



DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

SEO Foundations & Keyword Strategy

01

What this guide helps you create — and who it's for

An SEO foundation: the handful of keyword clusters worth ranking for (matched to buyer intent, not just volume), the page each cluster maps to, the on-page and technical basics that aren't optional, and the order you'll publish in.

Use this if you want to be found by people searching for what you do — and right now your “SEO” is either nothing, or a pile of blog posts that don't rank. **Skip it** if you already rank for the right terms and just need more content — that's the SEO Content Engine blueprint at the end, not this guide.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- 1 **Read sections 02–04** so you know what SEO actually is — an intent game, not a volume game.
- 2 **Open your AI chatbot** — the one you set up in guide 01.
- 3 **Make the decisions in section 03** — intent over volume, the cluster-to-page map, your real starting point, the priority order. Do this *before* you touch the prompt.
- 4 **Copy the prompt in section 05** into the chatbot. Paste your Founder Context Block where it says to, and fill in the `{curly braces}`.
- 5 **Send it**, then sharpen what comes back using the four moves in section 06 — one at a time.
- 6 **Fix the technical basics first**, then publish in priority order. Content on a broken site doesn't rank.

02

Why this document matters

SEO fails for founders in two ordinary ways. Either they chase big, obvious search terms (“project management software”) that established sites own and a new domain will never rank for — so nothing happens. Or

they “do content” — fifty blog posts on whatever, no structure, no internal linking — and it still goes nowhere, because Google can’t tell what any of it is for.

The fix is boring and it works: pick a small number of search *clusters* where the searcher is the kind of person who’d buy from you, map each cluster to one page that’s clearly the answer, get the technical basics right so Google can actually read your site, and publish the most valuable clusters first. That’s the document this guide produces.

SEO isn’t “write more.” It’s: who’s searching, do they have buying intent, and can we realistically be the answer?

It comes from four decisions. Section 03.

03

The thinking framework — what to settle before you prompt

The prompt builds the foundation doc. These calls are yours.

— Intent over volume

A search with 200 monthly hits where everyone searching is in trouble and looking for a tool beats a search with 20,000 hits where everyone’s a student writing an essay. Pick clusters by *who’s searching and why* — the ones where the intent points at your product — even if the numbers are modest. Volume without intent is traffic that never converts.

— Every cluster maps to one page

A cluster is a set of closely related queries that all want the same answer. Each cluster gets *one* page that owns it — a pillar page, or a single deep post — not seventeen thin posts scattered across the site. Decide the map now: cluster → page. Pages that don’t map to a cluster are noise; clusters with no page can’t rank.

— Where are you actually starting from?

Be honest. A brand-new domain won't rank for anything competitive for months — plan around that, and don't pretend otherwise. A site that already has authority might just need the content. And if your site isn't crawlable, is painfully slow, or has no titles or meta descriptions, *that's* the first job — no amount of content fixes a site Google can't read.

— What's the priority order?

You can't publish everything at once. Order the clusters by how close the searcher is to a buying decision: “how do I do X myself” and “best tool for X” before “what is X”. Publish the money-adjacent clusters first.

DECIDE	WEAK DEFAULT	WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE
Which terms	“the highest-volume keyword”	“long-tail clusters where the searcher clearly needs a tool”
Cluster → page	“one big blog with everything”	“each cluster → one pillar page or post that owns it”
Starting point	“we'll just write content”	“site's fast, crawlable, has titles — <i>then</i> we write”
Priority	“publish whatever's easiest”	“money-adjacent clusters first; ‘what is X’ last”

04

Common failure modes — what generic output looks like

Ask an AI for “an SEO strategy” cold, and you get a keyword-tool printout dressed as one. Reject these:

× WHAT TO REJECT ON SIGHT

- **Head-term fantasy.** A list of huge, generic keywords you have no chance of ranking for on a young site. Volume you can't win is worth zero.
- **A content dump, no structure.** "Write 50 blog posts" with no clusters, no pillar pages, no internal links. Google can't tell what's important.
- **Ignoring the plumbing.** A content plan that never mentions site speed, crawlability, titles, or whether you're even indexed. Content on a broken site is invisible.
- **Keyword stuffing.** Output that jams the target phrase into every sentence. Google's been past that for fifteen years; readers were never fooled.
- **Volume worship.** Choosing every cluster by search volume, ignoring intent. High-volume, low-intent content is a traffic spike that never buys anything.

If the plan looks like this, you've picked terms by volume and skipped the cluster-to-page map. Section 03.

05

The prompt template

This is the bit that does the work. You don't need to understand prompting — you just need to do these five things, in order:

RUNNING THIS PROMPT — STEP BY STEP

- 1 **Copy the entire grey box below** (all of it, top to bottom).
- 2 **Open your AI chatbot** and paste it into the message box. Don't press send yet.
- 3 **Paste your Founder Context Block** where the prompt says `{paste your Founder Context Block here}` — delete that line and put your block in its place. (No Context Block yet? Build one in guide 01.)
- 4 **Replace every `{curly-brace}` bit** with your own answer — your four decisions from section 03 go straight in. If you're unsure of one, leave it; the prompt will ask.
- 5 **Send it.** Then go to section 06 to sharpen what comes back.

PROMPT TEMPLATE

→ Copy the whole box. Paste your **Founder Context Block** where it says to, then swap everything in {curly braces} for your own answers before you send it.

