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How the Pros Redesign a Website Without Killing Their Rankings

Beth Kahlich – Search Engine Academy Texas

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Association

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SMU | Continuing and Professional Education

UT Dallas
The University of Texas at Dallas

SearchEngineAcademyTexas.com

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A&M Mays Business School

verizon
dcustom
division of D Magazine
MULTIVIEW
metroPCS.

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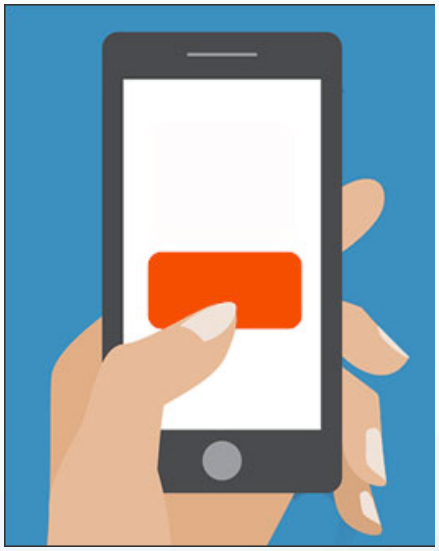
Why Change Your Website?

- Make sites more mobile friendly
  Accelerated Mobile Pages Project
- Moving to HTTPS
- Increase speed
- Re-align with business goals
- New design
- And more!



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Re-evaluate Your Website's Tech

- Entry Level
  - Weebly, GoDaddy, SquareSpace
- Old School
  - straight HTML (Dreamweaver)
  - Custom programmed CMS
- Enterprise Level
  - All In One Platform
- **If you don't have access to login and make simple text changes to your site, that's an issue.**

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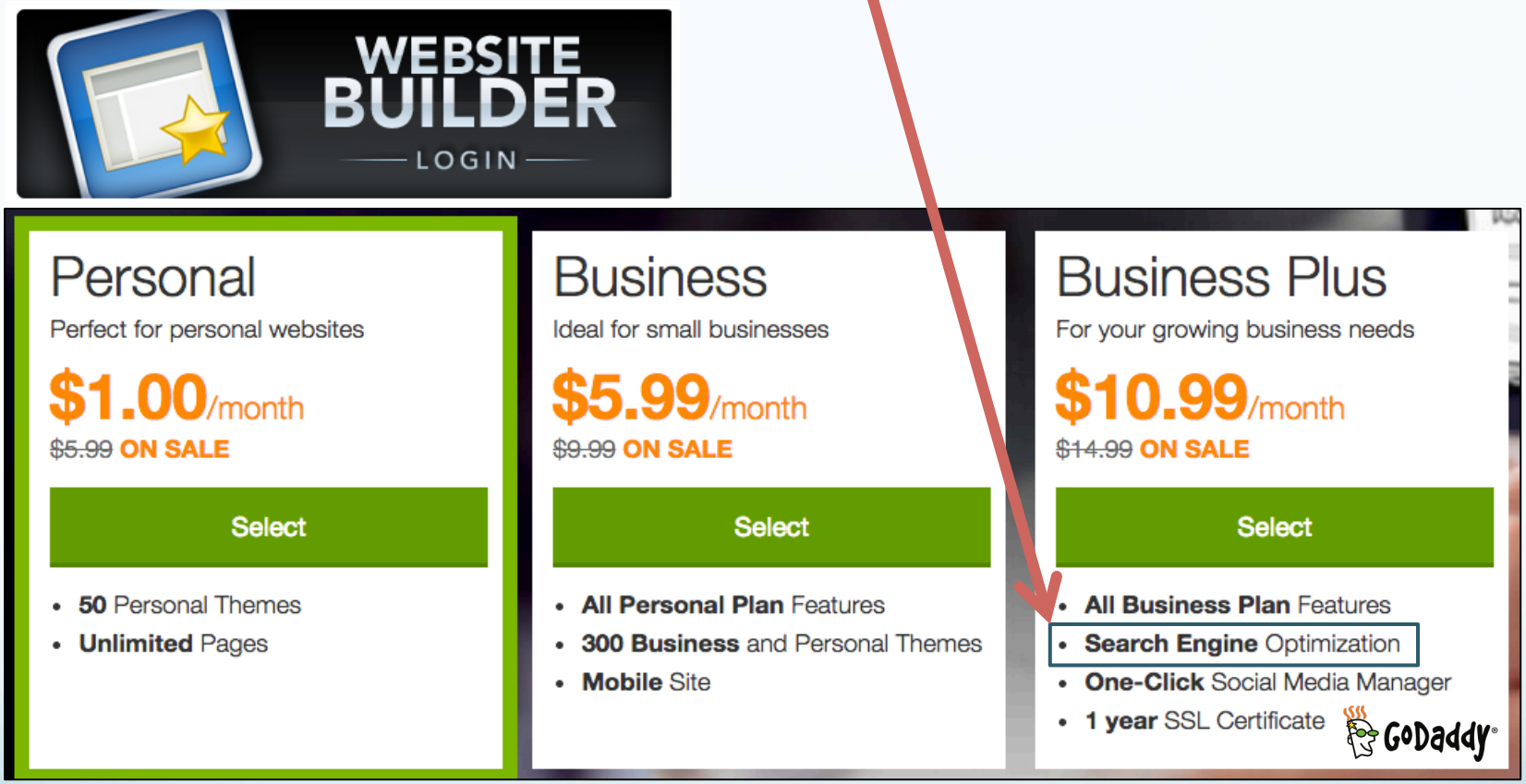
You Want SEO With That?



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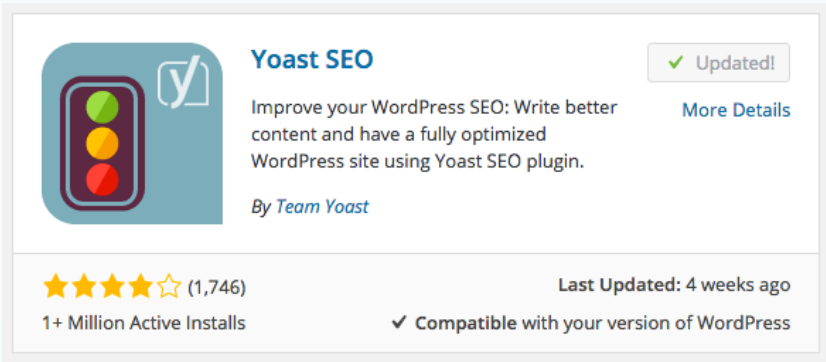
WordPress!

WORDPRESS
GREAT FOR THE WEB. GREAT FOR SEO



Challenges for larger organizations

- **Different roles of website (and technologies)**
- **Varied platforms – use the right platform for the right role!**
- **Your marketing website is unique!**

