Leveraging Google's E-A-T Concept for Success in the SERPs

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With Adam Durrant
@adamddurrant

What's covered

What is E-A-T?
Definition and origin

How Does E-A-T work?
What we know about E-A-T

Why Does E-A-T exist?
Google's fight against misinformation

Actionable Strategies
Leveraging E-A-T on-page and off-page

Case Study
Example of strategy in action and the results

Measurement
Measurement techniques i've found helpful

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So what exactly is E-A-T?

	Creator of the main content	The main content itself	The Website
Expertise	👍		
Authoritativeness	👍	👍	👍
Trustworthiness	👍	👍	👍

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'E-A-T' is mentioned 129 times!

Google's concept of E-A-T was first revealed in the 2014 Google Search Quality Rater Guidelines.

A (now) 172 page PDF **instructs search quality raters/evaluators** on how to assess and document the quality of a website.

This PDF fundamentally **shapes the goals of Google's algorithms** as opposed to explaining the algorithms themselves.

General Guidelines October 19, 2021

Copyright 2021 — 1

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Is E-A-T a ranking factor?

TL;DR: The consensus is no, not explicitly.

The relationship between E-A-T and rankings is more indirect - but still very real.

It's not as if there is a particular thing to 'fix'. The evaluation of E-A-T is broad.

Danny Sullivan ✔
@dannysullivan

@rustybrick @methode @bhumharit @Marie_Haynes @patrickstox Is E-A-T a ranking factor? Not if you mean there's some technical thing like with speed that we can measure directly.

We do use a variety of signals as a proxy to tell if content seems to match E-A-T as humans would assess it.

In that regard, yeah, it's a ranking factor.

4:07 PM · Oct 11, 2019 · Twitter for iPad

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Why does E-A-T exist?

In February 2019 Google published a white paper: 'How Google Fights Disinformation'.

An integral process being described within the whitepaper is the concept of E-A-T in conjunction with quality raters.

How do Google's algorithms assess expertise, authority, and trustworthiness?

- Google's algorithms identify signals about pages that correlate with trustworthiness and authoritativeness. The best known of these signals is PageRank, which uses links on the web to understand authoritativeness.

- We are constantly evolving these algorithms to improve results – not least because the web itself keeps changing. For instance, in 2017 alone, we ran over 200,000 experiments with trained external Search Evaluators and live user tests, resulting in more than 2,400 updates to Google Search algorithms.

- To perform these evaluations, we work with Search Quality Evaluators who help us measure the quality of Search results on an ongoing basis. Evaluators assess whether a website provides users who click on it with the content they were looking for, and they evaluate the quality of results based on the expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness of the content.

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Y M Y L

Your **Money** *or* **Your** **Life**
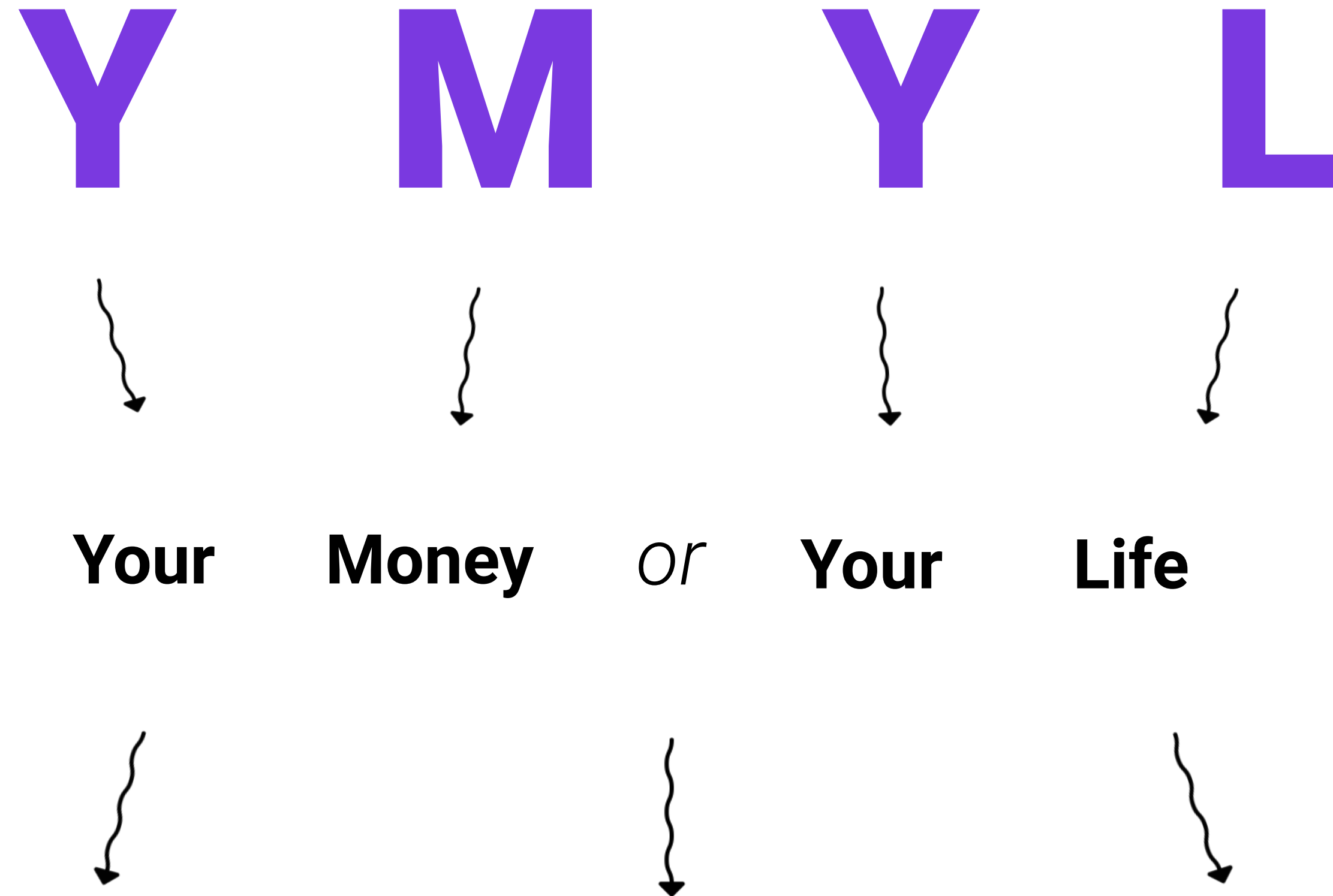
A **classification of topics/web pages** that have the potential to impact a person's future **happiness, health, financial stability, or safety**.

15% of all Google searches have never been searched before

⌄

*How does Google surface **an authority** on a topic it knows nothing about?*

⌄

2020 was a prime example of why E-A-T exists

⌄

Speculation outruns fact online, especially with something like a global crisis

⌄

E-A-T aims to mitigate the rise of misinformation

So, is E-A-T important for SEO?

I think it's safe to say a big **YES**.

