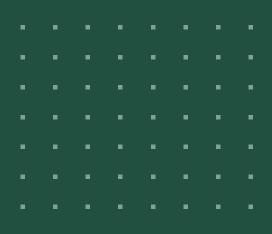
SCALE

Demand Gen Council
SEO strategy in the age of AI



Today's Agenda



- Welcome & introduction (5 min)
- Presentation (30 min)
- Q&A (rest of time)

We help our portfolio build and optimize hyper-growth GTM machines

What is the GTM Advisory?

Advisory

Been-to-market expertise



Advising over 60% of the portfolio with bespoke GTM consulting

Content

Step-by-step guides



Distilling decades of experience into 80+ practical tools and frameworks

Events

The power of community



Connecting EIRs, advisors, and portcos at 40+ events per year

GTM benchmark survey

What	An <u>anonymous GTM metrics survey</u> that should take you less than 15 minutes to complete					
Why	To produce a comprehensive set of public benchmarks that you can use to improve your GTM					
Who	Our entire GTM community					
When	Now (ideally), or before the end of the month					

5 SCALE

Future events

Friday, January 17th

Perfecting your positioning (<u>register here</u>)

Pete Giordano, ex-Global Director of GTM Strategy at Google Workspace and Scale advisor

Friday, February 7th

CMO Council: Aligning sales & marketing

Kelly Hopping (CMO at Demandbase) and Maria Pergolino (3x CMO and Scale EIR)

Today's speaker



John-Henry Scherck
Founder & CEO - Growth Plays
@JHTSCHERCK

SEO strategies in the age of Al

I'm here to talk about SEO, but let's be honest, SEO is....

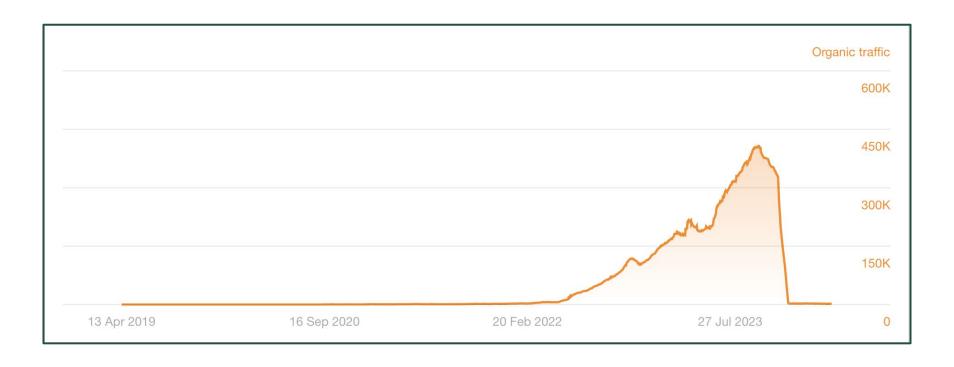
- Boring & tactical
- A means to an end
- Antiquated?
- Dying?

RISKY

SEO utilizes owned media, **but the distribution is algorithmic**.

There is inherent <u>platform risk.</u>

And rented land is risky



In 2014 SEO for B2B SaaS was:

- Easy to execute
- Easy to win market share
- Predictable inputs led to predictable outcomes
- Effective at ripping demos out of the web

It was <u>foolish</u> to not invest in it.

Here's what SEO was like in B2B over the last decade+









Then 2022 happened...





There's a way to get back to where we were with SEO...



First: some SEO truths...

We've gotten greedy.

Acquiring traffic was cheap and converting it was easy easier.



The Marketing Playbook I Helped Create Doesn't Work Anymore. Here's the New B2B Marketing Playbook.



Jon Miller

September 12, 2023

You'd think that all the new tools and digital channels we have these days would make B2B go-to-market (GTM) easier. But the reality is quite the opposite. CMOs and revenue leaders are struggling to create pipeline and drive growth, especially with constrained budgets.

Sure, the economy may be partly to blame, but I believe the core issue is the fact that we've used the same GTM playbook for the past 15 years (a playbook partly inspired by my own work at Marketo). Fast forward to today,

https://bit.ly/jm-playbook

If you are operating in an established market... you need to be an established business for SEO to be worth it.

