Comprehensive SEO Audit Template

1. Introduction

Purpose:
Define the audit's objective. For example:

- Improve rankings
- Increase organic traffic
- Boost conversions

Scope:
Outline the areas you'll assess, such as:

- Technical SEO
- On-page SEO
- Off-page SEO
- User Experience (UX)
- Local SEO (if applicable)
- Content quality and structure

Audit Date & Team:
Record the date of the audit, list the team members involved, and note the tools used (e.g., Google Analytics, Search Console, Ahrefs, Screaming Frog).

2. Website Overview

Item	Details/Example
Website URL	https://www.example.com
Industry & Competitors	E.g., Technology: Competitors – exampletech.com, etc.
Target Audience	Define demographics, interests, geographic focus
Main Goals	Sales, lead generation, brand awareness
Current Analytics	Traffic trends, bounce rate, conversions (use snapshot)

Example:
"Example Tech's website receives an average of 50,000 visitors/month with a bounce rate of 45%. The main competitors are ExampleTechPlus and TechHub."

Fig: SEO audit Overview

3. Technical SEO Audit

3.1 Crawlability & Indexation

- **Robots.txt:**

  - Check for disallow directives that might block important pages.
  - *Example:* Ensure /blog/ isn't accidentally blocked if it drives traffic.

- Below the example of robot.txt file:

User-Agent: *

Allow: /

Disallow: /api/

Disallow: /admin/

Sitemap: https://www.sudipacharya.com.np/sitemap.xml

- **XML Sitemap:**

  - Verify it is up-to-date, error-free, and submitted to Google Search Console.

- Below The example of sitemap.xml:

```xml
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">

  <script id="fjhfhwhrvfhjfsbdjehuewhru"/>

  <script/>

  <script/>

  <script
  src="chrome-extension://hoklmmgfnpapgjgcpechhaamimifchmp/frame_ant/frame_ant.js"/>

  <url>

    <loc>https://www.sudipacharya.com.np/</loc>

    <lastmod>2025-03-15T18:56:13.432Z</lastmod>

    <changefreq>monthly</changefreq>

    <priority>1</priority>

  </url>
```

```
  <url>

    <loc>https://www.sudipacharya.com.np/experience</loc>

    <lastmod>2025-03-15T18:56:13.432Z</lastmod>

    <changefreq>monthly</changefreq>

    <priority>0.8</priority>

  </url>

  <url>

    <loc>https://www.sudipacharya.com.np/blogs</loc>

    <lastmod>2025-03-15T18:56:13.432Z</lastmod>

    <changefreq>weekly</changefreq>

    <priority>0.8</priority>

  </url>

  <!------------continue here other urls-------->

</urlset>
```

- **Indexation Issues:**

  - Use a "site:example.com" search to compare indexed pages with those in your sitemap.
  - *Example Table:*

Page Type	Indexed Pages	Expected Pages
Blog Posts	150	155
Product Pages	45	45
Landing Pages	10	10

- **Canonical Tags:**

  - Ensure proper use to avoid duplicate content.
  - Verify that pages with similar content point to a single canonical URL.

- **Real-World Example**

Let's say your blog post can be accessed through multiple URLs:

- `https://example.com/blog/seo-tips`
- `https://example.com/blog/SEO-Tips`
- `https://example.com/blog/seo-tips?ref=twitter`

To avoid duplicate content, you add the following **canonical tag** in the `<head>` section of all versions:

`<link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/blog/seo-tips">`

This tells Google and other search engines that `https://example.com/blog/seo-tips` is the main version.

- **Multiple Versions & URL Redirects:**

  - Test these four variations in your browser:
    - http://example.com
    - https://example.com
    - http://www.example.com
    - https://www.example.com
  - They should all redirect to a single version (preferably the HTTPS with "www" or non-"www" version).

Example Table

Test URL	Expected Redirect	Actual Result
http://example.com	https://www.example.com	✓ Correct
https://example.com	https://www.example.com	✓ Correct
http://www.example.com	https://www.example.com	✓ Correct
https://www.example.com	No redirect needed	✓ Correct

Zombie Pages:

  - Identify low-value pages (archive, tag, or internal search result pages) that may harm crawl budget.
  - Decide whether to delete, merge, or add a noindex tag.