Importance

General degree of importance/value

My personal opinion

Proximity to a YMYL niche
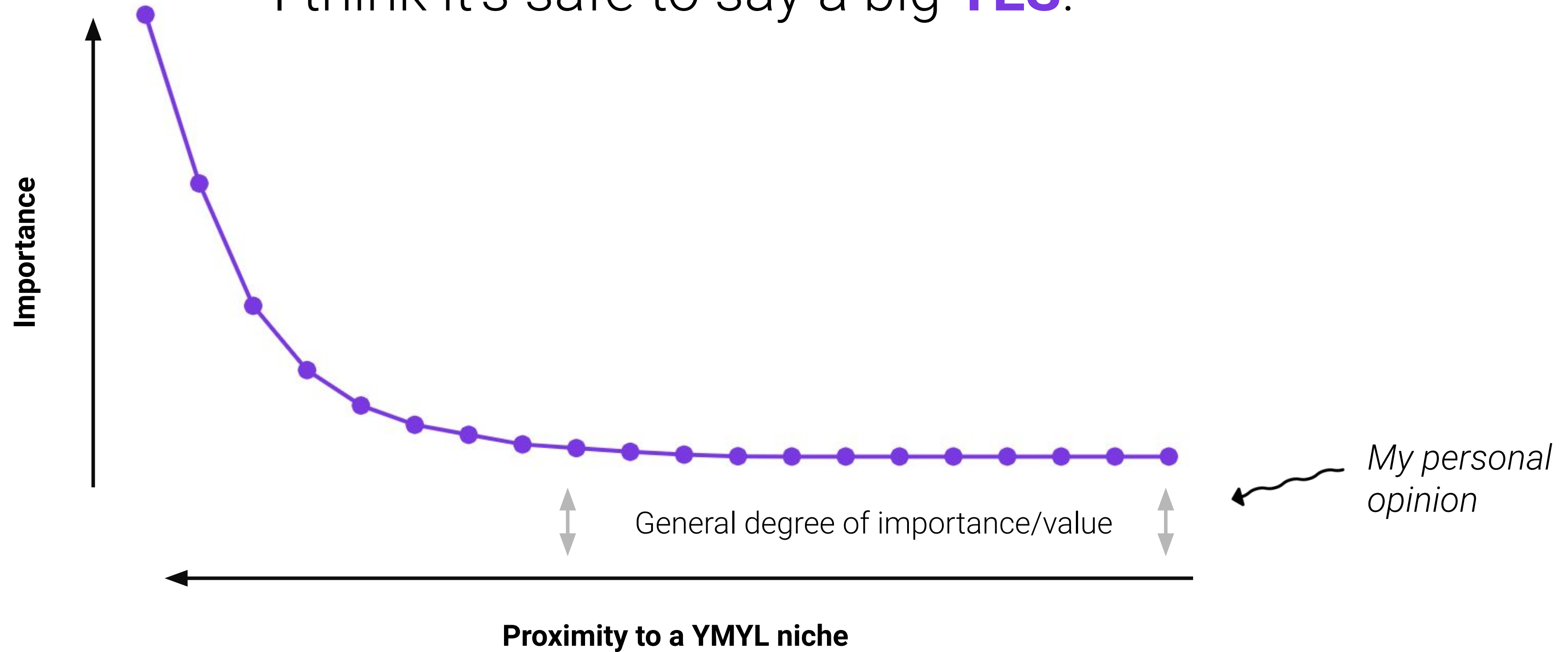
Arguably, it's critical if your niche is firmly within the category of YMYL

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So, how do we **leverage** E-A-T?

....Well, **only Google knows the exact signals** that are used as part of E-A-T evaluations.

But here's what we know...

Google's systems *aspire* to, and almost certainly already can evaluate…

1 — *"The Purpose of the Page"*

2 — *"Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness"*

3 — *"Main Content Quality and Amount"*

4 — *"Website Information/information about who is responsible for the MC"*

5 — *"Website Reputation/reputation about who is responsible for the MC"*

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Google filed a patent in 2020 to classify websites which aligns with the QRG's...

Medical Advice	Personal Finance

Text, images, and links within websites determine how they are classified

Medical Advice 2/10	Personal Finance 6/10

Quality Scores of classified websites may indicate authoritativeness within a particular topic area

Medical Advice & Pet Health	News & Wellbeing

Website's are capable of being authoritative in multiple topic areas

Medical Advice Dr. John Smith	News Louis Theroux

Labels used to classify sites could include information about the entities behind a site

Quality backlinks are confirmed to hold sizeable weight in E-A-T evaluation

Dr. Marie Haynes ✓
@Marie_Haynes

I asked Gary about E-A-T. He said it's largely based on links and mentions on authoritative sites. i.e. if the Washington post mentions you, that's good.

He recommended reading the sections in the QRG on E-A-T as it outlines things well.

