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/ How I Increased My Traffic By +82,5% After Being Penalized By Google



How I Increased My Traffic By +82,5% After Being Penalized By Google

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1 comments.

How I recoved my traffic after losing 90% of all organic traffic over night.



Back in 2014 one of my websites that are similar to Condopilot **suddenly lost 90%**

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of its organic traffic over night, due to Duplicate Content. Just like Condopilot, the website was collecting data from multiple different sources and then presenting all of them at one single spot, and was able to generate a lot of unique data and value from all this huge amount of data that was collected.

Since the whole point of the website was to collect data from different sources, this was something I knew could happen. But I could not solve it by the typical *rel="canonical"* tag since there was only a small part of each page that was actual duplicate content.

So how did I restore all my traffic and revenue, while still keeping my business model and all the so called duplicated content? Read the text below and find out how I was able not only to do that, **but also increase my traffic by a minor change in my HTML code.**

The Holy Shit Moment

After having stable traffic of about 800 - 900 daily visitors for months, this is what I woke up to one day:



Marcus Lind
Entrepreneur
Hacker

About Marcus Lind

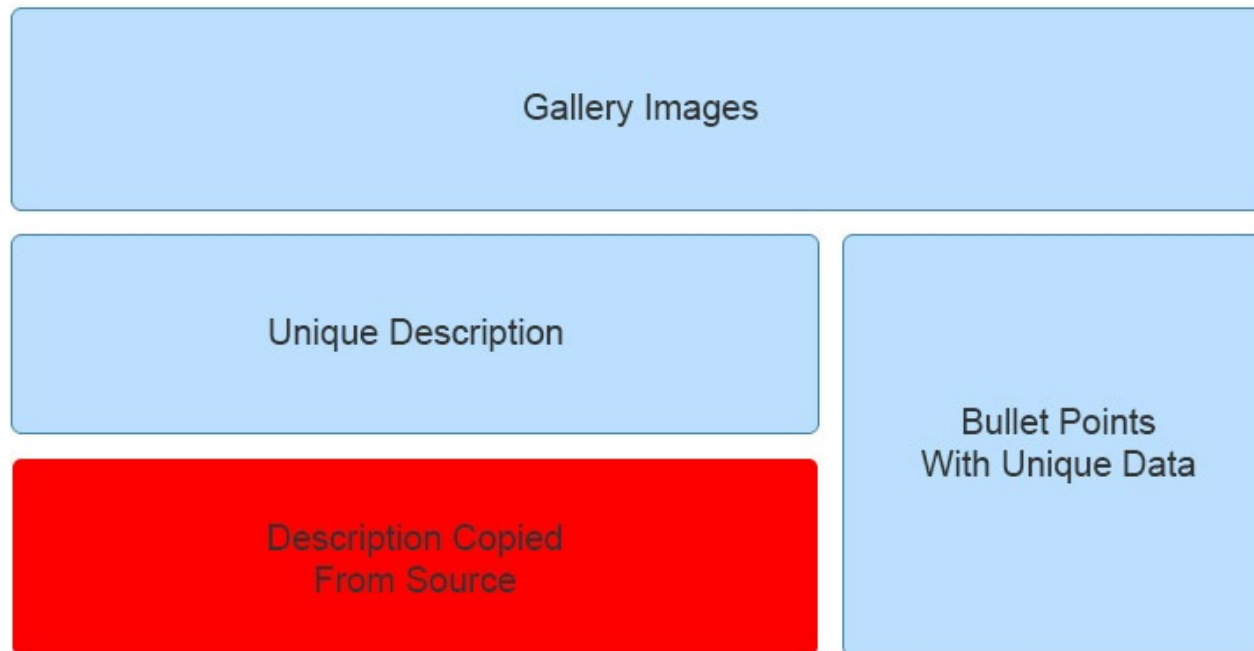
Marcus Lind is the founder of [Condopilot](#) and [Tourn](#) (Acquired in 2014), co-founder of [CupCard](#) and a partner of [Partytajm](#).

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For the first few days I was hoping that it was just a temporary mistake and that it would catch back up to its original state, but as you can see from the graph... it didn't.

Luckily, I already had a good idea what could have been the reason. The thing is that the whole web application was an application that gathered data from multiple different sources, then generated unique stats and information based on all this data and presented it to the users. Part of the website was duplicate from other websites, and part of it was unique data.