3.2 Site Speed & Performance

- **Page Load Time:**

  - Use tools like [Google PageSpeed Insights](#) and [WebPageTest](#) for key pages.
  - *Example Metrics Table:*
  -

Metric	Target	Current
Time to First Byte (TTFB)	< 500 ms	480 ms
Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)	< 2.5 sec	2.8 sec
First Input Delay (FID)	< 100 ms	90 ms
Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)	< 0.1	0.12

- **Mobile Responsiveness:**

  - Test with Google's Mobile-Friendly Test.
  - Ensure that content, buttons, and menus are optimized for mobile devices.
- **Core Web Vitals:**

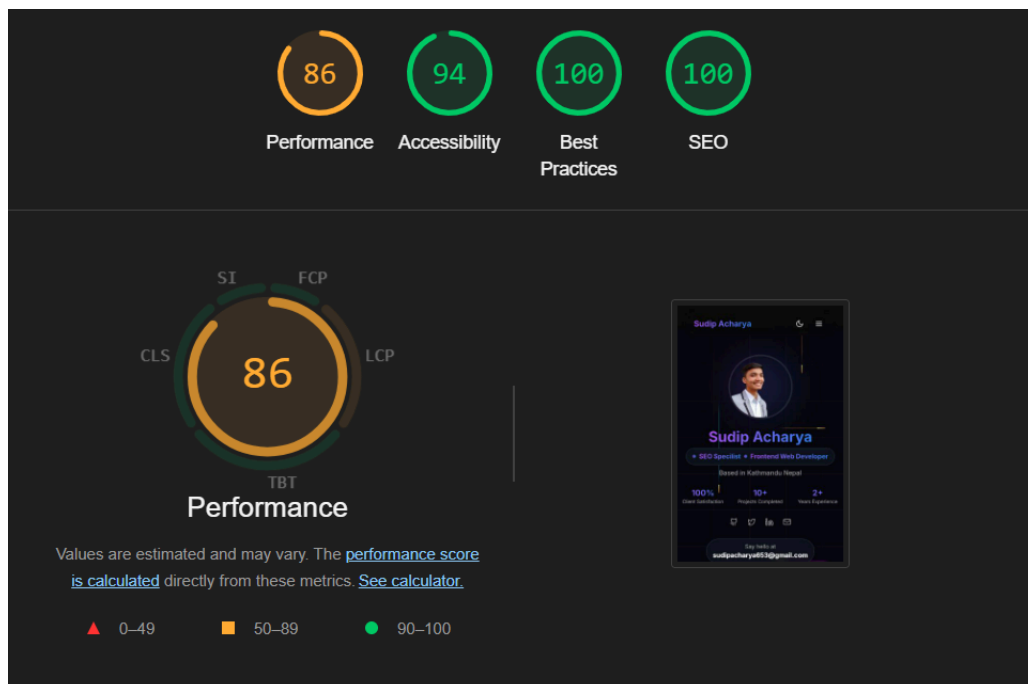 - Monitor LCP, FID, and CLS for continuous improvements.

Fig: Site speed and performance test using chrome lighthouse.

3.3 URL Structure & HTTPS

- **URL Readability:**

  - Ensure URLs are short, include relevant keywords, and follow a consistent structure.
- **HTTPS & Security:**

  - Confirm that all pages load securely (check for mixed-content errors).
- **Example Best Practice:**
  A URL like https://www.example.com/blog/seo-audit-template is preferable over a dynamic, less-readable URL.

3.4 Structured Data

- **Schema Markup:**

  - Implement relevant schema types (Organization, Breadcrumb, Product, Review, etc.).
  - Validate using Google's Rich Results Test.
- **Rich Snippets:**

  - Ensure that your markup can trigger rich results (star ratings, pricing, etc.) in SERPs.

3.5 Duplicate & Thin Content

- **Duplicate Content:**

  - Use tools like Copyscape or Siteliner to identify duplicates.
  - Implement canonical tags or combine similar pages as needed.
- **Thin Content:**

  - Identify pages with low word counts or little value.
  - Enhance content quality or remove pages that do not contribute to overall goals.

4. On-Page SEO Audit

4.1 Title Tags & Meta Descriptions

- **Title Tags:**

  - Ensure each page has a unique, keyword-rich title (50–60 characters recommended).
  - *Example:* "SEO Audit Template – Comprehensive Checklist for 2025"
- **Meta Descriptions:**

  - Write compelling, unique descriptions within 150–160 characters that encourage clicks.

