

SEO & Content That Converts: A B2B Playbook for Digital Growth

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. Welcome + Intros
02. Why Your SEO Strategy Isn't Working
03. Built for Revenue, Not Just Rankings
04. Content Strategy That Converts
05. UX + Technical SEO
06. Building a Sustainable Content System
07. Real Talk: How to Prove ROI
08. Final Takeaways + Q & A

SEO & Content That Converts: A B2B Playbook for Digital Growth

About Apiary Digital



Apiary Digital® is a collective of senior marketing experts who operate as an on-demand growth team for brands ranging from startups to global enterprises. With a flexible, collective model, they deliver high-impact strategy and execution across digital channels without the overhead of a traditional agency.

About The Hosts

- Danny brings nearly 20 years of experience in digital marketing, helping B2B tech, SaaS, and Fortune 500 brands connect the dots and drive real growth.
- Melissa is a seasoned B2B content strategist with 13+ years of experience turning content and workflows into revenue across SaaS, cybersecurity, and beyond.
- Together, they blend strategy, execution, and a no-BS approach to help marketing teams make content and campaigns actually perform

Our Mission

- To help you simplify and scale SEO with a buyer-first, conversion-driven strategy that maps to intent, aligns with UX, and turns your content into a sustainable engine for pipeline.



Danny Iannelli

Senior Marketplace Strategist
Apiary Digital



Melissa Meredith

Client Strategy Consultant
Apiary Digital

We're not here to talk theory—we're here to show you how we make SEO + content drive growth.

What You'll Walk Away With

Turn disconnected SEO and content efforts into a cohesive system that fuels your pipeline.

High-Impact SEO Strategy

→ Align SEO with business goals by prioritizing buyer-intent keywords and creating high-quality, evergreen content that drives meaningful outcomes

Optimized Buyer Journey

→ Map search intent to funnel stages using real user queries, and match content formats to buyer behavior, not assumptions, to drive relevance and conversion.

Empowering Existing Content

→ Maximize existing content by refreshing underperforming assets, repurposing into high-value formats, and prioritizing updates to high-ranking pages that don't convert.

Align SEO with UX for CRO

→ Optimize key pages for clarity, speed, and action by running the 10-second test, improving UX, and adding trust signals like testimonials and clear CTAs.

01.

Why Your SEO Isn't Working



Why the Usual Playbook Fails in B2B

Chasing Traffic Over Intent

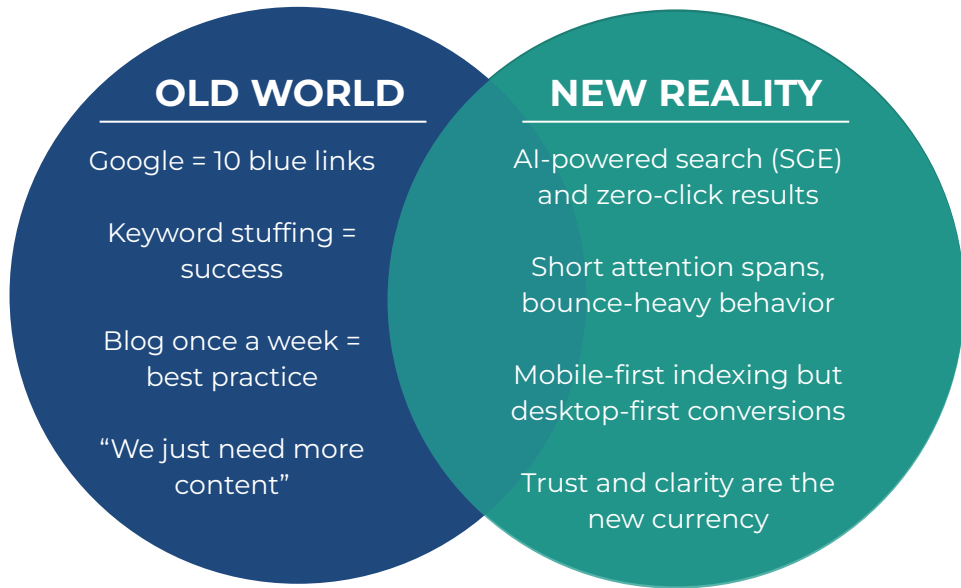
- High-volume keywords ≠ high-converting traffic
- Visibility without relevance doesn't drive pipeline
- "Look at our traffic spike!" ≠ business impact

Siloed Content with Disconnected Strategy

- Content, SEO, and UX teams often misaligned
- No clear journey from discovery to conversion
- Messaging created in a vacuum, not around buyer needs

Metrics that Don't Map to Revenue







- Reporting on rankings, not results
- No distinction between branded and non-branded traffic
- No tracking of MQLs, SQLs, or pipeline influence



PRO TIP:







If your SEO isn't buyer-first, it's already behind.

Today's Buyer Is Skeptical, Fast-Moving, and Impatient

THEY DON'T READ, THEY SKIM 	CONVERSION OCCURS ON DESKTOP 	AI OVERVIEWS = FEWER CLICKS 
Your content has seconds to prove its relevance. Headings, bullets, and bold takeaways matter more than paragraphs.	70–80% of B2B conversions happen on desktop – Optimize your UX for the platform that actually converts, not just the one that gets indexed.	If your content does not deliver the best possible answer or match intent, you won't even get the click, let alone the conversion.
SHIFTING BUYER EXPECTATIONS 	HOMEPAGE LITMUS TEST 	SEARCH TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS 
Buyers expect pricing, proof, and a path forward— immediately – If you bury value behind jargon or scroll fatigue, they bounce.	Can visitors instantly identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Problem<input type="checkbox"/> Solution<input type="checkbox"/> Audience<input type="checkbox"/> Proof<input type="checkbox"/> CTA	Audiences and consumers Google problems...not products. Stop optimizing for what you sell, and start optimizing for what they need.