You are helping me write an SEO foundation document – the small number of keyword clusters worth ranking for, the page each one maps to, and the basics that have to be in place.

Here is everything you need to know about my company:

{paste your Founder Context Block here}

Four things I've decided (use these – don't override them):

- The principle: intent over volume – pick clusters where the searcher is the kind of person who'd buy from us, even if the numbers are modest: {e.g. "people who DIY their own bookkeeping and are looking for a tool"}
- Cluster-to-page rule: every cluster maps to exactly one page (pillar page or single deep post). {confirm or note any pages that already exist}
- Our starting point: {e.g. "brand-new domain, no authority – expectations set to months not weeks" OR "established site, just needs content"}
- Priority basis: order clusters by how close the searcher is to a buying decision – money-adjacent first.

Produce the document with exactly these five parts:

1. Keyword clusters – 5 to 8 of them. For each: the cluster theme; 3–5 example search queries; the buyer intent in one phrase; and one honest sentence on whether we can realistically rank for it given our starting point.
2. Cluster → page map – for every cluster: the one page that owns it (pillar page or post), a suggested URL slug, and the single thing that page must do for the searcher.
3. On-page checklist – the per-page essentials: title tag, H1, meta description, internal links to/from related pages, and schema markup if relevant. One line each.
4. Technical must-haves – the site-level basics that have to be true before any of this works: crawlable, indexed, fast (give a target), mobile-fine, no broken links. Flag which ones I most likely haven't done.
5. Publishing priority order – the clusters ranked, money-adjacent first, with one line on why each is where it is. Tell me which 3 to do this quarter.

Rules:

- Don't list head terms a young or low-authority site can't realistically win. If I gave you a competitive market, lean hard into long-tail.

- No keyword stuffing in anything you produce.
- Anything in `{curly braces}` is a slot for me to fill. If I left one blank, ask me for it – don't invent it.

When you're done, tell me which cluster I'm most likely to waste effort on, and why.

06

How to iterate when the output is weak

First drafts come back too ambitious on volume and too vague on structure. These four moves fix that — one at a time:

1. **Trade down to terms you can win.** *“For each cluster, replace the head term with the long-tail version a young site could realistically rank for. If we can't win it in 6 months, cut it.”*
2. **Force the clusters.** *“Group the loose keywords into 5–8 clusters, each with a single search intent. Anything that doesn't fit a cluster, drop it.”*
3. **Demand the map.** *“For every cluster, name the one page that will own it — pillar page or post — its URL, and the single thing that page must do for the searcher.”*
4. **Reorder by money.** *“Re-rank the publishing order so the clusters where the searcher is closest to buying come first.”*

If two passes don't fix it, you've picked terms by volume not intent — back to section 03.

07

A worked example

Sam from guide 01, Ledgerwise — the SEO foundation, focused.

> WORKED EXAMPLE — SAM'S KEYWORD CLUSTERS

The starting point: young domain, no authority. Sam accepts nothing will rank fast, and gets the basics done first — site loads in under two seconds, every page has a real title and meta description, the site's indexed, the in-app help pages link to the marketing pages.

The clusters, by intent: - *“how do I do my own bookkeeping” / “do I need an accountant as a sole trader”* — high intent: this person is deciding whether to DIY. Pillar page: *“Bookkeeping for sole traders: do it yourself, properly.”* → priority 1. - *“what receipts do I need to keep for tax (UK)” / “allowable expenses sole trader”* — high intent, very specific pain. Page: a definitive, plainly-written guide. → priority 2. - *“self assessment for [trade]” / “VAT for [trade]”* — a family of pages, one per trade (electrician, plumber, builder). → priority 3 (do the two biggest trades first). - *“what is bookkeeping”* — low intent (mostly students). One page, low priority. → last.

The principle: Sam isn't chasing “accounting software” (unwinnable). He's owning the moment a sole trader, buried in receipts, types their problem into Google — and finds Ledgerwise as the answer.

08

Edge cases — and when to go deeper

A few situations need more than the template:

- **Brand-new domain.** It will not rank for anything contested for months. Don't let that stop you — do the technical basics and start publishing the priority clusters now, because the clock only starts when the content exists. Just set expectations: months, not weeks.
- **You're a local business.** This is a different game — Google Business Profile, reviews, “near me” searches, local citations. Some of this guide still applies (clusters, pages), but local SEO has its own playbook.
- **You already have content that won't rank.** Don't write more — audit what's there first. Often it's a structure problem (no clusters, no internal links) or a plumbing problem (slow, not indexed), not a volume problem.
- **You want to turn a cluster into a content machine** — a pillar page plus a ring of supporting posts that all link to it:

→ WHEN YOU NEED TO GO DEEPER

SEO Content Engine — Turn one keyword cluster into a pillar page plus a ring of supporting posts that link to it — a repeatable production loop, not one-off articles.

n-access.co.uk/playbook/seo-content-engine

09

What to read next

- **05 · Content Strategy** — SEO needs a publishing engine; this is how you build one you'll sustain.
- **08 · Sales & Landing-Page Copy** — the pages your clusters map to still have to convert; this is how.
- **10 · Social Media Content System** — distribution and links from social give new pages a push.

The Founder's Playbook

A library of short operator guides for founders building with AI — not prompt-pack content, an actual method. Each guide is free, each routes you to deeper blueprints when you need them, and each assumes one thing: that you've built your **Founder Context Block** (that's guide 01).

The Founder's Playbook · n-access.co.uk/playbook