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SEO for eCommerce

February 9th, 2023

Agenda

Presentation duration

30 Minutes

Conductor Speakers:

- Nate Endres, Senior SEO Analyst at Conductor

01. eCommerce + SEO - Why Does it Matter?

02. How does SEO work?

03. Foundational SEO

04. Content & Keywords

05. Technical SEO

eCommerce + SEO - Why Does it Matter?

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Why is SEO Important?

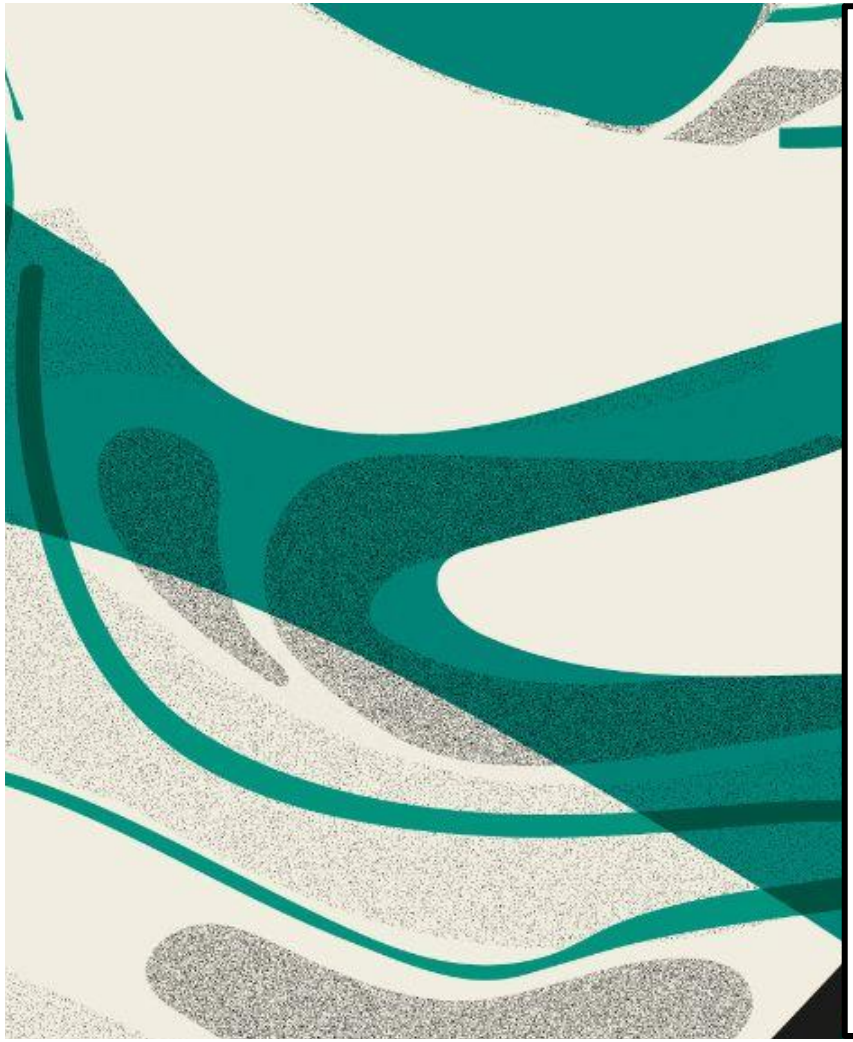
What is SEO for eCommerce?

E-commerce SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is the practice of improving your online store's organic visibility in search engine result pages (SERPs) in an effort to drive more visits and sales.

Why It Matters:

- Helps your business reach new customers that may be unfamiliar with your brand
- While not "free" in terms of investment, strong organic visibility can drive traffic without needing to pay-per-click
- Helps diversify your traffic streams so you aren't reliant on one or two channels

How Does SEO Work



> The process of maximizing the number of visitors to a particular website by ensuring that the site appears high on the list of results returned by a search engine.

