

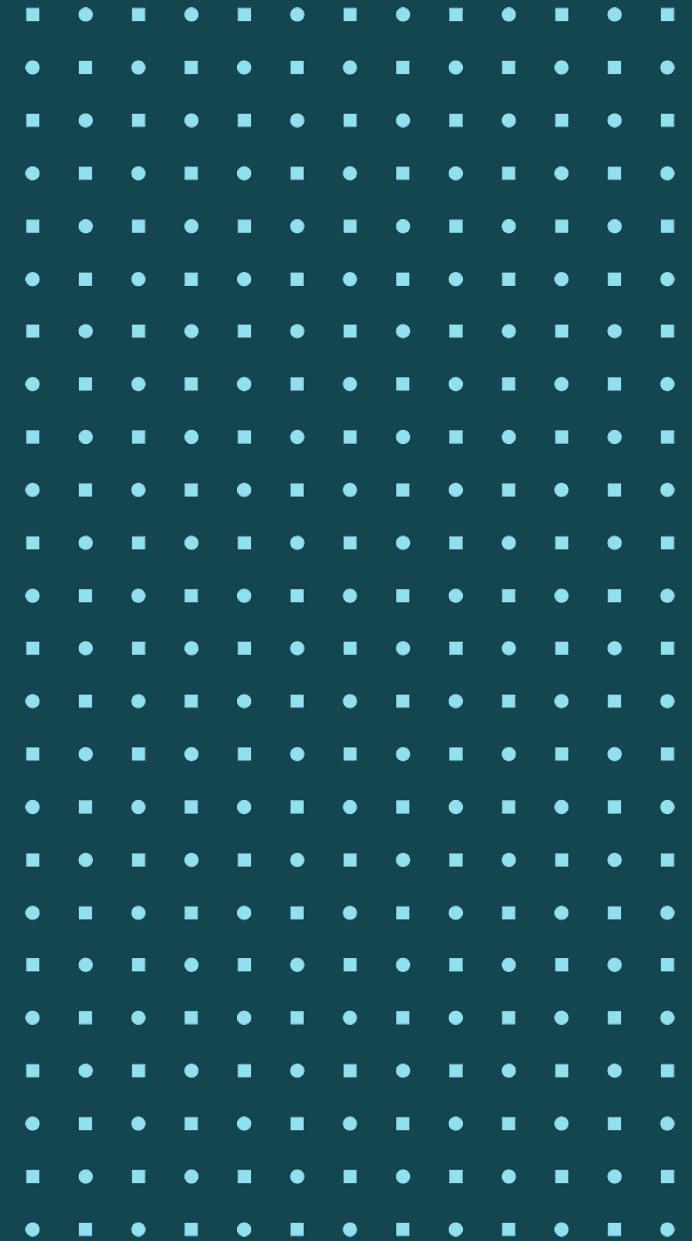
Content strategy

November 2023

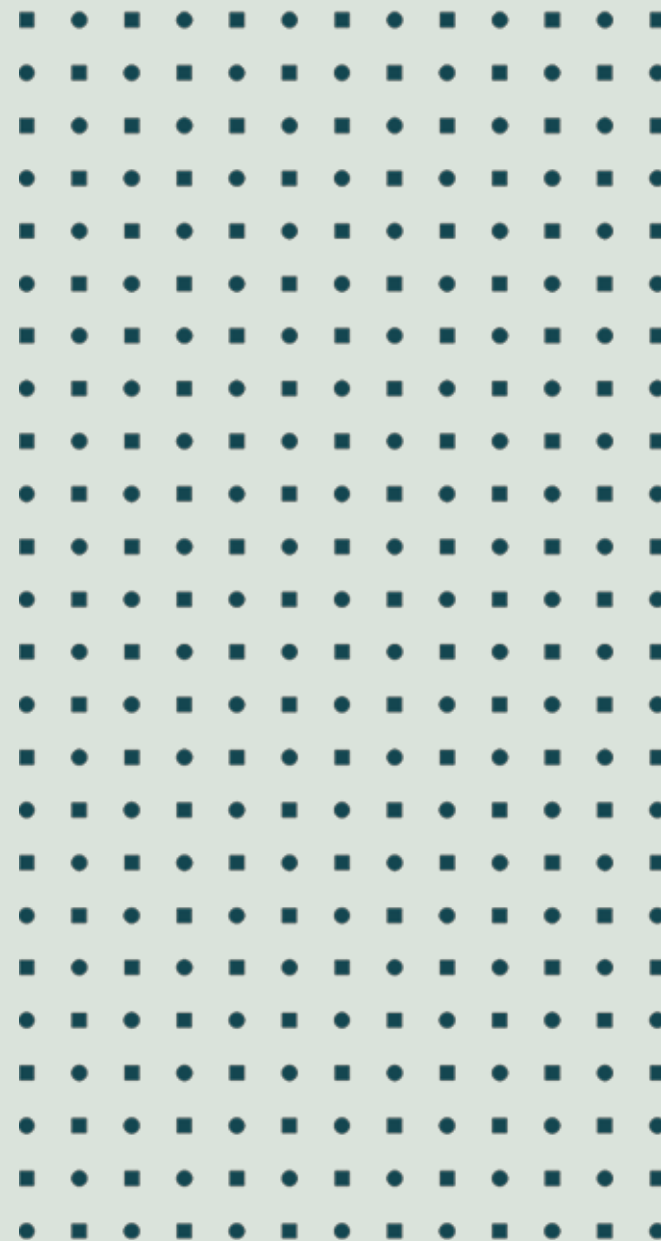
Introduction

This content strategy outlines how Social Finance will leverage various types of content to drive its impact strategies.

