

CH.5

TRACKING RESULTS

AND

MEASURING SUCCESS

Introduction

- Generating sales
 - Obtaining sales
 - Generating ad dollars
 - Getting people to read specific articles
-

- Total site traffic
- Traffic to your most popular pages
- Keywords driving the traffic
- Keywords driving conversions
- Pages receiving the search traffic

Why measuring success is essential to the SEO process

It helps in.....

- Identifying search traffic by search engine and keyword
- Measuring baseline of the major keywords
- Measuring what sections are getting the current traffic
- Identifying poorly performing pages
- Identifying the best performing pages
- Tracking search engine crawler activity on site
- Finding KPIs(Key Performance Indicators)

The Tracking Cycle:

Produce, launch, measure, refine

1. Define an SEO campaign and set goals
2. Discuss your strategy
3. Establish a baseline (recording current states before beginning)
4. Proceed with your project (implement new pages, site changes, link-building campaign)
5. Collect data
6. Compare the baseline data to the new data
7. Refine your campaign

Measuring search traffic

- Measuring **search traffic** means tracking and analyzing the visitors that come to your website through search engines like Google, Bing, or Yahoo.
- It helps you understand
 - how visible your site is in search results
 - what users are searching for
 - how much of your total traffic is organic (unpaid).

Types of Search Traffic

- **Organic search traffic** – Users who find your site through unpaid search results.
- **Paid search traffic** – Visitors from ads (like Google Ads).

Note: Most SEO analysis focuses on **organic search traffic**.

Key Metrics to Measure

- **Impressions** – How many times your website pages appeared in search results.
- **Clicks** – How many users actually clicked on your link.
- **Click-Through Rate (CTR)** – % of impressions that turned into clicks.
- **Average Position** – Where your site ranks in search results.
- **Sessions/Users** – How many visits came from search engines.
- **Bounce Rate & Engagement** – Whether users stay or leave quickly after visiting.
- **Conversions** – How much search traffic is generating business goals (sales, signups, leads).

Tools for Measuring Search Traffic

- **Google Search Console** – Shows queries, clicks, impressions, CTR, and ranking position.
- **Google Analytics** – Tracks how much traffic comes from organic search and what users do afterward.
- **SEO Tools (SEMrush, Ahrefs, Moz)** – Provide keyword rankings, estimated traffic, and competitor comparisons.

Steps to Measure

- **Set up Google Analytics & Search Console** for your website.
- **Identify organic traffic sources** (Google, Bing, etc.).
- **Analyze search queries** – What keywords bring visitors.
- **Track performance trends** – Is traffic growing, stable, or declining?
- **Check engagement and conversions** – Are search visitors valuable?

Common analytics mistakes

- Making decisions based on too small sample size
- Not recognizing when you have enough data
- Working with biased data

Tying SEO to conversion and ROI

- Sales
- Email/blog/newsletter subscriptions
- Sign-ups
- Downloads
- Contact forms and phone calls
- Visitors who share

Cont.....

Tying SEO to conversion and ROI

Attribution (credit)

- Search -> purchase on next day from site
- Search -> purchase from store
- Sees TV ad -> purchase from organic search result (your website)
- 6.5% to 30% of transactions – after 1 to 3 days after customer's initial visit

Cont.....

Tying SEO to conversion and ROI

- Setting up analytics software to track conversions
- Segmenting campaigns and SEO efforts by conversion rate
 - Conversions by keyword
 - Conversions by referrer
 - Conversions by web page
 - Conversions by initial entry page
- Increasing conversions

Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

(They help answer: *“What is working or broken inside our site?”*)

1. Click-Through Rate (CTR)
2. Impressions
3. Average positioning
4. Bounce rate / Dwell rate
5. Index coverage
6. Crawl statistics

Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

7. Link building, link – based metrics

- Ahrefs
- SEMrush
- Moz Link Explorer
- Majestic SEO

Cont.....

Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

- Measuring the value of a link
 - Where does the linking page rank for the term you want to rank for?
 - Where does the linking page rank for one to two important terms in the title tag?
 - Where does content on the linking domain generally rank for competitive terms?
 - How many keyword phrases do the linking domain and page rank in the top 20 results for?
 - When was the last time Google crawled the page?

Cont.....

Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

Ranking

- Ranking data can be helpful in few scenarios:
 - When there is a sudden significant change
 - Where a long-term trend can be established
 - Where you can measure a site's overall activity and popularity

Note: Google Search Console provides rankings data directly

Other tools : SEMrush, Ahref, Moz Pro

Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

Search Engine Robot Traffic Analysis

- Analysis of search robot behavior involves 3 main goals:
 - Ensuring that all of your important pages are found by robots
 - Preventing page rank from being diluted by duplicate content problems
 - Enabling rapid indexation of time-sensitive content

Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

Web Traffic Comparison

- Google console
- Quantcast

Traffic Sources Overview

Export to PNG

All devices

Visits

6M 12M All Time

1.9M

1M

500K

Sep 19

Oct 19

Nov 19

Dec 19

Jan 20

Feb 20

Direct Referral Search Social Paid + Google Ads

1.5M

All devices | Feb 2020

Direct 29.00% 447.2K

Referral 6.48% 99.9K

Search 62.42% 962.6K

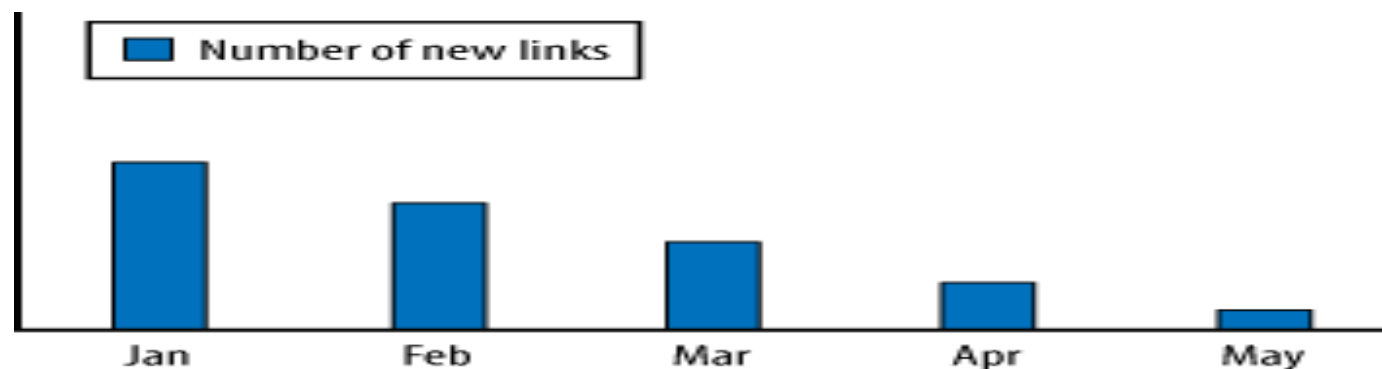
Social 2.09% 32.3K

Paid + Google Ads 0% 0

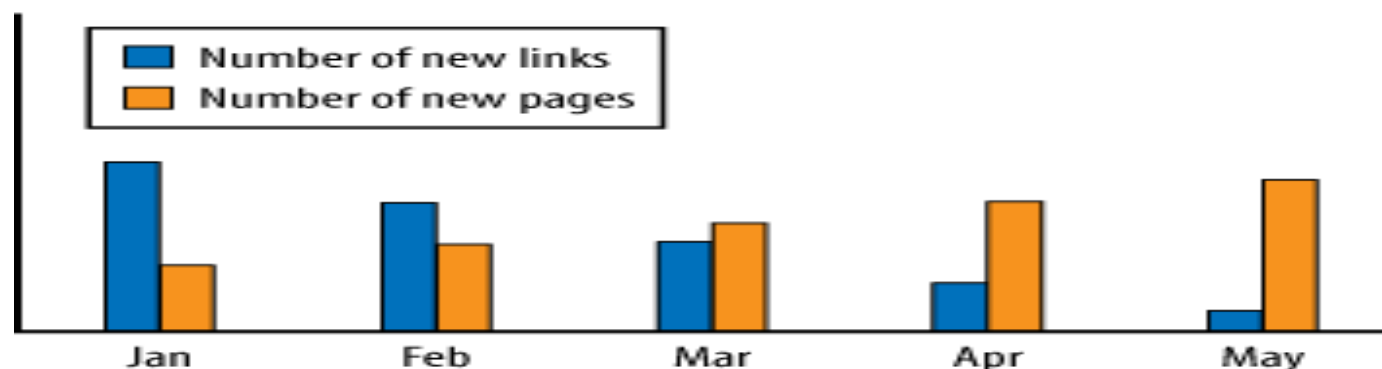
Competitive and diagnostic search metrics

