1stContent DIGITAL

WHITE PAPER · EDITION 2

The page-two problem

Where South African search opportunity hides, drawn from 12 months of our own Search Console data and a repeatable playbook for fixing it.

1st Content Digital 1stcontent.co

1stContent DIGITAL

Contents

Summary
The evidence
Opportunity
Playbook
Prioritise
60-day plan
Scorecard
Method

Why we wrote this

Most businesses measure search by traffic. Traffic is the end of a long chain. Before a click, a page must be crawled, matched to a query, ranked and chosen. Search Console records the middle of that chain, and it shows something uncomfortable: a great deal of visibility that never turns into a visit.

We looked at our own site first. Over 12 months it earned 434,086 impressions and 253 clicks. We published the numbers because the pattern is common, and because a business that can read its own data can fix it without guessing.

This paper explains what the data shows, where the opportunity sits, and a five-step playbook for acting on it. It describes one site. Treat it as a method, not as a benchmark for yours.

What is inside

Summary
Five findings in one page

The evidence
Where impressions and clicks really sit

Opportunity
Page-two queries, named

Playbook
Five steps, repeatable

Prioritise and plan
What to do first, in 60 days

Scorecard and method
Check yourself; how we counted

1stContent DIGITAL

Contents
Summary
The evidence
Opportunity
Playbook
Prioritise
60-day plan
Scorecard
Method

Five findings, one page

1

Visibility is not the same as visits

434,086 impressions produced 253 clicks over 12 months. Of the top 1,000 queries, 959 earned no click at all.

2

The top ten does the work

Queries averaging the top ten were 3.9% of impressions but 31.6% of query clicks.

3

Most visibility sat out of reach

85.2% of impressions came at an average position of 20 or lower, where clicks are rare.

4

Some visibility was in the wrong country

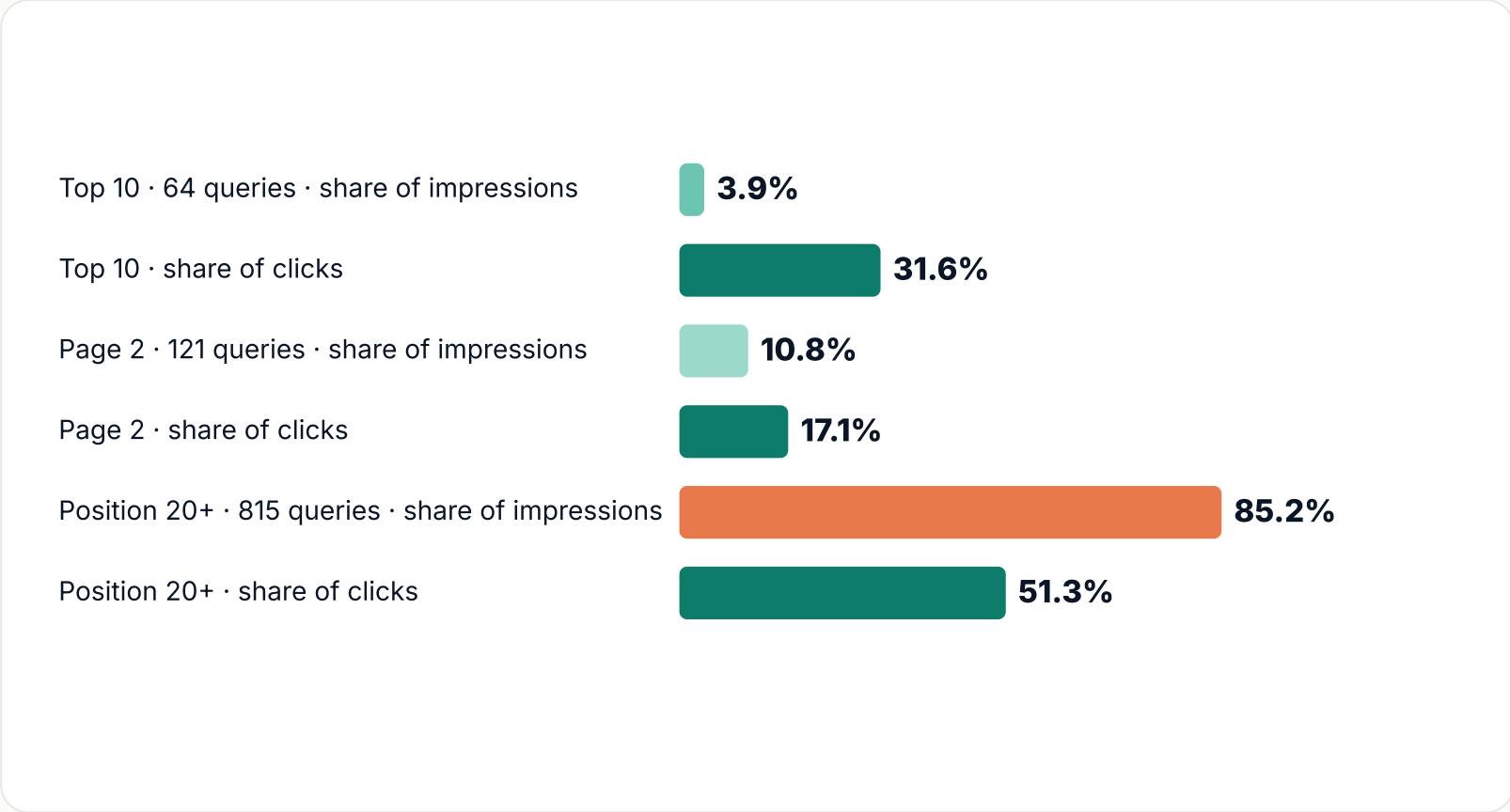
The United States supplied 21.9% of impressions and 1.6% of clicks. South Africa supplied 61.2% and 60.5%.

