Performance-Driven SEO Strategy Drives 220% Growth In Organic Conversions

Project Overview

Our client is an independent research firm specializing in the North American grocery retail sector. They provide critical insights for executives navigating industry transformations - from digital shifts to changing consumer behaviours.

As a trusted source of market intelligence for grocery executives pursuing business excellence, our client wanted to raise their visibility and deepen organic content engagement.

With our dual expertise in content marketing and search engine optimization (SEO), we developed a performance-driven, content-led SEO strategy to elevate their digital presence and achieve measurable outcomes.

Scope

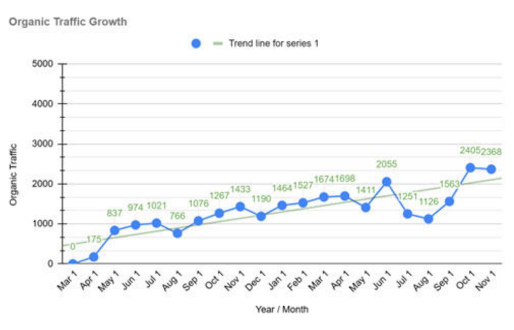
- Conduct a comprehensive SEO audit and establish a baseline for measuring impact
- Develop and implement an SEO strategy aligned with content goals
- Upskill the marketing team on best practices through training and consultation
- Implement continuous performance tracking and optimization
- Advise on a broad spectrum of performance-driven SEO solutions to advance organic marketing efforts

Before and After

Given the brief to increase organic traffic, improve engagement, and drive conversions (e.g. publication downloads), we leaned into data-driven, nuanced, and performance-oriented SEO tactics. Our approach was layered, starting with the basics and building on top of those wins. This delivered significant improvements across all key metrics.

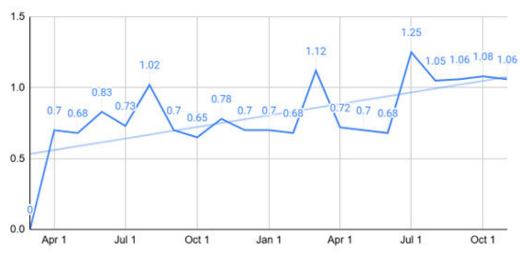
Organic Traffic Growth

Following our audit, we conducted a technical SEO cleanup of the website. Applying simple fixes around broken links and streamlining keyword use unlocked a steady traffic flow.



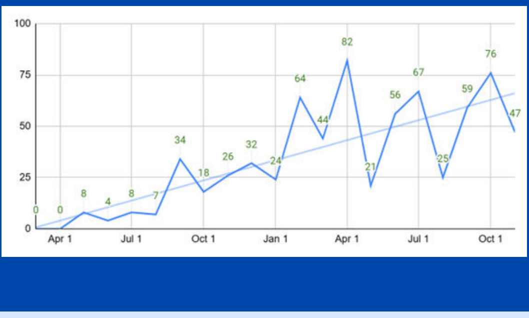
Improved User Engagement

Site restructuring, improved landing pages, keyword optimization, cross-linking, and other SEO tactics led to a marked improvement in readership.



Conversion Breakthrough

Thanks to our implementation of a proper tagging system, conversions (i.e., downloads of publications) could also be accurately tracked for the first time.



The Challenges

Implementing a sound SEO strategy did not come without its challenges. Our approach was to invest heavily in becoming a trusted extension of the internal team, by helping to:

- Improve internal knowledge of SEO, which affected the website's visibility and engagement levels
- Develop a baseline to measure progress and impact
- Deploy SEO tactics to improve the below-average domain authority rankings
- Implement a keyword strategy to improve positioning for critical industry terms

- Address the website's technical limitations which were diminishing user experience and performance

By systematically resolving these challenges, we were able to transform their digital presence and drive meaningful results.

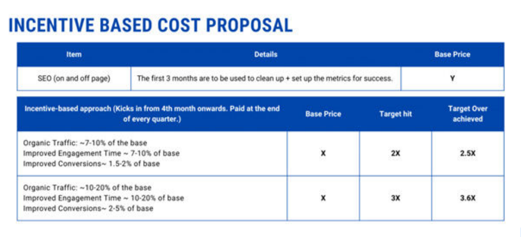
Our Unique Process

At Rato, clients value our proven process for delivering SEO excellence. We are systematic, data-led, and results-driven. Our methodical approach to uncovering insights delivers maximum impact. It makes for informed decisions that are transparent and tactical. Our commitment to delivering value also pushes us to think creatively, not just about the brief, but how we partner together.

Partnership Model: Incentive-based Pricing

Having a like-minded client, we were thrilled to co-create a new way of working; an incentive-based pricing model underpinning our SEO strategy. This created a partnership focused on shared success as we were both committed to achieving ambitious growth targets.

