


# Technical **SEO Tips** to Master Google Core Updates

## SEMRush Score +6%

2 Months After

Search Clicks **+54%** 

Search Impressions **+44%** 

Google Users **+33%** 

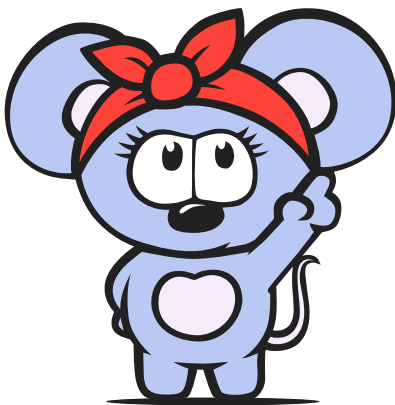
## SEMRush Score +7%

1 Month After

Search Clicks **+38%** 

Search Impressions **+31%** 

Google Users **+39%** 



# RebelMouse

# Table of Contents

03

How Google Core Updates Affect Websites

05

What Is Technical SEO?

07

Enhancing Your Website's Technical SEO

08

Create an XML Sitemap

09

Use a Robots.txt File

10

Add Canonical Tags

11

Shorten Your URLs

13

Build Internal Links

15

Optimize Images With Alt Text

16

Optimize Images Using Google's Best Practices

17

Organize Site Structure

18

Implement a Comprehensive 404 Dashboard

19

Maximize Page Performance With Core Web Vitals

20

Structure Your Data

21

Upgrade Your Web Security

22

Run a Site Audit

23

Maintain Website Health and Traffic During a Google Core Update

24

Skyrocket Your Technical SEO With RebelMouse



# How Google Core Updates Affect Websites

Google core updates can feel like a digital earthquake, threatening to bury your website traffic or propel it to new heights.

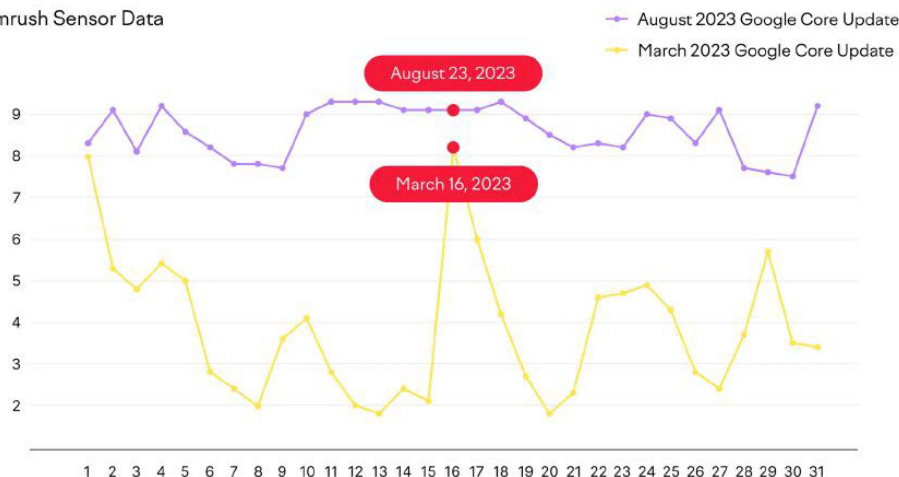


While the specifics of Google's ranking algorithm are unknown, marketers generally agree that focusing on the principle E-E-A-T (Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness) is critical for digital survival.

The truth is, even the most valuable and keyword-rich content cannot ensure stability during algorithmic shifts.