Why B2B Buyers Need a Different Approach

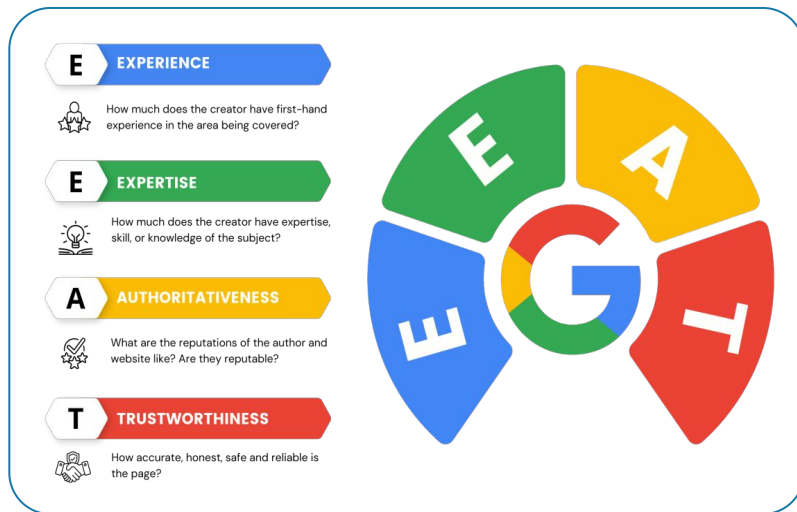
Your buyer doesn't want content—they want clarity and confidence.

USER-FRIENDLY NAVIGATION 	PRICING TRANSPARENCY 	ABOVE THE FOLD CTAs 
<p>Segmented navigation tailored to industries, use cases, or buyer roles makes it easy for U.S. visitors to find what's relevant to them fast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps buyers self-identify and explore solutions aligned with their needs• Reduces friction by mirroring how U.S. buyers think and search	<p>U.S. buyers expect some form of pricing context—even if it's “starting at,” tiered, or gated behind a lead form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Builds trust and reduces bounce from buyers doing vendor comparisons• Filters serious buyers who are evaluating based on budget fit	<p>Call-to-action buttons like “Book a Demo” or “Talk to Sales” should be visible without scrolling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Captures attention during the 10-second first impression window• Provides immediate direction for high-intent visitors
STICKY NAVIGATION and CTAs 	FORM LOGIC 	TRUST BADGES 
<p>A persistent header/menu that stays visible as users scroll helps maintain context and access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keeps CTAs and key pages always one click away• Reduces drop-off from long-scroll pages or blog readers	<p>Smart forms adjust based on user input or simplify field quantity based on context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improves completion rates by shortening forms for known users• Personalizes the experience for different personas or entry points	<p>Security icons, client logos, certifications, and review platform seals validate credibility quickly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides social proof and lowers perceived risk• Aligns with U.S. buyer expectations of professionalism and third-party validation

The Opportunity: Intent-Driven, Buyer-First SEO

Let's Talk About What **Does** Work:

- 01 Tailored SEO = Better Traffic Quality**
- 02 Funnel-Aligned Content = Reduced Friction**
- 03 Technical SEO + Strong UX = Conversion Lift**
- 04 Measurement Tied to Pipeline = True ROI**
- 05 Google rewards E-E-A-T**





02.

The Foundation:
SEO Built for Revenue,
Not Just Rankings

Intent Beats Volume—Every Time

High search volume ≠ high quality traffic

A keyword like “CRM examples” might bring clicks, but “best CRM for B2B SaaS” brings pipeline.

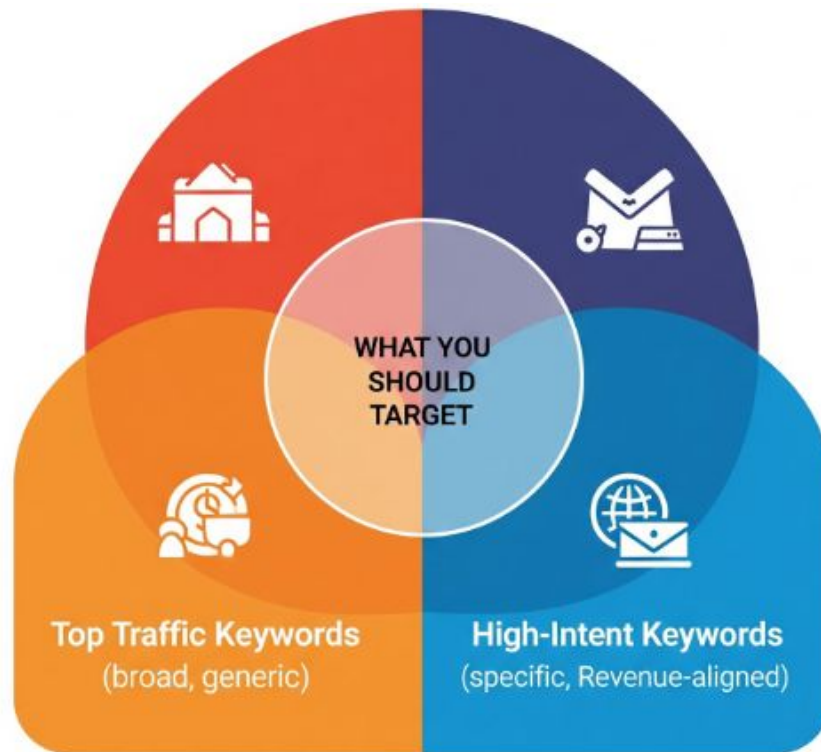
Buyers don’t search for what you sell—they search for what they need

Optimize around their problems, not your features.

Modern SEO connects audience needs with business goals

It’s not about ranking #1—it’s about being the best answer at the right moment.

PRO TIP: Trade volume for value. A keyword with 80 searches and 80% purchase intent beats one with 8,000 searches and zero context.



Map Search Intent to Funnel Stages

Every keyword reflects intent. Your job is to align that intent with a logical next step in their journey.

