Core Web Vitals:

How Industry Leaders Are Preparing

*Creating Your Enterprise Playbook for
Thriving with the Page Experience Update*

MARCH 2021

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WEBINAR

Featured Speakers

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Agenda: The Playbook for Page Experience

Core Web Vitals and what they mean for Businesses

Industry forecasts for what we can expect

Determining Impact on your business
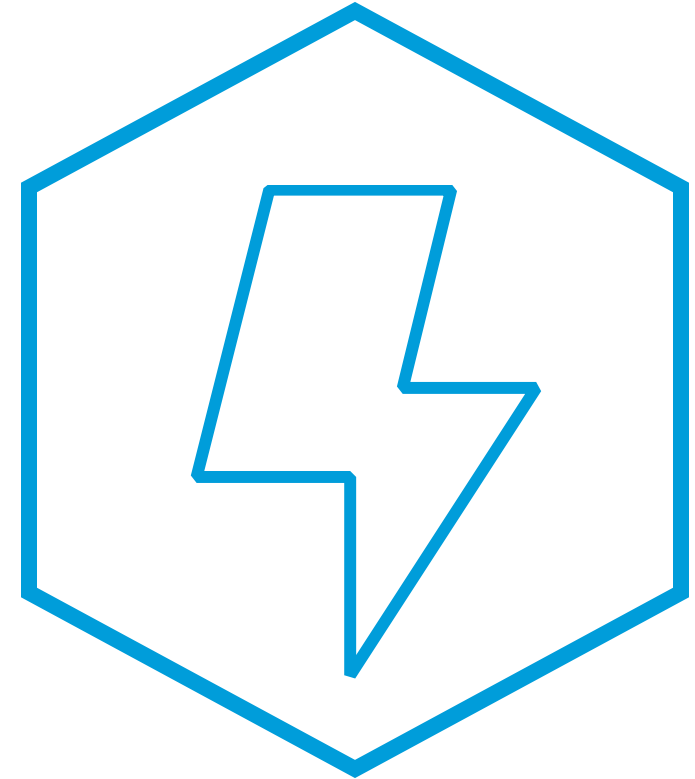
Strategies for Optimization and Mitigation