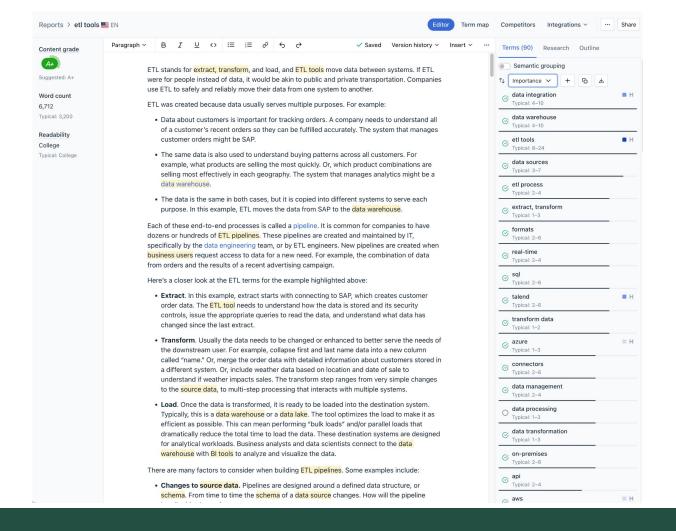
Sea	arch result	AR	DR	UR	Backlinks	Domains
1	Best Project Management Software Of 2022 - Forbes https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/software/best-project-management-sof tware/ ▼	104	94	47	4,191	456
2	▶ People also ask					
3	The Best Project Management Software for 2022 - PCMag https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-project-management-software ▼ ▶ 3 Sitelinks	1.0K	91	51	11,472	680
4	The best & the rest project management software for 2023 https://monday.com/blog/project-management/the-complete-project-management-software-list/ ▼	2.2K	88	52	2,330	694
5	67 Best Project Management Software To Work Faster In 2022 https://hive.com/blog/project-management-software/ ▼	35K	75	41	1,026	268
6	▶ Image pack					
7	Top 20 Best Project Management Software: An Overview https://mopinion.com/top-20-best-project-management-software-an-overview/ ▼	91K	71	41	2,754	228
8	Project Management Software: Compare Reviews on 400+ - G2 https://www.g2.com/categories/project-management ▼	1.4K	90	48	1,200	483
9	Compare The 15 Best Project Management Software Of 2022 https://thedigitalprojectmanager.com/tools/best-project-management-software/ ▼	52K	73	44	1,604	375
10	42 Best Project Management Software and Tools (2022 Update) https://www.scoro.com/blog/best-project-management-software-list/ ▼	61K	73	44	2,526	312
11	Best Project Management Software 2022 - Capterra https://www.capterra.com/project-management-software/ ▼	1.5K	90	48	2,904	445

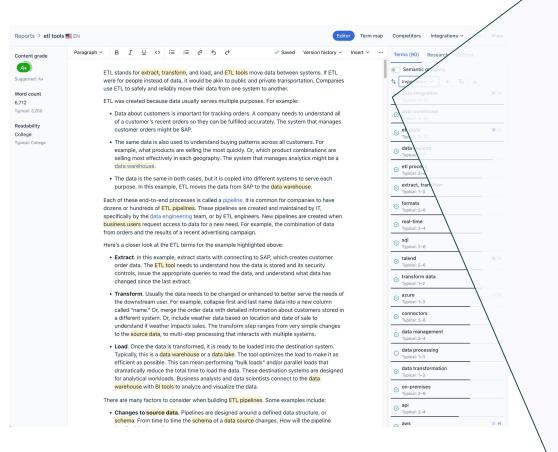
If you are creating a new category or operating in an emerging market - SEO is **absolutely worth it**.