INFORMATIONAL	COMMERCIAL	TRANSACTIONAL	NAVIGATIONAL
Get specific answers The user searches for information on topic (generally broader).	Investigate & compare The user is researching options for a product or service. Increased likelihood to purchase/convert.	Complete an action The user searches for a specific product or brand and is ready to purchase/convert.	Visit specific site The user searches for a specific website.
<i>how, why, what, tutorial</i>	<i>best, review, compare, product or service name</i>	<i>buy, cheap, near me, sign-up, download, register</i>	<i>direct website address</i>
Example: <i>What are popular running shoe brands?</i>	Example: <i>Best running shoes for long distance?</i>	Example: <i>Buy Nike running shoes near me</i>	Example: <i>Dicks Sporting Goods</i>
Aware of Problem or Need Help	Solution aware and prepping to convert		Highly brand aware

Don't Just Rank—Guide the Journey

Step 1

Identify Targeted Keywords

Use Google Keyword Planner or an SEO Tool like SEMrush or MOZ for keyword research.

Step 2

Examine Volume, Intent, and Difficulty

- **Search Volume** = Number of searches per month
- **Intent** = Goal or purpose of query
- **Keyword Difficulty** = How hard it will be to rank for the term

Step 3

Identify Relevant or Long-Tail Variations

Long-tail keywords get less search traffic, but usually have higher conversion value while similar (semantic) terms help to build larger awareness and relevance within search algorithm

Step 4

Research Relevant Questions to Guide Content

Use SEMrush or MOZ keyword tools to discover questions being asked relative to targeted keyword

Keyword	Volume	Keyword Difficulty	CPC (USD)	Competitive Density	Number of Results	Intent
software development solutions	720	77	3.54	0.03	2070000000	Transactional
software development	1600	64	4.2	0.08	1570000000	Informational
software development process	1300	79	3.52	0.03	507000000	Commercial

Apiary recommends identifying (3) keywords per page:

1. **Primary:** Integrated into URL, Page Title, Meta Description
2. **Secondary:** Integrated into Page Title (if possible), Meta Description, and H1 tag
3. **Tertiary:** Integrated into content, anchor text, alt text, and additional header tags

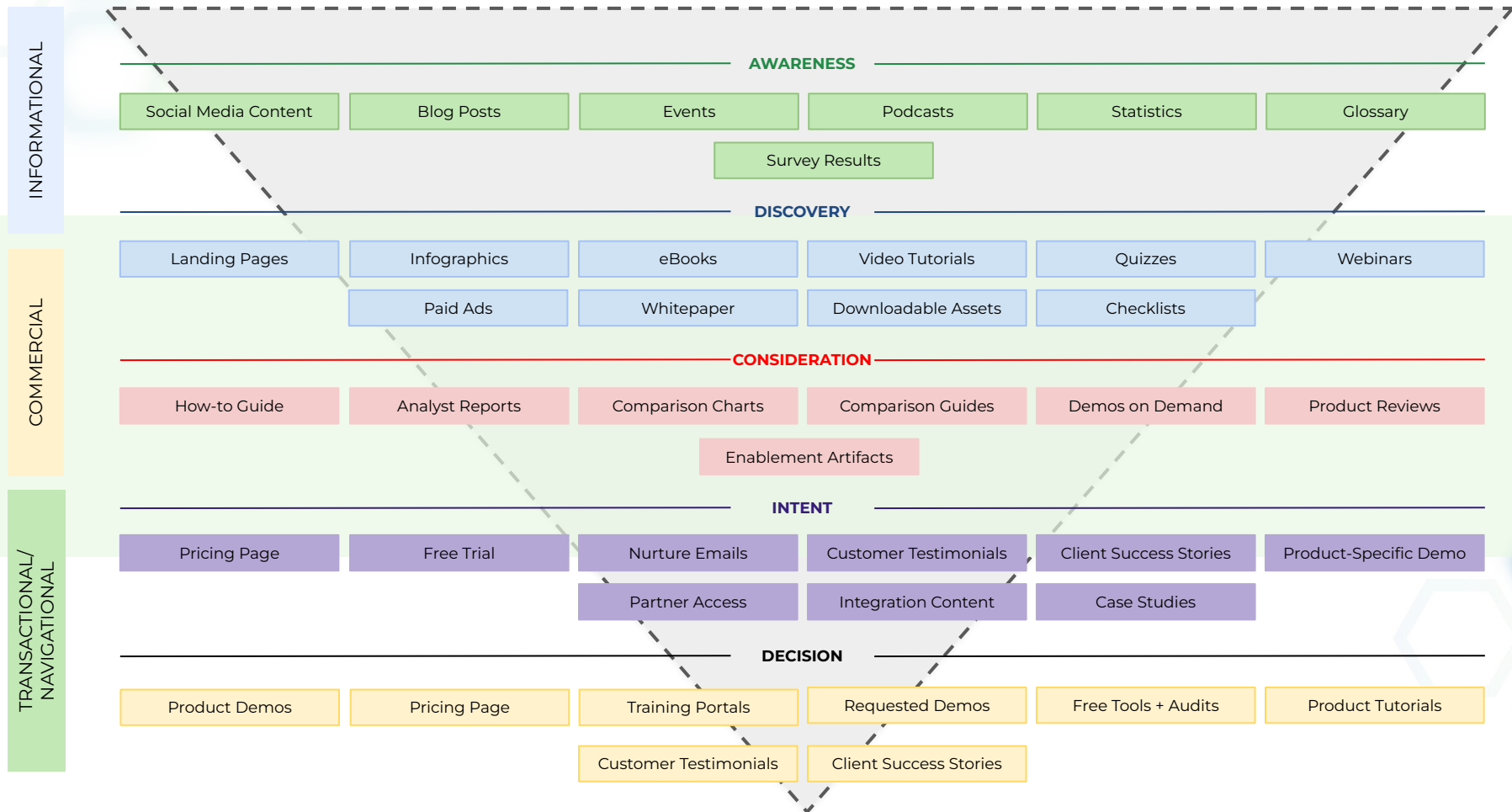
The background of the slide features a solid blue field on the left, transitioning into a series of concentric, wavy lines in shades of teal and green on the right. These lines create a sense of depth and movement, resembling a stylized landscape or a modern architectural design.