A snapshot of the incentive-based pricing model:



INCENTIVE BASED COST PROPOSAL

Item	Details	Base Price
SEO (on and off page)	The first 3 months are to be used to clean up + set up the metrics for success.	Y

Incentive-based approach (Kicks in from 4th month onwards. Paid at the end of every quarter.)	Base Price	Target hit	Target Over achieved
Organic Traffic: ~7-10% of the base Improved Engagement Time ~ 7-10% of base Improved Conversions~ 1.5-2% of base	X	2X	2.5X
Organic Traffic: ~10-20% of the base Improved Engagement Time ~ 10-20% of base Improved Conversions~ 2-5% of base	X	3X	3.6X

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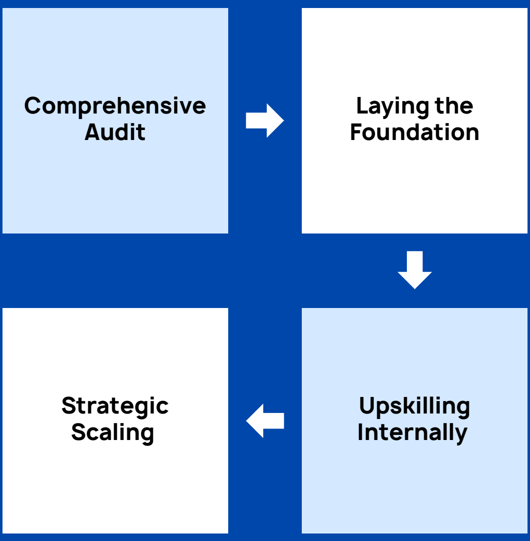

Comprehensive Audit

Laying the Foundation

Upskilling Internally

Strategic Scaling

Our Four-Pillar SEO Strategy

To improve visibility and organic engagement, we implemented a four-pillar strategy. It put the house in order, laid the foundations, and ensured that the in-house team was trained on best practices. We were then better positioned to scale our SEO solutions.

01 Comprehensive Audit

In keeping with our systematic approach, our first port of call was an audit. It provided a comprehensive overview of the lay of the land and informed the strategic direction that needed to be taken.

Over a period of two months, we crunched the numbers and established a baseline. This provided a transparent starting point for developing a sound performance-driven SEO strategy.

02 Laying The Foundation

To build a strong base for our interventions, we began by cleaning up the back end of the website. We rebuilt the technical infrastructure:

- Optimizing website tagging and event tracking
- Restructuring page architecture
- Cleaning up internal linking
- Improving site load times
- Conducting in-depth keyword research

03 Upskilling Internally

In parallel, recognizing that sustainable success requires internal capability, we invested in training the in-house marketing team. Our approach was hands-on and included:

- Sharing best practices on SEO-optimization
- Providing essential resources and tools
- Initially SEO-proofing all published content

The trust gained helped us align strategies and work towards shared objectives.

04 Strategic Scaling

With a suitably trained internal team, we shifted focus to expanding our SEO tactics:

- Re-designing landing pages for improved conversions
- Experimenting with content formats
- Strengthening backlinks
- Optimizing keywords
- Identifying third-party platforms for cross-promotion

All interventions were meticulously tracked in real time and improvements were made continuously. By implementing a performance-driven, content-led strategy, combining technical expertise with tactical thinking, we elevated our clients' digital presence.

Results

With organic search results accounting for about 94% of all clicks , each pillar of our strategic approach contributed to truly remarkable outcomes.

Performance Highlights

- **34% rise in organic traffic** immediately after backend optimization.
- **Sustained growth in average engagement** since April 2023, reflecting the positive impact of SEO tactics.
- **Conversion breakthrough**. By the end of Q2 conversions grew by 219.8%. This can be attributed to the measures put in place during the clean-up phase.
- **Improved domain authority and visibility**. Significant improvement in domain authority ranking and consistent improvements in keyword positioning.
- **Expanded digital footprint** due to substantial growth in quality backlinks and an increased share of traffic from external sources.

Strategic Transformation

SEO is now a central tenet of our client's marketing and communications strategy, driven by continuous, data-backed interventions and a commitment to digital excellence. The strategic advantage that our client has gained positions them well for continued success.

Client Testimonial

★★★★★

> Working with Rato Communications on our SEO strategy has been a transformative experience. Their expertise in both on-page and off-page SEO activities has significantly lifted our online presence. The bi-weekly status calls not only keep us on track but also spark new ideas for driving our strategy forward. Their invaluable support in refining our content strategy has been very helpful. And, the best part of seeing tangible results - a remarkable 34% growth in organic users from September to November last year (2023). I highly recommend Rato Communications to anyone looking to elevate their SEO game.

Every second, over 99,000 Google searches are being conducted in a digital marketplace that is growing more crowded by the day. This makes it increasingly challenging to engage with the right audiences. A strategic SEO approach can help you part the crowd.

Contact us for a discovery call to learn how.