

Optimisey

Why SEO "Sticking Plasters" Aren't the Enemy

Sometimes, SEO is nothing
more than getting the job
done.

It has taken me nearly seven
years to confidently be able to
say this

A lot of what we
do is simple

It's just the implementation
which falls down.

Why does implementation fail?



$$PR(A) = (1-d) + d (PR(T1)/C(T1) + \dots + PR(Tn)/C(Tn))$$



All of the above?

In this talk I'll help you to embrace the SEO “sticking plasters” to get the job done

But first

A story from my early years (in SEO)



(This was me)

I “learned SEO”

I did a spell in house

I went agency-side

I learned technical SEO

My first client, my first audit

I tore the site to shreds

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I did my duty:

I did my duty:
self-righteously fixing those
technical SEO wrongs

it goes badly

*I pissed off the owner of
the dev agency*

I pissed off the owner of
the dev agency
Their account manager

I pissed off the manager
the developer of
the agency
Their account

it took months to undo that

My fault? Their Fault?

But here's where I
went wrong

“In order to carry a positive action we must develop here a positive vision.”
-Dalai Lama

Don't piss off the person who
you need to help you get the job
done

Make friends with developers!



But seriously, web
development isn't easy

Most developers don't know
enough about SEO

but they don't need to
(it's not their job - for the most part)

Granted, you need to get your
own way



But take everyone on that
journey



Chris Green @chrisgreen87 · Aug 30

Reactions please:

"You have to be a web **developer** to be any good at tech SEO"



Chris Green @chrisgreen87 · Aug 30

Reactions please:

"You have to be a web **developer** to be any good at tech SEO"

5% Obviously

19% Utter bull

64% It helps

12% Doesn't really matter

167 votes • Final results

Monster spreadsheets



How many
clients/stakeholders love
monster spreadsheets?

Some Scenarios

Here's a list of x,xxx keywords.
What do you want to rank for?

Here's a list of x,xxx pages you
need new titles for

These are the x,xxx long-tail
keywords you need to
incorporate into existing copy

How many of these
get actioned?

Make it as easy as possible
to get the job done

Present actions, not data

Embrace TL;DR

We hate
compromising

Dictionary

Enter a word, e.g. 'pie'



compromise

/ˈkɒmprəmaɪz/

noun

1. an agreement or settlement of a dispute that is reached by each side making concessions.
"eventually they reached a compromise"
synonyms: [agreement](#), [understanding](#), [settlement](#), [terms](#), [accommodation](#); [More](#)
2. the expedient acceptance of standards that are lower than is desirable.
"sexism should be tackled without compromise"
3. to utterly fail at getting your own way
I'll be f%&@ed before I compromise on this!

verb

1. settle a dispute by mutual concession.
"in the end we compromised and deferred the issue"
synonyms: [meet each other halfway](#), [find the middle ground](#), [come to terms](#), [come to an understanding](#), [make a deal](#), [make concessions](#), [find a happy medium](#), [strike a balance](#); [More](#)
2. expediently accept standards that are lower than is desirable.
"we were not prepared to **compromise** on safety"

Dictionary

Enter a word, e.g. 'pie'



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Too many SEOs/Developers/Designers spit their dummies out over it



But SEO is all about
compromise!

Budgets

Time

Buy-in

Information

Misinformation

Skill

Inclination

Don't we all have to
compromise with Google?

But are you a victim of them, or
do you make the best of them?

Sticking Plasters

True
Or
False

If you're forced to implement
“SEO changes” via Meta-CMS or
a Tag Management system,
something has gone wrong

✓ True
Or
False

Tag managers, or similar which
act client-side using JS are
unreliable

Any Meta CMS (server or client)
adds another point of failure

Don't not do it because it's not
the best way to implement
these changes...



“Excuse me ma’am
have you ever
thought about
JavaScript for
SEO?”

“I need to bulk
change 100s of
titles”