Temporal Link Growth Measurements

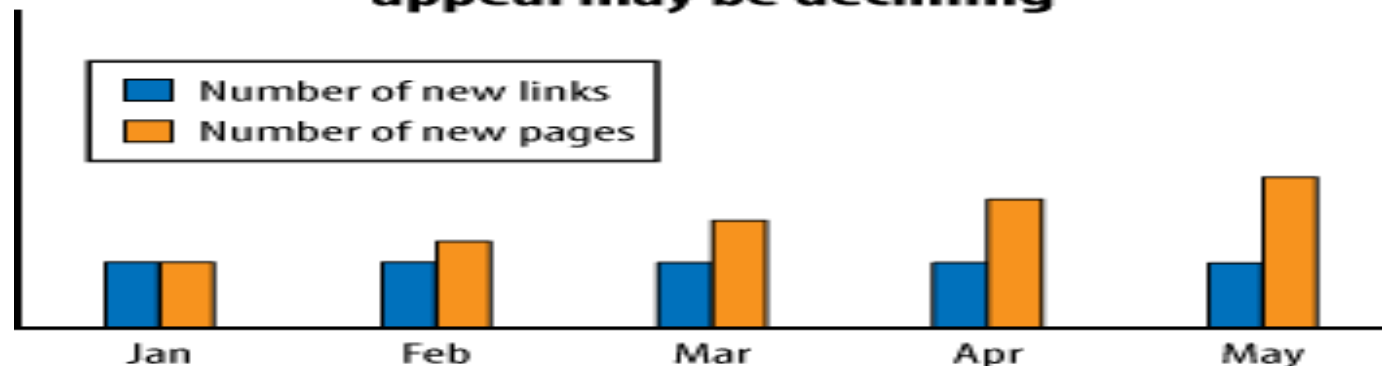
- Search engines try to measure patterns:
 - Content growth pattern
 - Content update pattern
 - Link growth pattern



A site that's becoming less relevant, interesting or worthwhile?

