



Research Report

ABSHER CONSTRUCTION

June 6, 2018

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What is a UX website audit?

User Experience (UX) Website Audit refers to the collection of methods, skills, and tools used to study and analyze how users interact with a website.

The analysis is then used to make educated decisions and recommendations (based on facts, research, and data) on how to tweak and optimize the website which translates to better business performance and higher ROI.

Why is it important?

UX focuses on enhancing user satisfaction by improving how users interact with websites. It makes things easy to use and easy to understand. Through an audit, we can begin to identify potential usability and findability issues, inefficiencies, and bottlenecks that prevent users from completing their objectives.

UX is all about eliminating opinions and assumptions and replacing them with data and research collected from the website and its users. Rusty George Creative's UX Team utilizes a collection of quantitative and qualitative research methods, skills, and tools to study and analyze your website for potential issues. Finally, recommendations are made based on the findings and established best practices.

By making tweaks and improvements to an existing website, we can achieve the following:

- Increase conversions
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Produce more leads and information requests
- Make important information easier and quicker to find
- Quicker task completion by users
- Less user frustration
- Overall better perception of your brand and organization





Overview

PROJECT TEAM

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HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Rusty George Creative has created this report to summarize the findings of our thorough research and UX audit on the current Absher Construction website. The information in this report will be vital to the next phases of creating a new website design and will assist the designers and developers in creating thoughtful site structure and design that is backed by research and data.

In this document you will find a summary of the key challenges for your site and possible solutions, five main audit categories that have been assessed, SEO and analytics exploration, and a competitive analysis.

Review the information in the audit tables to better understand our measures for assessing the current site. It is also helpful to review the Considerations for each category at the end of the document, which explain in further detail the specific criteria and industry standards that were considered when evaluating the site.

The site's SEO and Analytics were also examined. This is the most data-heavy section of the report, but full of incredibly useful information about the user's behavior of your site. Pay special attention to the Heat Mapping Analysis, which gives a visual representation of how users are interacting with your current site, including which buttons are getting the most clicks.

Finally, we have included an analysis and comparison of your top four identified competitors with your current site. Based on data from Moz, industry standards, and criteria we have determined, we give each site a specific rating, allowing us to see what is and isn't working for you and your competitors and areas for improvement to consider in your new website.



Challenges & Solutions

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
<p>Overall design and function is not reflective of the innovative and modern approach of Absher.</p>	<p>Create a unique and engaging website design that delights users and encourages them to explore the site further, to apply for a job at the company, or to contact Absher.</p>
<p>Google Analytics is installed incorrectly and/or disrupted for some reason, causing a loss of valuable user data.</p>	<p>RGC will correctly install analytics on the new site, as well as the old site if necessary so we can gain more insight into how users are interacting with the site.</p>
<p>H1, alt text for images, and keywords are not being used properly or in some cases at all, which is not good for usability, site hierarchy, or SEO.</p>	<p>Correctly build out H1, H2, and so on headers, tag images with alt text in all cases and make sure we are being strategic about the keywords, tags, and meta-data on the site to boost SEO rankings and adhere to best practices for usability.</p>
<p>CTAs (calls-to-action) and links to additional information on other pages are not used on the site in enough instances. CTAs give the user a path to follow, either to an end destination, or to explore the site further.</p>	<p>CTAs are important for creating a path that we want users to follow through the site. Without CTAs and buttons linking to other pages, contact information, or additional information, it is likely users will leave the page they are viewing.</p> <p>This also applies for the social media sites; CTAs are important on every post to let the user know where you are wanting them to go next.</p>
<p>SSL site is linking to Big Bear Sports in Montana.</p>	<p>It is unclear why this is happening but the secure site URL (using https instead of http) is redirecting to bigbearsports.com, a sports and outdoor store in Montana. We will certainly need to figure out how and why this is happening and fix it.</p>
<p>Site is not responsive and not mobile-friendly.</p>	<p>50% or more of typical website traffic comes from a mobile device, so it'll be very important to have a responsive design that not only looks great but also works great on mobile devices.</p>



Branding & Design Audit

SUMMARY

The branding and design of the site is so important to the success of the site and the ease of use for your users. Though Absher’s branding is reflected on the site via usage of the logo and colors, the imagery and overall feel and tone of the site doesn’t clearly reflect the company culture and important values of Absher Construction. Content is organized well, but a lack of hierarchy and CTAs (calls-to-action) make it more challenging for users to find the content that they are seeking.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST	NOTES
Do your pages have a consistent format for navigation, headers, text, typography, and hyperlinks?	Yes.
Is your critical content easy to find?	Information is organized in a way that makes sense, but highlighting some key information on the homepage outside of the navigation would be helpful.
Do you include CTAs that give visitors a clear path?	No, most pages don’t contain a clear CTA that encourages the user to explore the site further or to take an action.
Does the design align with your company brand?	Some of the angles are taken from the angles in the logo, and the brand colors are used. But overall, the importance of relationships, technology, and innovation doesn’t come through the design.
Does the imagery tell the story you’d like to tell visually?	Great photography of the portfolio pieces and projects, but not used in a way that tells the Absher story.
Do the graphics and architecture of the pages encourage users to explore deeper into the site?	No. Lacking CTAs on many pages, or links in texts to other pages on the site. Content seems contained to each separate page instead of telling a seamless story and guiding users on a path.



<p>Is there a healthy balance between content density, images, and white space?</p>	<p>Content-heavy on a few pages, and the images tend to be used small, but there is a decent amount of white space.</p>
<p>Do all the navigation buttons and tabs follow a design and terminology convention? Is there an obvious relationship between the navigation and the page the user is current viewing?</p>	<p>The terminology used in the navigation menu items and subitems are easy to understand. It isn't always clear via the navigation which page the user is on. There are no buttons or hover effects to let the user know that the links are clickable or to orient a user on the site. Needs a different design convention to distinguish between the main navbar items and sub-pages.</p>
<p>Are form fields clearly labeled with clues that provide the users about the expected input values? Is that information checked for accuracy before the user moves on to the next step?</p>	<p>No forms on the site.</p>
<p>Are items that are clickable obvious?</p>	<p>No. Most clickable items on the page, only underline when the user hovers over them, but otherwise they just look like normal paragraph text that a user would not know is a button/link to somewhere else. No button stylings on any other page.</p>



Coding & CMS

SUMMARY

The URLs in the site are clean and simple for search engines. Site potentially lacks an SSL certificate. There is a weird and unexplained redirect when trying to access the secure site that routes users to an outdoor sports store in Montana. This is a problem for many reasons, but simply not having an SSL certificate is problematic because Google now requires sites to have an SSL certificate or the site will be flagged and penalized in search engine ranking. SSL/HTTPS protects your site from tampering and protects the integrity of your site. If you don't have an SSL certificate, a secure connection cannot be established. A CMS will make the site easier to manage for the owners, and allows for more functionality and capabilities.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST	NOTES
How easy is your Content Management System (CMS) to use?	N/A; will mostly likely switch to WordPress for the CMS.
Does your site have an SSL (secure-socket layer) Certificate?	The weirdest thing happens when trying to access the secure site (https), it ends up going to bigbearsports.com, which looks like a legitimate outdoor sports store in Montana. We tried this on different browsers and computers and it always does the same thing. Not sure what this is about, but definitely need to figure out how to fix this.
Are you using Headers and Sub-headers properly?	No, though some headers are tagged properly in the HTML with H2, H3, etc., there are no H1 tags.
Are you using Flash, or any other outdated technologies?	No, pretty simple site.
Are you using clean and simple URLs?	Yes. For example: The page for Leeds/Sustainability has a URL of "abserhco.com/expertise/leed-sustainability/".



Usability Audit

SUMMARY

The site needs quite a number of tweaks to be more user-friendly and adhere better to usability best practices and standards for websites. Number one priority would be to have a responsive mobile-friendly site as up to 50% of website traffic now comes from mobile phones. The most important two or three pieces of information that a user is looking for on your site should be clearly defined and easy to find on the site, above the fold. Site loads quickly since there are not currently many images on the site.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST	NOTES
Is your site responsive?	No.
Is your site mobile-friendly?	No.
How easy is it to do the top three things people come to your website for?	<p>We've identified through our discovery session that the top three things Absher would like users to do on the site are: Apply for a position; Get in touch; Learn something new about Absher ("we aren't just one thing").</p> <p>Contact information is on the homepage, but not highlighted in any way. There are no callouts about the ways in which Absher is unique and different, what they are doing to disrupt the construction industry. There is a link to Careers on the homepage, but again, its not highlighted in any way or compelling for job seekers to click on.</p>
How long does it take for your site to load?	Pretty fast, there are some images that could be optimized to help pages load faster. There are also a few scripts and CSS resources that are render-blocking which will slow down the page load speed.



