

A Site Migration: Redirects, Resources, & Reflection



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3 MONTHS OUT, WE HAD A PLAN

1. Start Early & Have a Process
2. Preserve Top Traffic-Driving Pages
3. Use 1-to-1 Redirects
4. Expect Rankings To Stabilize in 8-12 Weeks
5. Monitor Traffic to Quantify Performance

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WHAT OUR PLAN SHOULD HAVE BEEN

1. SEO's Work Comes Last. Be Patient.
2. Long-Tail Pages Can Save or Sabotage Traffic
3. Redirects Work, but Redirect Tools Have Limits
4. It Will Take 3 Months for Ranks to Stabilize
5. Get Specific, Deep & Detailed with Reporting

LESSON 1

Have a Process,
But Wait to Do the Work

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CHAOS IN THE CREATION

**New Pages Created
Fast & Often**

**URLs Changed
Daily (Yes, Daily!)**

**Incomplete
Product Catalog**

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REDIRECT MAPPING IS MESSY WHEN URLS FREQUENTLY CHANGE

Old: categoryId=4418838

1 Month Out: ~~running-shoes~~

1 Week Out: ~~running-shoes-1~~

4 Days Out: **shop-running-shoes**

2017 JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5 	6	7
8	9	10 	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 	19 	20 	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 	30	31	75% of Redirect Mapping			

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LESSON 2

Preserve Top Pages,
But Don't Neglect the Long Tail

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Sand Spike Rod Holders



Compare

Compare ☐



Marathon 50" Aluminum Sand Spike Rod Holder

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (1)

\$19.99

Compare ☐



Sea Striker Sand Spike Rod Holder

\$5.99

Compare ☐



Marathon 42" PVC/Aluminum Sand Spike Rod Holder

\$14.99

Compare ☐



Sea Striker Surf Pal Sand Spike

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (6)

