



## SEO Health Check

# Step: 1

Before anything else, we need to know where your site stands today - Trailhead Consulting Partners, LLC.

# Hi, I'm Chase

This guide is just the start.



## Chase Aertker

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Founder, Trailhead Consulting Partners

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With over a decade of experience in digital marketing, I've helped small businesses, startups, and service-based teams build smarter marketing systems that drive real results. I've led SEO strategy at agencies, built in-house marketing teams, and currently consult with companies looking to scale — without wasting budget on fluff.

My focus is on clarity and control. I built this guide to help you take control of your marketing foundation — whether you're doing it yourself, or hiring smart. These aren't agency pitches. They're playbooks. Practical, proven steps that help you grow your business online.

## Chase Aertker

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### Our Proposal

This document is part of a larger system designed to equip you with the insights, tools, and strategies you need to compete — and win — in today's digital space. Whether you're launching a brand-new business, reworking a tired marketing engine, or simply looking for clarity in a noisy online world, this guide is here to help. It's built to meet you exactly where you are — no jargon, no fluff — and provide a clear path for-

ward. Each section is crafted not just to inform, but to empower you with practical steps, scalable strategies, and the kind of marketing confidence that usually takes years (and expensive retainers) to build. Consider this your trail map — a guide to get you moving, and growing, in the right direction.

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# About

## — Trailhead Consulting Partners

Trailhead was created to help small and service-based businesses compete online—without burning through cash or chasing trendy tactics. We offer agency-level marketing strategy and execution, minus the overhead, confusion, and inflated retainers. Whether you need a clear SEO roadmap, support managing content and campaigns, or simply a partner to guide your growth, we're here to help you build a better path forward.



## — About Our Company

We believe great marketing should be practical, teachable, and tailored to your goals—not hidden behind buzzwords or gatekeeping. That's why every project starts with a conversation, not a pitch.



# — Step 1: SEO Health Check

Get a clear look at how your website is performing right now —  
and what's getting in the way.

Before diving into strategy or content creation, start with a clear baseline. This means identifying technical issues, checking your site's visibility, and ensuring search engines can actually access and understand your pages.

Use free tools like Google Search Console, PageSpeed Insights, and Screaming Frog (free version) to quickly scan for red flags like broken links, slow load times, or missing metadata. You don't have to fix everything at once—but knowing where you stand helps you plan smart.



## — Google Indexing

If your site isn't showing up in Google's search results, nothing else you do matters. Use `site:yourdomain.com` in Google to see what pages are currently indexed. If key pages are missing—or worse, if nothing shows at all—you'll need to check your sitemap, robots.txt file, and crawl settings in Google Search Console. Indexing is the foundation of visibility.



## — Site Performance

Slow sites, broken links, and mobile issues all chip away at your rankings. A quick audit can highlight what's holding your site back. Even small fixes—like speeding up load times or cleaning up 404 errors—can lead to better SEO and a smoother user experience.



## — Navigation Structure

If Google—or your visitors—can't find your most important pages, they won't get the attention they deserve. Keep your key content within two clicks of the homepage, and use clear internal links to guide both users and search engines through your site.

# — Step 2: Keyword Strategy

Keyword strategy is the foundation of search visibility. Before you create content or optimize pages, you need to know what your customers are actually searching for—and why. This step helps you uncover the terms that matter most and turn them into actionable page plans.



Discover how your customers are searching and build your content around it.

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## Build Intent Into Every Page

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Not all keywords are created equal. The best ones match what your customers are actually searching for—and reflect where they are in their buying journey. Instead of just picking terms with the highest volume, look for search intent: are they ready to buy, just browsing, or comparing options?

Use tools like Ubersuggest, Google Keyword Planner, or AnswerThePublic to uncover long-tail phrases and real-world language your audience uses. Then assign those terms to specific pages based on their purpose: sales, support, education, or lead capture.

## Start Strong — Finish Strong

Plan First. Rank Faster.

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### Trailhead Insight

The right keyword strategy connects your content to the people actively looking for it. Start by mapping keywords to your core pages: services, FAQs, blog content, and your homepage. This ensures each page is optimized for a specific topic—and avoids overlap or cannibalization.

You don't need a 10,000-term list. What you need is clarity: what each page is about, who it's for, and which search queries it should rank for. Group keywords into topic clusters to build topical authority and show Google that your site is a trusted resource.