Definition of SEO

Google

SEO is More Than Just Keywords

There are hundreds of variables that impact SEO

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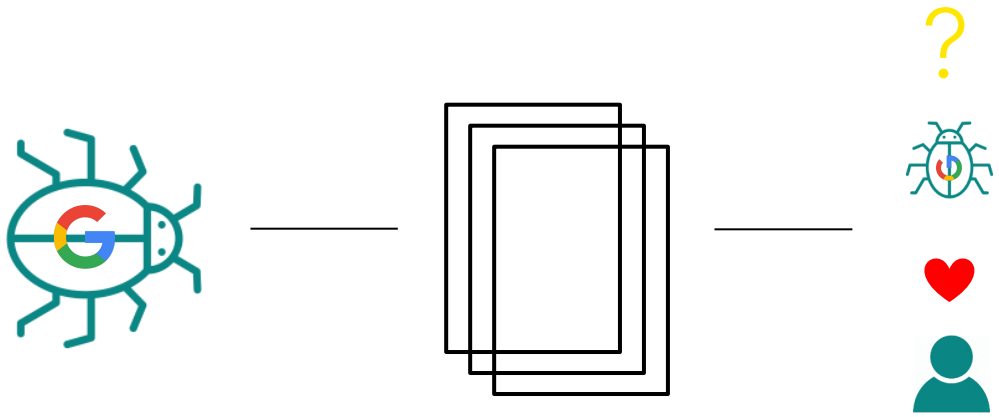
How Search Engines Work



- **Trustworthy Brand**
  - Build authority around topics relevant to our brand/business
- **Quality Web Experience**
  - Good user experience, easy navigation, low bounce rate, high page engagement rate
- **Relevant Content**
  - Creating customer-first web content that meets their search intent
  - Creating content with value, especially in comparison with other webpages on the SERP

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Anatomy of an eCommerce Search Results Page

