

# The SaaS SEO Checklist.

169 checks that move rankings and revenue. Startup to enterprise.

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**11**

PARTS

**169**

CHECKS

**3**

STAGES

**80**

PAGES

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# How to use this checklist.

This is a working document, not a reading assignment. Print it, or work through the PDF with a highlighter. Every item follows the same anatomy: the action, why it moves rankings or revenue, and how to verify you can honestly tick the box. A check you cannot verify is a wish.

Every item carries two tags. Stage tells you when it matters. Owner names the desk the item belongs to, because a checklist without owners is a list of things nobody did.

## **S** Startup

Pre-Series A · small site · founder-led

## **G** Growth

Series A–C · marketing team in place

## **E** Enterprise

Large site · multi-market · real governance

## **All** Every stage

Baseline hygiene that never goes away

# The five ways SaaS SEO programs die.

01

## Publishing as strategy

A calendar is not a plan. Volume was never the bottleneck; intent mapping and conversion paths are. Forty posts a month can lose to one page that matches what a buyer actually asked.

02

## Traffic as the scoreboard

Traffic that does not become trials, demos, and pipeline is a hobby with reporting. If your dashboard cannot connect organic sessions to revenue, fix Part 01 before touching anything else.

03

## Authority bought by the dozen

Links from pages nobody reads, on sites built for metrics, get discounted or get you hurt. Part 07 exists because the cheap route costs more.

04

## Technical debt under new content

Content built on a site crawlers cannot render properly is budget set on fire. Clear Part 04 before you scale Part 05.

05

## Ignoring the second scoreboard

Roughly six in ten B2B purchases now touch an AI assistant somewhere in the journey. If your program has no answer to Part 08, it is optimizing for a shrinking share of discovery.

00 · STAGE ROUTER

# Where you start depends on what stage you are.

Read across your row. Each cell names the Parts in the order to run them.

| YOUR SITUATION                                          | START WITH                    | THEN                | ONGOING               |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Startup</b><br>Small site · founder-led · no SEO yet | Part 01                       | Part 06 money pages | Part 11 weekly loop   |
| <b>Growth</b><br>Team in place · some content live      | Part 01 attribution → 02 → 06 | Part 03 · 07 · 08   | Part 11 full cadence  |
| <b>Enterprise</b><br>Big site · many markets            | Part 11 governance · 04E · 09 | Part 03 · 08 · 10   | Everything, quarterly |

WHAT COMES NEXT

**Eleven parts. 169 items. Each part opens with a plate; the checks follow.**

Ticked once, revisited quarterly. The cadence is the program.

# Eleven parts.

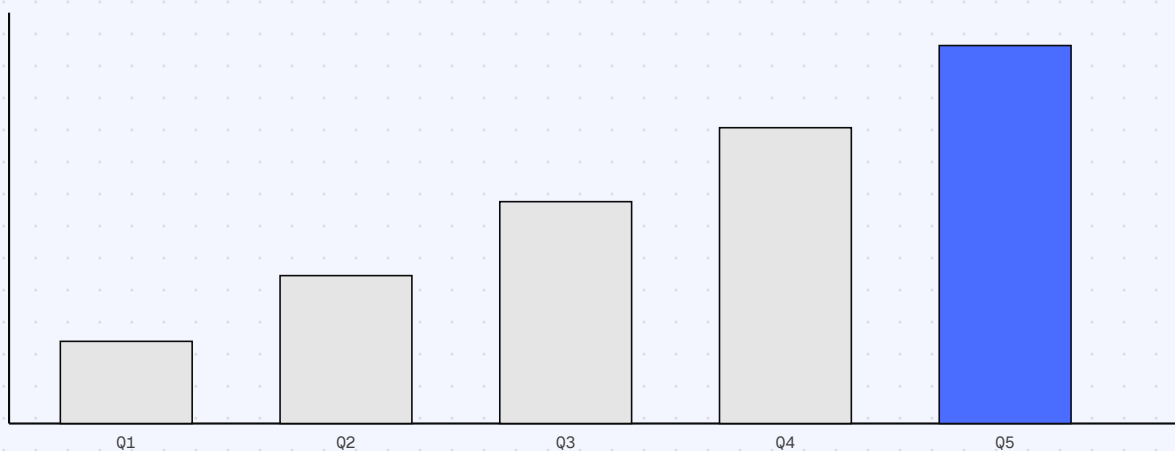
|            |                                         |          |
|------------|-----------------------------------------|----------|
| PART 01    | Revenue foundations and measurement     | 14 items |
| PART 02    | ICP and the keyword system              | 16 items |
| PART 03    | Architecture and internal linking       | 16 items |
| PART 04    | Technical foundation                    | 22 items |
| PART 05    | On-page and content standards           | 18 items |
| PART 06    | SaaS page types that carry revenue      | 18 items |
| PART 07    | Authority and digital PR                | 16 items |
| PART 08    | AI search and GEO                       | 15 items |
| PART 09    | International and enterprise operations | 10 items |
| PART 10    | Conversion and the revenue layer        | 12 items |
| PART 11    | Cadence and governance                  | 12 items |
| APPENDIX A | The pre-publish gate                    |          |
| APPENDIX B | The first 90 days, by stage             |          |
| BACK COVER | About Technotize                        |          |

# Revenue foundations and measurement.

Nothing here matters if you cannot see what it does to revenue. This part wires the instruments before the flight.

ORGANIC → PIPELINE

+461% YoY





1.01

### Install analytics with conversion events for every revenue action: trial start, demo request, contact, signup

Why · without events, SEO reports in sessions, and sessions do not pay salaries

Verify · fire each event yourself and watch it land

All

OWNER

marketing



1.02

### Connect Google Search Console, verify all property versions, and submit the sitemap

Why · GSC is the only first-party record of how Google sees you

Verify · coverage report populated, sitemap status Success

All

OWNER

SEO lead



1.03

### Agree written definitions of MQL and SQL with sales

Why · if marketing and sales count different things, SEO's revenue claim collapses in the first pipeline review

Verify · one shared document, both teams signed

G

E

OWNER

marketing + sales



1.04

### Build source attribution from organic session to closed revenue in your CRM

Why · this single connection is what turns SEO from a cost center into a channel

Verify · pick one closed deal and trace it back to its first organic touch



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RevOps



1.05

### Snapshot your baseline before any work: rankings on money terms, organic sessions, referring domains, indexed pages, AI citations per platform

Why · without a dated baseline, every future claim of progress is arguable

Verify · one dated document, stored where the team can find it



OWNER

SEO lead



1.06

### Set up rank tracking for every money term and named competitor

Why · weekly position data is the early-warning system for everything else in this document

Verify · tracker emails you weekly without being asked



OWNER

SEO lead



1.07

### Establish per-platform AI citation tracking: Google AI Overviews, AI Mode, ChatGPT, Perplexity, Copilot, Gemini

Why · a blended AI score hides which platform moved; per-platform data tells you where to work

Verify · you can state today's citation count for each platform separately



OWNER

SEO lead



1.08

### Build one dashboard a CFO can read: organic sessions, MQLs from organic, pipeline influenced, trend lines

Why · budget survives on legibility. The channel that cannot explain itself gets cut first