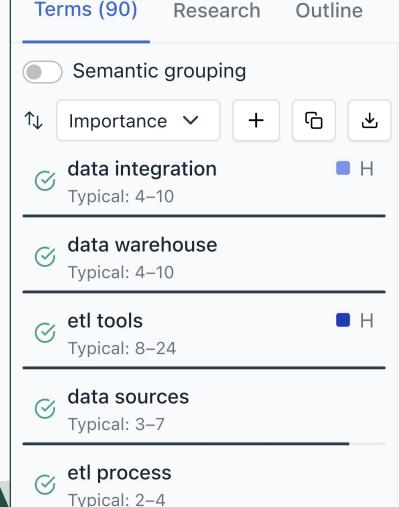
Sea	rch result	Words	DR	UR	Backlinks	Domains
	▶ 3 Top ads					
1	What is an Internal Developer Platform (IDP)? https://internaldeveloperplatform.org/what-is-an-internal-developer-platform/ ▼	1,198	43	15	147	96
2	▶ People also ask					
3	What is an internal developer portal? https://www.cortex.io/post/what-is-an-internal-developer-portal ▼	3,776	52	12	8	ţ
4	Developer Portals & Service Catalogs https://internaldeveloperplatform.org/developer-portals/▼	457	43	4	16	,
5	Internal Developer Portal https://www.harness.io/products/internal-developer-portal ▼	1,087	74	6	7	
6	Internal Developer Platform & Portal Port https://www.getport.io/ ▼	1,471	36	18	1,136	25
7	Internal Developer Portal vs. Internal Developer Platform https://www.configure8.io/blog/internal-developer-portal-vs-internal-developer-platform-whats-the-difference-and-why-both-matter ▼	1,500	25	2	4	
8	10 Best Internal Developer Portals to Consider in 2024 https://www.qovery.com/blog/10-best-internal-developer-portals-to-consider/ ▼	1,074	58	3	6	
9	What is an Internal Developer Portal? by Romaric Philogène https://medium.com/@rphilogene/what-is-an-internal-developer-portal-6bcbe2481300 ▼	N/A	94	3	1	
10	Internal Developer Portal: What It Is and Why You Need One https://thenewstack.io/internal-developer-portal-what-it-is-and-why-you-need-one/	6,492	82	6	14	

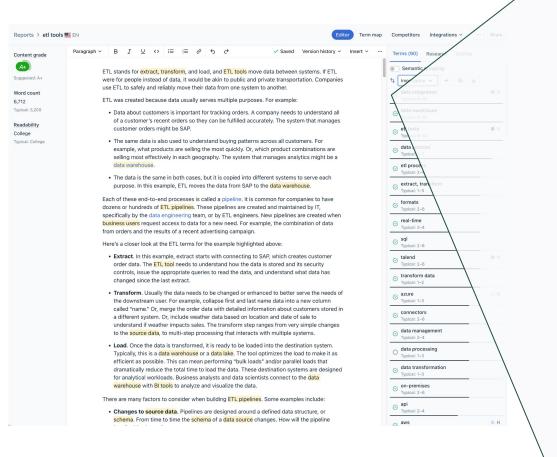
The state of SEO today

- Google currently rewards content that is:
 - Similar to what already exists.
 - From brands it already trusts.
 - Providing easy answers, instead of challenging the question.
- We're seeing less traffic for certain terms YoY.









Terms (90) Research Outline

C

Semantic grouping

`↓ Unused ∨

data processing

Typical: 1–3

data warehousing

Typical: 2-4

big data

Typical: 2-6

business intelligence

Typical: 1–3

crm

Typical: 1-2

Users are no longer satisfied with search results:

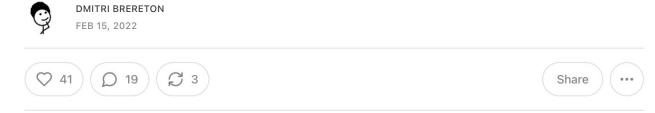


Google search is becoming one of those dying malls. You still go there out of habit, but once you get there, none of it is what you want. You can remember when it was a useful place to visit, but now it's weirdly hollow and you leave without getting what you came for