5

Page two is the cheapest place to start

121 queries sat at positions 10 to 20 with 41,200 impressions. Moving even some onto page one costs less than creating new topics.

Top-ten queries took 3.9% of impressions and 31.6% of clicks



Source: 1stcontent.co Search Console export, 12 months to 4 November 2026, top 1,000 queries (380,013 impressions, 76 clicks). Average position is an average across all appearances, so single queries can vary. Query clicks are the clicks attributed to those 1,000 queries.

Takeaway. Position 20 and below is not a slow start to page one. For most of those queries it is a place where you are almost never chosen.

One page held most of our impressions and almost none of our clicks

	Page	Impressions	Clicks	Avg position
1	/seo-services/	204,827	10	40.2
2	/ (homepage)	96,931	173	34.9
3	/what-is-paid-owned-and-earned-media/	28,300	6	53.0
4	/digital-marketing-agency-for-small-businesses/	10,927	6	30.0
5	/digital-marketing-strategy-for-a-fintech-startup/	10,801	4	45.6
6	/fintech-marketing-agency/	8,954	17	20.9

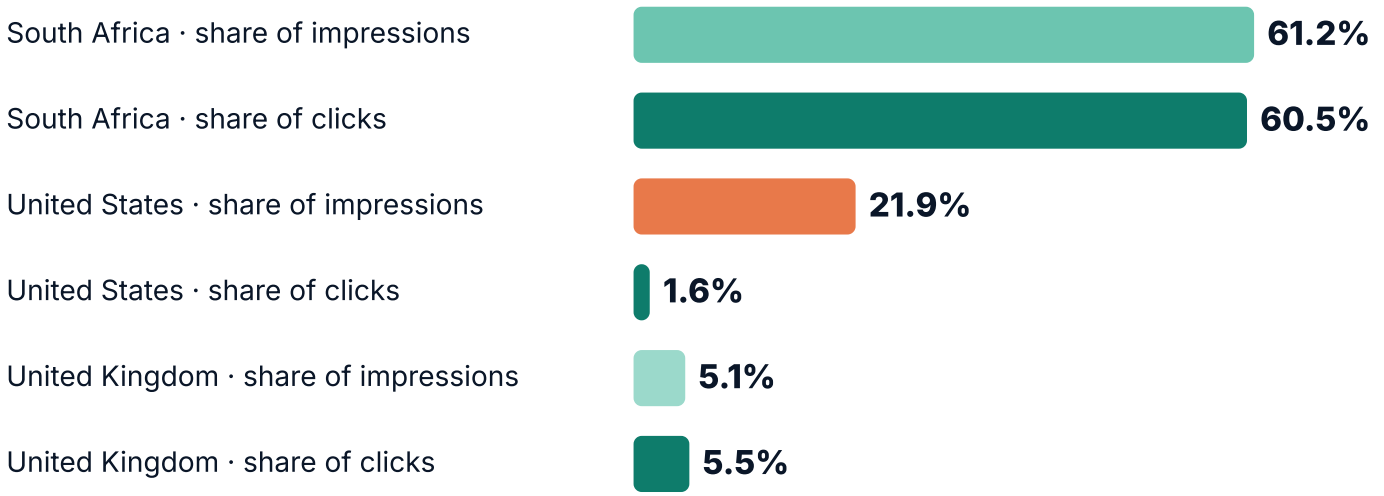
Our services page earned 204,827 impressions at an average position of 40.2 and 10 clicks. It was shown for many loosely related searches without being a strong answer to any of them. Our homepage earned 173 of our 253 clicks, 68.4% of the total, mostly from searches that included our name.