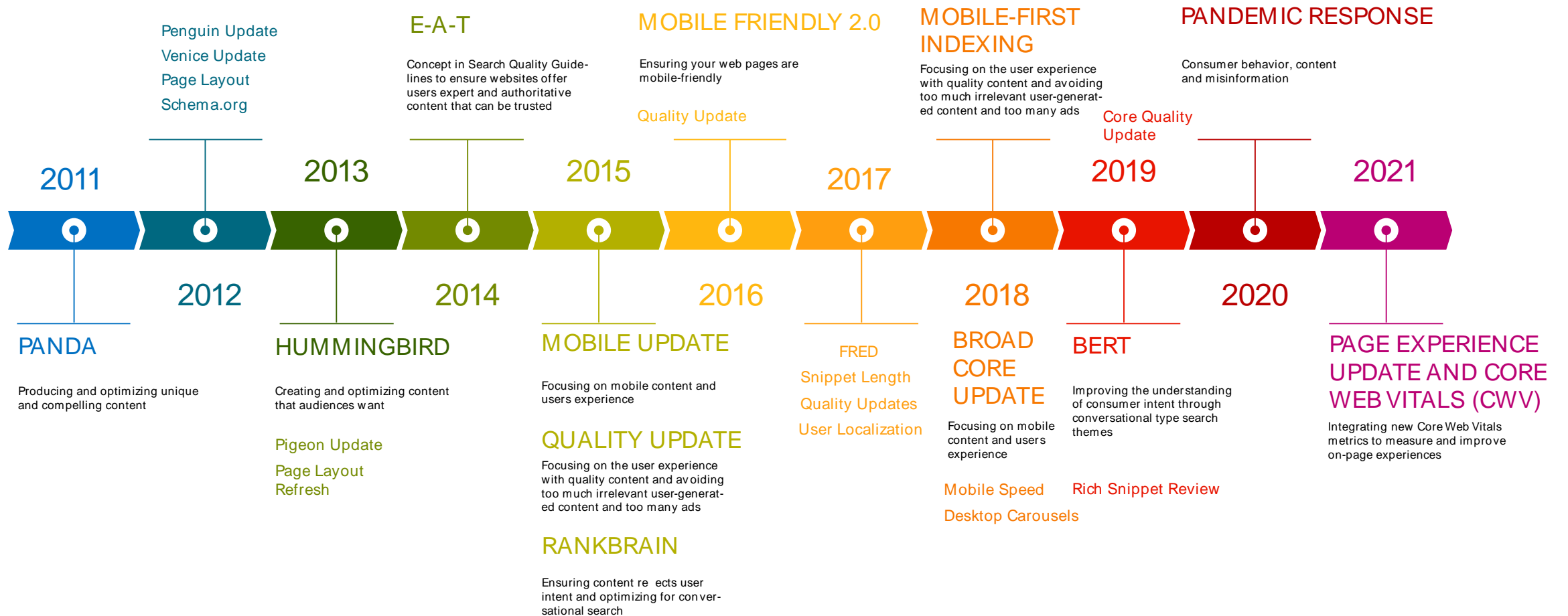**BRIGHTEDGE**

What are Core Web Vitals?

The Page Experience Matters

UPDATES

- Last Spring, Google Announced it would be using three new metrics to help assess the quality of the page experience to help serve better results

- Google has stated this update will rollout in May 2021.

- In order to receive a boost from this update, your URL needs:

  - **Largest Contentful Paint:** Less than 2.5 Seconds
  - **First Input Delay:** Less than 100 Milliseconds
  - **Cumulative Layout Shift:** Less than 0.1

Core Web Vitals are Just One of Many Factors

Penguin Update
Venice Update
Page Layout
Schema.org

E-A-T
Concept in Search Quality Guide-lines to ensure websites offer users expert and authoritative content that can be trusted

MOBILE FRIENDLY 2.0
Ensuring your web pages are mobile-friendly

Quality Update

MOBILE-FIRST INDEXING
Focusing on the user experience with quality content and avoiding too much irrelevant user-generated content and too many ads

PANDEMIC RESPONSE
Consumer behavior, content and misinformation

Core Quality Update

2011 **2013** **2015** **2017** **2019** **2021**

2012 **2014** **2016** **2018** **2020**

PANDA
Producing and optimizing unique and compelling content

HUMMINGBIRD
Creating and optimizing content that audiences want

Pigeon Update
Page Layout Refresh

MOBILE UPDATE
Focusing on mobile content and users experience

QUALITY UPDATE
Focusing on the user experience with quality content and avoiding too much irrelevant user-generated content and too many ads

RANKBRAIN
Ensuring content reflects user intent and optimizing for conversational search

FRED
Snippet Length
Quality Updates
User Localization

BROAD CORE UPDATE
Focusing on mobile content and users experience

Mobile Speed
Desktop Carousels

BERT
Improving the understanding of consumer intent through conversational type search themes

Rich Snippet Review

PAGE EXPERIENCE UPDATE AND CORE WEB VITALS (CWV)
Integrating new Core Web Vitals metrics to measure and improve on-page experiences

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Addressing Core Web Vitals means more than Rankings

1. Reducing your LCP reduces user bounce rates

- Reducing First Contentful Paint can improve conversions by as much as 15%
- Your audience has other things they want to do, respect their time

2. Improving CLS provides your audience a visually stable and engaging experience

- Layout shift disrupts the user experience and annoys your audience
- Annoyed users don't convert well

3. Improving FID helps a website respond more quickly to the actions your audiences takes

- The quicker your site responds to a user's actions, the crisper their experience is
- Users are less likely to return to a website they feel is poorly designed or broken

https://wpostats.com/

Desktop - LCP	Desktop CLS	Desktop - FID
1.5 s	0.251	5 ms
1.6 s	0.23	5 ms
1.5 s	0.262	5 ms
1.9 s	0.2	5 ms
2.2 s	0.181	6 ms
1.5 s	0.059	4 ms
2.2 s	0.157	4 ms
0.9 s	0.116	5 ms
1.5 s	0.231	5 ms
1.5 s	0.051	5 ms