6:30 AM · Oct 25, 2022 · Twitter for Android

5,550 Retweets 930 Quote Tweets 43.9K Likes

Google Search Is Dying

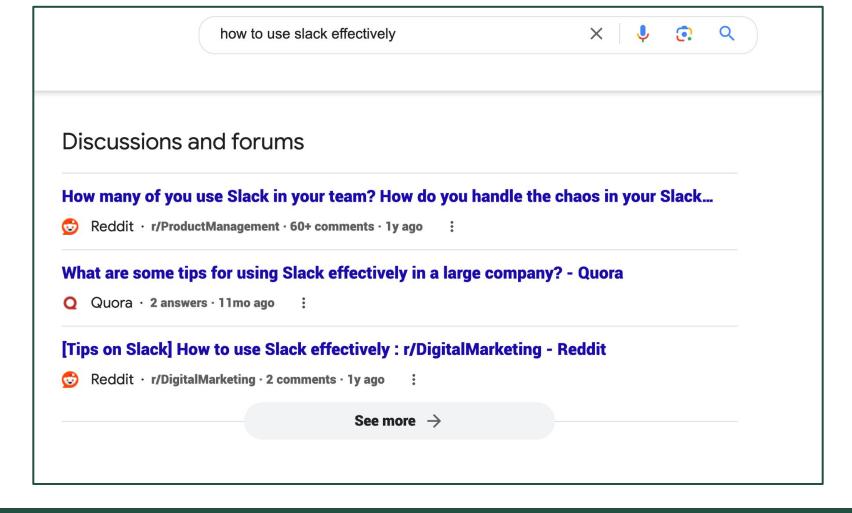


(There is good discussion on this article on <u>Hacker News</u> and <u>Reddit</u>)

Reddit is currently the most popular search engine. The only people who don't know that are the team at Reddit, who can't be bothered to build a decent search interface. So instead we resort to using Google, and appending the word "reddit" to the end of our queries.

Paul Graham thinks this image means Reddit as a social media site "still hasn't peaked". What it actually means is that the amount of people using Reddit as a search engine is growing.

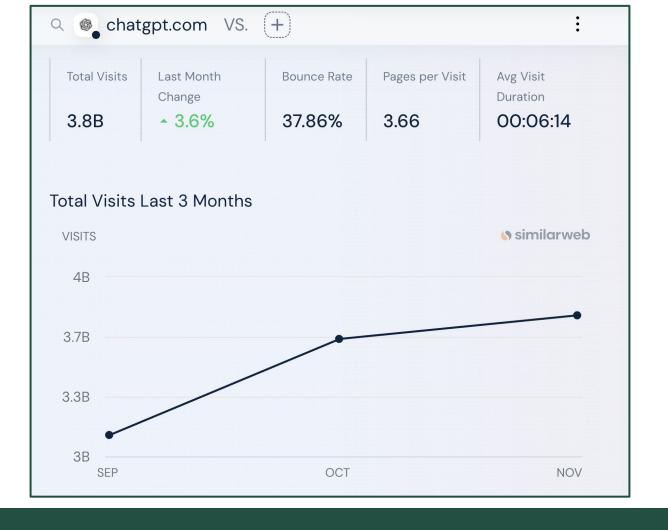
https://dkb.blog/p/google-search-is-dying



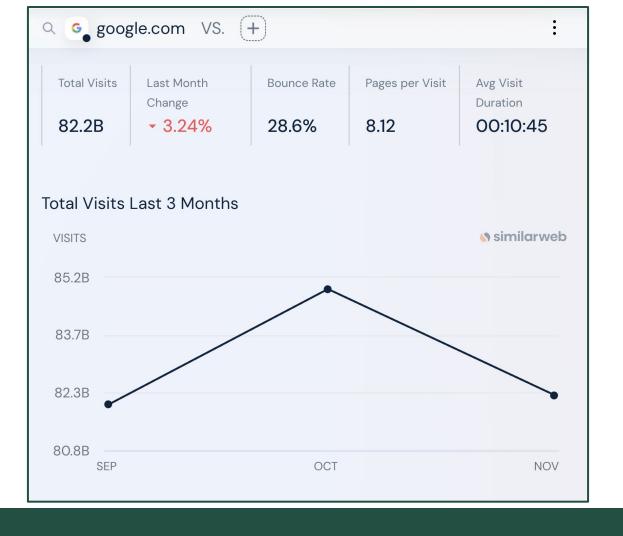
This is why marketers can't have nice things.

My bet: there will be a steady decline in the effectiveness of trad SEO and trad SEO traffic.

Al is going to change the way we all search - and send less traffic to our sites.



But it's still early....



Being #1 on a list of ten blue links that all say the same thing has diminishing returns. If your content is the same as everyone else's it won't generate meaningful results - because it's not meaningfully differentiated. We are competing in a channel that **rewards sameness** - and we are afraid to invest more to stand out.

