

FRIENDS JESEARCH

Common & Not So Common Core Web Vitals Issues (and how to fix them)

Tom Pool

www.bluearray.co.uk | @bluearrayseo

I'm Tom - Technical & Training Director at Blue Array



And I love a good adventure



Like all good adventures

We're going to start with a question







What are the things that really annoy you about using the internet?



No, Twitter/Reddit/LinkedIn doesn't count



What are the things that really annoy you about using the internet?



If you had to make a list of 5 things that annoy you







Pages 'not working' fast enough



Links taking you to irrelevant locations



Pages moving around while interacting (Local News Publishers)



Pages taking ages to load





3 of these areas, coincidentally



Are all things that 'CWV' aims to track & monitor



Pages 'not working' fast enough

(Interactivity)



First Input Delay





Pages 'taking ages' to load



Largest Contentful Paint







Things on pages moving around

(Visual Stability)









Core Web Vitals are a set of metrics, intended to



Help site owners measure User Experience on the web



CWV were announced nearly 3 years ago



And lots of sites are still shit



Especially pages that are not the main, 'money' pages



Evaluating page experience for a better web

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Through both internal studies and industry research, users show they prefer sites with a great page experience. In recent years, Search has added a variety of user experience criteria, such as how quickly pages load and mobile-friendliness, as factors for ranking results. Earlier this month, the Chrome team announced Core Web Vitals, a set of metrics related to speed, responsiveness and visual stability, to help site owners measure user experience on the web.





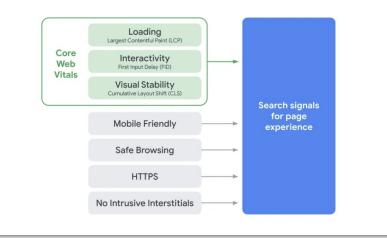
Home > Search Central > Google Search Central Blog

Timing for bringing page experience to Google Send feedback

Tuesday, November 10, 2020

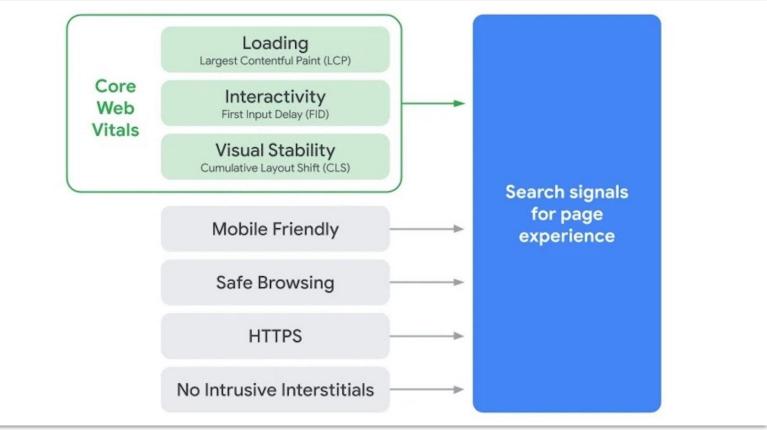
This past May, we announced that page experience signals would be included in Google Search ranking. These signals measure how users perceive the experience of interacting with a web page and contribute to our ongoing work to ensure people get the most helpful and enjoyable experiences from the web. In the past several months, we've seen a median 70% increase in the number of users engaging with Lighthouse and PageSpeed Insights, and many site owners using Search Console's Console's Core Web Vitals report to identify opportunities for improvement.

Today we're announcing that the page experience signals in ranking will roll out in May 2021. The new page experience signals combine Core Web Vitals with our existing search signals including mobile-friendliness, safe-browsing, HTTPS-security, and intrusive interstitial guidelines.













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Thursday, November 4, 2021				
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★ Update on January 17, 2022: Search Console now h	nas a dedicated 'Desktop' section	in the Page Experience report	₫.	
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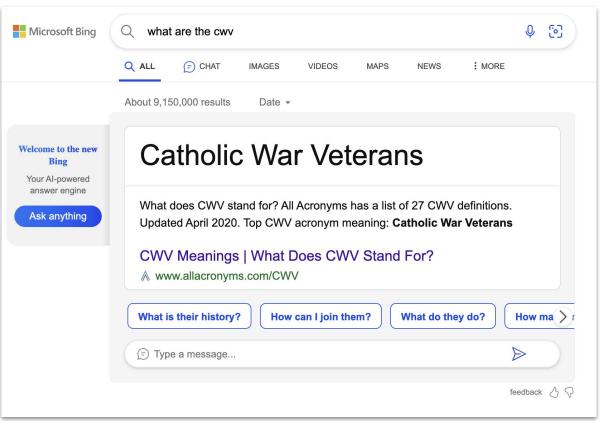


What about now?



