

Scaling Enterprise SEO: Navigating Unique Challenges for Maximum Impact



Table of Contents

04. [Regular SEO vs. Enterprise SEO: What's the difference?](#)

04. [What is scale in SEO?](#)

05. [How to scale enterprise SEO: Top challenges and solutions](#)

- Lack of speed
- Soft skills development
- Lack of resources compounded by internal roadblocks to secure buy-in
- Centralized vs. decentralized SEO and SEO governance
- Focusing on the wrong SEO efforts
- Historical enterprise SEO neglect
- Ineffective use of SEO data or solutions
- Unable to procure the best SEO solution

15. [Unlock your enterprise SEO potential](#)

Enterprise SEO produces unique challenges for SEOs and digital marketers to overcome for maximum impact.

The slower decision-making processes at the enterprise level, organizational silos, historical enterprise SEO neglect, and a lack of understanding from stakeholders on the importance of SEO can dismantle even the most seasoned search expert's efforts. SEOs and channel owners need to rethink their approach and identify adaptive solutions to overcome the most common enterprise SEO challenges and ensure their initiatives deliver the highest ROI possible.

Regular SEO vs. Enterprise SEO: What's the difference?

In the simplest terms, the main difference between regular SEO and enterprise SEO is that **enterprise SEO happens at enterprise-sized businesses**. [Enterprise SEO](#) is specific to navigating a large organization and achieving good SEO results.

As a result, you're not reporting to the CEO or founders like you might at an SMB. Instead, you report to leaders a few layers down, which leads to slower decision-making and approvals, more red tape, organizational silos, and other specific enterprise SEO challenges for search experts and marketing leaders to overcome.

What is scale in SEO?

When we talk about scale in SEO or scalable enterprise SEO, we're referring to **the ability to increase SEO efficiency and maximize impact related to core business objectives**.

Achieving success in enterprise SEO comes down to one core question: are you able to assess, prioritize, and implement SEO initiatives at the scale necessary for expansive sites? Today's SEO experts have the knowledge to do so but face SEO challenges specific to enterprise-sized organizations that require another set of skills and solutions to overcome.

How to scale enterprise SEO: Top challenges and solutions

Consider us your enterprise SEO partner. Whether you're facing extensive legacy enterprise SEO mistakes or struggling to get your next ROI-driving initiative approved, we have the answers.

Here are the top eight enterprise SEO challenges our customers face most often, along with action-oriented solutions to help you power through.

01. Lack of speed

Enterprise organizations are notorious for their slow internal processes, arguably their biggest weakness. At some enterprise companies, getting budget approvals, securing the necessary cross-departmental support, or getting all stakeholders to sign off on a new website optimization project can take weeks (or even months).

Effective enterprise SEO requires speed. You'll never hit your marketing KPIs if your SEO experts have to wait six to nine months to implement recommendations due to internal red tape and a lack of prioritization from the executive level.

One thing we've seen time and time again with our customers is the constant deprioritization of SEO due to department heads and execs not understanding the importance of SEO. Initiatives will continue to be deprioritized when there is a lack of understanding of the why behind the project.

This challenge is compounded at global enterprise companies when the implementation team is based in a different country or region than the marketing or SEO departments, yet this team owns all website edits. The back-end tech experts have wide-ranging (and competing) priorities, tend to manage updates across multiple regions, and are always strapped for time. As a result, they often deprioritize SEO implementation asks or implement them incorrectly because they don't understand the why behind the need.

How to solve:

First, focus on prioritization. You need to ensure all parties understand the why behind SEO projects. If they don't know the impact specific edits or campaigns will have—primarily related to their core business objectives—they won't prioritize it.

Top tips from SEO leaders:

"To minimize the lack of speed with SEO implementations, which is common due to bureaucracy or lack of buy-in in enterprise environments, you must **align your SEO action plan with existing marketing and product efforts and priorities.**

Doing so ensures your activities are not seen as competing with others from marketing, products, or UX, but rather as an additional reason to focus on what already matters to many other stakeholders and decision-makers, facilitating faster implementation of your SEO tasks."



Aleyda Solís, International SEO Consultant & Founder at [Orianti](#)

"Steal a page from the Agile software development playbook:

- Spend more time explaining the why than the what
- Always talk about the business value
- Cut your big idea into small increments

○ For example:

Don't say you want to optimize title tags. Talk about generating an additional \$800,000 (annualized) in revenue without incremental cost by optimizing title tags.