[INSIGHTS]

The Sea of Sameness Problem in Content Marketing & SEO



SEO

APR 12, 2024

I "de-optimized" a Seer post to make it better for people, dropped it's ranking, and learned a lot in the process.

https://bit.ly/sea-of-same

If you deleted your brand's SEO content from the web, would anyone miss it?

Modern buyers don't want content written by generalists and juniors.

They want **expert content** that can guide how they operate and how they buy.

5 Retool Alternatives to Supercharge Your Internal Tooling in 2024





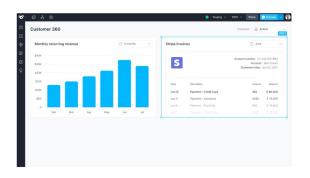
Whether you are evaluating Retool for the first time or are a current Retool customer dissatisfied with functionality, performance, or price, this list is for you.

We have extensively researched the internal tools development space and ranked the 5 best alternatives to Retool in 2024 based on product functionality, generative Al capabilities, extensibility with code, enterprise-readiness, pricing, maintenance costs, security, and customer support.

This list includes both proprietary and open-source alternatives to Retool, so you can comprehensively evaluate which Retool alternative best meets your specific business requirements.

1. Superblocks

Superblocks is an enterprise ready low-code without limits platform for building custom internal <u>applications</u>, automated <u>workflows</u>, and <u>scheduled jobs</u>. Developers can extend Superblocks infinitely with code, build faster with an Al Copilot, self-host without the overhead, and deliver performant apps at scale, all while adopting affordably across their organization.



Strengths	Weaknesses
Infinite Extensibility with Code: Superblocks is infinitely extensible with code, allowing developers to write complex backend APIs with NodeJS and Python, leverage Javascript on the front-end, and build custom components with React within their own IDE and filesystem.	Newer Entrant: Superblocks was founded in 2021. However, Superblocks has seen rapid growth, having raised \$37,000,000 in a Series A round led by Kleiner Perkins.
Architected for Enterprise Scale & Performance: Superblocks application front-ends are multi-threaded for smooth UI rendering, while back-end queries scale elastically with on-demand cloud compute - critical for the enterprise.	No Support for Native Mobile Apps: Superblocks does not support building native mobile applications for iOS or Android. However, Superblocks does support building mobile-responsive web applications.
Generative AI Native: The context-aware Superblocks AI Copilot supercharges development, with support to generate, explain, and debug SQL, JavaScript, Python, JSON, and HTML, as well as integrate with REST APIs.	User Analytics in Private Beta: The ability to view user analytics for usage of your applications, such as number of views, time spent in a app, and more is currently in private beta, as of March 2024.
Self-Hosted Agent Architecture: The Superblocks On-Premise Agent is lightweight, stateless, simple to deploy, and new App Builder features are instantly available from the cloud, while ensuring that customer data never le	No Air-Gapped Deployments: Superblocks does not support an air- gapped deployment model, as businesses self-host Superblocks wit an agent architecture rather than a legacy on-premise model.

Feature Breakdown by Low-Code Vendor



SEO is a landing pad, and if all you can do is send people to more SEO content - **YNGMI**.

Send people from SEO content to BBQ content.

F*ck Keywords. Write Barbecue Content.

11 Apr - Written By Jason Mountford

AI has won.

In our efforts to become more and more technical and data oriented in creating content for search engines, humans have created a system that AI is better at than we are. The by-the-numbers SEO battle that leans so heavily on the crutches of Ahrefs and SEMRush has been lost.

Maybe not right now. Maybe there's still some juice to be squeezed from that lemon. But it's coming. Before long, the already somewhat depressing reality of the SERPs is going to become a wasteland into which only the least tech savvy will wander.

So as a content marketing agency, what do we do? Close up shop and cry?

Oh hell no.

This is the best opportunity for content marketers and companies than we've seen in years. Even decades. The complete leveling of the playing field for standardized, keyword focused content means we can get back to sharing ideas, strategies, thoughts and feelings that have *real meaning*.