No CMS access


Client has no resource to do it

It isn't priority

Title Tag injection via GTM

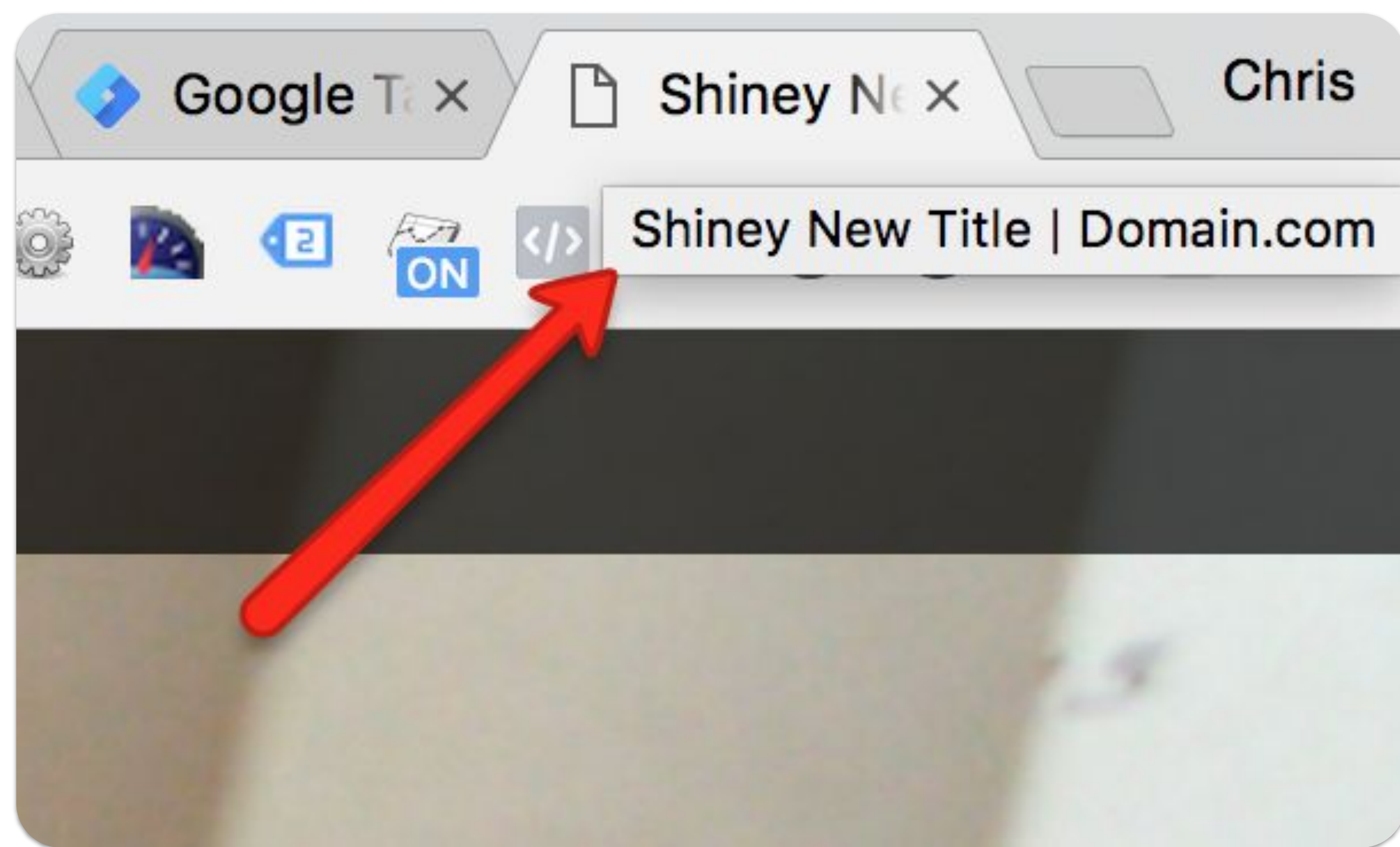
Tag Configuration

Tag type

<> **Custom HTML** 
Custom HTML Tag

HTML ?

```
1 <script>
2   document.title = "Shiney new title | Domain.com";
3 </script>
```

Rendered page

```
<title>Test 2 - Test - CG Net</title>
```

Source

That could work -
but it'll take aaages!

WORKSPACEVERSIONSADMIN

GTM-MTSWNNV

PREVIEW

SUBMIT

Current Workspace

New Test >

Search

Overview

Tags

Triggers

Variables

Folders

Tags

NEW

Name ↑	Type	Firing Triggers	Folder	Last Edited
Title Rewrite 1	Custom HTML	Page 1	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 10	Custom HTML	Page 10	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 2	Custom HTML	Page 2	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 3	Custom HTML	Page 3	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 4	Custom HTML	Page 4	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 5	Custom HTML	Page 5	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 6	Custom HTML	Page 6	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 7	Custom HTML	Page 7	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 8	Custom HTML	Page 8	JS Title	a few seconds ago
Title Rewrite 9	Custom HTML	Page 9	JS Title	a few seconds ago

Or maybe

Title Lookups

Input Variable 

{{Page Path}}

Lookup Table 

Input

Output

/page-1/



New title | BrandName



-

/page-2/



It's quicker here | BrandName



-

/page-3/



Much better than loads of tags | BrandName



-

/page-4/



Easier to manage too | BrandName



-

/page-5/



Lookup tables still need manual Work | BrandName



-

/page-6/



100s of these will get boring very soon | BrandName



-

/page-7/



So what's even better? | BrandName



-

A better option
thanks Stephen Harris!

<http://bit.ly/seer-gtm-match>

Seer Interactive's GTM Match Table Variable Generator v0.2.1

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help GTM Match Table Variable Generator

