

# Introduction to Search Engine Optimization

SEO, Search Engine Marketing (SEM) & Google Ranking Factors

# SEO/SEM

19 Weeks to get optimized  
35 Weeks to get noticed



# VERONICA JEANS

Ecommerce  
Coach

# WIIFM

We only buy what is of VALUE to us

Google criteria - WIIFTU  
Bing

# Google Updates

When a user makes a certain query, an **AI-powered snapshot** can actually appear in the search results.

- The SEO playing field is split into 3 new playing fields: AI Snapshot, non-AI results, and Perspectives
- SEOs need to learn a new set of skills, which is equally intimidating and exciting
- Signals that might become more important: image optimization, brand **combination searches**, links/mentions, reviews

# New Google

## Doing more with a single search

- The SEO playing field breaks into 3 parts: AI Snapshots, non-AI results and Perspectives.
  - AI Snapshots provide a much better answer to [longtail queries](#),
  - non-AI results
  - Perspectives
- Structured by EEAT

Experience - Expertise - Authority - Trust

# New Google

The **AI Snapshot** link carousel will likely get the most search traffic but be limited to high authority, high expertise web results.

Below the AI Snapshot, we have “**authentic, first-hand experience**” results. Ranking here will likely take content that emphasizes the experience of individuals, most probably experts.

And in the **Perspectives tab**, we have a new playing field of creator results. Ranking here might be much easier and based on a new set of signals.

**Perspectives** might be a valuable traffic source for affiliates and brands:

- Perspectives is already live for some queries with high QDF (query deserves **freshness**) like “google io announcements” or “recession”. Right now, they’re coming from Twitter and web content. Pretty soon, I expect them to also come from Youtube, Reddit and TikTok.

# New Google

Corroborated results break the AI Snapshot down into different components and might allow us to understand how Google's AI answer comes together.

They are built on the classic ranking algorithm, which makes sense.

Most search engines use a tech called Retrieval Augmented Generation [[paper](#)], which cross-references AI answers from LLMs (large language models) with classic search results to decrease hallucination.

***Google understands all implications of the longtail search query and breaks them down (corroborates) into pieces of information.***



# New Google

Below the AI Snapshot, we have “*authentic, first-hand experience*” results.

Ranking here will likely take content that emphasizes the experience of individuals, most probably experts.

## **Classic web results!**

The search query is extended and refined to MORE....

# New Google

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# New Google

- Image thumbnail optimization will become a much stronger lever.
  - In all of these new surfaces, images stand out as a way to get attention and clicks.
  - New ways to make **thumbnails** stand out in **AI Snapshots, classic web results** and **Perspectives**.
  - Youtubers have played this game for years, and SEOs will need to catch up.
- Video continues to play a role - but not in important position within the Snapshot. - future

# Google Ads

No concept for Google Ads yet.

Google still shows Shopping ads above AI answers, which helps the company monetize important verticals that matter.

But we don't yet know what Google Ads will look like in AI  
Snapshots

# Google Criteria #1

## Understanding the Website - who owns the website and content

“Start by finding out who is responsible for the website and who created the content on the page... Then, look for information about the website and/or content creators on the website itself.”

Indicating that the reputation of the **people contributing content** to the website should also factor into consideration when **evaluating that website**.

# Google Criteria #2

## Overall Page Quality Rating

The updated QRG offers a new 3-step process for assessing Page Quality:

1. Assessing the **true purpose of the page** and how harmful/deceptive it is
2. Assessing the **potential of the page to cause harm** or otherwise be untrustworthy or spammy

*(If the rater determines the pages are harmful, untrustworthy or spammy, they should rate them Lowest quality)*

3. If the page is not harmful, the **quality rating** is based on **how well the page achieves its purpose**

# Google Criteria

Google introduced a new **consideration for understanding the type of website**. Some of these considerations include whether the website:

- Is a hobbyist site or corporate.
- Involves financial transactions or requires payments
- Is supported by volunteers or by professionals.

Different types of websites have different page quality expectations

Google also indicated that while ads are necessary for many sites to monetize, the “ways in which ads contribute to user experience” are a consideration for page quality.

As stated in previous sections, the **reputation of the website and its content creators contributes to page quality**.

# Google Criteria #3

## Quality of the Main Content

“For most pages, the quality of the MC can be determined by the **amount of effort, originality, and talent or skill** that went into the creation of the content.”

Google seems to be asking raters to focus on **how much actual work went into building the content**, as opposed to tactics that use automation without oversight or manual curation.

Google is also increasingly focused on the **originality of the content** and the **presence of insights not found elsewhere**.

As with previous versions of the QRG, Google also states that accuracy and alignment with expert consensus are important for YMYL topics. (Health, finance & news)



# Google Criteria #4

## Reputation of the Website and Content Creators

One important addition is that reputation research depends on the **topic of the page content**. Google asks raters to think about the reputation of the content creators “in the context of what the page is about.”

Google also added an important new detail about websites or content creators that create content across many different websites.