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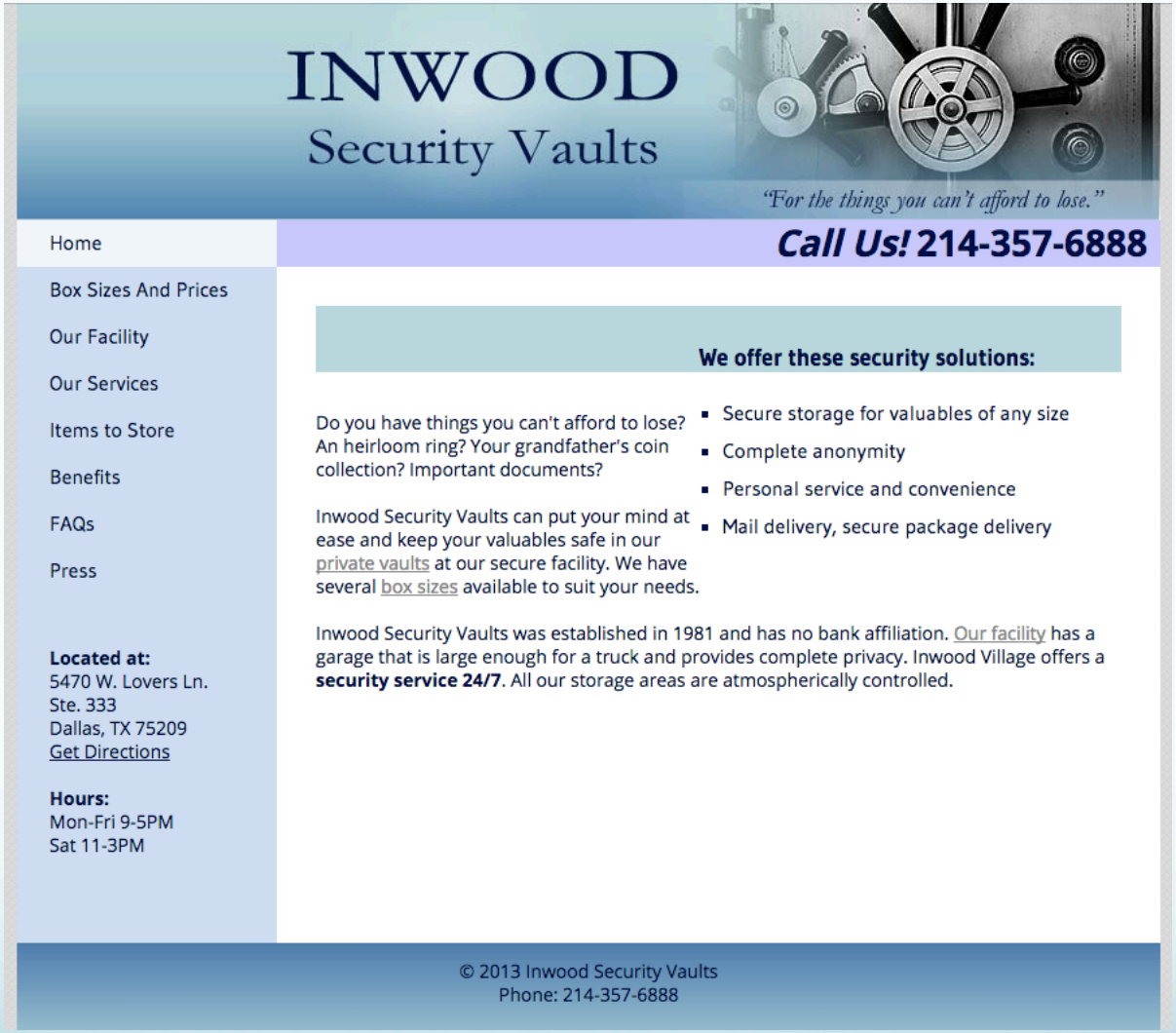
Before

2011



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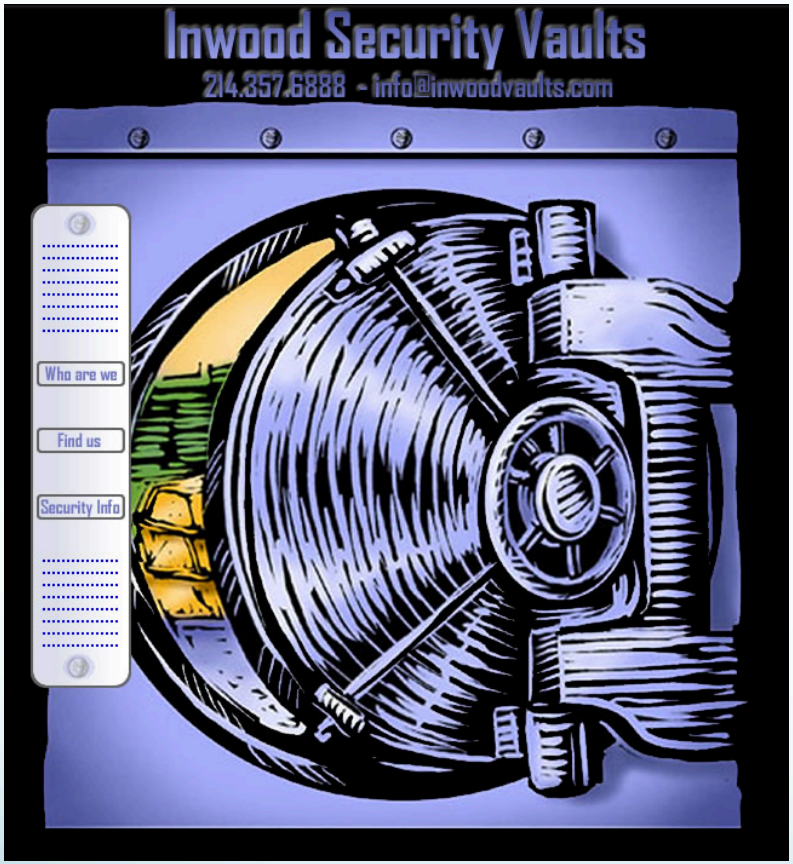
2007



2009

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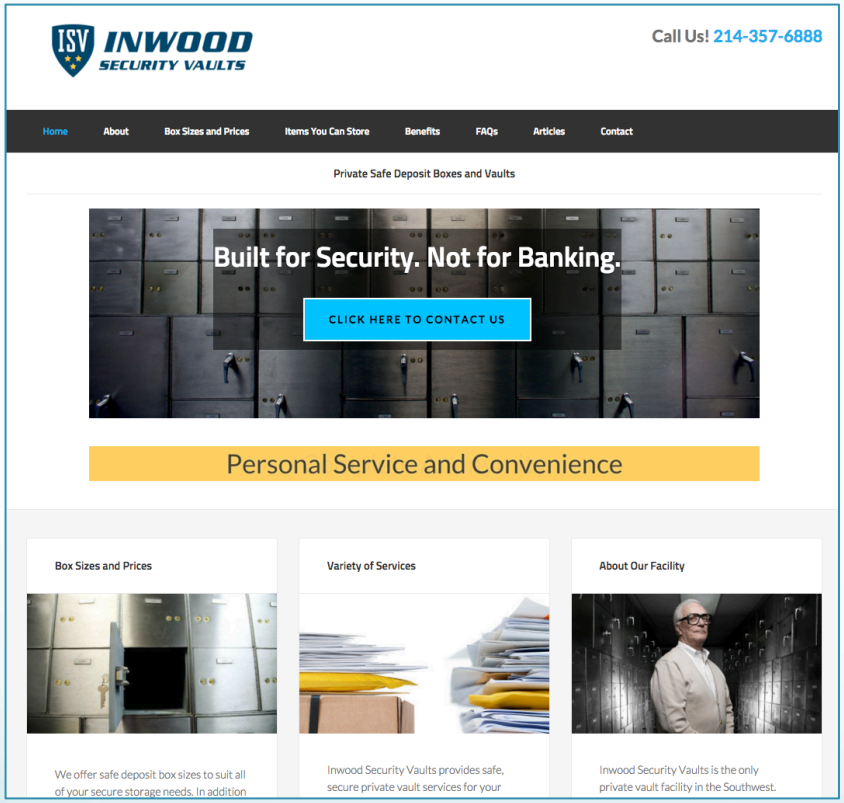
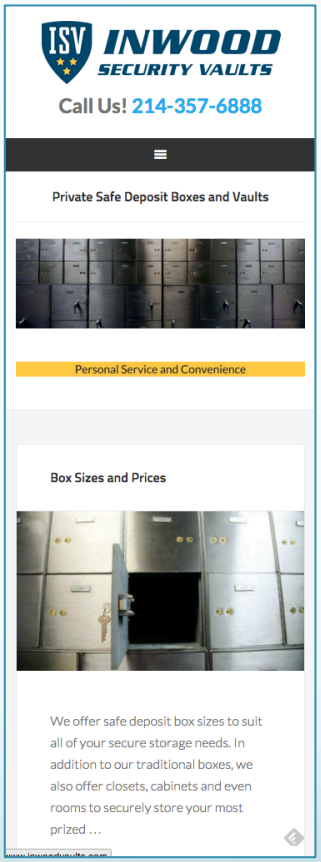
After

