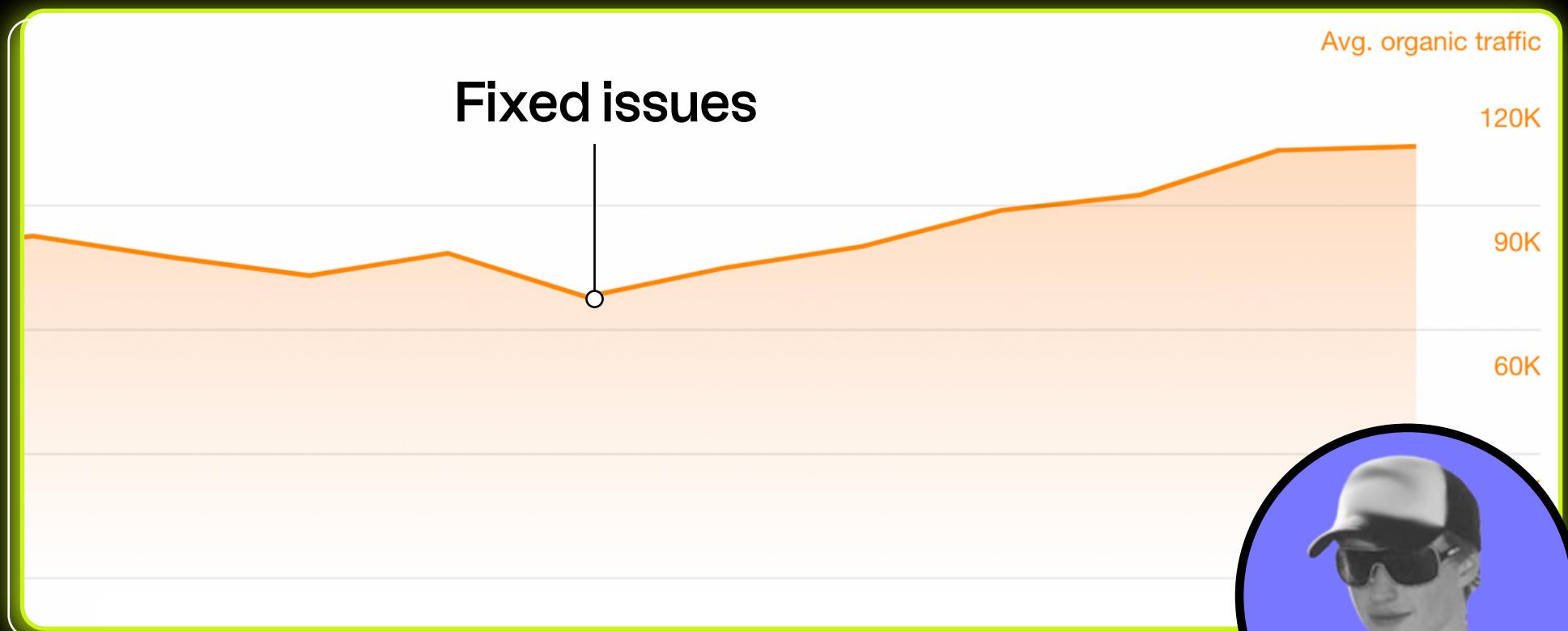


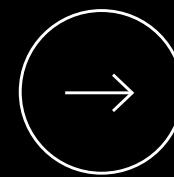
12 Most common SEO issues



Featuring
Glen Allsopp
detailed.com

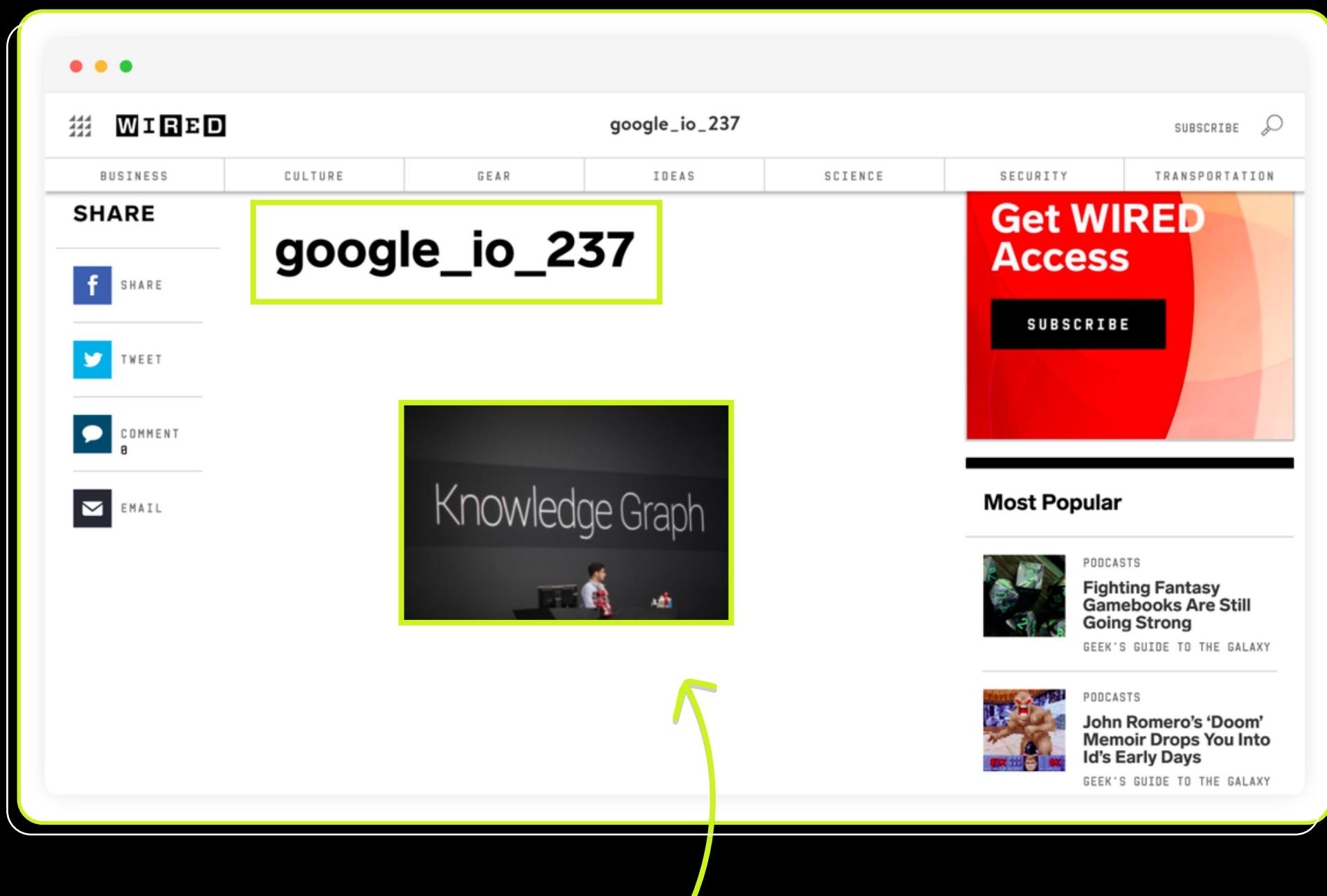


ABN ASIA.ORG



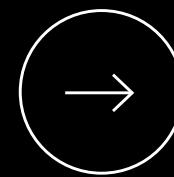
1. Image pages

Use WordPress? Every image you've ever uploaded may have its own page, which Google indexes.



I used to find this on ~30% of WordPress sites and although its presence seems to be declining, it's still good to check for...





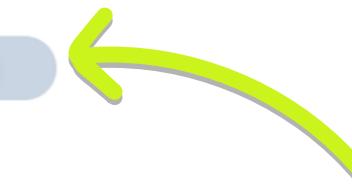
Luckily, this is an **easy fix**.

WordPress plugins like Yoast have a built-in option to redirect attachment URLs to the image.

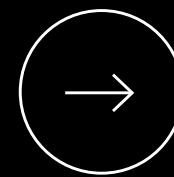
Media pages

When you upload media (e.g. an image or video), WordPress automatically creates a media page (attachment URL) for it. These pages are quite empty and could cause [thin content problems and lead to excess pages on your site](#). Therefore, Yoast SEO disables them by default (and redirects the attachment URL to the media itself).