Verify · show it to someone in finance; count the questions



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marketing



1.09

### Write the SEO forecast model: addressable search volume, realistic click share by position, conversion rates, pipeline math

Why · a forecast forces honesty about what the channel can carry and by when

Verify · leadership has seen it and agreed the timeline



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SEO lead



1.10

### Review GSC index coverage monthly and investigate every unexpected exclusion

Why · pages Google refuses to index are budget already spent earning nothing

Verify · you can explain every category in the coverage report

All

OWNER

SEO lead



1.11

### Filter known bots and internal traffic from analytics

Why · inflated data produces confident wrong decisions

Verify · internal IPs and staging domains excluded, bot filtering on

All

OWNER

marketing



1.12

### Enforce UTM discipline on every campaign so organic stays clean

Why · untagged paid and email traffic leaks into organic and flatters it dishonestly

Verify · spot-check last month's campaigns for tags

G

E

OWNER

marketing



1.13

### Keep a decision log: what you changed, when, and why

Why · when a metric moves three months later, the log is the difference between learning and guessing

Verify · the log has an entry from the last two weeks

G

E

OWNER

SEO lead



1.14

### Review the numbers weekly at a fixed time, fifteen minutes, same three questions: what moved, why, what do we do

Why · cadence beats intensity. Programs die of neglect more often than error

Verify · the meeting happened last week

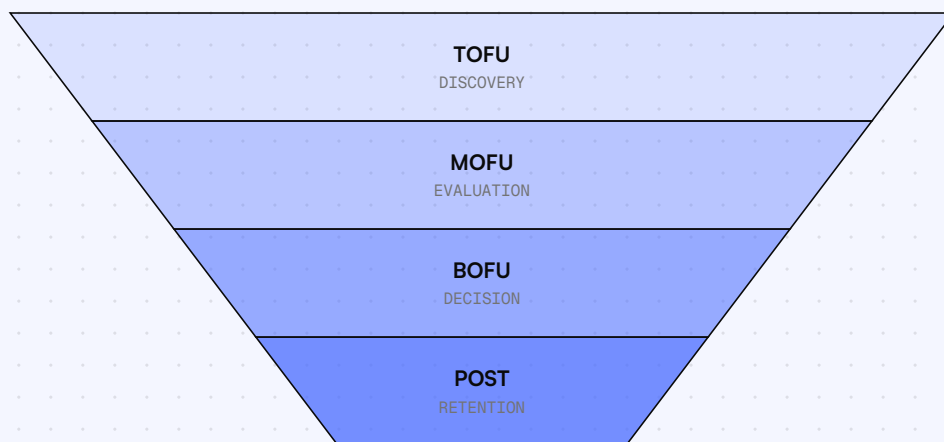
All

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SEO lead

# ICP and the keyword system.

Keywords are only useful when they map to who buys and what stage they are in. This part builds the map.





2.01

### Document your ICP and the full buying committee: who researches, who evaluates, who signs

Why · enterprise software purchases involve six to ten stakeholders, and each one searches differently

Verify · named roles with the questions each one asks

All

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marketing



2.02

### Run five to ten customer interviews focused on the words buyers actually use

Why · internal vocabulary and buyer vocabulary diverge, and rankings live on the buyer's side

Verify · a phrase bank quoting real customers

All

OWNER

marketing



2.03

### Mine sales calls and support tickets for recurring questions and phrasings

Why · these are queries with proven commercial intent, pre-validated by your own pipeline

Verify · ten keyword candidates traced to specific calls or tickets

G

E

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content



2.04

### Source bottom-funnel first: pricing, alternatives, versus, integrations, use case, and "[category] software" terms

Why · BOFU pages convert at multiples of informational content and justify the program while clusters mature

Verify · a BOFU keyword list mapped to pages, built before the blog calendar

All

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SEO lead



2.05

### Build alternative and comparison keyword lists around every named competitor

Why · a buyer searching "[competitor] alternative" is days from a decision; absence here is a standing gift to rivals

Verify · one list per competitor with volumes

All

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SEO lead



2.06

### Map feature, workflow, role, and industry keywords to your product's actual capabilities

Why · these mid-intent terms carry buyers from problem to product, and generalist competitors cannot write them credibly

Verify · keyword-to-capability map exists

G

E

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content



2.07

**Calibrate intent per keyword before assigning a page type.**  
**Read the live results: if the page one set is comparisons, an informational post will not rank there**

Why · intent mismatch is the quietest way to waste a quarter

Verify · every target keyword carries an intent label sourced from its actual results page

All

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SEO lead



2.08

**Cluster keywords into topics and assign exactly one primary keyword per page**

Why · two pages chasing one term split signals and both lose

Verify · no primary keyword appears twice in the map

All

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SEO lead



2.09

**Run a cannibalization audit on everything already live before adding pages**

Why · growing sites accumulate overlapping pages that fight each other invisibly

Verify · GSC query report shows one dominant URL per money term

G

E

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SEO lead



2.10

### Keep a zero-volume list: precise long-tail queries your buyers ask that tools report as nothing

Why · tools undercount niche B2B queries badly, and these terms convert out of proportion to their reported volume

Verify · the list exists and at least three pages target it

All

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content



2.11

### Sanity-check volume against CPC

Why · a modest-volume term with a high CPC is a term advertisers profit from, which is the strongest intent signal a tool can give you

Verify · CPC column present in your keyword map

All

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SEO lead



2.12

### Maintain the keyword-to-URL map as a living document with an owner

Why · the map is the program's source of truth; when it goes stale, cannibalization and gaps return

Verify · last edit within the quarter

All

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SEO lead



2.13

### Build the list of prompts your buyers ask AI assistants, in their words

Why · AI answers are composed per prompt; you cannot measure share of answer for prompts you never wrote down

Verify · twenty-plus prompts documented per product area



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2.14

### Score priorities by revenue proximity, not volume. A 90-volume pricing-intent term outranks a 5,000-volume definition

Why · volume flatters reports; proximity fills pipeline

Verify · your next quarter's list is not sorted by volume



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2.15

### Note seasonal and budget-cycle patterns for your category

Why · B2B demand moves with fiscal calendars, and publishing into the trough wastes the launch window

Verify · known peaks marked in the content calendar



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marketing



2.16

### Re-run the full keyword pass quarterly

Why · features ship, competitors rename, language drifts. A map older than a quarter is partly fiction

Verify · dated quarterly versions exist

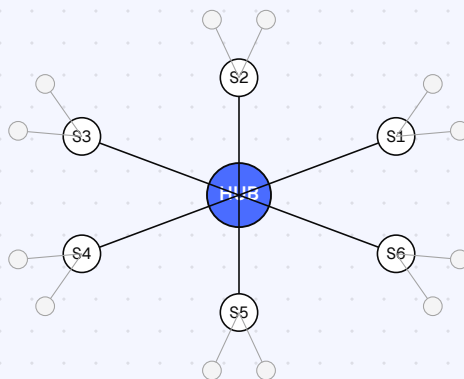
All

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# Architecture and internal linking.