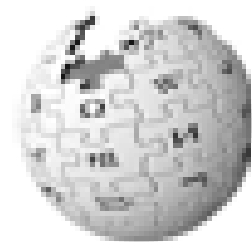
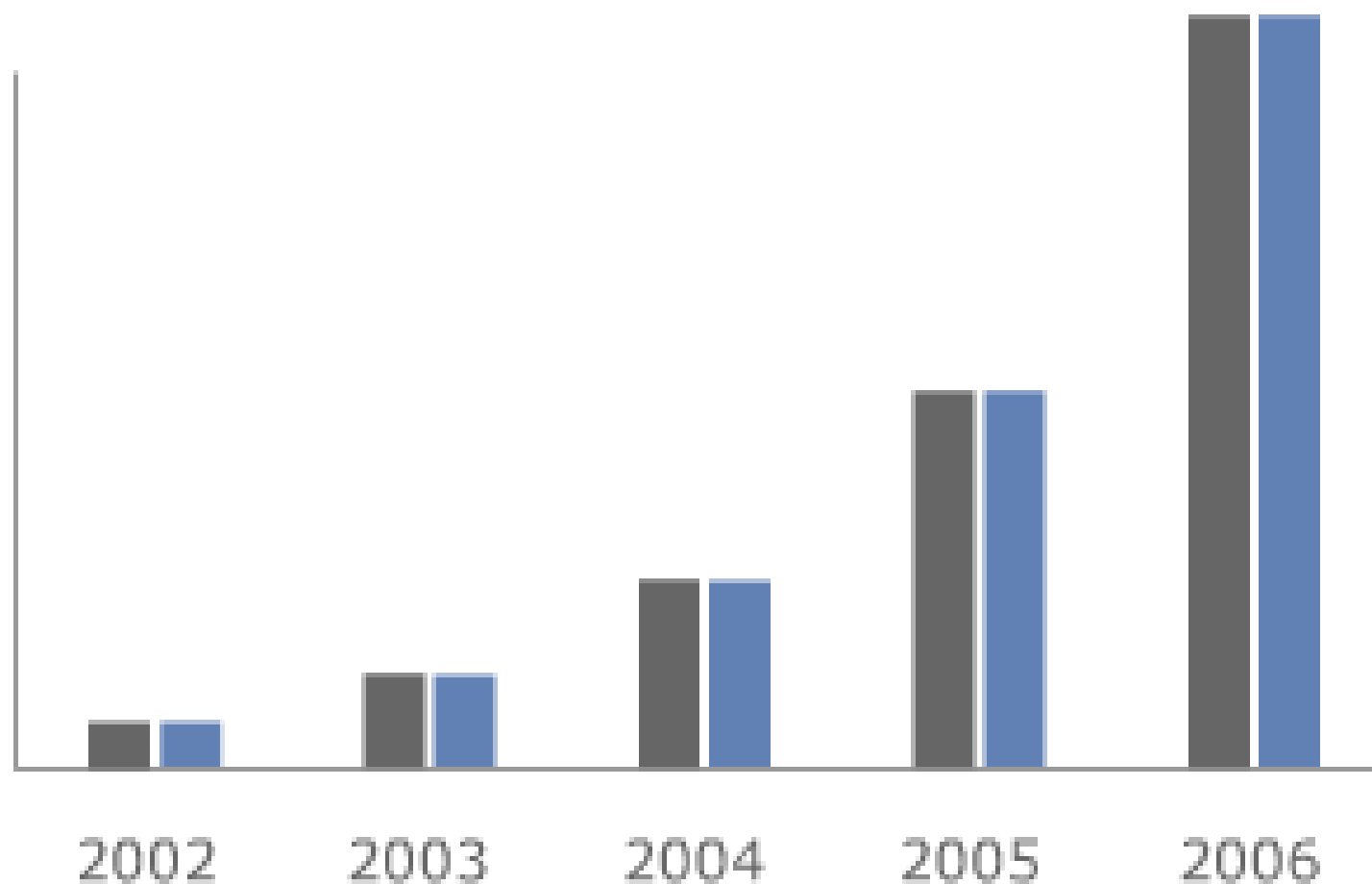