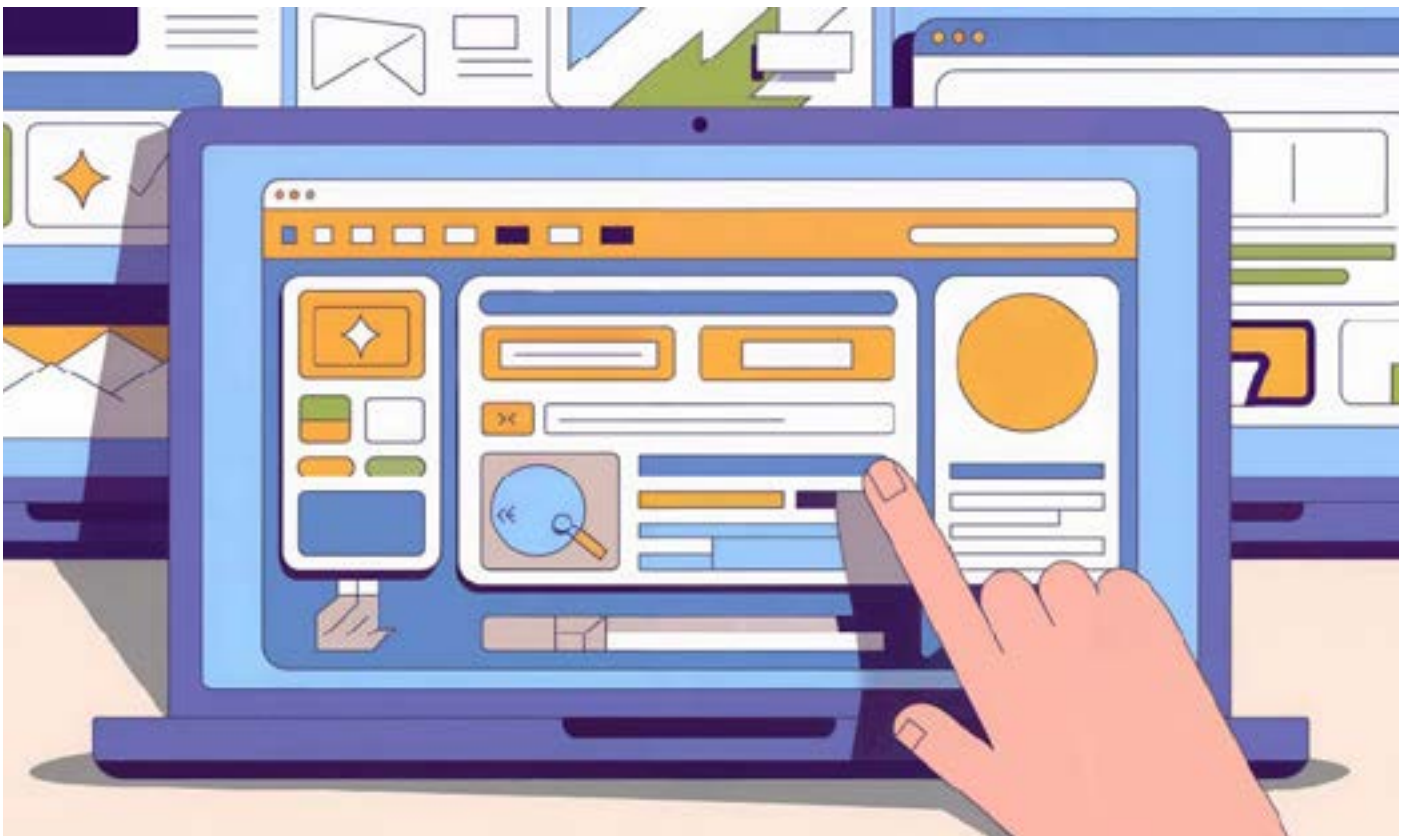
# Step 3: On-Page Optimization

Every page on your site should serve a purpose—and be easy for both users and Google to understand. On-page SEO helps each page get found, load fast, and convert better.



— Clarity Wins.

The better Google can understand your page, the better chance it has of showing up in search—and getting in front of the right audience.



## Build Pages with Purpose

Each page should target a specific keyword or topic. No overlap, no confusion.