03.

Content Strategy That Converts

Keyword Mapping: Funnel-Aligned Keyword Strategy

KEYWORD INTENT



Content Allocation

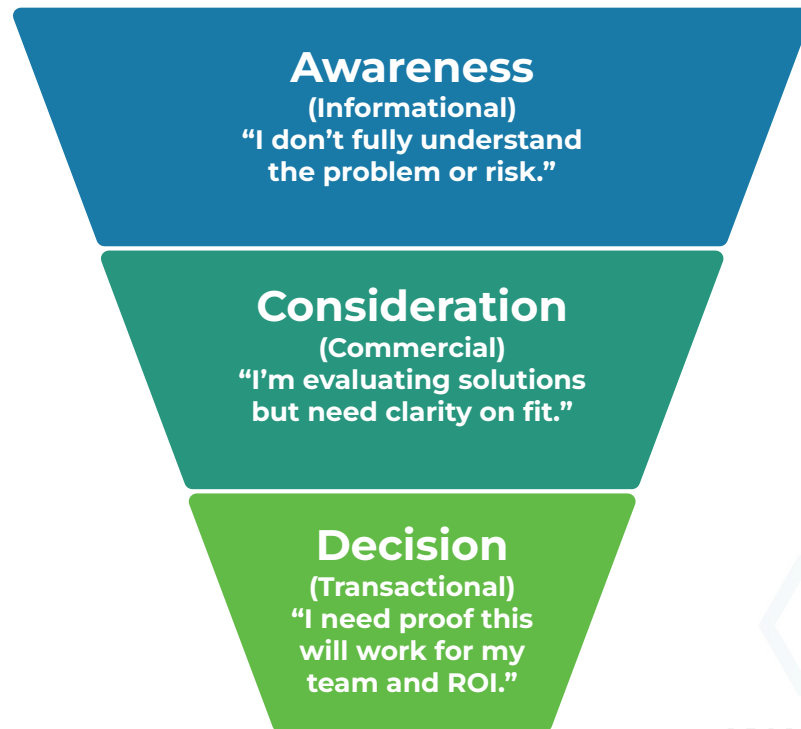
Mapping Content to Buyer Journey

50% average allocation to **awareness** by leading brands

35% average allocation to **consideration**

15% average allocation to **decision**

Brands are under pressure to justify spend on awareness and consideration



Content Exercise

Build a Topic Cluster Around a Keyword Priority



Choose one high-impact topic and map out your pillar and cluster content — aligned to search intent.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1: Choose a specific topic your ICP cares about

Step 2: Identify a broad, high-intent keyword like “b2b seo strategy”

Step 3: Brainstorm 3–6 supporting Cluster Topics that go deeper into use cases, objections, or subtopics

Step 4: Think about internal linking and keyword targeting for each piece

CONTENT TYPE	TOPIC/TITLE IDEA	TARGET KEYWORD	FUNNEL STAGE
Landing Page	The Ultimate Guide to B2B SEO in 2025	b2b seo strategy 2025	Awareness / Consideration
Blog Page	Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) vs Traditional SEO	generative engine optimization	Awareness
How-to-Guide	How Core Web Vitals Are Changing in 2025	core web vitals 2025	Consideration
Infographic	AI and EEAT: Building Trust in the Era of SGE	seo trust signals ai sge	Awareness
Case Study	How [Brand] Increased Organic Leads in 6 Months	b2b seo case study	Decision

Content Exercise

Align Your Content to the Buyer Journey



Identify one existing content asset that supports your buyer at each stage of their journey and map it to keyword intent.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ask yourself: What is the buyer thinking?
2. Choose one content asset per stage (can be blog, guide, FAQ, case study, etc.)
3. Align each asset to a keyword intent based on. buyer search behavior
4. Ask yourself: Does this content help the user move forward in their decision-making?

CONTENT TYPE	TOPIC/TITLE IDEA	TARGET KEYWORD	FUNNEL STAGE

Content Built To Connect: How to Assess

EMPHASIS

ANALYSIS

APPLICATION

01

tone

- Does the voice match your audience?
- Is it too formal or too casual?

Adjust tone to align with buyer expectations

02

Readability

- Is the content easy to scan?
- Are there clear headers, bullets, spacing?

Break content into digestible chunks with strong formatting cues

03

Visuals

- Are visuals aiding understanding or cluttering it?
- Is CTA placement clear?

Use visuals to support reading flow; prioritize CTA visibility and clarity

04

Structure

- Are headers (H1, H2, H3) used consistently and clearly?
- Are keywords naturally included in metadata and content?

Use clear headers and natural keyword placement to strengthen SEO.

The background of the slide is an abstract, marbled pattern in shades of blue and gold. The pattern is dense and intricate, resembling a topographical map or a microscopic view of a mineral surface. The blue tones range from deep navy to a lighter, almost white blue, while the gold tones are concentrated in the veins and swirls of the pattern.

04.

UX + Technical SEO That Drives Conversion

Fast Sites Convert—Slow Sites Repel

Your page speed is your first impression—and your first test of credibility.

Fast sites feel more credible, more modern, and more trustworthy— especially for U.S. buyers.

- 1 in 2 users abandon sites that take >3 seconds to load
- A 1-second delay can cut conversions by 7%
- Google's Core Web Vitals directly impact rankings and UX scoring
- Speed = trust — especially in B2B where purchase decisions involve risk

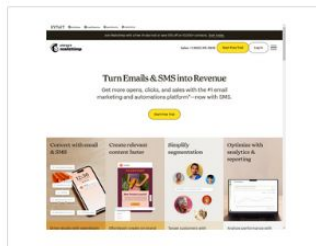
Remember: While mobile optimization is essential, 70–80% of B2B organic traffic still comes from desktop. Prioritize a desktop-first experience—especially where conversions happen.