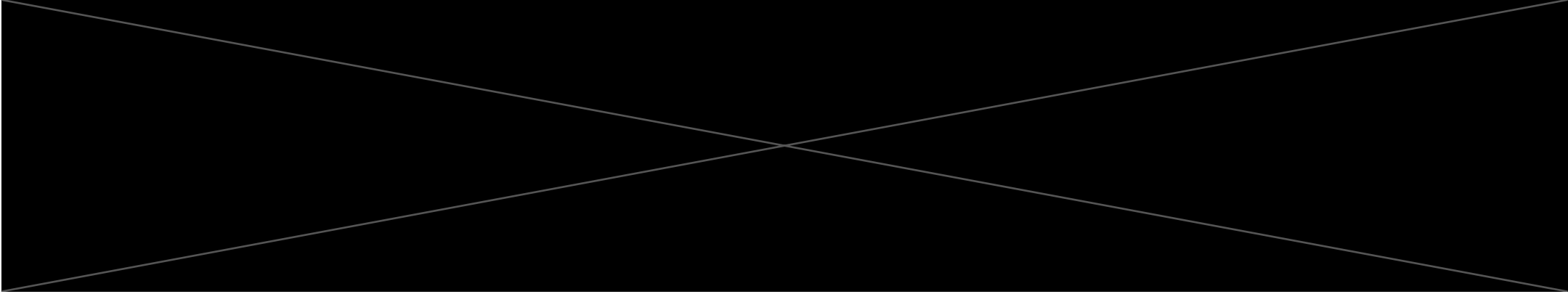
Our work delivers lasting and widespread change that improves the lives of people and communities in the UK and globally, and effective content creation and distribution is key to achieving this mission. This strategy will help us reach and engage our target audience, inspire action, and create meaningful change.



Audit of current content



2023: Website visitors, content created



2023 was the first full year under the refreshed SF brand and rebuilt website. From February we also switched to the latest version of Google Analytics (GA4) meaning comparisons against previous data were less reliable. So it makes sense to consider benchmark our activities from this year onward.

The overall picture was mixed:

What are users looking at?

The table on the right contains a list of the top 25 most-viewed pages on the site for the period 1 Jan – 1 Dec 2023. The third column contains the average engagement time for each page.

This is the first full year of the rebuilt site and contains some significant new pages when compared to previous years. In particular, some expert subject matter content – SIBs, impact at scale, our offer – make the cut, and certain project pages, such as Changing Futures and end of life care.

But the mix is still geared mainly toward career-related content, and it is a concern that the most-viewed project page – the Peterborough SIB – is SF’s original, now 15-year old proof of concept.

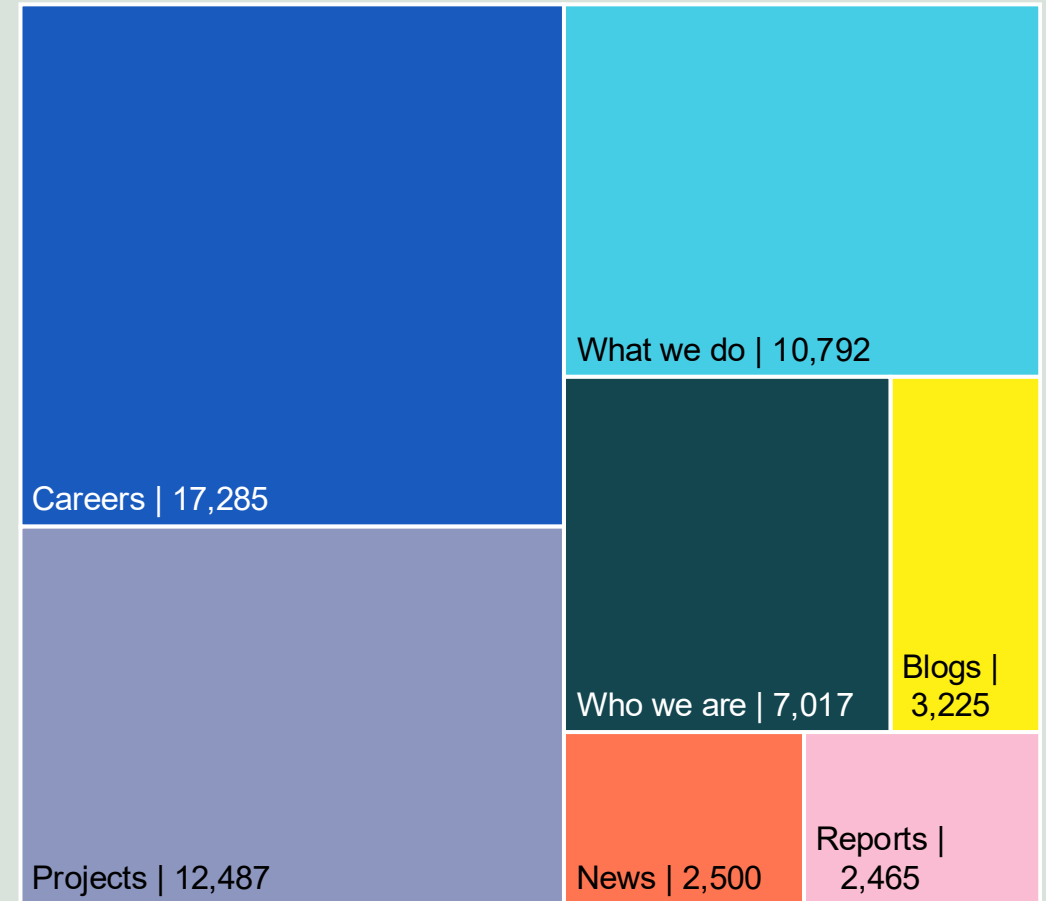
People	
Homepage	
Vacancies	
Our projects	
The Analyst Programme	
Our offer	
Search	
What we do	
Impact bonds	
Teams	
What does it take to make impact at scale?	
Who we are	
Working at Social Finance	
Vacancy: The Analyst Programme	
Careers	
Macmillan End of Life Care Fund: Invitation to apply	
Contact	
Publications	
Reducing reoffending in Peterborough	
Blogs and videos	
Changing Futures: Transforming services for...	
Improving end of life care through...	
Health + Social Care team	
Our partners	
Vacancy: Manager	