Don't start with a headless CMS operated by the SEO team with built-in SEO A/B testing capabilities. Start collaborating with the content department to optimize title tags for 100 important landing pages."



Malte Landwehr, Head of SEO at [idealo](#)

Additional ways to overcome this include:

- Providing training on the basics of SEO, how it works, best practices, and what departments have to gain by prioritizing SEO. If they know why and how SEO helps them achieve their objectives, they'll be invested in making new initiatives a success from the start.
- Spearheading cross-departmental collaboration to eliminate information silos and adopt a horizontal approach to SEO. Getting your colleagues bought in on the idea that SEO is everyone's responsibility will help instill the collaborative team mentality needed to maximize SEO impact.

Meanwhile, utilize interim fixes. Implementing those prioritization solutions can take time; time SEOs don't have. While leaders work to break down silos and implement collaboration across the org, focus on short-term solutions like edge SEO.

[Edge SEO](#) allows SEOs to make website changes without developers or interacting with the site's structure. Solutions like [Conductor's Live Editor](#) empower SEOs and marketers to make immediate changes to content with instant optimizations and advanced on-page SEO testing via a [free Chrome extension](#). These workarounds ensure slow internal processes don't impede SEO efforts.

Lastly, provide detailed, comprehensive SEO briefs to fast-track buy-in. Once your stakeholders understand SEO, you can bypass slow internal processes by providing extensive briefs on new SEO initiatives that detail necessary resources, potential impact, and overall ROI.

Explain what will happen if you don't move forward with the proposed initiative to help get your message across. If you don't take steps now, then your competitors will. Providing details and stats, if available, around what you have to lose and how your competitors could benefit can help shore up any stakeholders still on the fence.

02. Soft skills development

Getting something done in enterprise SEO **often relies on soft skills**, so much so that soft skills might even be more important than SEO skills and competency. Digital leaders and SEO channel owners spend more time identifying the best way to report on results, present insights to executives, and manage up than they do on technical implementation.



How to solve:

Prioritize and invest in continuous soft skills development. The importance of these skills can't be overstated. Enterprise organizations typically have multiple SEOs with different areas of focus. One individual or team may be focused on reporting, while another is working to secure buy-in, collaborating on content creation, monitoring technical SEO needs, or building domain authority.

Regardless of the main focus area, these team members will have to utilize soft skills to accomplish their core objectives. It takes a team to get SEO initiatives over the line, and soft skills are a key ingredient in making it happen.

Incorporating soft skills development as a requirement for internal career growth helps ensure your SEO experts are making time for this. The good news? Identifying courses doesn't need to take up anyone's time. New resources, like [LinkedIn Learning](#), make it easy for organizations to provide employees with access to thousands of training and skills development resources.

Top tip from an SEO leader:

"Knowing how to **communicate, influence, and coordinate your SEO activities** across different areas **by tying your SEO activities and goals to business ones** is fundamental as an enterprise SEO specialist.

From there, developing your project management and soft skills is critical, like further refining how to communicate results to technical and non-technical stakeholders and decision-makers."



Aleyda Solís, International SEO Consultant & Founder at [Orienti](#)

03. Lack of resources compounded by internal roadblocks to secure buy-in

Another major enterprise SEO mistake happens when the necessary resources are not provided or invested in. Some marketing teams at enterprise organizations only have one or two individuals owning the entire SEO strategy. Others may have a built-out team, including SEO generalists, technical SEOs, and an organic channel owner, but overlook the importance of hiring full-time content writers. The rise of AI has made some enterprise organizations think content or copywriters are optional and that [AI-generated content](#) produces all the writing they'll need. **(Spoiler: it doesn't.)**

Then there's the SEO vs. PPC comparison. PPC teams have an easier time securing budget because they can easily show the ROI of their efforts, thanks to tools and platforms with comprehensive reporting. Execs want to see the same type of provable ROI from SEO before investing. But SEO is not PPC. And the only way to provide those metrics is with an enterprise SEO solution and a fully realized team of SEO specialists.

In turn, limited resource allocation intensifies internal roadblocks to secure buy-in on SEO from the top down. The SEO solution your budget allows for might not provide the right data and ROI metrics your execs need to understand the bigger picture. When strapped for time and resources, search experts can get lost in the black box of data and metrics that make sense to them but are lost on their executive audience.