A lot of sites still struggle with Core Web Vitals



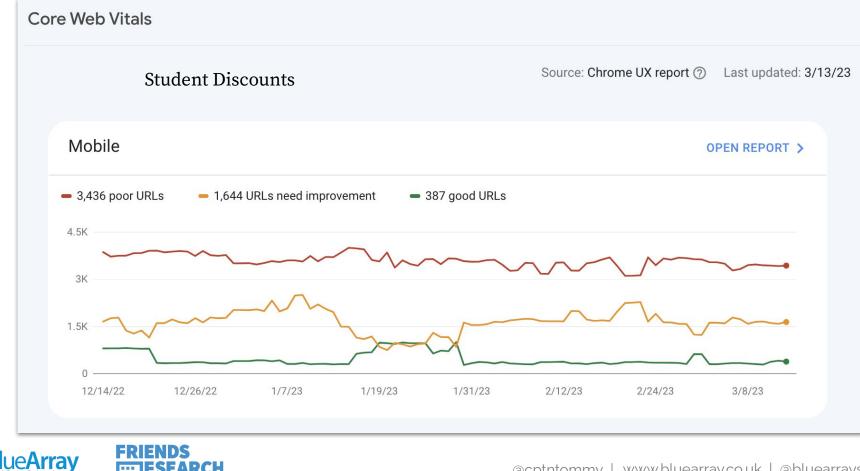


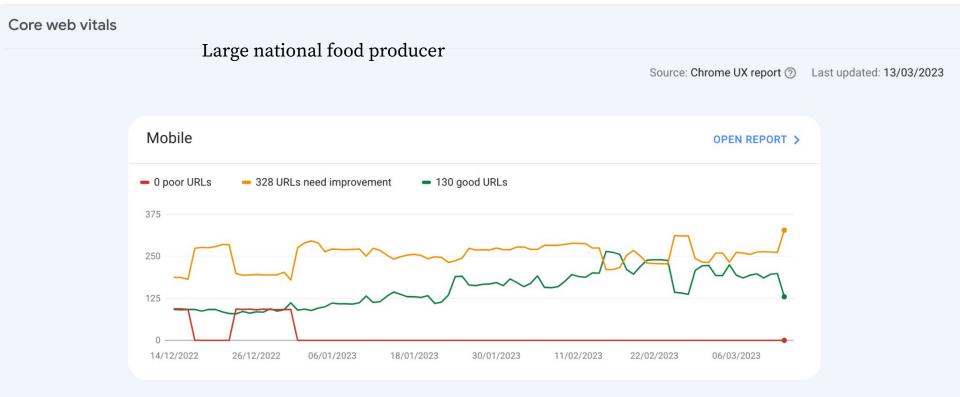




A quick look through Search Console











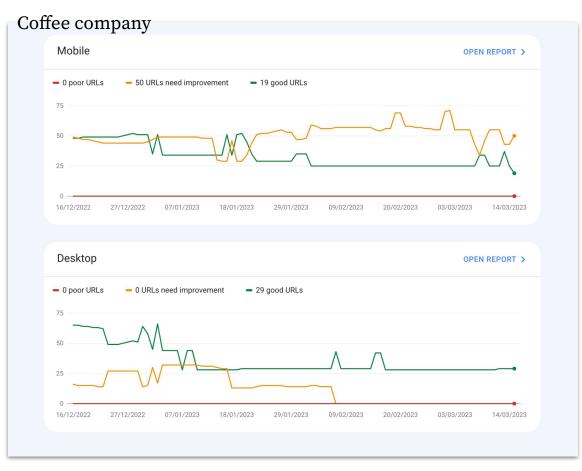
Multinational retailer

Core web vitals

Source: Chrome UX report ⑦ Last updated: 15/03/2023











There's also the more general 'Page Experience' report









No site is safe from the judgement of CWV

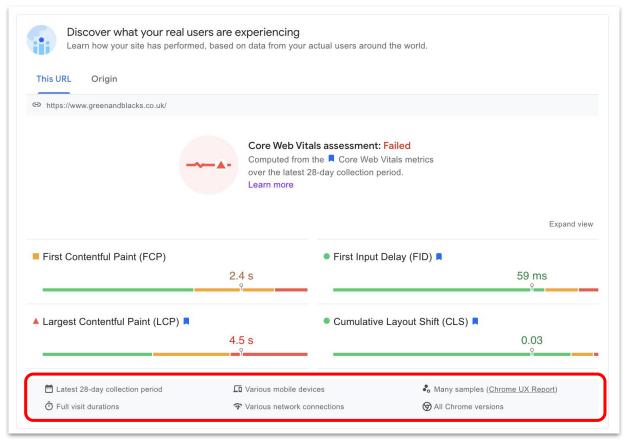


The report shown in Search Console is built from the CrUX



This is also what the first view in Page Speed Insights is built from









The Chrome User Experience Report is powered by real user measurement of key user experience metrics across the public web