Content mix

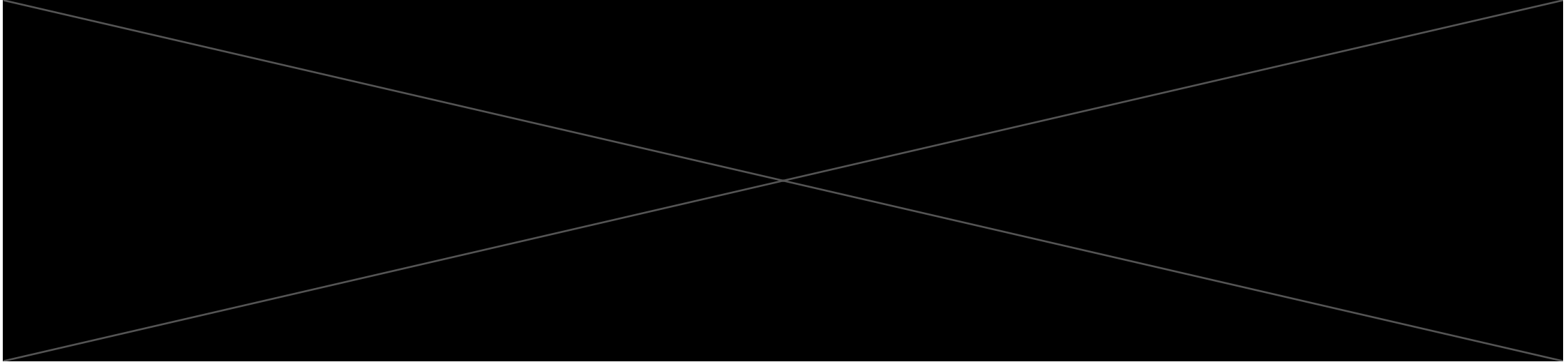
Drilling down further we can broadly categorise the types of content we produce into six types, with the chart on the right comparing the pageviews from the period Dec 22-Oct 23.

Some things to note:

- The 'News' traffic was made up almost exclusively of the Macmillan EOI post (1,894 views)
- While Publications are low, it represents a small number of content pieces of that type (five)
- The median pageviews for a blog is 189



Newsletter stats



This chart displays newsletter audience number, opens, and clicks since January 2021.

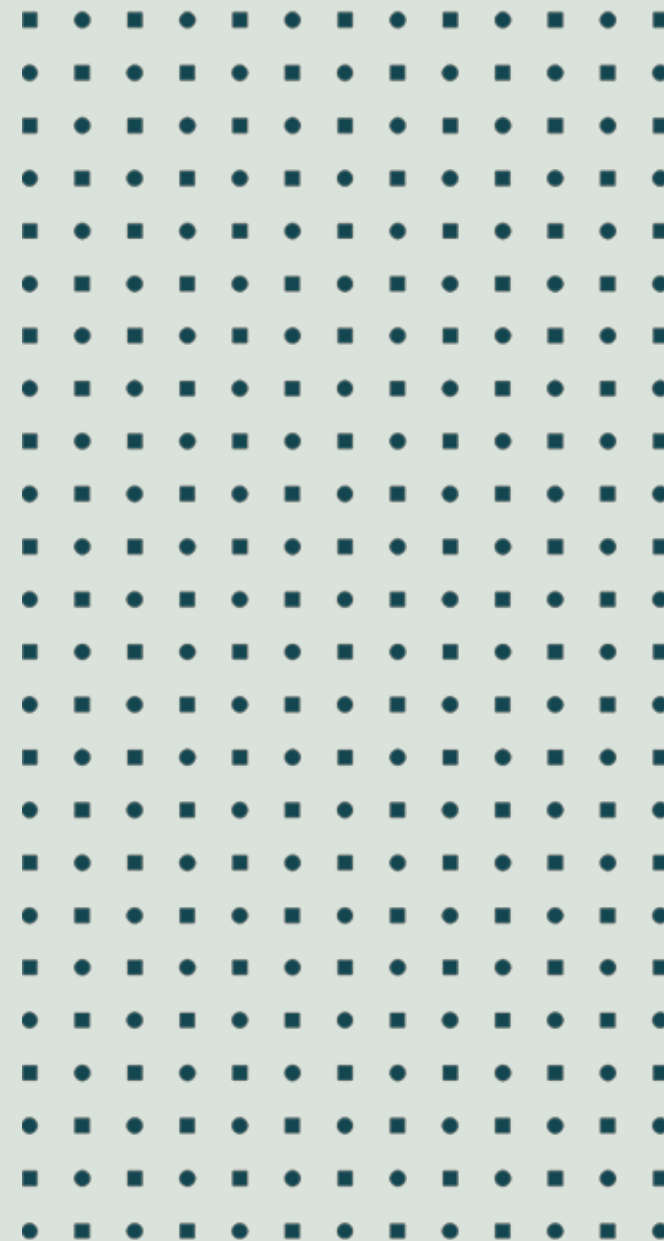
While the number of subscribers grows at a slow, if steady, pace, the clicks & opens vary. Of note, the most popular for opens and clicks tend to be the job- (or TAP-) focused emails.

The current strategy has been to wait until enough content is ready before sending the newsletter out, which has resulted in three or four month gaps between. But there is a problem: the longer newsletters have a very short tail, with content in the lower 2/3 of each getting very few clicks, if any.