## Volatility Trends Comparison

Semrush Sensor Data



semrush.com

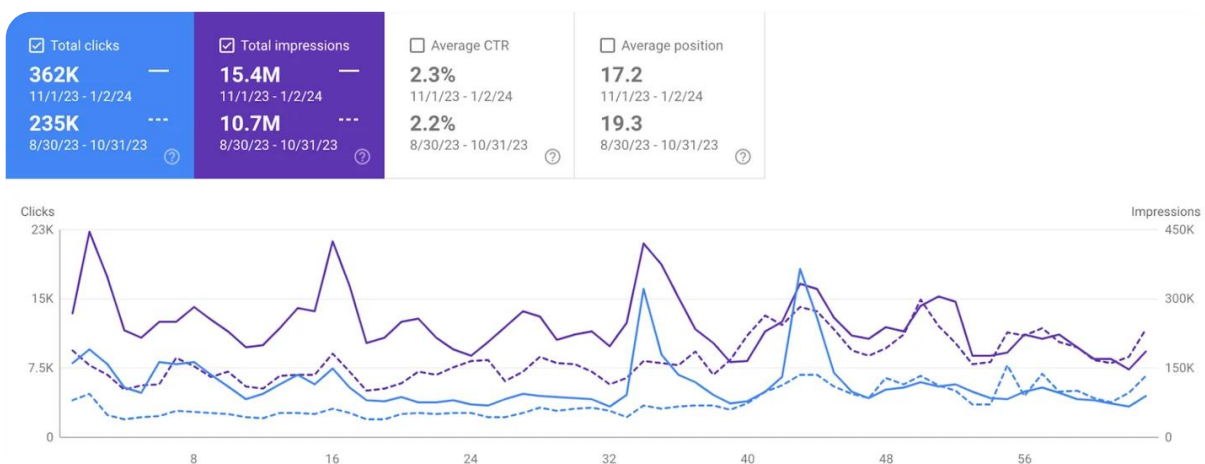


Volatile core updates can disrupt online traffic, making it challenging for businesses to adapt. So, how do you build a resilient content strategy that can weather Google's updates?

By implementing a comprehensive technical SEO strategy.

Technical SEO is frequently overlooked as a ranking factor, despite being more important than high-traffic keywords in achieving high rankings across search engines.

Let's dive deep into technical SEO, understand how it affects your Google Search rankings, and learn the best practices for remaining competitive even during a volatile Google core update.



Google Search Console Traffic Report



# What Is Technical SEO and Its Importance to Google?

Technical SEO is a powerful subset of content optimization that enhances your website's security, speed, and site structure to boost search engine visibility. Imagine driving a car and having the best route and guidance to reach your destination quickly. In this analogy, high-quality content is your destination, and technical SEO is the efficient highways and clear signs that lead you there, ensuring a smooth and successful journey.

Google rewards websites that follow best practices for organizing content and infrastructure, delivering a positive user experience. That means ensuring the pages that power your helpful content are set up for optimal performance.

## Benefits of Technical SEO Over On-Page

FEATURES	Technical SEO	On-Page SEO
Structured Data Markup	✓	✗
Enhanced User Experience	✓	✗
Enhanced Site Speed	✓	✗
Mobile-Friendly	✓	✗
Improved Site Visibility	✓	✗

# Technical SEO

## Statistics Infographic



Search Generative Experience (SGE) drives focus on technical web aspects for ranking in 2024.



**70%**

of marketers employ internal personnel for SEO tasks.



Improving schema markup improves data structure, leading to better Google Search results.



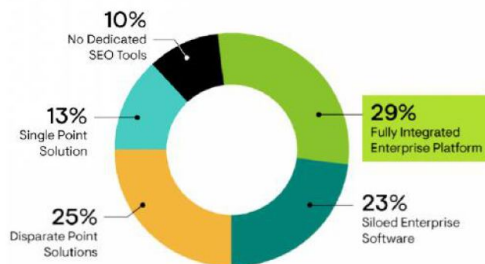
**2.5 Minutes**



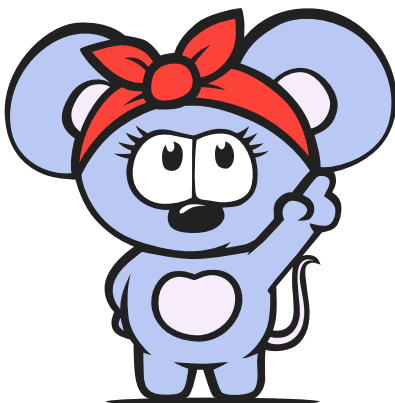
The top results on Google often have 3.8 times more backlinks than those ranked 2nd to 10th

Most first-page Google Search results average a page speed of 1.65 seconds.

Average site time users spend to win Google's first page result.



Out of 400 digital marketers in North America, 1/3 leverage fully integrated enterprise SEO platforms for online success in 2024.