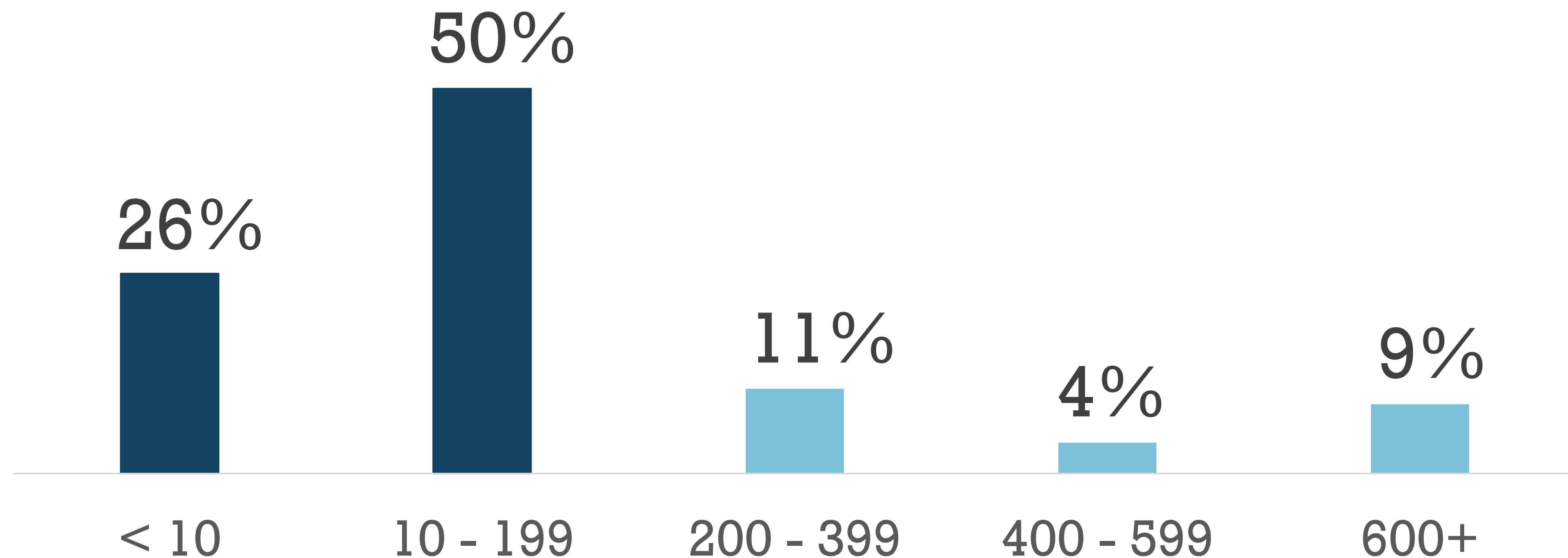
NOW: \$16.47 (17% off!)
WAS: \$19.99*

**SHOULD HAVE
FOCUSED ON THE
THOUSANDS OF
LONG-TAIL PAGES
THAT = BIG
TRAFFIC**

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76% OF TRAFFIC COMES FROM PAGES WITH LESS THAN 200 VISITS A DAY



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50,000 PAGES GET
<10 VISITS A DAY

HOW DO YOU GUIDE 50,000 PAGES THROUGH A SITE MIGRATION?



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LESSON 3

1-to-1 Redirects Are Critical,
But So Is the Process

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A woman with brown hair tied back, wearing glasses and a brown sweater over a white shirt, is sleeping at her desk. Her head is resting on her arm, which is on the laptop keyboard. A white pen holder with several pens is visible on the desk to the right. The background is a blurred office setting.

**WE SUBMITTED
120,000 1-TO-1
REDIRECTS**

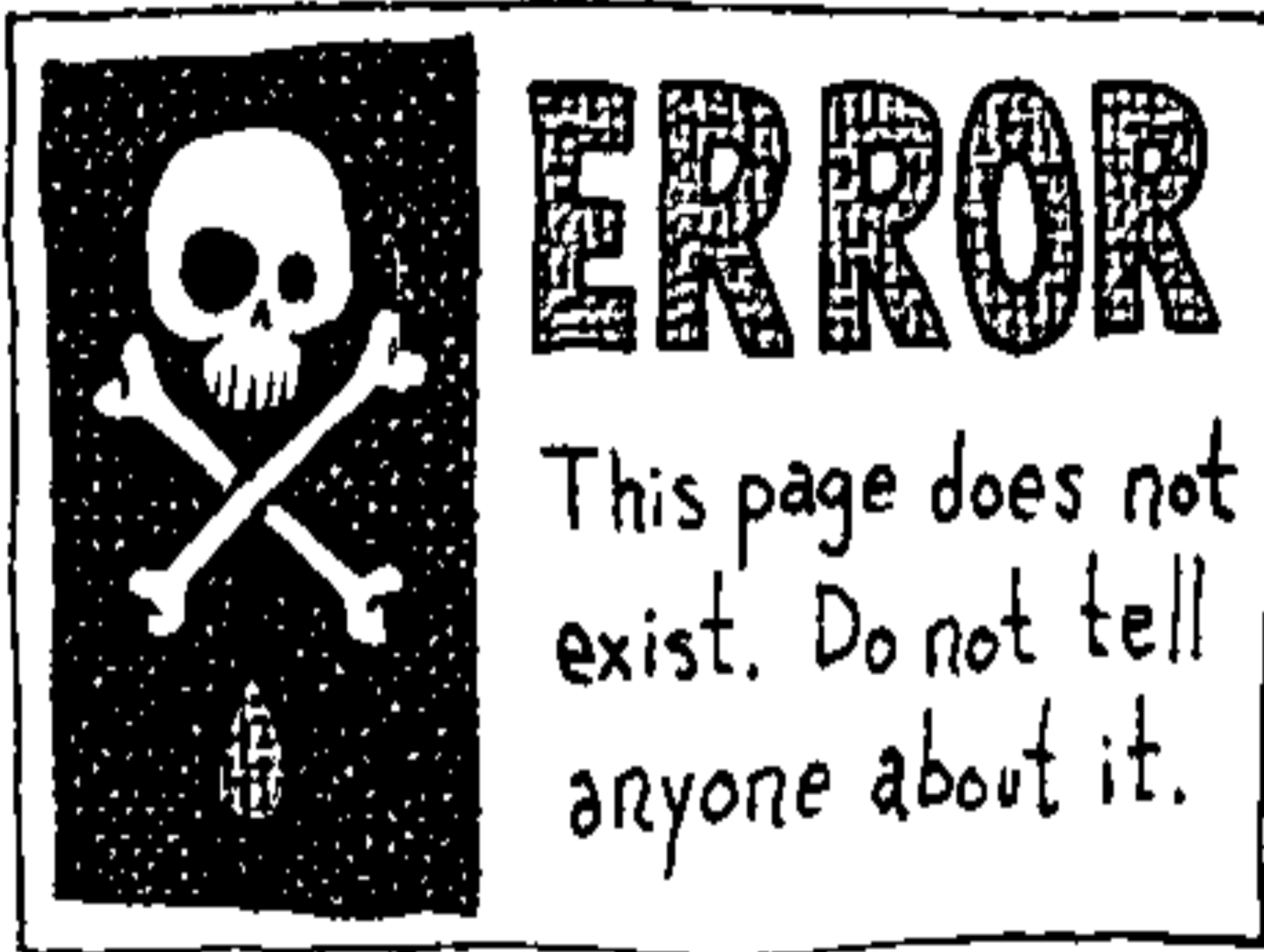
REDIRECTS WORKED, BUT DID NOT TEST THE TOOL LIMITS