@methode #Pubcon

2:54 PM · Feb 21, 2018 · Twitter Web Client
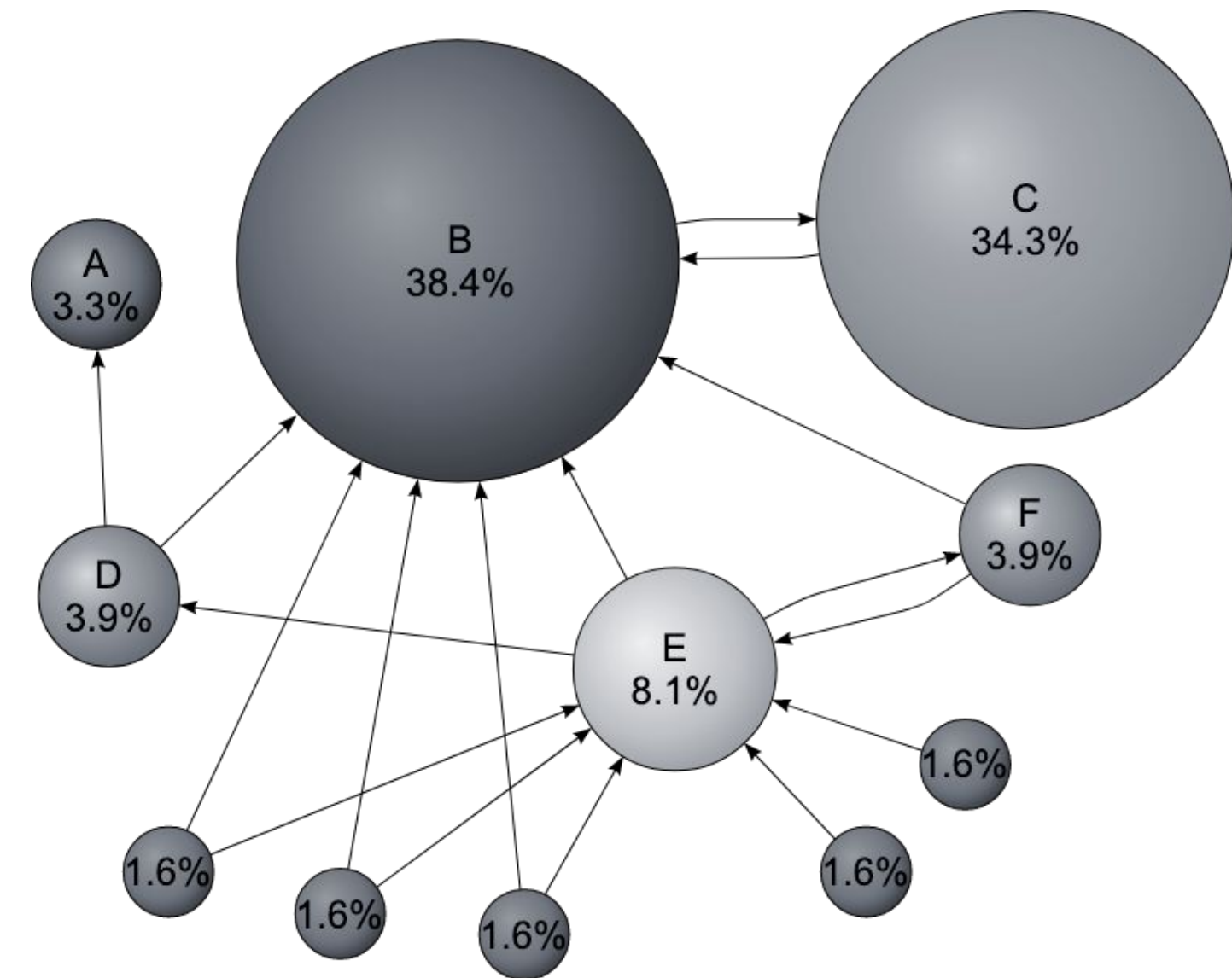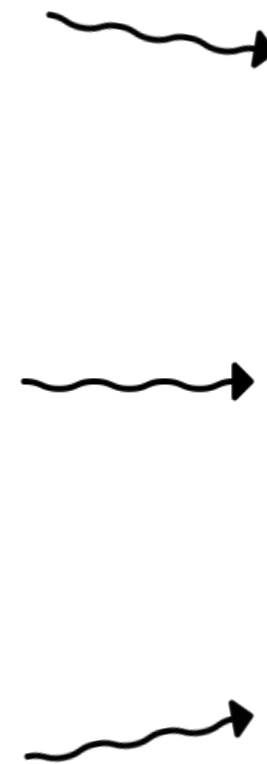
On-Page Strategy

Take a step back from the micro of SEO and become laser focused on *illustrating what you're doing and why*.

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Before you even put fingers to keyboard, source quality subject matter experts

As well as supporting E-A-T, involving great thought leaders, improves the uniqueness and quality of your content.

If you're publishing at scale, build an 'experts' database

GRAB THE SHEET

Cite credible sources, and keep content fresh

HEART HEALTH > HEART DISEASE

Understanding Anxiety and Heart Disease

By Angelica Bottaro | Updated on October 17, 2021

Print 🖶

✓ Medically reviewed by Jeffrey S. Lander, MD

Last updated date

Complications of Anxiety and Heart Disease

A person with heart disease and anxiety is more likely to experience worse outcomes, such as severe disability or death, than people with heart disease who do not have anxiety.[1]

Anxiety can als[...] [...]our fears might ke[...]

Celano CM, Daunis DJ, Lokko HN, et al. Anxiety disorders and cardiovascular disease. Curr Psychiatry Rep. 2016;18(11):101. doi:10.1007/s11920-016-0739-5

Though the res[...] [...]pear to be less likely to [...] heart disease. Anxious individuals tend to have increased dietary cholesterol intake, eat more food, live a sedentary lifestyle, and exercise less.[1]

Anxiety is also associated with a lower likelihood of following risk-reducing recommendations after a heart attack, including smoking cessation, social support utilization, and stress reduction.[1]

Immediate, accessible citations

Was this page helpful? 👍 👎

Feedback input

12 Sources ⊖

Verywell Health uses only high-quality sources, including peer-reviewed studies, to support the facts within our articles. Read our editorial process to learn more about how we fact-check and keep our content accurate, reliable, and trustworthy.

Reference to processes

1. Celano CM, Daunis DJ, Lokko HN, et al. Anxiety disorders and cardiovascular disease. Curr Psychiatry Rep. 2016;18(11):101. doi:10.1007/s11920-016-0739-5

2. Olafiranye O, Jean-Louis G, Zizi F, Nunes J, Vincent M. Anxiety and cardiovascular risk: Review of epidemiological and clinical evidence. Mind Brain. 2011;2(1):32–37.

3. Johns Hopkins Medicine. Anxiety and heart disease.

4. Brewer LC, Svatikova A, Mulvagh SL. The challenges of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of ischemic heart disease in women. Cardiovasc Drugs Ther. 2015;29(4):355–368. doi:10.1007/s10557-015-6607-4

5. National Center for Biotechnology Information. Impact of the DMS-IV to DSM-5 changes on the national survey on drug use and health.

Stylised, ordered list of citations with working links

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Illustrate who wrote and/or contributed to your content with a rich byline/short bio

Who wrote this article?

Are they credible enough to do so?

Who reviewed/contributed this article?

Are they credible enough to do so?

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Supplement a byline/short bio with a **comprehensive author 'home' page**

Jeffrey S. Lander, MD
☑ Medical Review Board Member | Cardiologist

Expertise Cardiology, Cardiovascular Disease

Education University of Pennsylvania, St. George's University

Highlights

- Private practice cardiologist at Consultants in Cardiology in New Jersey
- President and Governor of the New Jersey chapter of the American College of Cardiology

> " Health care and health science are rapidly evolving fields. While this is encouraging, it also means that up-to-date, reliable information may be difficult to easily find and decipher. I am excited to work with Verywell to help make this ever-changing landscape more accessible to everyone."
>
> — JEFFREY S. LANDER, MD

Experience

Jeffrey S. Lander, MD, FACC, is a board-certified cardiologist at the single-specialty practice Consultants in Cardiology located in New Jersey. Dr. Lander holds multiple board certifications, including Cardiovascular Medicine, Nuclear Cardiology, Adult Comprehensive Echocardiography, and Cardiovascular Computed Tomography. He holds a certification of Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation.

Dr. Lander has authored the American College of Cardiology's Preparticipation Cardiovascular Screening for Adolescent and Young Adult Athletes module, published several articles, as well as been invited faculty to multiple national meetings. Dr. Lander frequently lectures, is actively involved in teaching, and has been a speaker for the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology. He is currently the team cardiologist for Seton Hall University, and is also the President and Governor of the NJ chapter of the American College of Cardiology.

Education

Dr. Lander graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Arts in English. He received his Doctor of Medicine from St. George's University School of Medicine. Dr. Lander completed both his residency in Internal Medicine and a Fellowship in Cardiovascular Disease at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City.