The site is a graph. Rankings follow the shape of the graph, not the length of the sitemap.



HUB · CLUSTER · LEAF



3.01

### Organize content in three tiers: pillar pages for head terms, sub-pillar pages for disciplines, cluster posts for long-tail

Why · concentrated topical authority is how smaller SaaS sites beat bigger domains on specific territories

Verify · every live URL slots into exactly one tier

All

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SEO lead



3.02

### Separate commercial pages from informational content, and let them link to each other rather than compete

Why · a blog post and a product page chasing the same term guarantees neither wins it

Verify · money terms owned by money pages only

All

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SEO lead



3.03

### Lock URL conventions: lowercase, hyphenated, short, no dates in evergreen slugs, no parameters in canonical paths

Why · URLs are forever; every later change costs a redirect and a re-earning period

Verify · written convention, new URLs follow it

All

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engineering



3.04

### Set breadcrumbs by topic parentage, not folder structure, and mark them up with BreadcrumbList schema

Why · breadcrumbs teach crawlers your hierarchy and win the SERP display line

Verify · breadcrumb on every deep page, schema validates

All

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engineering



3.05

### Keep primary navigation lean and commercial. Every nav slot is a sitewide vote

Why · forty nav links dilute what the site says it is about

Verify · nav carries pillars, pricing, and proof, not every page you like

All

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marketing



3.06

### Sweep for orphan pages quarterly: any URL with zero internal links pointing at it

Why · an orphan tells crawlers the page does not matter, and they believe you

Verify · crawl export shows no indexable page at zero inlinks

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3.07

### Keep every important page within three clicks of the homepage

Why · click depth correlates with crawl frequency and perceived importance

Verify · crawl depth report, money pages at depth two or less

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SEO lead



3.08

### Give every page its full set of link types: up to its parent hub, laterally to siblings, across to related clusters, and out to a conversion page

Why · pages that only link down or only link out leak the authority they earn

Verify · audit any five pages against the four directions

All

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content



3.09

### Write anchors as specific phrases, five to eight words at the sweet spot, never "click here" or "read more."

Why · anchor text is a ranking vote for the destination; generic anchors vote for nothing

Verify · crawl anchor report shows no generic anchors on editorial links

All

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content



3.10

**Cap anchor repetition: never the same anchor twice to one destination on one page, and rotate variants sitewide instead of stamping one exact-match phrase everywhere**

Why · unnatural anchor concentration is a pattern, and patterns get discounted

Verify · anchor report shows variety per destination



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3.11

**Add a hub link block to every cluster post footer pointing at its parent**

Why · the repeated structural vote consolidates the sub-pillar's authority on its head term

Verify · template renders the block on every post



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3.12

**Make related-content modules real crawlable links, not JavaScript-only carousels**

Why · a recommendation module that exists only after script execution passes nothing

Verify · links present in view-source



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engineering



3.13

**Decide subdomain versus subfolder deliberately for blog, docs, and app. Default: marketing content in subfolders, product app on a subdomain**

Why · authority consolidates on one host; splitting it is a choice you should make on purpose

Verify · written rationale for the current split



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3.14

**Keep sitemap.xml clean: canonical, indexable, 200-status URLs only, updated on publish**

Why · a sitemap full of redirects and noindexed pages teaches Google to trust it less

Verify · sitemap sample returns 200s and self-canonicals



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3.15

**Own the redirect map. Every removed or moved URL gets a 301 to its closest living relative, never to the homepage in bulk**

Why · bulk homepage redirects are treated as soft 404s and the equity evaporates

Verify · redirect log with one-to-one mappings



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3.16

## For faceted or filtered listing pages, choose which combinations deserve indexing and block the rest

Why · unmanaged facets can multiply a thousand-page site into a million thin URLs that drown the pages that matter

Verify · parameter rules documented, coverage report stable

E

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# Technical foundation.

Crawlers and rendering come before content. Fix the platform, then feed it.

**CRAWL** DISCOVERY, SITEMAPS, ROBOTS

**RENDER** JS EXECUTION, HYDRATION

**INDEX** CANONICALS, DEDUPE

**SERVE** CORE WEB VITALS, LATENCY



4.01

### Audit robots.txt: nothing important blocked, staging and app paths handled deliberately

Why · one wrong disallow line can remove a site section from search silently

Verify · test money URLs in GSC's robots tester

All

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4.02

### Confirm every marketing page renders its content server-side or through static generation

Why · content that appears only after JavaScript runs is invisible or delayed to most crawlers, and the whole program sits on top of this one fact

Verify · view-source on key templates contains the H1, body copy, and links

All

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engineering



4.03

### Run a rendering parity test: compare what Googlebot sees (URL Inspection, rendered HTML) with what users see

Why · hydration bugs create pages that look fine and index empty

Verify · rendered DOM matches the visible page on five key templates

G

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engineering



4.04

### Meet Core Web Vitals thresholds on mobile: LCP under 2.5 seconds, INP under 200 milliseconds, CLS under 0.1

Why · field-data vitals are a confirmed ranking input and a conversion input twice over

Verify · field data in GSC's CWV report, not just lab scores

All

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engineering



4.05

### Keep the LCP element text or a properly preloaded image, never a background image behind a script

Why · the largest element decides the score; choose it on purpose

Verify · lab report names the LCP element and it is the hero heading or optimized image

All

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4.06

### Reserve layout space for everything that loads late: embeds, tables, banners

Why · layout shift is a user-hostile pattern with a metric attached

Verify · CLS under 0.1 in field data

All

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engineering



4.07

### Serve images in modern formats with explicit dimensions and lazy loading below the fold

Why · images are the usual page-weight villain, and weight is the usual LCP villain

Verify · audit shows WebP or AVIF with width and height attributes

All

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engineering



4.08

### Load fonts with preconnect and font-display swap, subset to used weights

Why · font loading blocks first paint on most marketing sites

Verify · no invisible-text period on a throttled load

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4.09

### Set one canonical per page, self-referencing by default, absolute URLs

Why · canonical confusion splits signals across duplicates you did not know you had

Verify · crawl shows every indexable page self-canonical

All

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engineering



4.10

### Handle URL parameters and duplicates: tracking parameters canonicalized away, www and trailing-slash variants redirected to one form

Why · every duplicate form is a vote against itself

Verify · variant URLs resolve to one canonical form with one hop

All

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engineering



4.11

### Enforce HTTPS everywhere with a single redirect from HTTP

Why · baseline trust signal and a prerequisite for everything else

Verify · HTTP URLs 301 once to HTTPS

All

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engineering



4.12

### Deploy the schema stack: Organization sitewide, Article plus BreadcrumbList on posts, FAQPage where questions render on-page, SoftwareApplication or Product on product pages, Person for named authors

Why · structured data is how machines read your entities, and machine-readable entities get cited

Verify · every type validates in the Rich Results Test

All

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engineering



4.13

### Keep visible FAQ text and FAQPage schema identical, and edit both in the same change

Why · mismatch between page and markup reads as manipulation  
Verify · diff the schema against the rendered questions

All

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content



4.14

### Return real 404s for gone content, or 410 when permanent, with a useful not-found page

Why · soft 404s (a 200 page saying "not found") pollute the index and waste crawl  
Verify · a fake URL returns status 404, not 200

