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Technical Analysis

After reviewing with a specialist named Kaitlin McMichael, several improvements for the On The Boards website are critical and should be top priority for future work. These suggestions primarily focus on Search Engine Optimisation issues, however included are a few social media optimization recommendations. The problems are outlined below:

References: Most of these ideas and data were compiled by Kaitlin McMichael

Technical Element: Duplicate content

Problem: On the boards faces an issue where identical pages are listed with different addresses. This is bad for business because search are put in charge of which page will display to users when searched. This issue can be cause by having duplicate pages that change from http to https, appended data to urls (sorting, tracking codes, and session ids), and also blog content copied from another page. OTB's issues appear to mostly concern the blog posts. For example both <http://www.ontheboards.org/blog?page=228&p=742> & <http://www.ontheboards.org/blog?page=228> are listed for the exact same blog post.

Recommendation: In order to solve this issue, the source of the duplicate page needs to be removed. A common strategy is to redirect the extra pages to the homepage - this seems like the most direct approach for OTB's duplicate content issues. Another option is to change the duplicate pages to "nofollow" with the page's meta html tag which blocks search indexing from occurring. On the Boards should also consider adding canonical tags, which essentially specifies the preferred version of the web page. Web crawl results showed a problem with the usages of p tag parameters, and if this issue was sorted out the company would be better off because it would draw the user closer to the home page. Page buttons on the blog posts have useless parameters and need to be taken out, the suggested method is with adding "nofollow". By solving this issue web crawlers will no longer have to go through the route of every parameter and thus find more relevant content to display more effectively.

Technical Element: Calendar

Problem: Internal Calendar links are adding a mini=calendar parameter to all the urls associated with this page. This creates duplicate pages which confuses SEO and may slow down site performance.

Recommendation: To stop the calendar from making additional URL addresses, the internal links in the mini calendar need to be changed. The content management system can also be modified to help this issue as well. Pages with mini=calendar can be made "noindexed" by adding extra meta data to the robots page tag.

Technical Element: Headings

Problem: Headings aren't used correctly in the html of the page. There can only be one "h1" tag, and the presentation by SEO specialist Kaitlin showed this to be an issue with the organization.

Recommendation: Go through code to ensure that headings are used correctly. Although many designers use headings stylistically, this is not good practice in web development. On the boards should make sure that all of its pages reflect what is displayed on its titles from a human perspective. Try to make sure the words used in the titles represent what a user would be searching for in a search engine. Correct keywords are essential to users finding what they are looking for. A specific example is that none of the title tags display "Seattle Theater." To improve this issue, a page should be associated with this specific keyword. All of these general categories should be tied in with how the overall navigation of the site functions.

Technical Element: Page Speed

Problem: Page speed is slow and clunky, and in need of optimization. The page speed tool PageSpeed indicated a need for On The Boards to increase the page load speeds.

Recommendation: I would highly recommend crawling the site to look for appropriate meta descriptions, title tags, and headings. Similarly, make sure to look for duplicate content, fields that are missing, and correct usage of keywords. Having these things in order will ensure that pages can be rendered at the speed that will give each user the best experience possible.

Technical Element: Alt Tags

Problem: On the Boards doesn't have alt tags on its images. This is problematic for accessibility issues and SEO optimisation purposes.

Recommendation: Go through all content and include the html property "alt=" so that if a user is using a screen reader they could understand the instructions. The more keywords the better, and this greatly affects what images appear when image searching ([stackoverflow](https://stackoverflow.com)). I'd ensure the web developer makes a habit of including this when posting new content.

Technical Element: User Experience Issues

Problem: Website experience and navigation is confusing. Things are hard to read on the site, and its not entirely clear what the next step should be in a user's task flow.

Recommendation: Remembering the goals and user needs should be the top concern. Make sure that if a user visits a page, there are proper affordances and calls to action so there are no "dead ends". Each blog post should clearly allow the user to accomplish their goals which are buying tickets, sharing and reading posts, and finding information about performance art.