Despite more content, relevance or appeal may be declining

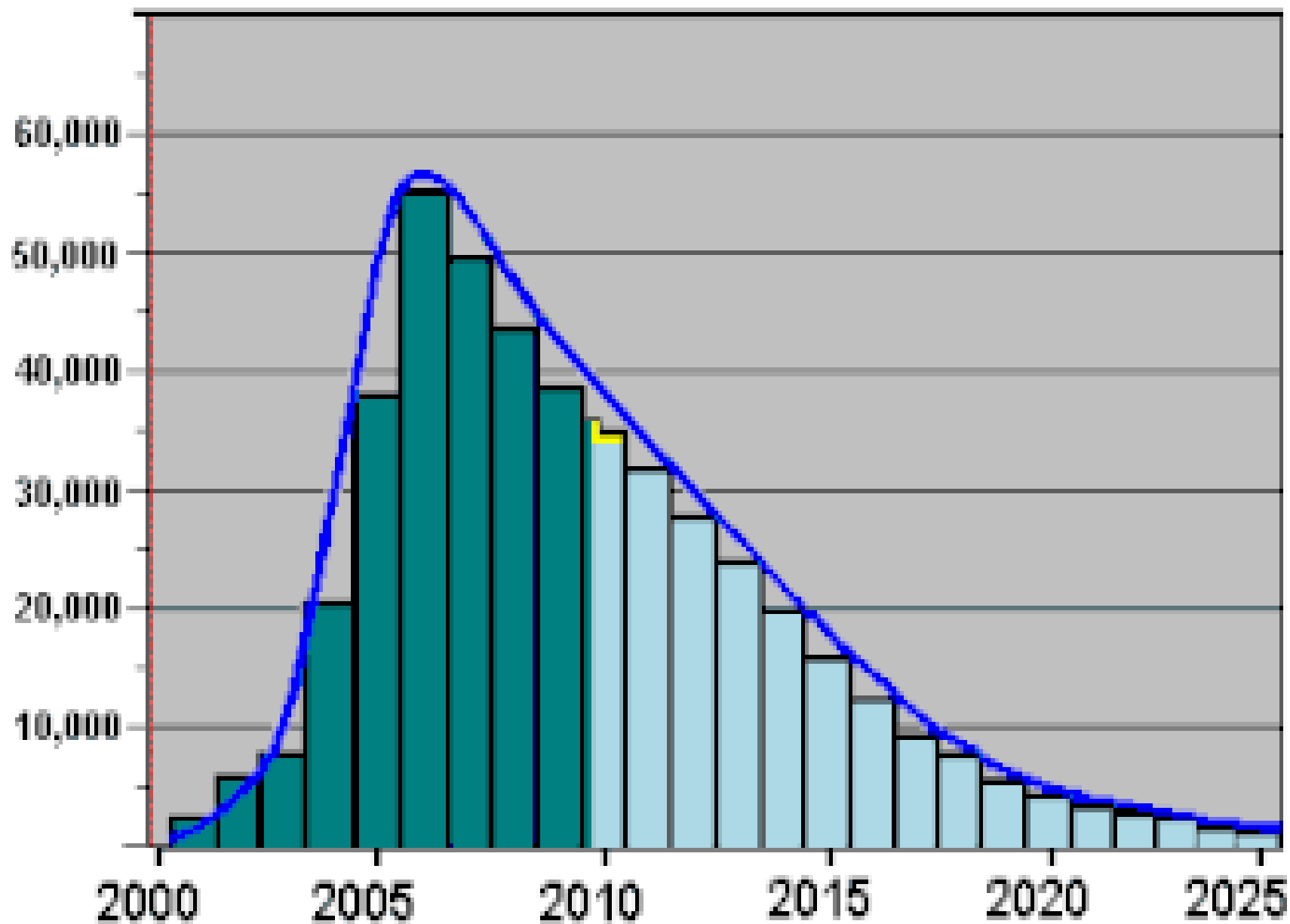


The new pages aren't increasing link numbers, a potential sign of staleness

■ Number of New Links
■ Number of New Pages



Wikipedia



(KPI)Key performance indicators for Long-tail SEO

- Branded to nonbranded ratio
- Unique crawled URLs
- Search visitors per contributing page
- Keywords per page
- Search visitors per keyword

Other third party tools

- Google search console
- SEMrush
- Ahref
- Moz pro
- SpyFu

An evolving art form :
The future of SEO

The ongoing evolution of search

- The growth of search complexity
 - Google processes **over 8.5 billion searches per day** (2023).
 - AI-driven models like **BERT (2019)** and **MUM (2021)** understand natural language better than ever.
 - Search expanded beyond text → **voice, images, video, and multimodal queries.**

The ongoing evolution of search

- Milestones
 - **2015** → RankBrain introduced AI into search ranking.
 - **2019** → BERT enabled contextual understanding of language.
 - **2021** → MUM (Multitask Unified Model) enabled multimodal search (text + images).
 - **2023-24** → Generative AI (Google SGE, Bing Chat) started shaping conversational search.
 - **Zero-click results** now dominate, with snippets and AI answers directly on SERPs.