Does your site follow usability best standards?

- Avoid long paragraphs and sentences
- Content is easy to understand
- Use H1, H2, etc. appropriately for screen-readers
- Give text blocks plenty of white space
- User-friendly hyperlink texts
- Images use quality alt-text
- Don't embed text into images

Content is most broken up into short and easy to consume paragraphs and sentences, including using bulleted lists to get across key information points. No H1 tags on the site. The site overall has plenty of white space. Hyperlinked text is not user-friendly and not obviously clickable. Links don't look any different than normal text without hovering over them. Alt-text is not used for images. There is one instance of text embedded into an image, the title on the about page is embedded text on an image, which doesn't get read by screen readers.



Content, Goals & Effectiveness Audit

SUMMARY

Because your Google Analytics hasn't been working for the past 6+ months, it is hard to say exactly what users are currently interacting with the most, but from our kickoff meeting, it was determined people are viewing your projects frequently as well as your contact information. It will be important to keep that information highlighted and easy to find. Search engines like to see unique and compelling content. Fleshing out the content on the site, including current blogs, will help boost your search engine rankings and make it easier for your users and potential clients to understand your offerings and who you are.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST	NOTES
Do you have marketing strategies and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and recruit high-quality, mid-career professionals for mainly non-union staff positions. • Be clear and get everyone on the same page about who Absher is and what Absher does. • Showcasing the use of technology in the Absher building process as a differentiator.
Are you currently generating leads from your website?	Would prefer to get more leads on qualified professionals for job postings.
Do your landing pages have a few paragraphs of engaging and unique text?	Not all pages.
Does the homepage clearly describe what you do and/or what you provide?	No. Not clear from the homepage except for a small paragraph towards the bottom of the page that talks briefly about Absher.
Do you use creative headlines for blog posts?	No blog.
Are you providing fresh content on a consistent basis that your users will want to read and share?	No.
Do you have duplicate content on several pages?	Content is unique on each page.



Are there spelling or grammar mistakes?	No.
Do you use bulleted lists to communicate key lists?	Sometimes bulleted lists are used on pages to communicate important information and key points.
Do you know what the purpose of each page is? Does each page have a main objective or path that a user should follow?	There is a title on each page (ex: 'About') to let the user know what the page is about. But most if not all pages lack an objective or path or CTA for users to follow.
Do you have calls-to-action (CTAs) on each page?	No.
Do you know what people are engaging with the most?	According to the Google Analytics analysis, the most engagement on your site is on the careers/job listing page.
Does your content reflect the tone of voice of your organization?	Tone of content is official and professional. Not much culture or personality in the content, which might better reflect the culture of Absher and help attract prospective employees.



Social Media Audit

SUMMARY

Social Media is a powerful tool that can increase visibility to your website. Utilize Social Media channels to drive more traffic to website. Ensure that your content has a clear objective and CTA that compels users to share your content and drives them to your site. Your Facebook page has content posted frequently but there is not a ton of user engagement. You have 531 ‘likes’ and 543 people follow your page. Continue to create robust and timely posts that encourage your users to engage and participate in the post and share the post with others. Ensure every post has a clear CTA that leads users back to your site.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST	NOTES
Do you have links to your social media accounts clearly visible on your site?	There is a Facebook and LinkedIn link on the homepage, but no other page, including the Contact page.
Do you utilize social media share links on your blog posts?	No blog.
Does your social media contain fresh and consistent content?	There is fresh content shared frequently on the Facebook page. It looks like the same content is cross-posted on Absher’s LinkedIn page or vice versa. Seems to be an okay amount of engagement with users on both sites. More comments on the LinkedIn posts than Facebook, but more shares and likes on Facebook.
Does social media content have a clear objective and CTA?	Most posts do not link to the Absher website. There was a great post with a link to an NPR article about trade jobs sitting empty. That is a great opportunity to encourage users to check your job listings on your website!



Search Engine Optimization Audit

SUMMARY

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is important in ensuring your website ranks high on search engines. Based on the rankings for your current keywords, your overall Search Visibility is very low (1.83%). A score of 35-45% is the average click through rate of a URL in the top position in the search results. Another reason your score might be low is that you are utilizing very specific keywords (like ‘Washington Place Apartments Tukwila’) but not things like ‘Construction,’ ‘Contracting Pierce County,’ etc.

There are some simple best practices we can utilize on your site including appropriately utilizing description tags, meta tags and descriptions, targeted keywords, alt-text, sitemaps, and prioritizing creating unique content. In addition, making sure your site is registered with Google and Bing and that both of those sites have a current XML sitemap will help increase your search engine rankings.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST	NOTES
Do you utilize meta description tags? Interior page title tags?	No, there are 121 pages on the site that are missing a meta description, which provides the content that appears when your site is shared or on search engines.
Do you utilize outbound and inbound links?	Yes. There are 294 external (outbound) linking domains on your site. There are over 2k inbound links (links from other sites to yours). However, only 4% of the external links are followed to your site. In comparison, Lydig has a 39% follow rate on external links and Korsmo has an 87% rate.
Do you utilize targeted keywords?	Somewhat, but could be more strategic in targeted keywords. There are 238 keywords on your site that rank in the 1-50 position on Google US.
Do your images have appropriate alt-text?	No, all alt-text instances in the HTML are left blank, which is bad practice for both usability and SEO.



