

How to Perform an SEO Content Audit: Step-by-Step Process



Let's dive into the audit process.

We'll start by gathering the data you need to make informed decisions about your content.

Step 1: Gather Comprehensive Performance Data

First, you need a complete list of URLs to audit. At PIC, we use [ScreamingFrog](#) to crawl [websites](#), but you can also export your sitemap or gather URLs directly from Google Search Console and Google Analytics. The key is getting a full picture of your content inventory.

Whatever method you choose, you'll want to gather:

- ☐ Last 12 months of organic traffic data
- ☐ Search performance metrics (impressions, clicks, rankings)
- ☐ Current indexation status of pages
- ☐ Basic technical SEO elements (titles, meta descriptions, headers)

This initial data gathering helps identify:

- ☐ Content getting zero organic traffic
- ☐ Pages not ranking for any keywords
- ☐ Content that's no longer indexed
- ☐ Technical SEO issues needing attention

Step 2: Create Your Audit Workspace

Organization is crucial for a successful content audit. While I'm performing the audit, I have both Google Analytics and Google Search Console open in separate windows to review the performance data of the last 12 months and previous 90 days year-over-year. This lets me quickly analyze trends and dig deeper when needed.

- ☐ URL list from your content inventory
- ☐ Space for detailed notes that capture key performance data from Google Analytics and Google Search Console
- ☐ A clear recommendation field (Keep, Kill, Combine, Update, or Rewrite)

Let's talk about those notes, because they're your secret weapon for turning this audit into actual results. When you're knee-deep in content analysis, you'll spot patterns, issues, and opportunities that are crystal clear in the moment—but might get fuzzy a week later when you're ready to take action. Your notes are what transform "we should probably update this sometime" into a clear roadmap for your next steps.

For each URL, document:

- ☐ Performance trends you spot in the data
- ☐ Quality issues that need addressing
- ☐ Potential combination opportunities
- ☐ Technical fixes required
- ☐ Content update needs



This becomes your command center for the entire audit process—where initial data analysis meets strategic decision-making.

Step 3: Identify Performance Patterns

Now comes the detective work. Beyond just looking at individual metrics, you're searching for patterns that tell the story of your content's performance. Here's what to look for:

- **Content Decay Signs:**

- ☐ Pages with steady rankings but declining impressions
- ☐ Previously strong performers showing traffic drops
- ☐ Seasonal content that's losing year-over-year performance

- **Search Intent Mismatches:**

- ☐ High impressions but low click-through rates
- ☐ Traffic that bounces quickly
- ☐ Pages ranking for unexpected keywords
- ☐ Content that's drawing the wrong audience

- **Hidden Opportunities:**

- ☐ Pages ranking just off page one for valuable terms
- ☐ Content getting impressions for keywords you didn't target
- ☐ Topics where you have multiple posts competing with each other
- ☐ High-performing content that could be expanded

- **Top Performer Patterns:**

- ☐ What makes your best content work so well?
- ☐ Which formats drive the most engagement?
- ☐ What topics consistently perform?
- ☐ Which content types convert best?

Remember, you're not just collecting data—you're looking for actionable insights that will guide your content decisions. A page with low traffic might just need a strategic update, while a high-traffic page might actually be undermining your site's authority if it's off-topic.

Step 4: Making Strategic Content Decisions



Now that you've identified your content patterns, it's time to make informed decisions about each piece of content. Here's how to apply the Keep/Kill/Combine framework effectively:

- **Keep & Update Decisions:**

- ☐ Strong performers that need refreshing (update statistics, examples, screenshots)
- ☐ Content ranking well but could perform better with optimization
- ☐ Strategic pages important to your business (even if traffic is lower)
- ☐ Pages with valuable backlinks that could be improved

- **When to Consider a Full Rewrite:**

- ☐ Content targeting the right keywords but missing search intent
- ☐ Pages with good traffic but poor conversion rates
- ☐ Topics where the competitive landscape has changed significantly
- ☐ Content that's structurally sound but outdated in substance

- **Combine Content When:**

- ☐ Multiple posts target the same primary keywords
- ☐ Several thin posts could make one comprehensive guide
- ☐ You have competing content cannibalizing each other's rankings
- ☐ Related topics would serve users better as a single resource

- **Delete Content If:**

- ☐ Zero organic traffic or rankings in the past 12 months
- ☐ No strategic value to your business
- ☐ Outdated and not worth updating
- ☐ Topics far outside your core expertise
- ☐ Thin content that can't be meaningfully improved

Step 5: Prioritize Your Action Items

With your decisions made, create a prioritized implementation plan based on:

- **Potential Impact:**

- ☐ Traffic potential of target keywords
- ☐ Current ranking positions (pages just off page one are often quick wins)
- ☐ Conversion value of the content
- ☐ Resource requirements for updates

- **Quick Wins:**

- ☐ Technical fixes that could boost existing rankings
- ☐ Content merges that are straightforward to implement
- ☐ Simple updates to high-potential pages
- ☐ Removal of clearly obsolete content

- **Long-term Projects:**

- ☐ Major rewrites of important content
- ☐ Complex content consolidations
- ☐ New content creation to support existing assets
- ☐ Website section overhauls