Takeaway. A page that tries to answer everything ranks well for nothing. Each important search needs a page that answers it.

Source: Search Console, Pages report. Page impression counts overlap because one query can show several pages, so these figures should not be added together.

Contents
Summary
The evidence
Opportunity
Playbook
Prioritise
60-day plan
Scorecard
Method

A fifth of our impressions came from a country we do not serve



Source: Search Console, Countries report, same 12 months. United States: 95,168 impressions and 4 clicks. United Kingdom: 22,311 impressions and 14 clicks.

Takeaway. Check country before celebrating impressions. Visibility in markets you do not sell to inflates the picture and hides the real position in your own.

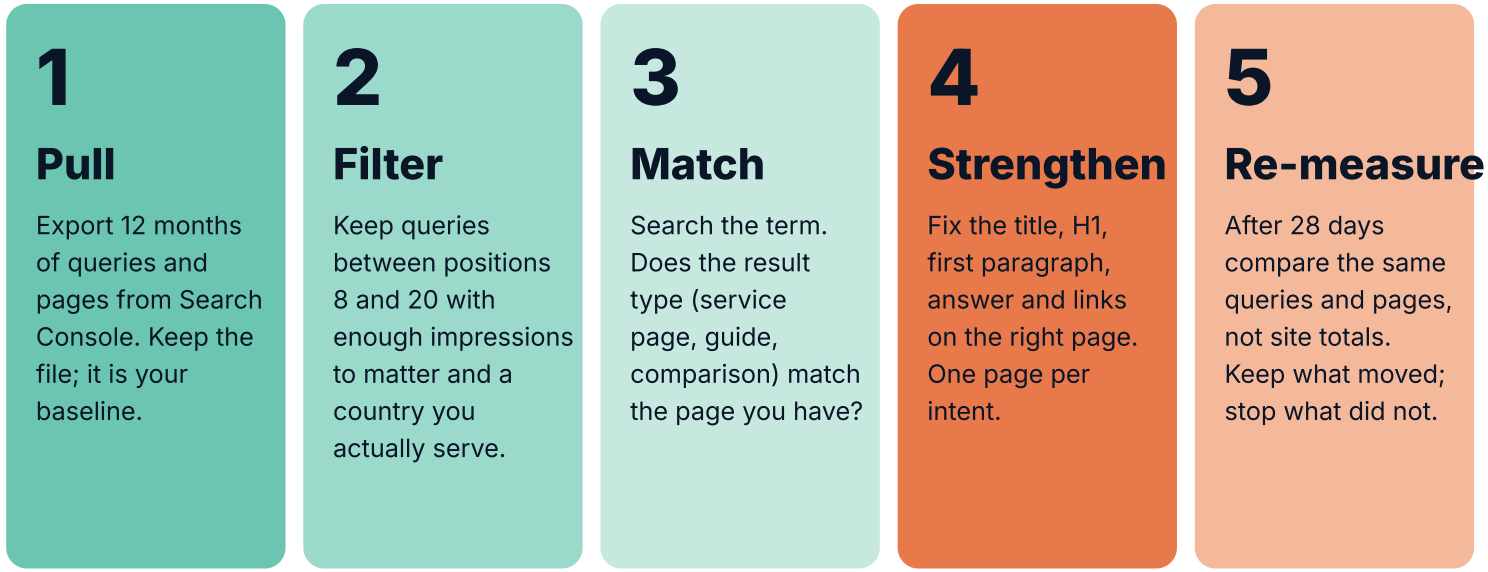
Page two is full of queries we should already win

	Query (page-two, position 10 to 20)	Impressions	Avg position	Clicks
1	digital marketing services	4,932	16.95	0
2	content marketing agency	2,351	14.73	0
3	content marketing services	2,283	19.9	0
4	seo company in johannesburg	1,593	19.67	0
5	online content marketing services	1,202	11.73	0
6	website seo content services	1,145	14.59	0
7	content marketing agency services	1,023	13.92	0
8	seo consulting services	994	18.87	0

Source: Search Console, Queries report, queries at average position 10 to 20 with 900 or more impressions. A zero in the clicks column means no click was recorded for that query in the export.