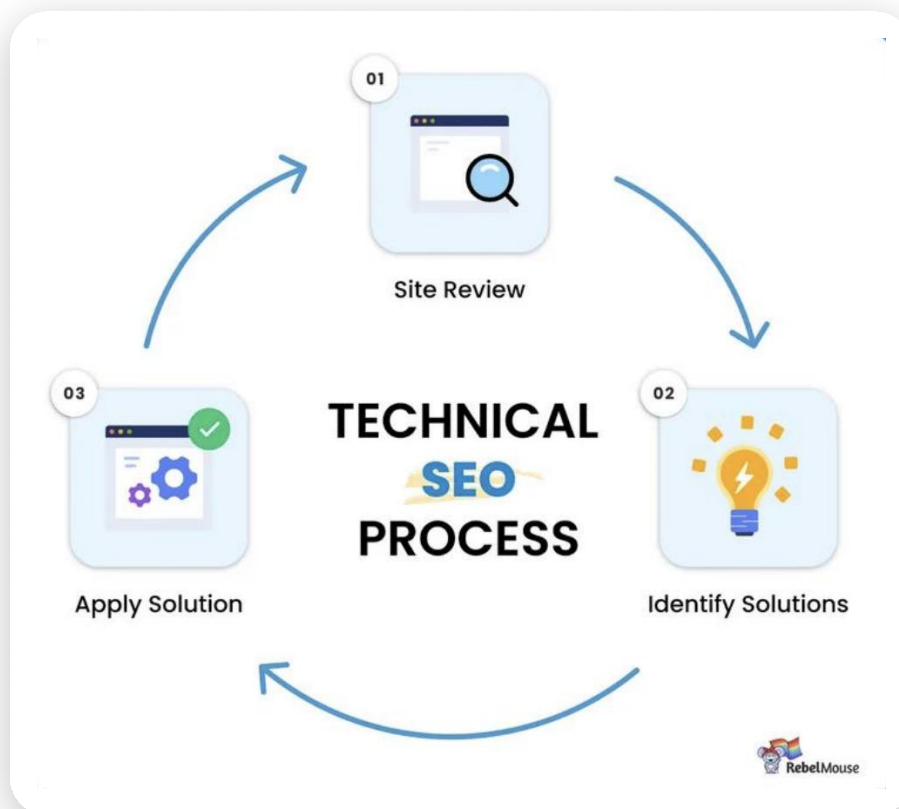


# Enhancing Your Website's Technical SEO



To enhance your website's technical SEO, start by improving crawlability (scanning and navigation) and indexability (organization and storage).

Google's bots crawl web pages to understand and discover each page's content. After crawling, the bots will organize and store the information in specific databases to display on the search engine results page (SERP).



Here are 14 strategies to improve your website's technical SEO and rankings.

# 1. Create an XML Sitemap

An XML sitemap is a file that outlines the structure of a website and provides important metadata about its pages to Google's search crawlers. They are critical for efficient website indexing and discovery. Studies show that websites with an XML sitemap experience a 37% increase in organic search traffic compared to those without one.

Whether you have a few pages or hundreds on your site, a sitemap helps Google discover your pages faster. Most content management systems will automatically generate a sitemap ready to submit to Google Search Console. Google will then periodically crawl and index your sitemap when changes are made.

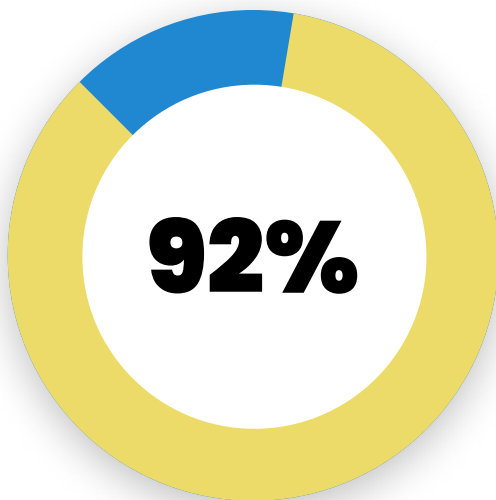
Websites with  
an XML sitemap  
get **37%** more  
organic search  
traffic.

## 2. Use a **Robots.txt File**

A robots.txt file is a text file placed on a website's root directory to instruct web crawlers which pages to crawl or not crawl, like pages with duplicate content or pages that are nonessential to the user experience.

Without this file, Google will crawl your entire website, which could hurt your SEO if you have hundreds of pages with old, unoptimized content. Your CMS should automatically generate a robots.txt file for you.

If you do not have one, there are resources for [writing and submitting a robots.txt file](#).



**of websites have  
a robots.txt file.**

### 3. Add Canonical Tags

A canonical tag is an HTML element that can be used to signal to Google's crawler the preferred version of a web page when multiple URLs contain identical or very similar content. This helps Google more quickly understand which URL should be treated as the primary or "canonical" version for indexing and ranking.