Adding tangible value into the world by sharing the insights from people who actually know what the fuck they're talking about, instead of another piece of boilerplate 'top ten tips' bullshit.

https://bit.ly/bbq-content

For most high ACV B2B industries:

- There aren't enough handraisers to hit your number.
- buyers have become immune to standard DG tactics.

If you are trying to squeeze demos out of top of funnel traffic - **YNGMI** (much longer).

If all visitors can do is either demo or bounce - **YNGMI**.

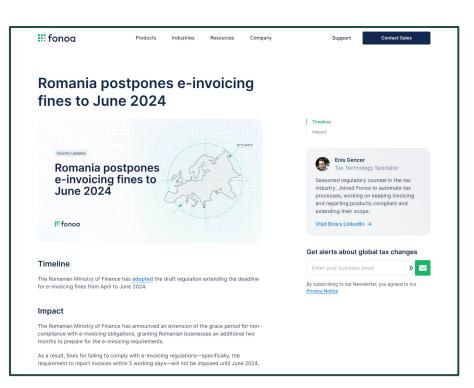
Audience development can get you in front of your buyer before they are even problem aware.

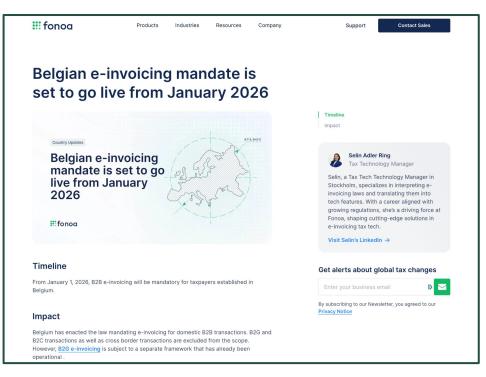


Fonoa's content strategy

- Breaking news
- Evergreen resources
- Meme guy?!?!

Breaking news





Evergreen content

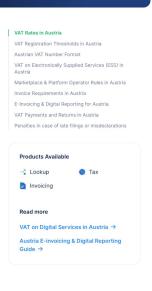


Standard VAT Rate	Digital Reporting Requirements / E- invoicing	VAT on Cross-Border Electronically Supplied Services	Tax Authority Website
20%	Yes	Yes	Federal Ministry of Finance (Finanzamt Österreich)

VAT Rates in Austria

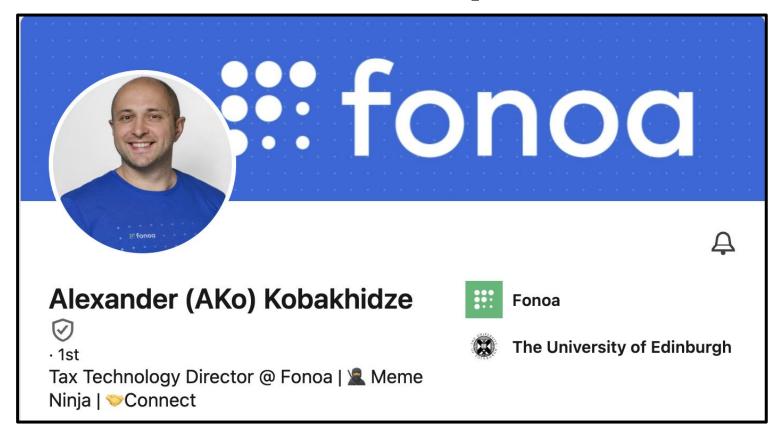
Austria's standard Value Added Tax (Umsatzsteuer (USt)) rate is 20%, with some goods and services exempt from Austrian VAT, such as financial services, postal services, medical services, etc.

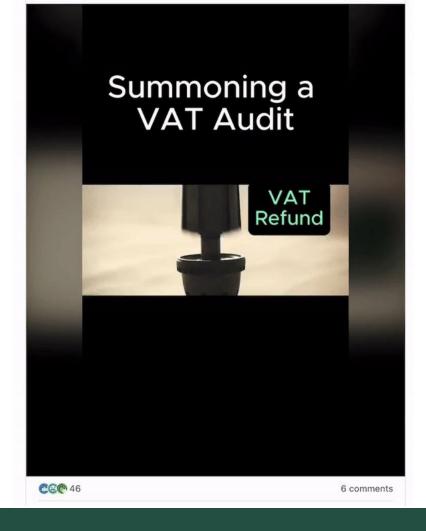
VAT Rates	Rate Type	Description
20%	Standard Rate	Applies to all taxable supplies, with certain exceptions
13%	Reduced Rate	Animal feed, domestic flights, cultural and sports events entrance fees, etc.
10%	Reduced Rate	Certain food, books, newspapers, pharmaceuticals, etc.
0%	Zero Rate	Intra-Community supply of goods, export of goods to non-EU countries, etc.