100%

\$ % .0 .00 123

Arial 9

B *I* A

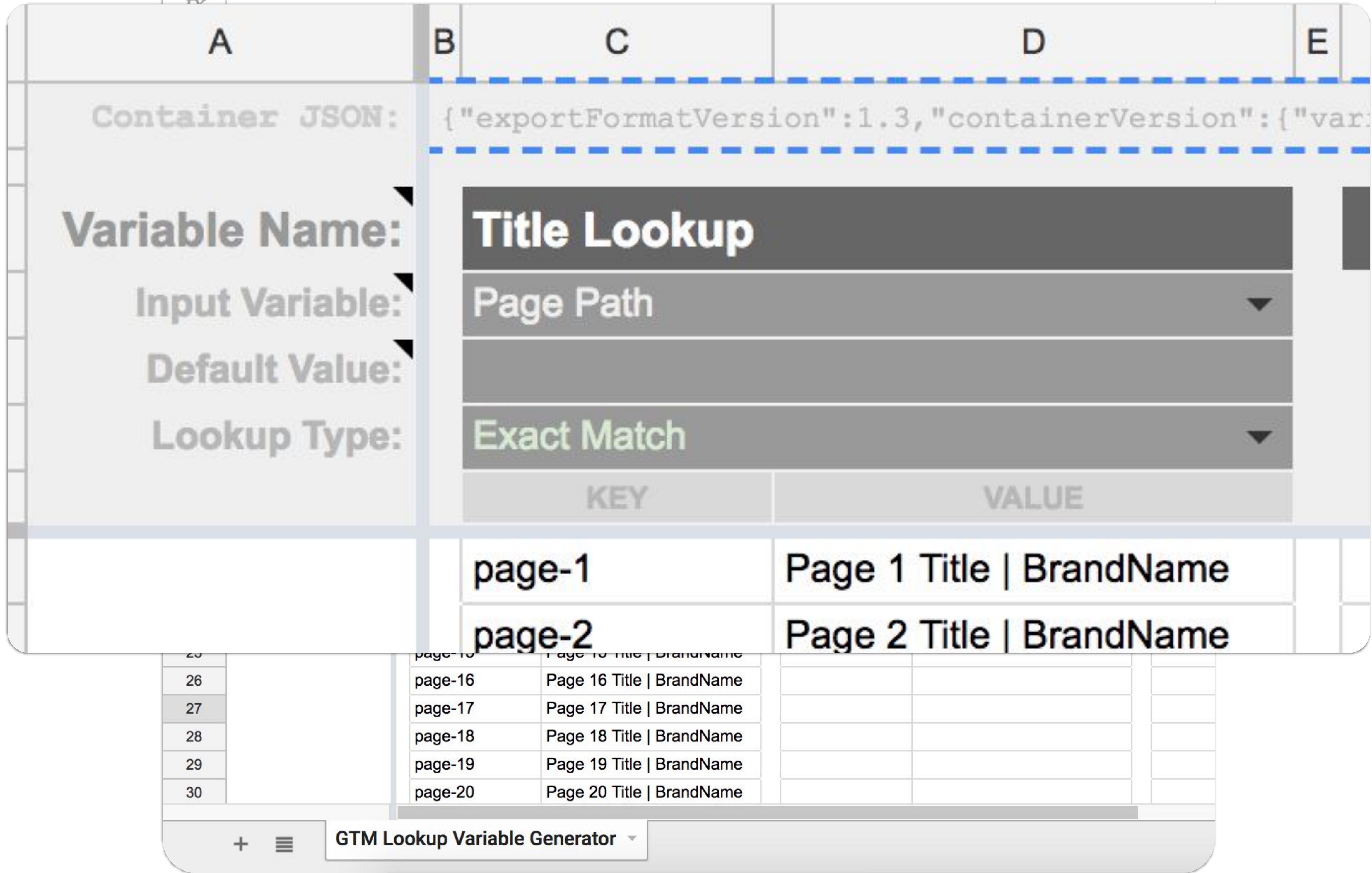
fx

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Container JSON:	{ "exportFormatVersion":1.3, "containerVersion":{"variable":[{"accountId":"0", "containerId":"0", "fingerprint"						
3								
4	Variable Name:	Title Lookup						
5	Input Variable:	Page Path						
6	Default Value:							
7	Lookup Type:	Exact Match						
10		KEY	VALUE					
11		page-1	Page 1 Title BrandName					
12		page-2	Page 2 Title BrandName					
13		page-3	Page 3 Title BrandName					
14		page-4	Page 4 Title BrandName					
15		page-5	Page 5 Title BrandName					
16		page-6	Page 6 Title BrandName					
17		page-7	Page 7 Title BrandName					
18		page-8	Page 8 Title BrandName					
19		page-9	Page 9 Title BrandName					
20		page-10	Page 10 Title BrandName					
21		page-11	Page 11 Title BrandName					
22		page-12	Page 12 Title BrandName					
23		page-13	Page 13 Title BrandName					
24		page-14	Page 14 Title BrandName					
25		page-15	Page 15 Title BrandName					
26		page-16	Page 16 Title BrandName					
27		page-17	Page 17 Title BrandName					
28		page-18	Page 18 Title BrandName					
29		page-19	Page 19 Title BrandName					
30		page-20	Page 20 Title BrandName					

+


≡

GTM Lookup Variable Generator



Bulk upload those

Select file to import

 LOOKUPIMPORT.JSON

Choose workspace

TEST 2

Choose an import option [?](#)




☐ **Overwrite**
Overwrite selected workspace with content of imported container **GTM-MTSWNNV**

☒ **Merge**
Merge selected workspace with content of imported container **GTM-MTSWNNV**

☒ Overwrite conflicting tags, triggers and variables.

☐ Rename conflicting tags, triggers and variables.

Preview and confirm your import

Tags 			Triggers 			Variables 		
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
New	Modified	Deleted	New	Modified	Deleted	New	Modified	Deleted

[View Detailed Changes](#)

CONFIRM **CANCEL**

Title Lookup

Input Variable ?

{{Page Path}}

Lookup Table ?

