Newsletter

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DID YOU KNOW THAT GOOGLE MIGHT BE BLOCKING SEO TOOLS FROM COLLECTING DATA?

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Last month, the SEO community discussed Google blocking or restricting access to data used by many popular SEO tracking tools.

Since January 15th, it has been speculated that Google is making it harder for SEO tools to collect data from search results, as several of them are experiencing disruptions in their ability to track search engine rankings accurately. While most have since recovered, there are several concerns raised regarding the issue.

It is suspected that Google is reacting to the increasing competition to its search dominance. It may be due to the rise of LLMs like ChatGPT, which are being discussed as potential replacements for Google search.

While scraping Google's data has always violated their terms of service, SEO tools have done so for over 20 years. Although Google may find this bothersome, it's not the existential threat that LLMs pose.

To an extent, the issue has been fixed with JavaScript, as most of the tools have recovered by adapting to Google's new JavaScript rendering requirements, a more complex and costly process that forced some tools to shut down.

2 GBP EXPANDS SERVICES WITH LAUNCH OF CHAT FEATURE VIA TEXT & WHATSAPP IN US

Although Google's help documentation states that it's not yet available in the U.S., Google Business Profiles seems to be enabling certain U.S. businesses to interact with customers via texting and WhatsApp.
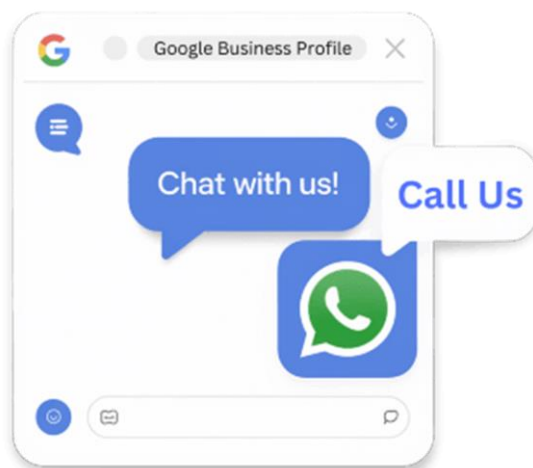
This advancement brings multiple advantages to your business:

- **Improved Customer Engagement:** Real-time conversations with both potential and existing customers are now possible directly through your Google Business Profile.
- **Greater Convenience:** Customers can reach out through their favorite messaging platforms, making it easier to inquire about products, services, or booking appointments.
- **Boosted Local Visibility:** Offering a chat feature may improve your presence in local search results, as Google favors businesses with accessible communication options.
- **Optimized Operations:** By integrating chat into your profile, you can streamline customer service by consolidating communications into a single, efficient platform.

Before implementing this feature, consider the following:

- **Rollout:** Access may be staggered, meaning not all businesses in the US will have immediate availability.
- **Resource Allocation:** Ensure your business has the necessary resources to manage incoming chat messages efficiently.
- **Customer Expectations:** Once enabled, be ready to provide prompt and professional responses to customer inquiries.

Maximize the benefits of this feature with the following steps:

1. **Check Availability:** Log in to your Google Business Profile to verify if the chat option is accessible, as illustrated in the image below...
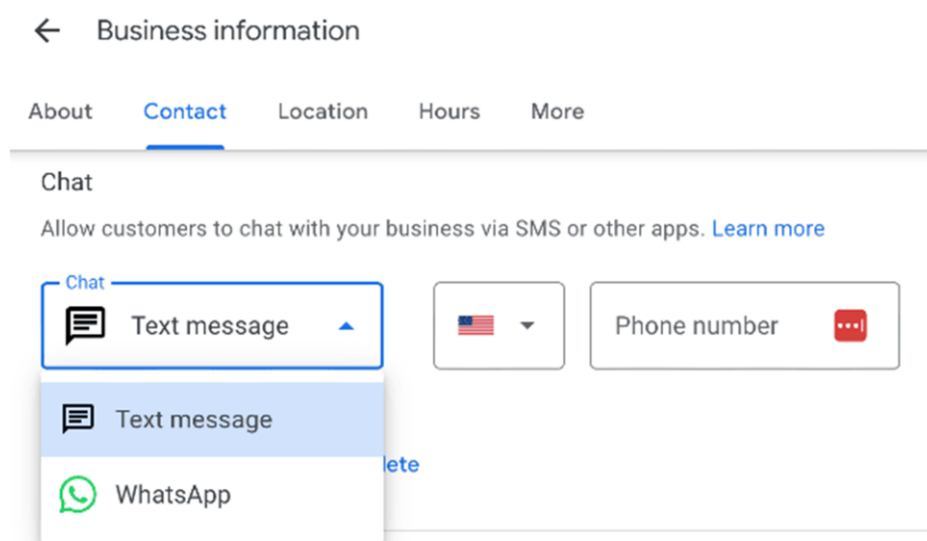
2. **Activate Chat:** If available, enable SMS, WhatsApp, or both to provide customers with seamless communication options.
3. **Prepare Your Team:** Train your staff to handle real-time inquiries efficiently for a smooth customer experience.
4. **Track Performance:** Monitor engagement metrics to evaluate how this feature enhances customer interactions.

