BrightEdge Industry Focus: Real Estate Marketing

2018 is expected to see 6,270,000 homes sold in the US with a total value of $1.73 trillion or 9% of the US gross domestic product. Though the market has slowed some in mid-2018, housing prices are up 6% and volume is expected to be flat to last year.

Commercial real estate sales have declined modestly from their peak in Q4 2015. With US unemployment dipping below 4%, the demand for commercial real estate is on the upswing in 2018 and expected to remain steady. Job growth bodes well for housing market, but that is also being tempered by rising interest rates. As the market slows, marketing for customers and transactions becomes more important for agents and brokers in both commercial and residential housing.

Top Trends Affecting the Real Estate Industry:

- **Mobile First** – BrightEdge Research shows that on average 62% of site traffic is now mobile and that 70% of commerce journeys start in the SERPs. Real estate has very strong mobile use cases because people will be out on the move in the neighborhoods looking around for units.
- **Digitization** – The core asset of the industry, the Multiple Listing Service, has long been digitized but only agents had access to it. The Internet and democratization of access to the MLS enables digital real estate sites to develop and thrive. People can now do most of the research on their own, so real estate agents and brokers need to start thinking about how to add and market value beyond listing information. Zillow, Redfin, Trulia, Realtor.com, Move.com, and Movoto are sources of direct information for consumers and leads for real estate agents.
- **Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality** – Long a fringe application, it provides a logical and personalized way to deliver the physical-to-digital and digital-to-physical experiences. Real Estate has one of the best use cases for virtual reality and augmented reality. Agents and brokers that master these marketing techniques should see lift in close rates.
- **Voice Search and Browsing** – Voice queries are between 20 and 30% of mobile searches, so brands should explore adding voice search to their sites to allow people who start a query with voice to continue browsing and exploring in voice.
- **Personalization and Video** – Clever use of configurable personalized updates will help engage customers in what can be a long decision process. Marketers should continue to expand the use of video to convey their personality and value in addition to providing digital video access to properties and neighborhoods. Drone photography can provide a marketing “wow” factor in your lineup.

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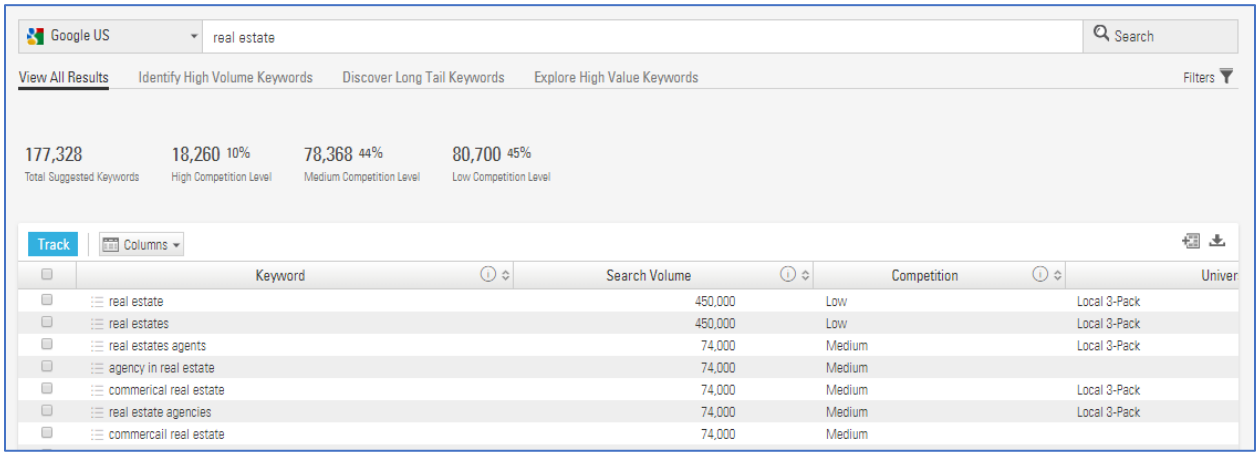
- **Customer Journey Analytics** – Sites must figure out how to collect and use their vast amounts of site data to reduce friction and accelerate customers along the buyer's journey.
- **Sustainable Housing Features** – 61% of younger home buyers have a stronger interest in better energy usage through solar, LED lights, and use of low-chemical, sustainable building materials. 40% of realtors are including this green information in their MLS house profiles.
- **Access to Public Transit and Walkability** – There is keen interest in the denser urban units with 51% interested in walkability or carless commuting.
- **Interest Rates** – Always the biggest driver of prices and inventory, interest rates have been on a steady increase since 2015 and the 8-year-old up cycle is showing signs of slowing. Industry messaging should adjust and reflect the opportunities available in a more neutral to softening market.
- **Tax Reform Law** – The 2017 tax law change capped the deductibility of mortgage interest to interest payable on the first $750,000 of mortgage debt and increased the standard deductions making it less attractive for people to file an itemized return. This somewhat negates the mortgage deduction as an offset and selling point.