Analytics Summary

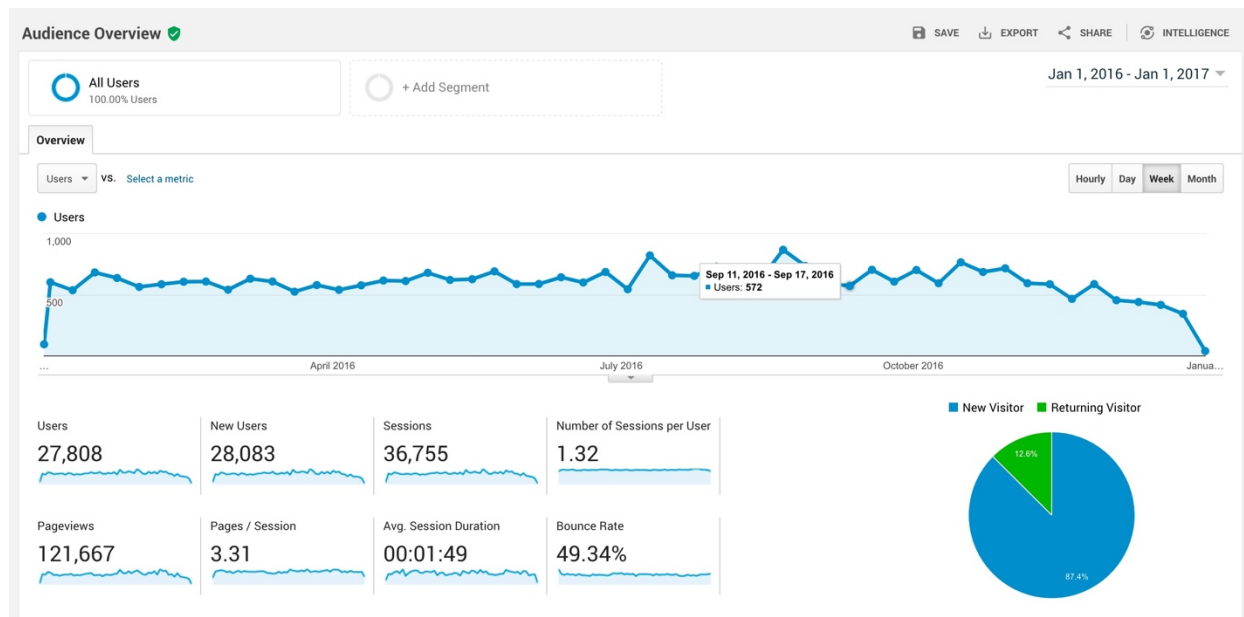
SUMMARY

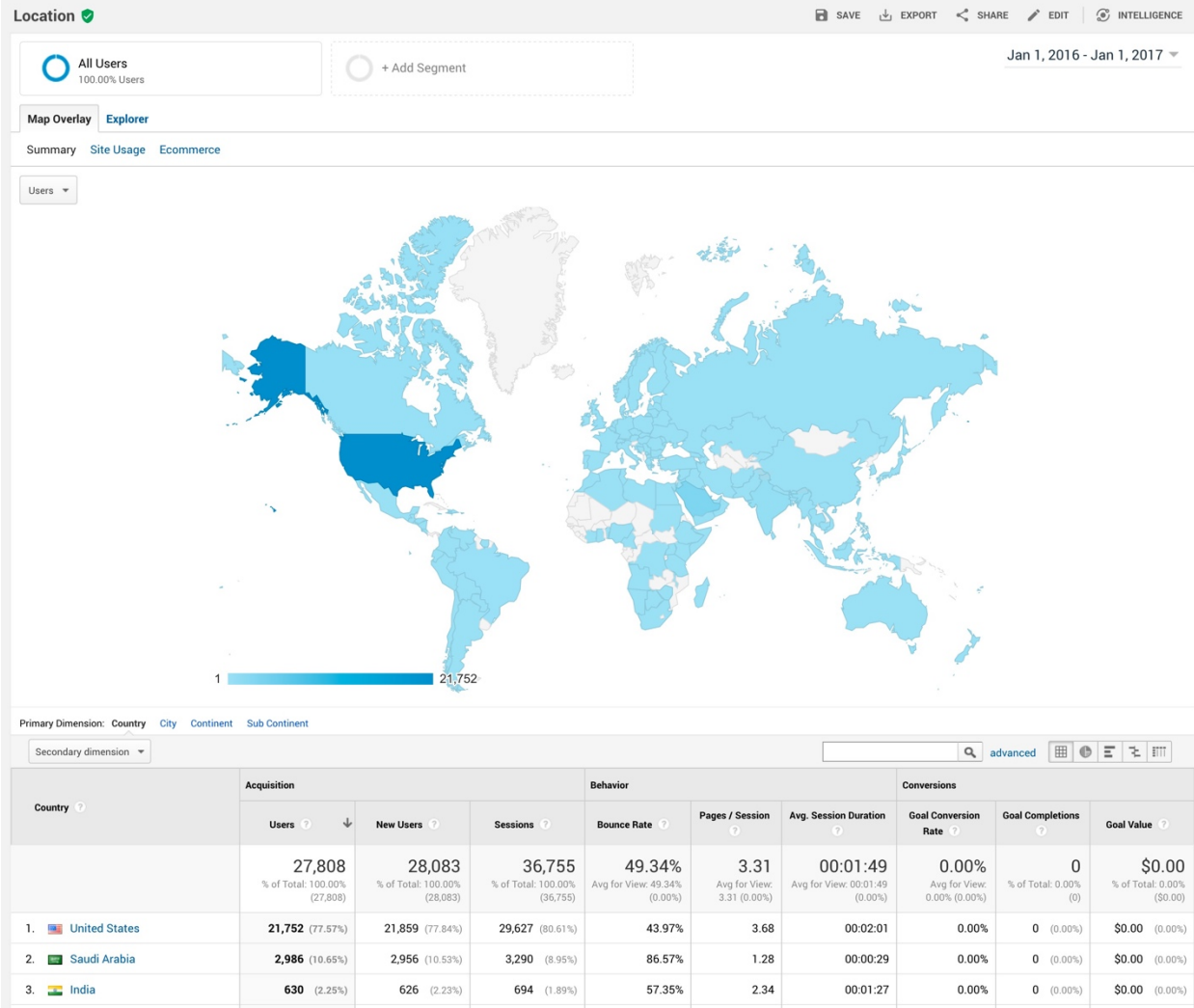
Through Google Analytics, we compiled some statistics about your current website's traffic and information about your current users. We believe the Google Analytics for your site are installed improperly, so there is no new data coming in after February 22, 2017. We pulled data from before that data for most of 2016 so we have included that data here. It is obviously not the most current data but might still offer some insight about your users and your site's performance.

Much of this will change when you have a fresh website design and build, but it is always good to see where your current site was performing well and lacking to make sure we address those issues in the website redesign.

HIGHLIGHTS

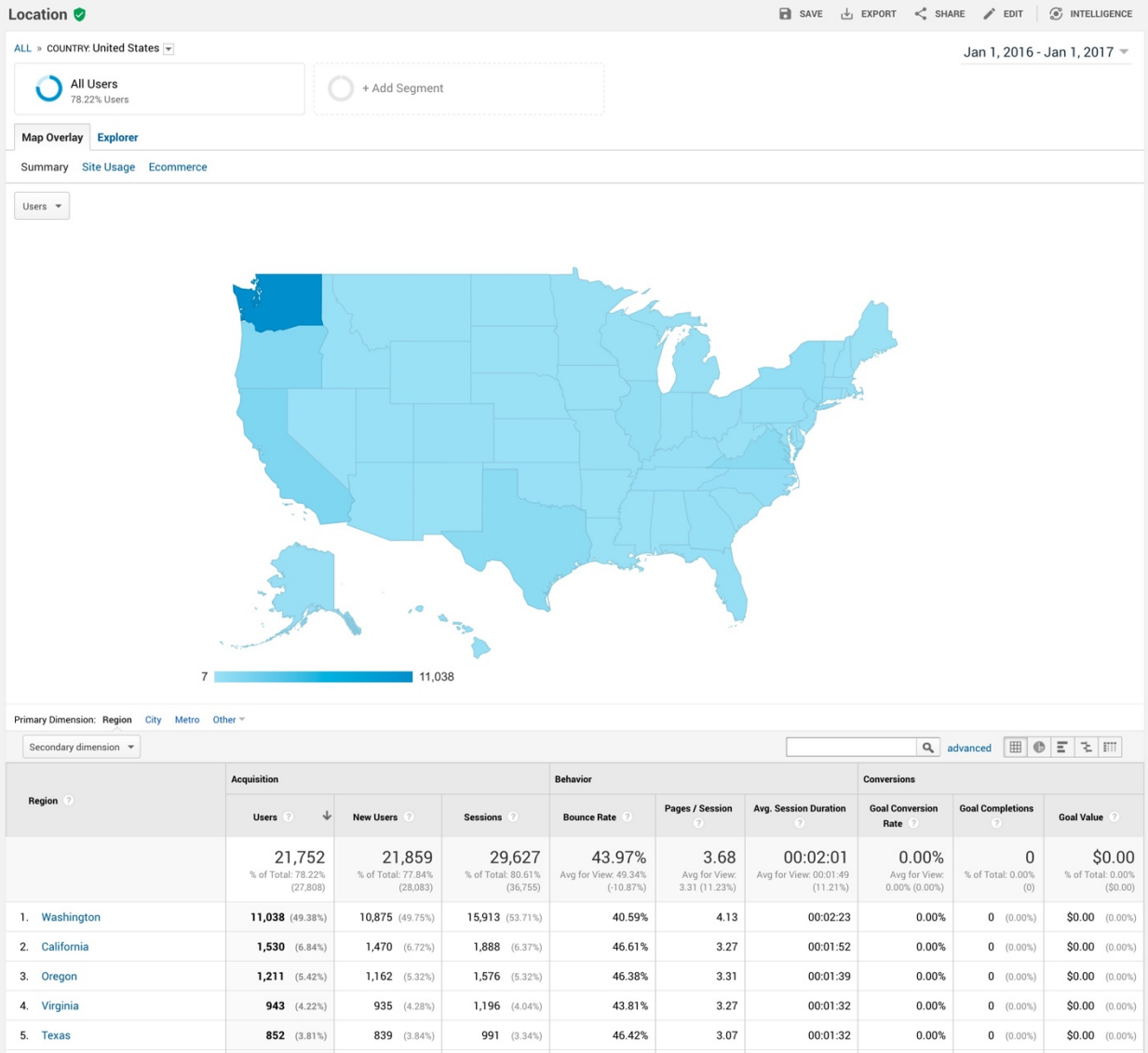
- Less than ~500 daily users
- Decent pages per session at 3.3
- Almost all traffic is new, only 12% return traffic