Your Results:

DOWNLOAD HAR

SHARE RESULT



Performance grade

D 68

Page size

2.2 MB

Load time

36.92 s

Requests

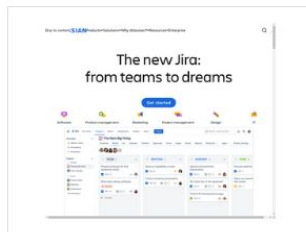
119



Your Results:

DOWNLOAD HAR

SHARE RESULT



Performance grade

B 84

Page size

5.4 MB

Load time

936 ms

Requests

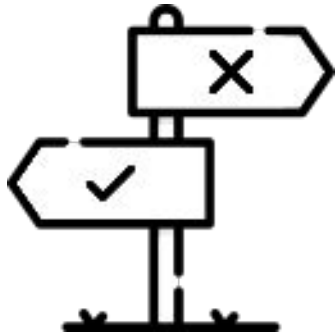
109

The Homepage Litmus Test

If your homepage feels like a mystery novel, it's costing you pipeline.

Can Your Homepage Pass the 10-Second Test?

Would a U.S. buyer immediately understand **what** you offer, **who** it's for, and **how** to act?



LITMUS TEST TEMPLATE:

Problem: Clearly state the challenge or pain point your ideal customer is facing.

Audience: Identify who the solution is for by naming the specific industry, role, or segment.

Solution: Explain how your product or service solves the problem in a clear, compelling way.

Proof: Provide evidence that your solution works through testimonials, case studies, or credibility markers.

CTA: Tell the visitor exactly what to do next with a direct, action-oriented prompt.

Homepage Litmus Test: Underperforming

Rugged Controls

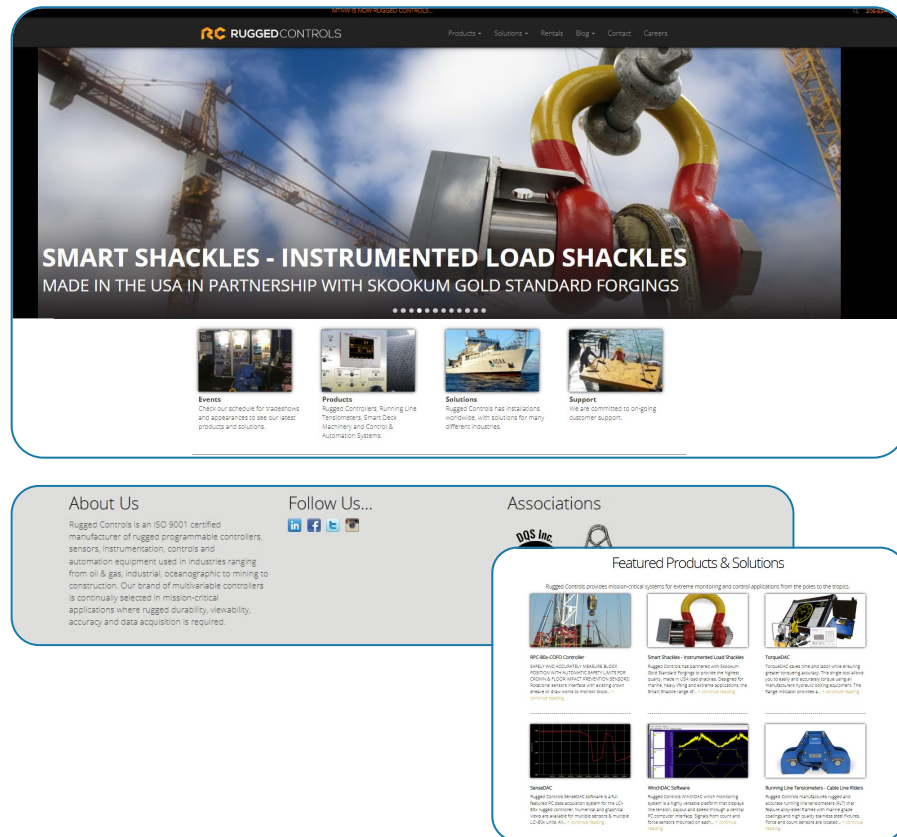
Problem: Lacks a concise statement addressing the problems or challenges that potential clients might be experiencing.

Audience: Site mentions various industries in the navigation menu, the homepage doesn't explicitly address or appeal to a specific audience segment.

Solution: Lists products and services, but without context or explanation of how they solve specific problems.

Proof: Does not showcase any testimonials, case studies, or recognizable client logos.

CTA: Lacks prominent CTAs. There are no immediate prompts encouraging visitors to engage further.