It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Those limited resources mean you don't have time to provide pivotal education and effective reporting to get decision-makers on board with increased SEO investments, meaning the buy-in (and the corresponding resources) never comes.

How to solve:

Always position the ask in relation to a top competitor's performance. One way to get the attention (and buy-in) of your decision-makers is to show them what's at risk by not taking action. This is especially effective with SEO. If you prove the opportunity is real, and your competitors are winning market share as a result, you'll start fielding follow-up questions from execs angling how to prioritize your proposed initiative ASAP. Expect increased investments and resources to follow.

Focus on scaling yourself. If you're on a small team or are the only SEO in the organization, the best first step to scaling SEO is to focus on scaling yourself and the team. Look for ways to scale your time, availabilities, and relationships.

- Take the time to meet with as many stakeholders as you can across every department. Learn their top problems and find a way to solve them using SEO data.
- Prioritize effective time use for those handling SEO. Ensure the team can make the most of your investments in SEO technologies and solutions through in-depth onboarding and continuous learning to unlock further time savings.

Top tip from an expert:

"Provide value upfront. Engage with other marketing leaders within your organization to obtain buy-in by elevating valuable data and insights from your SEO reporting & analysis that can benefit other channels.

- **Example:** Sharing insights with your Paid or Demand team around opportunities to decrease spend for terms where you already own the SERP organically can help start the conversation on other ways SEO can support the entire marketing department."



Ryan Maloney, Team Lead, Customer Success at Conductor

04. Centralized vs. decentralized SEO and SEO governance

Centralized SEO is where one central team owns all strategic decision-making and operates as the channel owner. Decentralized SEO is when multiple teams or different brands that own SEO operate in silos with limited to no collaboration between these groups.

How can you accomplish SEO objectives when the individuals executing it are a part of a central team of leaders far removed from the day-to-day implementation or are split across various groups? This becomes much harder to overcome when teams are split across countries and time zones.

Centralized vs. decentralized internal SEO structures also highlight the importance of developing an SEO governance strategy to safeguard your SEO performance. Governance strategies can get overlooked in enterprise organizations for different reasons. SEOs can start off on smaller teams where responsibilities and oversight are clear without needing documentation. But when teams expand or are split across regions or countries, those governance policies protect current rankings, website performance, and user experience.

How to solve:

Break down silos and educate decision-makers by hosting regular SEO office hours. It seems simple enough, but you won't believe the transformative results this can produce. For example, Wolters Kluwer, a global leader in professional software and services across 180+ countries, struggled with an decentralized SEO structure. When they came to us, each division had its own website and unique SEO strategy. Resulting in cannibalization, outdated or unhelpful content, and other issues preventing them from improving discoverability and rankings. We helped them overcome this and [break down silos across 1,000+ marketers by:](#)

- Implementing Conductor as the SEO solution for all teams so they could start speaking the same language
- Hosting regular office hours on SEO best practices, proven SEO strategies, and how to make the most of Conductor to drive results
 - Including specialized sessions with team leaders to develop an in-depth understanding of the why behind the strategies

These office hours provided an opportunity to come together and highlight SEO strategies brands or teams were seeing success with for others to learn from and emulate. What resulted was a true cultural shift internally at Wolters Kluwer that changed how these teams think about and approach SEO, along with a [400% increase in top 10 search results](#).

Prioritize an SEO governance strategy from the start.

It's best to implement from day one, but it's never too late to establish new processes to safeguard the SEO results you've worked hard to produce. The three pillars of your SEO governance strategy should be:

1. Developing processes for who can make what changes on the site when
2. Determining the right access and permissions for all team members
3. Implementing real-time monitoring and alerting for any changes on the website

05. Focusing on the wrong SEO efforts

You could have all the resources you could hope for—expansive budget, preferred SEO solution, ideal team structure—but it won't make a difference if your organization focuses on the wrong SEO priorities. Many marketers make the common enterprise SEO mistake of prioritizing overexpansion of net new content creation over strategic optimizations to top revenue-driving website pages.

Enterprise SEO excels when it's fueled by data-driven insights and a strategic approach. A lot of the time, it's SEO basics that drive the most value on enterprise websites. But marketers and execs can get lost prioritizing efforts because they are shiny and new vs. implementing what is proven to work.