mobile responsive





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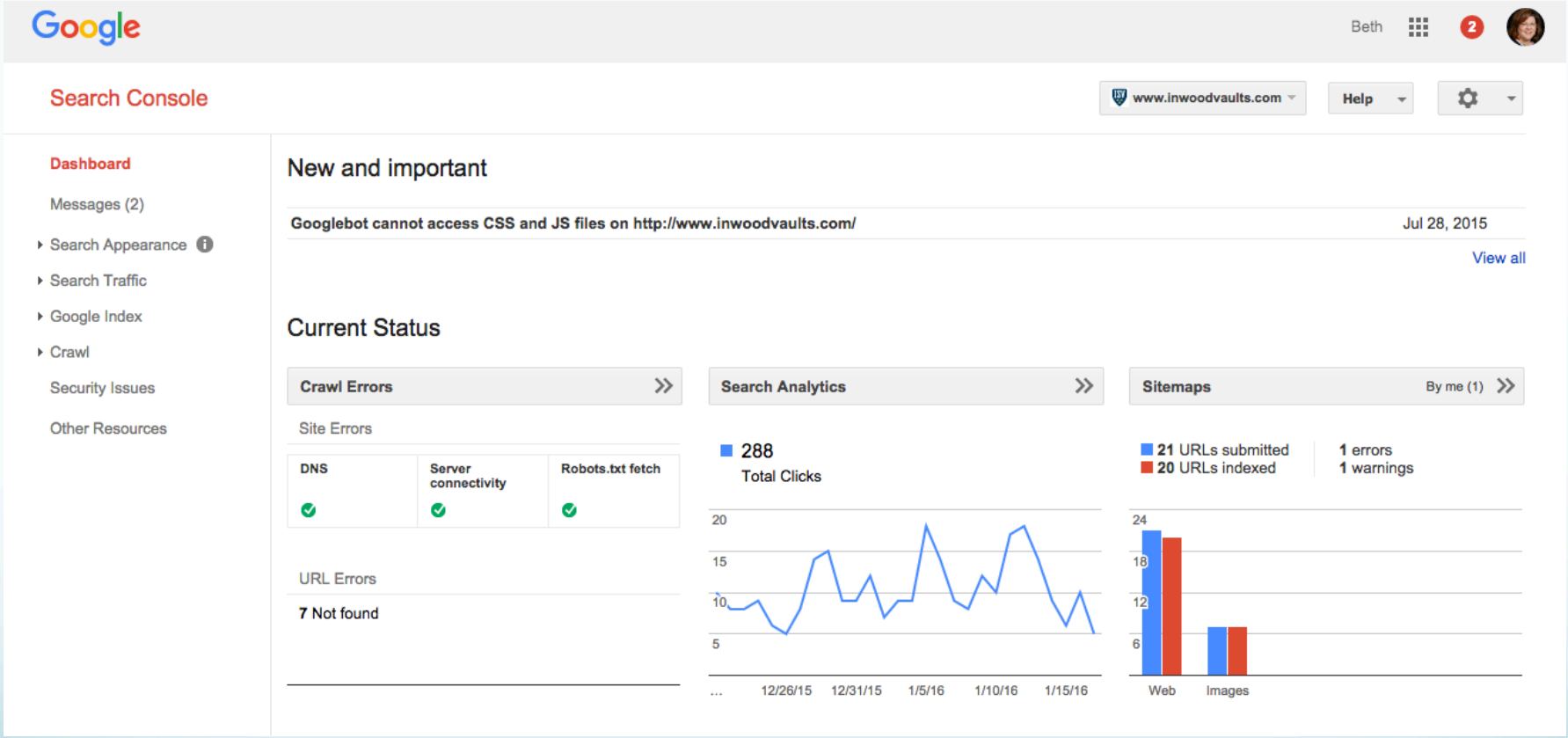
Google Search Console is Your Friend!



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Your Web Developer is Your Friend

Do they have programming capabilities, or do they just know how to edit a site only from the WordPress backend?

Big difference…

A Webmasters Checklist to Protecting Traffic and Rankings During a Website Redesign
https://www.searchenginenews.com/se-news/content/seo-tips-for-website-redesign

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What Next?

Six Steps to a SEO Friendly Website Move

1. Crawl Your Own Site

A. Screaming Frog

B. Do a Google Search
   - site:yourwebsite.com

URL - web address of each page on the site

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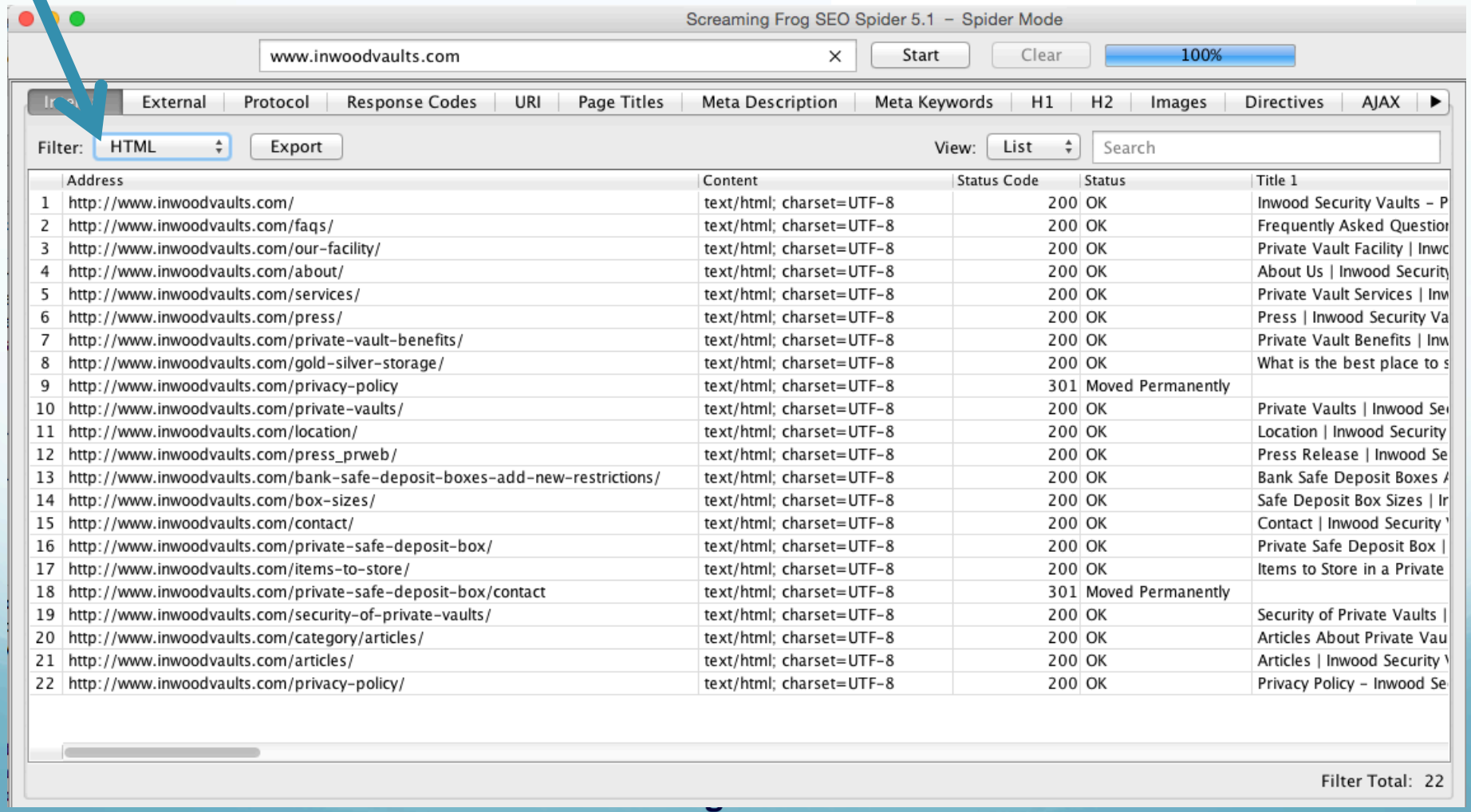
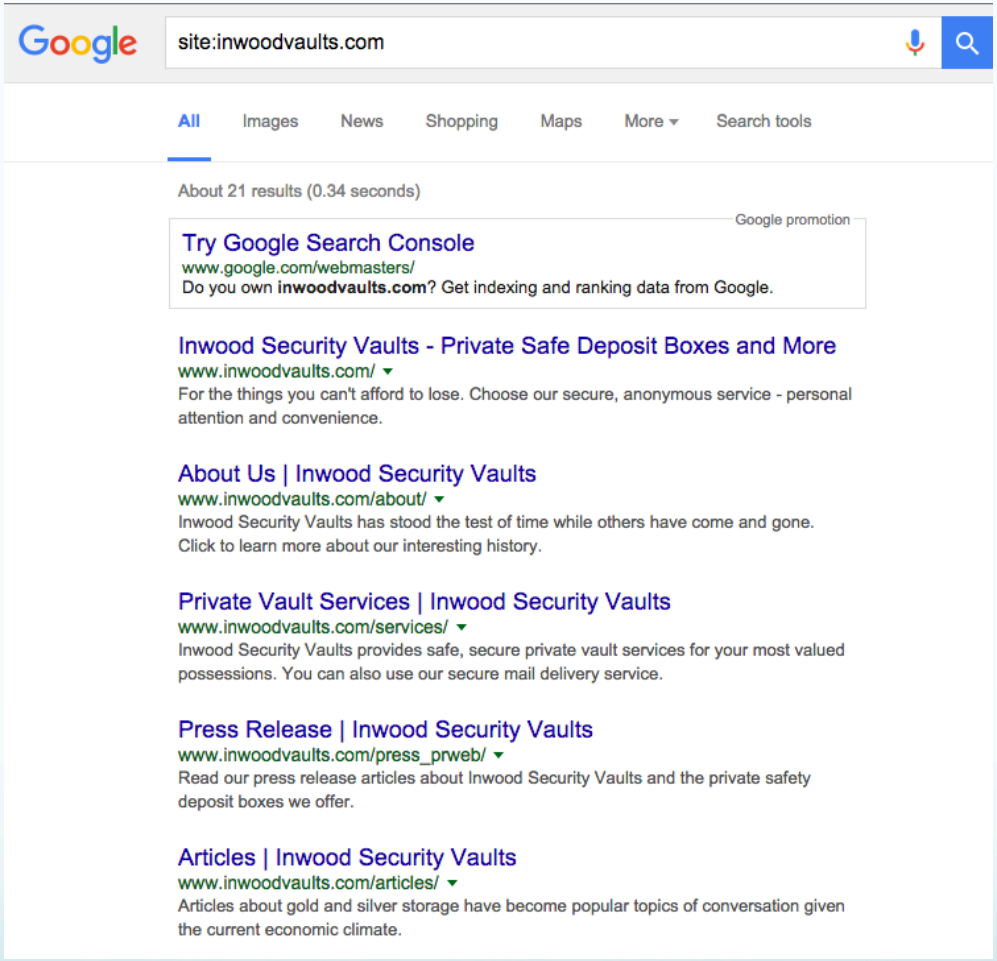
Screaming Frog SEO Spider