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Addressing Core Web Vitals Isn't Always Easy

Changes are Complex

Enterprise Sites built on Apps require lots of scripts to execute and take work to streamline

Investments can be Significant

In addition to time, some brands may need to invest in upgrading their infrastructure to meet Google's benchmarks

Impact not Obvious

Quantifying the impact of making these updates is not inherently clear. Marketers need to be prepared with the right data

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How Well Prepared are Leaders for Page Experience update?

We've looked at the top sites across industries to see how susceptible to impact they are leading up to May

- **Top 500 Keywords Across Four Categories (education, retail, B2B Tech and finance)**

- **Top Share of Voice URLs for each category**

- **Measure and aggregate page speed performance on all URLs from the CRux Database**

"There are a number of factors that come together and I think the general idea is if we can recognize that a page matches all of these criteria then we would like to use that appropriately in search ranking." - **John Mueller**

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How would the rollout look today?

Education
Less than 5%
of URLs would
receive a boost
in rankings

Finance
24% of Top
URLs would
receive a boost
in rankings

B2B
13% of Top
URLs would
receive a boost
in rankings

Retail
Almost none of
the top ranking
URLs would
receive a boost

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	5.04s
MOBILE FID	34.93ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	9.17s
MOBILE FID	78ms
MOBILE CLS	.15

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Education

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

- Evaluated 253 unique Education URLs ranking for top education keywords
- Over half the URLs evaluated met all three criteria for desktop performance
- Sites that appear most challenged: App store listings and other dynamic loading pages
- Of the URLs tested, URLs from resources like Indeed.com and job listing resources are most commonly meeting Google's CWV threshold

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Finance

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	5.04s
MOBILE FID	34.93ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

- Evaluated 328 unique Finance URLs ranking for top finance keywords
- Over 60% of URLs evaluated meet thresholds for desktop queries
- Sites that appear most challenged: banking sites and aggregator sites (mortgage brokers etc).
- Of the URLs tested, URLs from resources like Investopedia winning informational queries are best positioned.

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B2B

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

- Evaluated 302 unique B2B Tech URLs ranking for top B2B queries
- Almost 70% of URLs meet the criteria for desktop
- Informational resources such Indeed or definition sites are best positioned for this update
- Pages most challenged appear to be app stores and transactional content. This could be due to videos and interactivity hindering contentful paint and layout shift.

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Retail

Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	9.17s
MOBILE FID	78ms
MOBILE CLS	.15

- Evaluated 689 unique retail URLs ranking for top retail queries
- URLs were higher here due to multiple product listings from the same domains dominating share of voice.
- Over half of URLs evaluated would meet the criteria on Desktop
- Page attributes like hero images of products and pop ups for sales seem to be driving largest contentful paint and layout shift.
- Of the URLs tested, reviews URLs from pages like Tech Radar and Consumer Reports are best positioned for this update.

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Key Takeaways

The Mobile Experience is critical for all categories

Image compression seems to be a leading challenge for leaders

Pages doing well for CWV tend to be informational in nature

Retail in particular could see significant disruption if second tier retailers receive a boost

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What are the Right Strategies for Preparing and Thriving?

Five Steps for Winning in May

1   **Quantify and Benchmark your space**

2   **Evaluate Infrastructure**

3   **Use Log Files to Guide Prioritization**

4   **Build a holistic failover plan**

5   **Monitor with Macro and Micro Trend Data**

Each of you will receive our eBook on how to implement each of these in your organization

Page Experience Playbook

Strategies to Prepare Your Organization for The Core Web Vitals Update in May

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Navigating Core Web Vitals within an organization

With Featured Speaker
Dre De Vera
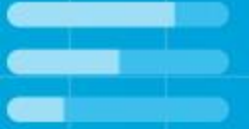
workday®

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WorkDay Began Talking about Core Web Vitals last year