Paid Listings

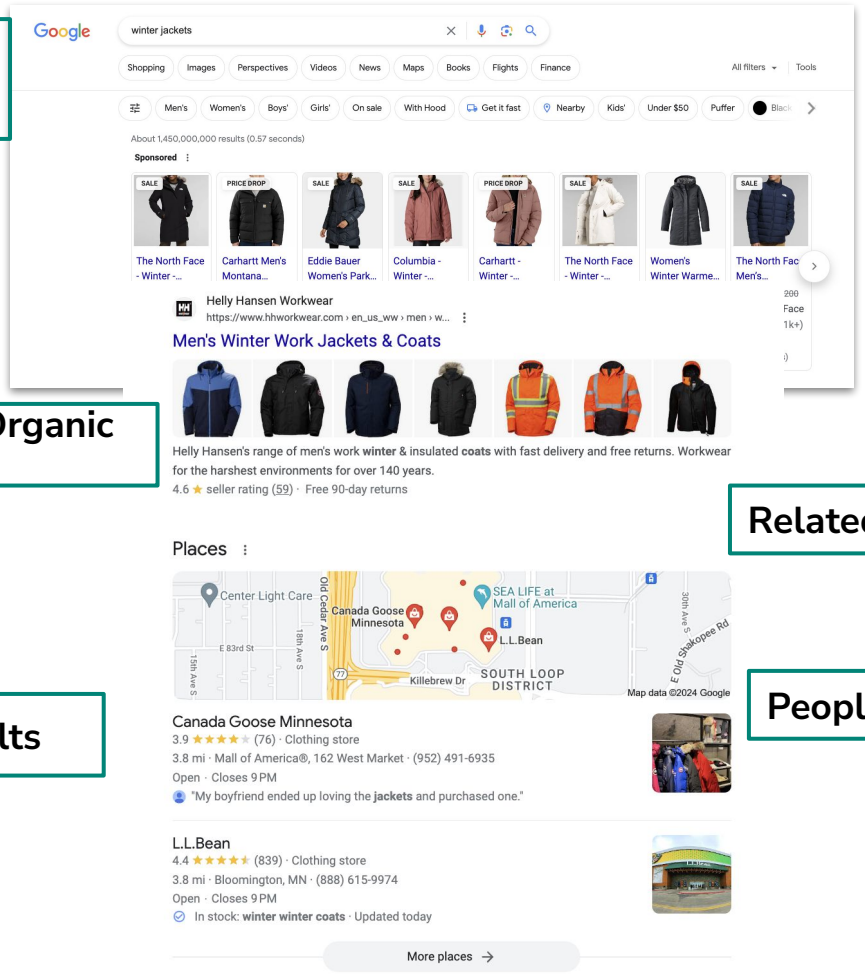
Regular Organic Listing

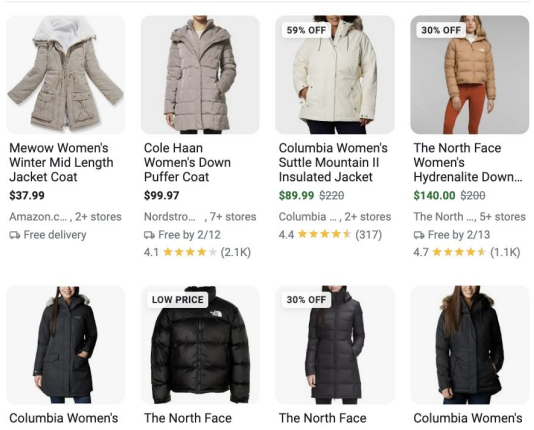
Local Results

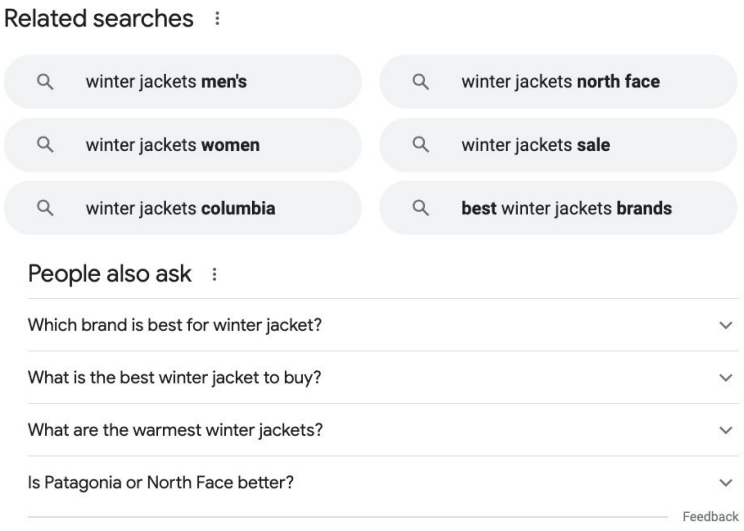
Product Listings

Related Searches

People Also Ask







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Key Trends in the eCommerce Search Landscape

Shoppable results and a more interactive search results pages are keeping more people within search results and reducing the number who clickthrough to a website

Increased personalization can make search results very different for the same keyword depending on location & individual search history

Google and other search engines are making an effort to diversify results, making the search landscape more competitive between competing retailers and other types of search intents (informational, transactional, etc.

Foundational SEO

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On-Page Optimization Provides Your SEO Foundation

Foundational SEO refers to the key page elements you must optimize to help search engines understand what your pages, and website, are about

- Title
- Meta Description
- URL Structure
- Headings (H1, H2, H3...)
- Images (Alt Text)
- Internal Links (Anchor Text)

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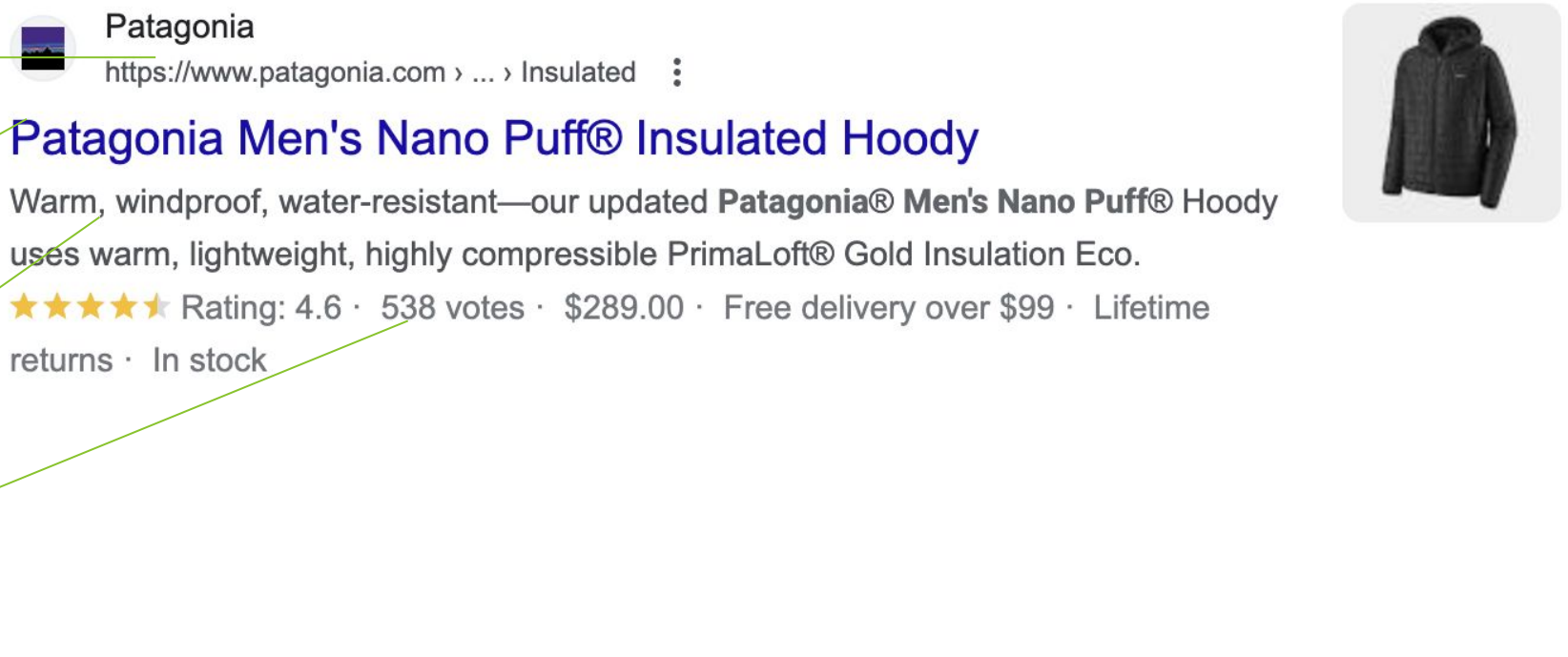
Anatomy of a Regular Search Result