http://www.screamingfrog.co.uk/seo-spider/



	Address	Content	Status Code	Status	Title 1
1	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Inwood Security Vaults - P
2	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/faqs/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Frequently Asked Questio
3	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/our-facility/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Private Vault Facility | Inwc
4	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/about/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	About Us | Inwood Securit
5	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/services/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Private Vault Services | Inw
6	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/press/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Press | Inwood Security Va
7	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-vault-benefits/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Private Vault Benefits | Inw
8	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/gold-silver-storage/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	What is the best place to s
9	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/privacy-policy	text/html; charset=UTF-8	301	Moved Permanently	
10	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-vaults/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Private Vaults | Inwood Se
11	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/location/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Location | Inwood Security
12	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/press_prweb/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Press Release | Inwood Se
13	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Bank Safe Deposit Boxes /
14	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/box-sizes/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Safe Deposit Box Sizes | Ir
15	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/contact/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Contact | Inwood Security
16	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-safe-deposit-box/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Private Safe Deposit Box |
17	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/items-to-store/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Items to Store in a Private
18	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-safe-deposit-box/contact	text/html; charset=UTF-8	301	Moved Permanently	
19	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/security-of-private-vaults/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Security of Private Vaults |
20	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/category/articles/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Articles About Private Vau
21	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/articles/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Articles | Inwood Security
22	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/privacy-policy/	text/html; charset=UTF-8	200	OK	Privacy Policy - Inwood Se

Google Search of all pages



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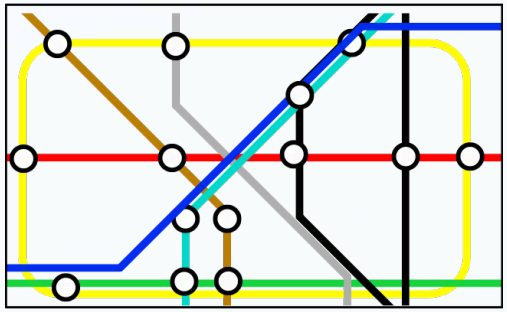
2. Map Site Architecture

- Use the software of your choice
- Microsoft Excel works well
  - track old site architecture and new site architecture



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Sample Before/After Site Architecture

	A	B
1	**Existing Page Layout**	
2	**Page**	**Subpage**
3	**Home**	
4		
5	**About**	
6		
7	**Windows**	
8		Energy Efficient
9		Replacement
10		Premium Vinyl
11		Aluminum
12		
13	**Doors**	
14		Fiberglass Entry
15		Steel Entry
16		French
17		Patio
18		
19	**Gallery**	
20		
21	**Contact**	
22		Testimonials
23		F.A.Q.
24		

	G	H	I
	New Page Layout		
	Home	Add 3 blocks on Home Page	
		Window Replacement	
		Door Replacement	
		Get a Free Quote	
	About		
	Window Products		
		Vinyl Windows	
		Energy Efficient Windows	
		Aluminum Windows	
	Door Products		
		Entry Doors	
		French Doors	
		Patio Doors	
	Areas We Service		
		[Have a separate page with UNIQUE content for every city/town/area you serve]	
		>>focus on areas with best customers first	
	Gallery		
		[re-do this section to have pictures before/after]	
	Reviews		
	FAQs	[no need for periods]	
		>> Have one page for each question - very specific	
	Contact		
	ADD TO FOOTER MENU		
	Articles		
		Types of Windows (one article that lists all the types of windows)	
		Types of Doors (one article that lists all the types of doors)	
		More specific articles can go here over time	
	Blog	[this is OPTIONAL - do not have to do at this time]	