Input

Output

page-1

Page 1 Title | BrandName

page-2

Page 2 Title | BrandName

page-3

Page 3 Title | BrandName

page-4

Page 4 Title | BrandName

page-5

Page 5 Title | BrandName

page-6

Page 6 Title | BrandName

page-7

Page 7 Title | BrandName

page-8

Page 8 Title | BrandName

page-9

Page 9 Title | BrandName

page-10

Page 10 Title | BrandName

page-11

Page 11 Title | BrandName

page-12

Page 12 Title | BrandName

page-13

Page 13 Title | BrandName

page-14

Page 14 Title | BrandName

page-15

Page 15 Title | BrandName

page-16

Page 16 Title | BrandName

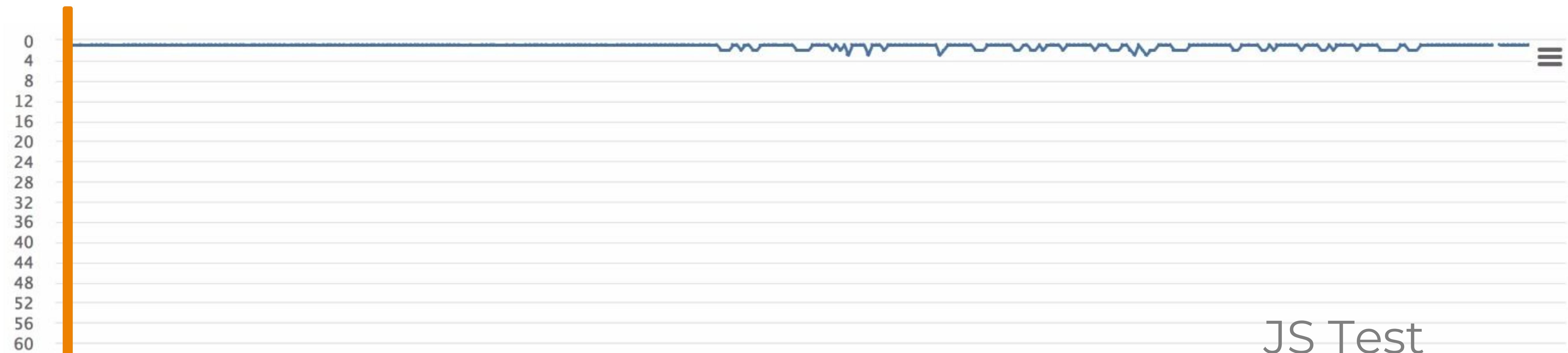
page-17

Page 17 Title | BrandName

Not perfect

Content injected like this is
slower to get picked
up by Google

Control
Indexed



JS Test
Indexed

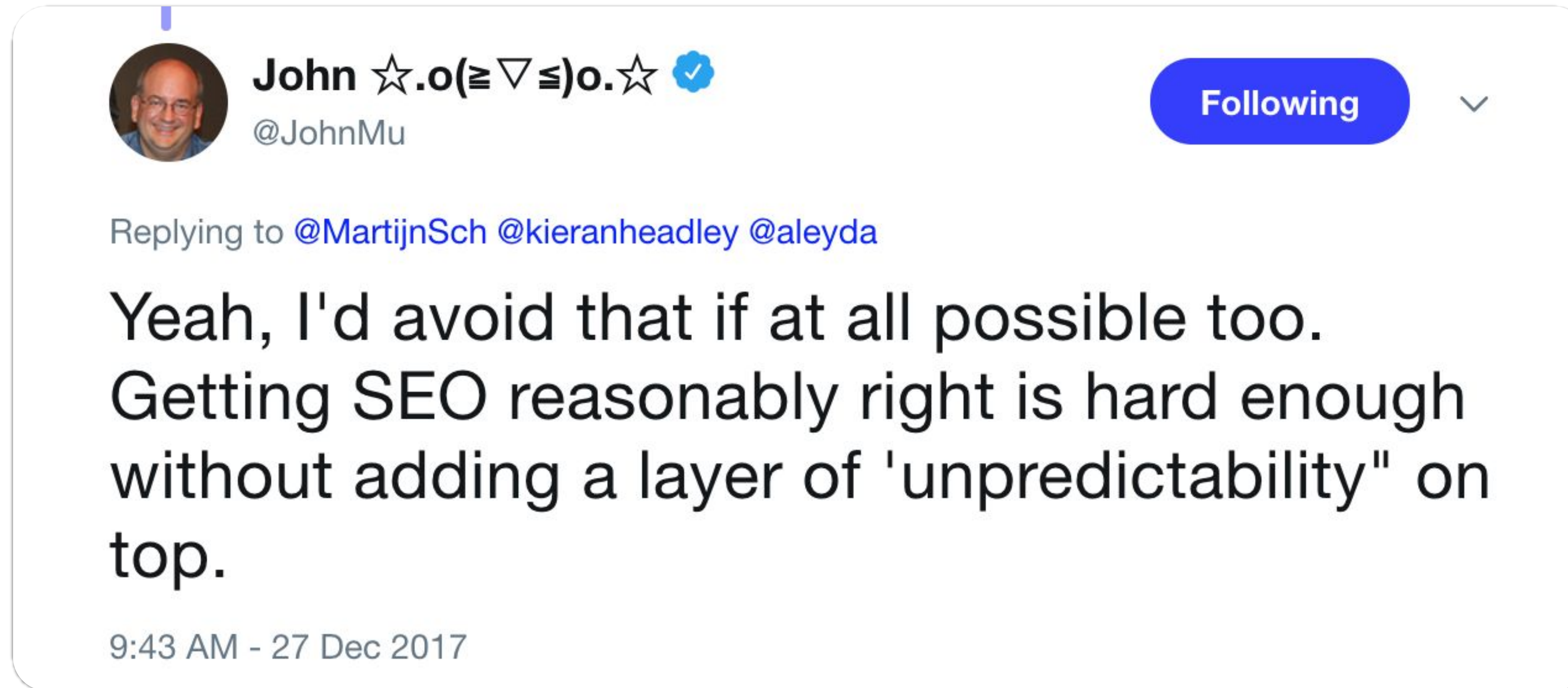


< 1 hr

12 days

And less reliable

(Google says don't use GTM for this)