Foremost Because - These features are crucial as they strengthen your online presence, enhance customer communication, and provide your business with a competitive advantage in your target market.

3 A COMPREHENSIVE 7-STEP GUIDE TO DIAGNOSING AND FIXING TRAFFIC DROPS

Many believe that title tags should be short, but longer titles can actually help you rank higher. Google reads the entire tag, even if it gets truncated, allowing your page to show up for more search queries and attract more traffic.

Seeing a decline in your website traffic can be frustrating, especially when rankings, leads, and revenue are at stake. However, traffic drops are common and often stem from multiple factors. By systematically analyzing the issue, you can develop an effective strategy to regain lost ground.

Understanding the Causes of Traffic Decline

Before jumping to solutions, it's essential to identify the root causes of your traffic loss. The most frequent reasons include:

- **Changes in search intent** – Users may expect different results for the same keywords.
- **User experience issues** – A poor site layout or slow loading of pages can push users away.
- **New search features or ads** – Google's evolving SERP elements may divert clicks elsewhere.
- **Algorithm updates** – Core updates can reshuffle rankings based on new quality signals.
- **Technical problems** – Crawling errors, indexing issues, or slow performance can hurt visibility.
- **Content modifications** – Updating or removing content might impact rankings.
- **Backlink deterioration** – Loss of high-authority links can weaken your domain's strength.

By addressing these factors step by step, you can rebuild your website's search performance.

Step 1: Assess the Quality of Your Traffic

Not all traffic drops are necessarily bad. Sometimes, Google refines its ranking algorithms to match content with search intent, filtering out irrelevant visits.

Key actions:
- Check whether conversions have declined along with traffic.
- If leads and sales remain steady, the lost traffic may be of low-quality.
- If engagement metrics also drop, a deeper investigation is needed.

Step 2: Evaluate Content from a User's Perspective

Your content might not be as engaging or helpful as competing pages.

How to analyze:

- Search for your target keywords and review the top-ranking results.
- Compare their formatting, clarity, and depth to your content.
- Identify gaps where your competitors do a better job of addressing users' needs.

Improving your content's structure, readability, and value can help recover lost rankings.

Step 3: Audit and Improve Your Backlink Profile

Backlinks play a crucial role in rankings, but their influence can change over time.

What to do:

- Analyze recent changes in your backlink profile.
- Check if authoritative links have been lost or devalued.
- Identify opportunities to build new high-quality links through digital PR and outreach.

Regularly monitoring backlinks ensures your site maintains strong domain authority.

Step 4: Optimize Content Layout for Better Engagement

A well-structured page makes it easier for visitors to find information.

Best practices:

- Include a table of contents or summary at the top.
- Highlight key takeaways early in the article.
- Avoid burying crucial insights deep within lengthy content.

This approach enhances user experience and keeps visitors engaged longer.

**Step 5: Compare Performance Against Competitors**

Industry-wide shifts can impact traffic trends. For example, user-generated content platforms like Reddit have been gaining visibility, affecting traditional informational pages.

How to respond:

- Analyze whether competitors or new platforms are ranking for your keywords.
- Consider diversifying content formats, including commercial and transactional pages.
- Engage with discussions on high-visibility platforms to maintain brand presence.

Understanding these trends helps you adapt to Google's evolving ranking landscape.

Here's an example of a site that lost some traffic (in blue), while a subreddit gained traffic at the same time (in green):
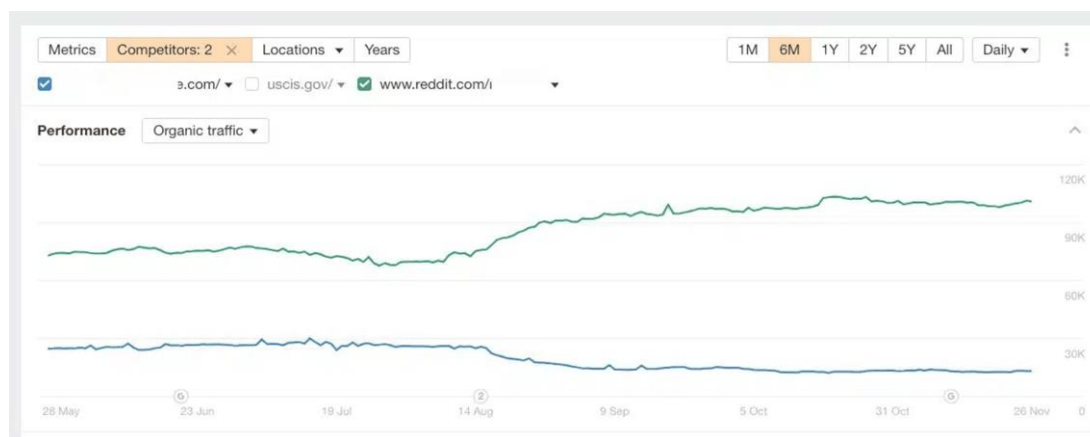
Source: Ahrefs.com

Step 6: Identify High-Performing Pages

Even if traffic has declined overall, some pages may still rank well. Studying them can provide valuable insights.