You have to be using Chrome (not Chromium), (not on iOS), and be opted in to syncing browser history



The CrUX report collects a lot of different data



First Paint First Contentful Paint First Input Delay Largest Contentful Paint Cumulative Layout Shift Time to First Byte **Connection** Type **Device** Type Country

<u>https://developers.google.com/web/tools</u> /chrome-user-experience-report





You can explore this data in more depth within the CrUX dashboard in Looker Studio





 Month: Apr 2020
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 Device

 Core Web Vitals
 Origin https://developers.google.com
 Month Apr 2020

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Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)

LCP reports the render time of the largest content element that is visible within the viewport. web.dev/lcp

desktop			59	9.88% 18		21.13%
phone			46.8%	23.45%		29.75%
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desktop					95.	26% 22

*

First Input Delay (FID)

FID measures the time from when a user first interacts with a page (i.e. when they click a link, tap on a button, or use a custom, JavaScript-powered control) to the time when the browser is actually able to respond to that interaction. web.dev/fd

Î

Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)

CLS measures the sum total of all individual layout shift scores for every unexpected layout shift that occurs during the entire lifespan of the page. web.dev/cls



Good (< 100ms) Needs Improve... Poor (>= 300ms)

Questions or concerns? Visit the CrUX forum.

Create your own dashboard at g.co/chromeuxdash

*











There's a lot of useful insight



You can use it with {any domain} - ideal for competitor analysis



← SELECT CONNECTOR							
Chrome UX Report By The Chrome UX Report Team Explore user experience stats about an origin in the Chrome UX Report. Terms of Service: <u>https://policies.google.com/terms</u> Privacy Policy: <u>https://policies.google.com/privacy</u> It is your responsibility to review and comply with all applicable third party TOS.							
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Use report template for new reports This is provided by the connector's creator.							
Learn more about how your data is being shared when allowing report editors to modify parameter values.							





A few moments ago we mentioned the 3 main CWVs



Largest Contentful Paint First Input Delay Cumulative Layout Shift



The most common issue that we see is usually with LCP



What is LCP?



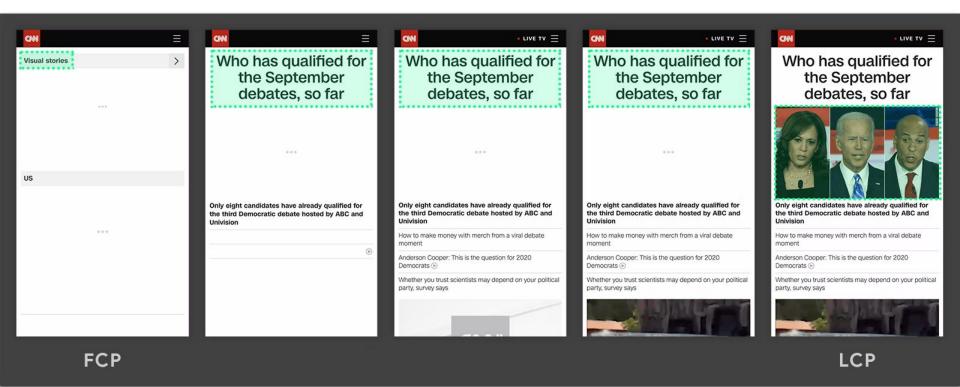
The Largest Contentful Paint (LCP) metric reports the render time of the largest <u>image or</u> <u>text block</u> visible within the viewport, relative to when the page <u>first started loading</u>.

https://web.dev/lcp/#what-is-lcp



The LCP can change as a page loads

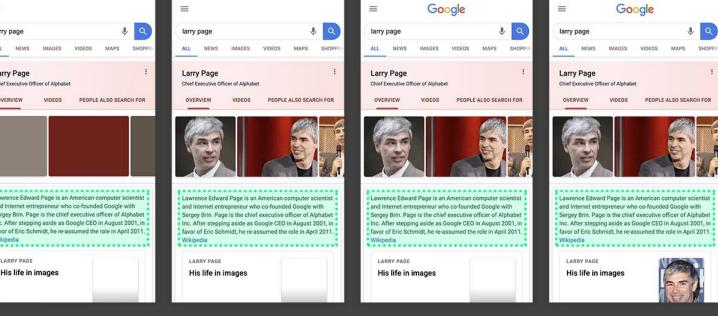








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As soon as a user interacts with a page, no new LCP classifications can occur



What can impact LCP?