Website purpose

- Explain who Social Finance are and what we do
- Showcase our skills, expertise, and project work
- Engage and inspire through stories aligned around impact strategies
- Support key user journeys
- Promote our company culture to potential employees

Competitor analysis



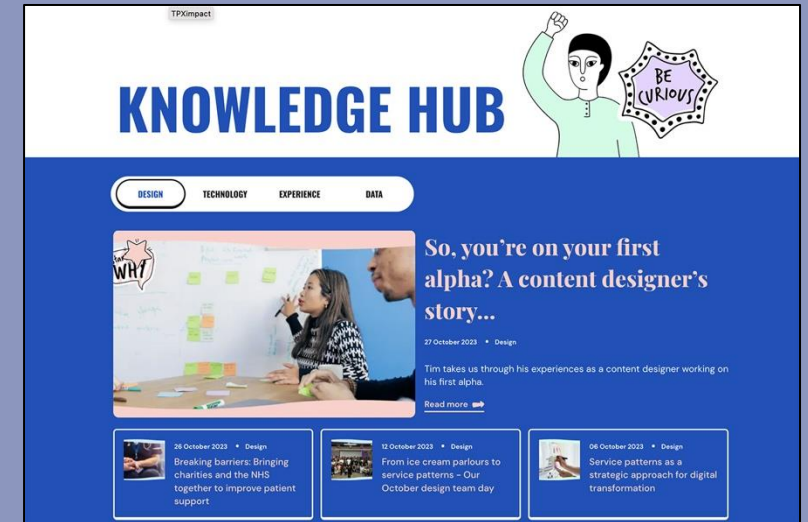
Competitor analysis: TPX Impact

Tagline: “We’re a digital transformation company supporting organisations to build a better future for people, places and the planet.”

Top ranking terms: ‘oxford zero emission zone’, ‘symca’, ‘power bi measures’

Types of content: Insights, blogs, project updates

Takeaway: Knowledge Hub – blogs, project updates, etc. categorized across their four services: Design, Technology, Experience, and Data. There are also categories for things like Topic and Sector.



Competitor analysis: Nesta

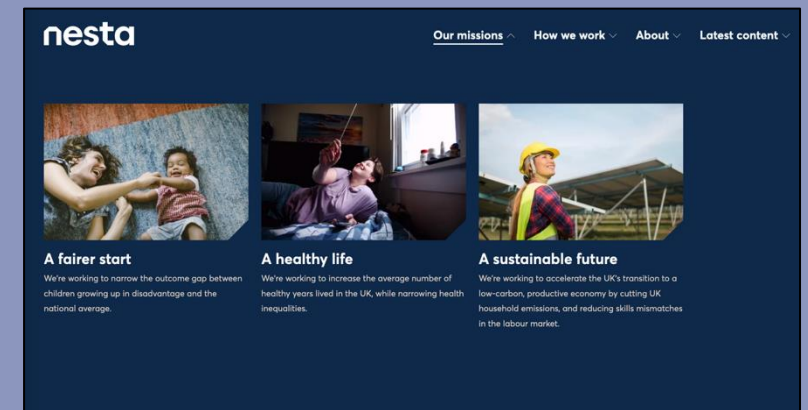
Tagline: “We are Nesta. The UK's innovation agency for social good.”

Top ranking terms: ‘nesta energy saving’, ‘nesta boiler challenge’, ‘money saving boiler challenge’

Types of content: Blog (~4/mo), reports (~3/mo), events, project updates (~3/mo), podcast (last ep May '22), video (~4/mo)

Takeaways: Content is generally geared around their ‘missions’ – A fairer start, A healthy life, A sustainable future. Could a similar approach be employed with SF’s website and the impact strategies? The current number (over 30) may present a challenge.

In lieu of ‘Contact us’, their ‘How we innovate’ section offers more constructive ways Nesta can help potential partners



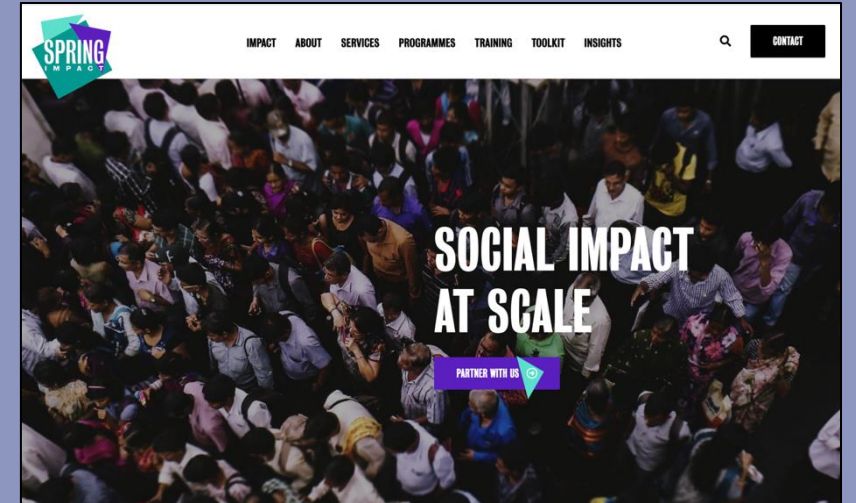
Competitor analysis: Spring Impact

Tagline: “We equip ambitious teams with the skills, tools and mindsets needed on their journey to achieve social impact at scale.”

