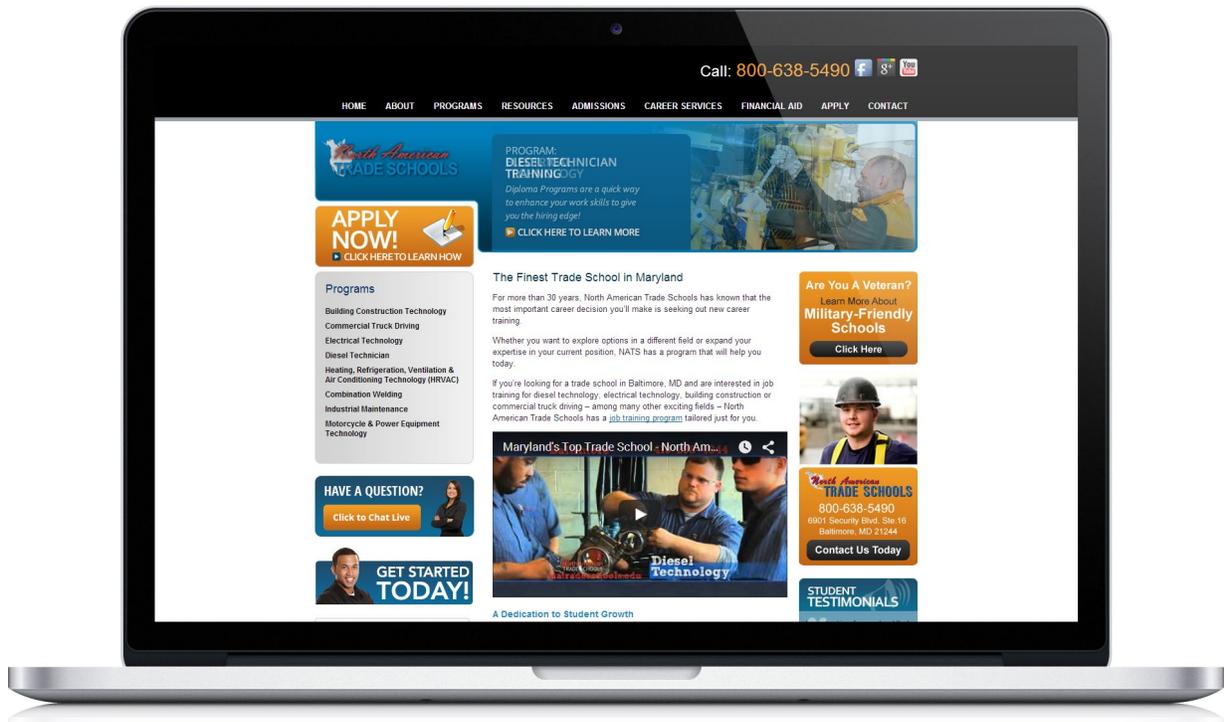




presents:

# Trade School's Organic Visits Skyrocket After SEO Backbone

a digital marketing case study



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The Company



Type

Trade School

Website

<http://www.natradeschools.edu/>

Case Study Content

Marketing

SEO Backbone

Keyword Research

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## Introduction

North American Trade Schools (NATS) provides career training services in Northern Maryland. Their website exclusively featured language found verbatim in their course catalogue and visiting brochure. Receiving few to no inquiries from the web, the NATS team determined it was time to invest in an SEO strategy so they could start attracting prospective students online

## The Problems NATS Faced

### Zero Digital Expertise

The NATS marketing team excelled at offline advertising and TV commercials, mailers, and other offline channels historically yielded strong results. As an increasing number of prospective students turned to the web, however, NATS needed to strengthen its digital presence.

Their team created a website that combined materials from their course catalogue and visitor's brochure. While better than nothing, the website failed to truly amplify their recruiting abilities. It was unoptimized, underutilized, and failing to attract new prospects. Additionally, the website's activity was not being tracked or measured in any way.

### Offline Language Being Used Online

A glaring example of the NATS team unfamiliarity with online best practices was the way they created each webpage. They used language verbatim from their brochures and course catalogues, rather than crafting their content for an online audience.

By failing to optimize their content for the web, there were a large number of "bald spots" on each page in the eyes of search engines. These "bald spots" needed to be filled in to make the content more relevant to prospective students' search queries.

Outside of the on-page language tweaks that were needed, there were also numerous technical SEO opportunities that had previously been overlooked—missing metadata, few internal links, and other issues

## What We Did

### Signature SEO Backbone

Our number one recommendation was to identify low competition keywords used by prospective students and optimize each page's on-page and off-page elements for that specific keyword. This is a critical part of our signature SEO Backbone that is used for new or unoptimized content.

Some of the core steps in the SEO Backbone process include:

- Initial performance baselines
- Extensive keyword research
- Development of a "Keyword Universe"
- Detailed technical SEO audit

- Metadata recommendations
- Content architecture planning
- Page-by-page content & internal linking optimization
- Competitive backlink analysis & acquisition strategy

Our team conducted some keyword research and developed a Keyword Universe that revealed commonalities amongst prospective students' search queries. We nominated target keywords for each existing page and optimized them accordingly.

To optimize the pages, we first updated each page's metadata to include the target keyword. We also included a well-written hook in the metadata that would entice the searcher to click on that result. We then optimized the on-page content by adding contextually important keywords and building internal links to and from related pages.

### Transparent Reporting

While we were optimizing each page, our developers were implementing Google Analytics tracking mechanisms for key event and conversion data. These would help us measure the changes in website visitor behavior so that we could further refine our strategy down the line.

Why would we want to refine our strategy? Lots of reasons. For example user search patterns can shift, a website's overall relevancy for keyword categories can change, and sometimes we find a better keyword. With a clear reporting system in place, our team and the NATS team would be able to identify when these kinds of changes needed to be made.

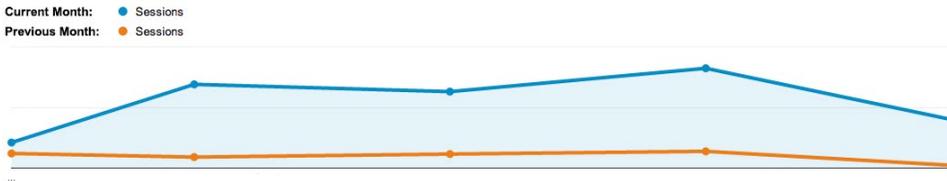
Organic Visits  
▲ 469.79%

New Visitors  
▲ 582.84%

Cash Not Spent on TV  
\$177,500

Pages Optimized  
42

Month-to-Month Sessions Comparison After Backbone



Visits more than quadrupled  
—up 469.79%—  
from the 30 day period preceding the SEO Backbone!

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## How Things Turned Out

The SEO Backbone had an immediate impact on the website's relevance for important search queries. Visits more than quadrupled—up 469.79%—from the 30 day period preceding the SEO Backbone!

The change was dramatic from August to September, but it didn't end there. Traffic continued climbing higher before it eventually began leveling out.

After stabilizing, we were then able to start the second phase of our SEO activities in December—content publishing. The SEO Backbone was pulling relevant traffic to the existing pages but our keyword research and content audit revealed plenty of opportunities for future growth.

### Month-Over-Month Session Improvement After Backbone

● Sessions



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