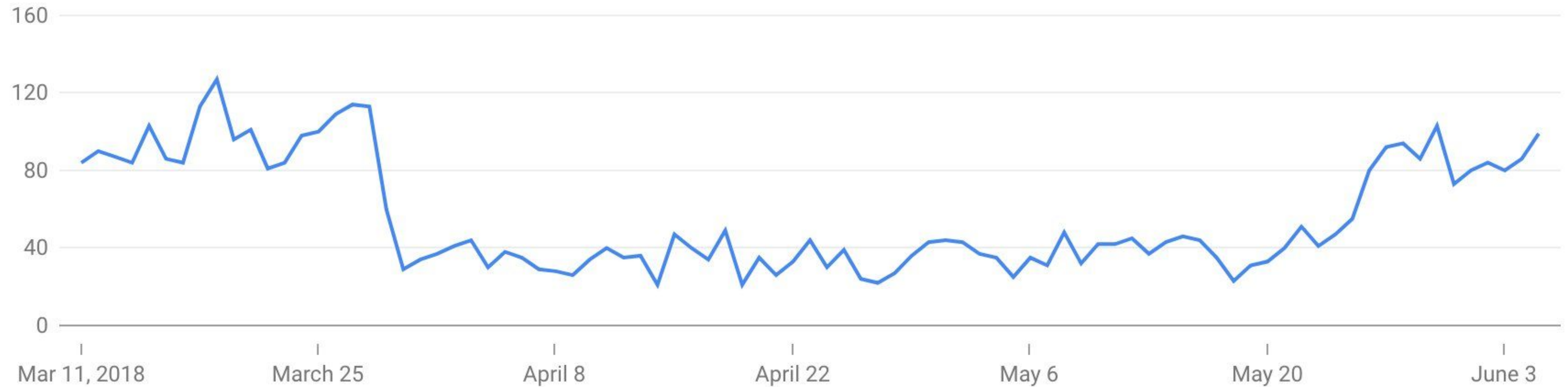
<http://bit.ly/no-gtm>

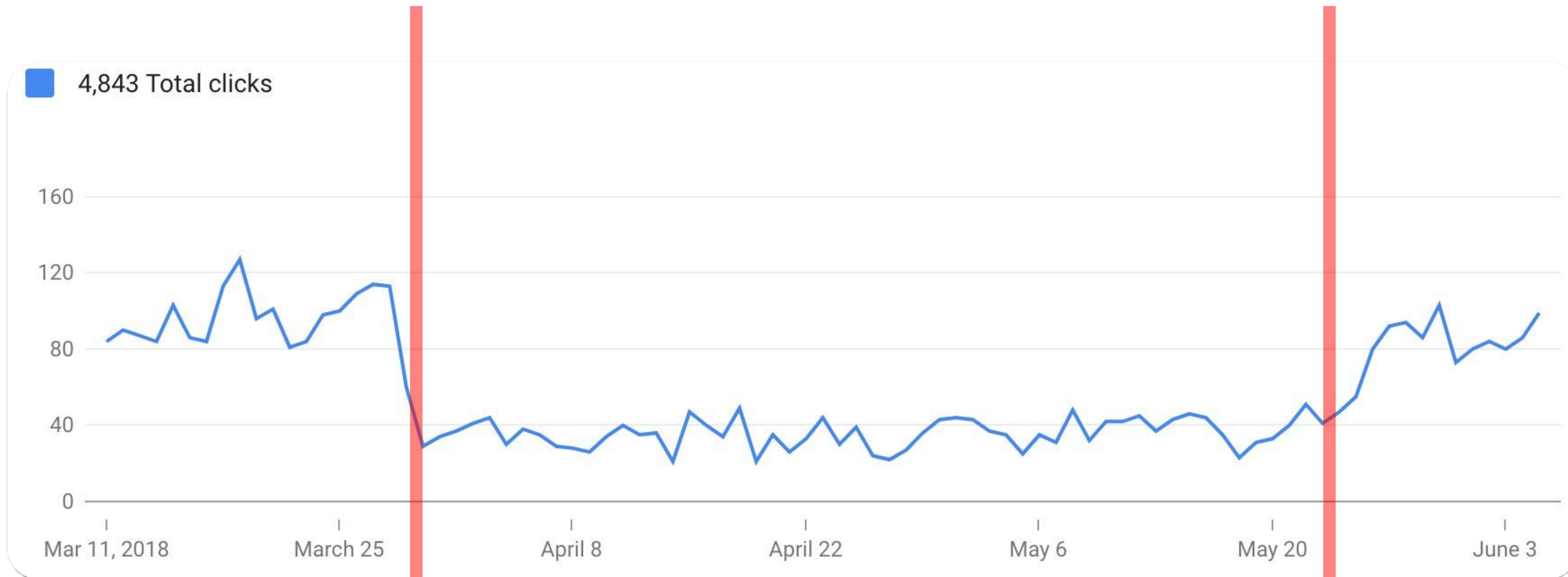
But job done!

It does work

Don't doubt the
damage you could do!

4,843 Total clicks





Screwed up a test here

Fixed it here

“I need a new content area
on a category page”



Development pipeline stretches off into the distance?

Once again - Tag manager, JavaScript injection!