URL

Page Title

Meta Description

Product Details (Pulled from page content or Structured Markup)



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Page Element Definitions

URL

Uniform Resource Locator, more commonly known as a “web address,” specifies the location of a resource (such as a web page) on the internet.

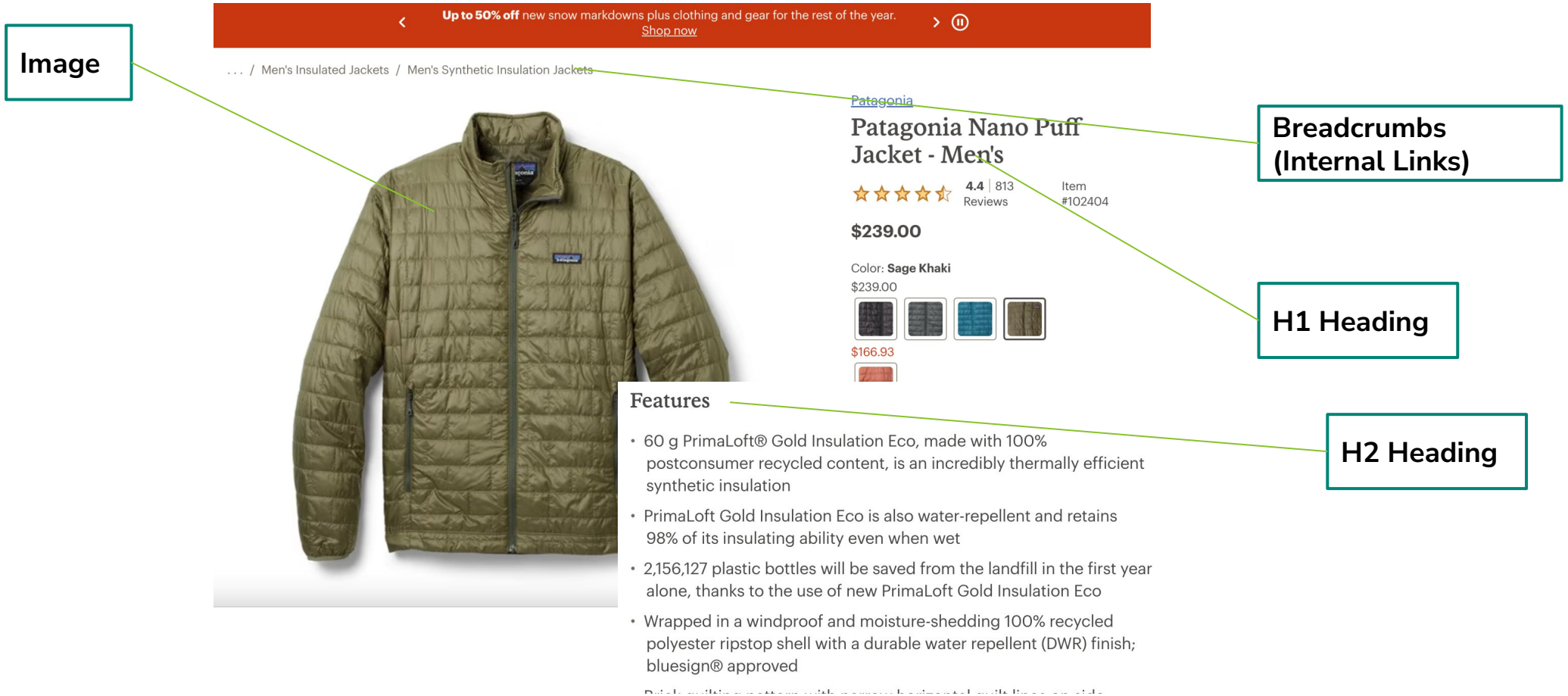
Title

Delivers the first message that the users see within the SERPs - this is a big SEO ranking factor.

Meta Description

This is the blurb of text under the title within the SERP. This is an important page element for clicks.