So what exactly does a “mobile-first” real estate lead generation campaign look like? Here are a few pointers to make sure your current lead generation strategy is focused on mobile:

1. **Make all images, videos, or animations look great on mobile first then check on desktop** - Make sure your pages load fast and look great on standard mobile phones.
2. **Use a responsive website -** How nice your landing pages look on mobile should be your primary concern if you’re advertising on any of the above platforms.
3. **Make sure your Facebook ad and social headlines don’t get cut off on mobile** - While your lengthy headline might make sense on desktop, it could be getting cut off on mobile. Before you publish your ads, make sure your titles work on mobile AND desktop. In most cases this will involve shorter titles.
4. **Use large “call now” buttons on your mobile site and landing pages** - Even if your site and landing pages are mobile responsive, you still need to make it easy for people to call you. While tapping text phone numbers works on Iphones, it doesn’t always work on Android. Use buttons instead.
5. **Use mobile first design for your email list -** According to one study, mobile email opens have grown by 180% in the last three years. That means that the chances of your audience opening your email on their phone or tablet are high. Make sure the email reads well on mobile.
6. **Use shorter paragraphs -** Make sure your paragraphs in blog posts are no more than three lines tall to make them easier to read on mobile.

Google Search Query Activity in Real Estate Queries



BrightEdge Data Cube shows more than 177,000 relevant keywords for “real estate.” BrightEdge Research shows that about 75% of the Search clicks go to the organic side rather than the paid side and that organic SEO traffic is worth $270 Billion.

Channel Marketing Mix in Real Estate Industry

Using our proprietary data sets we have looked into the prevalence of Organic channel share vs. other marketing channels for travel and hospitality brands. Real Estate shows a lower proportion of Paid traffic at 11% and therefore the SEO average traffic is on the low side at 60%.

Real Estate Industry SEO BrightEdge Content Benchmark Stats

Universal search results refer to the results on a SERP that are not the standard direct links to websites. Examples of universal results include Images, Videos, News, Places, Carousel, Quick Answer, 3-Pack results, and Apps.

BrightEdge Data Cube Metrics	Avg for eCommerce
The average Data Cube score for the industry is:	477,005
The average number of position one listings is:	907
The average page 1 listings is:	8687
The average total universal content results is:	767
The average number of images is:	132
The average number of Quick Answers is:	81

These numbers are all rather high relative to other industries as real estate sites tend to have broad keyword sets and large sites.