Homepage Litmus Test: Best in Class

HubSpot

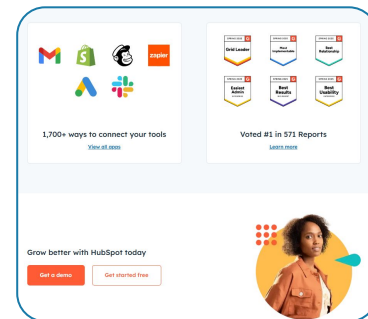
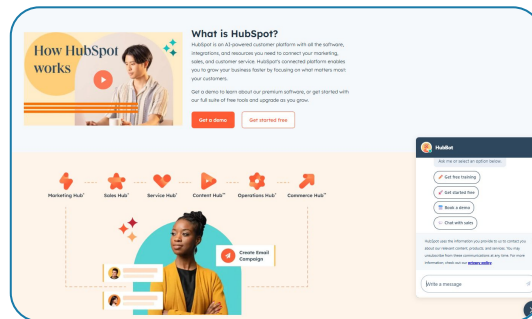
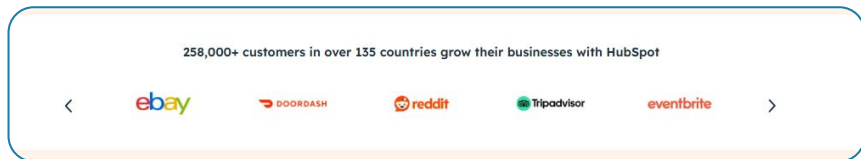
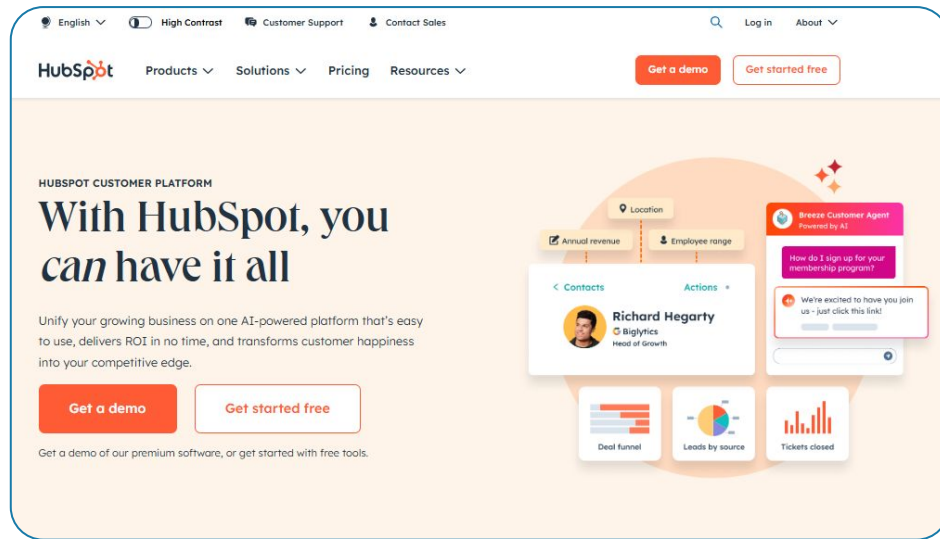
Problem: Immediately addresses common business challenges, such as fragmented customer data, inefficient marketing strategies, and sales misalignment.

Audience: Site segments its offerings based on business size and roles.

Solution: Showcases its comprehensive CRM platform, detailing how it integrates marketing, sales, and customer service tools.

Proof: Features testimonials from satisfied clients, impressive statistics, and links to detailed case studies

CTA: Prominent CTAs like "Get started free" and "Request a demo" are strategically placed throughout the homepage.



Structure Trust—and Remove Friction

Don't just tell buyers what to do—show them they can trust you to solve it.

NAVIGATION	TRUSTWORTHINESS	SMART LOGIC	FRICTIONLESS ACTION
Segment Your Navigation for Relevance <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Group by industry, role, or need→ Use mega menus to avoid overwhelm→ Keep top paths 1-2 clicks away	Build Visual Credibility <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Display logos and testimonials prominently→ Add certifications and trust badges near CTAs→ Use consistent, polished design	Use Smart Forms and Conditional Logic <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Show only relevant fields dynamically→ Break long forms into steps or stages→ Enable auto-fill for known info	Make Action Effortless <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Keep CTAs visible as users scroll→ Offer clear pricing or demo options→ Use short, action-focused button text



05.

Building a Sustainable System



How to Build an SEO Aligned B2B Content Strategy

A 7-step framework for building authority and driving organic visibility

01 Define Your Buyer Persona

02 Identify Targeted Keywords (Research)

03 Map Content to the Buyer Journey

04 Audit Existing Content for Relevance

05 Build Topic Clusters Around Buyer Priorities

06 Create a Lean Editorial Plan

07 Publish, Measure, Improve

E EXPERIENCE



How much does the creator have first-hand experience in the area being covered?

E EXPERTISE



How much does the creator have expertise, skill, or knowledge of the subject?

A AUTHORITATIVENESS



What are the reputations of the author and website like? Are they reputable?

T TRUSTWORTHINESS



How accurate, honest, safe and reliable is the page?



Start with Your Buyer Persona

Buyer Persona Builder

Who exactly are you trying to reach— and why should they care?

