

candour

Soft 404s



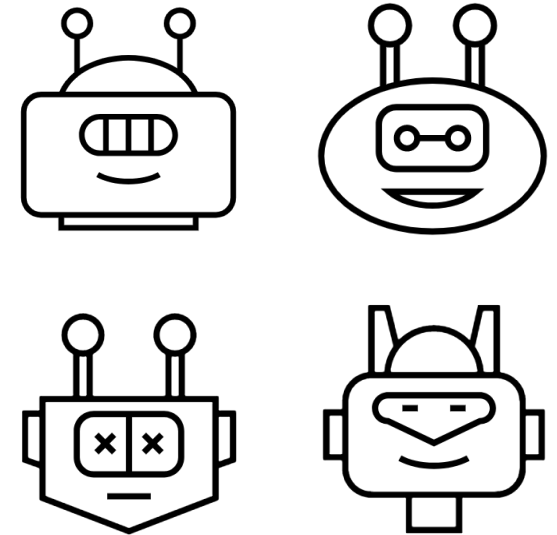
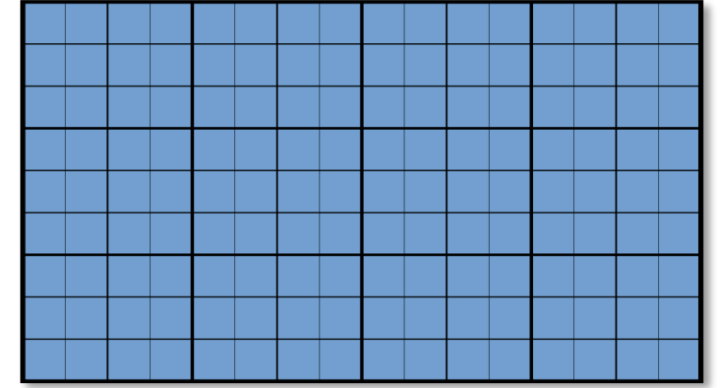
Trainer:

Mark Williams-Cook
Candour

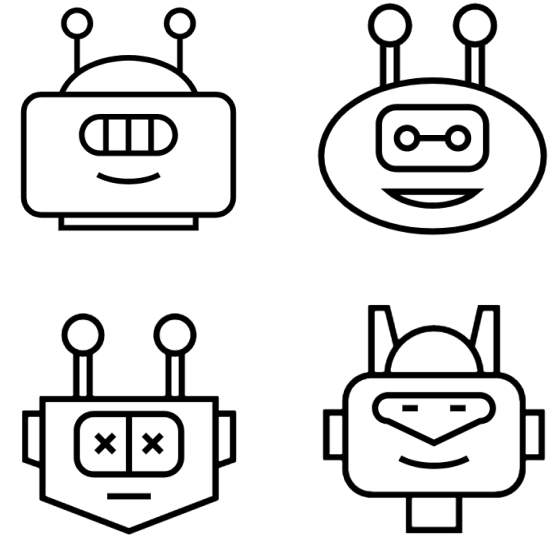
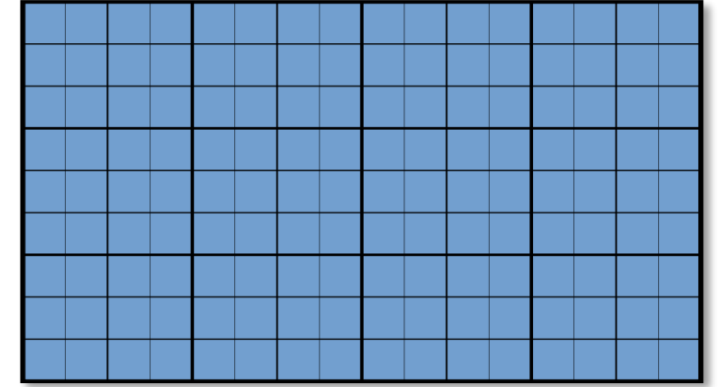


What are soft 404s?

