

SEO: Content Marketing

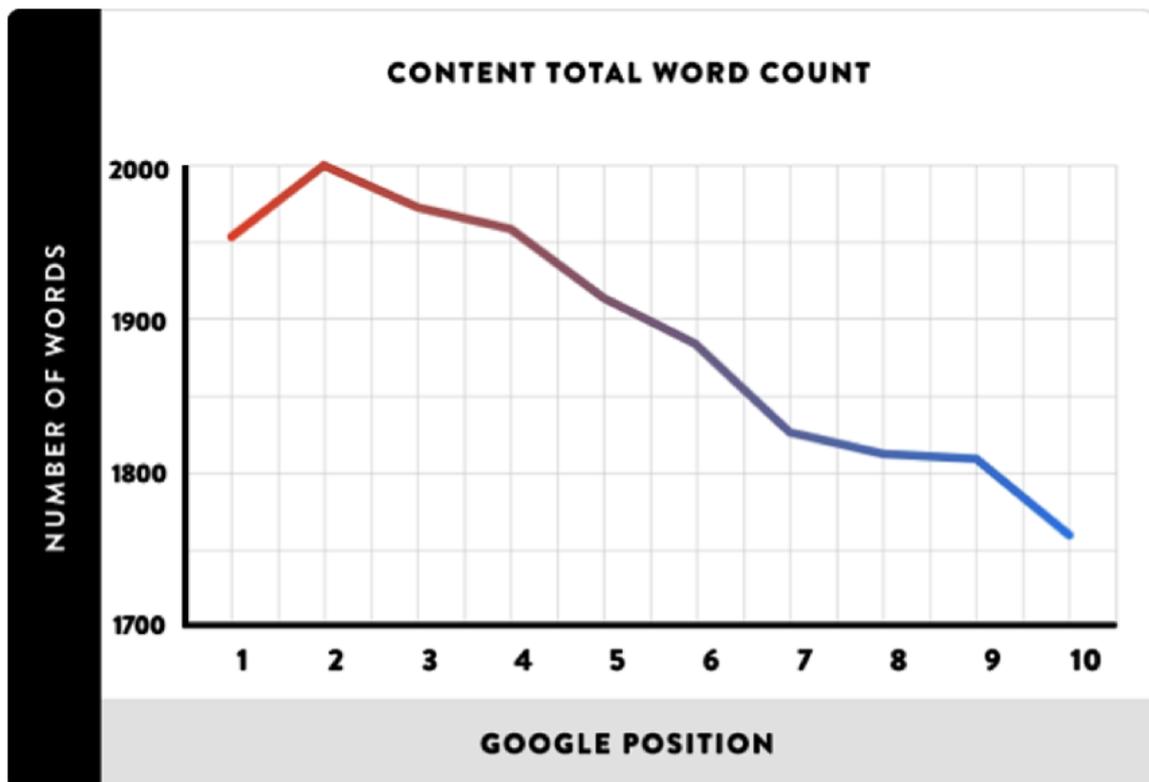
Increase Traffic and Rankings by Updating Blogs

More is More with Google

It is every content marketer's dream to rank at the top of search engine results, or at least land on page one. According to research conducted by Backlinko, ranking at the top of the SERPs can actually be a reality for your website if the content length exceeds a certain number of words. Google will reward you by increasing your position as a result of having extended and meaningful content that is refreshed and updated regularly.

The recommended word count ranges from 1700-2000 for Google to reward you, however, it is not always possible to produce quality articles on a consistent basis that contain that many words. Online content must be both engaging and relevant, making the task of writing blogs of this length a laborious one.

Rather than writing articles entirely from scratch, consider re-writing and re-purposing existing content by refreshing it with updated information. Google already recognises the existing content on your website, therefore it makes sense to use what is there and improve it in order to rank higher.



Why Updating Blog Content Increases Rankings and Traffic

1. Stay on page one of Google search

In order to improve the search engine and web user experience, Google runs countless algorithms that are always testing and verifying websites. They are looking for content that performs well using a small sample of search terms, promoting it accordingly to first page results. The criteria for well-performing sites can be as specific as a higher number of clicks to the link with fewer clicking back. As a result, Google will recognise higher engagement with that page and retain their position on page one. Re-publishing existing content on your site gives you a better chance of retaining your SERPS position if engagement on this page was already high. Rather than going through the rigorous process of developing new content and optimising it for Google, it makes sense to refresh existing top-performing pages on your site.

