

Your SEO Holiday Triage Checklist

Even the best-prepared category managers find themselves in holiday ‘triage’ mode. Here are the five steps you can take to recover in the holiday season:



Assess

Understanding where you are is often half the battle. Start by:

- Reviewing last year’s performance** – Have an honest review of what worked and did not work in the last year to address weaknesses.
- Building your holiday keyword list** – Each season will have its own vital topics. Start here to keep yourself broad and open to ideas you haven’t thought of yet.
- Establishing holiday performance** – Crawl your holiday keyword set to determine search volumes and to see where you and competitors rank.
- Mapping performance to pages** – Understand what holiday assets and content you have already. Identify URLs that are performing well, not well, or not at all.
- Running a technical audit** – Identify issues that will limit your website’s success.



Prioritize

Select topics that pose the greatest potential. This includes:

- Categorizing holiday topics** – With the limited time available, select the most important topics. Establish which content should be optimized based on the topics you choose.
- Prioritizing your activities** – Prioritize content to be optimized based on the opportunity for improvement balanced against the difficulty of achieving it.



Optimize

Refresh the content and get it live! Start with:

- ✓ **Planning content changes** – Know which keywords to target and the process to update each piece of refreshed content.
- ✓ **Editing the content** – Based on the priorities you've set, optimize the existing content for keywords and user intent. Push each piece live as soon as you can!



Build

Gain authority and expand awareness by:

- ✓ **Driving awareness** – Drive people to the holiday pages early and often. Use social media, email campaigns, targeted advertising, and other channels to push customers to your holiday pages.
- ✓ **Spreading the link juice** – The most common mistake is creating content for events and not integrating these pages into the taxonomy of the site. Internal linking to these pages is absolutely critical to their success.



Measure

Know what to measure as your triage strategy gains traction, including:

- ✓ **Setting your goals** – Set realistic goals that make sense for your business – e.g., traffic, conversions, bounce rate. Know what KPIs to measure to show your progress. Communicate these goals and KPIs to the entire team to set expectations.
- ✓ **Establishing a baseline** – Knowing where you started from allows you to measure change and growth.
- ✓ **Setting a measuring cadence** – Measure KPIs as needed. The frequency may change – standard keyword tracking is weekly, but near event time monitoring daily has added value.

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