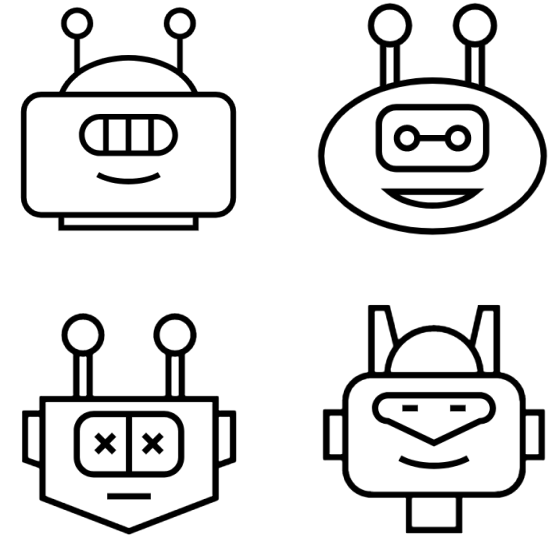
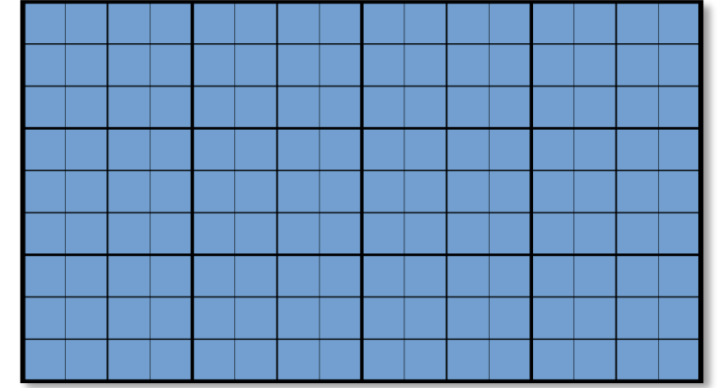
A URL that returns a page telling the user that the page does not exist, but returns an HTTP 200 (OK) response code



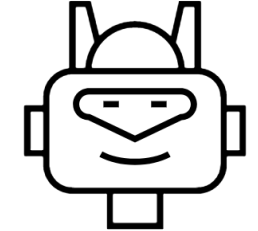
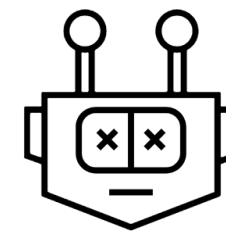
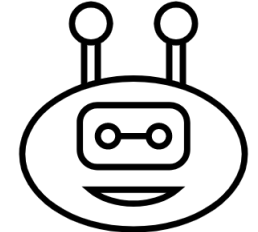
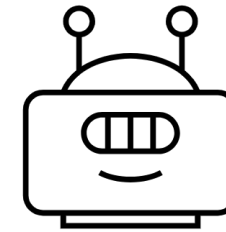
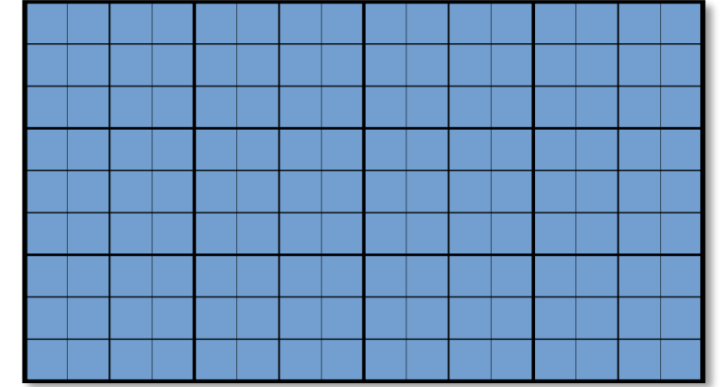
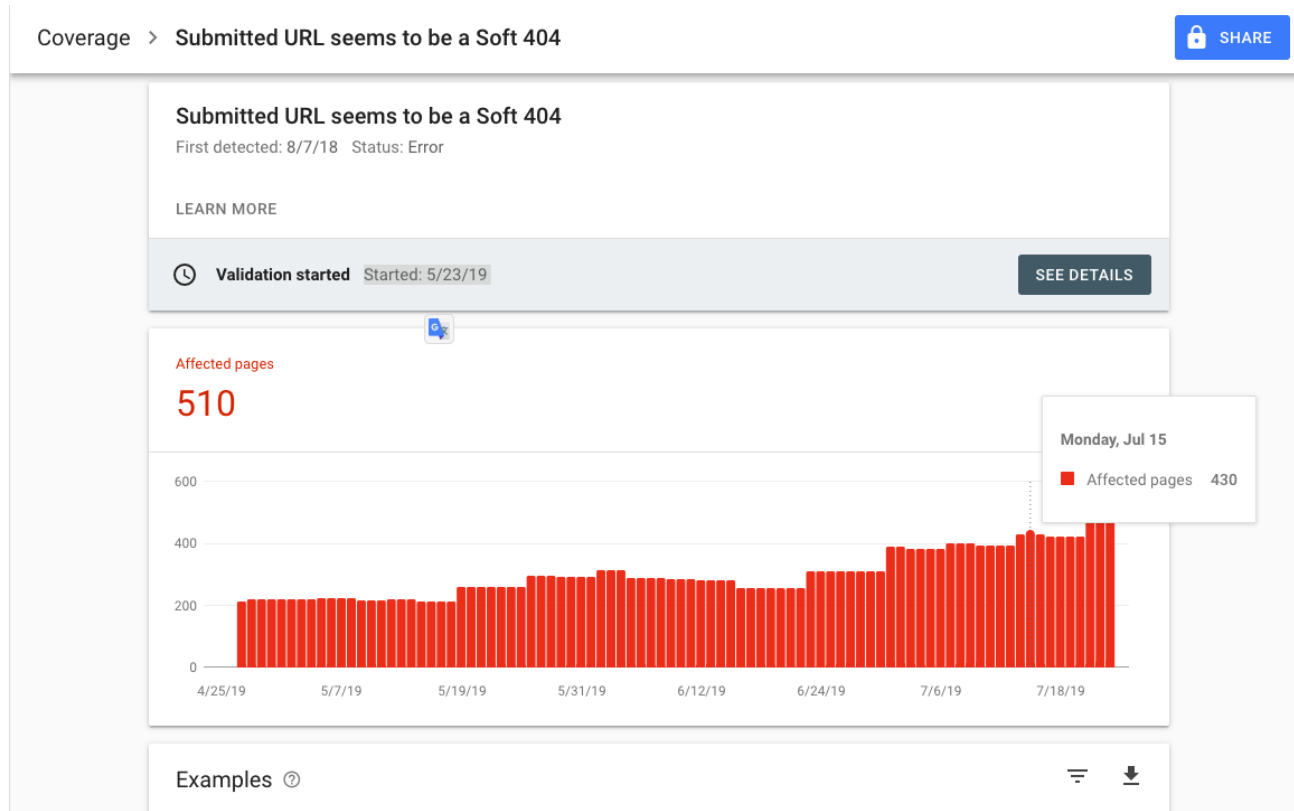
How can you check for them?