Quick expertise & education snapshot - ideal for skimming

Portrait photograph with helpful alt text

Unique quote that adds value, illustrates authority and reassures users

Concise, detailed experience information with links to affiliations

Brief educational background

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Solidify signals with structured data

E.g: 'Person' schema will help google better understand: *"the authoritativeness of the creator of the main content."*

There are dozens of options to use:

- affiliation
- alumniOf
- award
- brand
- hasCredential
- hasOccupation
- jobTitle
- Citation
- reviewedBy

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Publish your processes to make them accessible & transparent

How?

People

Always be thinking about internal links

Why?

Freshness

Visual summary

Our Editorial Process

Our editorial process centers on making sure you understand what you're reading and know how to use the information to make confident choices about your health. Our writers, editors, and fact checkers only use fact-based research and present it in a clear, judgement-free way that empowers you to take an active role in your health.

Our editorial team manages all of our content, which includes new articles on evergreen topics, coverage on the latest news, and updates to existing content to ensure our information is reflective of the latest research. The integrity of our content is a top priority, and we are not influenced by advertisers in our coverage. We rely on current primary sources, including peer-reviewed studies and government institutions, to ensure our information is as updated as possible, and applicable to real people.

Written by health experts and journalists

Fact-checked with science-backed research

Medically reviewed by board-certified physicians

Updated to reflect medical advances

Learn More About Our Editorial Process

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Illustrate your **purpose** and **substantiate your claims**... in detail

- Who you are as a business
- Who is involved in making it happen
- Detailed information about unique processes
- Mission statements
- HIstorical timeline of events
- Future goals
- Accessible contact page

Table of Contents

Our Mission

Our Medical Review Board

Our Editorial Process

Our Team

Our Policies

Contact Us

Our mission is to help you make the best choices for your health.

Every year, we help more than 300 million people answer their most important health questions with our expert-written, medically-reviewed articles across hundreds of health topics. Our team of writers and editors are industry experts, including healthcare professionals and health journalists, who write and continually update our 16,000+ article library. Our Medical Review Board of board-certified physicians vets our articles so you can be confident in your next steps for better health.

Meet Our Medical Review Board

Our team of more than 75 experienced medical professionals join us in our mission to empower you to confidently take the next steps in your health journey—for yourself or a loved one. They ensure our content is medically accurate and reflects the latest in evidence-based research and health information.

The Medical Review Board of board-certified physicians represents 30+ specialties. Here are a few of our members:

- Statistics that support your business model
- 'In the news' section, linking to where you've been spoken about
- Description of where you fit in the market
- Cited testimonials, reviews and media quotes

Verywell Health's 'about' page

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Boast about your wins and cite them…

Linked news mentions

BACKED & SUPPORTED BY Banc
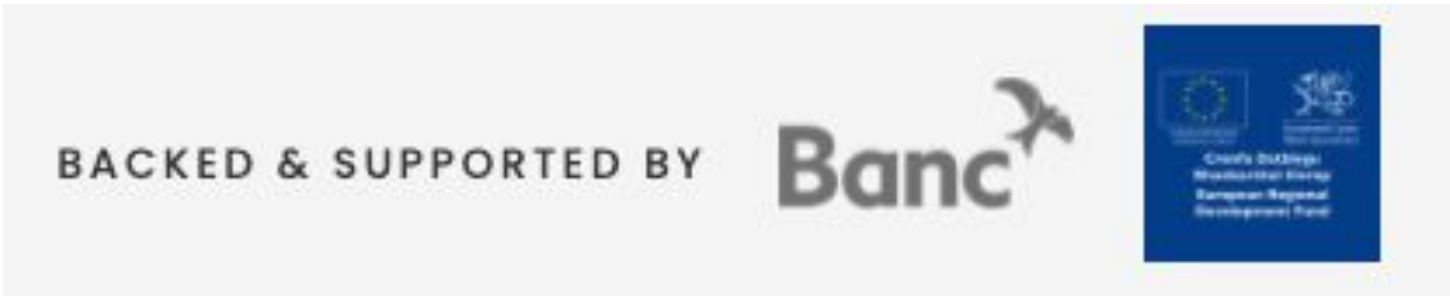
FEATURED NEWS

WALL STREET JOURNAL
The New Trend in Healthcare: Do-It-Yourself
January 11th, 2022

WELLANDGOOD.COM
10 At-Home Tests That Will Help You Take Control of Your Health in 2022
January 10th, 2022

PEOPLE
7 FDA-Authorized At-Home COVID-19 Tests You Can Order Online
January 6th, 2022

VERYWELLHEALTH.COM
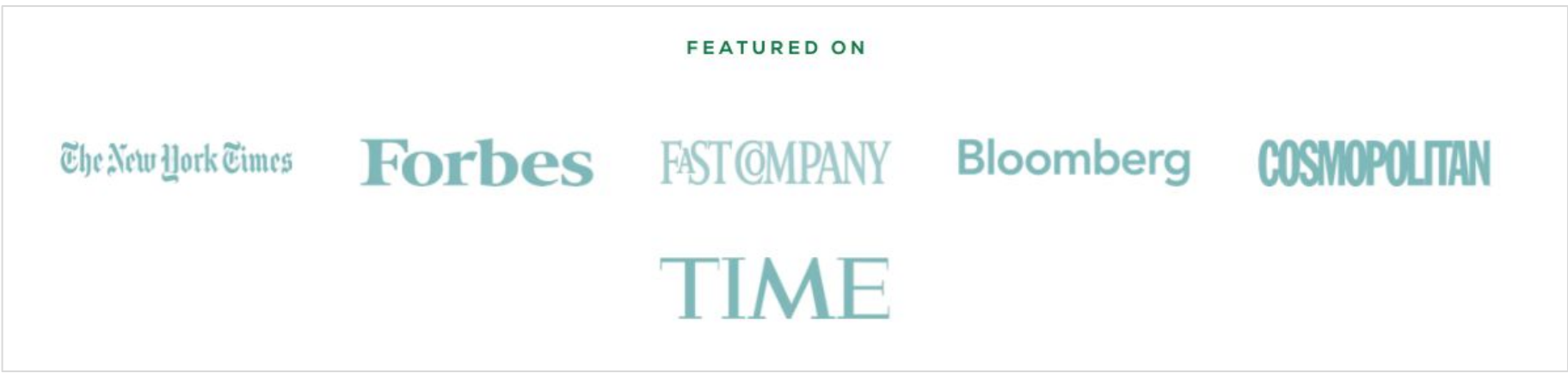Best At-Home Metabolism Tests
January 4th, 2022

Accreditations

ACCREDITED LABS

UKAS
UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

ISO
ISO 15189: 2012
Medical laboratories

Awards

THE TIMES TOP 50 EMPLOYERS FOR WOMEN

Ad Age
Best Places to Work
4 Years

campaign
Best Places to Work
2018

Best Small & Medium Workplaces
Great Place To Work
USA 2019

THE TIMES TOP 100 GRADUATE EMPLOYERS

Third-party endorsements

FEATURED ON

The New York Times   Forbes   FAST COMPANY   Bloomberg   COSMOPOLITAN

TIME

healthline   Recommended as "Best for women" by Healthline

Brag bar

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Focus on quality, not quantity