In these cases, the quality rater should consider the “**underlying company or the content creator,**” which means they can look across different websites to obtain reputation information.

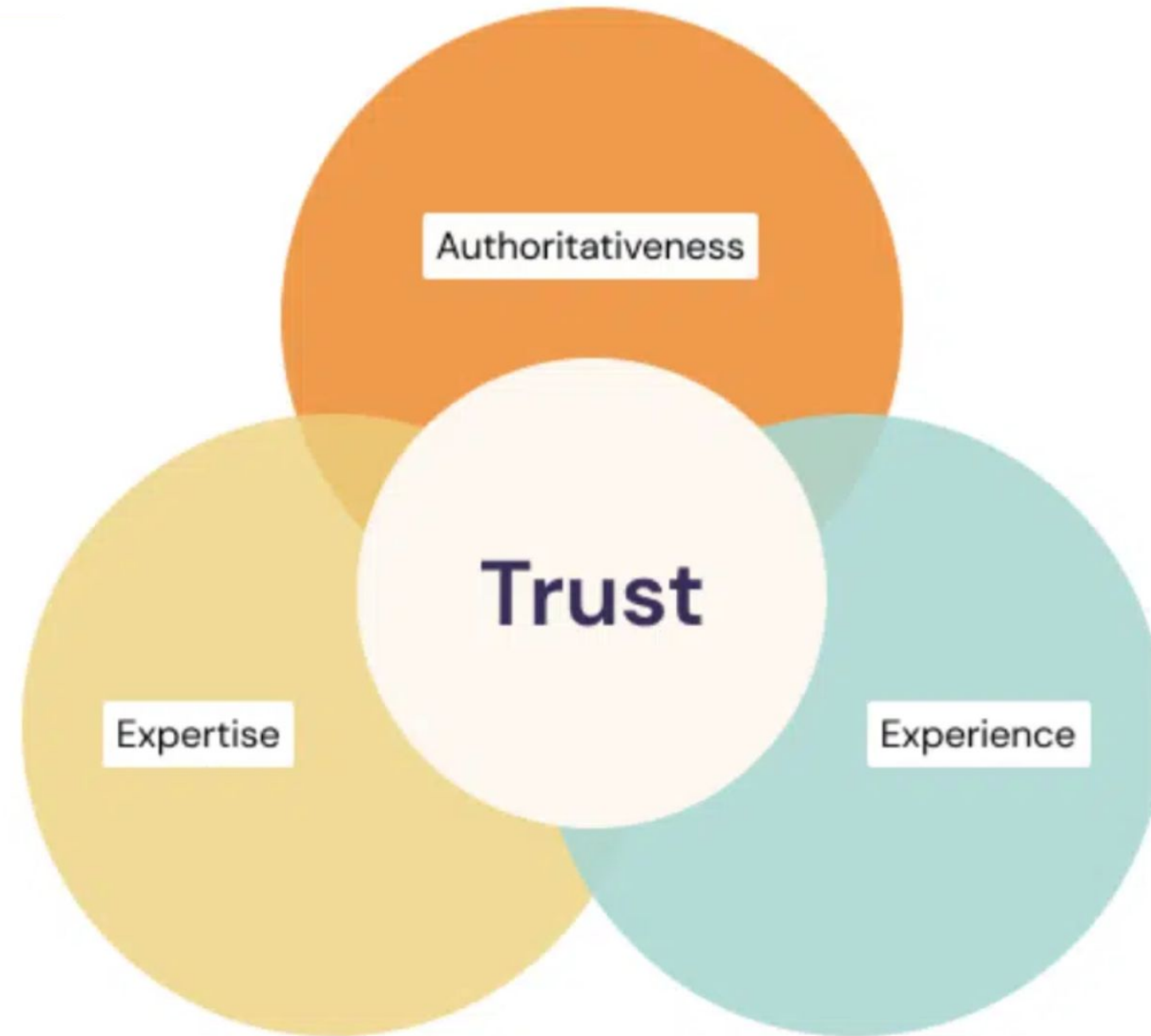
# QRG (Quality rated guidelines)

## Introducing E-E-A-T

Google is now introducing the concept of [E-E-A-T](#), which stands for

- Experience.
- Expertise.
- Authoritativeness.
- Trustworthiness.

Trust is the mechanism by which raters determine if the page is “accurate, honest, safe, and reliable”



[Schedule](#)

# TRUST

**For evaluating Trust, the most important "member of the E-E-A-T family," raters should consider:**

- What the website says **about itself on its About Page or other profile pages.**
- What others say about the website or its content creators (**third-party reviews or references**).
- What is visible on the page – actual evidence on the page that the content creator can be trusted (e.g., real evidence of them doing the thing they claim to be an expert in).

# Example

Particularly related to [product review content](#).

Google focuses on the extent to which content creators have "necessary first-hand of life experience for the topic." Having significant experience lends itself to trust.