4.2 Headings & Content Structure

- **Header Tags (H1, H2, etc.):**

  - Use a proper hierarchy. The H1 should reflect the page's main topic, while H2s and H3s break down the content logically.
- **Content Quality & Readability:**

  - Use short paragraphs, bullet points, and subheaders to improve scan-ability.
  - Include visuals and multimedia to enhance engagement.

4.3 Keyword Optimization

- **Keyword Research & Mapping:**

  - Ensure target keywords are naturally integrated in titles, headers, and body text.
  - Check for keyword density and avoid over-optimization.
- **On-Page Tools:**

  - Consider using tools like SEMrush or Ahrefs for detailed keyword performance insights.

4.4 Image Optimization

- **Alt Text & File Names:**

  - Every image should have descriptive alt text and optimized file names.
  - Compress images to reduce file sizes and improve load times.
  - Use Next Gen Image format (WEBP).

Example Table

Image	Current Size	Optimized Size	Alt Text
hero-banner.jpg	1.2 MB	200 KB	"SEO Audit Checklist Banner"
product-demo.png	800 KB	150 KB	"Screenshot of SEO dashboard tool"

4.5 Internal Linking

- **Navigation & Anchor Text:**

  - Ensure a logical internal linking structure.
  - Use keyword-rich anchor texts for relevant linking.
- **Broken Links:**

  - Use tools like Screaming Frog or Broken Link Checker to find and fix any broken internal or external links.

5. Off-Page SEO Audit

5.1 Backlink Profile

- **Quality & Quantity:**

  - Use Ahrefs, SEMrush, or Moz to analyze the number and quality of backlinks.
  - Review Domain Authority and referring domains.
- **Anchor Text Distribution:**

  - The majority of links should use natural, branded anchor texts.
  - Identify any toxic or spammy links and plan to disavow them if necessary.

5.2 Competitor Analysis

- **Competitor Backlink Comparison:**

  - Compare your site's backlink profile with that of your main competitors.
- **Keyword & Content Gap Analysis:**

  - Identify keywords your competitors rank for but you do not.
  - Analyze the structure and content style that helps them rank.
- **Example Insight:**
  "Competitor A ranks highly due to in-depth, visual-rich blog posts. Consider adding video tutorials and infographics to your content."

5.3 Social Signals & Brand Mentions

- **Social Presence:**
  - Assess social media engagement across platforms.
- **Unlinked Mentions:**
  - Identify brand mentions that aren't linked to your site and consider outreach for link-building opportunities.

6. User Experience (UX) & Content Quality

6.1 Website Architecture & Navigation

- **Site Structure:**

  - Ensure every important page is accessible from the homepage within three clicks.
  - *Example Table:*

Section	Clicks from Homepage	Notes
About Us	1	Direct link in top menu
Product Details	2	Homepage > Products > Details
Blog	2	Homepage > Blog

6.2 Mobile Usability

- **Mobile-Friendliness:**
  - Validate with Google's Mobile-Friendly Test.
  - Check for responsive layouts, easy-to-tap buttons, and legible fonts.

6.3 Content & UX Signals

- **Copywriting Best Practices:**

  - Use short introductions, small paragraphs, and clear subheaders.
  - Include visuals, infographics, and videos to keep users engaged.

- **User Engagement Metrics:**

  - Monitor bounce rates, dwell time, and session duration using Google Analytics to ensure your content meets user intent.

6.4 Featured Snippet Opportunities

- **Content Optimization:**

  - Format content to answer common questions in short paragraphs (ideally around 40 words).
  - Use bullet lists, tables, and clear headers to increase chances of earning featured snippets.
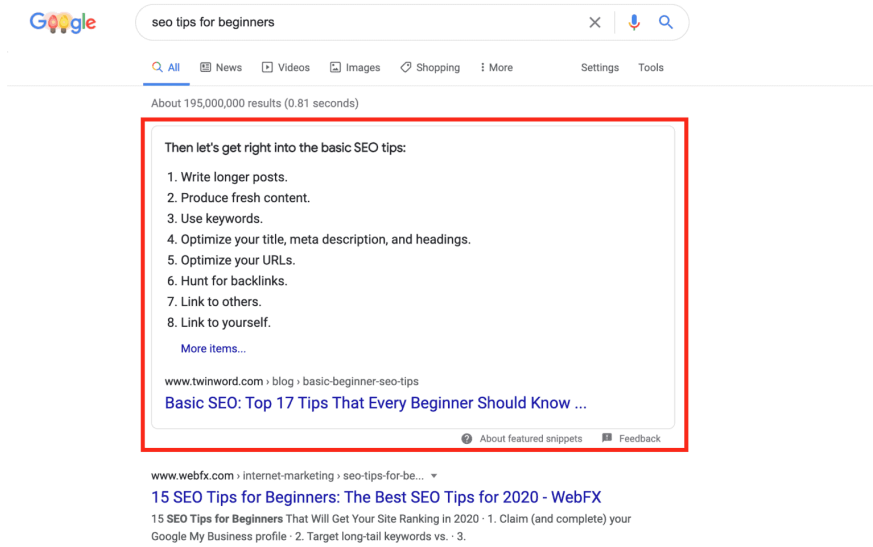
Fig: Featured snippet example