For example, you might want to apply a canonical tag to articles that contain the same disclaimer message at the bottom of each page. Certain CMS platforms can easily create a canonical URL for you, or you can manually add the "rel=canonical" tag to your system's HTML code.

The following resource can provide more details on configuring canonical tags:

**[How to Set up a Canonical URL](#)**

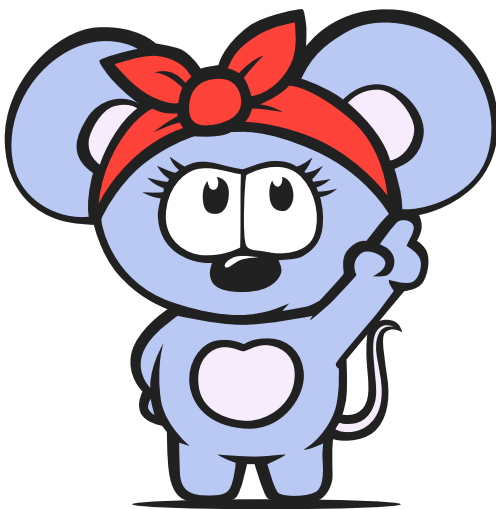
## 4. Shorten Your URLs

URLs help Google and users find new content. Avoid long URLs with random characters that are not easy to remember to increase your visibility and brand awareness. If you write an article about vegan recipes, here are some good and bad examples of how your URL should be formed.

**Good URL:** <https://www.yourdomainname.com/vegan-recipes>

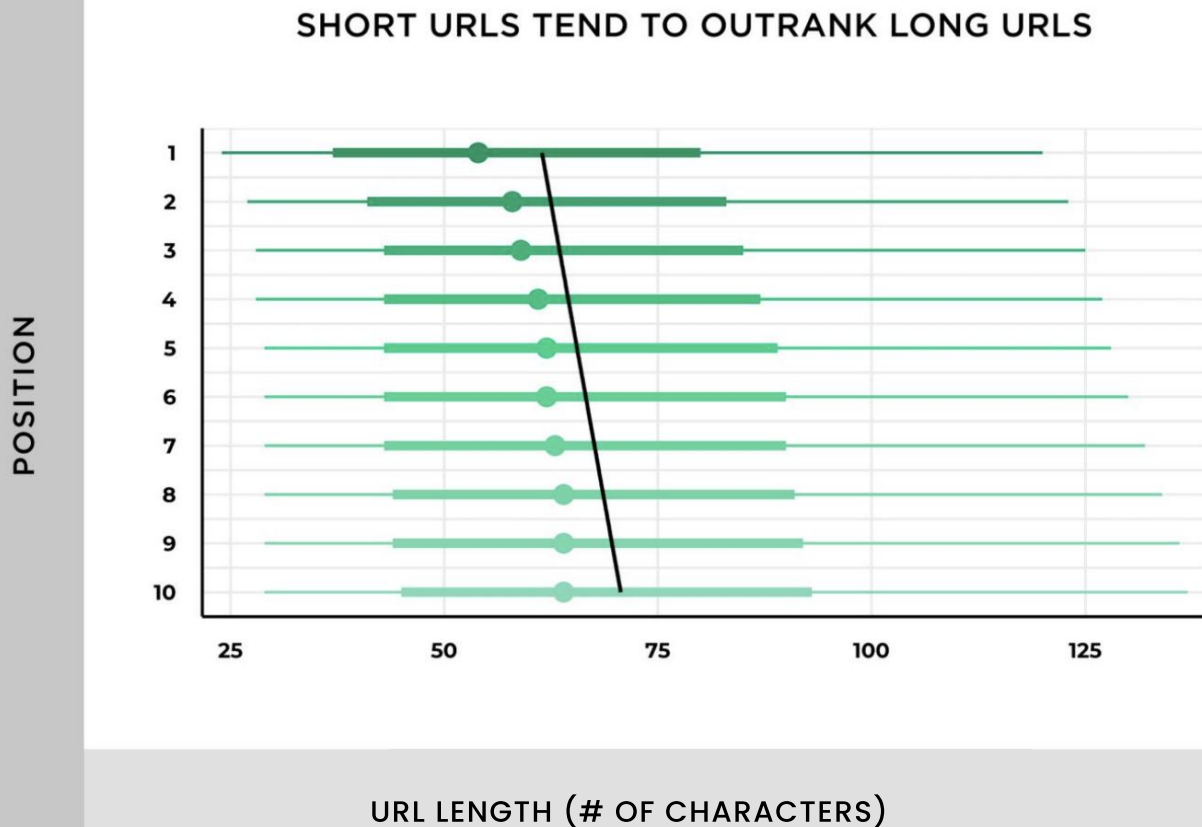
**Bad URL:** [https://www.yourdomainname.com/veganrecipes/7563/\\$#%/culinary-baking](https://www.yourdomainname.com/veganrecipes/7563/$#%/culinary-baking)

Keep your URLs free of random characters and shorten them to help Google and users understand an article when navigating.



