Crystal Cook: Welcome to the SearchEngineNews July 2016 MasterClass with Kristine Schachinger, "Technical SEO: Hidden Gains – How Strong is Your Site's Foundation."

Casey Markee: Make sure to take GOOD notes peeps. And start pushing your questions over to the Q&A box now for Kristine!

Casey Markee: www.panguintool.com -- use it ALL of the time.

Casey Markee: 200 words = bad

Casey Markee: 1000 words = good. Note the articles we publish at SEN

Casey Markee: Updated link to "SEO Periodic Table" can be found here: http://searchengineland.com/seotable

Casey Markee: Here is the "Technical SEO is just Makeup" article that Kris is referring to: http://searchengineland.com/technical-seo-makeup-250408

Casey Markee: And here is the REBUTTAL to that article which is also well worth a read. And no, we at SEN do not believe that "Technical SEO" is makeup: http://searchengineland.com/role-technical-seo-makeup-really-251835

Casey Markee: Here is a list of WCAG web accessbility assessment tools you can use: https://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/

Casey Markee: Google Chrome JSON Creator Add-On: https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/my-json-editor/oeclbhigfgdhohcojkdnaahfblebhopm?hl=en-US

Casey Markee: James Flynn has a great JSON markup tool that will cover "most" schemas. I used this one myself: https://www.jamesdflynn.com/json-ld-schema-generator/

Casey Markee: http://searchengineland.com/google-says-page-speed-ranking-factor-use-mobile-page-speed-mobile-sites-upcoming-months-250874

Kristi Hagen: Your Ultimate Guide to XML Sitemaps: https://www.searchenginenews.com/se-news/content/your-ultimate-guide-to-xml-sitemaps

Crystal Cook: And here's the training link for SEO Advanced: https://secure.searchenginenews.com/training/SEOA6-MC

Participant: How do you do a Content ONLY Word Count on Screaming Frog?

Casey Markee:
> One of the BEST and exhaustive how-to guides for Screaming Frog is this one from Seer Interactive. I use it myself: http://www.seerinteractive.com/blog/screaming-frog-guide/
> It will actually tell you how to "sort for thin content by word count" -- so check that out.

Casey Markee: When we talk about tools, are there any specific content tools that you use, that you'd recommend… other than the content count in Screaming Frog?

Kristine Schachinger:
> The content count is in Deep Crawl. Deep Crawl does a lot of great content analysis for you. It's really nice, it's about $80 a month for 100,000 URLs. And then, for duplicate content it will help you with that as well. But I also use CopyScape. And onpage.org is a little bit more expensive, but it does a lot of analysis on page data… so that's a really good one too.

Casey Markee:

Yeah OnPage actually has an agreement in place with Yoast, so you can actually get a lot of the data… they do an OnPage scoring calculation now, as part of the Yoast SEO plugin. For those of you on the call, it's only been active since the second quarter of 2016… so it's relatively recent. But yeah, the OnPage stuff is now in there, which is pretty cool.

Participant: Wow! Thank you Christine! My question... I often hear back from web devs that it's "too difficult" to compress JS and CSS files (when that is recommended to improve page speed). How do you counter this resistance?

Kristine Schachinger:

I'm not sure about why it's too difficult to compress JS and CSS. There is one recommendation that Google gives you to put those in a format where they all run together and move all white space. You don't really need to do that, it doesn't save anything… it's like 1k or 2k.

Your biggest issue is going to be on the scripting files, which would be your JS. It's not that difficult, but it depends on what you're using. If you're using Wordpress, there are tools for this… also who you're hosting with.

So it's very specific, you'd have to know the environment to say how to do it, but it's not difficult. You usually get pushback from devs if you don't find them a solution. So I would suggest anyone who has some technical ability, which I assume you do because you're doing technical SEO, goes and looks and finds them a solution to that specific setup (whether they're using IAS or Wordpress or Drupal or hand coding)… and then help them that way. If you help them do their job, usually you don't get their pushback.