Basically the application was looking like this:



My hopes was that unique images, unique text and unique bullet points data would make the page unique enough for the users and for the search engines,

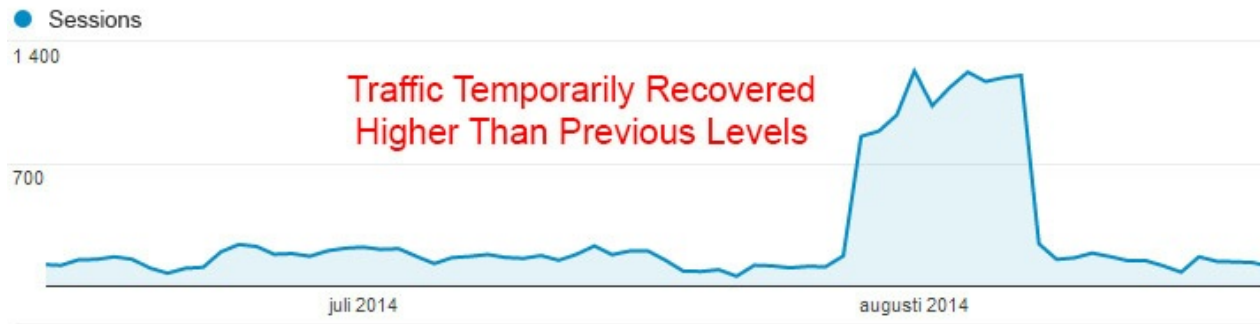
and see past the fact that part of the page was same as another page. It seems like it worked for a few months, but with time it caught up with me and punished me for it.

Does Unique Content Balance Duplicate Content?

I was already well aware of the fact that I was using some content from other sources on my pages, and that was the whole idea of the web application. The business idea was not to "steal" other peoples content, but to gather a lot of data and be able to present a bigger picture, with all the data on the same place, and to be able to show statistics of it as well.

So the last thing I wanted to do was to remove the content that Google was punishing me for. Because if I did, then the whole business would lose its core business idea and selling point (Which was to present data from many different sources on a single page).

So instead I tried to beat Google by just simply adding a lot more unique content, to try to get the balance into my favor. I was able to double my unique content on every page and a few days later I saw a huge recovery to levels even higher than before, where my traffic peaked around 1350 visitors per day. I thought I was out of it and that my business was back on track - But boy how wrong I was.



Just a few days later, my traffic crashed back into the previous lows and all my organic Google traffic was gone once again. It was crushing to have spend so much time and work to improve my site, and first see result, and then just having it taken away from me once again.

Sacrifice Your Business To Please Google

At this point I thought I'd lost and I felt I had to sacrifice my user experience and value to my users, to satisfy Google and to get my traffic back. So what I did next was that I removed the description from the external sources from each page of my application, to make sure that there was no duplicate content at all.



As you might expect, this helped a lot and I saw an instant recovery in traffic. But unfortunately my users was not happy and I received many complaints on missing data that was of great value to my users.

So what I did was that I 301 Redirected all my pages to the Root page and put my application "on hold" until I could find a better, long term solution. The slow decline during September was due to my 301 Redirects, not because of any Google Punishment.

Blockquote Saved My Business

After a month or so of research and testing, I was finally able to find a long term solution that would fix all my problems, yet still let me keep my duplicate content and please my users. Sounds too good to be true, right?

The magic sauce of the solution was the HTML tag `<blockquote>`.

The `<blockquote>` tag specifies a section that is quoted from another source.

Browsers usually indent `<blockquote>` elements.

Instead of just writing out the description from the external sources on each page in normal paragraphs, I wrapped it in a `<blockquote>` tag instead to tell Google that *"This content is not mine, it's a quote from someone else"*. But this is not enough, you have to tell Google where that quoted content comes from, and HTML offers a neat little attribute rarely used to handle this specific task, the attribute is called "cite".

The cite attribute specifies the source of a quotation.

The cite attribute does not render as anything special in any of the major browsers, but it can be used by search engines to get more information about the quotation.

By outputting your duplicate content like this:

```
<blockquote cite="http://mysource.com/category/article-slug/">  
This is my quote from MySource.com  
</blockquote>
```

You are able to tell Google upfront that you are using that content from MySource.com, and that you also credit them with a source. By using Blockquote, you are able to mark a small part of your page as duplicate, while still keeping the rest of the page unique. This is different than using something like a *rel="canonical"* tag which instead tells Google that the whole page is duplicate of another page.

What happened next? Well I removed my 301 Redirects and relaunched the website. This time it was a slow increase in traffic since Google had to reindex my whole website, but the results were staggering.

I was able to recover and go beyond my previous traffic levels, and my traffic has now kept growing for almost a year without any more hickups or trouble with Google, even though I still keep the same "Duplicate Content" on all of my pages.

In the end, I went from 800-900 visitors per day to over 1550! **That's a +82,5% increase in traffic** after improving my onpage optimization, and using Blockquote.

You can see the whole traffic story here:



Do you have a similar story of your own or do you have any questions? Give me a comment below and let me hear about it!

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First name

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Comments (1)

[Adrian Lee](#)

🕒 8 months

I was wondering how to get my blog traffic back with Google Search. It was once ranked high. I suspected blockquoting duplicate snippets would help. Then I found your journal. Thanks for confirming the use of blockquote and cite.

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