All

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engineering



4.15

### Flatten redirect chains to a single hop

Why · every extra hop leaks signal and slows crawlers; chains grow silently as sites age  
Verify · crawl report shows no chain longer than one

G

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engineering



4.16

### Noindex staging, preview, and test environments, and password them

Why · a leaked staging site duplicates your entire domain against itself  
Verify · site: search for the staging host returns nothing

All

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engineering



4.17

### Confirm mobile parity: same content, same links, same structured data as desktop

Why · indexing is mobile-first; whatever the mobile version lacks, you lack  
Verify · mobile crawl diff against desktop on key templates

All

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engineering



4.18

### Analyze server logs quarterly to see where crawlers actually spend time

Why · on large sites, crawl budget disappears into parameters, redirects, and dead sections while new pages wait days to be found  
Verify · log analysis report with crawl distribution by section

E

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engineering



4.19

### Manage crawl budget on large sites: fast responses, clean sitemaps, pruned low-value URL spaces

Why · Google crawls what it can afford; make the affordable set your important set

Verify · average crawl-to-index time for new pages is days, not weeks



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4.20

### Put SEO checks in the release pipeline: block deploys that change titles, canonicals, robots directives, or status codes on protected URLs without review

Why · the biggest SEO losses at scale are engineering accidents, not algorithm updates

Verify · a test deploy with a broken canonical fails the pipeline



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4.21

### Follow a written migration protocol for any redesign, replatform, or domain change: full URL inventory, one-to-one redirect map, staged rollout, rank monitoring

Why · migrations are where sites lose years of equity in a weekend

Verify · the protocol document exists before the migration is scheduled



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4.22

## Monitor uptime and crawl errors with alerts, not with monthly discoveries

Why · three days of 5xx responses can deindex pages you spent a year ranking

Verify · an alert fires on a simulated outage

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# On-page and content standards.

Pages that rank in 2026 are answers first, essays second. The standards below make that the default, not the exception.

The image shows a mockup of a web page layout. At the top, there is a black header bar. Below it, a blue button labeled "GET AUDIT" is visible. To the right, a sidebar titled "ON PAGE" contains five horizontal lines, likely representing a list of items. The main content area is represented by several horizontal lines, suggesting text or a list of items.



5.01

### One H1 per page, carrying the primary keyword naturally

Why · the H1 is the page's declared subject; two H1s is two declarations  
Verify · crawl report, one H1 everywhere

All

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content



5.02

### Title tags at or under 60 characters, primary keyword forward, written to earn the click

Why · the title is your one line of ad copy in the results, and truncation wastes it  
Verify · no truncated titles in a SERP spot-check of money pages

All

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content



5.03

### Meta descriptions at or under 155 characters with the keyword and a reason to click

Why · descriptions do not rank, but they decide click share, and click share is the point  
Verify · length audit clean, no duplicates

All

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content



5.04

**Keep heading hierarchy strict: H2 per section, H3 beneath H2, no skipped levels, no bold paragraphs pretending to be headings**

Why · hierarchy is how crawlers and AI systems parse structure; fake headings parse as nothing

Verify · HTML audit shows real heading elements in order

All

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content



5.05

**Open every section with a direct answer before elaborating**

Why · featured snippets and AI answers quote whoever answers cleanly first; buried answers lose to worse pages that answer up top

Verify · each H2's first paragraph stands alone as an answer

All

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content



5.06

**Show a named author with a real bio page on every substantive piece**

Why · expertise signals attach to identifiable people, not to "Team."

Verify · byline links to a live author profile with credentials

All

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content



5.07

### Display a visible updated date and keep it honest, matching the schema

Why · freshness matters in software categories, and fake date bumps get learned and discounted

Verify · dateModified equals the visible date, and the content actually changed

All

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content



5.08

### Cite outbound sources at the specific page that states the claim, never a homepage or blog root

Why · precise citation is a credibility signal to readers, raters, and language models alike; lazy citation reads as decoration

Verify · click every outbound link on a new piece; each lands on the claim

All

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content



5.09

### Carry at least one verified fact per page that competitors do not have: your data, a named case figure, an original test

Why · content with nothing original has no reason to be cited, linked, or ranked over the incumbents

Verify · name the fact for any page you publish

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content



5.10

### Enforce claim density: numbers, names, and sources per section, not adjectives

Why · specific, attributable claims are what both readers and AI systems extract and quote; filler is invisible

Verify · count concrete claims per section on a random page

All

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content



5.11

### Match every page to its keyword's intent shape: comparison terms get tables, how-to terms get steps, pricing terms get numbers

Why · the format of page one tells you the format that wins; publishing against it loses politely

Verify · your page's format matches the live results for its term

All

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content



5.12

### Set a thin-page threshold and enforce it: below a real word and value floor, merge, expand, or noindex

Why · a long tail of thin pages drags sitewide quality assessments

Verify · crawl export shows no indexable pages below the floor without a reason

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SEO lead



5.13

### Run a refresh program on decaying content: pages that lost positions get updated with new data before new posts get written

Why · recovering a decayed ranker is cheaper than earning a new one, every time

Verify · refresh queue exists and ships monthly



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content



5.14

### Keep a table of contents with anchor links on long pages

Why · jump links win sitelinks in results and help extraction systems map the page

Verify · TOC anchors match section IDs



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5.15

### Write for scanning: short paragraphs, front-loaded sentences, tables where data belongs in tables

Why · B2B readers evaluate before they read; pages that fail the scan never get the read

Verify · any section survives a five-second skim with its point intact



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content



5.16

### Ban undisclosed AI-generated filler. Tools may assist research and drafts; what ships carries human judgment, real sources, and a point of view

Why · commodity text is free now, which means it earns nothing, and at scale it reads as a site-wide quality signal against you

Verify · spot-read shipped pieces for specifics a model could not know

All

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content



5.17

### Review legal and compliance-sensitive claims before publish in regulated categories

Why · one uncleared security or compliance claim can cost more than the page ever earns

Verify · review lane exists for flagged topics

E

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legal



5.18

### Gate every publish behind a written pre-publish check: metadata lengths, hierarchy, schema parity, link audit, rendering

Why · standards without a gate are suggestions

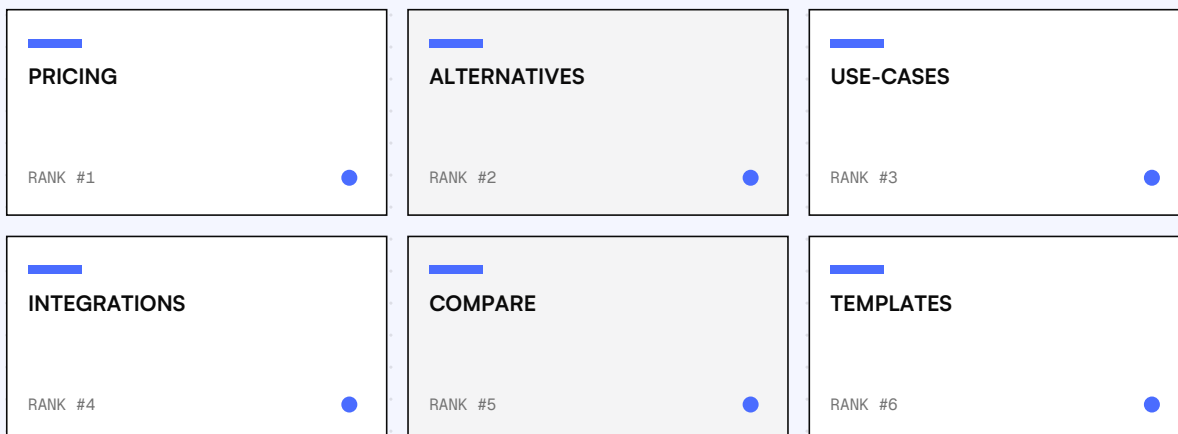
Verify · the last five published pages have completed gates on file

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# SaaS page types that carry revenue.