Takeaway. These eight queries alone carried about 15,500 impressions and no clicks. The demand is already there, and the work is to give each query a page that answers it.

A five-step playbook for page-two queries



Run it quarterly. Each cycle should take a few days of focused work for a site of this size, and the first one will show how much of your visibility is real.

What strengthening a page means

Title and H1

- Name the exact topic people search
- One H1 per page
- Keep titles readable, not stuffed
- Match the search intent: service, guide or comparison

Answer

- Say what the page is about in the first paragraph
- Use headings that mirror real questions
- Add facts, prices and examples a stranger can quote
- Add an honest FAQ

Links

- Link from your strongest pages with descriptive text
- Link to related guides in the same topic
- Fix broken and redirected internal links
- Earn relevant external mentions

Cleanup

- Merge pages competing for the same query
- Redirect duplicates with a 301
- Remove thin or outdated pages
- Never change a URL without a redirect

1stContent DIGITAL

Contents
Summary
The evidence
Opportunity
Playbook
Prioritise
60-day plan
Scorecard
Method

Decide what to do first

Quick wins

- Page exists
- Position 10 to 20
- Impressions in the hundreds or more
- Action: strengthen and link

Build

- Demand is clear
- No page answers it
- Or the wrong page ranks
- Action: create one focused page

Defend

- Already in the top ten
- Earning clicks today
- Do not rewrite blindly
- Action: monitor and refresh carefully

Ignore

- Wrong country or audience
- Wrong intent for what you sell
- Clicks would never convert
- Action: leave alone

A 60-day plan

DAYS 1 TO 7

Baseline

Export 12 months of data. Mark brand queries, country and page. List queries at positions 8 to 20.

DAYS 8 TO 21

Match and fix

Check the results for each target term. Rewrite titles, headings and first paragraphs on the best page for each intent.

DAYS 22 TO 45

Link and build

Add internal links, merge duplicates, and write pages for demand with no answer.

DAYS 46 TO 60

Measure

Compare the same queries and pages. Keep what moved. Choose the next ten.

> **Expectation.** Search engines need time to recrawl and reassess pages. We cannot promise movement or a timeline, and neither can anyone else.

Ten-question page-two check

Score 2 for yes, 1 for partly, 0 for no.

1	We export Search Console data at least quarterly and keep the files.
2	We know which queries are brand and which are not.
3	We can list our queries at positions 8 to 20.
4	Each important search has one clear page answering it.
5	No two of our pages compete for the same query.
6	Our titles and first paragraphs name the topic.
7	We know which countries our impressions come from.
8	Our strongest pages link to the pages we want to lift.
9	We compare the same queries before and after changes.
10	We record enquiries by source, not just visits.

16 to 20: well run. 8 to 15: clear opportunities. 0 to 7: start with the baseline. This measures practice, not performance.

Contents
Summary
The evidence
Opportunity
Playbook
Prioritise
60-day plan
Scorecard
Method

Method, sources and limits

Data. Google Search Console export for https://1stcontent.co, web search only, 12 months to 4 November 2026. The Queries report holds the top 1,000 queries, which covered 380,013 of 434,086 total impressions. Totals of 434,086 impressions and 253 clicks come from the daily chart.

Bands. Queries were grouped by average position: below 10, 10 to below 20, and 20 or more. The position of a query is an average across appearances and can hide wide variation.

Countries and pages. Country figures come from the Countries report. Page figures come from the Pages report and overlap between pages.

Limits. This is one website, with a legacy WordPress structure, over one year. Search Console anonymises some queries, so the top 1,000 are not the whole picture. Clicks are small in number, so percentages move easily. We make no claim that these results apply to your business.

What we did not do. We did not estimate market-wide figures, use third-party volume tools, or infer causes. Where a number is a measurement we say so, and where it is a reading we say that too.

Next. To run this playbook on your own data, contact 1st Content Digital at 1stcontent.co.