- **Company was going through a sitewide redesign**

- **Site Serves Multiple Markets**

- **Across the site, URLs were failing to meet thresholds**

Key Challenges:

- Site Leverages Adobe page speed is one of many attributes that need to be addressed

- Implementation Requires QA and Web Development Groups

- Site depends on high res images and aspects that can hinder load times

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To Begin We Needed Data

Page	Overall Score - Desktop	Overall Score - Mobile	Desktop - FCP	Desktop - FID	Desktop - SI
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/learn-at-home/activities-and-supports/health-education	86%	40%	1.3 s	5 ms	1.4 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/learn-at-home/activities-and-supports/physical-education-and-physical-activity	73%	21%	1.3 s	5 ms	4.6 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/subjects/physical-education	83%	27%	1.3 s	5 ms	1.7 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/subjects/arts	82%	27%	1.3 s	5 ms	1.6 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/learn-at-home/technical-tools-and-support/teachhub	71%	42%	1.5 s	6 ms	1.8 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/working-with-us/vendors	88%	24%	1.3 s	4 ms	1.5 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/careers/teachers/pre-k-teaching-opportunities	68%	38%	1.4 s	4 ms	1.8 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/schools/M267	92%	50%	0.8 s	5 ms	2.0 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/subjects/physical-education/physical-education-requirements	74%	32%	1.3 s	5 ms	4.7 s
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/subjects/civics-for-all	75%	33%	1.3 s	5 ms	4.8 s

Keyword Rankings

Keyword	Classic Rank	Category	Search Volume	Est. Traffic ↓	Top Page	Listings
case studies seo	1	Web Listing	880	201	yes	
seo case studies	1	Web Listing	880	201	yes	
seo case study	1	Web Listing	880	201	yes	
case study seo	3 ↑ 1	Web Listing	880	74	yes	
seo studies	1	Web Listing	140	32	yes	
seo case study examples	2 ↑ 1	Web Listing	20	2	yes	
case study on seo	1	Web Listing	10	2	yes	
seo case	1	Web Listing	10	2	yes	
seo cases	1	Web Listing	10	2	yes	
seo marketing case study	1	Web Listing	10	2	yes	
seo case study example	4	Web Listing	20	1	yes	
case study seo best practices	3	Web Listing	10	1	yes	
seo strategy case study	3	Web Listing	10	1	yes	
seo case study template	5	Web Listing	20	1	yes	
best seo case studies	4 ↓ 1	Web Listing	10	1	yes	

1.

Evaluating Core Web Vitals means more than the homepage. We took a look at page speed performance across all high value pages

2.

We Referenced the Traffic and rankings they represent to aid in supporting the importance of addressing Core Web Vitals

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Now We Have:

- **A Pulse on what vulnerabilities we have across the site**

- **Clear direction for where to dive in**

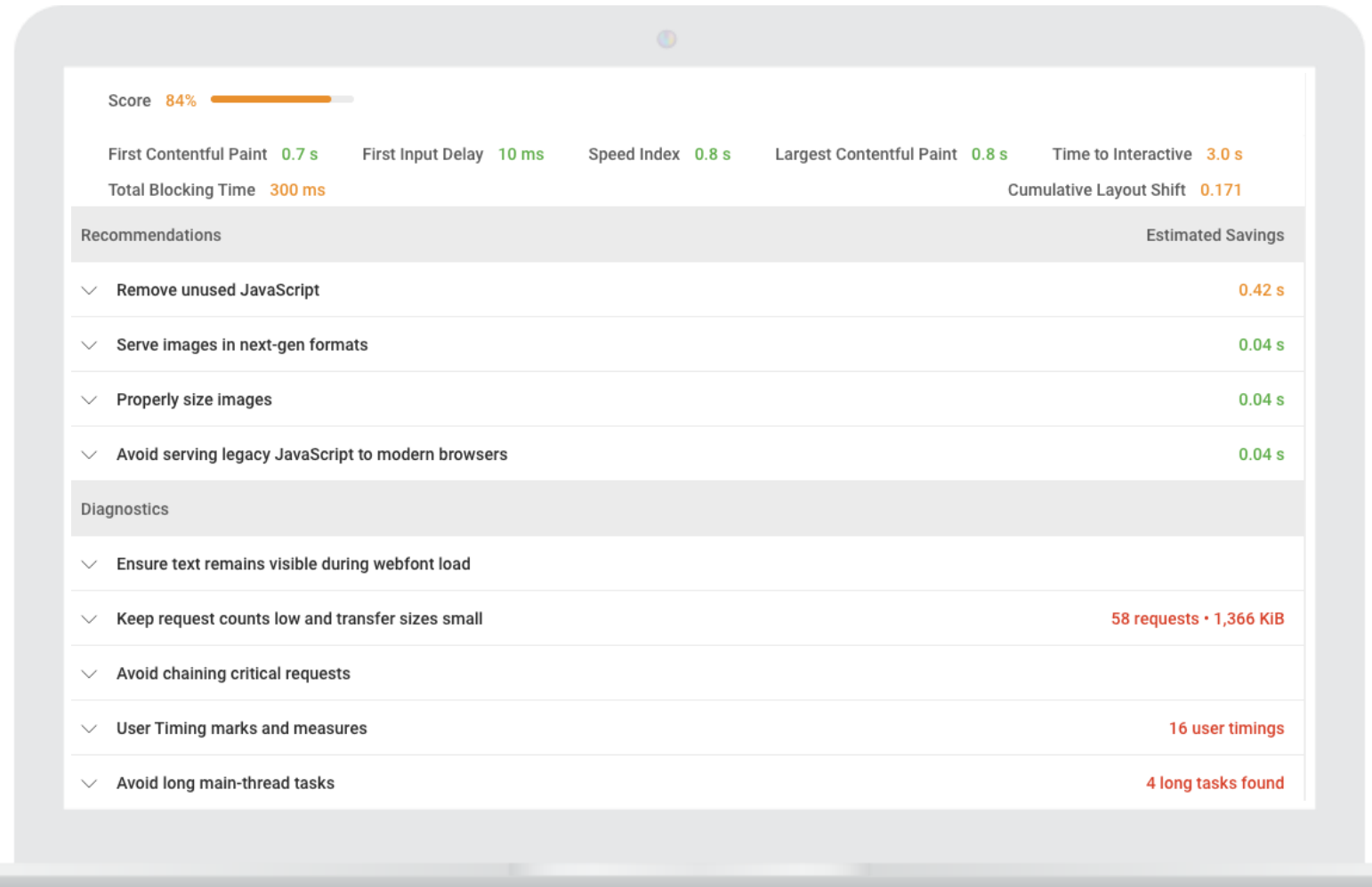- **Quantifiable Data to Justify Implementation**

Key Action Items:

- Set Core Web Vitals as a Department OKR

- Socialize analysis among leadership and QA and Development Teams

- Evaluate team sprint schedule to ensure core web vitals are part of planning

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We Evaluated Infrastructure at all Levels

QUESTIONS

- Is the CMS up to date?

- Is there legacy code blocking load times?

- Will the hosting support multiple locations consistently?

- Are images compressed sufficiently?

- Are videos loading efficiently?

Score 84%

First Contentful Paint 0.7 s	First Input Delay 10 ms	Speed Index 0.8 s	Largest Contentful Paint 0.8 s	Time to Interactive 3.0 s
Total Blocking Time 300 ms				Cumulative Layout Shift 0.171

Recommendations	Estimated Savings
Remove unused JavaScript	0.42 s
Serve images in next-gen formats	0.04 s
Properly size images	0.04 s
Avoid serving legacy JavaScript to modern browsers	0.04 s

Diagnostics	
Ensure text remains visible during webfont load	
Keep request counts low and transfer sizes small	58 requests · 1,366 KiB
Avoid chaining critical requests	
User Timing marks and measures	16 user timings
Avoid long main-thread tasks	4 long tasks found

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What We Found:

- **Multiple redundant CMS issues hindering LCP and FID**

- **Legacy code from prior tracking tools and infrastructure**

- **Tagging tools actually were hindering core web vitals**
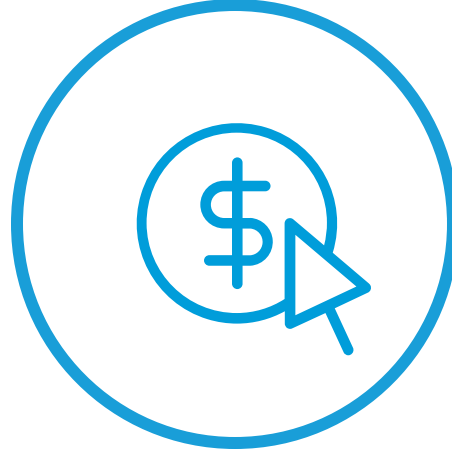
Key Action Items:

- Requirements document for site redesign

- Specific Code Fixes successfully implemented in the sprint

- OKR tracking to socialize improvements among leadership

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We Built Top-Down Support to Get Things Done

Check In

Through OKR check ins we ensure they are top of mind amid other priorities

Get Ahead

We justify key investments for new site architecture elements by getting ahead of development sprints

Monitor

We've continuously monitor and reported results back post-sprint to track progress with QA and Development teams

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Through Implementation We Are Able To:

- **Assuage concerns about core web vitals**

- **Track progress on a data-driven OKR**

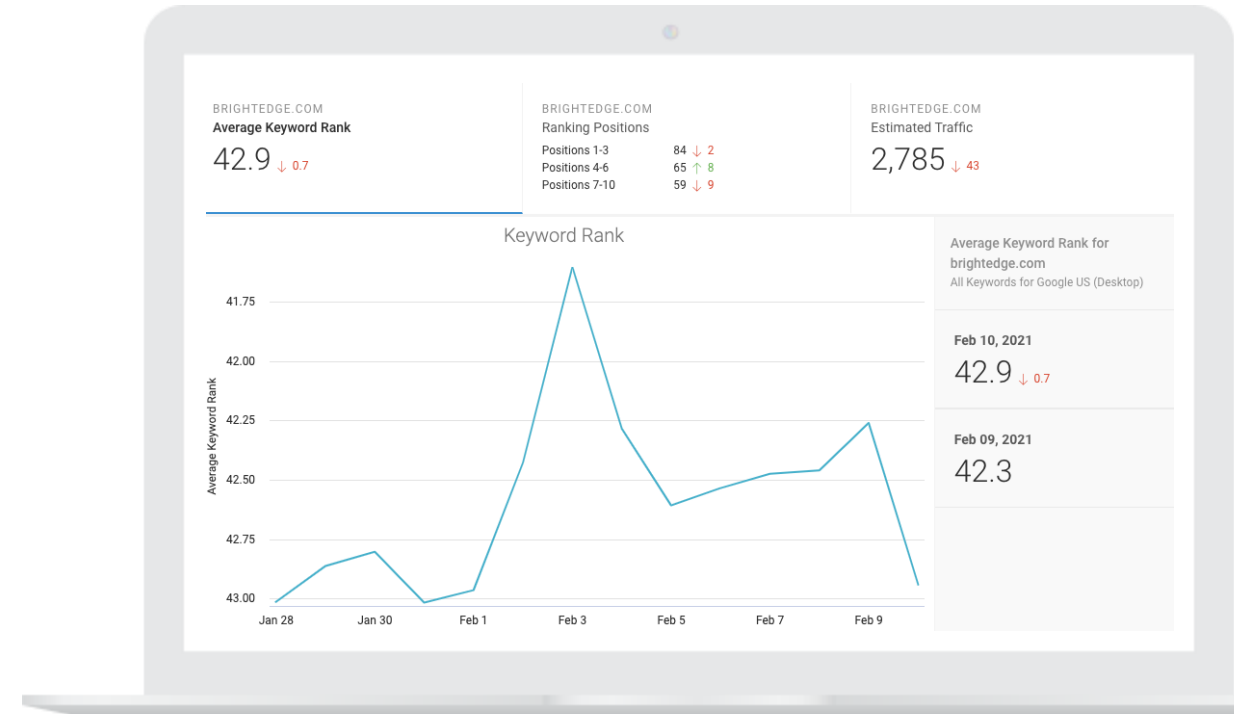- **Proactively sense and respond to fluctuations in Page Speed and competitive behavior**