Tool Could Not Handle Volume

Scope Reduced 12 Hours Before Launch

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**SHOULD
HAVE TALKED
THROUGH**

Dead Pages
404 Pages
Parameters

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LESSON 4

Ranks Will Fluctuate,
But Expect Stability in 3 Months

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GOOGLE UNDERSTOOD THE NEW SITE, BUT IT TOOK 3 MONTHS FOR RANKS TO STABILIZE



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TECHNICAL SEO PROVIDED A FOUNDATION

Canonical Tags

Sitemaps

Robots.txt

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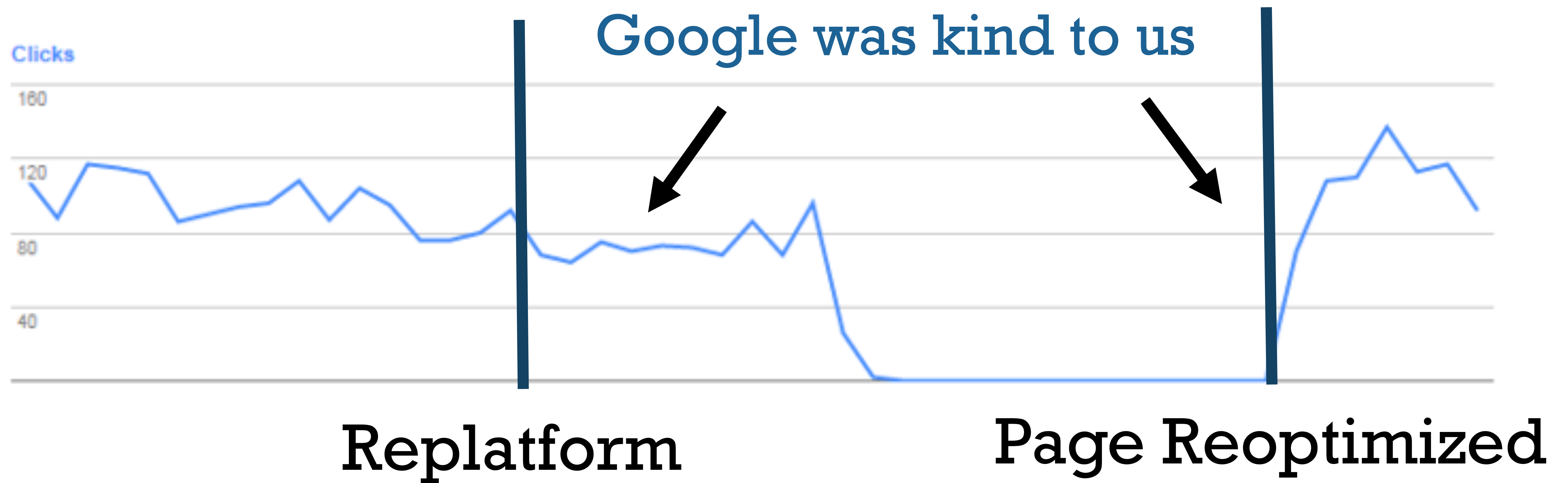
GOOGLE KEPT OLD PAGES INDEXED FOR 100 DAYS