Key On-Page SEO Elements



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Page Element Definitions

Heading Tags

Commonly referred to as the “outline” of a page. Used by search engines as reinforcement to the main/surrounding topics on a page.

Images

Importance placed on optimizing ALT text on images with relevant keywords, as well as for ADA compliance.

Internal Links

These are hyperlinks in your content that lead to other pages on your website. This is how Google’s spiders find all the high-quality content you’re creating.

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Key SEO Elements - Best Practices Cheat Sheet

Title Tag & Meta Description

Title Tag

- Unique to each page
- 50-60 characters long
- Include primary & secondary keywords
- Ensure it reads naturally
- Branding at the end

Meta Description

- Unique to each page
- 150-160 characters
- Compelling & relevant to the page
- Entices click through

URL

- Keep it simple and straightforward
- Include your keyword as close to the root of your URL as possible
- Avoid parameter strings, capital letters, underscores or spaces (use dashes)
- Avoid using stop words (of, a, and, the, etc.)
- Shorter than 2,083 characters

Heading Tags

- Map H1 to the title tag
- Should include most important keywords and serve as the title of the book
- Only one H1 should be used per page
- H2-H6 can be used as the chapters of the book, can have multiple H2s, H3s etc. Include secondary and tertiary keywords

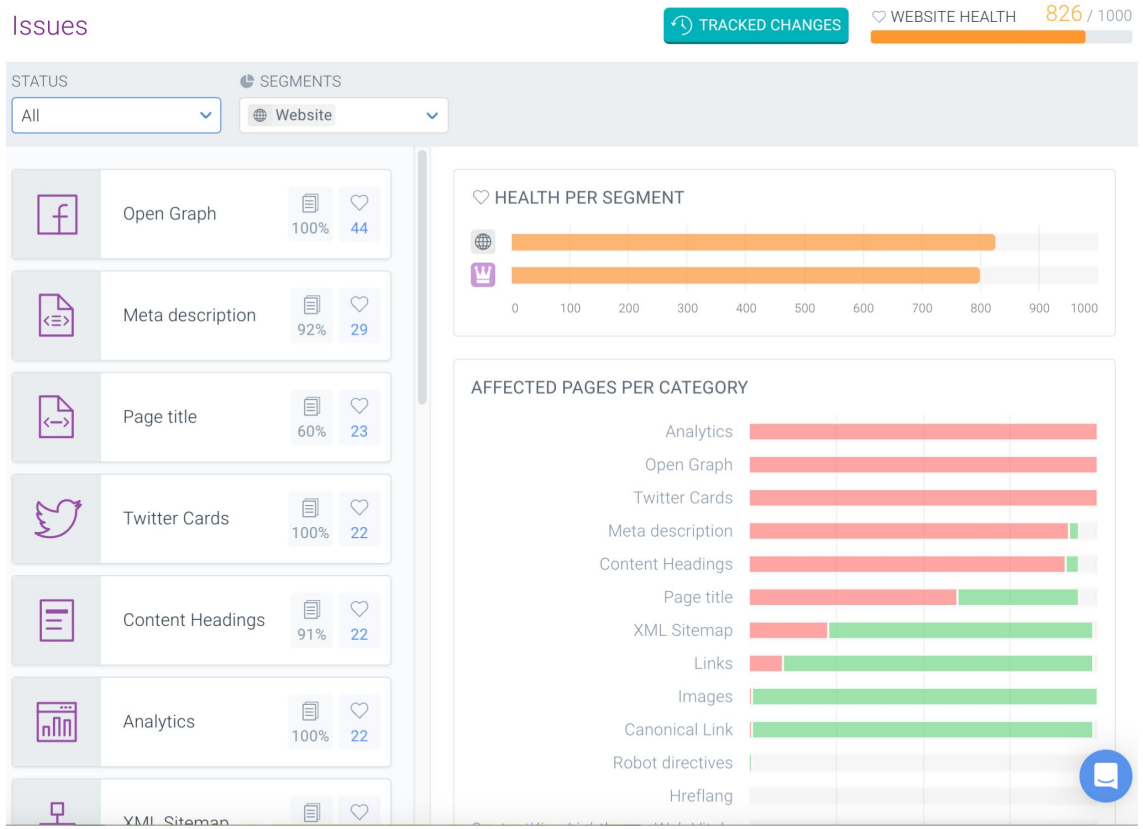
Images

- Include keywords in the ALT text of the image
- Ensure that the alt text accurately describes the content of the image
- Make image alt text short and descriptive
- Important for ADA compliance

Internal Links

- Links are how your content gets found!
- Use anchor text
- Link deeply when possibly throughout the site
- Use links that feel natural to the reader
- Use relevant and ‘follow’ links
- Use between 3-4 links per 1,000 words of content