Key Action Items:

- Continued socialization of progress

- Narrow forecasts and impact as we get closer to May

- Evaluate specific elements on a URL by URL basis to fine tune the program

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We are paying attention to macro and micro trends
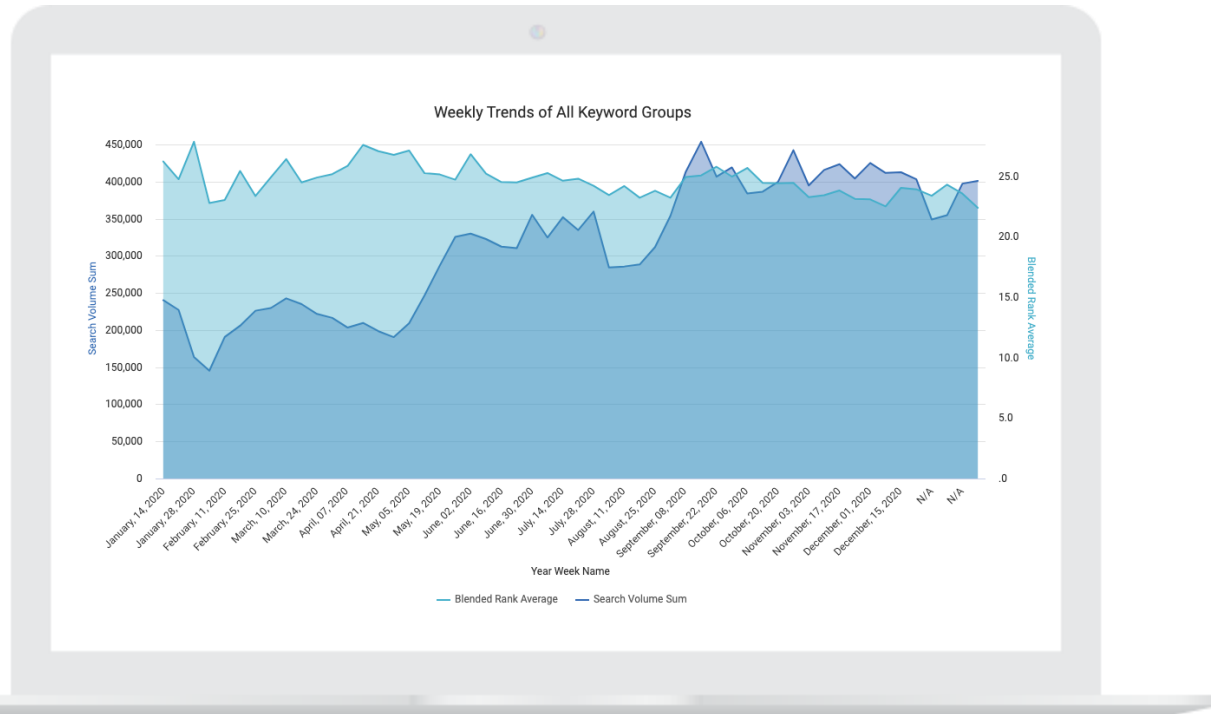
High level search behavior tells us how SERPs may evolve and what we may need to pivot from a strategy standpoint between now and May

We will continue to be watching daily fluctuations, particularly in May, to sense and respond to key changes

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Macro and Micro Trends help fine tune strategy

- **Macro Trends in volume and growth justify prioritization for core web vitals**

- **Micro Trends provide holistic activation points**

- **Now, we can sense and respond to ranking and upcoming behavioral data**

Key Action Items:

- Continued socialization leading to May

- Competitive Landscape analysis to see how our competitors are preparing

- Contingency planning with holistic teams for shifts that could happen

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Q&A