How To Use Majestic Site Explorer During Initial Site Reviews: A Case Study

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When a new client brings their site to us for help with their digital marketing, we begin by researching their current status – it's important to know where you are before you decide where you're going. This leads into the development of a digital marketing strategy based on the specific needs & aims of each client.

As part of our key toolset, Majestic Site Explorer is an important audit & research tool that helps to seriously cut down on the man hours when we have a new site to understand & a strategy to develop.

Identifying Major Issues

As a first step, we need to know what situation the site is in, and by that we mean a range of on-site factors, and off-site issues.

During an Initial Digital Review for a site, we look at technical SEO issues, onsite optimisation, usability, competitor benchmarking & backlink profiles. Investigating these latter off-site factors is where Majestic Site Explorer is essential for us.

Backlink Profile

Following analysis of their search traffic history, we will already have a good idea whether the site has been affected by the Penguin algorithm or hit by a manual penalty for an unnatural link profile.

The next step, in any situation, is to investigate the backlink profile in more detail, to identify a recovery strategy, or whether a currently healthy site is at risk due to its backlinks.

The summary page of Site Explorer is the obvious place to start, and where alarm bells can often start ringing.
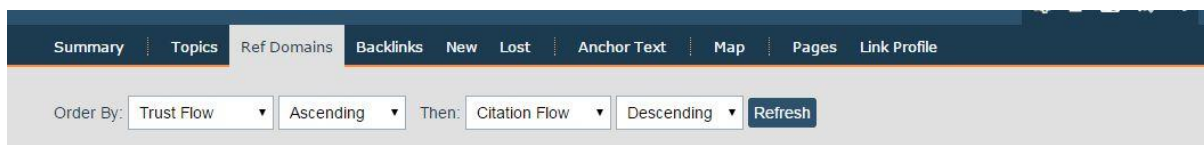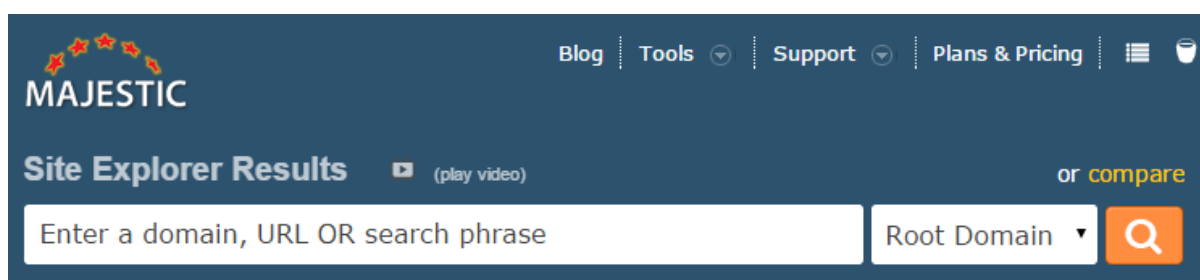

This gives information on

- The number of links across the number of referring domains
- Anchor Text distribution
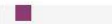- Trust Flow / Citation Flow distribution
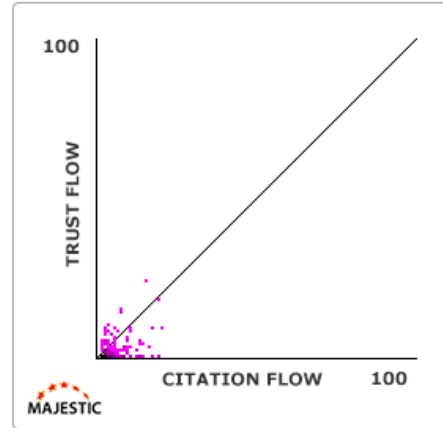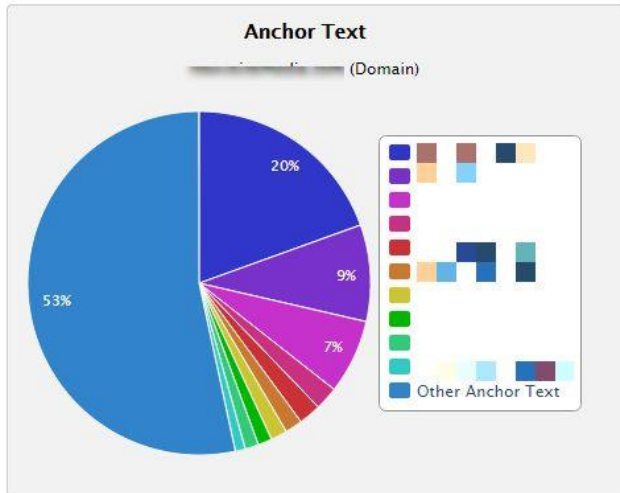
External Backlinks Link Profile

To dig further, I delve into the referring domains tab to look at whether the profile as a whole contains a high proportion of suspicious site. Majestic's trust flow and citation flow metrics provide a handy way of sorting the domains so that the most likely to be unnatural pop up at the top.

Essentially low trust flow and high citation flow will likely identify a suspect site, one that has lots of links that are untrustworthy.

This allows us a clear view of where to focus our comprehensive link removal strategy or whether a site is at risk with a suspiciously unnatural backlink profile.

Competitor Benchmarking

It's not enough to research the site itself as it doesn't exist in a bubble. To get a full picture of how the site is performing, we need to look at their search competitors. For sites that are out-performing our client, we use the compare functionality with Site Explorer to look the backlink statistics of up to 4 competitors. This provides us with an idea of where improvements can be made.

The next stage is to identify link-building targets to include in the site's digital marketing strategy. For this, the Clique Hunter function is particularly useful.

#	Linked Domains		Matches	Alexa Rank	⚙	⚙	⚙
1		⚙	3	231	2	6	4
2		⚙	3	2,154	3	11	3
3		⚙	3	2,199	1	3	1
4		⚙	3	2,266	6	122	15
5		⚙	3	3,184	1	14	17
6		⚙	3	6,364	3	5	1
7		⚙	3	6,484	1	9	4
8		⚙	3	18,810	1	2	1
9		⚙	3	19,201	11	266	35

By including the site's competitors but removing the site's domain, this report gives a helpful overview of domains that are linking to competitors. By identifying those that don't also link to the client's site, we have a list of relevant, high quality sites that have previously linked to similar sites to focus our future link-building and outreach efforts on. At this early stage, this enables us to focus our efforts on developing content that will appeal to these sites.

All this information is gathered as part of every new client we take on board, and is used to inform the focus of the site's digital marketing strategy and tactical plan.