How can you check for them?



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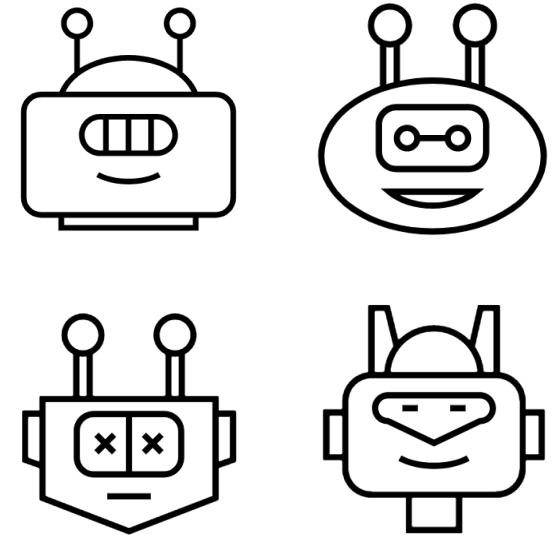
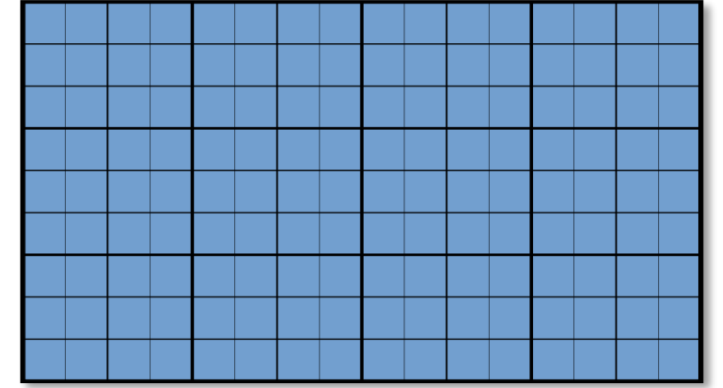


Soft 404s

Why does it matter?