BrightEdge Real Estate Industry SEO Click Curves for Mobile and Desktop

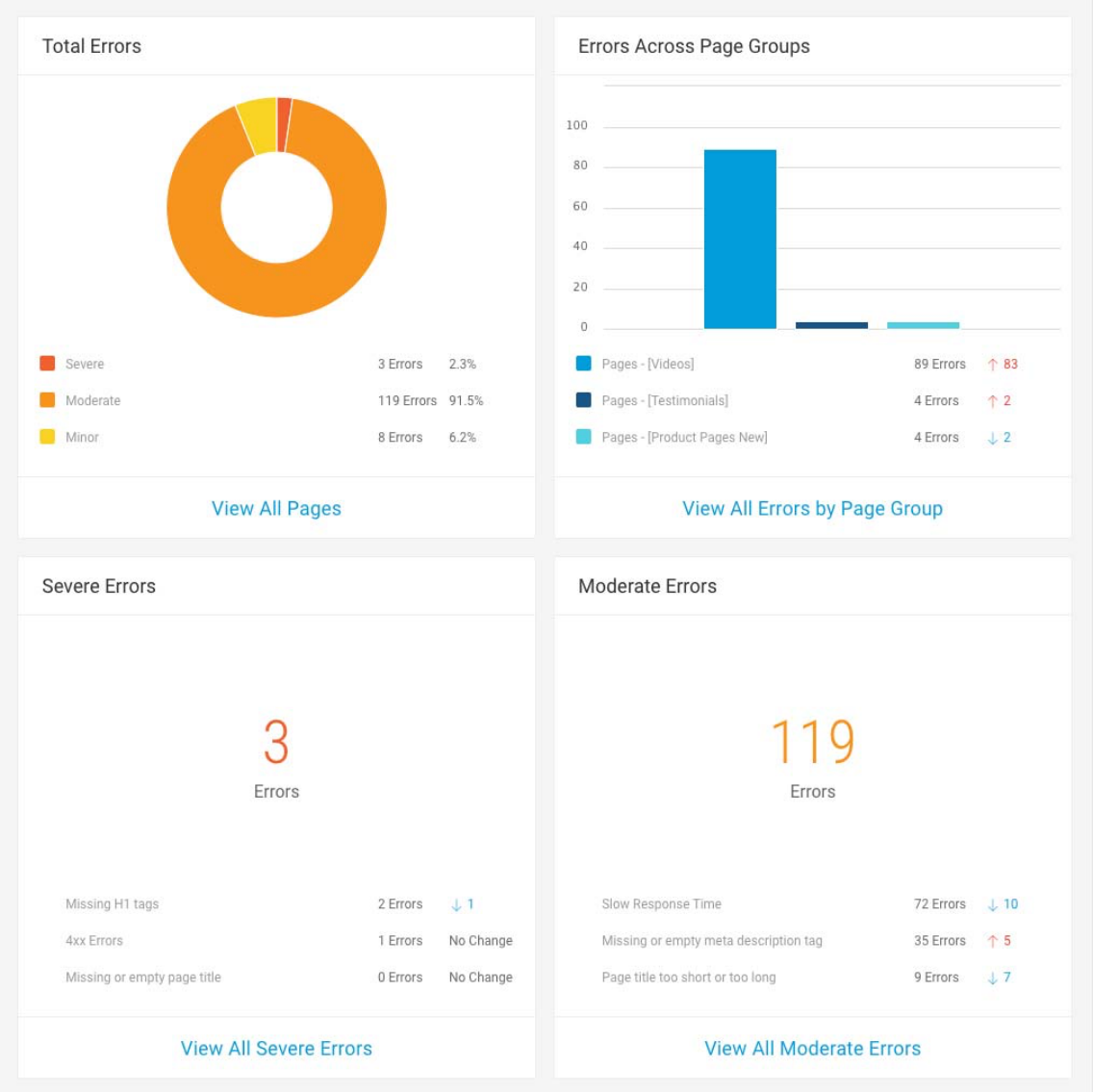
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Mobile	17.5	10.8	7.5%	5.2%	3.6%	2.4%	1.7%	1.4%	1.0%	0.7%	0.6%	1.1%	1.7%	1.9%
Desktop	29.1	11.7	8.7%	5.9%	4.1%	2.6%	1.8%	1.5%	1.2%	0.9%	0.8%	0.6%	1.5%	2.4%

These click curves indicate the average performance in various search result positions. These numbers help understand and forecast the traffic that should and is coming in from the organic search channel