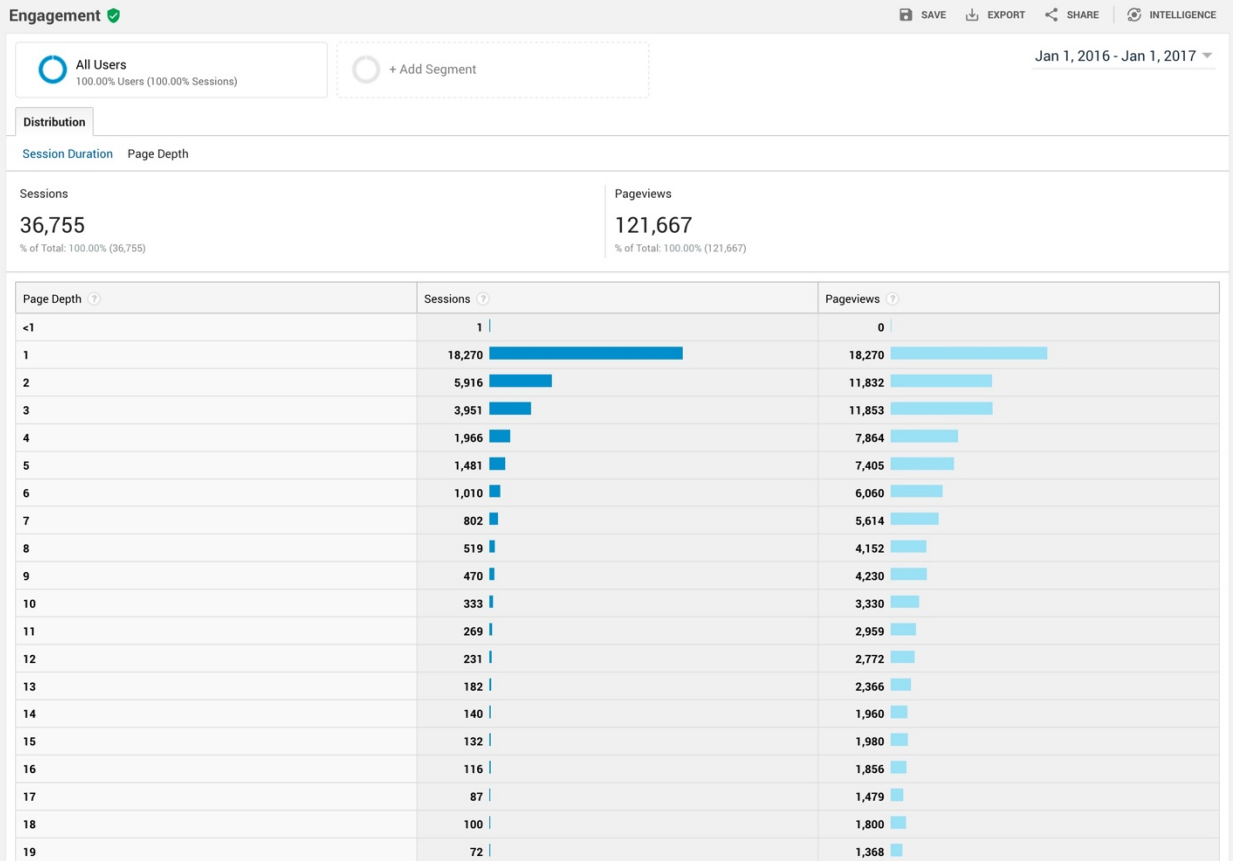
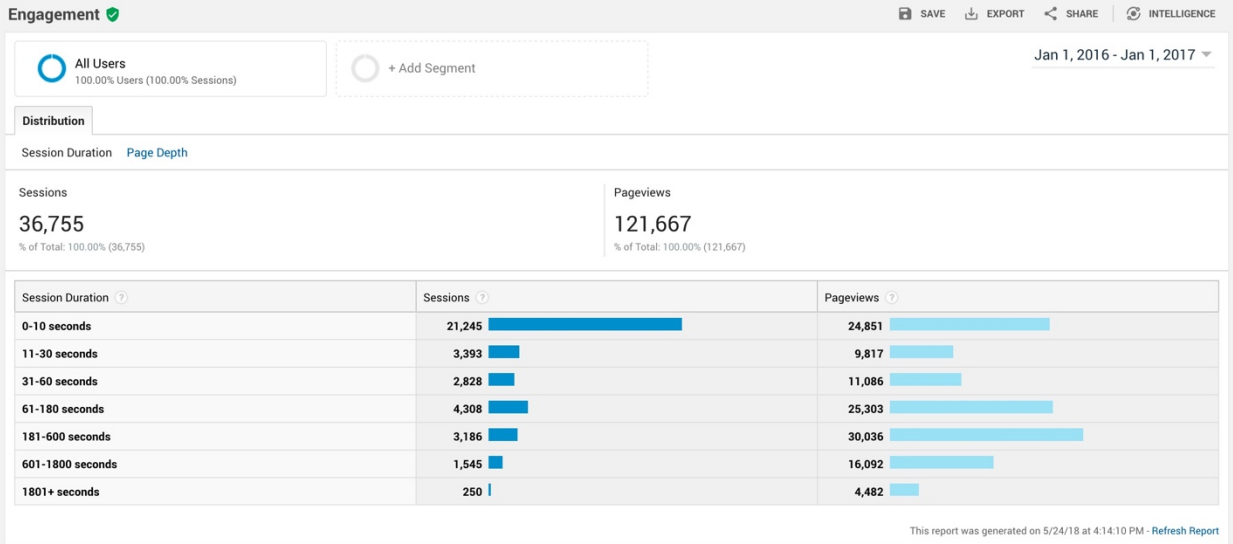
10% of the traffic for the year came from Saudi Arabia.





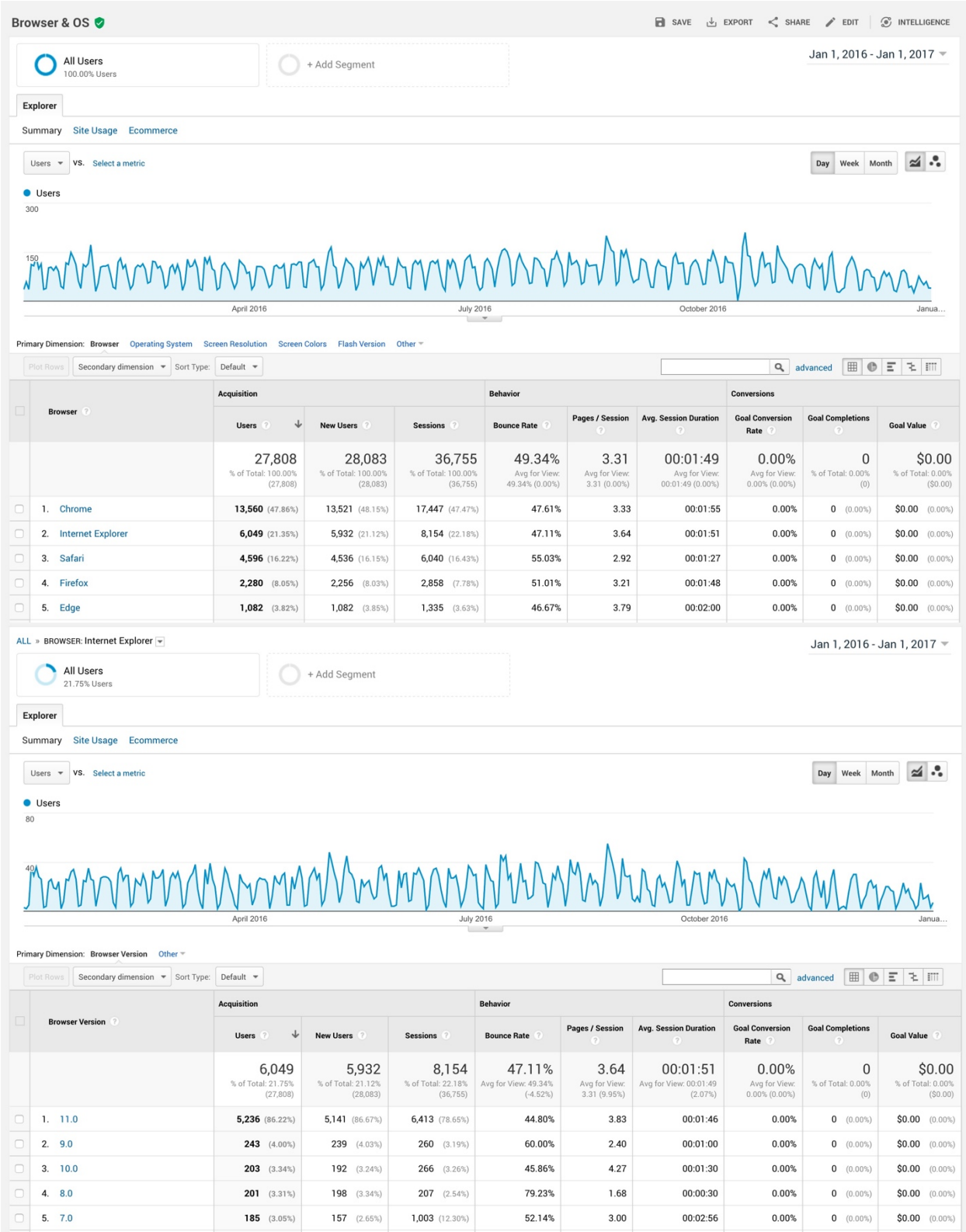
US traffic is pretty localized to PNW with a modest amount of out of region traffic.