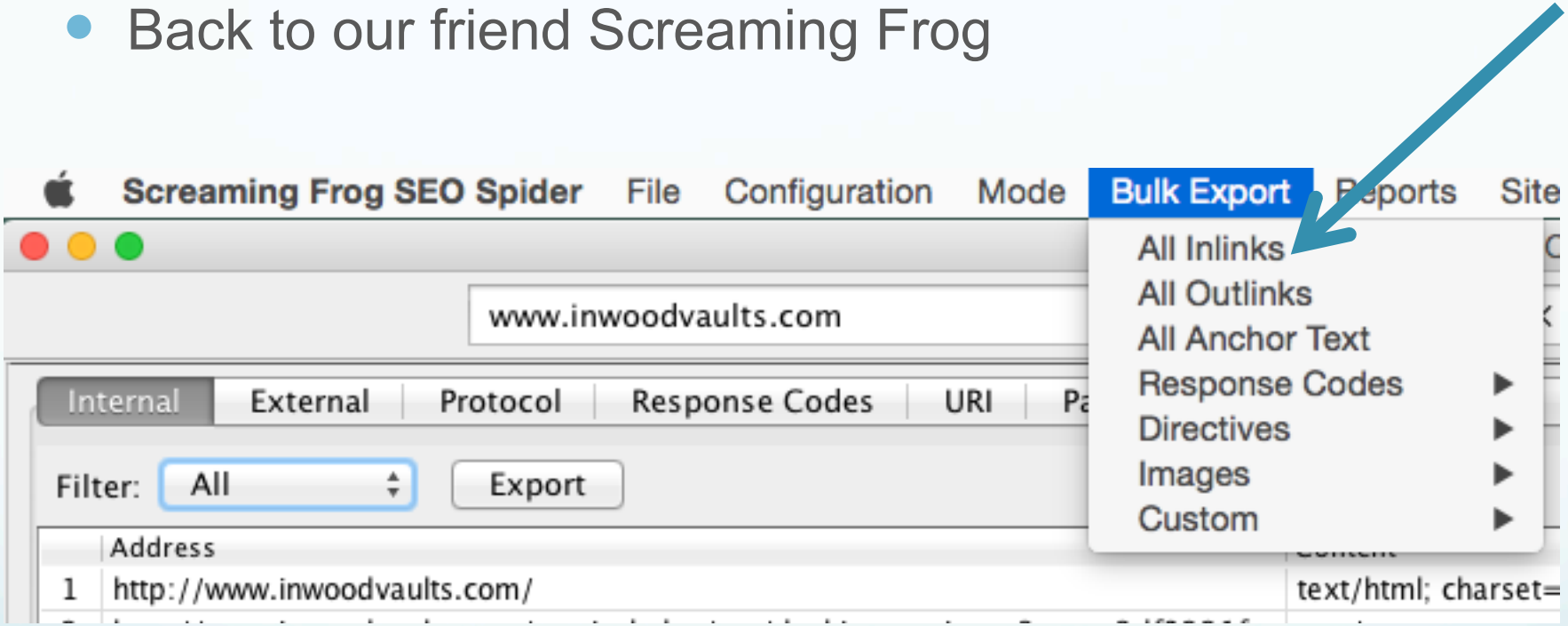
3. Map Before/After URLs

- Use Excel or Google Docs
- Share with your team – I have simple template I'll share with you

page or post	Menu Name (if applicable)	Old URL	New URL
page	Architect and Engineer Insurance	/commercial-insurance-agent-and-broker-dallas/architects-engineer-insurance/	/architects-engineer-insurance-texas/
page	Auto Dealers & Auto Services Insurance	/commercial-insurance-agent-and-broker-dallas/auto-dealer-insurance/	/auto-dealer-insurance-texas/
post	Broker/Dealer Errors & Omissions	/brokerdealer-errors-omissions-insurance-solutions/	/brokerdealer-errors-omissions-insurance-texas/
page	Building Material Dealers Insurance	/commercial-insurance-agent-and-broker-dallas/building-material-dealers-insurance/	/building-material-dealers-insurance-texas/

4. Check Your Internal Links

- Back to our friend Screaming Frog



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Find Hidden Internal Links to Old URLs

http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/faqs/		FAQs	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/our-facility/		Our Facility	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/about/		About	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/services/		Our Service	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/press/		Press	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-vault-benefits/		Benefits	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-vault-benefits/		the most se	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/gold-silver-storage/		Best Place t	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/privacy-policy		Privacy Poli	301	Moved Per	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/private-vaults/		Private Vau	2	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/location/		Location	2	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/location/		click for dir	200	OK	t
http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-new-restrictions/	http://www.inwoodvaults.com/bank-safe-deposit-boxes-add-		Bank Safe D	200	OK	t

Found incorrect link on this page – need to change to new URL

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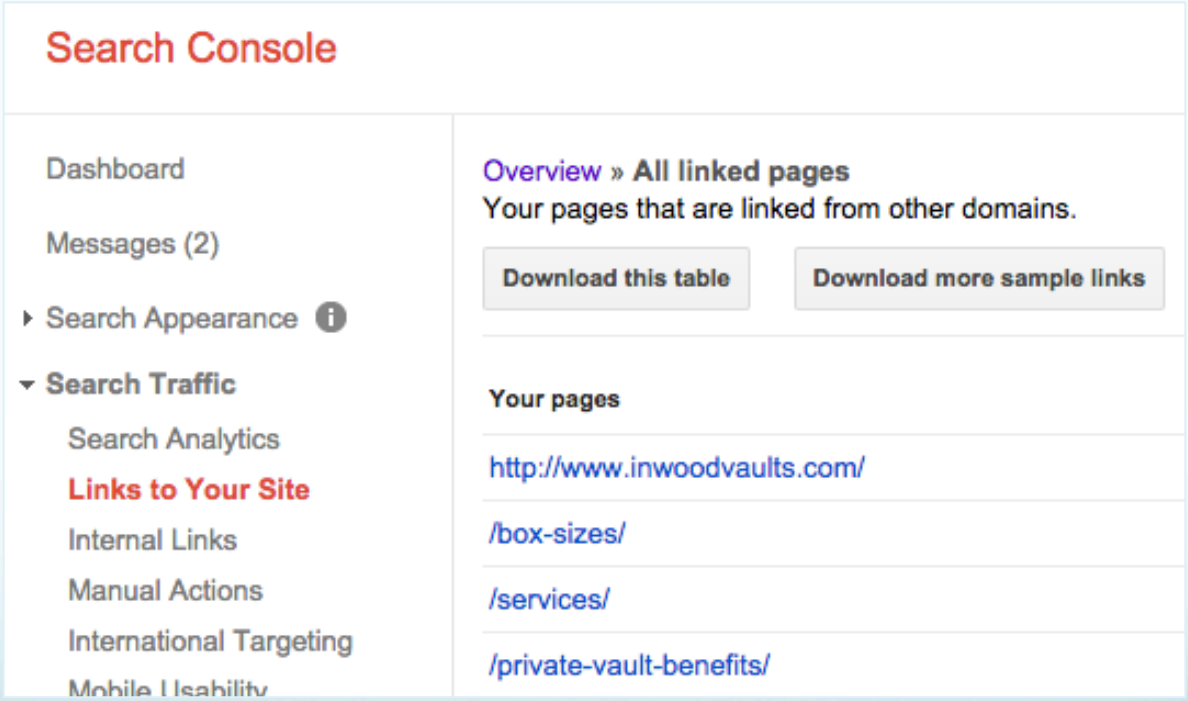
5. Check External Links

- Free: Google Search Console
  - Search Traffic > Links to Your Site > Your Most Linked Content