How to solve:

Take a step back and evaluate what you currently have to optimize, consolidate, and prioritize accordingly. Time is precious in SEO, but you need to dedicate more time to this step early on to ensure KPIs are achievable. Your first step when building out SEO priorities should be identifying those top traffic and revenue-driving pages. From there, find out which pages provide the best opportunity to help support core business objectives. Those two page groups should be your focus.

Keep it simple and invest in optimizations for these page groups. Don't make the mistake of prioritizing too much net new content creation just because it's topical or trending. A few helpful questions to pose when stakeholders want to adjust SEO priorities are the following:

- How will this initiative help achieve our core business objectives?
- Will it drive revenue generation and fuel business growth?
- Are we willing to deprioritize other efforts to focus on this?
 - If yes, ask which initiatives to push so it's clear how results and related campaigns will be impacted.

Top tip from an SEO leader:

“Creating a prioritization framework can help centralized and decentralized teams deliver more value. This involves linking SEO action to business objectives and measuring the effects. This should help teams steer clear of activities that do not contribute to the success of the channel.

Focusing on efforts that do not generate a positive outcome can be a huge time sink and result in negative SEO ROI and performance over time.”



Jack Sperry, European SEO Lead
at **Samsung Electronics**

Set up content reporting to evaluate performance regularly. By **running a content audit** on specific subfolders from time to time, you can evaluate how visible your content is organically and which content isn't performing well. There's no need to reinvent the wheel when you can reoptimize your existing content.

Top tip from an expert:

“If anything, you can use these content audit reports as benchmarks of how your content performed before you made changes. By re-running it a couple of months later, you can report detailed, proven wins to leadership to get more buy-in.”



Zack Kadish, SEO Success Manager
at Conductor

06. Historical enterprise SEO neglect

You don't know what you don't know, and that statement has never been more true than when referring to the history of any enterprise SEO website.

Most enterprise companies have been around for at least a few years, if not decades. There is a treasure trove of any SEO's worst nightmares hiding in that historical website data. From hidden website structure elements to one-off coding patches, hundreds of broken or outdated redirects,

cannibalization of duplicate content, and excruciatingly slow loading speeds, there is no getting around historical enterprise SEO neglect.

Maybe there was high turnover for a few years or a lack of SEO investments so short-term solutions were the option. Regardless of how it got this way, it's now on you to identify and resolve these issues to provide your website with the strongest possible foundation to improve rankings.

How to solve:

Prioritize, prioritize, prioritize. There's no overstating the importance of being able to prioritize accordingly as an enterprise SEO expert when faced with a backlog of issues.

Top tip from an SEO leader:

"Prioritization is the most important skill to learn in enterprise SEO, especially when you have a lot of historical SEO neglect to deal with.

Learn to triage issues and consider using something like a JIRA board to catalog things that need fixing as you find them. **But resist the urge to fix everything at once.** Find the things that are actually driving traffic and fix those first while you build your backlog.

This may mean your website fails traditional SEO tools' health tests while you address more pressing issues. Focus, focus, focus. Work on what will drive change and revenue, and let the rest lapse until you can come back to it later."



Jenny Halasz, Head of SEO
at [LL Flooring](#)

Provide stakeholders with industry or competitive benchmarks. Sometimes numbers do more than words ever could. This is especially true when selling an exec on why you need several months to address pressing historical SEO issues before creating new content. Comparing your site to the latest **industry or competitive benchmarks** can paint a clear picture for decision-makers on why these fixes must be prioritized.

Do a thorough, in-depth SEO audit. It's time-consuming, but implementing a comprehensive SEO audit is the only real path forward. You'll want to audit your website content and the site's technical health and structure. This will produce a list of the core issues to help you prioritize which to focus on first.

Top tip from an SEO leader:

"Historical SEO neglect is a challenge we encounter frequently with our clients. In some cases, the company never considered SEO when launching a website, which can lead to significant technical or discoverability issues.

In other cases, the client may have worked with less-than-trustworthy SEO consultants or companies in the past whose recommendations led the site to get into trouble with manual actions or algorithmic impacts.

Understanding as much information about the site's history as it relates to SEO is necessary to do a good job going forward.

This often requires digging through the data, as not every stakeholder will know exactly what happened with the site (or may not even want to share all the details)."