Money pages are a category, not a page. Pricing, alternatives, use-cases, integrations — the pages sales quote in calls.





6.01

**Point the homepage at your category term and position statement, and keep it out of competition with your pillar pages**

Why · the homepage collects the most links; aim that weight at the term that defines you

Verify · homepage title targets the category, and no other page targets it

All

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marketing



6.02

**Build the pricing page for search, not just for sales: real numbers or honest ranges, plan comparison, pricing-intent FAQ**

Why · "[product] pricing" and "[category] pricing" are the highest-intent queries you can rank for, and hidden pricing sends that click to a review site's guess

Verify · the pricing page ranks for your own brand-plus-pricing query

All

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6.03

**Map features, solutions, and use-case pages to distinct search demand: features answer "what does it do," solutions answer "solve my problem," use cases answer "for my team."**

Why · each is a different query family; one merged page ranks for none of them

Verify · each page type has its own keyword targets in the map

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marketing



6.04

### Build an alternatives page for every named competitor, honest enough to be credible

Why · "[competitor] alternatives" buyers are in the final week of a decision, and honest comparisons outrank fan fiction

Verify · one live page per major competitor with sourced claims

All

OWNER

content



6.05

### Build versus pages for the head-to-head queries, with real comparison tables and named trade-offs

Why · buyers construct these queries themselves; someone will rank for yours, and it should be you

Verify · "[you] vs [competitor]" returns your page

G

E

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content



6.06

### Build an integrations directory with a quality bar per page: what the integration does, setup steps, a real screenshot or workflow, unique copy

Why · "[product] [platform] integration" queries carry ecosystem buyers, and thin duplicated stubs at scale hurt more than help

Verify · any random integration page passes the thin-page floor

G

E

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content



6.07

### Publish case studies with verified numbers, named clients where possible, and Article schema

Why · proof pages convert every stage of the funnel and feed sales; case studies with real figures also get cited by AI answers evaluating vendors  
Verify · each case names its metrics and their source

All

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marketing



6.08

### Ship at least one free tool or calculator tied to your category's core math

Why · tools earn links passively for years and rank for "[calculation] calculator" terms with buyer intent  
Verify · the tool is live, indexable, and has earned its first external links

G

E

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marketing



6.09

### Build a template or resource library where your category has recurring documents

Why · template queries are high-volume, high-goodwill entry points that convert to product interest  
Verify · templates rank for at least one "[thing] template" term

G

E

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content



6.10

### Decide the glossary question deliberately: build definition pages only where your buyers actually search definitions, with unique depth

Why · a hundred thin glossary stubs is a quality liability; twenty deep ones can own a vocabulary

Verify · every glossary page targets a term with real volume and adds more than a dictionary line



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content



6.11

### Treat documentation as a search surface for product-aware queries: indexable, well-titled, internally linked to marketing pages where relevant

Why · docs rank for "how to [task] in [product]" queries that retain customers and catch evaluators mid-research

Verify · docs pages appear in GSC with impressions



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engineering



6.12

### For developer products, make API reference pages indexable with clean titles per endpoint area

Why · developers search error strings and endpoint names; being the answer is product marketing

Verify · an endpoint query returns your reference, not a forum



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engineering



6.13

### Separate the changelog from the blog

Why · release notes bury editorial content and dilute the blog's topical signal

Verify · distinct sections, distinct templates

G

E

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marketing



6.14

### Maintain a security and trust page: certifications, compliance posture, data handling

Why · enterprise buying committees search for it by name, and its absence ends evaluations silently

Verify · "[product] security" returns your page

E

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marketing



6.15

### Keep a customers page listing recognizable logos with links to their case studies

Why · social proof is a ranking page's conversion layer, and the page itself ranks for "[product] customers" checks

Verify · page live, logos current, permissions on file

G

E

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marketing



6.16

### Noindex tag, author-archive, and thin category pages unless a specific one earns traffic

Why · archive sprawl is index pollution with your brand on it  
Verify · archive URLs carry noindex or demonstrate impressions



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SEO lead



6.17

### Give the blog hub a real structure: curated categories matching your pillars, not a reverse-chronological firehose

Why · the hub distributes authority; a firehose distributes nothing  
Verify · hub links map to your pillar structure



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marketing



6.18

### Keep careers, press, and legal pages out of the main topical flow: linked from the footer, not from the money architecture

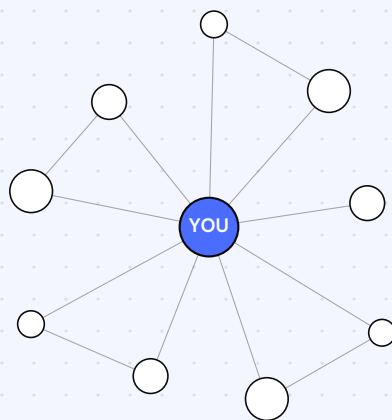
Why · necessary pages should not borrow attention from pages that earn revenue  
Verify · money-page templates do not link to them in-body



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marketing

# Authority and digital PR.

Links are earned as a side effect of being useful. This part is the intake, not the outreach.



EARNED LINKS · REAL SITES



7.01

**Test every prospective linking site on five signals before outreach: real organic traffic, topical fit with your category, content a human would read, a clean outbound link profile, and no cross-linking fingerprints with other metric-farms**

Why · DR and traffic numbers are optimized by farms precisely because buyers filter on them; the content inspection is the filter that works

Verify · a written pass or fail on all five signals per domain

All

OWNER  
PR/links



7.02

**Auto-reject known farm categories on sight: nonsense-keyword blogs, AI review mills, piracy-adjacent sites, "write for us" directories**

Why · these networks exist to sell you a penalty on layaway

Verify · reject categories written into the intake process

All

OWNER  
PR/links



7.03

**Keep one shared, permanent reject list across everyone who sources prospects**

Why · without institutional memory, rejected domains come back through the next researcher

Verify · the list exists, is shared, and grew last month

G

E

OWNER  
PR/links



7.04

**Hold a steady acquisition cadence instead of spikes: a consistent monthly band of new referring domains that your program can sustain**

Why · a natural link profile grows like interest, not like a purchase order; spikes then silence is a pattern that reads as bought