Enable media pages



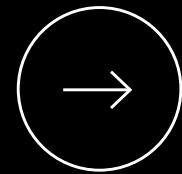
We recommend keeping media pages disabled. This will cause all attachment URLs to be redirected to the media itself.



Why does it matter?

Your site needs to maintain a clean footprint to help with its overall '**quality score**'.

I avoid indexing low-quality pages in Google that I wouldn't want searchers to find.



2. HTTP pages

As you'll know, all pages on your site need to be secure ([https](https://)).

But you'd be surprised how many sites still have pages ranking which aren't secure.

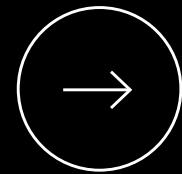
The screenshot shows a Google search results page with the query "site:pcmag.com -inurl:https". The results indicate approximately 2,950 results found in 0.45 seconds. Two specific results are highlighted:

- Eero**: The result for Eero shows a link to <http://uk.pcmag.com/eero>. The URL is highlighted in green, and the entire result card is outlined in yellow.
- iometer**: The result for PC Magazine shows a link to <http://au.pcmag.com/iometer>. The URL is highlighted in green, and the entire result card is outlined in yellow.

Below these highlighted results, there is a general note: "Eero. Latest Eero. Eero. Eero is a good-looking mesh-based Wi-Fi system that installs in minutes, is easy to manage, and delivers good overall throughput ...".

At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a small logo for ABN ASIA.ORG featuring a stylized blue bird.





Use the '**'site:domain inurl:-https'** search command to find these non-secure pages.

This search command can also help you find other unusual pages that probably shouldn't be indexing.

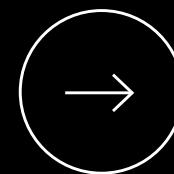
The image shows a comparison between a Google search results page and the actual website content. On the left, a Google search results page for 'site:forbes.com -inurl:https' is displayed. It shows two search results from the Forbes website:

- Forbes.com : College Planning**
Seven basic points to remember when starting a savings plan
Real Estate, Back-To-School Six Must- ...
<http://images.forbes.com › collegeplanning>
- America's New Tech Hot Spots - 2013-03-**
Mar 8, 2013 — Mark Schill of Praxis Strategy Group crunched the numbers for us to determine the changes in STEM employment from 2001 to 2012 in the 51 ...
<http://www.forbes.com › pictures › methodology>

A green arrow points from the second search result on the left to the corresponding article on the right. On the right, a screenshot of the Forbes.com homepage is shown. The header features the Mercado Pago logo and the slogan 'COBRA EN LÍNEA FÁCIL Y SEGURO'. The main navigation menu includes Home, Business, Investing, Technology, Entrepreneurs, and Op/Ed. Below the menu, there are several news articles:

- Personal Finance: [Start Saving For College Now](#)
Seven basic points to remember when starting a savings plan.
- Home Improvement: [A+ College Real Estate](#)
- Back-To-School: [Six Must-Have Gadgets For College Students](#)
- Personal Finance: [13 Financial Tips For College Kids](#)
- Business In The Beltway: [An Expensive Education](#)





3. Pages you don't even know about

Find pages you might not want to index (or even know existed).

Perform a **site:domain** search and use terms to discover these pages.

Google site:ey.com "lorem ipsum"

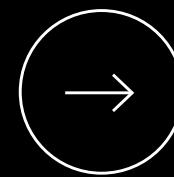
About 541 results (0.27 seconds)

ey.com https://www.ey.com › doorway · Translate this page

Lorem Ipsum profile page browser title Building a better ... - EY

Lorem Ipsum Profile Lorem P Lorem Ipsum . Lorem job title. Proin quis ligula id nunc accumsan venenatis ut eu mauris. Morbi non finibus orci.





Example of terms to try:

"Lorem ipsum" →

Portfolio →

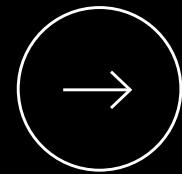
Demo →

Index →

Error →

Test →

Or perform a blank **site:domain** search and look for any odd titles that might be low-quality pages.



4. Matching intent

"I'm not ranking for [keyword]" can be answered by understanding the search intent.