How Conductor Can Help: ContentKing Issues Report



- ContentKing crawls your website in much the same way a search engine would and will monitor and flag foundational SEO content issues

- Foundational SEO issues ContentKing can help you uncover and address include:
  - Titles that are missing, duplicative, or too long to display fully in search engines
  - Meta descriptions that are missing, duplicative, too long to display fully in search engines
  - Missing, multiple, or duplicative H1 tags
  - Images missing alt tags

Content & Keywords

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A well-optimized eCommerce site has content that aligns to each stage of the customer journey

High Funnel

Informational Content

This is content that familiarizes potential customers with your brand and helps customers learn about your product offerings

Medium Funnel

Consideration Content

This is content that allows your potential customers to browse your product offerings and begin the shopping process

Low Funnel

Transactional Content

This is content that allows your customers to make a purchase or explore details about a specific product in the shopping process

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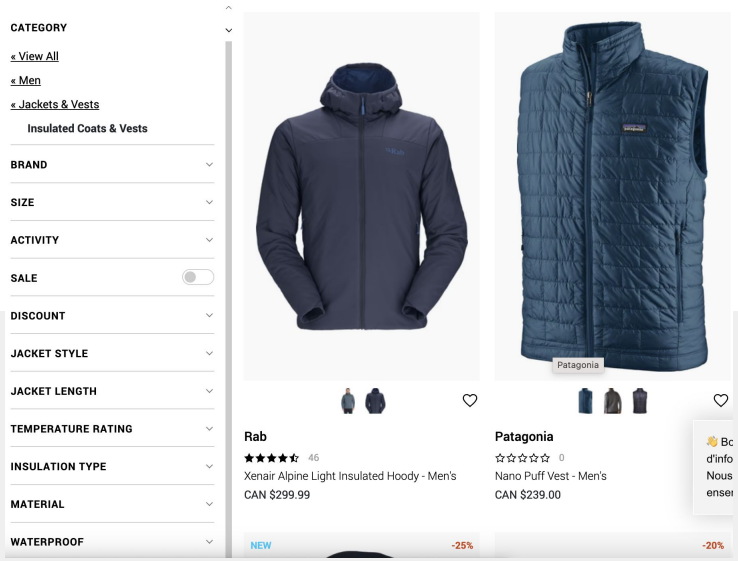
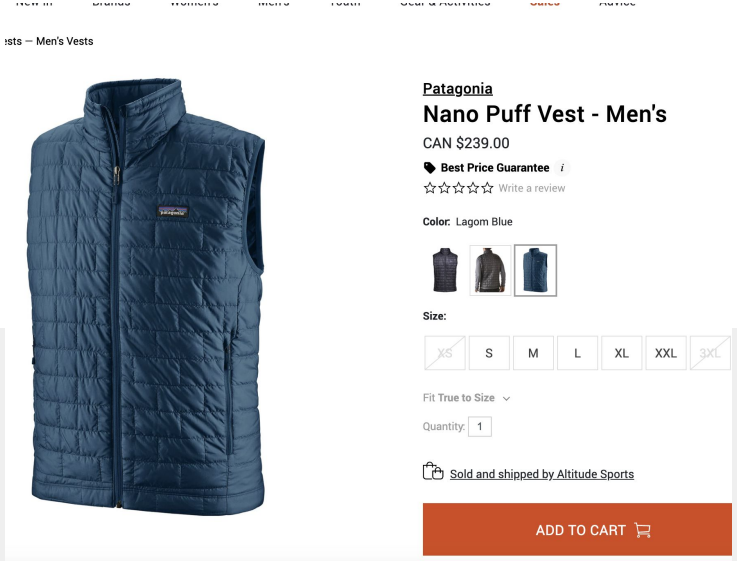
Informational Content

Consideration Content



Transactional Content



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Keywords help us identify what content customers need and how they're searching for it

Search Volume (MSV)

How many searches took place for a particular query in a given month. The higher the volume, the higher the searches and competition.

Relevance

While search volume is a great measurement for competition and strength, it's not always the best way to determine relevance.

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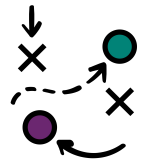
Keywords, like content, map to different phases of the customer journey

Head Keywords
i.e. ‘winter jackets’

The most popular and competitive terms that a website targets. Harder to rank for and less likely to convert (usually more of a window-shopping term)



Long-Tail Keywords
i.e. ‘men’s winter goose down parka’

Lower competition and lower volume terms. Can be easier to rank and have higher monetization potential due to specificity and weaker competition.

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Well-optimized content should rank for a variety of related keyword variations

Primary Keyword

The central keyword you would like this particular page to rank for, typically with search volume and page relevancy.