## 4. Shorten Your URLs

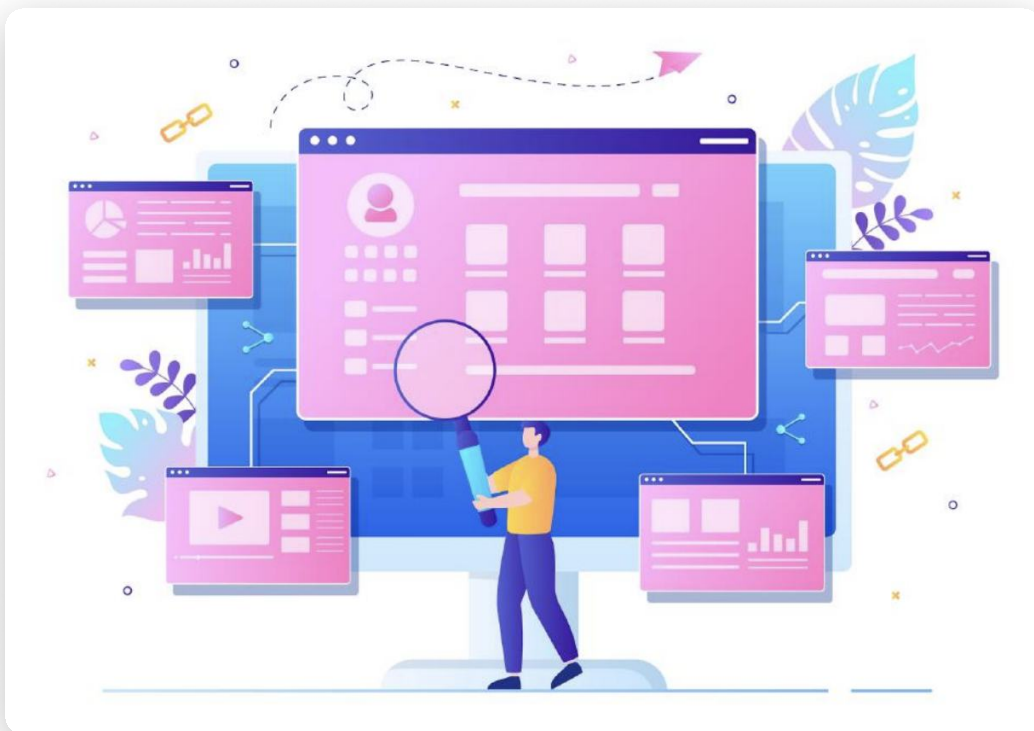
The following chart compares how short URLs perform against longer URLs.





## 5. Build Internal Links

Internal links are hyperlinks that connect one page of a website to another page within the same website. Internal links are essential to ranking across Google Search because they allow bots to efficiently navigate and index your webpages. This practice boosts authority, particularly for large websites with numerous pages that may not be visible to users. By internally linking important or orphan pages, Google indexes them faster, increasing the likelihood of them ranking and users seeing your most valuable content.



# 5. Build Internal Links

## Best Practices for Internal Linking

---

Use a Specific Number of Links

Include at least 6–10 links per 2,000 words, with 1–2 links pointing to product pages

---

Link to Keyword-Rich Anchor Text

Include exact keywords in your anchor text, and avoid long anchors over five words

---

Link to Pertinent Pages

Link to the most important pages (contact, product, home page, or relevant articles)

---

Discover High-Traffic Pages

Link to high-traffic pages using audit tools like Semrush, Google Search Console, or Ahrefs

---





Sweep Site for Broken Links

Regularly conduct site audits every three months

---

## 6. Optimize Images With Alt Text

Alt text, short for alternative text, is a descriptive piece of text added to HTML image tags. It provides a contextual description of an image's content for users who may not be able to see the image for a number of reasons, including using a screen reader or having slow internet connection. Alt text is important for accessibility because it ensures that visually impaired users can understand the content and context of images on any web page. Additionally, alt text can also be displayed in place of an image if it fails to load.