Build an inventory of your content performance, audit/update/cut content that adds little value

Off-Page Strategy

Again, take a step back and focus on building lasting *identity* *and* *genuine reputation*

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Build evergreen content that will be referenced by others as a source of truth

Erica (the author):

- Well known digestive health writer
- Published author
- Diagnosed with Celiac disease making her an advocate for the patient and has real world experience of a gluten free diet
- Voted 'Best Allergy Friendly Blog' by Healthline

Dr Guandalini (the reviewer):

- Internationally recognised expert on celiac disease
- Founder of the University of Chicago Celiac Disease Center
- Ranked among America's "Best Doctors" since 2008

CELIAC   ✓ Medically reviewed

Should I Go Gluten Free? 4 Risks of a Gluten Free Diet

Written by Erica Dermer on February 7, 2020
Medically reviewed by Stefano Guandalini, MD

Zero outreach, we just hit 'publish'

Backlinks [i]	Referring domains [i]	Organic keywords [i]	Organic traffic [i]
100 +5	44	3.0K –33	1.0K
Recent 137	Recent 52	PPC 0	
Historical 316	Historical 134		

Actively **engage with reviews** and foster positive online sentiment

Quality raters use search operators to research your reputation:

site: example.com "review"
site: example.com "complaint"
site: example.com "scam"

Replicating this, would someone researching your business come away with a great impression?

What you are known for

Third-party

glassdoor

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

Google My Business

facebook ★★★★★

★ Trustpilot

Forum

Quora

Patient

reddit

Product

Capterra

G2

CR Consumer Reports

T | Wirecutter
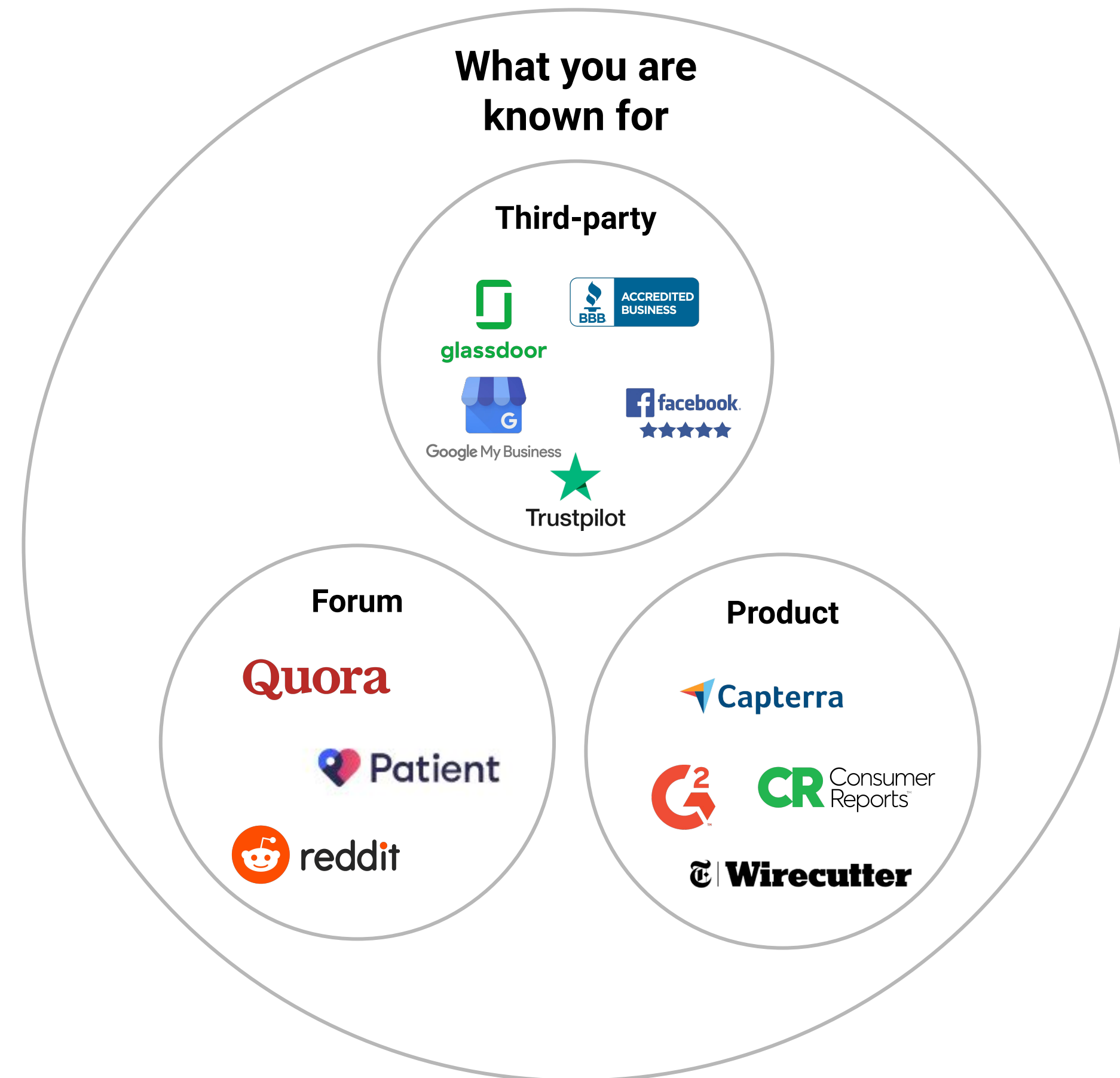
Take **full advantage** of your valuable subject matter experts

Just like you want to work with subject matter experts, so do reputable publications

>

H|A|R|O
Help A Reporter Out

>

Get a link/mention on your brands behalf or directly to your experts bio page

>

🥳

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Actively support/encourage your experts to
cite themselves online

- Not many subject matter experts are web/SEO literate
- Supporting/building citations on the web can support both them and you:
  - Wikipedia page
  - Personal one-page website
  - Trusted industry specific directories
  - Linkedin profile
  - Google Scholar

Knowledge Graph

Track this entity on Kalicube >>

If Google is confident it has fully understood who you are, this is you

Type	TVSeries, CreativeWork, Movie, Thing
@id	/g/11n1_7lz28 See on Google
Name	Louis Theroux: Shooting Joe Exotic
Subtitle	2021 film
Description	Louis Theroux: Shooting Joe Exotic is a British documentary film presented by Louis Theroux. It was released on 5 April 2021 on BBC Two.
Description URL	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Theroux:_Shooting_Joe_Exotic
Confidence	1271

Find out what Google knows

Try knowledge graph explorer

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Case Study - Medical Startup
Est. 2018

Data Source: Ahrefs

Detailed authorship, about page & product claim substantiation

Doubled down on-page signalling, schema & content production

Maybe we don't need to focus on EAT?