- **Content type:**

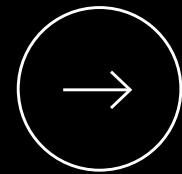
Should it be a blog post, landing page, or other?

- **Content format:**

Should it be a how-to guide, list, or other?

- **Content angle:**

What type of audience should it be targeting?



To understand intent, Google your topic and **read the results page**.

Type: Blog post

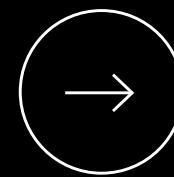
SERP overview for "real estate agent website" ② 15 Aug 2023 ▾ Compare with ▾

- Search result
- 1 50 Best Real Estate Websites
<https://www.agentimage.com/50-best-real-estate-websites/> ▾
- 2 Placester®
<https://www.nar.realtor/realtor-benefits-program/business-marketing/placester> ▾
- 3 Top 25 Real Estate Agent Websites RANKED (+ Tips & ...)
<https://theclose.com/real-estate-agent-websites/> ▾
- 4 The 11 Best Real Estate Agent Websites of 2020 (Plus Tips ...)
<https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/real-estate-agent-websites> ▾
- 5 15 Best Real Estate Agent Websites: Tips and Examples
<https://www.wix.com/blog/real-estate-agent-websites> ▾
- 6 ► People also ask
- 7 Real Estate Agent Websites: 30+ Inspiring Examples (2023)
<https://www.sitebuilderreport.com/inspiration/real-estate-websites> ▾

Format:
List of examples

Angle: Inspiration
for real estate agents





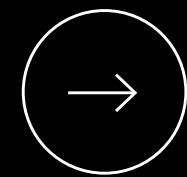
5. Tags and categories

Another common source of thin content on a site is going overboard on tags and categories.

They're great in moderation.

But not when these pages:

- Are empty
- Only have one post/item
- Haven't been updated in years



This applies to ecommerce, forums, and any other sites with a blog.

I avoid having a significant number of categories, tags or collections with 0-2 items.

The screenshot shows the Star Trek Shop homepage. A yellow box highlights a single product listing for a "Star Trek Party Supplies Pack" which includes a plate and cups. A yellow arrow points from the text above to this specific product listing.

STAR TREK SHOP

SHOP BY SERIES COLLECTIONS SHOP BY PRODUCT BEST SELLERS SALE

starkid.com

Party Supplies

Home /

SERIES

The Original Series

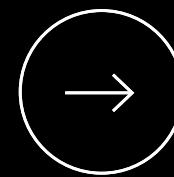
1 product

Exclusive

Star Trek Party Supplies Pack
\$34.95

No rating available





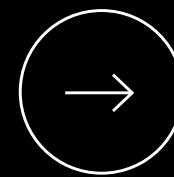
6. Title and H1

Updating dates in your blog title?

Make sure you don't just change your H1 but also the title that shows in Google (or vice-versa).

The screenshot illustrates the importance of consistency between the main title on the page and the SEO meta-data. The main title is 'Best Off-Road SUVs For 2023', while the subtitle is 'Best Off-Road SUVs for 2022 - Forbes Wheels'. The SEO panel shows the title field is correctly set to the main title, and the subtitle is listed under the description.

| Field | Value | Status |
|--------------|--|--------------------|
| Title | Best Off-Road SUVs for 2022 - Forbes Wheels | ✓ 43 characters |
| Description | Some SUVs look tough, but the vehicles on this list are tough. Here are the best off-road SUVs options for those looking to get off the beaten path. | ✓ 151 characters |
| URL | https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/ | ✓ Indexable |
| Canonical | https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/ | ✓ Self-referencing |
| Robots Tag | max-image-preview:large | |
| X-Robots-Tag | Missing | |

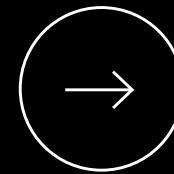


Easily find and fix these pages with '**site:domain intitle: [previous year]**'.

Then use the free **Detailed SEO Extension (Glen's tool)** to quickly check the page's title.