The ongoing evolution of search

- In 2008, Danny Sullivan summarized this entire evolution into four phases:
 - Search 1.0 : keywords and text
 - Search 2.0 : link analysis
 - Search 3.0 : Integration of vertical results
 - Search 4.0 : Personalization
 - Search 5.0 : AI-driven intent understanding
 - Search 6.0 : Generative AI and conversational search

More searchable content and content types

- Engines continue to improve crawling and indexing
 - Google now fully renders **JavaScript-heavy sites** (React, Angular etc)
 - AI-driven crawling predicts user intent and prioritizes high-value pages.
- Engines are getting new content sources
 - Digitized and scanned archives (books, legal docs, research papers).
 - Social media content, short-form videos, and user-generated reviews.

More searchable content and content types

- Multimedia is becoming indexable
 - **Images:** Indexed with AI-powered **computer vision & alt-text automation**.
 - **Video:** Automatic **transcripts, chapters, and key moments** now searchable.
 - **Podcasts:** Speech-to-text indexing makes audio discoverable in search.

Personalization, localization and user Influence on search

- Determining user intent
- User interactions
- Location awareness
- Emerging Search Patterns & Cloud Influence

The increasing importance of Local, mobile and voice recognition search

- Local search
 - Users often search for services, stores, or events “near me.”
- Mobile search
 - Mobile-friendly websites and fast-loading pages improve visibility in search results.
- Voice recognition search
 - Voice assistants (like Siri, Google Assistant, Alexa) are driving natural language queries.

Increased market saturation and competition

- More Websites Competing for Keywords
 - As more businesses move online, multiple websites target the same keywords.
- Higher Cost for Paid Search Campaigns (PPC)
 - Increased competition raises bidding costs for paid search ads.
- Content Saturation
 - More businesses create similar blog posts, articles, and landing pages.

Increased market saturation and competition

- Importance of Technical SEO
 - With many competitors, sites must have optimized site speed, mobile responsiveness, and structured data.
- Greater Need for Backlinks and Authority
 - Competitors acquiring backlinks and building domain authority makes it harder for new or smaller sites to rank.

SEO as enduring(continuing) art form

- Objectives:
 - Make content accessible to crawlers
 - Find the keywords that are used by searchers
 - Build content that user will find useful
 - Create web pages that allow users to find what they want extremely quickly
- To be an artist, SEO practitioner needs to see following possibilities
 - Social media optimization expertise
 - Local search expertise
 - Video optimization
 - Understanding what is coming in mobile search

Benchmarking Current Indexing Status

- Crawlability Check
 - Ensure search engines can crawl your website without restrictions.
- Sitemap Evaluation
 - Verify if your **XML sitemap** is up-to-date and submitted to search engines.
- Duplicate & Thin Content
 - Detect duplicate content that may prevent proper indexing.
- Indexation Ratio
 - Measure the **percentage of pages indexed vs. total pages** on your site.

Benchmarking current rankings

- **Keyword Ranking Analysis**
 - Identify which keywords your website currently ranks for.
- **Top Performing Pages**
 - Highlight pages that bring the most traffic from organic search.
- **Competitor Ranking Comparison**
 - Compare your rankings with competitors for target keywords.
- **Traffic Metrics**
 - Understand which high-ranking pages are actually driving traffic.

Benchmarking Current Traffic Sources and Volume

- **Organic Search Traffic**
 - Measure visitors arriving via search engines.
- **Direct Traffic**
 - Visitors who enter your URL directly or via bookmarks.
- **Referral Traffic**
 - Traffic coming from **other websites linking to your site.**
- **Social Traffic**
 - Visitors coming from **social media platforms**
- **Paid vs. Organic Comparison**
 - Compare traffic from **paid campaigns (PPC) vs. organic SEO.**

Ch. 5

Over



Syllabus over