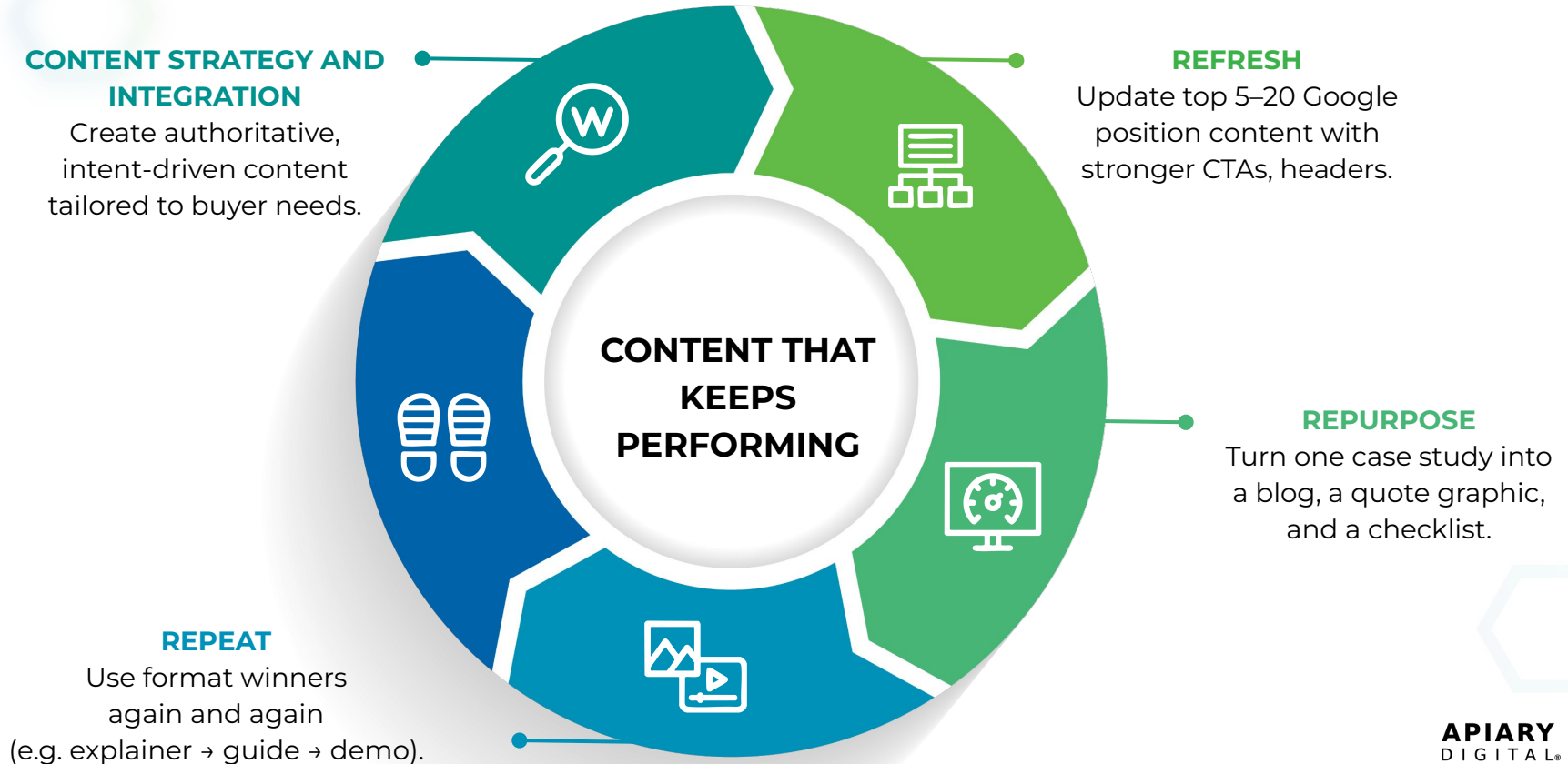
Once you've defined your ICP (Ideal Customer Profile), you can start building your buyer persona based on:

- Buyer Background & Professional Context
- Daily Priorities & Functional Objectives
- Personal Frustrations & Role-Based Challenges
- Events & Pressures That Spark Action
- How They Evaluate & Make Decisions
- Where & How They Learn and Engage
- Personalization & Contextual Relevance

Before you create any content, you need a clear picture of the person you're speaking to: their role, challenges, and what drives their decisions.



3R Method: Refresh, Repurpose, Repeat



The background is a solid teal color. On the right side, there are several overlapping circles of various sizes in shades of blue and teal. Additionally, there are many small, shiny, metallic-looking bubbles or droplets scattered across the right side, particularly concentrated in the lower half.

06.

Real Talk: How to Prove ROI

Why Most SEO Reporting Falls Short: Traffic ≠ Pipeline

SURFACE METRICS

You'll often see reports filled with impressions, keyword rankings, and traffic trends—but none of these prove if your SEO is helping generate qualified leads or revenue.

BRANDED VS NON-BRANDED

If you don't separate branded (people who already know you) from non-branded (people discovering you), it's impossible to tell whether your efforts are creating new demand.

INCONSISTENT ATTRIBUTION

Many teams lack the tools or processes to show how organic content drives form fills, demo requests, or sales conversations—so marketing struggles to justify budget.

BENCHMARK BY BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

Traffic and rankings might look good on dashboards, but C-suites and boards care about influenced pipeline, deal velocity, and revenue impact.

OVERLOOKED CONVERSIONS

In B2B, a blog post may not convert directly, but it often nurtures awareness and moves prospects down the funnel—and this value is almost never tracked.

APIARY TIP: If you can't show how content drives revenue, your SEO program stays stuck in the 'nice to have' category.

Measure What Moves the Needle

Pipeline attribution makes SEO a strategic lever, not a cost center.

Metric	Why It Matters
Branded vs Non-Branded	Separates <i>demand capture</i> vs <i>demand creation</i>
MQLs and SQLs	Tracks progress to revenue, not just interest
Influenced Pipeline	Proves content's role in sales conversations
Assisted Conversions	Reflects multi-touch buyer journeys
Revenue Attribution	Shows true ROI—real dollars, not clicks

The SEO ROI Scorecard: Traffic Isn't the Goal—Revenue Is

If it doesn't move pipeline or revenue, it's not SEO—it's content decoration.

Metric	Traditional SEO	Revenue-Focused SEO
Impressions	● High priority	● Awareness-only if it leads to engagement
Keyword Rankings	● Top goal	● Useful, but not final success metric
Pageviews / Sessions	● Vanity metric	● Directional insight when tied to CVR
Bounce Rate	● Misused	● Needs context (intent, page type)
Branded vs. Non-Branded Split	● Rarely reported	● Core discovery indicator
Conversion Rate (CVR)	● Sometimes tracked	● Essential KPI—optimize pages around it
MQLs / Demo Requests	● Not tracked	● Direct funnel signal
Influenced Pipeline	● Not measured	● Primary performance metric
Assisted Conversions	● Ignored	● Critical for long B2B sales cycles
Revenue Attribution	● Siloed, not owned	● Must be integrated across CRM + analytics

Build Your Attribution Framework

The goal isn't perfect attribution—it's credible, directional insight that builds confidence.