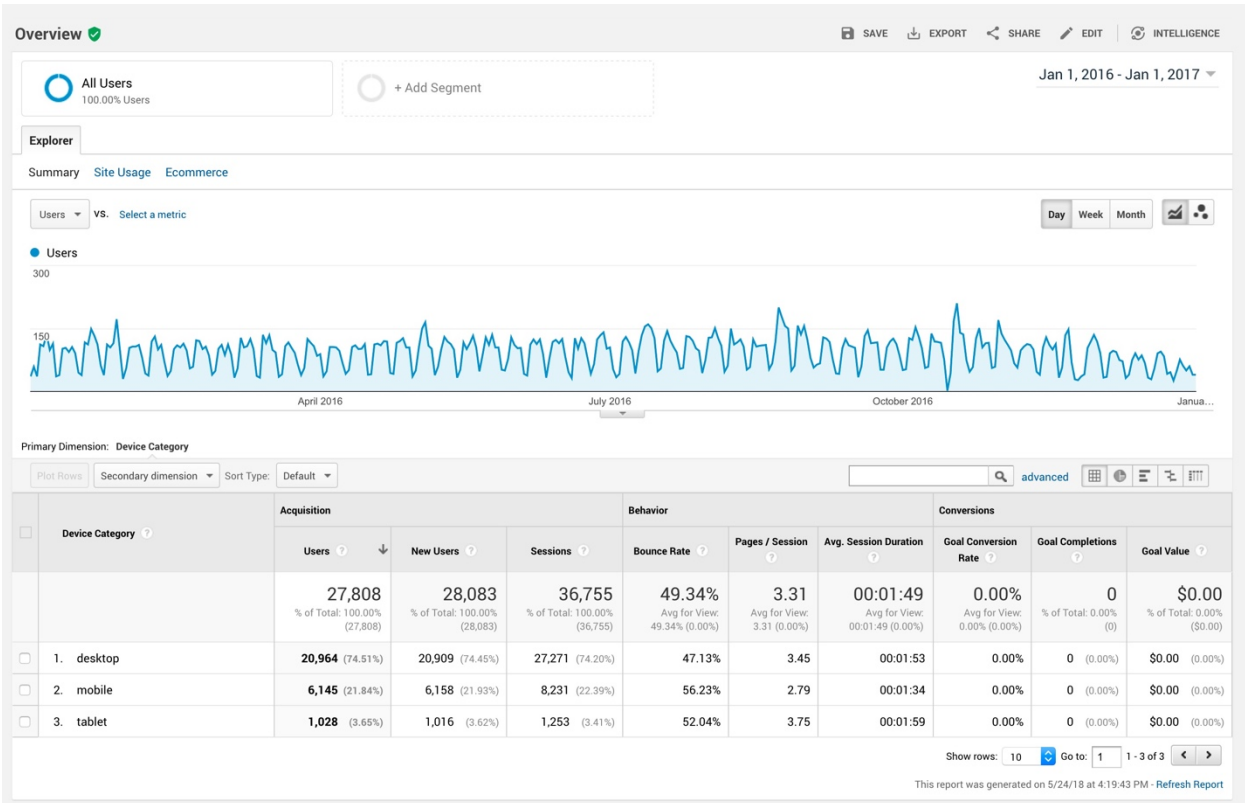
Over 50% of reported sessions stayed for 0-10 seconds and only viewed one page.





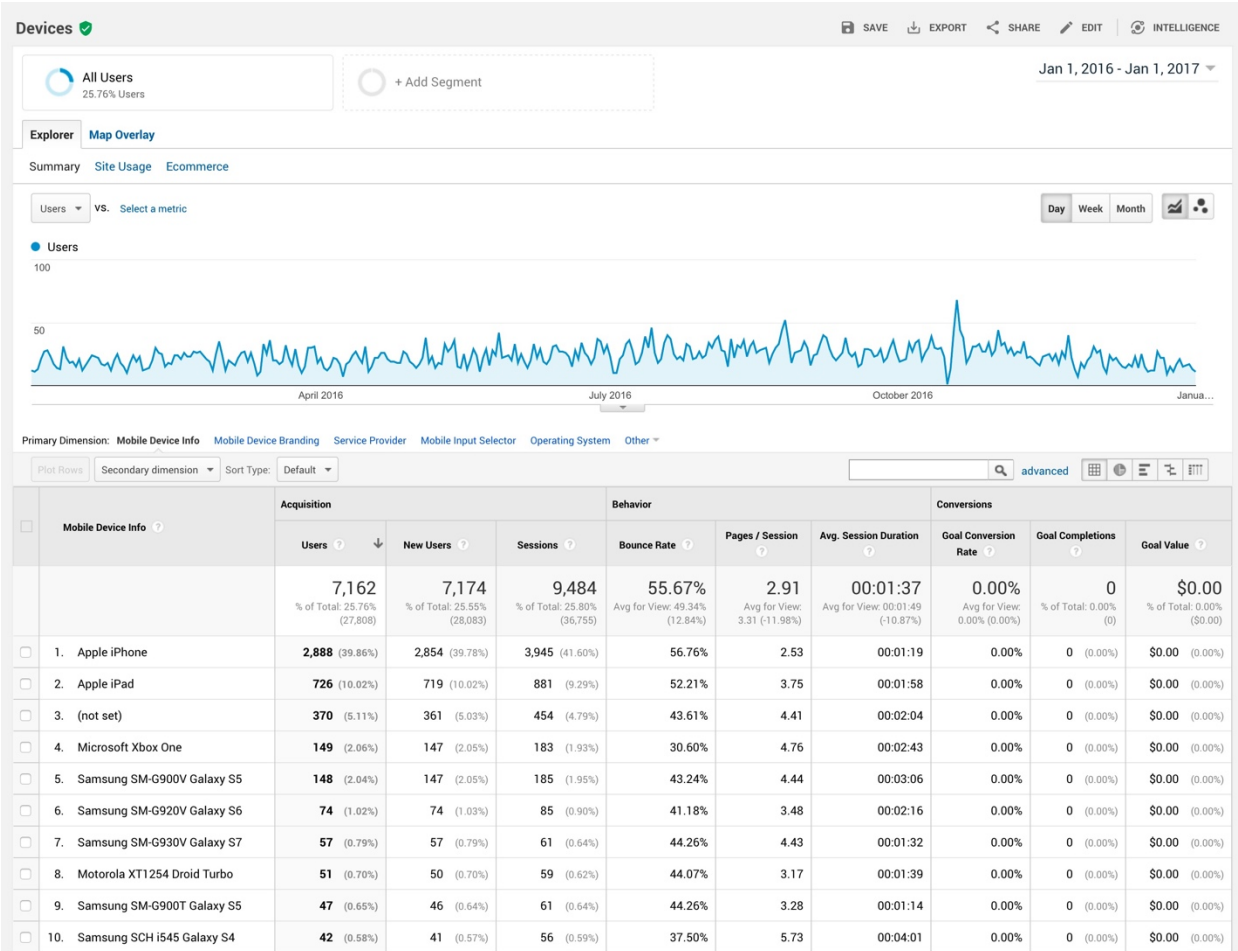
21% of yearly traffic from 2016 used Internet Explorer, though this is not likely the case today, but they have a larger percentage than most.