Slow server response times Render blocking resources **Resource load times** Large files Client side rendering



One of the most common issue that we see with LCP



(And we do a lot of CWV investigations)



Is large imagery



It's also one of the easier areas to fix, too



For example, take this URL on the BlueArray Website





Meet the team > Tom Pool



Tom Pool

Technical SEO Director

in

Tom Pool was Blue Array's first hire and has excelled on the technical side of SEO. Tom's engineering BTEC level has proven to be a solid foundation and he's excited about pursuing his career with Blue Array.

We asked Tom "If you could visit any place in the world, where would you choose to go and why?";

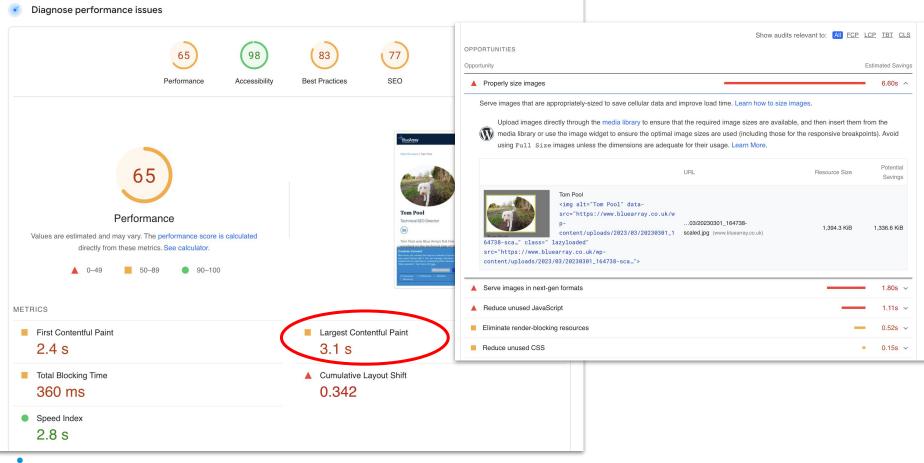
If I could visit anywhere, it would have to be Switzerland for the mountains, or somewhere north, where you can see the Northern Lights. I'm slowly ticking off each European country, and absolutely loving the different cultures!





Page Speed Insights shows





FRIENDS Search Engine Optimisation

The Blue Array website is hosted on WP



(So it's easy to fix this one!)



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Meet the team > Tom Pool



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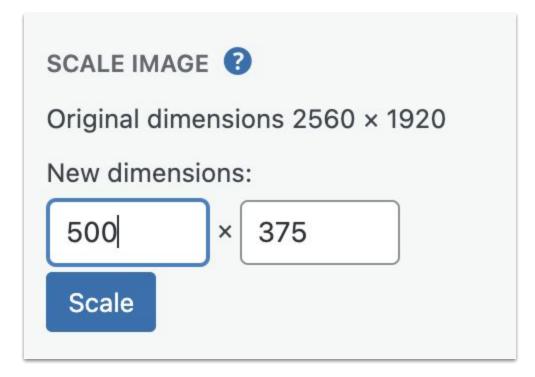


It's surprising to see how many sites just upload images & roll with them



Simple scaling can really help







You can also do this easily on Mac



Preview > View > Show Markup Toolbar > Resize



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You can also resize multiple images https://support.apple.com/en-gb/guide/pr eview/prvw2015/mac



When you've resized, don't forget to upload



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20230301_164738-1-min-1.jpg

16 March 2023 32 KB 500 by 375 pixels Edit Image Delete permanently







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(in)

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Tom Pool Technical SEO Director