● **Checklist for Snippets:**

  ○ Mobile-optimized content
  ○ HTTPS-secured pages
  ○ Clear H2/H3 headings
  ○ Direct answers (approx. 40 words)
  ○ Outbound links to authority sources

7. Analytics & Reporting

7.1 Google Analytics & Search Console

- **Setup Verification:**

  - Confirm tracking codes are correctly installed.
  - Regularly review key metrics: organic traffic, bounce rate, conversion rate, and user behavior.
- **Indexing & Crawl Reports:**

  - Check for crawl errors and indexing issues in Google Search Console.

7.2 Performance Tracking

- **Ranking Reports:**

  - Monitor keyword rankings using tools like SEMrush or Ahrefs.
  - Track changes over time and compare against goals.
- **Conversion Analysis:**

  - Set up goals (leads, sales, downloads) and analyze the conversion funnel.

8. Local SEO (If Applicable)

8.1 Google My Business (GMB)

- **GMB Optimization:**
  - Ensure business information (Name, Address, Phone – NAP) is accurate and consistent.
  - Add photos, respond to reviews, and update business hours.

8.2 Local Citations & Reviews

- **Directory Listings:**
  - Audit listings on Yelp, Yellow Pages, and industry-specific directories.
- **Review Management:**
  - Develop a strategy to encourage positive reviews and address negative feedback promptly.

9. Content Audit

9.1 Content Inventory

- **Page List & Metrics:**
    - Create a spreadsheet listing all pages, including key metrics (traffic, rankings, word count, etc.).
- **Example Columns:**
    - Page URL
    - Title Tag
    - Traffic
    - Bounce Rate
    - Last Updated Date

9.2 Content Quality & Relevance

- **Content Gaps:**
    - Identify topics that are underrepresented or missing.
- **Update/Prune Strategy:**
    - Decide which pages need updating, consolidation, or removal to improve quality and relevance.

10. Action Plan & Recommendations

10.1 Prioritized Issues

- **Short-Term Fixes:**
    - List immediate technical fixes (e.g., fixing broken links, updating title tags).
- **Long-Term Strategies:**
    - Outline ongoing efforts such as content creation, link-building, and UX improvements.

10.2 Timeline & Responsibilities

- **Implementation Schedule:**
    - Develop a timeline with clear deadlines.
- **Team Assignments:**
    - Assign specific tasks to team members or departments.

11. Conclusion & Next Steps

- **Summary of Findings:**
  - Recap the key issues discovered and opportunities identified.
- **Strategic Recommendations:**
  - Highlight the most critical changes to boost SEO performance.
- **Monitoring Plan:**
  - Explain how you'll track improvements over time.
- **Follow-Up:**
  - Schedule regular audits and performance reviews (quarterly or biannually).

12. Appendix

- **Tools & Resources:**
  - List all tools used (Screaming Frog, Ahrefs, SEMrush, Google Analytics, etc.).
- **Glossary:**
  - Define key SEO terms for reference.
- **Additional Notes:**
  - Include any extra observations or custom metrics relevant to your website.

Instructions for Use

1. **Copy & Paste:**
   Copy the template into a Google Doc or your preferred documentation tool.

2. **Customize:**
   Replace placeholder text and examples with your website's specific details and metrics.

3. **Data Collection:**
   Use your SEO tools to fill in data, capture screenshots, and note findings.

4. **Review & Collaborate:**
   Share the document with your team for feedback and collaborative insights.

5. **Regular Updates:**
   Revisit the audit periodically to ensure continuous optimization in line with the latest SEO trends.

This unified SEO audit template is built to guide you through a thorough review of your website's performance across all key areas. By following this structured checklist, you'll be better equipped to identify weaknesses, seize new opportunities, and maintain a strong SEO foundation in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

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