Casey Markee:

That's a very good point. And most of you on the call, I know you're using Wordpress; I know that's what we recommend. We tend to use W3 Total Cache which is exceptional, especially if you're able to… it doesn't detect all the CSS and JS, but you can paste in any ones that the plugin misses and then it'll automatically compress that.

And you can even move the files around and that does a substantially effective job of increasing those PageSpeed Insight scores and the like… so definitely check on that. But as Kristine has already said, it absolutely needs to be done. You can compress and consolidate that stuff down and we've seen, personally, 30-50 points down… just doing that sort of compression on the back end for some of the various Genesis themes that are out there.

Crystal Cook:

If you're on Apache or nginx, mod_pagespeed will do a bunch of this for you as well. https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/module/mod_pagespeed is built on PageSpeed Optimization Libraries, deployed across 100,000+ web-sites, and provided by popular hosting and CDN providers such as DreamHost, GoDaddy, EdgeCast, and others. There are 40+ available optimizations filters, which include:

Image optimization, compression, and resizing CSS & JavaScript concatenation, minification, and inlining Cache extension, domain sharding, and domain rewriting… Deferred loading of JavaScript and image resources and many others...

Casey Markee: Is there a specific thing, in all of your auditing and technical SEO eyes (besides the page speed, we know that's super important), is there one other issue that you can pull out that's really important for improving user experience? And we'll kind of keep you out of the penalty set with Google long-term?

Kristine Schachinger:

There are two really… kind of inter related. Title tags are not specifically UX, but they are so overlooked these days. They're too long, they're written with lots of punctuation and sentence structure because people think that works for Rank Brain; that's not really how Rank Brain works. So title tags are still vastly important to your SEO value, and then vastly important to your click through rate.

So go and look at your title tags, do a search on one of your major queries and find out - what do my title tags look like? Run a Screaming Frog report and say, "How many are over the character limit? " Because as soon as they see that dot dot dot, your click through rates go way down; it also means you're using excessive wording, which doesn't grab the viewers eye or cause them to come into your site.

In addition, combined with that is content. A lot of people are just generating content; not good content, not quality content, not unique content. A well-written, unique article is 1,000% better than 100 regenerated, repurposed, rescrambled articles that you've taken from somewhere else.

And then I'd say finally on that, advertising… make sure that you don't have a bunch of ads above the fold, make sure your not (?) to the user. Don't use those ads that come on with audio… I've stopped even going to those sites.

Those can trigger numerous actual issues; all the way from how Google decides how ads should be laid out to the page layout algorithm to the page speed issue. So I would say if you're going to look at anything on your site, if you have ads… see how you're using them and make sure you're using them properly and not violating Google's principles or terms of service with them.

Casey Markee:

Right… I do a lot of food blogging auditing these days and the two issues are lack of quality meta descriptions (like you said and Google is continuing to rewrite descriptions because they know better than we do apparently, on what a good quality meta description)… you mentioned the ad networks; such a huge problem.

For those of you on the call who have clients running ad networks, I cannot stress enough how important the break down report on Webpagetest.org. That thing is awesome, it allows you to see what is dragging down performance by each of those ad networks; really big deal.

Participant: Thanks, Casey! I'll download that.
Participant: Thanks Christine. Great tip to give them the solution. Thank you!
Participant: Excellent session, Christine. Thank you so much for sharing your expertise with us.
Participant: Thank you for a great webinar!
Participant: Thank you Crystal! That would be awesome.
Participant: Magic Christine - thank so much
Participant: Thanks so much Christine!! GREAT stuff!!
Participant: Great session! Thank you Christine!
Participant: Thank you Christine! So much valuable information and great tips to follow. Definitely not makeup!!! AAAAAAAAAA!!!!!!!!!!!
Participant: Thank you!! Learned a lot of new tips! AAAA!!!!
Participant: Thank you!

Participant: Thank you, Crystal!
Participant: Thanks Christine!
Participant: Thanks! I'll check that out.