Meme Guy?







P.S. Feels like someone is taking revenge, no?

#taxes #creativity





☼€♥ Alexander Kobakhidze and 141 others

4 comments · 1 repost

Reactions



















Meme guy gets in front of ICPs



Global Tax Manager @ Uber

Can tax be so much fun! # Loved this. #taxfluencer





Senior Indirect Tax at Wayfair

Love it... and you have to love Indirect Tax...





Indirect Tax Director at Activision Blizzard

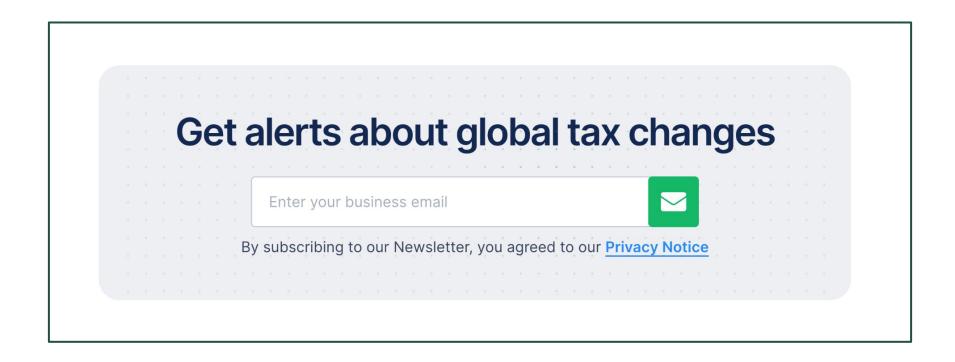
These make me laugh every time!!

8mo ***

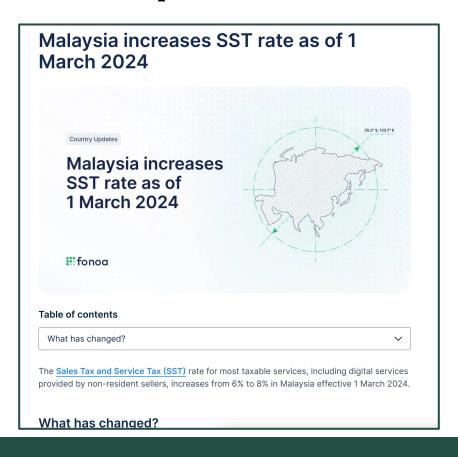
Meme guy distributes SEO content



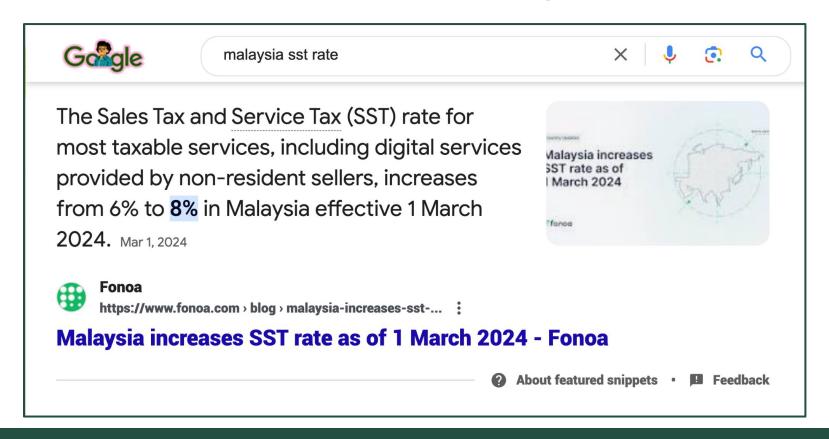
All this content leads back to:



News alerts keep subscribers engaged:



And hooks ICPs searching for this info:



Fonoa is using rented channels (search & social) to build an owned audience of indirect tax professionals.