Verify · refdomains chart shows a steady slope



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PR/links



7.05

**Keep anchor text natural across acquired links: mostly brand and page-title anchors, exact-match rare**

Why · anchor distribution is the most legible fingerprint paid links leave

Verify · anchor report on new links is brand-heavy



OWNER  
PR/links



7.06

**Distribute links across the site, not only at the homepage and one money page**

Why · authority pointed at hubs and proof pages lifts everything they link to; a two-URL profile looks like what it is

Verify · new links land on at least four distinct sections per quarter



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PR/links



7.07

**For link insertions, read the target page first and require topical bridge to the paragraph, not just the domain**

Why · a link that makes no sense in its sentence earns nothing and risks the page's credibility with it

Verify · every placement includes the surrounding paragraph in the record

All

OWNER

PR/links



7.08

**Hold guest posts to the host's best-content standard, on sites whose audience overlaps your buyers**

Why · a guest post on a site with no readers is a paid link with extra steps

Verify · host site passes the five-signal test in 7.01

G

E

OWNER

PR/links



7.09

**Publish original data at least twice a year: a survey, a benchmark, an analysis of your own anonymized product data**

Why · original numbers are the only content class that earns links and AI citations passively at scale

Verify · last data piece has external referring domains

G

E

OWNER

content



7.10

### Work journalist-request platforms and expert-quote opportunities weekly with a named expert

Why · editorial mentions from real publications are the links farms cannot fake

Verify · pipeline of pitches and placements logged



OWNER

PR/links



7.11

### Reclaim unlinked brand mentions monthly: find them, ask for the link

Why · the easiest link is the one where the editorial decision already happened

Verify · monthly mention sweep with outreach sent



OWNER

PR/links



7.12

### Run a competitor link-gap review quarterly: domains linking to two or more rivals but not you

Why · those domains have demonstrated willingness to link to your category

Verify · gap list refreshed and worked



OWNER

PR/links



7.13

### Maintain profiles on the review platforms your buyers check, complete and current

Why · most of those links carry nofollow, and it does not matter: review sites dominate AI answers about vendor selection, and presence there is citation infrastructure

Verify · top three platforms for your category show current listings

All

OWNER  
marketing



7.14

### Pursue partner and integration ecosystem links: every integration page you built in Part 6 has a counterpart directory on the partner's site

Why · ecosystem links are topically perfect, editorially natural, and available in volume nowhere else

Verify · partner listings live for your top ten integrations

G

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marketing



7.15

### Review link toxicity quarterly and keep a disavow decision log; disavow only clear, at-scale garbage

Why · most sites over-disavow and hurt themselves; the log forces the decision to be deliberate

Verify · quarterly review dated, disavow file changes justified

E

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SEO lead



7.16

## Report links in referring domains and their rankings effect, never in raw link counts

Why · counting links rewards buying links; counting domains and outcomes rewards earning them

Verify · the monthly report has no raw link-count vanity line

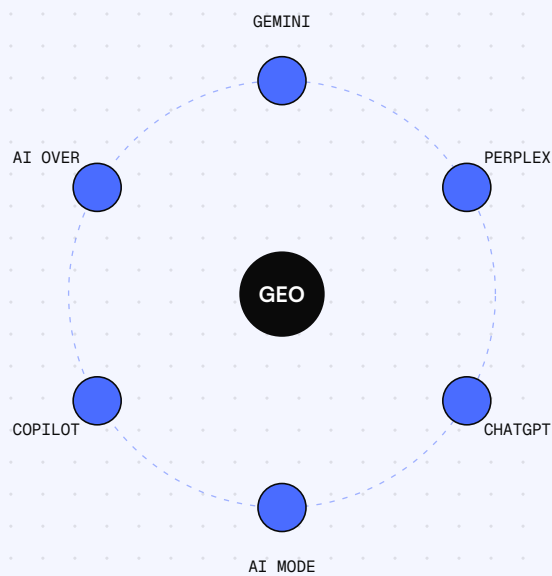
All

OWNER

PR/links

# AI search and GEO.

Six in ten B2B purchases touch an AI assistant. Get cited, or get skipped.





8.01

### Audit crawler access for the AI systems that matter: GPTBot, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot, Google-Extended, and decide each allow or block deliberately

Why · blocked crawlers cannot cite you; the default many CDNs ship is not a decision, it is an accident

Verify · robots.txt and CDN rules list each agent with an explicit choice

All

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engineering



8.02

### Baseline citations per platform before optimizing: how often each AI system cites you today, on which pages

Why · without a per-platform baseline, GEO work is unfalsifiable

Verify · dated counts for each platform on file

G

E

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SEO lead



8.03

### Retrofit citable elements into money and hub pages: statistics with sources, expert quotations, precise claims

Why · the published benchmark on generative engines found exactly these three elements drive the visibility lift; adjectives do not get quoted, numbers do

Verify · each key page carries at least three sourced, quotable claims

All

OWNER  
content



8.04

### Shape headings as questions where buyers ask questions, and answer directly beneath

Why · AI systems decompose prompts into sub-questions and quote whoever answers each one cleanly

Verify · key pages carry question-form H2s or H3s with immediate answers

All

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content



8.05

### Cover the fan-out: for every head topic, the cluster answers the sub-questions a buyer's prompt implies, not just the headline query

Why · assistants assemble answers from fragments; owning three fragments of a ten-fragment answer beats owning one headline

Verify · cluster map lists sub-questions per topic with a URL each

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content



8.06

### Keep entity signals consistent: one Organization schema, sameAs links to your real profiles, one canonical company description used everywhere

Why · systems that answer "what is [product]" reconcile entities across the web; contradictions lower confidence and citations

Verify · name, description, and category match across site, LinkedIn, and review profiles

All

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marketing



8.07

**Cultivate third-party mentions in the sources AI answers actually draw from: review platforms, comparison articles, community threads, industry publications**

Why · assistants triangulate; a vendor that exists only on its own domain reads as unverified

Verify · your brand appears in at least three independent sources per major platform's typical citation pool



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PR/links



8.08

**Track presence in Google's AI Overviews for your money terms separately from rankings**

Why · an Overview above position one changes what position one is worth, and presence inside it is winnable independently

Verify · overview presence logged per money term monthly



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SEO lead



8.09

**Measure share of answer on the buyer-prompt list from 2.13: run the prompts, record who gets named and cited**

Why · this is the AI equivalent of rank tracking, and almost nobody in your category does it yet

Verify · monthly share-of-answer log per prompt set



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SEO lead



8.10

### Keep dateModified honest and current on pages you want cited

Why · answer systems weight freshness in fast-moving categories, and software is one

Verify · key pages updated with real changes inside the last two quarters

All

OWNER  
content



8.11

### Write the first paragraph of every key page as a standalone direct answer

Why · extraction favors self-contained passages; a paragraph that needs the rest of the page cannot be quoted alone

Verify · first paragraph answers the page's query with no pronoun referring backward

All

OWNER  
content



8.12

### Participate honestly where your buyers ask in public: the community threads and forums that rank for your category's questions

Why · AI systems cite community consensus heavily in vendor questions; absence there is absence in answers