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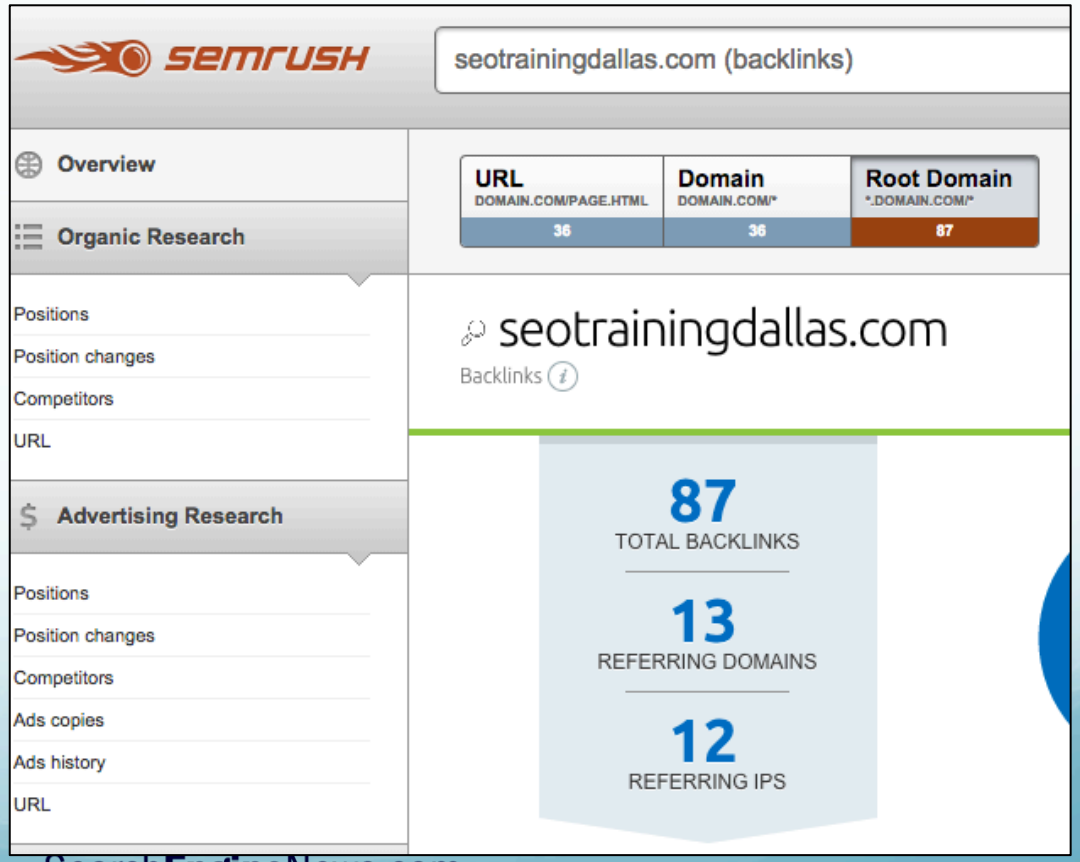
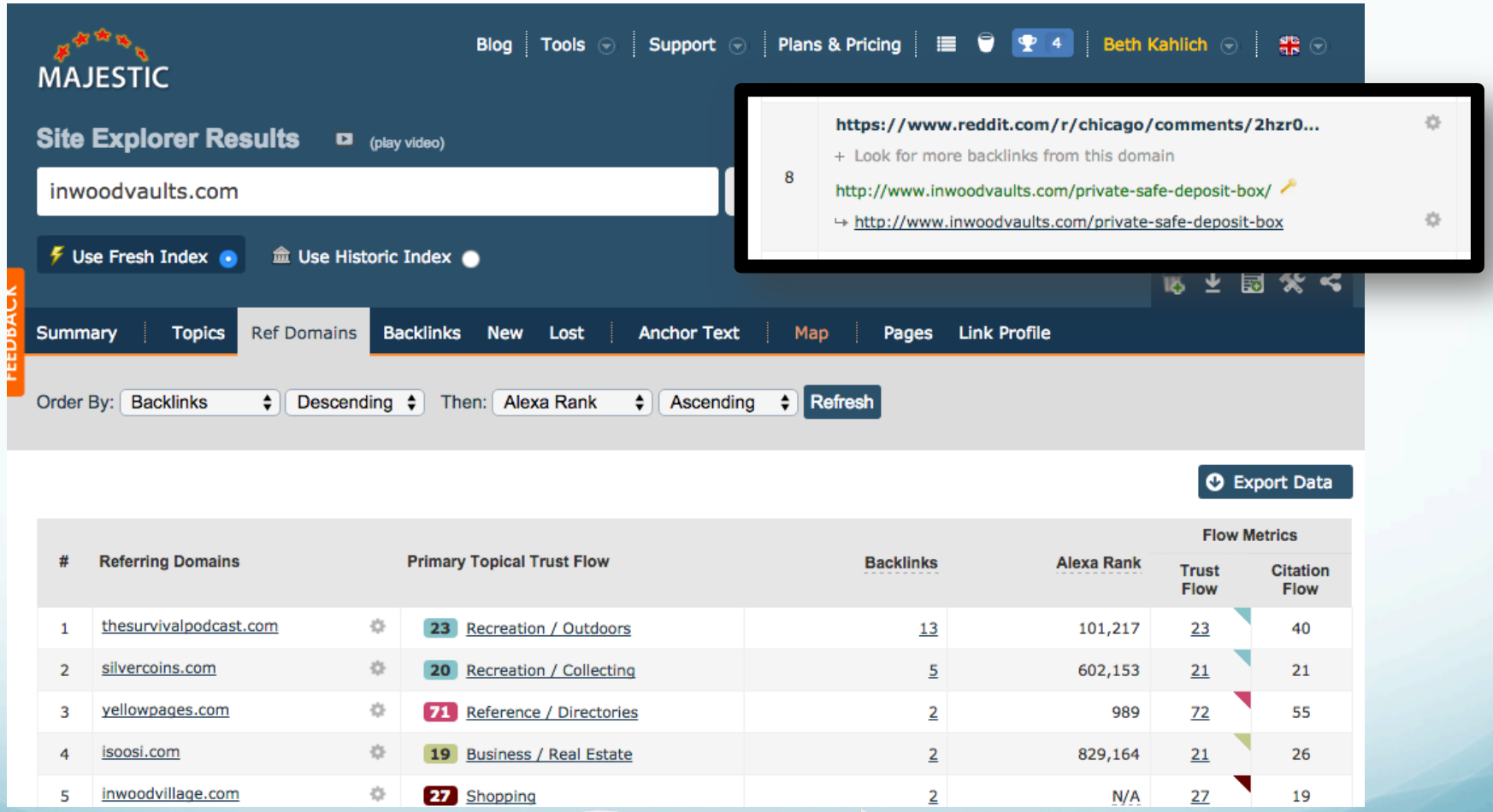
Check External Links

- Paid
  - Open Site Explorer (Moz Tool)
  - Majestic
  - SEMrush



Sample Report – Referring Domains



#	Referring Domains	Primary Topical Trust Flow	Backlinks	Alexa Rank	Flow Metrics	
					Trust Flow	Citation Flow
1	thesurvivalpodcast.com	23 Recreation / Outdoors	13	101,217	23	40
2	silvercoins.com	20 Recreation / Collecting	5	602,153	21	21
3	yellowpages.com	71 Reference / Directories	2	989	72	55
4	isoosi.com	19 Business / Real Estate	2	829,164	21	26
5	inwoodvillage.com	27 Shopping	2	N/A	27	19

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6. Redirects, Redirects, REDIRECTS!

- What is a redirect?
- A 301 redirect tells any visitor to your site (including Google) that the webpage has moved to a new URL [website address]
  - visitors will be “redirected” to the new URL of the page
- 302 redirect – temporary
  Don’t use these!