Questions to ask:
- What's different about the pages that retained strong rankings?
- Did they follow a unique content strategy?
- Do they have stronger backlink profiles?
- How does the search intent for these pages differ from that of the underperforming ones?

Reverse-engineering successful content can help your recovery plan.

Step 7: Use AI to Detect Patterns in Traffic Drops

AI-powered analysis can reveal hidden trends in your website's performance.

Steps to take:
- Export keyword data from Google Search Console, Ahrefs, or Semrush.
- Compare data from before and after the drop.
- Use AI tools like ChatGPT to identify patterns and emerging ranking factors.

This method can provide deeper insight into why some pages lost traffic while others remained stable.

Monitoring Recovery and Next Steps

Once you implement these changes, track results over the next 4-6 weeks. If your rankings don't improve, a more detailed SEO audit may be necessary.

By taking a methodical approach, you can pinpoint weaknesses, strengthen your content, and adapt to algorithm changes—ultimately restoring your website's traffic and visibility.

4 BREAKING THE MYTH: HOW LONG TITLE TAGS CAN BOOST YOUR GOOGLE RANKINGS

Many believe that title tags should be short, but longer titles can actually help you rank higher. Google reads the entire tag, even if it gets truncated, allowing your page to show up for more search queries and attract more traffic.

The SEO Myth That's Holding You Back

If you've ever used an SEO tool, you've probably seen warnings about keeping the title tags under 60 characters. Conventional wisdom suggests that longer titles get cut off in search results, reducing their effectiveness. But what if we told you that longer title tags could actually improve your rankings?

The Secret Behind Long Title Tags

This strategy isn't new, nor is it just a theory. Joel Headley, a former Google employee, first introduced this concept at a LocalU event. He conducted a test with thousands of healthcare websites, adding neighborhood names to title tags. The result? A 15% increase in visibility on Google. That means these sites ranked for more queries and received significantly more traffic.

Why Google Loves Long Title Tags

Even though Google truncates titles after approximately 60 characters, it still reads and processes the entire title. This means that longer title tags allow you to include more relevant terms, increasing the chances of matching multiple search queries. More keywords = more ranking opportunities.

Real-World Results: Case Studies

Case Study #1: A 229-Character Title Tag

A website had a page optimized with a title tag that stretched to 229 characters. Despite exceeding the so-called "character limit," their rankings improved significantly.
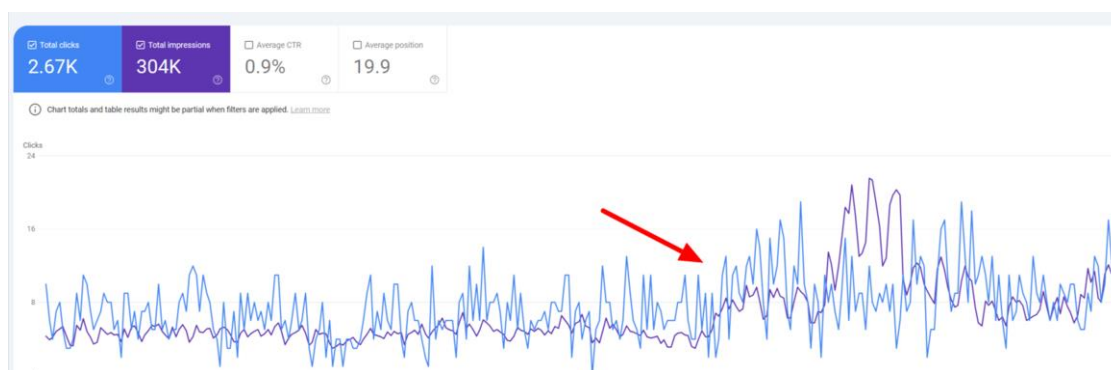
Case Study #2: A Personal Injury Lawyer's Ranking Boost

For a personal injury lawyer, a crucial keyword was added to their already lengthy title tag, pushing it to 232 characters. The result? Their ranking jumped from position 6 to position 4 for that keyword.

Debunking Common Concerns

1. SEO Tools Say It's a Problem

Most SEO tools flag long title tags as an issue, but this is outdated thinking. The reality? Longer titles give you more opportunities to rank for relevant searches.

2. Click-Through Rates (CTR) Might Suffer

Our experience shows no negative impact on CTR. As long as the visible portion of the title is compelling, users will still click.

3. Isn't This Keyword Stuffing?

No. This tactic isn't about spamming keywords—it's about strategically expanding your titles with valuable, relevant terms.

Final Thoughts: Should You Try This Strategy?

If you prioritize actual results over outdated best practices, then absolutely. SEO is about driving traffic and leads, not following arbitrary guidelines. As Joel Headley put it best: "Don't fear the ellipsis." The extra words beyond the visible cut-off still contribute to your ranking success. So go ahead—test it for yourself and watch your rankings rise.