Verify · named team members active in the two communities that appear in your category's results

G

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marketing



8.13

### **Publish an llms.txt file if you maintain one deliberately; treat it as optional and low-priority**

Why · adoption by AI systems is uneven and unproven; it costs little but ranks behind everything above it

Verify · if present, it lists your canonical key pages accurately

**E**

OWNER

**engineering**



8.14

### **Report the two scoreboards together: rankings and pipeline beside citations per platform and AI-referral conversions**

Why · a program measured on one scoreboard will quietly sacrifice the other

Verify · one report, both scoreboards, monthly

**G**

**E**

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**SEO lead**



8.15

### **Follow the platform's own guidance for AI features in Search: no separate optimization system, the same quality signals, structure, and clarity decide both surfaces**

Why · chasing tricks for AI surfaces wastes effort the fundamentals already cover

Verify · no line item in your plan exists only to game an AI surface

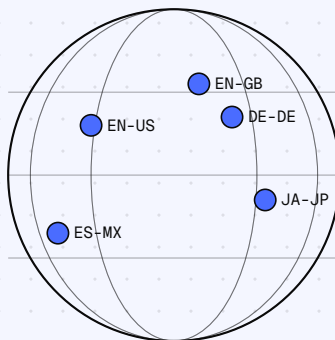
**All**

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**SEO lead**

# International and enterprise operations.

Scale exposes governance. Multiple markets, multiple stakeholders, one program.





9.01

### Prioritize markets by pipeline potential before translating anything: search demand, competition, sales capacity per market

Why · translation without a market case produces expensive pages nobody sells into

Verify · written market ranking with demand figures

E

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marketing



9.02

### Implement hreflang as a complete matrix: every language version references every other plus itself, with return tags

Why · half-implemented hreflang causes wrong-country rankings that look like mysteries

Verify · hreflang validator shows zero return-tag errors

E

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engineering



9.03

### Localize, do not just translate: keywords re-researched per market, examples and currency local, local proof where it exists

Why · buyers search in their own vocabulary, and translated keywords are frequently the wrong keywords

Verify · per-market keyword maps exist, not one map machine-translated

E

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content



9.04

### Choose the international URL structure once: subfolders by default, ccTLDs only with a country-level business case

Why · subfolders inherit the main domain's authority; ccTLDs start from zero on purpose

Verify · written rationale for the structure in use



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SEO lead



9.05

### Serve every market fast: CDN coverage and vitals measured from target countries, not from headquarters

Why · your CWV pass in Virginia can be a fail in Frankfurt and Singapore

Verify · field or synthetic vitals per target market



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engineering



9.06

### Write the RACI for SEO across marketing, engineering, product, and regional teams

Why · at enterprise scale, the usual cause of SEO failure is that every fix belongs to someone else

Verify · the document names one accountable owner per workstream



OWNER

SEO lead



9.07

### Hold a standing SEO and engineering sync with a ticket SLA for SEO-critical fixes

Why · a canonical bug that waits two sprints costs more than the meeting ever will

Verify · SEO tickets carry a priority class and a measured resolution time



OWNER

engineering



9.08

### Mirror the buying committee internally: brief legal, security, and product marketing on what the SEO program claims publicly

Why · enterprise deals stall on pages the SEO team wrote and nobody reviewed

Verify · flagged-topics review lane used in the last quarter



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marketing



9.09

### Define the agency and in-house split in writing: who owns strategy, who owns production, who owns the roadmap

Why · two owners is zero owners, and vendors optimize whatever the contract measures

Verify · the split is documented and the contract's KPIs match it



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marketing



9.10

## Audit acquired domains and microsites into the fold or out of existence: consolidate with 301s or maintain deliberately

Why · forgotten properties leak authority and occasionally leak penalties

Verify · inventory of all owned domains with a decision per domain

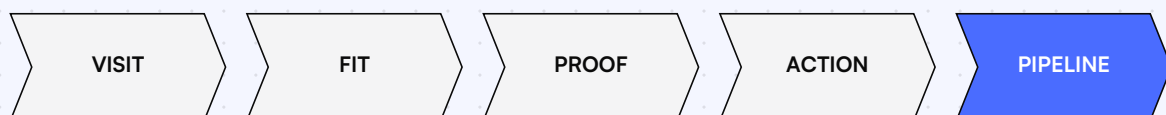
E

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SEO lead

# Conversion and the revenue layer.

Rankings without conversion are a vanity chart. This part turns visits into pipeline.





10.01

**Match the call to action to the page's intent stage: educational pages earn a soft next step, comparison and pricing pages earn the demo ask**

Why · one CTA for every context converts the middle and loses both ends  
Verify · CTA map by page type exists

All

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marketing



10.02

**Route product-led and sales-led paths separately where both exist: trial for self-serve intent, demo for committee intent**

Why · forcing enterprise buyers into a trial, or self-serve buyers into a sales call, is a conversion tax you chose  
Verify · both paths present on high-intent pages, analytics split by path

G

E

OWNER  
marketing



10.03

**Cut form friction to what sales actually uses: every field must earn its place**

Why · each field costs completion rate, and most CRM fields go unread  
Verify · sales confirms every field on the demo form gets used

All

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marketing



10.04

### Place proof beside every ask: a named result, a logo row, or a one-line case figure adjacent to each CTA

Why · the moment of decision is the moment doubt spikes; proof belongs there, not three scrolls up

Verify · audit CTAs on money pages for adjacent proof

All

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marketing



10.05

### Give every cluster post an exit path to a money page that fits its topic

Why · informational traffic with no route to revenue is Part 1's failure pattern number two, rebuilt page by page

Verify · random cluster posts each carry a relevant commercial link

All

OWNER

content



10.06

### Check the attribution chain end to end quarterly: organic session to MQL to SQL to pipeline, with the handoffs reconciled against the CRM

Why · attribution rots quietly as forms, routing, and CRM fields change

Verify · one recent deal traced through every stage without a gap

G

E

OWNER

RevOps



10.07

### Report content-assisted revenue, not just last-touch

Why · SEO's real contribution is usually early and middle touches that last-touch models erase

Verify · the board report shows assisted pipeline alongside sourced

G

E

OWNER

RevOps



10.08

### Test high-traffic money pages deliberately: one variable at a time, enough traffic to conclude, results logged

Why · untested conversion opinions compound into templates; tested ones compound into revenue

Verify · testing log with at least one concluded test per quarter

G

E

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marketing



10.09

### Watch speed as a conversion metric, not only a ranking one

Why · every additional second of load bleeds completion on exactly the pages you paid the most to rank

Verify · money pages meet the same vitals bar as Part 4 demands

All

OWNER

engineering



10.10

### Review the funnel for leaks monthly: pages with rankings and traffic but conversion below their page-type benchmark

Why · a ranking page converting at half its class is a raise nobody is claiming

Verify · monthly leak list with one fix shipped



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marketing



10.11

### Keep personalization from breaking crawlability: default content renders for anonymous visitors, variants are enhancement

Why · personalization that hides the page from crawlers un-ranks the page it meant to improve

Verify · crawler view shows full default content



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engineering



10.12

### Publish the board scorecard monthly in revenue units: organic sessions, MQLs, pipeline influenced, and the two or three moves that explain the lines

Why · the scorecard is how the program keeps its budget through the quarters when the graph is flat

Verify · last month's scorecard shipped on time

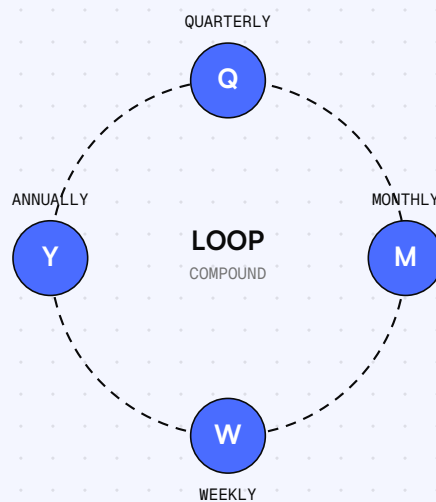


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marketing

# Cadence and governance.

SEO is a compounding program. The cadence — weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually — is the program.