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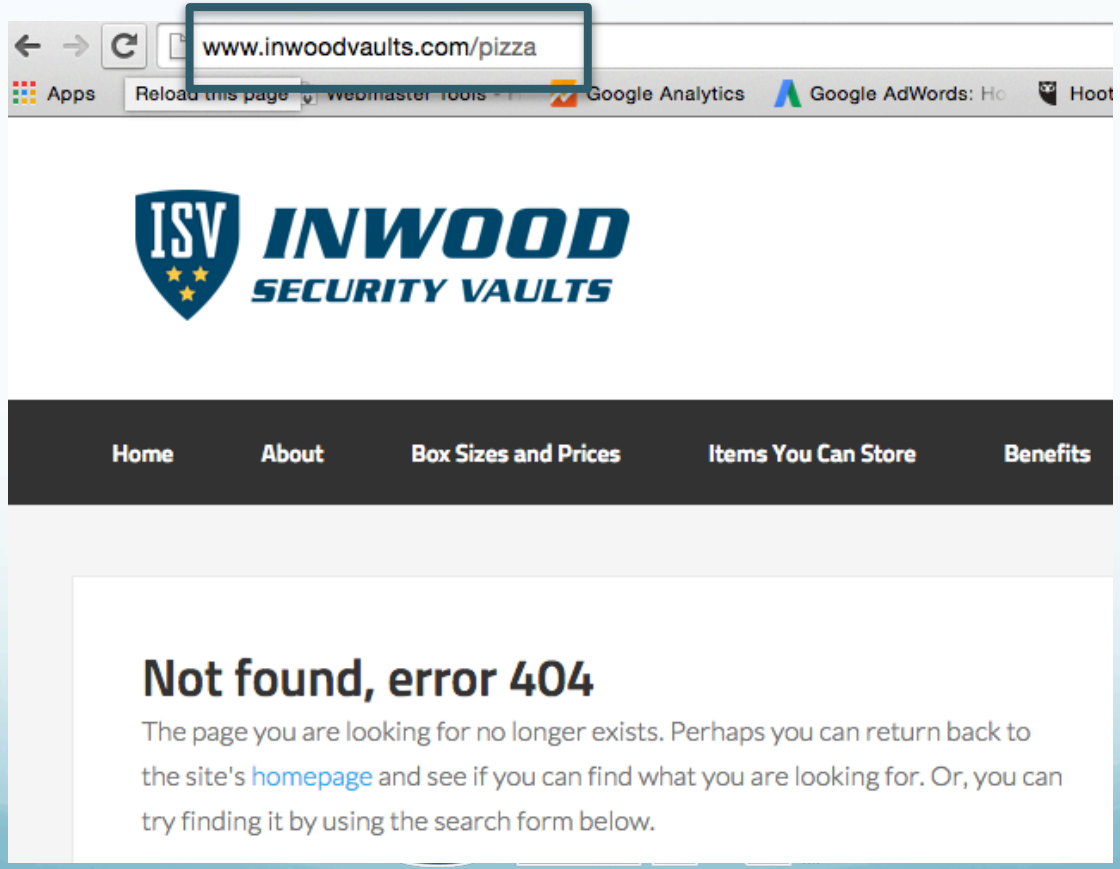
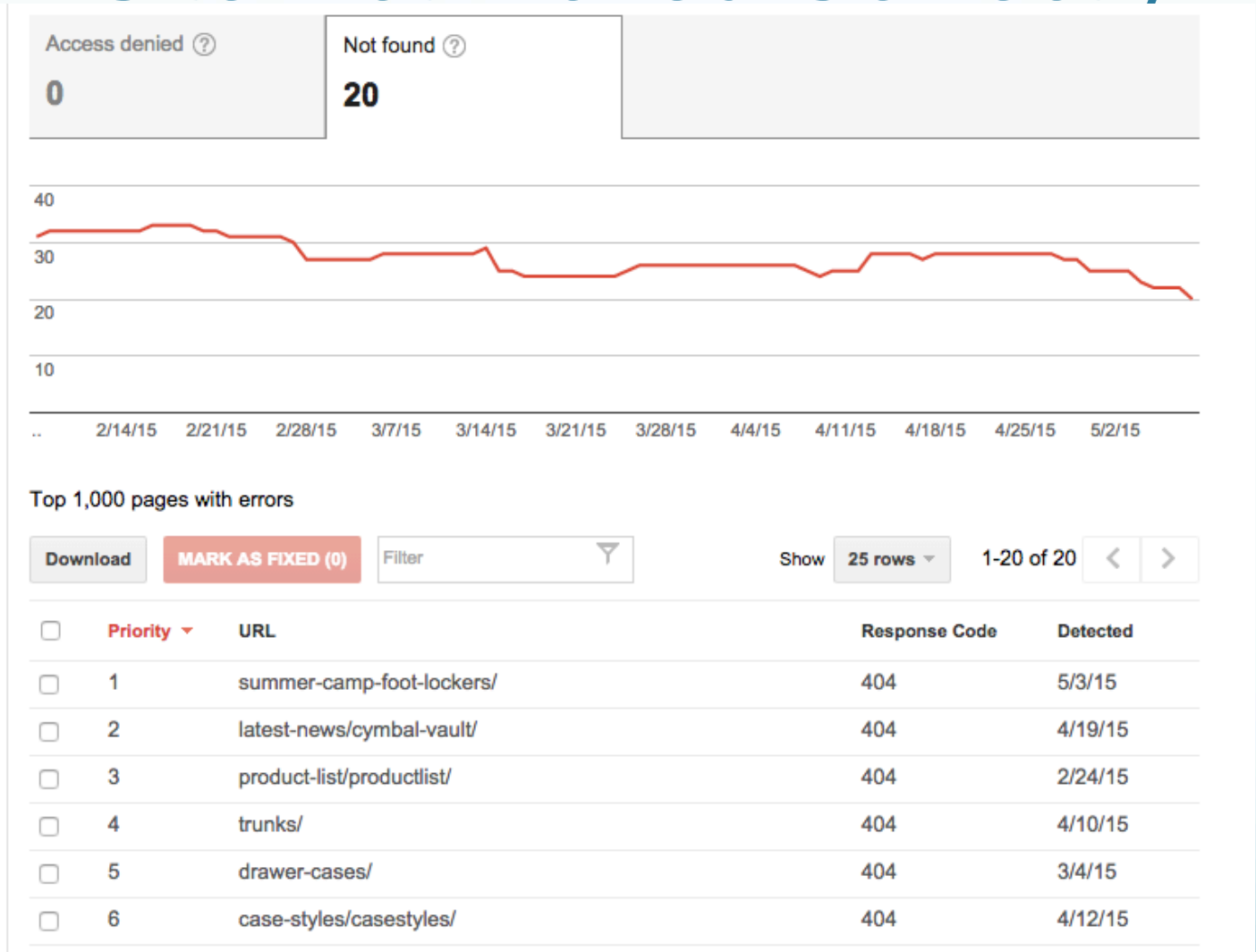
What is a 404?

- Tells human visitors and search engine visitors that the page is not located at that address



Site Not Moved Correctly



Priority	URL	Response Code	Detected
1	summer-camp-foot-lockers/	404	5/3/15
2	latest-news/cymbal-vault/	404	4/19/15
3	product-list/productlist/	404	2/24/15
4	trunks/	404	4/10/15
5	drawer-cases/	404	3/4/15
6	case-styles/casestyles/	404	4/12/15

Redirects Can Be Easy If…

- You are using WordPress
- There are many “plugins” for WordPress

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301 Redirect Plugin

Request example: `/about.htm` or `/directory/landing/`		Destination example: `http://www.seotrainingdallas.com/about/`
/seo-training-dallas-september-2014/	»	/september-2014-seo-training/
/seo-software-using/	»	/seo-software-how-to-choose/
/sitemap.xml	»	/sitemap_index.xml
/testimonials/	»	/reviews-dallas-search-engine-academy/
/reviews/	»	/reviews-dallas-search-engine-academy/
/digital-marketing-services/SEOCoaching Services/	»	/seo-coaching-services/
/seo-certification-classes-held-in-dallas-texas/	»	/
/learn-seo-the-right-way/	»	/
/how-to-get-your-boss-to-pay-for-seo-training-video/	»	how-to-get-your-boss-to-pay-for-seo-training/

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Advanced – .htaccess for 301 Redirects

- Plugin – easy but some think it is too “code heavy”
- 301 redirects can be done by your programmer in the .htaccess file
  - stored at the hosting level
  - accessed through FTP
  - edit with any text editor
- When to do this
  - Large site (50+ pages to be redirected)
  - No planned changes to URLs after move
  - Good access to your Programmer Friend ☺

Advanced – URL Canonical Tag

<link rel="canonical" href="http://www.seotrainingdallas.com/seo-software-recommendations/" />