Top ranking terms: ‘child care programs’

Types of content: Case studies, blogs, news, events, media, reports, videos

Takeaways:

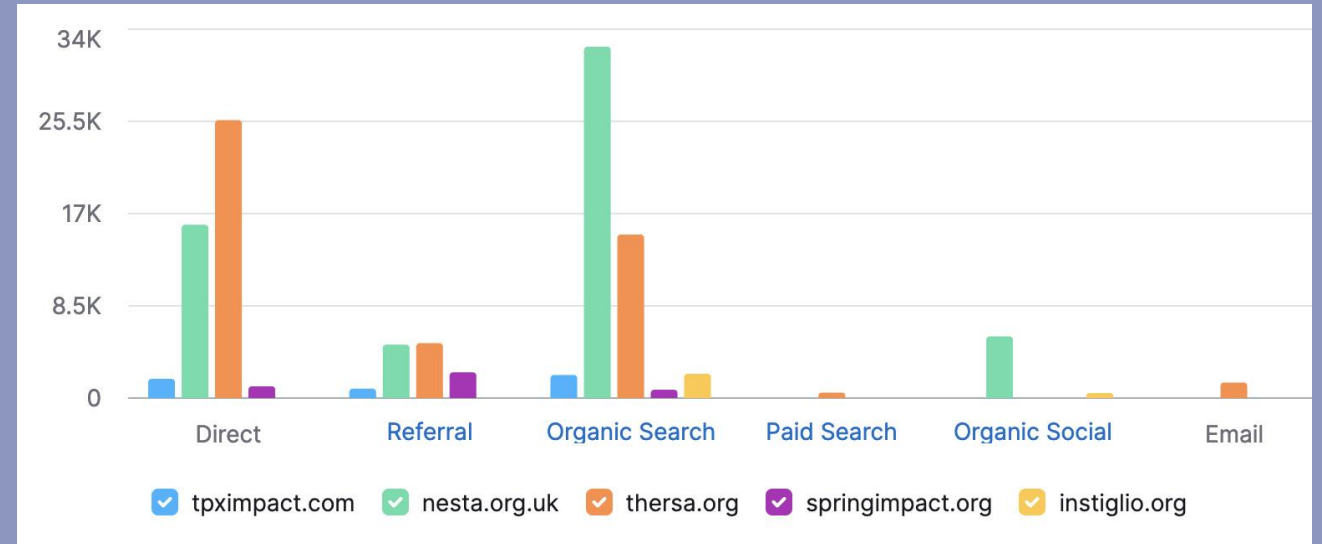


Competitor analysis: Traffic sources

Data from September 2023 showing traffic sources for SF vs key competitors (paid social and display ads omitted as none of the orgs considered make use of these).

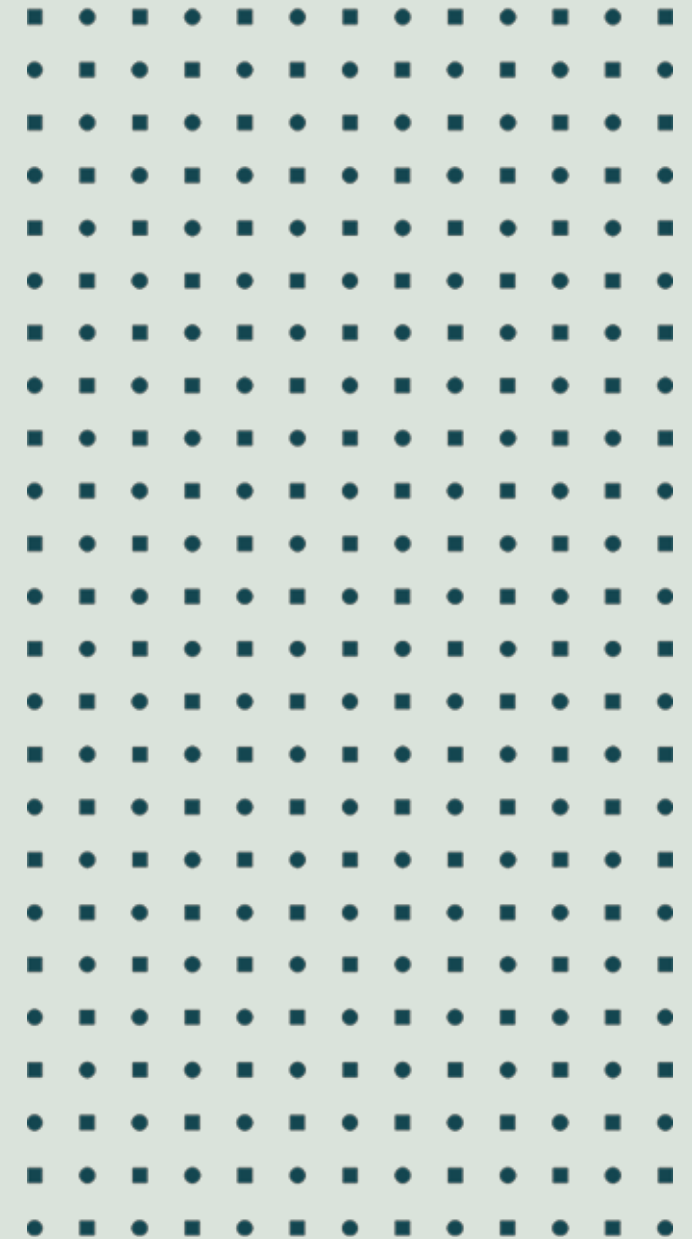
Across the board our competitors get most traffic either from direct (i.e. people visiting the site directly by entering the URL) or through organic search. Nesta have a significant presence on search and some social, mainly relating to their work on heat pumps ('Nesta boiler challenge').