-  **Bad (missing alt text):** ``
-  **Bad (keyword stuffing):** ``
-  **Better:** ``
-  **Best:** ``

Examples of good and bad alt text HTML attributes. From Google.

## 7. Optimize Images Using Google's Best Practices

It takes more than alt text to bring out the boldness and vitality of your website's aesthetic. When considering image SEO, Google's best practices for images are a step in the right direction.

From sourcing high-quality images to compressing them for efficient loading, there are a few ways to enhance your user experience and maintain optimal site health.

Here are some tips for best image practices for your website:

- **Choose the Proper Format:** Opt for WebP if supported, JPEG for photos, PNG for transparent graphics, and GIFs for simple animations.
- **Compress Your Images:** Use tools like Squoosh or TinyPNG to find the optimal compression level for each image without sacrificing quality.
- **Minimize Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS):** Preload website images to avoid your designs moving unexpectedly, causing user frustration.
- **Prioritize Critical Resources:** Load essential images first and defer non-critical ones to avoid delaying page rendering.
- **Implement Responsive Images:** Adapt images to different screen sizes and devices for a seamless experience.
- **Submit an Image Sitemap:** Help Google discover and index your images more efficiently.
- **Use Structured Data:** Provide additional information about your images for richer search results.

## 8. Organize Site Structure

When your website is not optimized for site navigation, users must sift through content like files in a basement. This can frustrate them, resulting in a high bounce rate. A well-structured site with a navigational menu or search bar can make or break your user experience, leading to increased user engagement and conversion rates if the content matches users' search intent.



### To make your site more navigation-friendly:

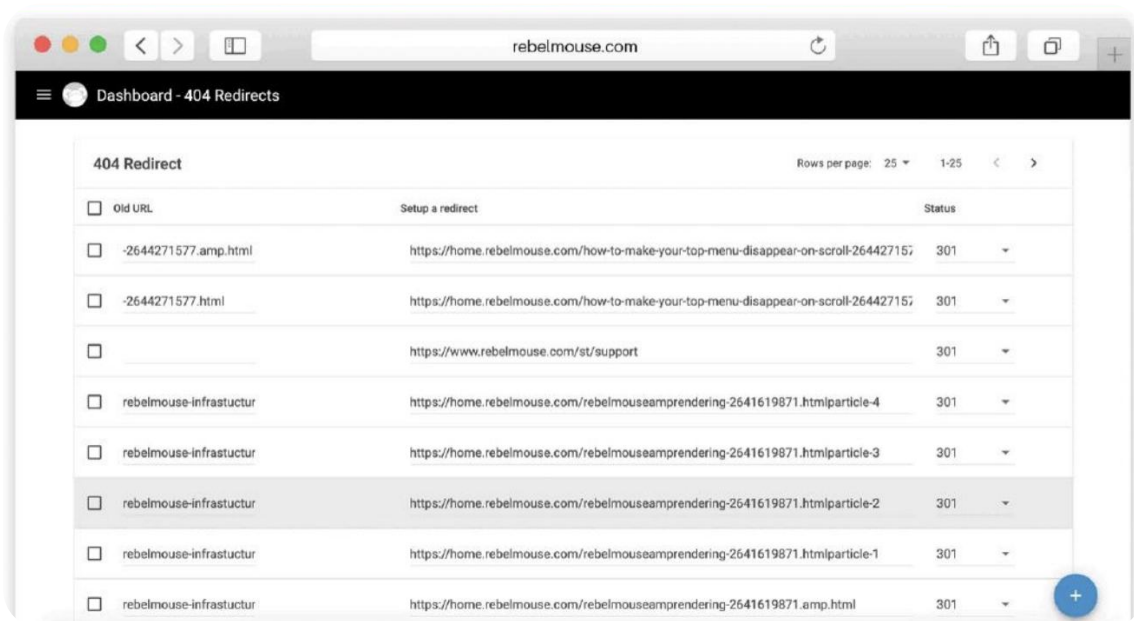
- Optimize for mobile
- Reduce clutter on your site with clear icons instead of lengthy text
- Add images and videos to break down complicated topics
- A/B test your pages to see which content and layouts interest users the most

# 9. Implement a Comprehensive 404 Dashboard

You have probably stumbled across a web page with a 404 error, often referred to as "404 Not Found," which is an HTTP status code indicating that the server couldn't find the requested web page. This occurs when a user attempts to access a URL that doesn't exist or has been removed.