Lily Ray, Sr. Director of SEO & Head of
Organic Research at [Amsive Digital](#)

07. Ineffective use of SEO data or solutions

SEO data is notoriously difficult to access and compile. Depending on which SEO platforms or solutions they have access to, many SEOs and marketing leaders make the mistake of relying on the wrong metrics, misinterpreting data, or failing to maximize the functionality of the chosen solution.

Today, enterprise organizations know they have to invest in some type of enterprise SEO technology. But a majority still need to figure out what to do with it once they get it.

How to solve:

Map SEO results and data to the metrics that matter most to stakeholders. Forget SEO lingo and translate data to speak to the key metrics leaders want to move the needle on. [This chart aligns each C-level role with the related metrics they care most about.](#) Tailor your reporting based on the audience to clarify how SEO is critical to progress on these objectives.

Map SEO technology features to your workflows. Before you sign anything, collaborate with the vendor to map available features within the SEO tech or platform to your current workflows to evaluate how effective it will be. Do this to ensure you identify a solution that best meets your specific needs so you can maximize your investment.

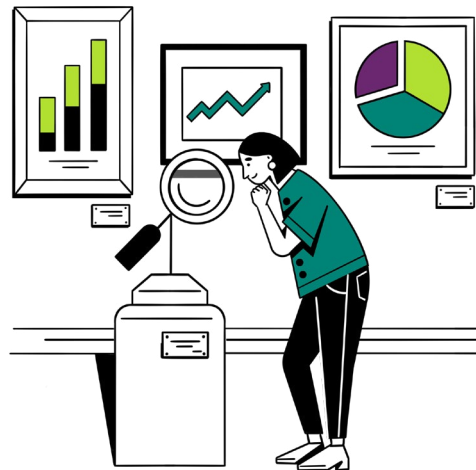
Look for a true partner in your SEO technology provider.

Do your due diligence when reviewing potential SEO tech providers. Ask detailed questions about the onboarding process and what ongoing training is provided during the length of the partnership. Explore customer testimonials and look for mentions of high-quality customer support, ongoing training initiatives, and renewals. Are they invested in making you a champion of their technology, or is their only focus getting the contract signed and moving on to the next prospect?

08. Unable to procure the best SEO solution

The [enterprise tech procurement process](#) is no joke. Enterprise companies want to ensure they get the most for their money, [especially during an economic downturn](#).

[Forrester's 2023 B2B Summit North America](#) highlighted how internal tech purchasing processes have grown exponentially more complex over the last 12 to 18 months. On average, there are now four separate departments involved, buying committees now include stakeholders throughout nearly all aspects of an organization, and the end-to-end process from outreach to onboarding is taking much longer. It's easy for the voice and priorities of the SEO channel owner to get lost as decision-makers with more authority prioritize lower costs and shorter contract lengths over platform functionality.



How to solve:

Prove the impact to secure the right SEO technology. The best way to overcome this enterprise SEO challenge is to win over critical decision-makers to your preferred solution *before* the procurement process ramps up by proving the impact the tech will have. Here are a few steps to make it happen:

- **Do your internal research.** Which stakeholders will have final say? Schedule touchpoints with these individuals ahead of time. Compile any concerns they have with your preferred solution so you can connect with the vendor and address these ahead of decision time.
 - Talk to IT. Get a feel for their non-negotiables from a solution. The same goes for finance and legal.
- **Use data to tell the story.** Collab with the vendor for customer testimonials and stats from competitors that speak to the impact this solution will have. What is the ROI? How will this platform fuel business growth, and how does it differ from other available options? What workflows or initiatives will this solution enable that you're currently lacking? These are all different ways to identify data points that tell the story your leaders need to hear to invest.

Unlock your enterprise SEO potential

The scale and scope of enterprise SEO produce unique challenges, from slow internal processes to resource constraints and historical neglect. Remember, data-driven insights and a strategic approach are the keys to success, and optimizing your top traffic and revenue-driving pages should be your primary focus. Prioritize speed and collaboration to break down internal barriers and get buy-in from stakeholders. Focus on soft skills development to effectively communicate the value of SEO to executives.

Equipped with the right strategies and solutions, you can tackle these common enterprise SEO challenges head-on to push your SEO efforts to new heights and watch your rankings climb.



About Conductor

Conductor is the world's leading organic marketing platform, helping businesses accelerate search traffic, digital growth, and revenue. Conductor's technology helps marketers create value-focused content to drive quality traffic to their site and track their organic performance. Websites are more valuable than ever and getting found online is a #1 enterprise priority.