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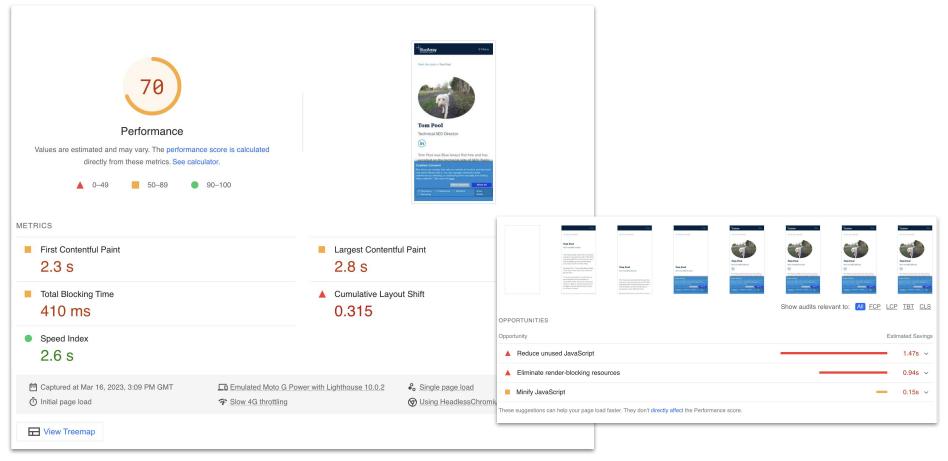
Contact

Get a quote

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Improvement! But there's still more actions to take



Moving on to another example, where the issue is not as commonly

seen





Relating to Lazy Loading







The developers were very 'keen' with the lazy-loading implementation



And all images had loading="lazy"



Even the images that appear above the fold





Venus beside a crescent Moon on July 15th, 2018. Image: NASA / Bill - Dunford

hen astronomer Tyler Nordgren first got involved in astrophotography in the '90s, he noticed something very off about the postcards, posters, and other photos he'd see when living and traveling in the American Southwest.

"One of the big things that struck me at that time was the number of pictures I'd see that show the buttes in Monument Valley with a full moon rising behind them," Nordgren recalls. Nordgren had been to that exact location in Monument Valley, and he knew the Moon didn't rise in the position shown in the photos. "And even if it did, the shadows on the Moon are utterly different from the shadows on the buttes." Even in a time before utdees undees the table to the advect time before utdees used.

CAMERAS AND PHOTOGRAPHY

The night sky is always getting faked

We've been getting fooled by photos of the night sky for years; now, tech is making it even easier.

By EMMA ROTH Mar 16, 2023, 3:00 PM GMT | D 2 Comments / 2 New

🖌 f 🖉

Sample site -The Verge doesn't have lazy loading issues (they have other ones...)





So instead of seeing rich, valuable content



Using lazy loading meant that the resource would not load until after the layout was confirmed

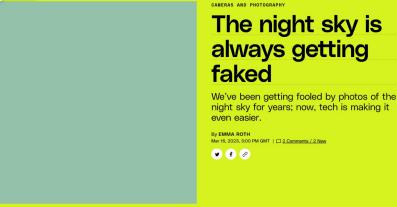




In practice, it would look something like:



The Verge / Tech / Reviews / Science / Entertainment / More +



Venus beside a crescent Moon on July 15th, 2018. Image: NASA / Bill Dunford

span 550 × 550

hen astronomer Tyler Nordgren first got involved in astrophotography in the '90s, he noticed something very off about the postcards, posters, and other photos he'd see when living and traveling in the American Southwest.

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Again, it's a pretty straightforward fix



Make sure that all in-viewport images are not using lazy loading



Or if they are, that the site is using an Intersection Observer



This watches for changes to the visibility of each image





When an image enters the user's view, the Intersection Observer detects this and triggers a JavaScript function that loads the image



We can also take this further, and help the LCP element (if it's an image) load faster



With something called 'Priority Hints'



Priority Hints indicate the relative priority of resources to the browser. They can enable optimal loading and improve Core Web Vitals. https://web.dev/priority-hints/



You can hint to the browser as to which resources are most *important via the <i>fetchpriority* attribute for resources that could benefit from a higher priority



For example, if you specify 'fetchpriority="high" on a main image, LCP can happen sooner



There's a wide range of other issues that can affect LCP





Clear & optimised caching is useful; more so for returning users



Be aware of preloading, too





Preloaded resources are fetched at a high priority, delaying the arrival of other resources in the page



In the case where a preloaded resource is never actually used by the page, that means potentially critical requests will be delayed, slowing down the initial loading of your site.



In addition to this, there's a couple of other things to be aware of



Slow Server Response Time -Make sure you're using a good, trustworthy host





Slow Server Response Time -Using a CDN is also valuable (Cloudflare)



Caching - Make sure you're using smart caching rules



Look at the resources that make up your site, and work out best possible cache times



Beyond LCP, CLS is the thing that can really affect User Experience



What is CLS?