**These errors can include:**

- **Broken Links:** The dashboard can identify URLs that return a 404 error, indicating broken links throughout your site.
- **Outdated Content:** The dashboard should pinpoint outdated content, link typos, or removed pages.
- **Prioritize Critical Pages:** The dashboard should classify broken links according to their impact, such as high-traffic or critical business pages requiring immediate attention.

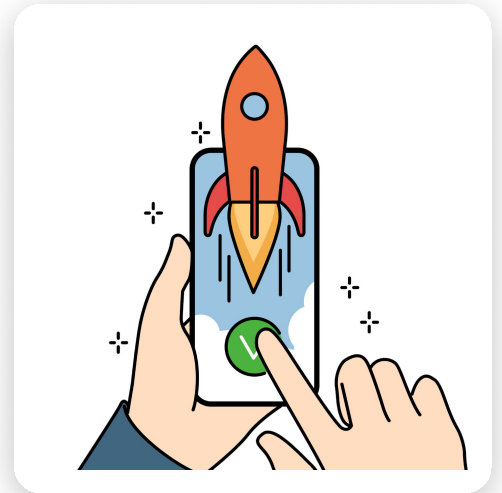


An example of the 404 Dashboard on RebelMouse.

# 10. Maximize Page Performance With Core Web Vitals

Google's Core Web Vitals are a set of metrics that measure your site's performance for page loading, interactivity, and visual stability.

Core Web Vitals can help optimize your website for search and elevate the user experience with fast-loading, delay-free pages that function across desktop and mobile.



Check out this [Performance Monitoring Page](#) to learn more about your Core Web Vitals score. Here are some ways to improve your LCP, INP, and CLS metrics:

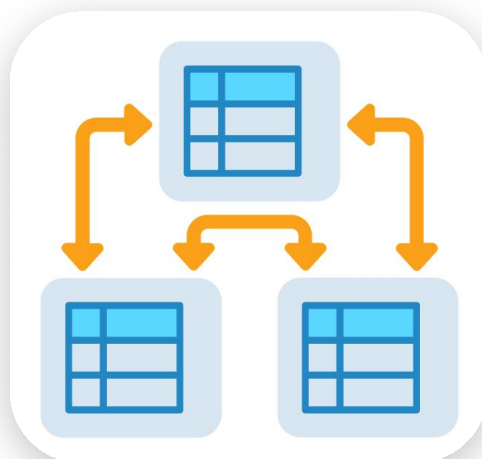
- **Loading Speed (LCP) Improvement:** Try preloading the most crucial components of your website so that they're available on the page as soon as the user lands on it to increase your loading speed.
- **Interactivity (INP) Improvement:** Prevent certain elements from slowing loading time to enhance interactivity. Use lazy loading to ensure specific sections load in a preferred order, prioritizing important content for users.
- **Visual Stability (CLS) Improvement:** Consider design and image dimensions that support the web page's layout and won't shift or move around as your users navigate around the page to improve your site's visual stability.

For a more comprehensive look into Core Web Vitals health, check out this guide on [improving your Core Web Vitals](#).

# 11. Structure Your Data

Did you know Google has its own preferred formatting for metadata? It's called structured data, and it helps Google crawl your content more quickly. The search engine even has its own support and integration [guidelines](#) around it, and you can test your data using their [Rich Results Test](#).

By following these rules, you're giving the search engine explicit clues about the meaning of a page. Structured data is a standardized format for providing information about a page and classifying its content. For example, on a recipe page, these classifying components could be ingredients, cooking time, temperature, and nutritional information.



You want your data to be organized neatly for crawling and visibility, unlike unstructured data, which lacks a defined format and is difficult for both Google and users to index and understand.



## 12. Upgrade Your **Web Security**

Security is crucial because Google relies on trusted sources that ensure user data is safe. To ensure your website is safe from malware and online hackers, make sure it uses HTTPS, advanced security encryption offered by hosting services like Amazon Web Services (AWS), and is SOC 2 Type 2 certified.