Now: Less Than
3% of 250,000
Pages Indexed

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GOOGLE HAD A GRACE PERIOD FOR DELETED PAGES



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91% OF TOP 1,000 URLS REMAINED THE SAME PRE & POST MIGRATION

`/products/workout-clothes.jsp`

Pre: categoryId=1524963

Post: /c/workout-clothes

LESSON 5

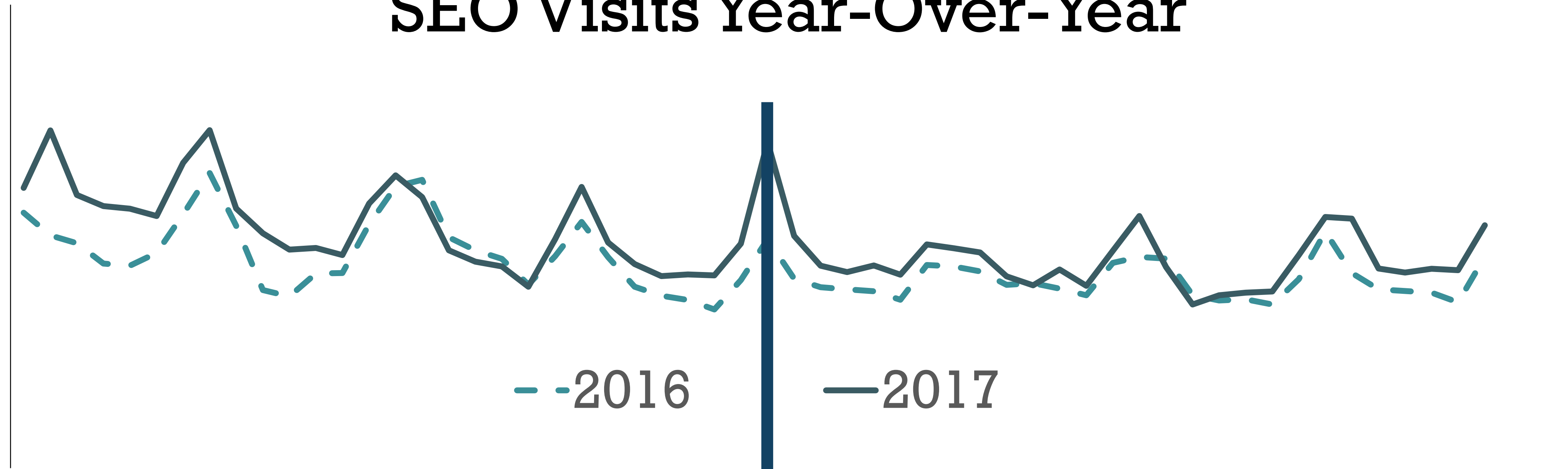
Analyze High-Level Reporting,
But Get Specific to Find Problems

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AT THE TOP LEVEL, POST-MIGRATION TRAFFIC LOOKED GREAT!