CLS is a measure of the largest burst of layout shift scores for every unexpected layout shift that occurs during the entire lifespan of a page. <u>https://web.dev/cls/#what-is-cls</u>



A layout shift occurs any time a visible element changes its position from one rendered frame to the next.

https://web.dev/cls/#what-is-cls



The Layout Shift Score is based on the size of a shifting element in comparison to the viewport

Impact Fraction





The distance the element moves in comparison to the viewport

Distance Fraction



Layout Shift Score =

Impact Fraction * Distance Fraction



The way that CLS was calculated was updated mid 2021



To account for pages with lots of small changes over a longer period of time (a sports scoring page)





Google takes readings every second for 5 seconds



And assigns each bracket it's own CLS



The bracket with the highest CLS is what represents the page in PSI



The most common issue for CLS

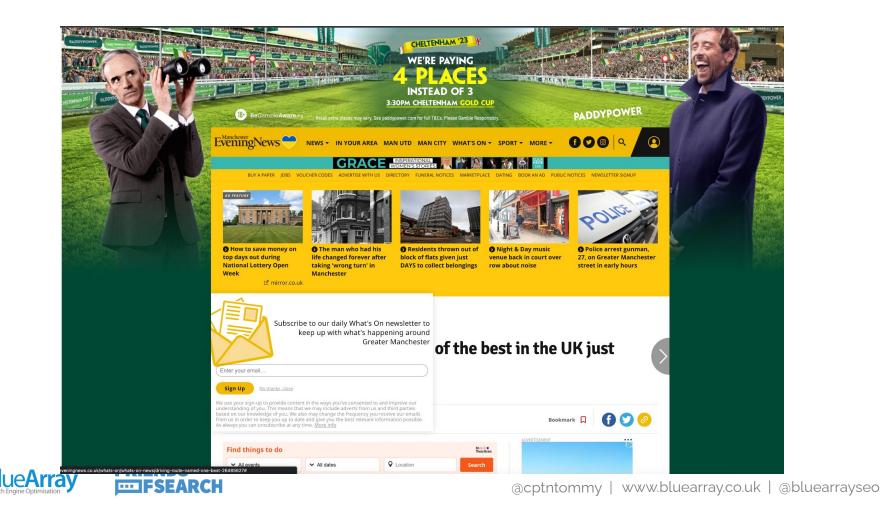


Not including size attributes on images & videos



I'm sure we've all seen the local 'news' publisher sites





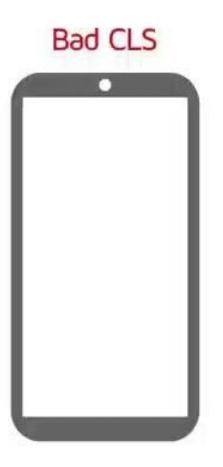
MANY ISSUES; Banners, ads, ads, ads, images not having dimensions