Process restructure and medical review of every article

Subject experts involved in content ideation

Content Production

More focus on link acquisition

SEO Strategy Green Light

Supported online citations + improved internal linking to expert pages

Estimated Organic traffic

150,000

100,000

50,000

0

1 Jan 2020   1 Jul 2020   1 Jan 2021   1 Jul 2021   1 Jan 2022

Date

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Data Source: Ahrefs

Trust the process... it will pay off

Time, effort, money & trust

12+ months of hard work finally paid off

Estimated Organic traffic

150,000
100,000
50,000
0

1 Jan 2020   1 Jul 2020   1 Jan 2021   1 Jul 2021   1 Jan 2022

Date

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traffficthinktank.com
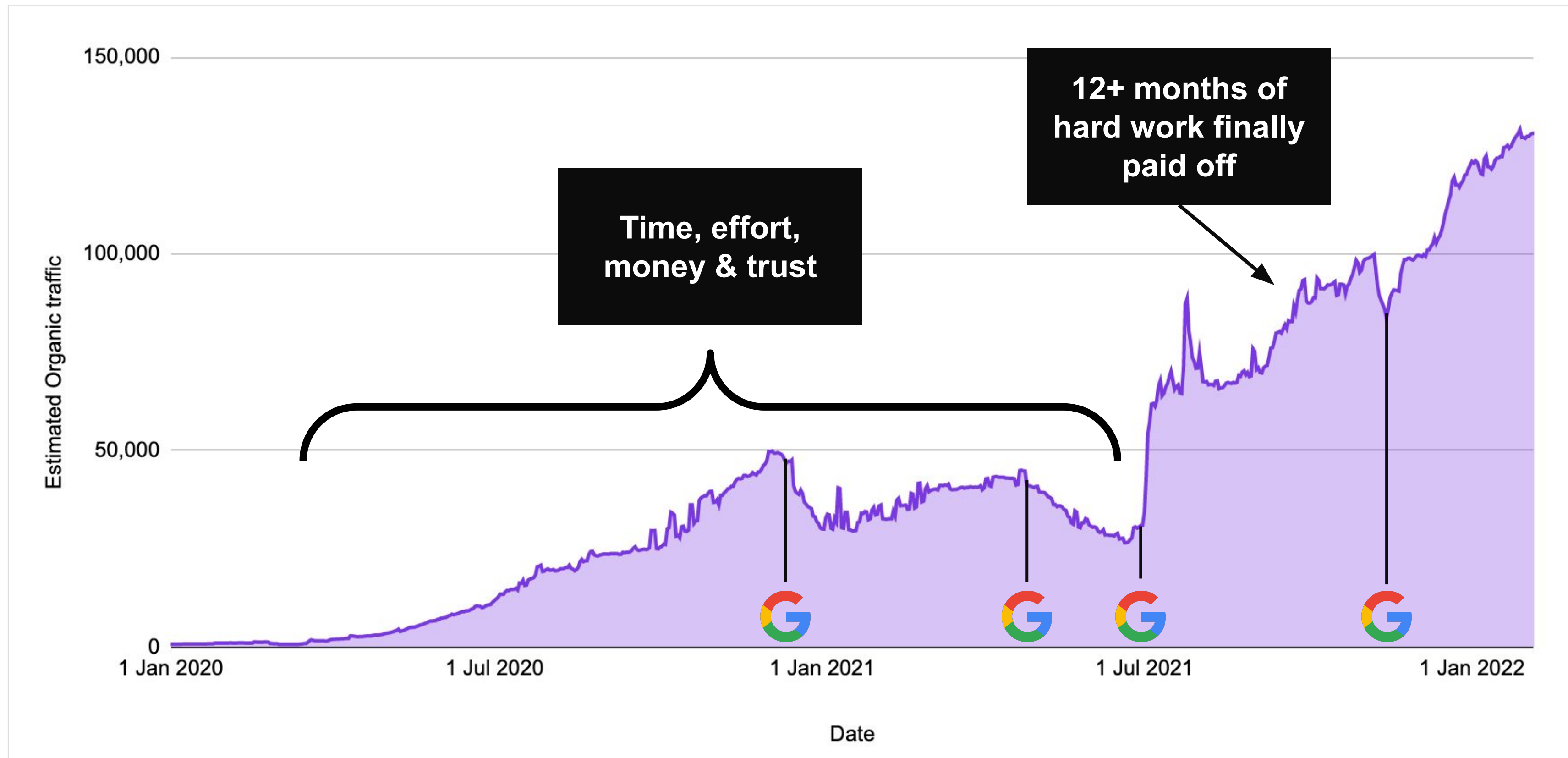
Measurement

You will not see the full impacts of E-A-T improvements usually until the next core update hits the SERPs.