Google uses the example of a product review – someone who has personally used the product has more experience than someone who has not, therefore creating more trust.

# Lacking E-E-A-T

Google provides examples of what it looks like to lack an appropriate level of E-E-A-T for the topic or purpose of the page. These are the examples provided:

- “The content creator lacks adequate experience, e.g. a restaurant review written by someone who has never eaten at the restaurant
- The content creator lacks adequate expertise, e.g. an article about how to skydive written by someone with no expertise in the subject
- The website or content creator is not an authoritative or trustworthy source for the topic of the page, e.g. tax form downloads provided on a cooking website.
- The page or website is not trustworthy for its purpose, e.g. a shopping page with minimal customer service information”

These examples help conceptualize the distinct roles that each letter in E-E-A-T play in evaluating the page quality.

# AI Content

**Google will watermark and tag AI content.**

Google is adamant about doing all it can to detect AI content. Again, from an SEO perspective, AI content is only a problem when done with **low quality**.

But from a platform perspective, Google cannot tolerate fake news, images or video.

Google collaborates with Midjourney, Shutterstock and other generative AI tools on meta tags (similar to how search engines all follow similar standards?) and watermarks.

# SEO's Future

SEOs will lose critical data if Google doesn't build new ways to understand site performance.

**Content still matters for e-commerce.**

The shopping results in Google's I/O keynote seem to be accompanied by **buyer guide content.**



# Traffic and reasons

An erosion analysis focuses on understanding three patterns:

1. Organic traffic moving to paid
2. Organic traffic declining due to non-paid reasons, like **new/more SERP Features**
3. Organic traffic decreasing due to fewer searches (market pullback)

# Analysis

## How to run an erosion analysis

3 red flags tell you if organic traffic erosion might occur:

1. If the organic position hasn't changed, but organic traffic declined, it's not an SEO issue but either ads or SERP Features.
2. If organic traffic/conversions declined and paid inclined, it's likely a shift from organic to paid.
3. If organic traffic declined and paid traffic was steady or declined as well, it's likely an issue of SERP Features.

We can use traffic data from Search Console and Google Analytics or your web analytic stool of choice to define and validate hypotheses for eroding organic traffic.

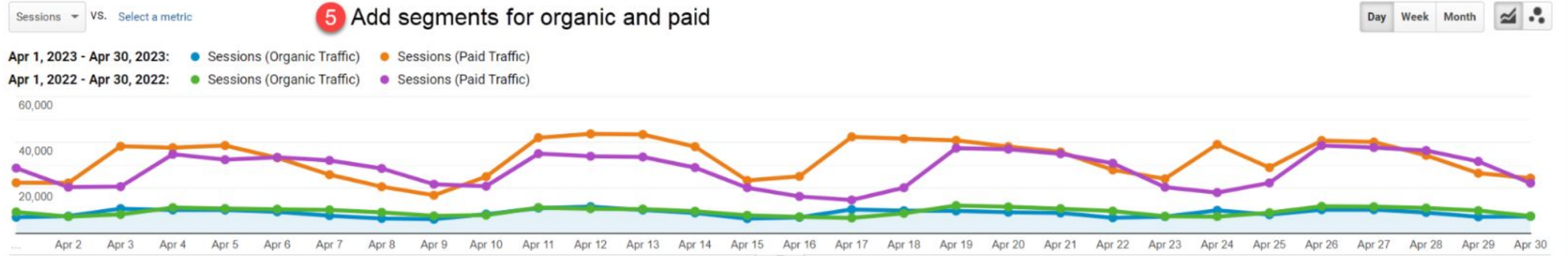
Just GSC data itself is already helpful to understand where you lost traffic without losing ranks.

# Build your own engine

In Universal Google Analytics:

1. Go to “Behavior → Site content → Landing pages”
2. Add segments for organic and paid traffic
3. Select the main conversion goals as event (requires that you tagged and define your main conversion and gave it a value)
4. Export

- Home
- Customization
- REPORTS
- Realtime
- Audience
- Acquisition
- Behavior 1**
  - Overview
  - Behavior Flow
  - Site Content 2**
    - All Pages
    - Content Drilldown
    - Landing Pages 3**
    - Exit Pages
    - Site Speed
    - Site Search
    - Events
    - Publisher
  - Explore BETA
  - Attribution BETA
  - Discover
  - Admin
  - Schedule



Primary Dimension: Landing Page Content Grouping: none Other

Plot Rows Secondary dimension Sort Type: Default

	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions 4		
	Sessions ?	% New Sessions ?	New Users ?	Bounce Rate ?	Pages / Session ?	Avg. Session Duration ?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Landing Page ?									
<b>Organic Traffic</b>									
<b>Paid Traffic</b>									
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. /									
Apr 1, 2023 - Apr 30, 2023									
Organic Traffic									
Paid Traffic									
Apr 1, 2022 - Apr 30, 2022									
Organic Traffic									
Paid Traffic									

Pulling organic and paid traffic from GA for the erosion analysis