Good documentation on GTMetrix shows







Let's look at a specific example

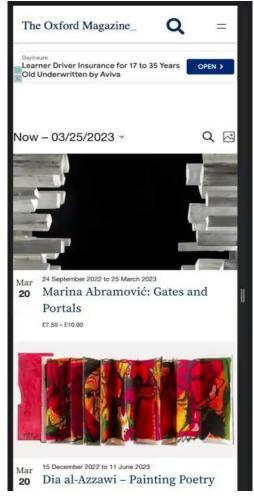


https://theoxfordmaga zine.com/events/



If we have a look at the page loading



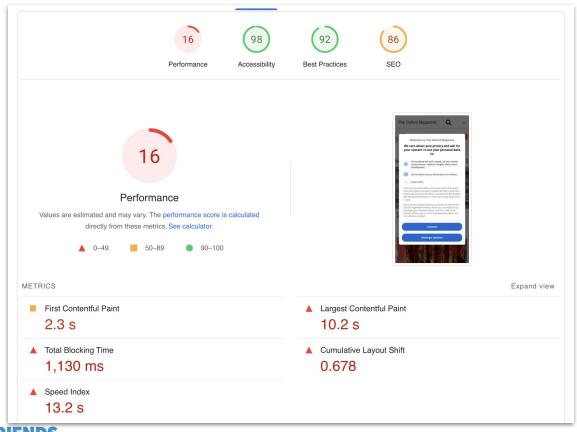






Using Page Speed Insights highlights the issue



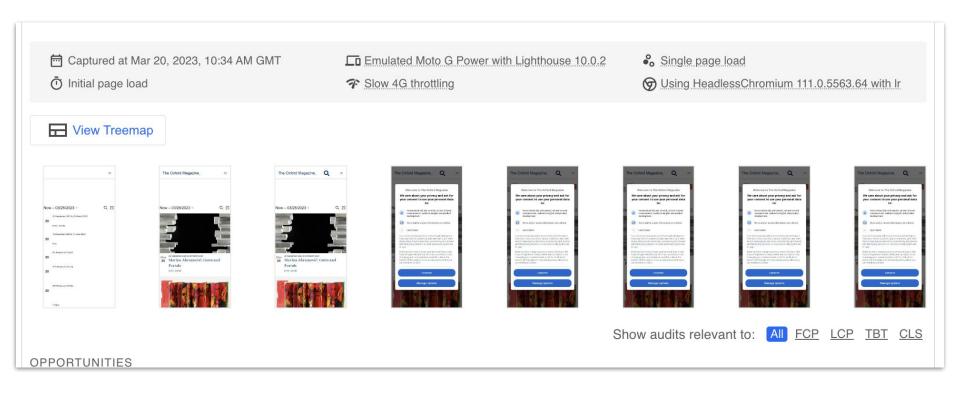






Looking at the timeline view shows the visual progress















There's some quite obvious immediate wins



Now, I don't have access to this website



But I do have access to WebPageTest



Welcome to WebPageTest Pro

You're ready to go! Enjoy premium locations, bulk runs, test priority, our API, & No-Code Experiments!

Start a Site Performance ~

https://theoxfordmagazine.com/events/

Simple Configuration 3 test runs from recommended location and browser presets



Include Repeat View (Loads the page, closes the browser and then loads the page again)

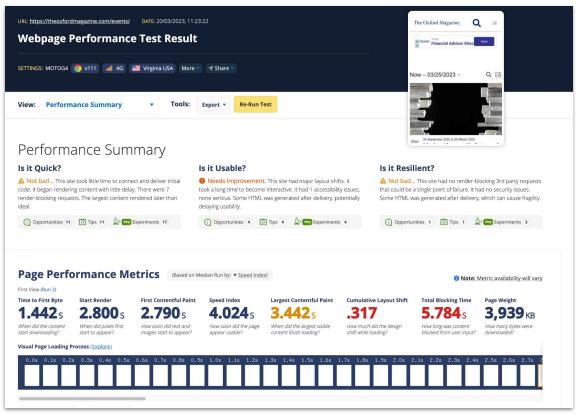
Run Lighthouse Audit (Runs on Chrome, emulated Moto G4 device, over simulated 3G Fast connection)

Make Test Private Private tests are only visible to your account

Test!

967 Runs Left | Upgrade

Start Test →







ls it Usable?

Needs Improvement. This site had major layout shifts. It took a long time to become interactive. It had 1 accessibility issues, none serious. Some HTML was generated after delivery, potentially delaying usability.

WebPageTest ran 5 diagnostic checks related to this category and found 4 opportunities.



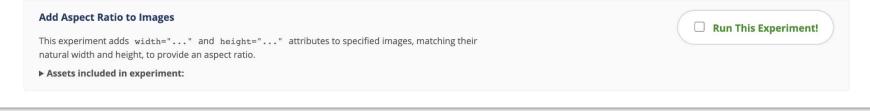
Layout shifts exist and may be caused by images missing aspect ratio.

i) 1 experiment selected.

Experiment Runs: 3 (6 total runs) Each experiment run uses 2 test runs (1 experiment, 1 control) for each first & repeat view