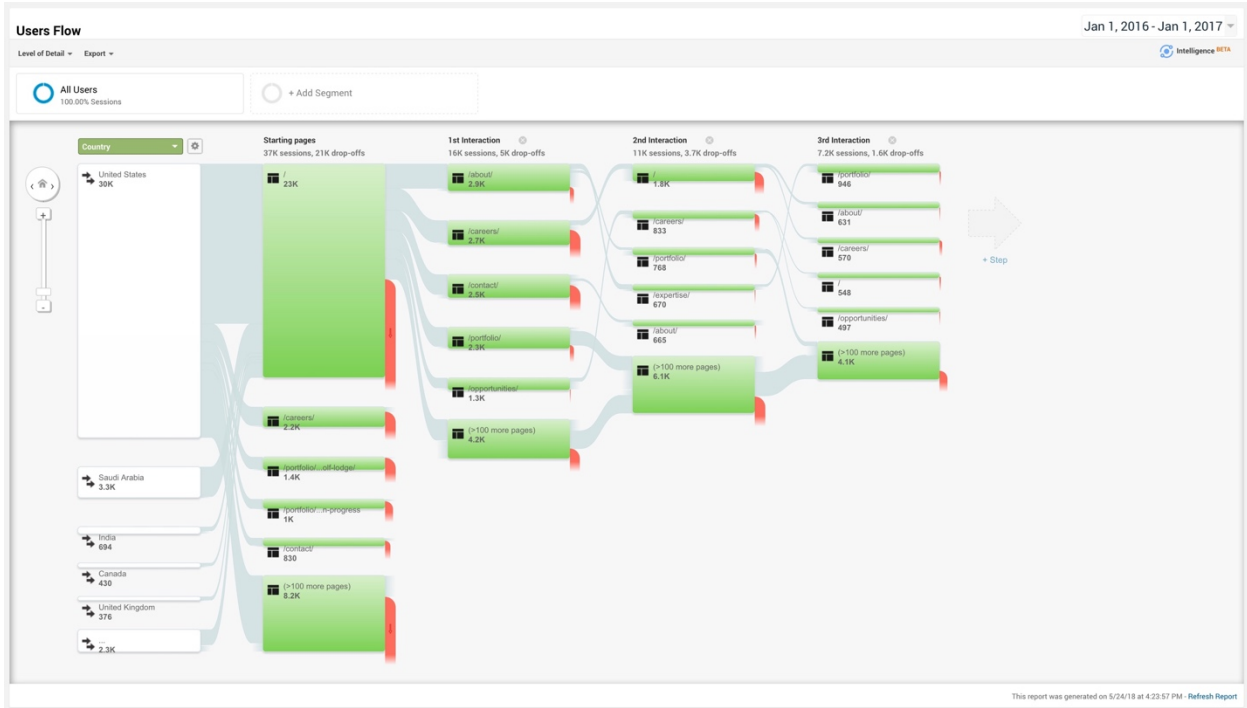
75% of 2016 traffic was non-mobile, though this also not likely the case today. Very little tablet traffic for a year's time, even in 2016.



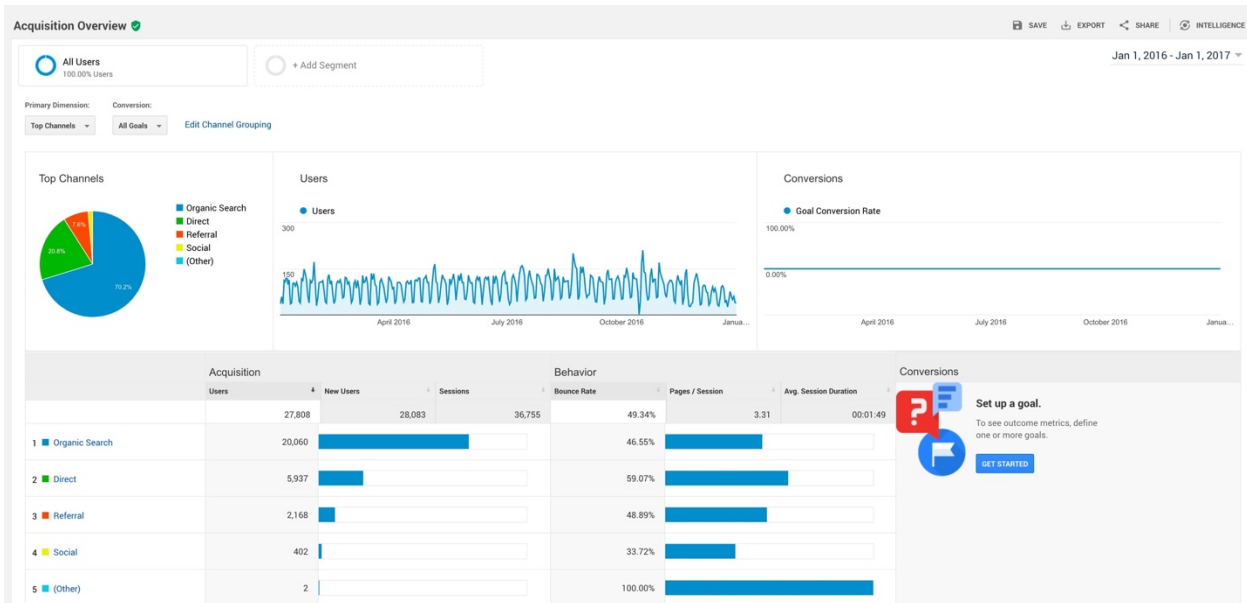


Almost all Apple iPhone and iPad were the devices used to access the site. 149 people viewed the Absher website from their Xbox browser in 2016.





Lots of job hunters hitting the Careers page. The 'About' page is also very popular.



Traffic is mostly from organic search. Almost no social referral traffic in relation. This is a good example of why it's important to include a call to action back to the Absher website in social posts.



Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounce Rate	% Exit	Page Value
	121,667 % of Total: 100.00% (121,667)	93,785 % of Total: 100.00% (93,785)	00:00:47 Avg for View: 00:00:47 (0.00%)	36,754 % of Total: 100.00% (36,754)	49.34% Avg for View: 49.34% (0.00%)	30.21% Avg for View: 30.21% (0.00%)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. /	30,451 (25.03%)	23,431 (24.98%)	00:00:53	22,503 (61.22%)	39.68%	40.87%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
2. /careers/	10,987 (9.03%)	6,977 (7.44%)	00:01:42	2,168 (5.90%)	54.94%	42.71%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
3. /portfolio/	7,653 (6.29%)	4,971 (5.30%)	00:00:43	267 (0.73%)	47.19%	15.50%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
4. /contact/	6,500 (5.34%)	5,069 (5.40%)	00:01:07	830 (2.26%)	62.29%	44.92%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
5. /about/	6,282 (5.16%)	4,830 (5.15%)	00:00:36	364 (0.99%)	34.62%	16.92%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
6. /opportunities/	4,290 (3.53%)	3,376 (3.60%)	00:00:15	306 (0.83%)	16.34%	7.25%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
7. /expertise/	3,472 (2.85%)	2,822 (3.01%)	00:00:35	242 (0.66%)	74.38%	18.15%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
8. /opportunities/bedroom/	2,292 (1.88%)	1,909 (2.04%)	00:01:48	800 (2.18%)	74.88%	49.17%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
9. /portfolio/hospitality/great-wolf-lodge/	1,970 (1.62%)	1,557 (1.66%)	00:01:25	1,390 (3.78%)	77.63%	68.27%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
10. /portfolio/in-progress/washington-place/	1,858 (1.53%)	1,485 (1.58%)	00:01:07	716 (1.95%)	69.69%	39.72%	\$0.00 (0.00%)

Show rows: 10 | Go to: 1 | 1 - 10 of 313 | Refresh Report

This report was generated on 5/24/18 at 4:29:55 PM.

Top 10 most visited pages on the site.