Should appear at the front of your title tag, and also in your meta description, H1 & body content.

Secondary Keyword

Complementary to the primary (and may even include another modifier).

Should appear in your title tag if possible, an H2, and within your body content.

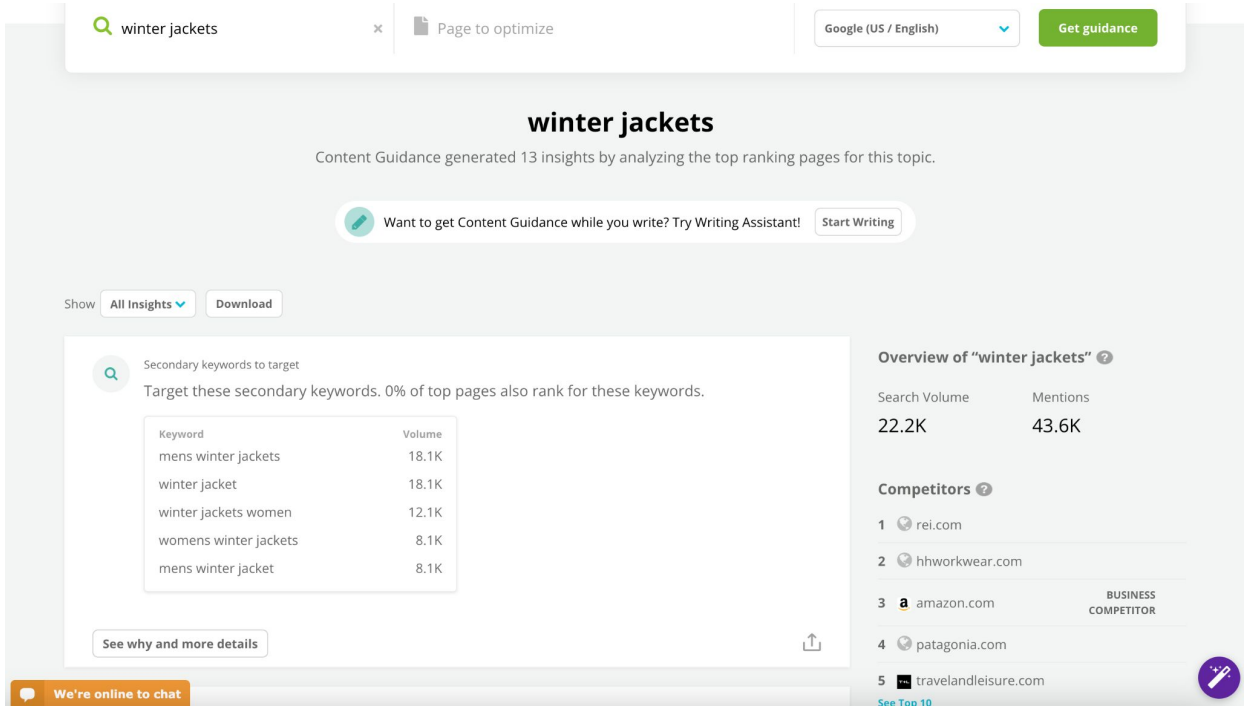
Tertiary Keyword

Not always necessary (or available), highly long-tail targeting specific, lower-volume niche keywords.

Can appear in your title tag if length allows, and should appear in body content where applicable.

Remember: You Don't Have To Target Every Keyword To Rank For Them!
Latent Semantic Indexing identifies patterns, as well as related terms and concepts.
For example: Lug nut wrench, automobile, fix and wheel are all semantically related to "flat tire."
Using these terms within the content will help better contextualize its meaning.

How Conductor Can Help: Content Guidance



- Content Guidance can help you understand how potential customers are searching for your products and how to create content that reaches them

- Entering a keyword/topic can help you uncover:
  - The highest volume keywords associated with your topic
  - Important related secondary and tertiary keywords
  - Search competitor pages ranking highest for the topic
  - Commonalities between high ranking pages inform content creation
    - Questions answered
    - Structure
    - Length
    - Meta data (title, headings, etc)

Technical SEO

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Technical SEO helps ensure users, and search engines, have a positive experience on your site

Crawling & Indexation

Can search engines find and and index your site and its constituent pages?

Site Architecture

Can users, & search engines, move easily and logically through your site's content?

Sitespeed & Usability

Is your site fast and easy to shop on/interact with regardless of device?