## Clear Content Structure

Use one H1, then break things up with H2s and H3s. Add bullet points and bold key info.

## Mobile & Speed Matter

A page that's slow or unreadable on mobile will drop in rankings—fast.

# Step 4: Local SEO (Optional)

## — Local SEO: Be Found Where It Matters

Your customers are searching locally. Make sure you're the one who shows up when it counts.



### Context/Problem

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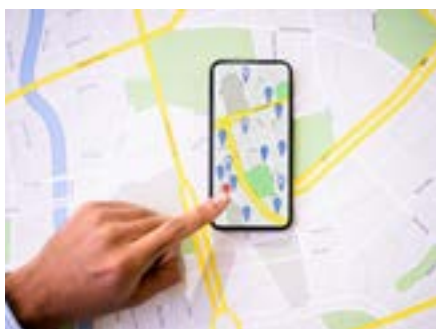
Local SEO isn't just for restaurants and retail. If your business serves a specific geographic area—even remotely—you're eligible to show up in local map listings and "near me" searches. The best part? These clicks often convert faster than organic traffic.



### Tactics/Action

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Claim and optimize your Google Business Profile. Use consistent name, address, and phone (NAP) data across the web. Gather local reviews, choose the right service categories, and add high-quality photos. Make sure your website also includes location signals and schema markup.



### 46% of all Google searches have local intent

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If your site isn't optimized locally, you're missing nearly half of your potential audience.



### Consistent NAP = Local trust

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Make sure your business name, address, and phone number match everywhere online.



### Google Business Profile = Must-Have

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This is your most important local listing. If you haven't claimed it, start there.



# Step 5: Content Planning

Content is more than blogs—it's how you earn attention and build trust. This step shows how to plan content that actually supports your SEO and drives results.



## Core Strategy

Before creating anything, define your content goals. Do you want to bring in new traffic? Nurture leads? Rank for keywords tied to your services? Start with a content map:

- Assign keywords to specific pages
- Fill gaps in your service or location coverage
- Add blog topics that answer common customer question

Focus on quality over quantity. One strong post with a clear purpose, call to action, and SEO-friendly structure can outperform five generic ones.

Use tools like Google Search Console, Ubersuggest, or AnswerThePublic to find new topics, and update old content that still gets traffic.



### Plan with Purpose

Assign every page or blog post a goal: traffic, ranking, education, or conversion.



### Update What's Working

Refreshing an old post with new data or structure is often faster and more effective than starting from scratch.



### Use Real Questions

Check your inbox, sales calls, or reviews. If a customer asked it, someone else is probably Googling it.

# Step 6: Marketing Management

Your long-term success depends on consistency, not chaos. You don't need to do everything, but you do need to do something—regularly.

Start small: set one content goal per month. Track performance. Review what's working quarterly. Update what's outdated. The most successful brands aren't the loudest; they're the most consistent. Whether you handle it yourself, delegate it, or build a lightweight process—turning strategy into repeatable motion is where real growth happens



Being “local” online means more than listing your address. Local SEO is about showing up—everywhere your customers might be searching for you.



## Build a System

Don't let marketing feel random. Create a monthly rhythm—publish, review, repeat. Structure beats guesswork every time.



## Use the Right Tools

Trello, Notion, Google Sheets, or a simple checklist—whatever helps you track progress and stay on task, use it.



## Measure What Matters

Focus on KPIs that move the needle. Track rankings, leads, and engagement—not vanity stats.

# Here's the Map - Take the First Step



## Keep Exploring

There's always more to learn. SEO isn't a one-time thing—it's an ongoing adventure.



## Apply What Works

You don't need to do everything—just do the next right thing for your business.



## Let Us Know

Have questions or need guidance? We're here when you're ready for a deeper dive.



This guide was never meant to be everything. It's a high-level playbook—a foundation to get you moving in the right direction. But there's so much more to uncover.

If you're ready to dig deeper into any part of this process—or just want someone to bounce ideas off—feel free to reach out.

And if now's not the time, no worries. Keep your eyes out for more resources coming soon. We're just getting started.

Chase Aertker

Founder, Trailhead Consulting Partners

### Coming Soon: The Trailhead Toolkit



A growing collection of templates, checklists, and step-by-step walkthroughs built for small business owners.