

04/02/2020



Auditing the Whole Picture: Content, SEO + **BEYOND.**

Author	Company	Updated
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Annie Veale Freelance provides UK based freelance services across areas of digital to include SEO, AI, AEO, PPC, reporting and auditing along side website design and development.

annieveale.com

Website Audits for SMEs: From Outdated to Optimised

Clear insights. Actionable fixes. Real growth.

The SME Website Problem

Post 2024 Websites Underperform for the following reasons:

Outdated code, broken plugins, messy content structure.

Poor navigation frustrates users.

Google Tools aren't properly configured – landing page scores and engagement falls cause rankings to drop, traffic declines.

Marketing spend wasted when the site itself is the weak link.

IDENTIFYING SEARCH QUERIES IN CONTEXT OF INTENT



Watch on YouTube

Interactive Content Audits are effective in allowing you to allocate the correct budgets to content creation, identify cannibalisation and duplicate content. Additionally, by overlaying the search query data you can **IMPROVE YOUR SEO** with better alignment to the helpful content updates and E-E-A-T (Experience, Expertise, Authority, and Trustworthiness) requirements for your site.

Many SMEs and sole traders involved in ecommerce or homes sectors saw unprecedented growth during the pandemic — sudden surges in revenue and users that would have been unusual in normal circumstances. For a lot of “one-person-band” businesses, this success was managed without internal customer service, tech, or marketing teams, this somewhat aggravated by lockdowns and social distancing - often relying on a single offshore developer to build and maintain their site.

Fast forward five years, and the consequences of that rapid growth are clear. Websites are showing the strain of underinvestment, technical debt, and deferred maintenance, compounded by evolving technology and platform updates. In effect, many sites are now operating in a slowed ecosystem — they function, but inefficiently, missing opportunities to engage users, convert traffic, and support business goals. Layer on top of this some of the challenges faced by businesses that do not have ‘full time employees in Marketing’ or those that are experienced to manage both the tech (digital) and marketing elements and you have an era that most are experiencing right now – a frustration and comparatively inflated cost to what they experienced during the fruitful years.

Average site Lifespan

Average Lifespan: Research indicates that the average lifespan of a website is approximately 3 to 5 years. Realnet Cambridge

Declining Performance: Beyond this period, websites often experience technical issues, outdated design, and reduced user engagement.

Industry Variability: The optimal lifespan can vary depending on industry, technology advancements, and design trends. Oxygen Elements

As we move through 2024 and 2025, the digital landscape is evolving at an unprecedented pace — rivalling the explosive growth many sectors experienced during the pandemic. Websites built even a few years ago are now contending with legacy code, deprecated functions, and older structures that weren’t designed to meet today’s demands for data compliance, user engagement tracking, content authority, site performance, and e-commerce functionality.

At the same time, the sheer variety of new technologies, frameworks, and platform choices means that businesses are navigating a rapidly expanding ecosystem, testing which stacks are most efficient while balancing performance, usability, and scalability.

The result is a complex environment where even well-intentioned updates can leave sites underperforming if the architecture and strategy haven’t kept pace.



The Missed Opportunity

You Don't Just Need More Traffic
— You Need the Right Traffic

Free audits/SEO checkers only scratch the surface. Technical “scores” don’t tell you if visitors are relevant or engaged.

Wrong traffic = misleading data, wasted effort, missed conversions.

The solution: Where Design Meets Data

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Your website isn't just code or content — it's an experience. I combine deep data analysis with design thinking principles (applied in a modern, agile way) to uncover what's really happening and turn it into creative, actionable solutions.

Technical Foundation

Most SME websites still run on outdated code, slow servers, or messy CMS setups. I dig into the hard data – crawlability, site speed, schema, database health – and turn those insights into practical fixes that are not just functional but visually and structurally intuitive. Your site ends up technically solid and user-friendly, so every improvement supports both people and search engines.

User Sentiment & Engagement
Numbers are only meaningful when paired with design-led interpretation. I analyse real user journeys, heatmaps, and behaviour patterns to uncover friction points and drop-offs. Then I translate these insights into design and UX solutions — from layout adjustments to interaction improvements — so users are guided effortlessly toward conversion. Data informs the decisions; design delivers them.

Market & Competitor Context
Competitor benchmarking and market analysis can overwhelm SMEs with spreadsheets and charts.

Content Marketing
Content is more than words – it's structure, clarity, and trust. I combine engagement data with a designer's lens to restructure content, highlight key messaging, and optimise information flow. The result is content that's both search-friendly and human-friendly, presented in ways that are visually digestible and compelling, from infographics to improved navigation paths.

I extract the insights that matter and translate them into visual frameworks and dashboards that make decisions simple.

This includes advanced tools for custom reporting such as The SEO Colour Wheel, user navigation paths, and intelligent engagement stats, so you can instantly see where opportunities lie and what steps to prioritise.

Your Options

Freelancers and audits are not of course the only options to achieve assessment and strategy for your site, apps and owned media or performance on digital channels – there are an increasing number of tools and options available to the business owner and these can be summarised as:
Headline: DIY, Agencies, AI... or Bespoke Reports

- DIY tools: free, but limited – surface-level SEO scores.
- Agencies: often package-driven, not tailored.
- AI tools: useful, but generic and lack strategic context.

Annie Veale Freelance audits: tailored, insight-driven, and designed for SMEs.

The Outcome

Clarity, Priorities, Growth

- Prioritised action plan, tailored to your goals.
- Balanced for both search engines and real people.
- Saves time and money by fixing what matters most first.



Transparent Pricing Tailored Depth

Bespoke
from £350

- Bespoke audit reports: £350 – £2,500 (tiered by scope).
- SEO Colour Wheel: £950 / £1,400 (structured audit framework).
- GA4 Implementation & Training: £1,500.

Interactive
£1, 400+

Every project or report includes – communication platforms, meetings and face-to-face explorative chats and guidance, whether it is directly relevant or is of relevance to the supporting teams – whether that be social, content creation, tech and hosting or internal process.

INSIGHTFUL, INTELLIGENT, DECISIVE.

Process + Promise

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Every project kicks off with a scoping session – if it is a small project the free (no-obligation) call can often achieve this, ultimately resulting in a pre-work agreement – whether this be for an audit or for retained AI incubation, SEO or a web or app project – the deliverables and time will be provided along with (in the case of the paid-consultancy) a full explorative report bench-marking the present day and the tasks required chronologically to elevate performance.

This means a fixed fee, no nasty surprises and a guarantee that the project or audit will level-up your digital performance.

+6,200

In excess of 6,200 days working on marketing and account or project management. This is a mix of client-side and agency work. The majority client facing.

+100

More than 100 clients have been looked after – whether this be in contracted marketing agency work, client-side contracts or in direct to client free-lancing, this experience is extensive and spans media transitions from traditional to dogotal and digital to AI.

case-studies-plus.annieveale.com/experience



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