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Common Technical SEO Issues in eCommerce

- **Content Duplication** eCommerce sites are often large. Faceted-navigation, site search and other elements can create large numbers of duplicate pages that make it harder for search engines to crawl, index, and rank your site
- **Slow Site Speed** eCommerce sites are highly interactive and often feature large images, banners and other elements. These can slow your site down and frustrate users
- **Poor internal linking and site architecture** eCommerce sites feature man categories, subcategories, and products. Poor internal linking between these site sections can confuse search engines and users

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Basic Ways You Can Monitor & Improve Your Technical SEO

Keep XML Sitemap Updated

An XML Sitemap contains the pages & images you want crawled & indexed on your site and helps search engines find them. Keep it up to date and free of errors

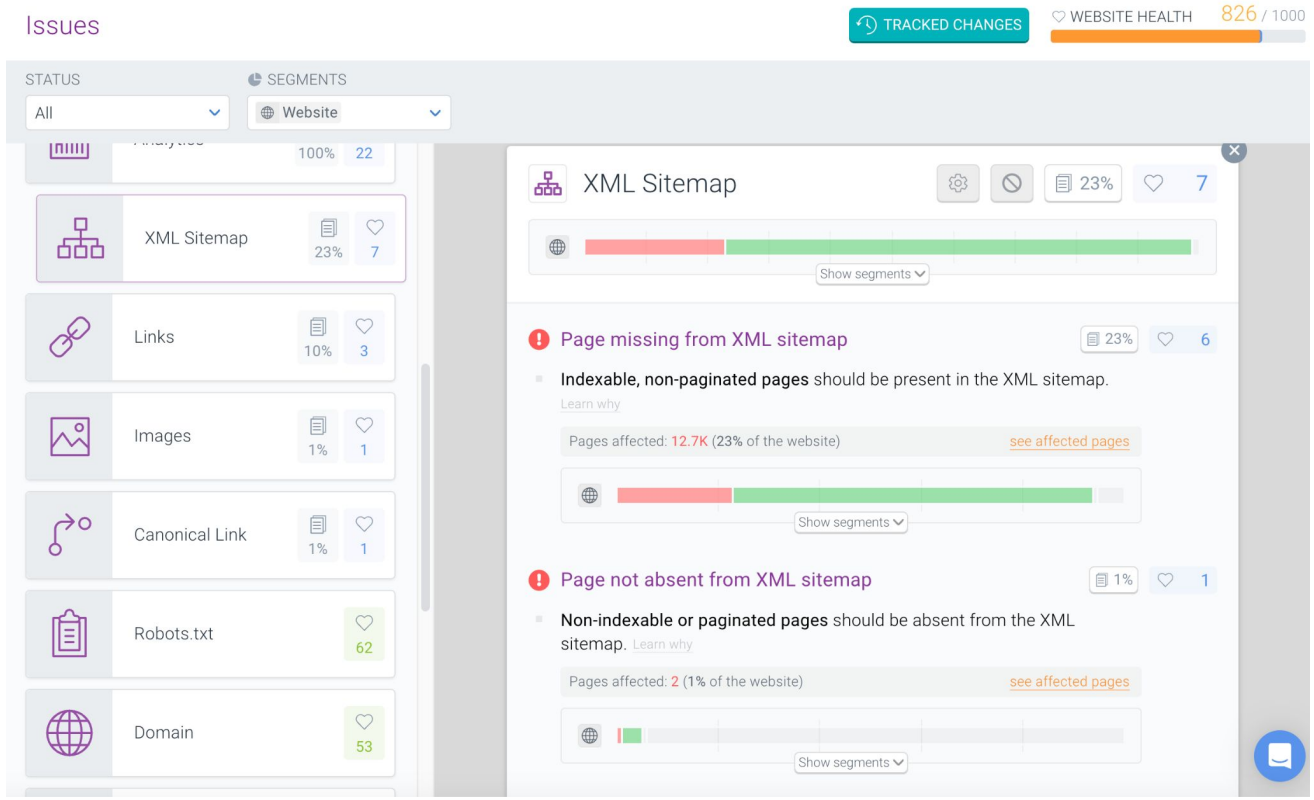
Set Up & Monitor Google Search Console

Google Search Console can not only help you understand what keywords are driving traffic to your site, its varied reports can alert you to issues with your site's indexation, sitespeed, and usability

Add Structured Markup

Structured data is standardized code that helps search engines understand your page content and display it in search results. Marking up products, for example, can help display richer search results that include key details like price, availability, review rating, etc.

How Conductor Can Help: ContentKing Issues Report



- ContentKing can also help you monitor key aspects of your site's technical health and surface issues when they arise

- Monitor key issues impacting your site's indexation and technical health like
  - XML sitemap errors
  - Robots.txt files directives that could impact indexation
  - Missing canonical tags
  - Structured Markup (Schema) errors
  - Analytics errors that could impact reporting

Questions?

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THANK YOU!