The screenshot shows the 'Overview' tab of the extension. The page title is 'Best Off-Road SUVs for 2022 - Forbes Wheels'. The description is: 'Some SUVs look tough, but the vehicles on this list are tough. Here are the best off-road SUVs options for those looking to get off the beaten path.' The URL is 'https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/'. The canonical link is 'https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/'. The robots tag is 'max-image-preview:large'. The X-Robots-Tag is 'Missing'. A green badge indicates the page is 'Indexable'.





7. Old publish dates

Avoid older dates showing up against recently published or updated content.

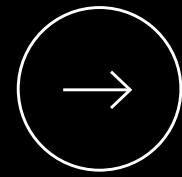
This hurts your CTR and, from my experiments, your rankings.

 pcmag.com
<https://www.pcmag.com> › ... › Android Apps ::

The Best Android Apps for 2023

Oct 5, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices Compared: Which One Is **Best** for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...





Here's one way to find this problem using Google:

- Perform a **site:domain** search
- Select tools (on the right)
- Enter last year's date (or even further back)

Google site:pcmag.com "best"

Videos Images Songs Laptop Haircuts Air fryer Smartwatch Movie Anime All filters Tools SafeSearch

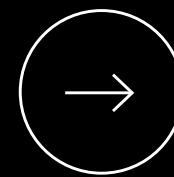
Jan 1, 2022 – Dec 31, 2022 All results Clear

pcmag.com https://www.pcmag.com › ... › Android Apps ...
[The Best Android Apps for 2023](#)
Oct 5, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices
Compared: Which One Is Best for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...

pcmag.com https://www.pcmag.com › ... › Video › Video Editing ...
[The Best Video Editing Software for 2023](#)
Jun 9, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices
Compared: Which One Is Best for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...

pcmag.com https://www.pcmag.com › ... › Windows ...
[The Best Apps in the Windows 11 Store for 2023](#)
Feb 24, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices
Compared: Which One Is Best for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...
\$9.99



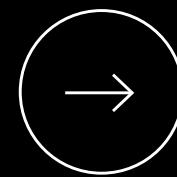


8. Heading tags

It may seem basic to some, but I still regularly see sites not using heading tags correctly.

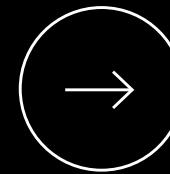
The screenshot shows a user interface for analyzing website structure. At the top, there are tabs: Overview, Headings, Links, Images, Schema, Social, Advanced, and a settings gear icon. Below the tabs, a list of page titles is displayed, each preceded by a small purple box containing the HTML tag '<H1>'. The first item in the list is 'Home Maintenance & Improvement, Reimagined'. A vertical yellow box highlights the first '<H1>' tag. The other items in the list are: 'On-demand Home Care', 'Finding Service Pros for Urgent Repairs', 'Annual Home Diagnostic', 'Maintenance & Improvement', '24/7 Home Care', 'Preferred Pricing & Vendors', 'Our Services', and '24/7 Home Care'.

- <H1> Home Maintenance & Improvement, Reimagined
- <H1> On-demand Home Care
- <H1> Finding Service Pros for Urgent Repairs
- <H1> Annual Home Diagnostic
- <H1> Maintenance & Improvement
- <H1> 24/7 Home Care
- <H1> Preferred Pricing & Vendors
- <H1> Our Services
- <H1> 24/7 Home Care



Here are some basic rules I follow:

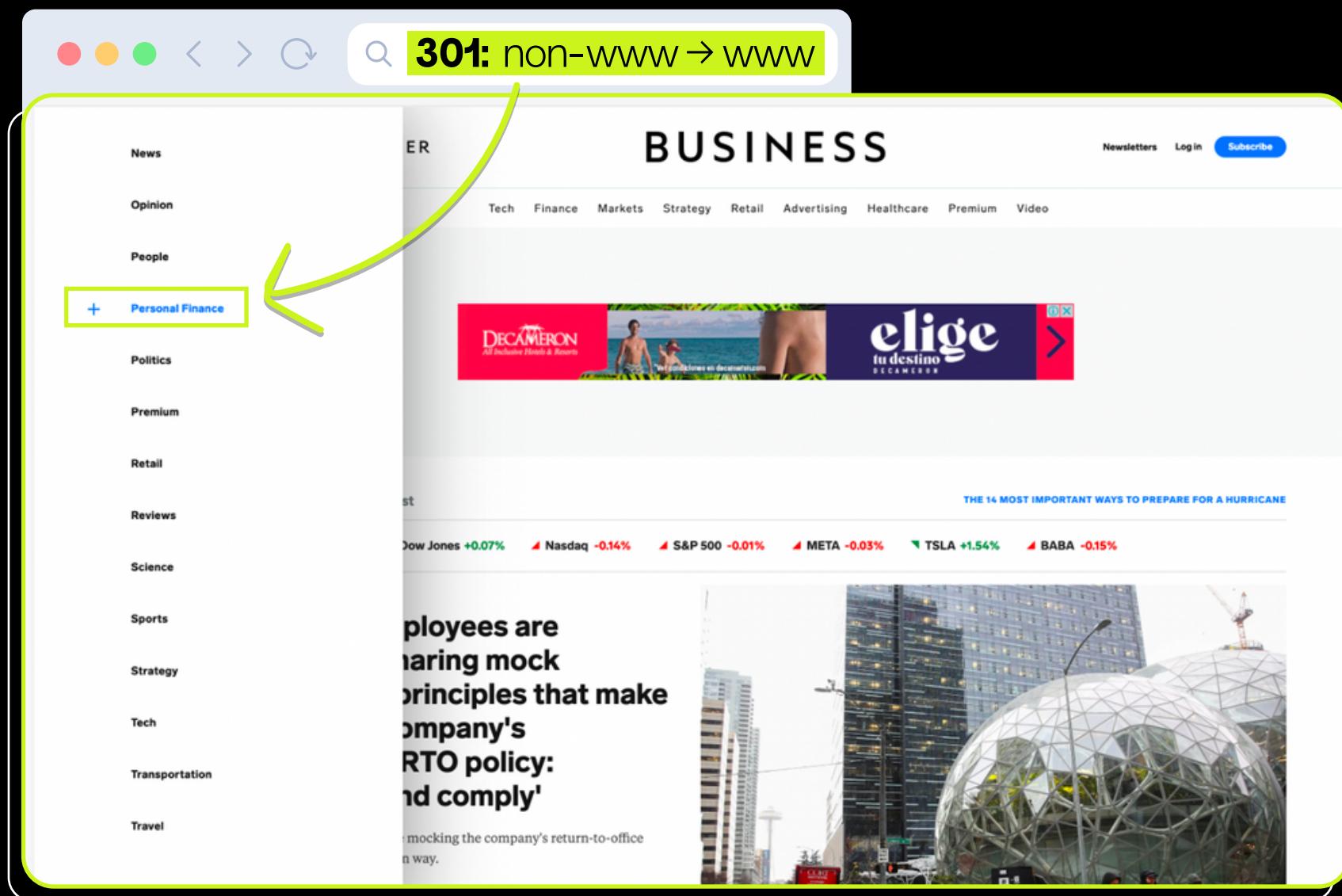
- **Include only one H1 per page**
- **Use the same title for the H1 and the title that shows in Google**
- **Don't over-optimise titles with keyword stuffing**
- **Order H2-H6s appropriately, e.g. don't go from H2 to H4 without H3 in between**
- **Make them incredibly skimmable**

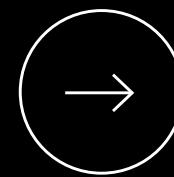


9. Redirected links

Ideally, key navigational links should not go through a redirect.

- http to https
- www to non-www
- trailing-slash to no trailing-slash





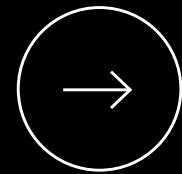
I hear you:

"A 301/308 redirect should pass all the 'weight', so it's fine..."

Why do it if you don't need to?

Here's why:

It's an (albeit, slightly) **slower** experience for users and increases the chance of creating **redirect chains** down the road.

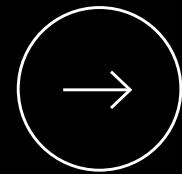


10. Redirect chains

Redirect chains occur when there's more than one redirect between the initial URL and the final URL.

For example:



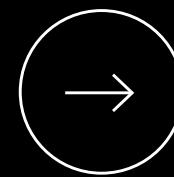


Similar to Glen's previous point,
ideally these 301s should be fixed
and not go through a redirect chain.