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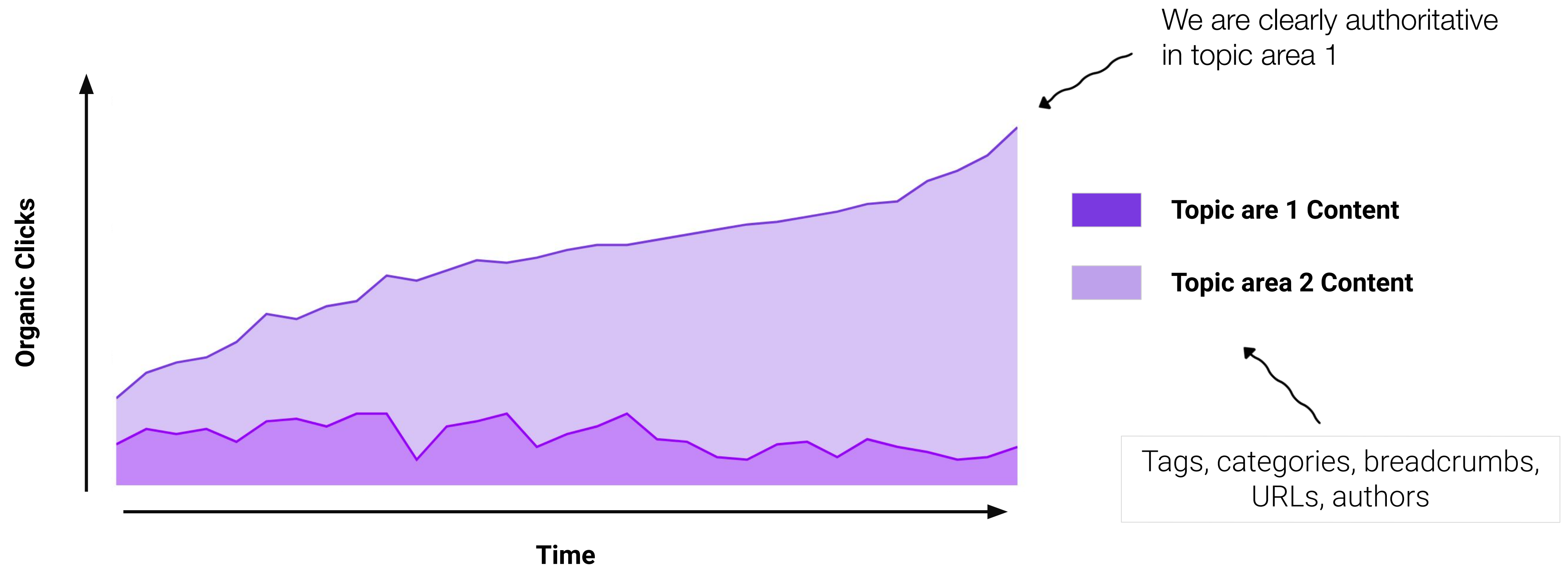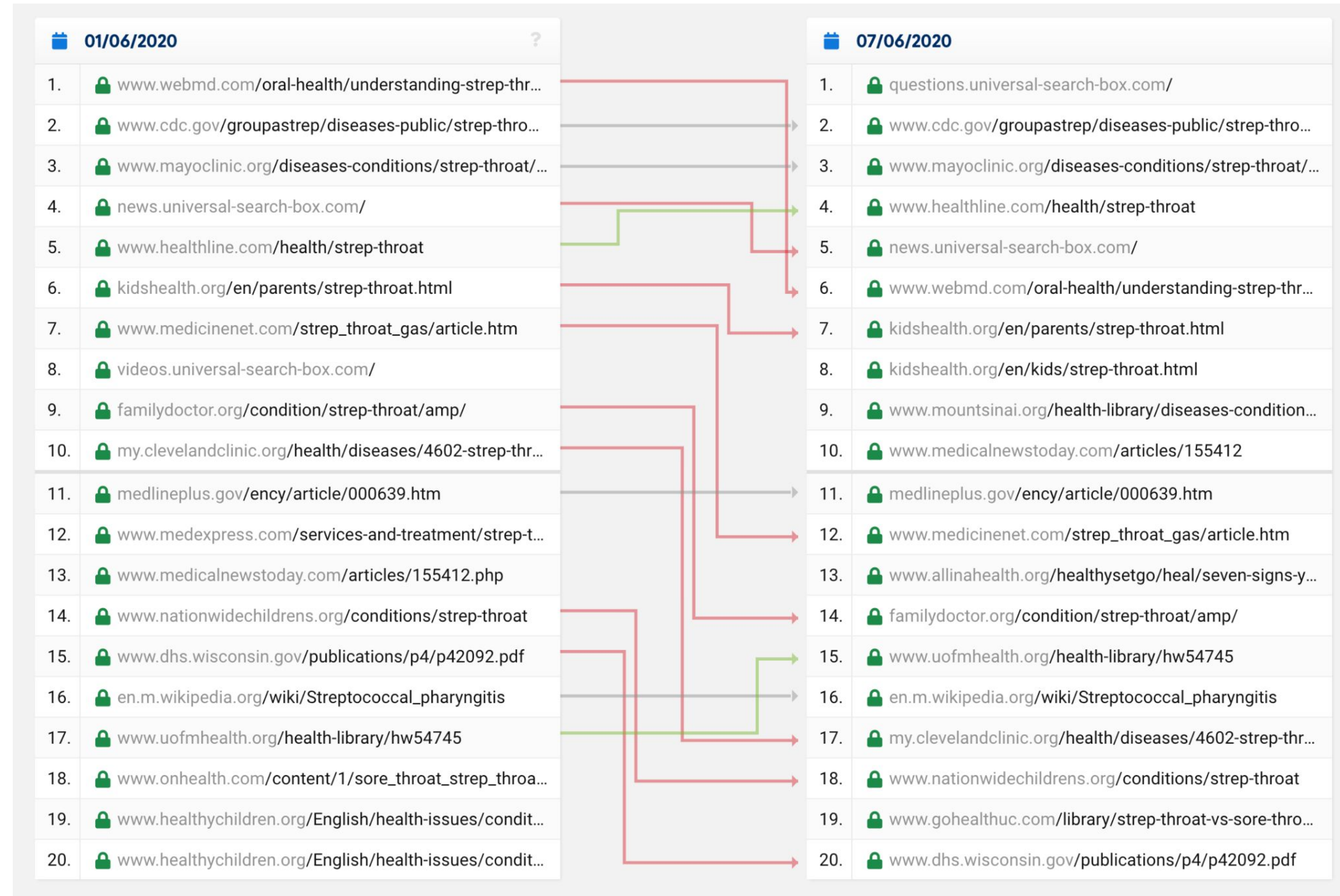# Use custom content groupings to spot trends and performance by topic or author

We are clearly authoritative in topic area 1

Organic Clicks

Time

Topic are 1 Content

Topic area 2 Content

Tags, categories, breadcrumbs, URLs, authors

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# Analyse and diagnose winners & losers when core updates hit the SERPs

Get visibility of service metrics and collaborate with service teams

1. Willingness to recommend
2. On-page quick ratings ('was this article helpful?')
3. Direct feedback
4. Comment velocity
5. Comment tone
6. Reaction tone
7. Shares and mentions
8. NPS scores
9. What information is missing on the site?
10. What are we missing at each touch point?