2. Refreshed content is rewarded by Google

Another important criteria for higher-ranking pages is regularly updated content. The same Google algorithms analyse websites that have been recently updated, bringing up pages with fresh content in search queries. The correlation between SEO performance and the content creation date is clear, indicating that refreshing your existing content can give you a ranking boost.

3. Build up your authority with Google

The depth and breadth of knowledge contained on your web pages can also influence rankings, building up your authority on certain topics. The more you publish content within your niche, the more Google associates you as a reliable source. Building up topical authority takes time and effort, but can broaden your reach when it comes to your target keywords and prospective audience.

4. Improve existing content to increase engagement

Optimising your pages and posts can be trial and error, especially if you are producing new content on a continual basis. By improving and expanding on your existing content, you can add layer upon layer of attributes that assist in boosting your ranking. Your site has a greater chance of reaching a wider audience by earning links, amplification, social shares and engagement, signalling to Google that the content is worthy of ranking.

How To Update Your Blog Content

Step 1: Identify Which Blog Posts to Update

The first step in updating your blog content is to identify posts that will yield better results. This will ensure you don't invest time and effort into updating existing content that won't necessarily perform well.

There are numerous online tools that can assist with reporting site and SEO performance. [Using this tool](#), you can filter top performing pages and review other pages that were outside the top 10 for the nominated keywords. As you drill down, the report will show you the focus keyword, estimated search volume and Google position.

ahrefs Dashboard Alerts Site explorer Content explorer Keywords explorer Rank tracker **NEW** More ▾

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Overview

Backlink profile ▾

Backlinks

- New
- Lost
- Broken

Referring domains

- New
- Lost

Anchors

Top referring content

Referring IPs

Organic search ▾

Organic keywords

- New
- Movements

Top pages 🔥

Competing domains

Competing pages

Content gap 🔥

Pages ▾

Best by links

Best by links' growth

Best by shares

Top content

Digital Marketing Agency / Digital Ad Agency with an ROI focus.

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Ahrefs Rankⁱ 44,930

URⁱ 55

DRⁱ 60

Backlinksⁱ 40.2K +561
Live 30.6K

Referring domainsⁱ 3.6K +102
Live 3.16K

Organic keywords 22.2K +50
PPC 5

Backlink profile Organic search Paid search Content overview

Ahrefs Rankⁱ

Today	44,930	↑ 416
avg 7 days	43,665	↑ 977
avg 1 month	44,399	↑ 3,202
avg 3 months	47,133	↑ 1,171

Past 3 months

Jul Aug Sep

40K 50K 60K

Referring domainsⁱ LIVE INDEX

All time One year Last 30 days

3.5K 3.0K

25	31 < 1%	57 ▾	4	www.singlegrain.com/blog-posts/search-engine-optimization/rank-using-black-hat-seo-tactics-white-hat-way/	black hat seo	1,800	13
19	49 < 1%	63 ▾	17	www.singlegrain.com/email-marketing/email-marketing-funnel-templates/	sales funnel templates	450	10

The example above shows the ranking results for two blog posts and their respective keywords:

- Using Black Hat SEO Tactics in a White Hat Way
- 9 Proven E-mail Templates to Add to Your Conversion Funnel

By updating these popular posts that already yield a high search volume, it is likely to see an increase in their performance, bumping up their position by a few spots. As a result, there would also be an increase in the number of page visitors as well as subscribers.

It therefore stands to reason that prioritising these well-performing posts that rank around the top 10 will cause a significant boost to your traffic. There's still a possibility for increased traffic on posts that rank lower, but the results won't be nearly as significant. Typically, going from page 2 to page 1 is going to make a more impactful difference than going from page 4 to page 3.

Step 2: Update the post, keeping the URL the same

Duplicate content on your website can be penalised by search engines, and decreases the web user experience. Instead of publishing an additional blog post that could potentially be the same, simply modify the original article.

To update your existing post, simply copy/paste the text into a new draft, make the necessary changes and then copy/paste the HTML back into the original post. If the post title, tags or SEO snippet has changed, you may be tempted to modify the URL. Even if your software automatically creates redirects, it is important to keep the URL the same, otherwise the redirects may remove some of the link value.