Content Injection


Tag Configuration

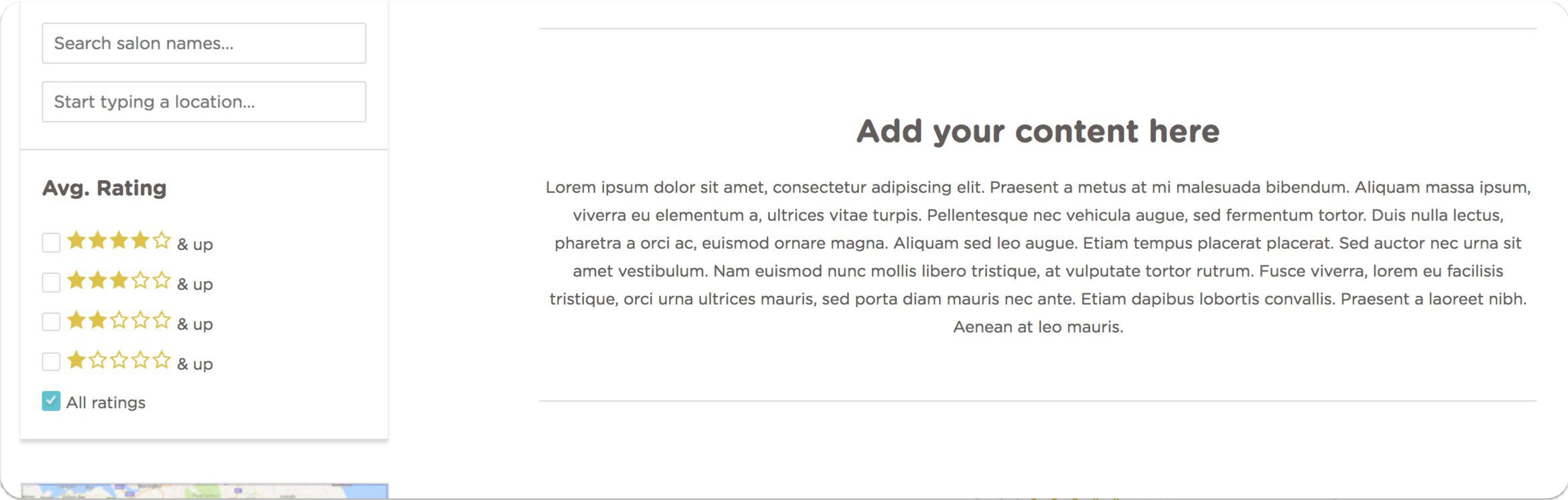
Tag type

 **Custom HTML**
Custom HTML Tag 

HTML 

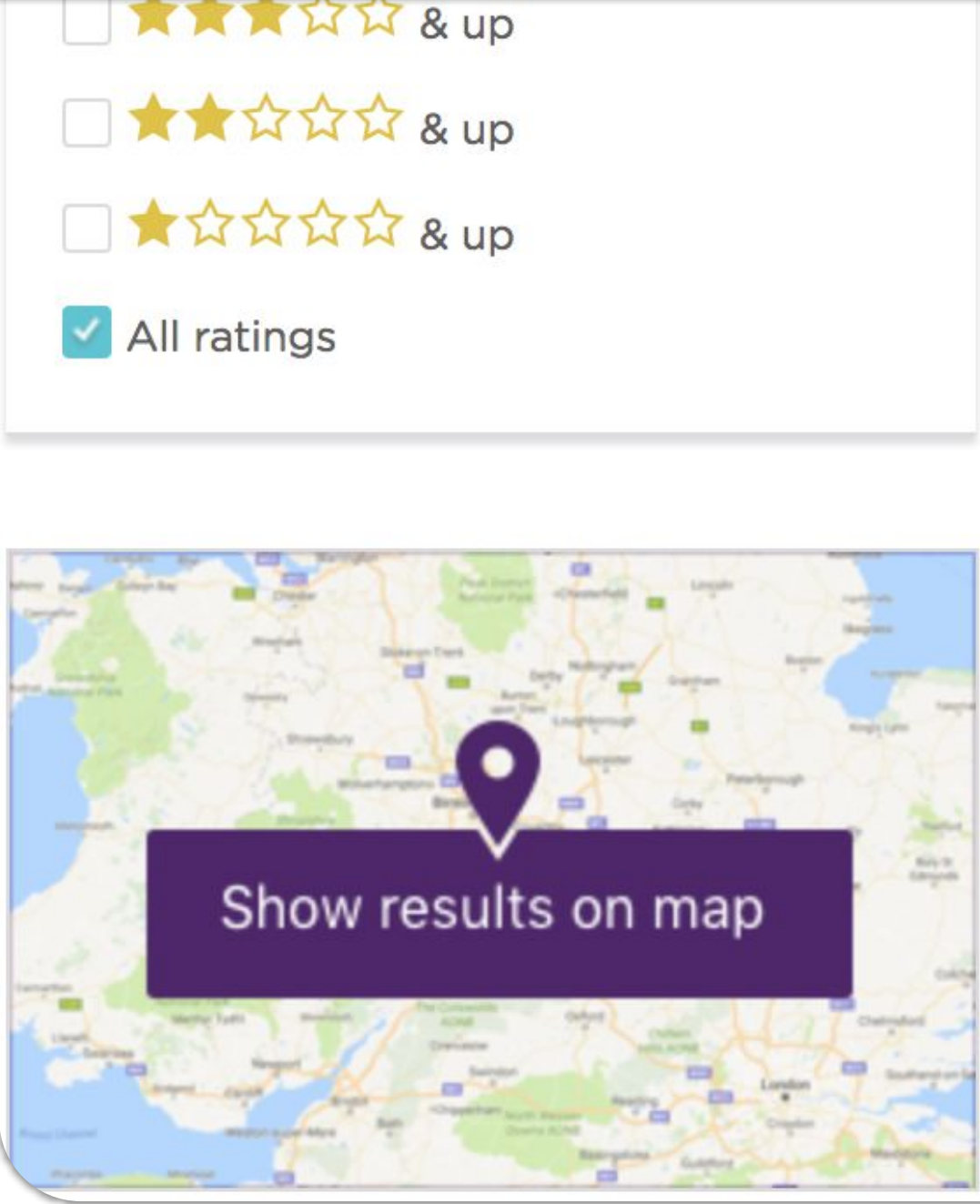
```
1 <script>
2 jQuery( '<div id="extra content"><h2>Some Extra Content</h2><p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,
consectetur adipiscing elit. Proin laoreet ultricies malesuada. Suspendisse in tempus sem, sit amet
ullamcorper erat. Aenean consectetur nunc non quam gravida, rutrum pulvinar sapien vehicula.
Vestibulum convallis massa accumsan, interdum sem a, scelerisque lacus. Donec nec odio finibus,
semper mauris sit amet, sollicitudin sem. Fusce vulputate ligula in sem hendrerit molestie. In in mi
urna. </p></div>' ).insertAfter( '.subcategories' );
3 </script>
```