SF's traffic sources are also largely driven by Direct and Organic Search, with Email, then Referral, with Social in a distant fifth. The conclusion is that maximising reach through Organic Search (i.e. Google) is the most effective route to building audience

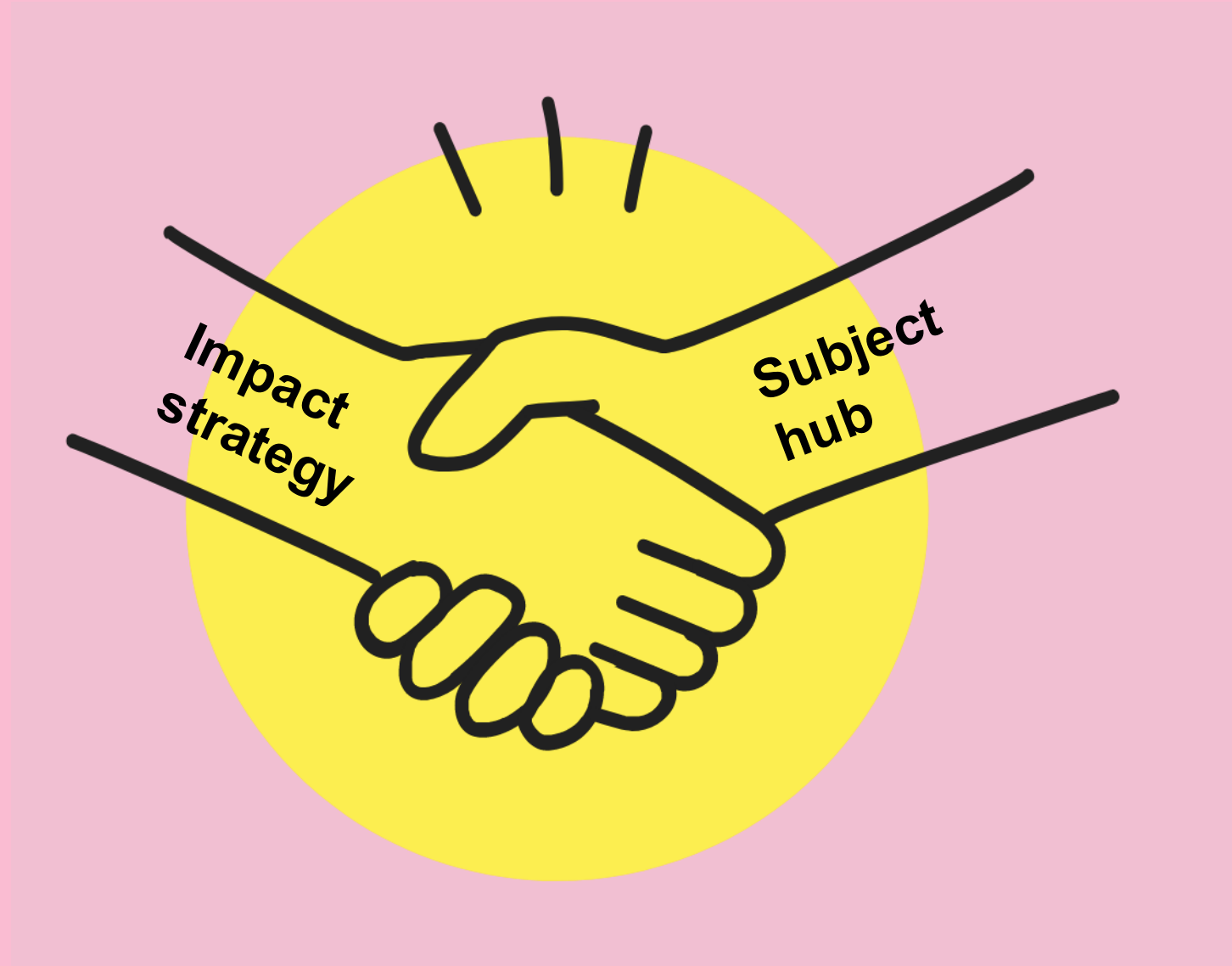


Source: SEMRush

Content strategy in a nutshell



We will create a matrix of content geared around subject hubs – aligned in each case to an impact strategy – and produce content that demonstrates, builds on and amplifies our expertise in that subject.



SF impact strategies, October 2023

International

1. Outcomes based approaches
2. People & Planet
3. LatAm ObA Ecosystem Development
4. Strategic Grants
5. Market Based Solutions

Impact Incubator

1. Online Harms
2. Unleashing Potential of Young Carers
3. Drive
4. Maximising Access to Education

Data and Digi

1. Managing the Market for Care Placements
2. Social Work Tech
3. Health Inequalities
4. CYP Mental Health
5. Early Help

Health and Social Care

1. End of Life Care
2. Health and Social Care Transformation

Government and Enterprise

1. Housing
2. Community capital
3. Equal opportunities in skills and work

Cross-team

1. Learning Partnership (joint strategy with Gov Ent)
2. Equity for women (new, emerging and x-SF)

IPS Grow

1. IPS Grow Strategy 2023-25

Current hub examples

- Social impact bonds
- Impact at scale
- Systems change
- Outcomes-based approaches