The future of SEO will be leveraging the channel to **build an owned audience** so you can skip the algorithm all together and go direct.

If a tax tech company can do it, anyone can.

Caveats - this only works if:

- If you have something to say
 - o and *someone* to say it.
- You have a library of owned content that isn't just SEO articles and gated webinars.
- If you can engage without alienating your buyer by DG'ing them to death.

Is SEO + audience building the right move?

Must Haves	Good fit example	Bad fit example
Demand/PMF	Proven product-market fit with developers actively searching for tools like "CI/CD pipelines" and "Kubernetes monitoring."	Unvalidated product-market fit with minimal search demand for concepts like "Al-driven knowledge graphs."
Thought leadership	Team has deep expertise and can share unique insights on modern dev workflows and emerging trends in the space.	Team lacks a unique perspective and avoids bold claims and predictions, limiting thought leadership potential.
Long-term mindset	Sees SEO and audience building as a strategic moat, recognizing it compounds over time.	Sees SEO as a short-term test, relying on agencies/freelancers and expecting quick results.
Capacity & cadence	Willing to invest budget and staff time with defined goals, SLAs, and stakeholder alignment.	Unwilling to commit ongoing resources, viewing content as a side task rather than a core function.
Cross-channel amplification	Founders and SMEs actively promote insights across social media, conferences, and podcasts - they are already amplifying their message.	Team limits content to their blog, with minimal external sharing or involvement in industry conversations.

Good fit vs bad fit:

- Good fit: Proven PMF, clear search demand, expert insights, willing to invest in the channel long term + consistently produce content, and promote across channels.
- **Bad fit:** Unvalidated PMF, low search demand, team does not have unique insights, afraid to invest in the channel, can't commit to consistent output, wants SEO to work in a silo.

For content to get real engagement it's going to need to be worth your buyer's time.

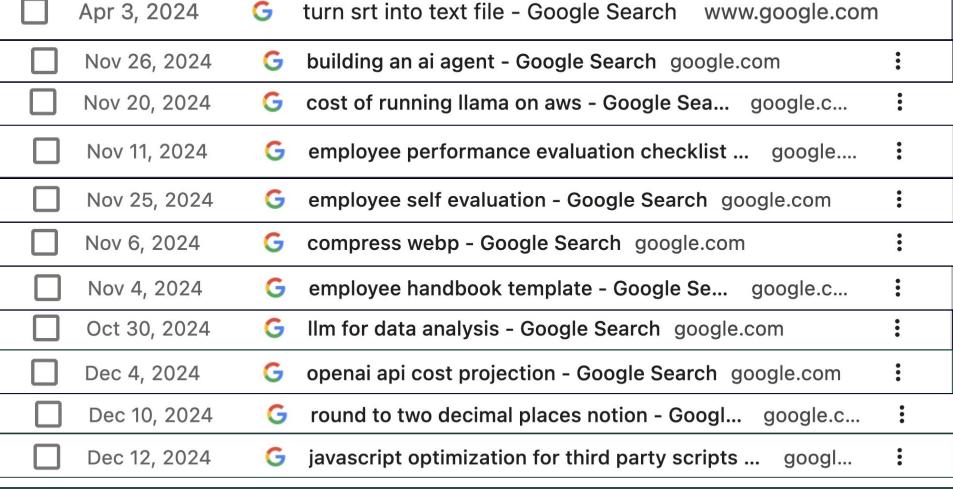
To stand out: we need to focus on **authenticity**, the **tactical**, and the **tactile**.

Actionable content FTW:

- Change how your audience operates
- Give them process
- Lean into first hand experience
- Entertain + inform

How do modern buyers search?

Go through your chrome history for the last 30 days and see what you've searched for.



But does this matter if Google's going to shift to a Gen Al interface?

Or if it loses market share?

If we answer questions differently, if we create **meaningfully different content**, Google won't be comfortable copying our content with AI.

There will be a new bar for B2B content:

It's going to have to be so damn good that it encourages a cult-like following of rabid fans that come to you directly.

Q&A

SCALE

Thank you