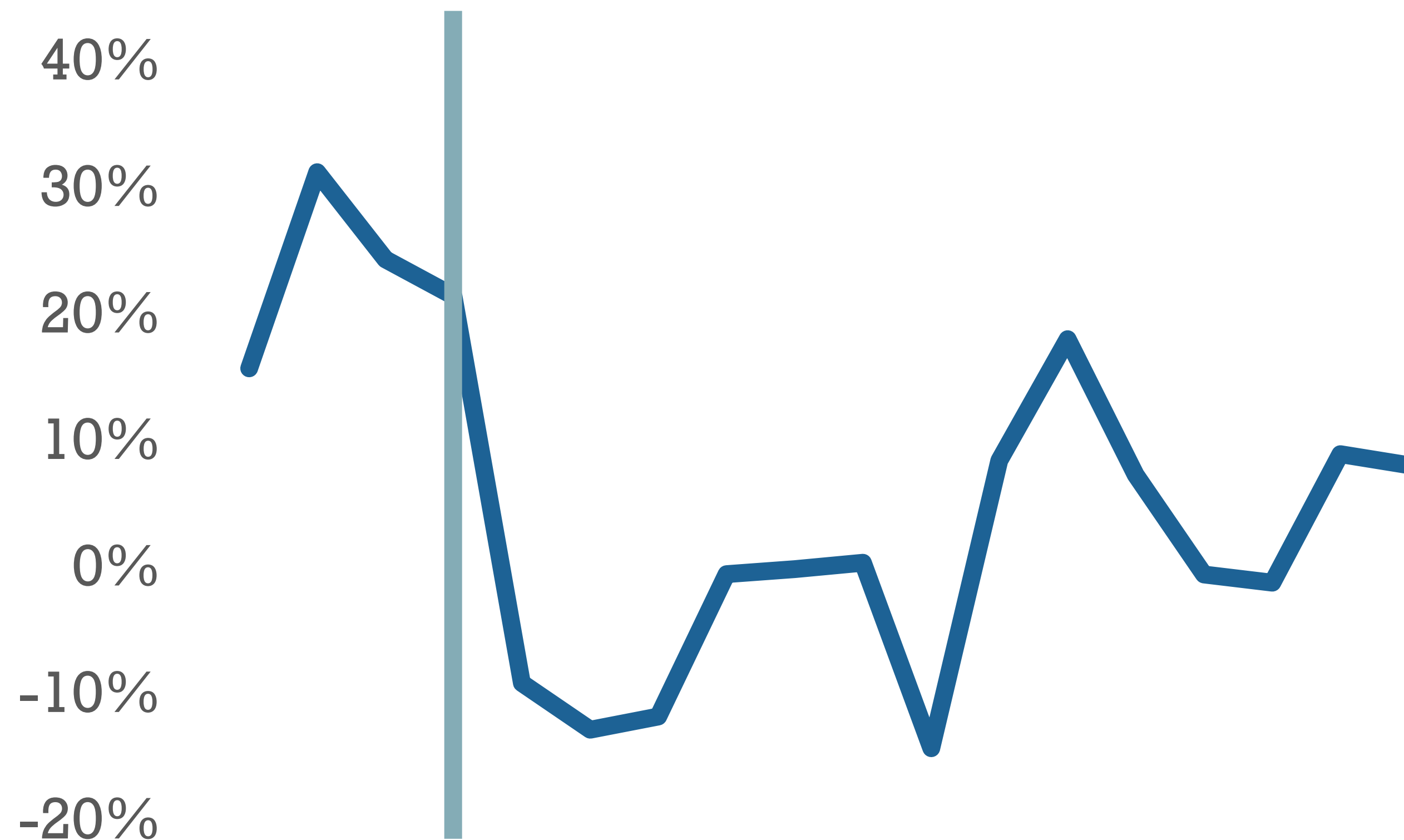
SEO Visits Year-Over-Year



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Division 1: SEO Visits Year-Over-Year



**THE TRUE
IMPACT WAS
SEEN AT THE
DIVISION &
PAGE LEVEL**

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**“RUN THROUGH THE WIRE...
THEN RUN SOME MORE”**

3

4

WE LEARNED VALUABLE LESSONS

1. SEO's Work Comes Last. Be Patient.
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Thank You

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