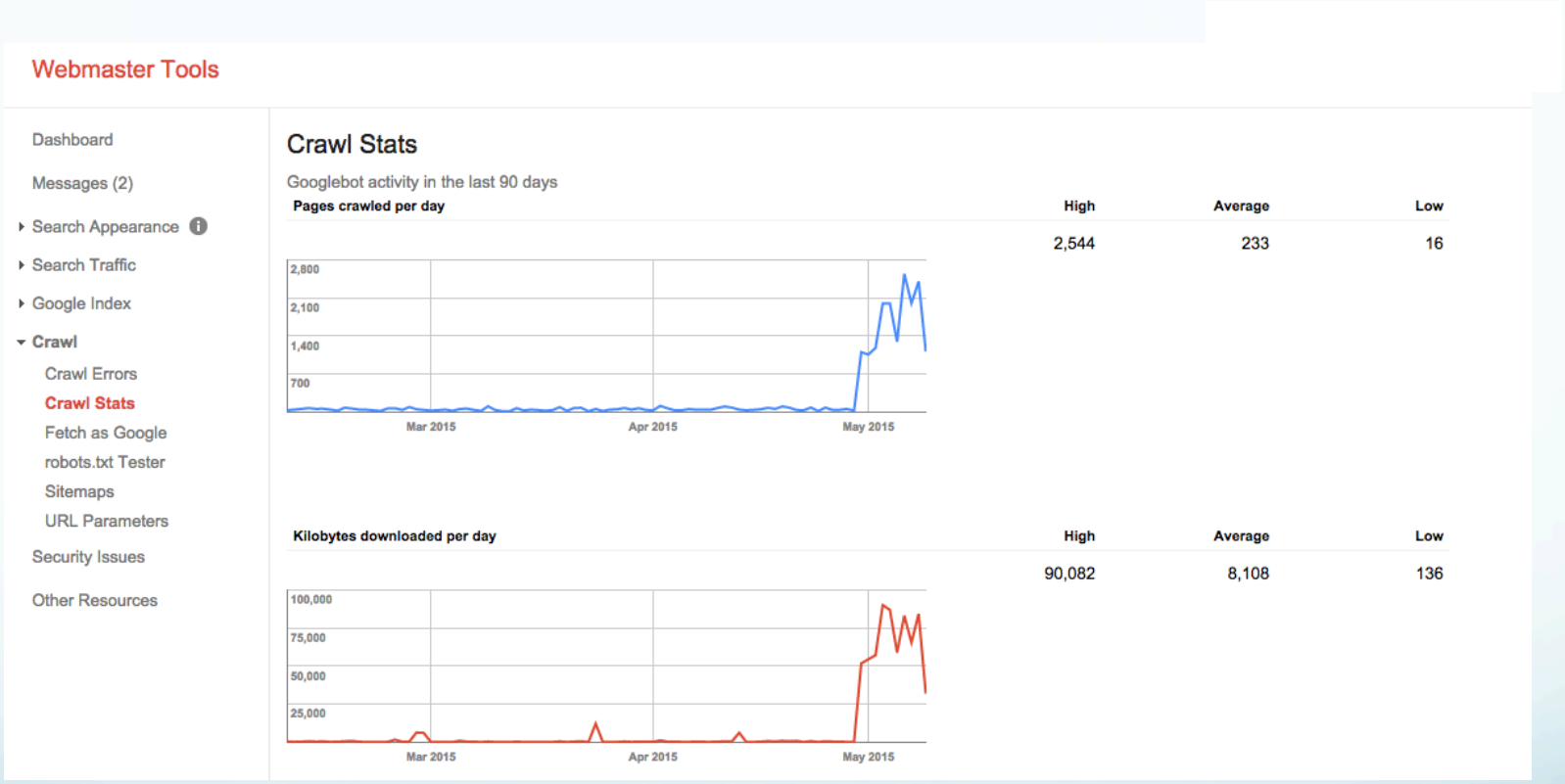
- Tells Google what the exact website address is of your web page
  - stored in the <head> section of your pages
  - unique to each page on your website

- Another good reason to use WordPress – it can handle this for you

https://yoast.com/rel-canonical/

What Happens When You Move Your Site?

What Google Does: Crawl Your Site More



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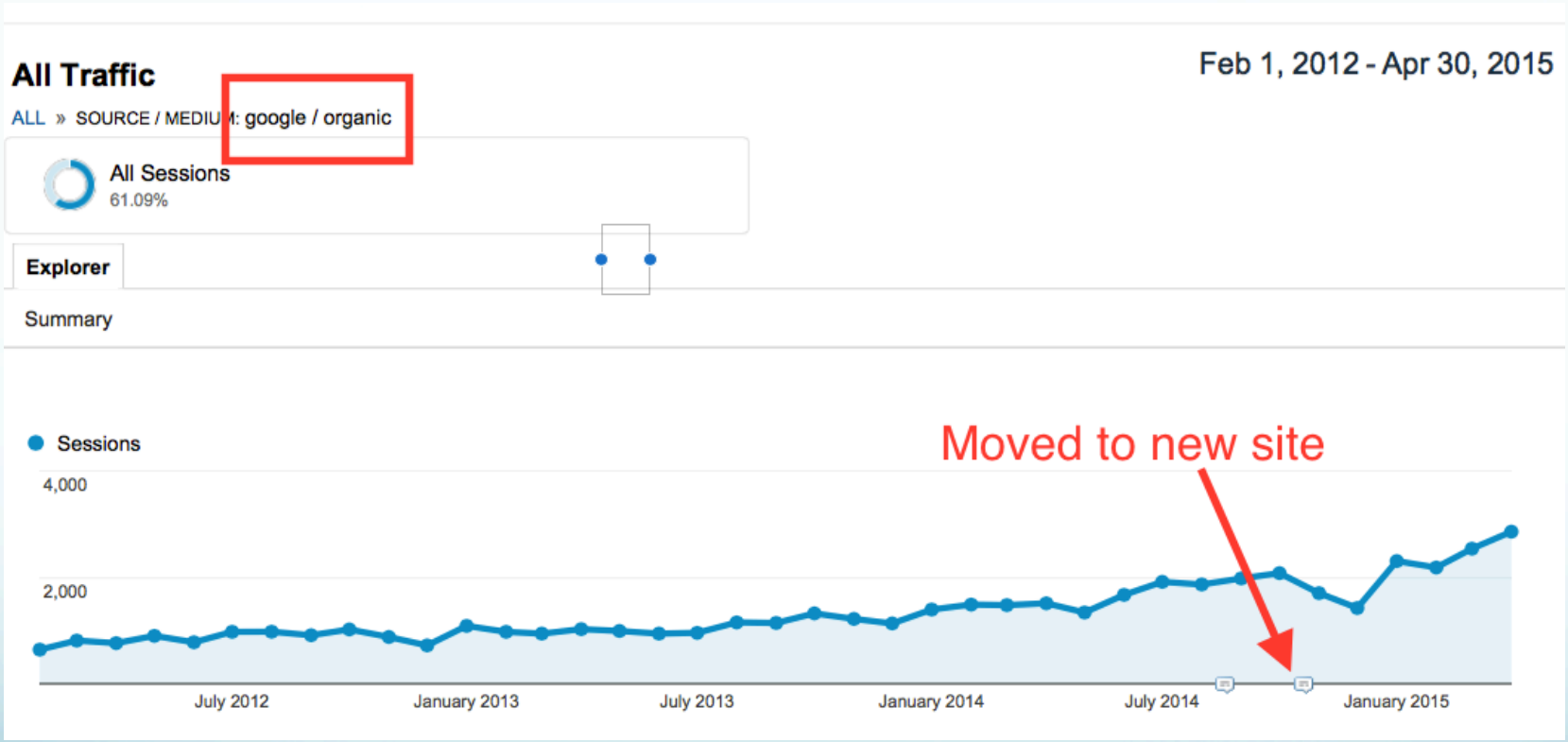
Good Results:
More Traffic from Google



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Case Study from Large Ecommerce

- Merchandising team was doing a great job of changing the URLs to be more relevant
- They were well-aligned with website team – so 301s were happening correctly
- result – 17% drop in traffic
- Conclusion:
  HAVE A PLAN
  DON'T CHANGE
  TOO MUCH

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Wrap Up

- You should most likely plan on moving your site to a new design and/or platform every 3 years
- New technologies could mean you have to move your site sooner
- Don't ignore Google Search Console
  - Please!
- STAY ORGANIZED
- Make friends with your programmer ☺

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QUESTIONS