11.01

**Weekly: scan GSC for anomalies, review ranking movers, run the publish gate on everything shipping. Fifteen minutes plus the gates**

Why · weekly catches in days what quarterly catches in ruins  
Verify · it happened last week

All

OWNER  
SEO lead



11.02

**Monthly: ship the refresh queue, review new referring domains against the five-signal test, update the citation and Overview logs, check vitals**

Why · these four rot fastest  
Verify · dated monthly log

G

E

OWNER  
SEO lead



11.03

**Quarterly: full technical crawl, cannibalization audit, keyword map re-run, link toxicity review, outbound link re-verification, roadmap re-score by revenue proximity**

Why · the quarter is where the program corrects course instead of drifting  
Verify · quarterly audit doc exists for last quarter

G

E

OWNER  
SEO lead



11.04

**Annually: refresh year references and dateModified with real updates, review the architecture against what the business now sells, prune what no longer earns its slot**

Why · sites accrete; once a year, someone must subtract

Verify · annual review notes on file



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SEO lead



11.05

**Run the pre-publish gate on every page, no exceptions for urgency: metadata lengths, one H1, hierarchy intact, schema parity, internal links placed, outbound links live, rendering confirmed**

Why · exceptions are how standards dissolve

Verify · gates on file for the last five publishes



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SEO lead



11.06

**Keep one accountable owner for the whole program, whatever else is shared**

Why · a program owned by a committee is owned by no one, and the checklist above proves it within a quarter

Verify · everyone on the team names the same person



OWNER  
founder or marketing lead



11.07

### Maintain the decision log from 1.13 as the program's memory: changes, dates, reasoning, outcomes when known

Why · teams change; the log is how the next person avoids re-paying for old lessons

Verify · log current within two weeks



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SEO lead



11.08

### Document the tool stack and its owners: analytics, search console, rank tracking, crawling, link data, AI citation tracking

Why · undocumented tooling becomes unowned tooling, and unowned tooling becomes unpaid invoices and lost history

Verify · one page lists every tool, its purpose, its owner



OWNER

SEO lead



11.09

### Set expectations in writing with leadership: what moves in one quarter, what needs three, what needs a year

Why · SEO dies of impatience more often than incompetence; the timeline conversation happens now or at budget review, and now is cheaper

Verify · the expectations doc predates the current quarter



OWNER

SEO lead



11.10

### Never guarantee, and never accept, promised rankings or citation counts

Why · nobody controls the results page; anyone promising it is selling something else

Verify · no active contract contains a rankings guarantee

All

OWNER

founder



11.11

### Re-verify this checklist's own claims quarterly: sources move, thresholds update, platforms change policy

Why · a stale checklist enforces last year's rules with this year's confidence

Verify · the sources page dates are within two quarters

G

E

OWNER

SEO lead



11.12

### When a check fails, log it, fix it, and add the failure pattern to your intake or gate so it cannot recur silently

Why · a checklist that only catches errors is half a system; one that prevents recurrence is the whole point

Verify · at least one gate item exists that came from a past failure

All

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SEO lead

# The pre-publish gate.

Run on every page before it ships. Anything failing blocks publish.

- ☐ <sup>01</sup> One H1, primary keyword present
- ☐ <sup>02</sup> Title at or under 60 characters, meta at or under 155
- ☐ <sup>03</sup> Heading hierarchy intact, no skipped levels, real heading elements
- ☐ <sup>04</sup> First paragraph answers the query directly
- ☐ <sup>05</sup> Named author, honest visible date matching schema
- ☐ <sup>06</sup> Schema present and validating; FAQ text matches markup exactly
- ☐ <sup>07</sup> Internal links placed: parent hub, one sibling, one commercial exit
- ☐ <sup>08</sup> Anchors specific, no repeats to the same destination on the page
- ☐ <sup>09</sup> Outbound links land on the exact page that states each claim
- ☐ <sup>10</sup> At least one verified fact competitors do not have
- ☐ <sup>11</sup> Content present in view-source, not JavaScript-only
- ☐ <sup>12</sup> Mobile render checked, vitals not regressed
- ☐ <sup>13</sup> URL follows convention, canonical self-references, sitemap updated

## APPENDIX B · FIRST 90 DAYS

# The first 90 days, by stage.

S

## Startup

WEEKS 1-2

Part 1 items 1.01, 1.02, 1.05, 1.06. Part 4 items 4.01, 4.02, 4.11, 4.16.

WEEKS 3-6

Part 2 items 2.01, 2.04, 2.05, 2.07, 2.08; build the pricing page (6.02) and first two alternatives pages (6.04).

WEEKS 7-12

Ship the first cluster against the map, run the gate on everything, start the weekly loop (11.01). Do not buy a single link yet.

G

## Growth

WEEKS 1-2

Attribution chain (1.03, 1.04), baseline plus AI citation baseline (1.05, 1.07, 8.02).

WEEKS 3-6

Cannibalization audit (2.09), BOFU gap build (6.03–6.06), five-signal link intake installed (7.01–7.03).

WEEKS 7-12

Refresh program live (5.13), citable-claims retrofit on money pages (8.03), monthly cadence running (11.02), board scorecard shipping (10.12).

E

## Enterprise

WEEKS 1-2

Governance first: RACI (9.06), engineering SLA (9.07), release-pipeline checks scoped (4.20).

WEEKS 3-6

Log-file analysis (4.18), crawl budget review (4.19), hreflang validation (9.02), facet rules (3.16).

WEEKS 7-12

Share-of-answer measurement live (8.09), quarterly audit calendar locked (11.03), migration protocol written before anyone needs it (4.21).

# Want this checklist implemented?

Technotize is a B2B SaaS SEO agency. Fifteen operators, one niche, and results we publish with sources.

Workwize, an IT asset management platform, ran our program for 22 months: organic sessions grew 1,852 to 13,420, marketing-qualified leads went 28 to 111 a month, and organic inbound peaked at \$1.16M in monthly pipeline.

Da Vinci, a cloud WMS for 3PLs, multiplied organic traffic 25 times in 11 months and earned 74 AI citations across six platforms. Both case studies are public, figure by figure.