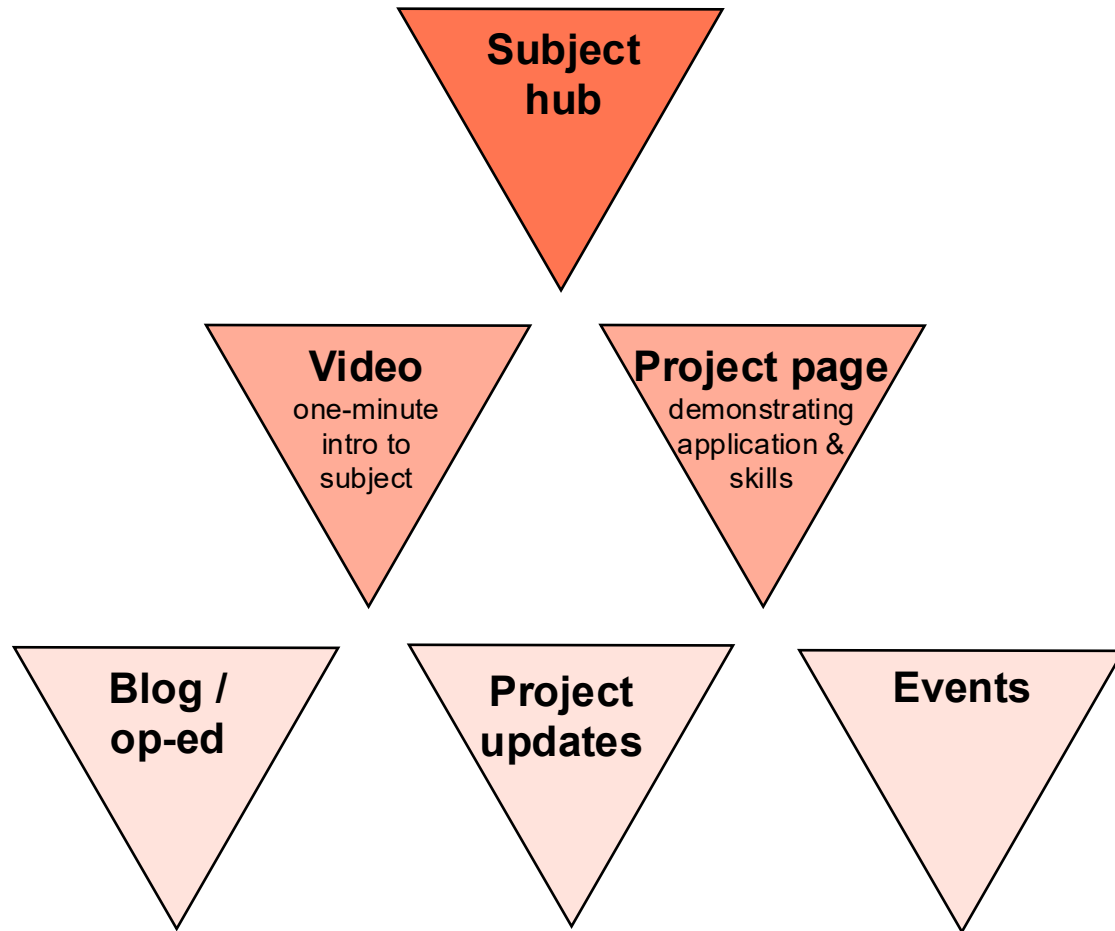
Below are currently in planning

- Human-centered design
- Service design

Potential hub examples

- Shared ownership
- Children in care
- Young people's mental health
- Opportunities in skills and work
- Earlier intervention to prevent school exclusion
- End of life care
- Effective climate action

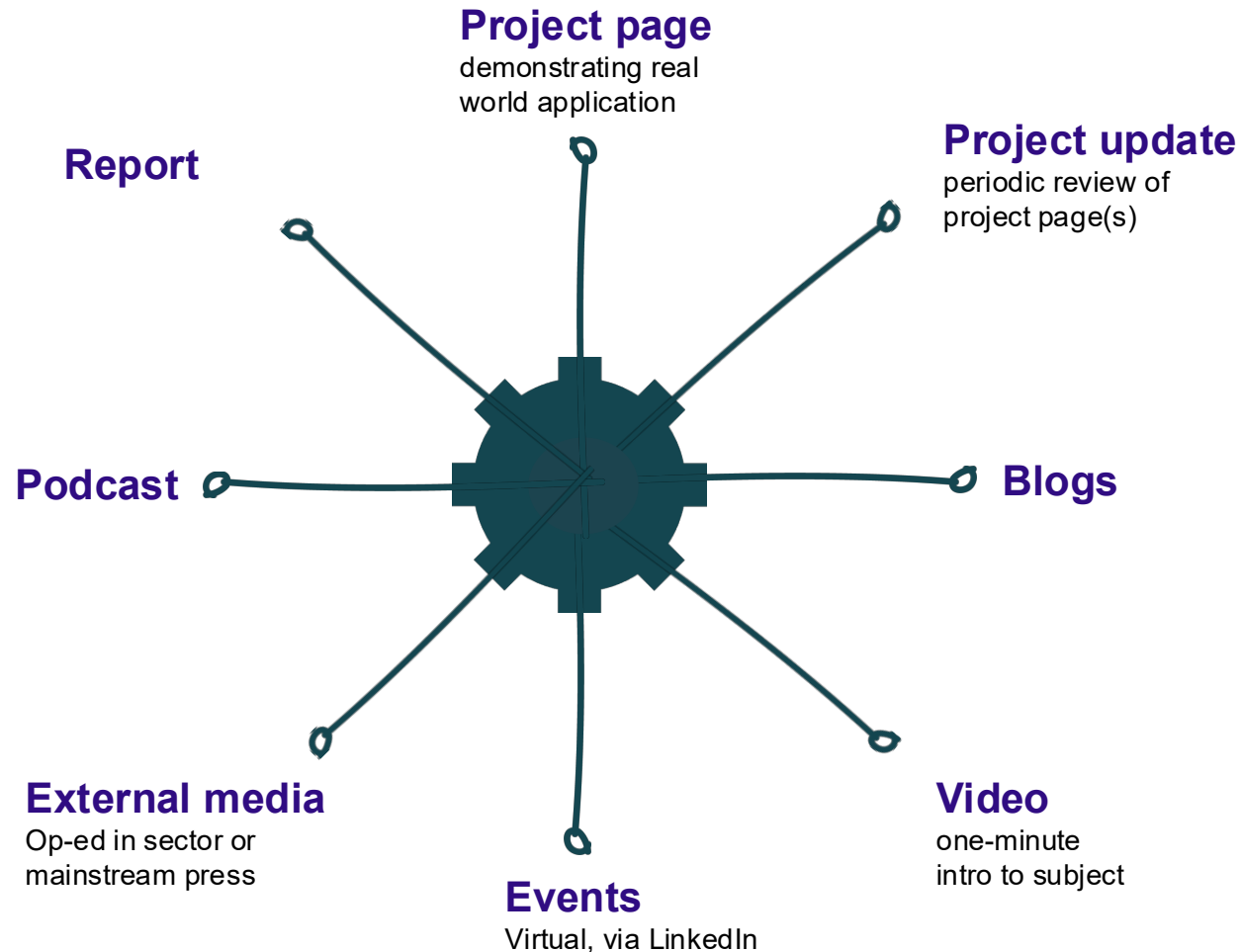
Content supports hubs aligned to impact strategies