Returning a 200 status code tells a search engine that a valid page exists.

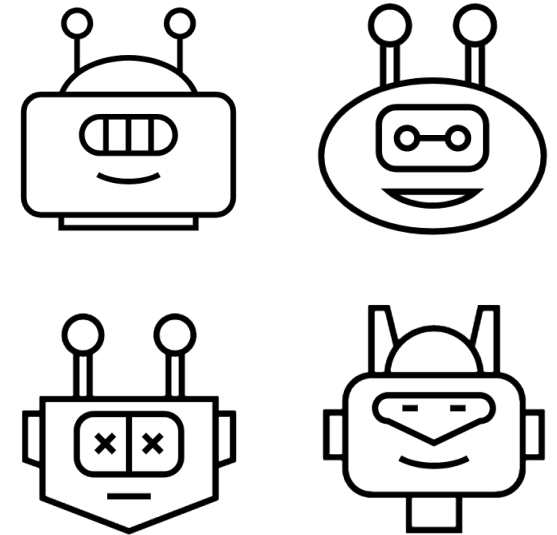
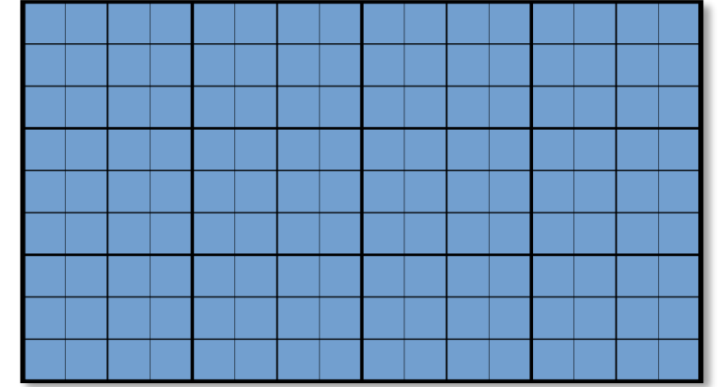
This means search engines could waste time both crawling and indexing your error pages, instead of spending time on your 'real' pages.



How do they occur?

Most common cause:

- Single page applications (SPAs)



Challenge

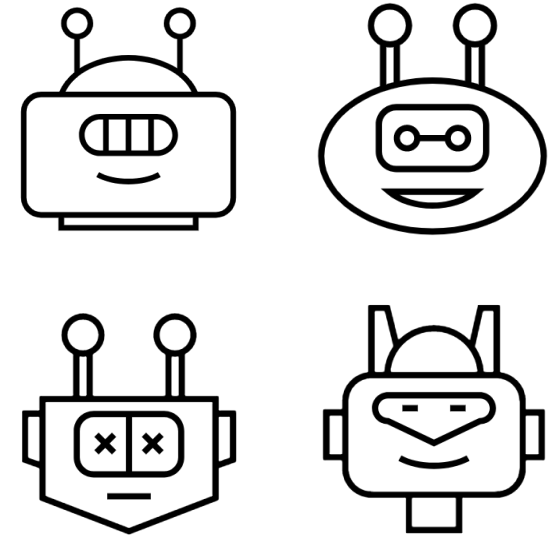
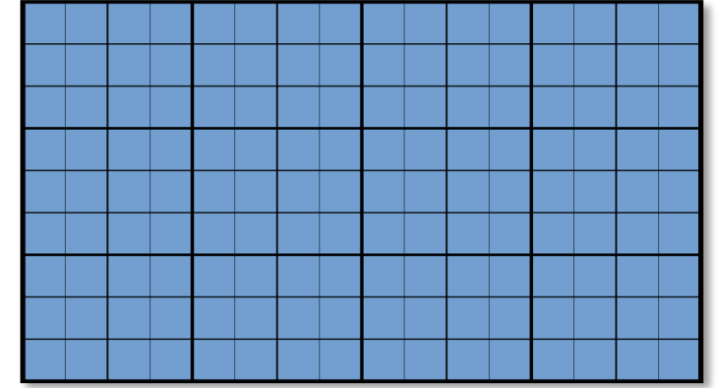


Out of stock e-commerce pages are often treated as “soft 404s” by Google. Why do you think this is?

How do they occur?

Out of stock pages:

- Return a 200 status code
- Rarely provide value to the user (like an error page)



Key concept

Pages intentionally removed should either be redirected or a 410 (Gone) used.

Random URLs should return a 404 (Not Found) status code.