They can impact:

- Crawl budget
- Page loading times
- General user experience
- 'Power' of your internal/backlinks

Redirect chains can be found in a
Screaming Frog crawl and/or using
a (free) tool like httpstatus.io.



11. Canonical interlinks

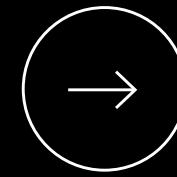
Avoid sending key internal links to pages you're not trying to rank (e.g. they canonicalise elsewhere).

The image shows a screenshot of the SpaceX website's "FEATURED PRODUCTS" section. On the left, there are two products: a "STARSHIP TORCH PRE-SALE" (SOLD OUT) and a "UNISEX STARSHIP HEATSHIELD PULLOVER HOODIE" (\$65.00). A yellow box highlights the hoodie. A yellow arrow points from this box to the "Canonical" field in the SEO panel on the right.

SEO METADATA:

- Title:** Unisex Starship Heatshield Pullover Hoodie – SpaceX Store (69 characters)
- Description:** Fabric Content: Black• Small-5X: 70% Cotton / 30% Polyester Gray Heather• Small-5X: 52% Cotton / 48% Polyester (110 characters)
- URL:** https://shop.spacex.com/collections/featured-products/products/unisex-starship-heatshield-pullover-hoodie (Indexable)
- Canonical:** https://shop.spacex.com/products/unisex-starship-heatshield-pullover-hoodie (Canonicalised)
- Robots Tag:** Missing
- X-Robots-Tag:** Missing

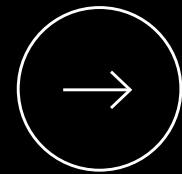




This is **extremely common** for ecommerce sites on Shopify.

Not the end of the world, but sometimes entire sites are built this way which isn't ideal.

It's nothing a **developer** can't fix.

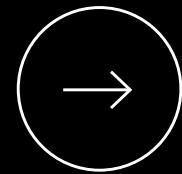


12. 404 pages with good backlinks

Many site owners delete pages without redirecting them to another page on the site.

This can be ok, but I suggest checking to see if the page has existing backlinks.

If it does, you can pass the 'power' of the backlinks to another page.

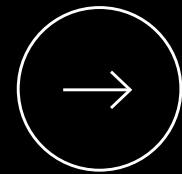


I use **Screaming Frog** to find these issues:

- Connect to Ahrefs' API
- You'll see backlinks per URL
- Find 404 pages with backlinks
- 301 to a page you want to rank

The screenshot shows the Screaming Frog SEO Spider interface. At the top, it displays the URL <https://hubspot.com/>. Below the address bar is a navigation menu with tabs like Internal, External, Security, Response Codes, etc. The main area is a table with columns for Pixel Width, Meta Description 1, Length, Pixel Width, Ahrefs Backlinks - Exact, and Meta Keywords. The 'Ahrefs Backlinks - Exact' column is highlighted with a yellow box. To the right of the table is a sidebar with sections for Overview, Issues, Site Structure, Response Times, API, Spelling & G, and Crawl Data. Under Crawl Data, 'Internal' is selected, and a green bar highlights it. The bottom right corner of the interface features a stylized blue and green logo.





Bonus: Superpixels

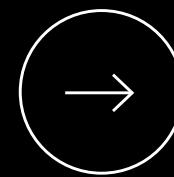
Once you've taken care of the fundamentals, add '**Superpixels**' everywhere you can.

In my 1,000+ audits, the most common issue was this:

Sites were so... **similar**.

No personality. Just pushing out content for Big G.





Superpixels = In the standard things you put on your site, try to make them memorable. Personal.

Make visitors do a double take. To me, this makes earning links, subscribers and sales much easier.

Rand Fishkin
@randfish

One of the best email overlays I've seen.

OTTICA SEATTLE

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WHAT'S NEW STORE INFO ABOUT INSTAGRAM

Six emails. Per year.

(Okay, there might be seven but we may end up sending as few as four?)

Sign up to get a peek at new arrivals and more!

Email Address

SUBSCRIBE

We respect your privacy.

A yellow box highlights the "Six emails. Per year." section of the modal overlay. A yellow curved arrow points from the text above to this highlighted area.