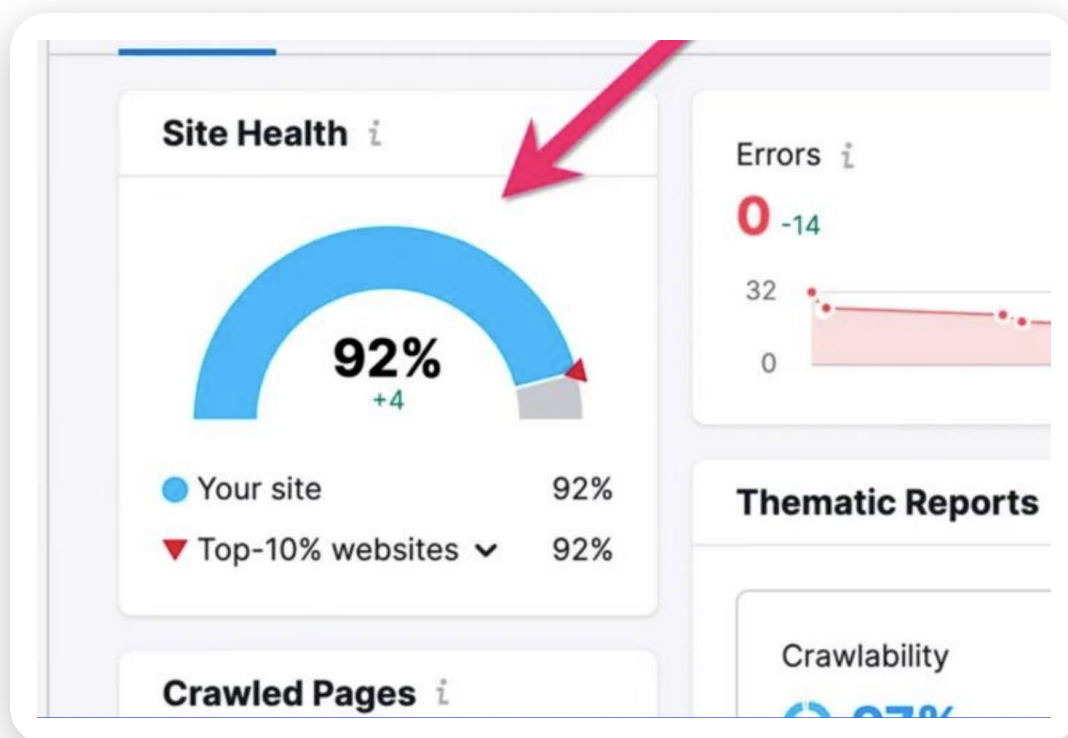
Discover more from [2024's safest content management system](#).

Websites that  
use HTTPS see a  
**5%** increase in  
organic search.

## 13. Run a Site Audit

Site audits identify areas for improvement to ensure optimal site health, such as ways to improve high-traffic pages, broken links, missing metadata and alt text, and technical SEO missteps. Platforms like Semrush and Ahrefs are great places to start if you're new to technical SEO. They can help you manage your content and address page errors on your website.

At RebelMouse, we've improved one client's technical site health from 59% to 92% through frequent audit checks and corrections. Even in the face of unpredictable Google updates, our CMS allows clients to maintain high-performing, optimized, and competitive sites through regular website health checks.



# 14. Maintain Website Health and Traffic During a Google Core Update

Many of Google's core updates can disrupt web traffic. If your website has seen a downward trend since the last Google Search update, here are some ways to remain competitive and bring your rankings back up:

## Focus on the User

Following SEO trends is nice, but you might be following a dead-end path. When trying to win long-tail keywords, consider whether the content helps a user take action, answers their questions, and takes them to the next steps that satisfy their search intent.

## Maintain Your Website Health

Site audits are the best way to launch your technical SEO efforts. Whether that means strengthening your Core Web Vitals, increasing security, refining metadata, or generating opportunities for link development. Work through our list of suggestions until you reach optimal tech health.

## Clean up Your Site

A Google Search core update may be the perfect time to get your site decluttered and focused on structured data that offers users the best navigation and interface to sift through. Use A/B testing to experiment with new features and gauge your users' reactions.

# Skyrocket Your Technical SEO With RebelMouse

RebelMouse is an enterprise-level, AI-powered CMS for brands and publishers. With our cutting-edge systems and AI solutions, we assist clients with increasing their online visibility and realizing their full earning potential. Our users love to rave about their online success and traffic increases after joining our platform.

We offer a one-stop shop for managing omnichannel integrations, Core Web Vitals, sophisticated security protocols, AI-powered recommendations, automated metadata recommendations, and smart-linking technologies. As we continue to be the number one CMS for SEO in 2024, we aim to transform online performance for our clients in a way that helps build connections with their audiences.

Contact our team to [request a demo](#) and learn more about our products and services.

# RebelMouse