Re-Run Test with Experiments

Arelevant Experiments

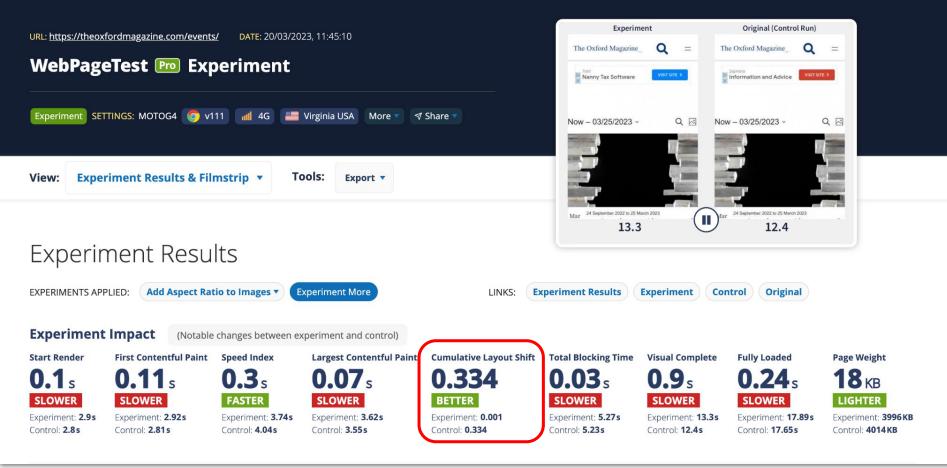






Running the experiment takes a minute



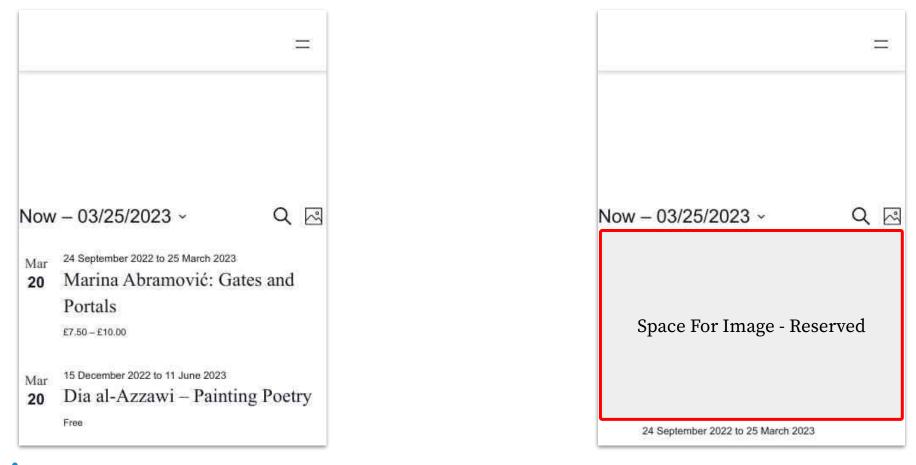






We can then compare the visual loading

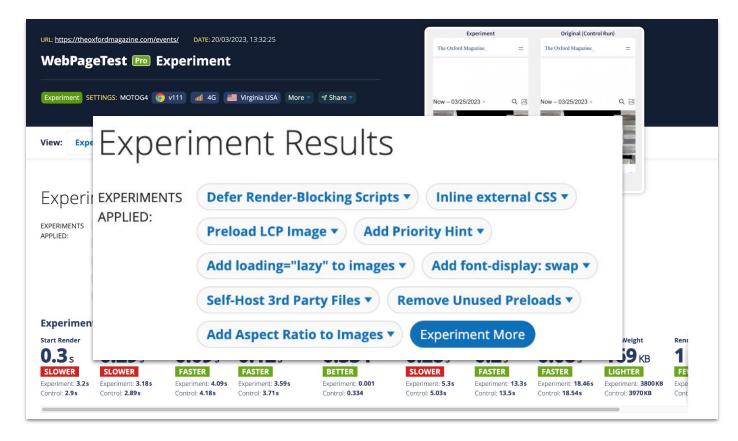






WebPageTest can also highlight other issues & allow for immediate testing









If you can, I'd recommend playing around with this



It can be really useful if you'd like to prove the potential impact of changes



It can also be useful for pitches, too



Cookie Banners can cause CLS issues, too





As well as other CWV problems



If not properly implemented



Consent Management Platforms often rely on a fair number of 3rd party scripts & resources



"If a CMP is configured to load before other critical resources on a webpage, it can delay the loading of those resources and negatively impact CWV metrics."



It's worth checking implementation to ensure best possible performance



We've got one more CWV to look at



First Input Delay



What is FID?



"FID measures the time from when a user first interacts with a page (i.e. when they click a link, tap on a button, or use a custom, JavaScript-powered control) to the time when the browser is actually able to begin processing event handlers in response to that interaction."

https://web.dev/fid/#what-is-fid



What can impact FID?



Lots of third party code (JS etc) Long JS execution times High levels of main thread work High numbers of requests Unused code



Optimising & Minifying code



"Minify JS/CSS"



If using WordPress





Divi (theme) can do this for you



Cloudflare can also do this, as well as other hosts (Siteground, in particular)



There's plugins available for most platforms



(or you could do it yourself)



"Reduce the impact of 3rd party code"



This is around reduction of render blocking resources, to ensure users get the main content faster



Deferring 3rd party scripts can benefit. Some plugins can aid with this, or some themes have functionality built in to defer



Tying it all together

Testing sites particularly large ones



Especially pages that are not the usual 'money' pages







Can reveal a number of different issues



It's important to understand what causes these issues



As well as how to fix (or at least understand some of the detail behind) these issues



There may be many, many, many things that annoy us about using the internet





Don't let Core Web Vitals be one of them.



Thanks!



Appendix:

https://web.dev/optimize-long-tasks/

https://support.google.com/webmasters/thread/865 21401?hl=en&msgid=86521401 https://support.google.com/webmasters/thread/104 436075/core-web-vitals-page-experience-faqs-updat ed-march-2021 https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appear ance/page-experience

https://web.dev/fast/