How Real Estate Customers Use BrightEdge

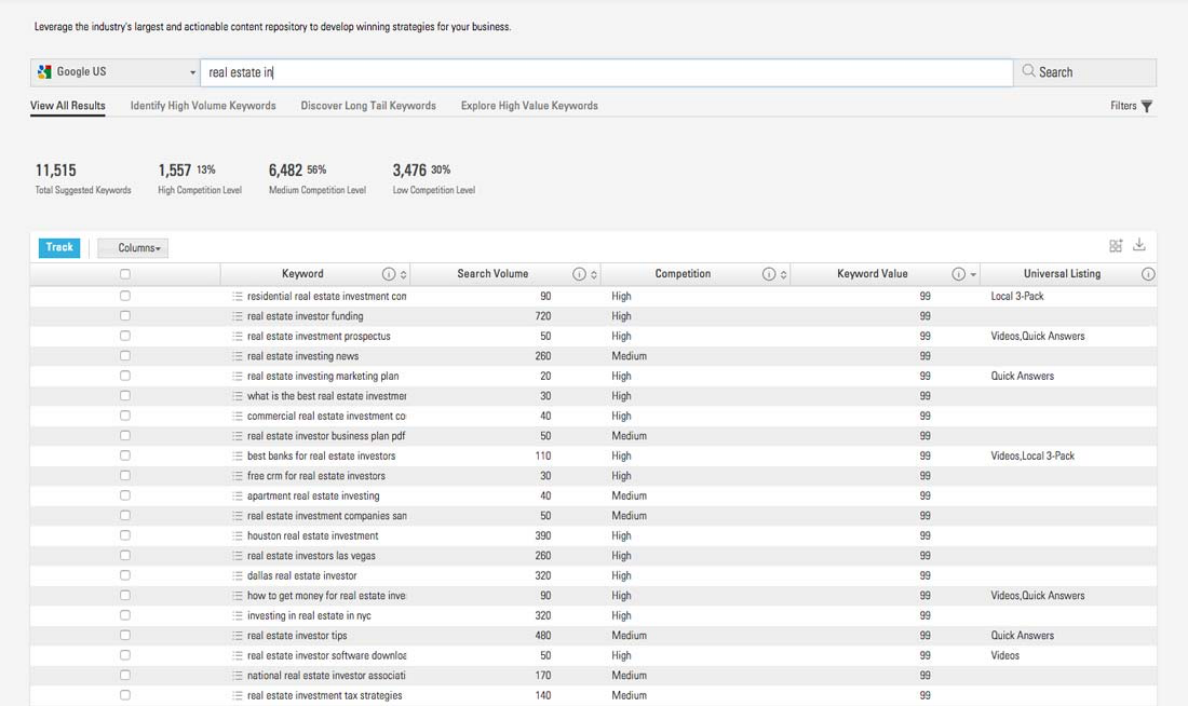
ContentIQ

Technical audits are a critical component of maintaining real estate sites with large amounts of inventory with unique pages for each property. ContentIQ allows SEOs and digital marketers to setup and run automated and manual audits across any number of technical SEO elements in any area of the website.



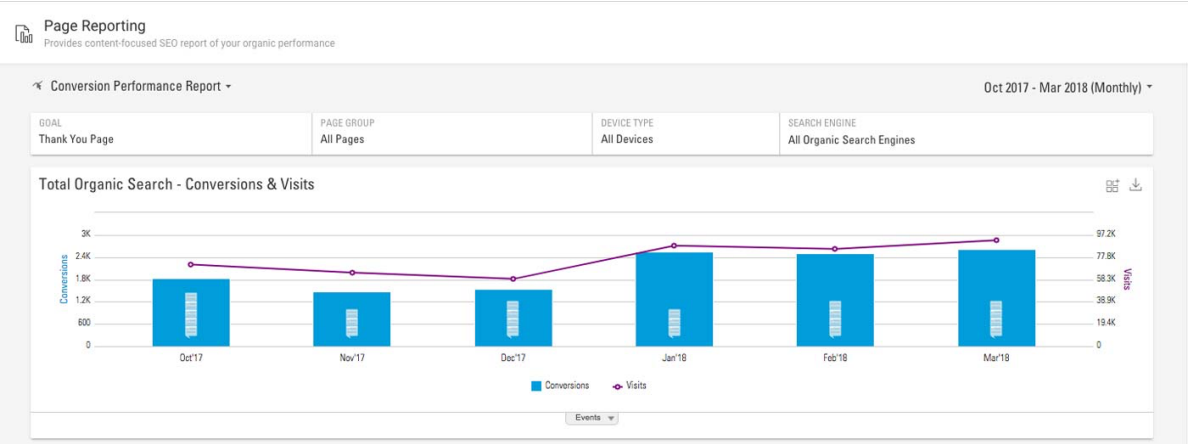
Data Cube

BrightEdge Data Cube helps real estate vendors to understand the voice of the customer and the words they use to find what they're looking for in search queries.



Page Reporting

Page Reporting opens up the possibilities for marketers to drill down to traffic and conversion data on individual property pages, or zoom out for a strategic by-zip code view



Dashboards

Real Estate brands can use the configurable multi-dimensional structure of StoryBuilder Dashboards to understand and highlight the key details of their SEO and digital efforts. They can also deliver those dashboards by email to stakeholders around the company.

BrightEdge Real Estate Case Studies

LGI Homes Launches Content Marketing Effort with BrightEdge.
CMO Rachel Eaton and SEO Aryan Moharir describe how their two-person team launched their SEO efforts, analytics, data, reporting, enables collaboration, speaks to the business results, onboarding, Share of Voice, and Opportunity Forecasting.

"We know 71% of the content on the internet gets little to no traffic. BrightEdge, showed us opportunities, provide great analytics, great data and great reporting, making the presentation process a lot easier in my business."

https://www.brightedge.com/resources/videos/lgi-homes-testimonial-video

BrightEdge Real Estate Related Customer SEO Quotes

> *"I'm a huge analytical person, so I love the dashboards portion and to be able to go in and see our week by week analytics and how we've grown."*
>
> *I'm very excited about BrightEdge Content because it's going to help us develop content more quickly, optimize it, and keep it optimized."*
> *-- Renee Lafontaine, PetersenDean Solar*

About BrightEdge
BrightEdge, the global leader in enterprise organic search and content performance, empowers marketers to transform online content into business results such as traffic, conversions, and revenue. The BrightEdge S3 platform is powered by a sophisticated deep learning engine and is the only company capable of web-wide, real-time measurement of content engagement across all digital channels, including search, social, and mobile. BrightEdge's 1,700+ customers include global brands as well as 57 of the Fortune 100. The company has eight offices worldwide and is headquartered in Foster City, California.