Step 3: Add an editor's note for transparency and clarity

Reputable sites containing blogs written by professional authors often add notations every time a post is updated. If a note isn't present or visible, there may be confusion by your readers who will see a current publish date but comments and feedback from years ago. We recommend you incorporate an Editor's Note so your audience is clear about any content modifications, and to assist with the chronological order of the article.

Here is an example:

Editor's Note: This post was originally published in December 2011 and has been completely revamped and updated for accuracy and comprehensiveness.

Step 4: Update the accuracy of content

Keeping your content accurate and up-to-date is important for your readers, especially if the information is time-based or no longer applicable. Modifying, adding and removing content keeps the post current and more relevant for your audience. Here is a simple check list as a guide:

- Remove irrelevant, superseded and outdated information
- Where applicable, replace old with new, fresher content
- Check and update any images, videos, screenshots and media
- Verify any internal/external links and update if necessary
- Update the call-to-action if it is no longer persuasive and current

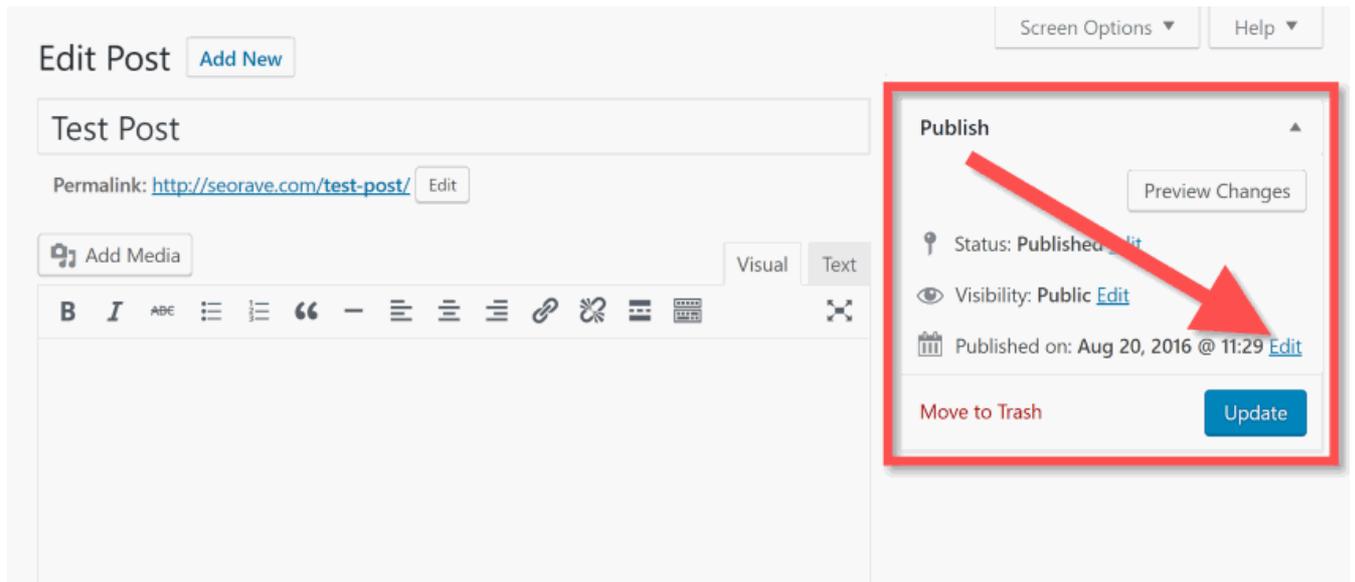
Step 5: Optimise and improve the meta description

The meta description on your post is a 160-character snippet that will show up in search results. It is the first thing searchers will see, so it's critical that you keep it current, as well as enticing and engaging so readers will click on it. A meta description that arouses curiosity is likely to have a higher click-through rate and get more traffic to your post.

Step 6: Re-publish your post with the current date

The final step in the process is re-publishing your post, but with a current publish date. While this might look different depending on which CMS you use, here's an example for WordPress, which is the most popular and widely utilised web platform worldwide.

From the 'Edit' page in your post, go to the 'Publish' box in the top right-hand corner and click 'Edit' next to the 'Published on' date.



Enter the new publish date and time, hit 'OK', then hit 'Update' to save.

