</b>	Page speed, waterfall analysis, Core Web Vitals	✉ Limited free
<b>WAVE Accessibility Tool</b>	Accessibility checks (correlates with UX quality)	✉ Fully free

## CHAPTER 12

# Priority Action Matrix

After scoring, use this matrix to decide what to fix first:



#### **Common quick wins (high impact, low effort):**

- Fix broken internal links
- Add missing meta descriptions
- Compress oversized images (LCP improvement)
- Add `alt` attributes to images
- Submit an updated XML sitemap
- Fix redirect chains
- Claim and complete your Google Business Profile

#### **Common strategic projects (high impact, high effort):**

- Build topical authority content clusters
- Earn backlinks through original research
- Implement comprehensive schema markup
- Improve Core Web Vitals across the site
- Create location-specific landing pages

- Publish FAQ content with structured data for GEO
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## CHAPTER 13

# Re-Audit Schedule

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AUDIT TYPE	FREQUENCY	FOCUS
<b>Full audit</b> (this checklist)	Every 6 months	Complete reassessment
<b>Technical spot-check</b>	Monthly	Core Web Vitals, crawl errors, indexation
<b>Content review</b>	Quarterly	Freshness, new keyword opportunities, E-E-A-T
<b>Competitor benchmark</b>	Quarterly	Compare scores against top 3 competitors
<b>GEO check</b>	Monthly	Search your brand in AI tools, monitor visibility

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## CHAPTER 14

# Changelog

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VERSION	DATE	CHANGES
1.0	February 2026	Initial release

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*Built for marketers, founders, and agencies who believe SEO is a system — not a guessing game.*

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## The SEO Audit Checklist

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