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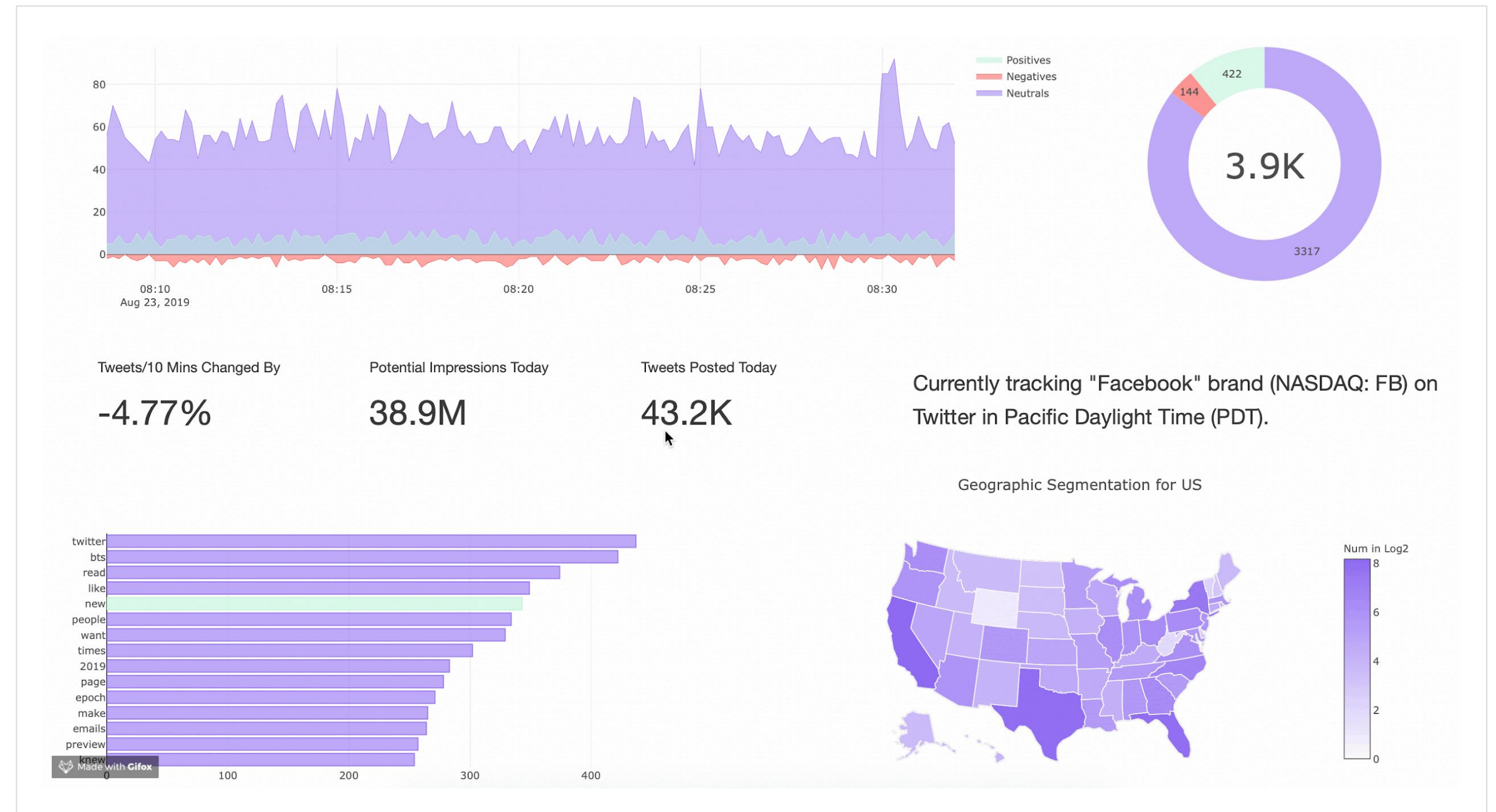
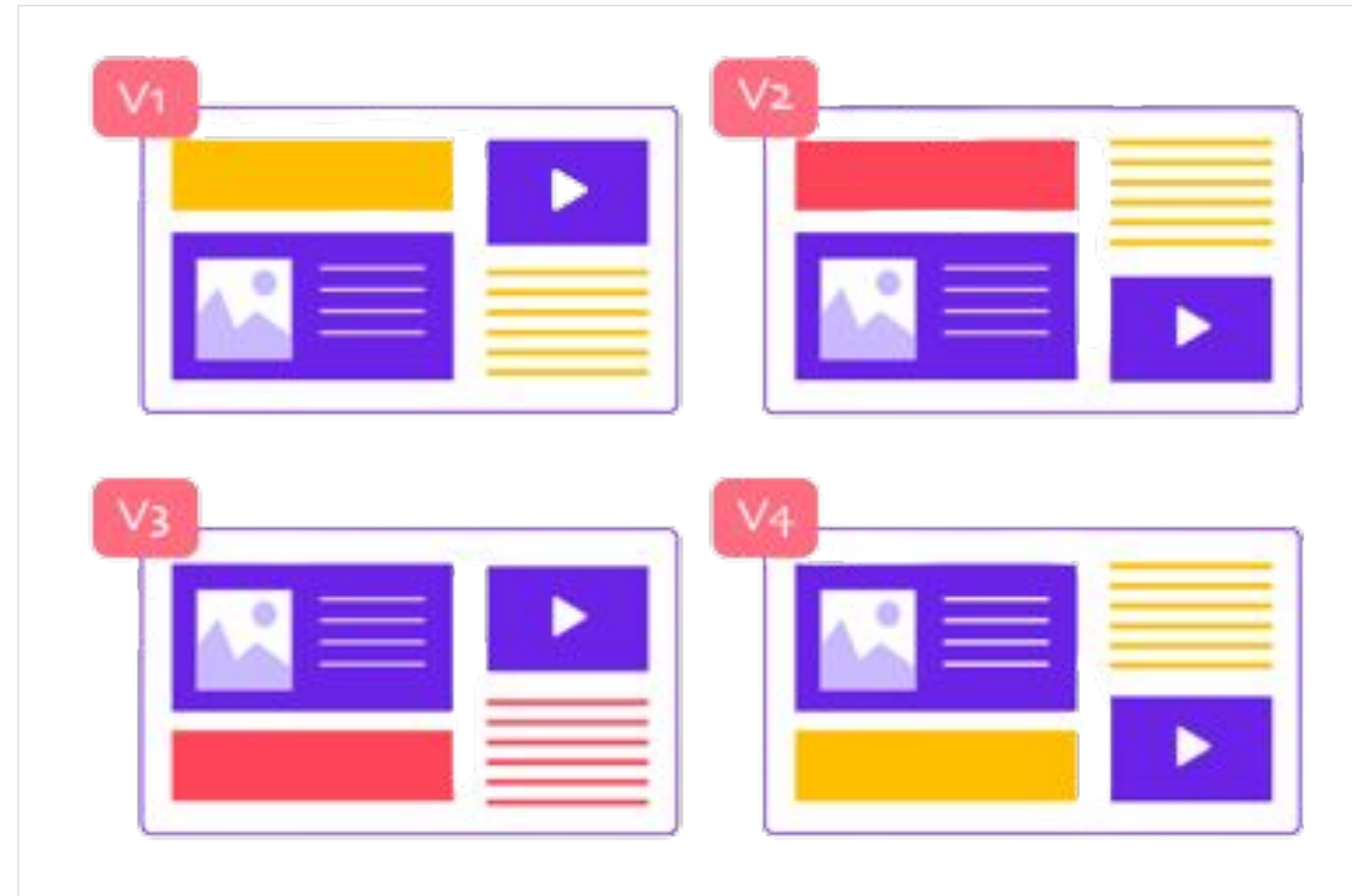# **Test new elements**, their location and how your users engage with them

Does author information reduce bounce?

What messaging should we use?

Should I bring author details above the fold?

How much information do my users actually care about?

Are mixed reviews reducing conversion?

Does a 'brag bar' impact conversion?

Optimize

Summary

Leveraging E-A-T may come as bad news for those looking for a quick win.

Following E-A-T as a framework will encourage you to approach SEO and content marketing more holistically.

Subsequently your content will be very difficult to knock off the top spot.

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Learn more about E-A-T

@lilyraynyc

SEO by day, DJ by night - Lily is extremely knowledgeable and influential on the topic of E-A-T.

lilyray.nyc

@Marie_Haynes

Obsessed with understanding Google's search algorithms. An Incredible resource for all things E-A-T.

mariehaynes.com

@bill_slawski

More than 26 years of SEO experience. Foremost expert on Google's search patents related to SEO.

gofishdigital.com

@jasonmbarnard

The Brand SERP Guy. Specialises in Brand SERP optimisation and knowledge panel management.

jasonbarnard.com

I hope this was helpful!
Reach out anytime

@AdamDDurrant

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