☐ Support document.write 

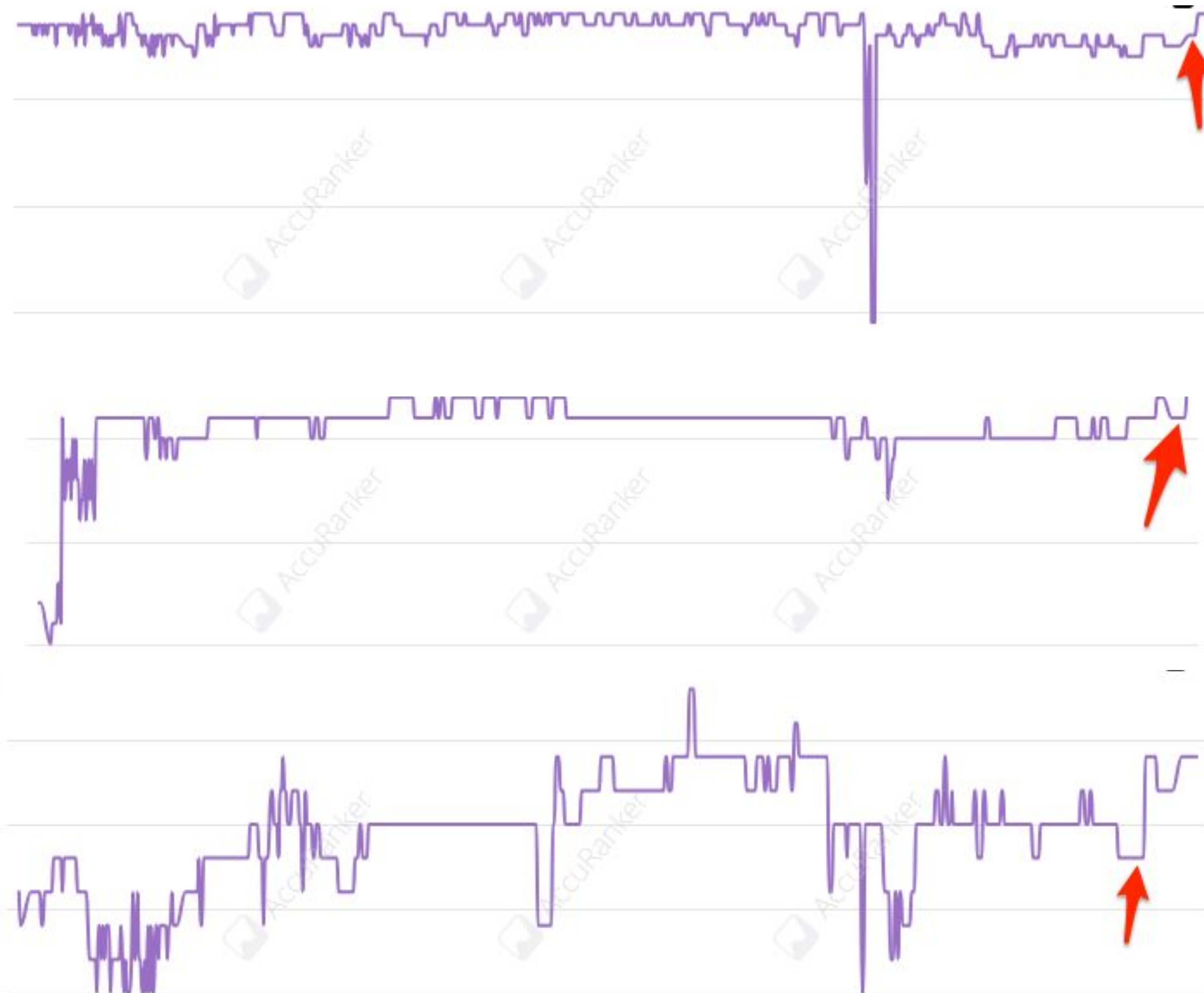


Without JS Content

With JS Content



Again, it seems to work



After further testing the pipeline
looks a little shorter!

“This landing page is
missing some key
conversion elements (it’s
crap)”

Again, the pipeline

That damn pipeline

Injection of additional CSS to modify content

It. Works!

Even if we have to wait for the
“ideal” solution

We're rolling now

Some Words of Warning

Reports of what does/doesn't
work via JS are conflicted

Canonical Tags



John ☆.o($\geq \nabla \leq$)o.☆

@JohnMu

Follow

Replying to @pedrodias @Adoubleagent

We (currently) only process the rel=canonical on the initially fetched, non-rendered version.

3:58 PM - 10 May 2018

<http://bit.ly/dom-dom-canoical>

A photograph of two men in an airport lounge. The man on the left is sleeping with his head tilted back and eyes closed. The man on the right is sitting next to him, looking at the camera with a surprised or concerned expression, holding a coffee cup. The background is a blurred airport terminal.