Landing Page	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Goal Conversion Rate	Goal Completions	Goal Value
	36,755 % of Total: 100.00% (36,755)	76.41% Avg for View: 76.39% (0.02%)	28,083 % of Total: 100.02% (28,076)	49.34% Avg for View: 49.34% (0.00%)	3.31 Avg for View: 3.31 (0.00%)	00:01:49 Avg for View: 00:01:49 (0.00%)	0.00% Avg for View: 0.00% (0.00%)	0 % of Total: 0.00% (0)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. /	22,503 (61.22%)	76.65%	17,249 (61.42%)	39.68%	3.74	00:02:03	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
2. /careers/	2,168 (5.90%)	60.70%	1,316 (4.69%)	54.94%	2.73	00:02:04	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
3. /portfolio/hospitality/great-wolf-lodge/	1,390 (3.78%)	94.60%	1,315 (4.68%)	77.63%	1.47	00:00:38	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
4. /contact/	830 (2.26%)	65.30%	542 (1.92%)	62.29%	2.72	00:01:32	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
5. /opportunities/bedroom/	800 (2.18%)	46.12%	369 (1.31%)	74.88%	2.03	00:01:20	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
6. /portfolio/in-progress/washington-place/	716 (1.95%)	87.71%	628 (2.24%)	69.69%	3.30	00:01:30	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
7. /portfolio/in-progress/risky-3-apartments/	523 (1.42%)	79.35%	415 (1.48%)	69.79%	2.53	00:01:02	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
8. /about/	364 (0.99%)	51.92%	189 (0.67%)	34.62%	4.24	00:02:43	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
9. /about/vanguard/	362 (0.98%)	85.64%	310 (1.10%)	28.45%	3.47	00:01:41	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
10. /opportunities/	306 (0.83%)	62.42%	191 (0.68%)	16.34%	4.15	00:02:19	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)

Show rows: 10 | Go to: 1 | 1 - 10 of 227 | Refresh Report

This report was generated on 5/24/18 at 4:31:06 PM.

Top 10 most visited landing pages on the site. A landing page is a section of the website that is accessed by clicking a link on another web page or email, such as a lead form.



Competitive Analysis

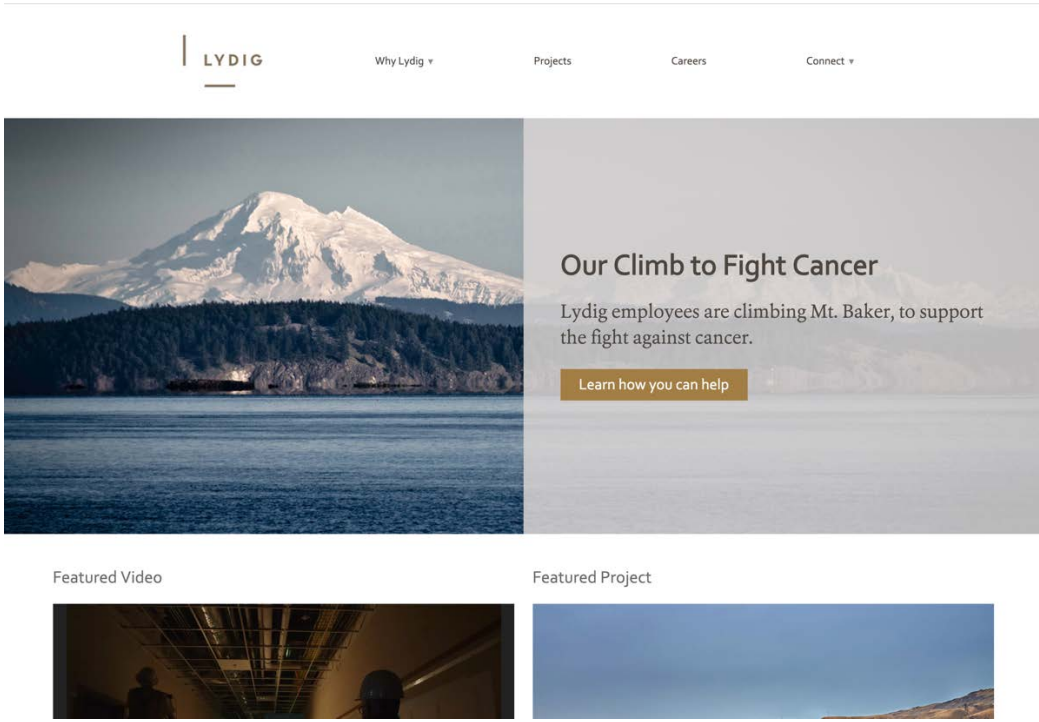
SUMMARY

The Competitive Analysis will help evaluate your company’s website and those of your competitors. From the discovery session, we identified the following main competitors: **Lydig Construction, Skanska, Korsmo Construction, and Forma Construction**. This is not an exhaustive list of competitors that Absher identified, but will be a good representation to compare the performance of your current website.

IDENTIFIED COMPETITORS

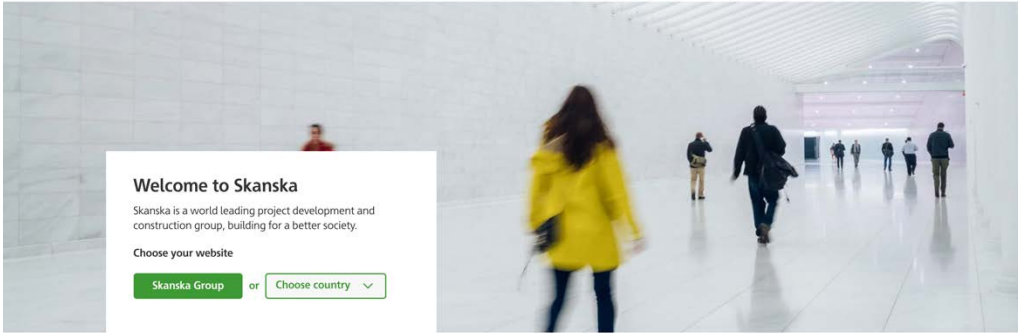
Lydig Construction (LC)

<http://www.lydig.com/>



Skanska (SK)
<https://www.skanska.com/>

SKANSKA



Welcome to Skanska

Skanska is a world leading project development and construction group, building for a better society.

Choose your website

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Group

Skanska's global Group website contains Group financials, corporate governance and sustainability information as well as the latest jobs.

[Skanska Group](#)

Europe

In Europe, Skanska is operating within Commercial Property, Construction, Homes and Public Private Partnerships.


[Europe](#) ▼

United States

In the United States, Skanska is operating within Commercial Property, Construction and Public Private Partnerships.

[United States](#)


Service by country



Korsmo Construction (KC)
<https://korsmo.com/>

KORSMO CONSTRUCTION Give us a call: 253.582.6712

Projects Company Approach Blog Careers Subcontractors Contact



DIVERSE PROJECT EXPERIENCE

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Success Measured in Decades

Diverse Project Experience

Experts in our Trade

Meet our People

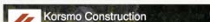
PROJECT UPDATES

KORSMO ON FACEBOOK

Rhein Haus German Restaurant

Rhein Haus, a popular German restaurant, located in Tacoma, Washington was part of the Titus...

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COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

For each question below, the website will receive a score from zero to ten (0 being the worst and 10 being the best) based on both subjective analysis and data-driven analysis. The cell will be color-coded depending on how it rates against the other values in that row. The greener the cell, the more likely this is an advantage for that company; the redder the cell, the more likely this is a weakness. The average score for each website will be highlighted at the top of the table.

AVERAGE SCORE	5	7	9	8	7
CREATIVE	ABSHER	LC	SK	KC	FC
Does the company look credible, authentic, and trustworthy?	4	8	9	9	7
Were the messages effective and compelling?	3	3	7	6	5
Was it free of typos, grammatical mistakes and poorly written content?	10	10	10	10	10
Overall, was the design and presentation effective and convincing?	3	6	9	7	6
TECHNICAL	ABSHER	LC	SK	KC	FC
Does the website load quickly? (under 2 sec)	10	10	10	8	10
Is the site mobile-friendly and responsive?	0	10	10	10	5
Is the website free of errors, glitches, broken links or dead-ends?	10	10	10	10	10
Does the site use any outdated technologies?	10	10	10	10	10
Overall, does the website seem it was built sound and was functioning well?	6	8	10	10	9
MARKETING	ABSHER	LC	SK	KC	FC
Does the company have an engaging and updated social media presence?	6	4	9	8	8
Do they have a blog or news area that is helpful, informative, and current?	0	0	7	4	9
Do they offer any downloadable material or content? Whitepapers, webinars, etc.?	0	0	7	2	0



Considerations for Analysis

BRAND CONSIDERATIONS

Color

Make sure the website's color scheme matches and accentuates the organization's brand and corporate color palette.