01	Define Conversion Goals in CRM & Analytics	<p><i>If you don't know what success looks like, you can't measure it.</i></p> <p>Map every meaningful action—MQLs, demo requests, content downloads—to a trackable goal.</p>
02	Use Consistent UTMs and Tagging	<p><i>Good attribution starts with disciplined tracking.</i></p> <p>Every campaign and asset should have clear, standardized tracking codes to follow engagement end to end.</p>
03	Split Branded vs. Non-Branded Performance	<p><i>Know whether you're capturing demand or creating it.</i></p> <p>Branded searches reflect existing awareness; non-branded show your SEO is winning new eyeballs.</p>
04	Track Assisted Conversions Over Time	<p><i>B2B content rarely closes the deal in one click—but it often starts the conversation.</i></p> <p>Use multi-touch models to credit assets that nurture and accelerate pipeline.</p>
05	Connect Content to Revenue Outcomes	<p><i>Prove that every piece of content earns its place.</i></p> <p>Show which blogs, guides, and pages influence opportunities and closed-won revenue, so you can double down on what works.</p>

07. Let's Get Actionable!

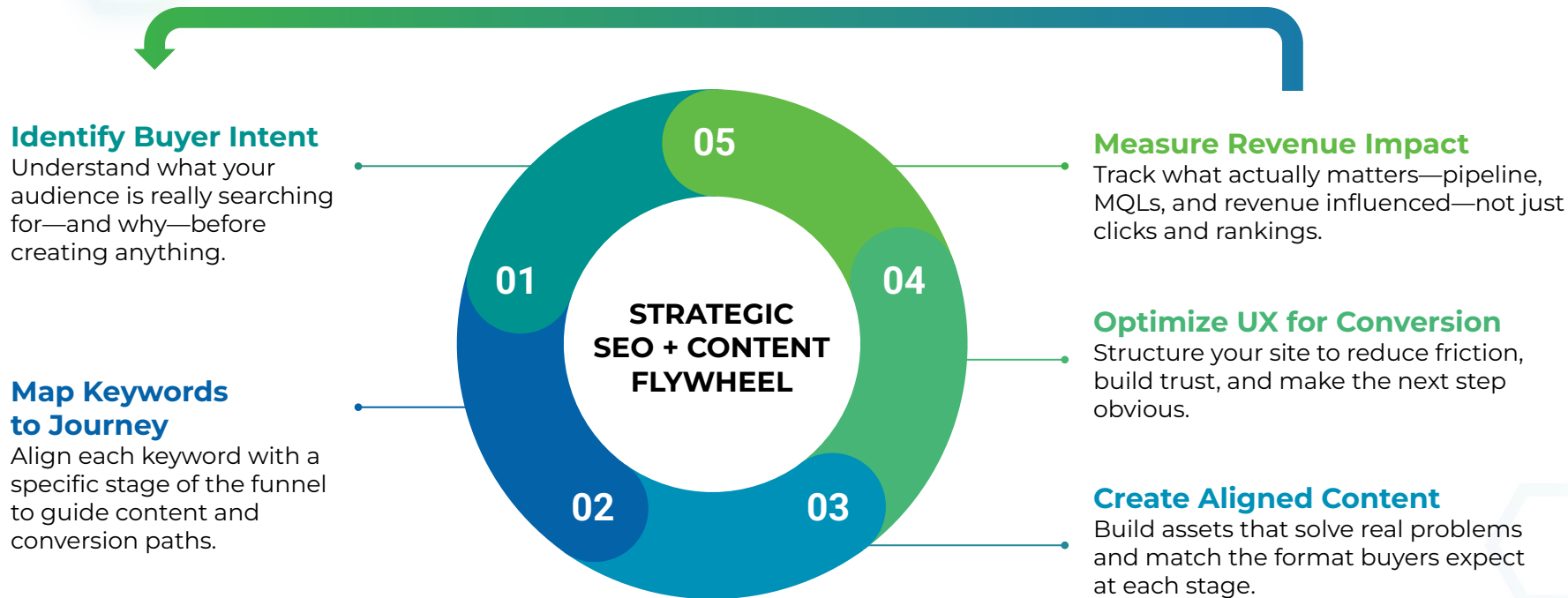


Turn Strategy Into Action

DIAGNOSE AND FIX WHAT'S BROKEN	PRIORITIZE BUYER INTENT OVER SEARCH VOLUME	BUILD CONTENT THAT MOVES BUYERS FORWARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Stop chasing traffic—audit your SEO for intent, not volume❑ Align content, UX, and SEO teams around shared revenue goals❑ Replace vanity metrics with KPIs tied to MQLs, SQLs, and pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Target keywords that reflect real purchase behavior, not just popularity❑ Map every keyword to a funnel stage to guide users toward action❑ Use a 3-keyword strategy per page to build relevance and visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Create content formats aligned to funnel stages—don't guess, match behavior❑ Use the pillar + cluster model to structure content around high-intent topics❑ Repurpose strong assets across multiple touchpoints to scale efficiently
TURN UX + TECHNICAL SEO INTO GROWTH LEVERS	CREATE A SCALABLE, REPEATABLE SYSTEM	PROVE CONTENT DRIVES REVENUE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Improve page speed, clarity, and navigation to reduce bounce and build trust❑ Run the 10-second homepage test—optimize until your value is obvious❑ Add smart CTAs, forms, and social proof to guide action and boost credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Follow the 7-step SEO content framework to build with intent and purpose❑ Refresh and repurpose existing content using the 3R method❑ Focus on sustainable workflows, not endless new creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Separate branded vs non-branded traffic to see what's working❑ Set up attribution tracking to connect content to actual pipeline movement❑ Use multi-touch reporting to highlight influence—not just first or last click


Revenue-Focused SEO & Content in Motion

This is how you move from publishing to pipeline—without chasing volume or burning out your team.



Summary

"Growth doesn't happen by **chance**.
It happens by choice, clarity, and the
right partners."



Ready to take the next step and accelerate results? The Growth Hive workshop is a collaborative session where we'll build your custom SEO and content game plan together, complete with templates, guidance, and a clear action plan to move faster.

Q&A + Open Workshop Time



Thank you!