JavaScript SEO surprise! Google DOES use JS-injected canonical tags.

<http://bit.ly/js-surprise>



John ☆.o(≧▽≦)o.☆

@JohnMu

Following



Replying to @JohnMu @rebelytics

Going through your example, it looks like it does work, at least sometimes (see? great test!). IMO I would not rely on this though, if you really want a URL as a canonical, do the work to get the signal in right from the start.

8:42 AM - 6 Jun 2018

<http://bit.ly/JS-surprise2>

Robots Directives



“... JS wouldn't be able to
overwrite a noindex tag”

Google Via Andrew Allen, Hike SEO

johnmu 13 points · 1 month ago

Google will use the most restrictive setting you have on the page (this matches how robots meta tags are generally processed, eg if you have a "noindex" + "index", then the "noindex" will override the "index"). If you have a "nofollow" in static HTML and remove it with JS, Google will still use the "nofollow". Similarly, if you don't have any robots meta tag, and add a "noindex" with JS, Google will use the "noindex". In short, adding a "nofollow" via JS would work, removing it won't.

Google Picks the most restrictive version

Nofollow (or noindex) in HTML CAN'T be overwritten by JS

BUT noindex via JS will work in an absence of directive on page

<http://bit.ly/noindex-override>

People are still contesting these,
more testing is needed!

Oh, and reliability?

Whilst a relatively small study, for the time-poor/less patient, here are the top five key takeaways:

1. JavaScript implemented content appears to be crawled & indexed in the same time as content loaded in the source; assuming optimal conditions.
2. JavaScript content is much more unpredictable and there are other elements, which could cause content to be dropped or not indexed.
3. Mixed content issues can stop Google indexing JavaScript content altogether.
4. JavaScript content presents a more viable option for deploying content than we'd initially thought.
5. This test needs to be run under many different conditions (and many more times) for these findings to be really exhaustive.

<http://bit.ly/js-drag-race>

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3. Mixed content issues can stop Google indexing JavaScript content altogether.
4. JavaScript content presents a more viable option for deploying content than we'd initially thought.
5. This test needs to be run under many different conditions (and many more times) for these findings to be really exhaustive.

- When JavaScript content does rank, we saw it more likely to drop in/out of search on an hour-by-hour basis (and then come back) than the control. This *could* just be intermittent gaps in the data – as you see with all rank tracking – but it *does* happen more frequently on the JavaScript test pages. It is too soon to jump to conclusions, but it still supports the idea that **JavaScript content is less reliable to rank with than content in the source.**

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A few words on “perfection”

One of my favourite
presentations...

<http://bit.ly/distance-from-perfect>

**SUCCESSFUL MARKETING MINIMIZES
DISTANCE FROM PERFECT**

... maybe those 50 missing Alt
Texts won't make a difference

Perfection doesn't mean
“ranking well”

Perfection doesn't mean
“client retention”

Each decision you make has to
be a commercial one

What is “perfect” anyway?

Perfection \neq Yoast SEO Score

Perfection \neq SEMRush Site Audit

We want to do what works,
But what works doesn't have to
be perfect

It

It

Just has to

It
Work

Just has to

In Conclusion





When Life Gives You Lemons

SAVE

Tag Configuration

Tag type

 **Custom HTML**
Custom HTML Tag 

HTML 

```
1 <script>
2 let lemons = life.getLemons()
3 let sugar = new Sugar()
4 let water = new CarbonatedWater()
5
6 if( lemons ) {
7   lemons.squish();
8   lemons.concat( [ sugar, water ] )
9 }
10 </script>
11
```

But

Wait!

There is another way...!

Search Engine Land

SEO

SEM

MOBILE

LOCAL

RETAIL

GOOGLE

BING

SOCIAL

MORE

EVENTS

SUBSCRIBE

f

t

g+

🔍

ALL

FITNESS

BEAUTY

Recommendations for

Thu 1/10

Scottsdale, AZ

Swelter

Fit 6-7-8

Because this is a popular location

6:15 PM

60 Minute Express Yoga

The Foundry Yoga

Because this is a popular location

7:00 AM

7:00 AM

12:00 PM

Discover more around you

YOGA

CROSSFIT

PILATES

Leading local SEO predictions:
Reserve with Google will grow,
real-time local inventory gets real

Ready to

Confirm Deployment

Change Summary

Type	Name	Status	Page Group
Modification	Test	production	1

Recent D

Deployment Name

Test

Deploy

Sites / simon-thompson.me

StrategiQ launches Spark, an SEO deployment platform

unlock your

AMAZON DATA

Discover new opportunities on Amazon and better understand your competitors.

GET STARTED

SEARCHMONITOR

What makes people click on search ads?

Automate your in-market audience bidding with this Google Ads script

Bing Ads' AI-powered Performance Insights now available globally

THE SEARCHMONITOR

PRECISION AD INTELLIGENCE

Brand Protection Software

The industries most powerful ad monitoring platform

FREE DEMO

LATEST

11 paid search tactics that drive quality inbound calls

Click-to-call and direct dialing from voice assistants is making it easier than ever for consumers to turn their digital transactions into...

Digital Marketing Depot | Jan 7, 2019 at 3:26 pm ET

ATTEND OUR CONFERENCES

🔍

SEARCH MARKETING EXPO

S M X

SEARCH MARKETING EXPO

We think we have a better alternative to the “less-than-perfect” options discussed today



<https://spark.strategiq.co/>



— Thank you.