Typography

Make sure that the website uses typography consistently and stays in line with branding standards.

Images and Videos

Select the right images and videos and not just any stock image. Use images that best represent the organization's brand, product or service, and the industry.

About Us Page

This page should tell website visitors who the organization is and what they do, while aligning with the organization's overall style. It should not only provide an overview, it can include testimonials, success stories, or key employee bios.

Tone of Voice

Make sure the organization's unique tone of voice is adequately represented in the website verbiage and information presented to visitors.

Favicons

Favicons help provide branding for the website and support ease of use while reviewing bookmarks for a particular website or link.

Consistent Website Formatting

Use a consistent template format for navigation, headers, text, typography and hyperlinks.

Focused Layout

Use the layout of the site to highlight the most important content. Place critical content above the fold and allow less important content to follow.

Organize Content

Make sure content flows from one block to another without overwhelming the visitor. Give users a clear and consistent structure they can follow.

White Space

Make sure to provide enough white space throughout the design. White space not only helps reduce the cognitive load of visitors, it makes it much easier for users to segment and digest the information presented.

Control the Bling

Many website owners want their website to "pop" or "sparkle" at the cost of the user experience. Limit



bling and don't make the logo bigger even if the organization desperately wants it to leap off the page at visitors.

Call to Actions

Think through the desired visitor path and present clear call to actions to guide them along the way. Plan on these early in the development process so they can be included in the design in a cohesive and non-obstructive manner.

Conversion Optimization

Make sure the website's CTAs and other points of user conversion are operating are optimized.

- Noticeable phone number
- Primarily and secondary calls to action (CTA)
- Lead capture forms
- Relevant trust factors
- Unique selling proposition (USP)

CODING & CMS CONSIDERATIONS

Use Headers and Sub-headers Properly

Make sure the website properly uses H1 headers and H2-H6 sub-headers. Limit H1 headers to one per page.

Use Canonical URL's

Canonicalization is the process of picking the best URL when there are several choices. Best practice is to set a preferred URL structure and/or page for search engines.

Use a Sitemap.xml File

XML sitemaps make it easier for search engines to discover new or updated pages and posts on the website. Keep the XML sitemap dynamic.

Avoid Frames

Frames present a variety of problems including support for older browsers, user navigation, and the search engines ability to crawl the page successfully.

Optimize for Performance

Speed matters to users and search engines. Make sure the site's code is light, images minimized, and cache is used where feasible.

Site Security

HTTPS protects the integrity of your website. HTTPS helps prevent intruders from tampering with the communications between your websites and your users' browsers. Intruders include intentionally malicious attackers, and legitimate but intrusive companies, such as ISPs or hotels that inject ads into pages. HTTPS is a requirement for many new browser features, particularly those required for progressive web apps.



USABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Layout Meets Best Practices

Every website should include sections dedicated to a header, content, and footer. Include sidebars, or sections to the right or left of content, when appropriate.

Navigation Used Appropriately

Every website should include a navigation in the header and should list the important pages. Navigation options should be no more than three levels deep.

Check Browser Rendering

Does your browser perform well across all major browsers and operating systems? A cross browser check is worth the time, as many browsers do render website differently.

Mobile Responsive for Smaller Websites

Responsive web design keeps desktop and mobile content on a single URL, which is easier for users to interact with, share, and link to and for Google's algorithms to assign the indexing properties to content. Google recommends webmasters follow the industry best practice of using responsive web design, namely serving the same HTML for all devices and using only CSS media queries to decide the rendering on each device.

Dedicated Mobile Sites for Larger Websites

Larger and more complex websites can struggle with the responsive approach. In these scenarios, it is best to have a segregated website that specifically designed to mobile devices.

Check Device Rendering

Does the website look good on tablets and smartphones? Is content easy to navigate through and forms accessible? Spend time to test prior to launch.

Consider Image Usage Carefully

Large horizontal images with text may work great on a desktop computer, but they can be difficult to scale and still read on a mobile device. If you plan to use text within graphics, consider a vertical approach and avoid horizontal layouts.

CONTENT, GOALS, AND EFFECTIVENESS CONSIDERATIONS

Quality

Make sure the content is of high quality with substantial depth to make it worth reading. Do research and use facts to support your words. Showcase the organization's knowledge and position them as an expert.

Consistent

Content marketing requires regular publishing of content that is consistent in nature. If the site allow readers to expect new content, they will return frequently. The best way to do this is to set publishing goals and execute them.



Relevant

Cover topics that are relevant to the organization's website, industry or niche, and target market. Remember to write for the organization's humans and not the search engines.

Engaging

Use a light tone that will bring in readers, captivate and encourage them to discuss and share content.

Fresh

A web page is given a "freshness" score that can boost ranking for certain search queries. Websites that add new pages at a higher rate may earn a higher freshness score than sites that add content less frequently.

Readability Level is Appropriate

Content should not require a masters degree to read. Make it simple enough so a majority of the target audience can understand it. If a user cannot digest the content, they will not stay on the website.

Content is Free of Spelling and Grammatical Errors

Make sure website content is free of spelling errors, properly edited and written in the author's native language.

Content is Easy to Read and Digest

Longer articles or large blocks of text should be broken out by the appropriate use of sections or sub-headers. It is also advisable to use a mix of paragraphs and bullets.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONSIDERATIONS**Integrate Social Media in Your Website**

Make it very easy for people to locate the organization's social profiles and share their content. The website should have easily identifiable social icons that link to social accounts, as well as traditional sharing icons on posts so content can be quickly shared across social media networks.

Use the Proper Social Accounts

We have a lot of choices when it comes to social media platforms. Make sure you are using the right network for your audience.

SEO -> Google+ and YouTube

Business to Business -> LinkedIn, Twitter, Quora

Business to Consumer -> Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram

SEO CONSIDERATIONS**Use Appropriately Targeted Keywords**

Consider the words that a user might search for to locate a web page or post on the website. Validate this list of possible keywords to actual search volumes. Anticipating the right keywords and writing content with these keywords in mind will produce positive results. A mix of regular keywords and long-tail (longer phrases) will provide the best mix of search traffic and results.



Use No More Than One or Two Keywords Per Page or Post

With the increasingly competitive nature of organic SEO and website optimization, best practices for keyword selection and implementation is to focus on one keyword per web page. In cases where the keywords are long-tail keywords or keywords of lesser competitive nature, it is possible to target two similar keywords or phrases on one page.

Spend Time Mapping Keywords to Individual Pages and Posts

Plan the website pages and posts by mapping preferred keywords and phrases to actual content. Use a WordPress plugin like WordPress SEO from Yoast to help track the keywords and keep focused.

Avoid Keyword Stuffing

Google defines “keyword stuffing” as the practice of loading a webpage with keywords in an attempt to manipulate a site’s ranking in Google’s search results. Such practices create a negative user experience and can harm your site’s ranking. Focus on creating useful, information-rich content that uses keywords appropriately and in context.

Page Titles Accurately Represent Content

Each website page should have a clear and concise title that effectively communicates the topic of the page’s content. It should be presented at the top of the page and represented with an H1 header that is keyword rich.

Keyword in Page URL

URLs with keywords that are relevant to page content make the pages rank higher due to the inherent SEO value. They will also make it easier for real users to remember and will encourage more sharing on social networks.

Meta Descriptions

A good meta description will begin with the page’s target keyword or phrase while also providing compelling text that will encourage a searcher to click through to the content. They should be unique to each page or post. The meta description should be no more than 155 characters.

Meta Titles

Meta titles should be keyword rich, without appearing as if the writer is keyword stuffing. They should be less than 55 characters. The main keyword word or keyword phrase should begin the title and clearly align with the page content and targeted keyword.

Duplicate Content

Search engines want to provide unique content and they avoid presenting searchers with multiple versions of the same content. As such, some search engines will filter out content they deem to be similar or nearly duplicate of existing indexed content.

Thin Content

This refers to websites who create low-quality pages with little or no unique content. It degrades the user experience and opens websites up to a manual penalty from Google.

Stolen or Scraped Content

This includes the reuse of content from another source in an effort to increase page volume and influence search results. It also opens the website up to a penalty.