Each piece of standalone content – be it a blog, video, external op-ed, publication – should in the long term be in support of both a project page (which demonstrates the work in action) and, ultimately, a subject hub which anchors our topical authority on key work areas.

The ambition is Social Finance to be a topical authority and for these hubs to be among the top three links for anyone searching on Google for relevant keywords.

Hub / spoke model aligned to impact strategies



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Real world example: Systems change

An example of this approach is on the topic of system change.

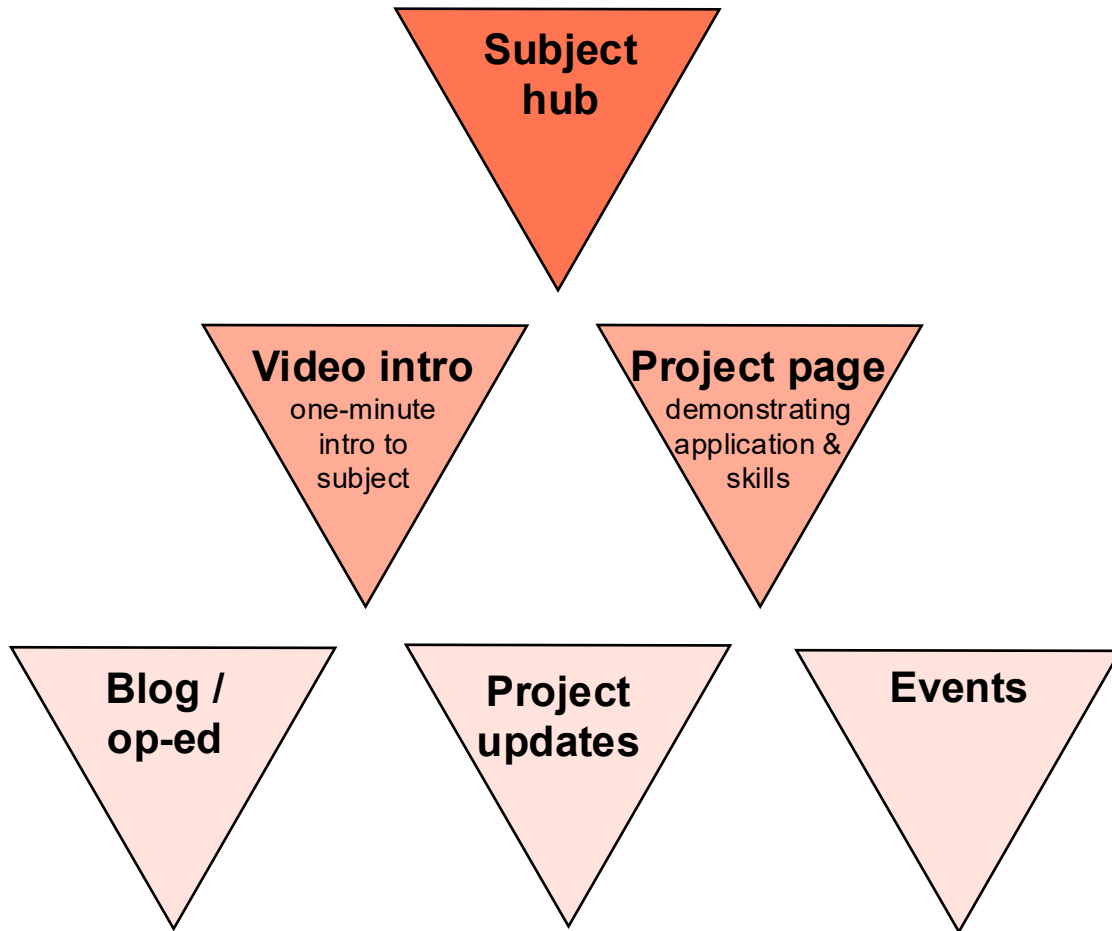
In October 2023 we launched the System change roadmap page, which acts as the **subject hub**. While we have not yet created a **video** or a specific **project page**, we have supplemented the hub with a series of blogposts.

The result has been a steady increase in our SEO performance against the relevant queries:

Keyword	Pos. on Nov 03	Diff.	Volume
system change	12	↑ 15	320
systems change	23	↑ 5	320

Source: SEMRush

Over six months



- Identify 10 impact strategies with most commercial / general appeal
- Produce video aligned to matrix on right

Potential reach for new hubs

Keyword	Queries*	Difficulty**
Systems change	210	33%
Outcome based approach	110	27%
Human-centered design	170	66%
Service design	1,900	66%

* Queries per month registered on Google UK

** Lower is better as it reflects a more achievable goal

Types of content currently produced

Publication

Reports produced either externally or in house, designed for wide dissemination.

'Expert' page

Thought leadership in particular skill or area of work, e.g. 'impact bonds', 'system change'. Driven by SEO potential and org expertise

Project page

Lengthy explainers about specific projects SF has worked on

Blog

Generally take the form of updates / detailed explanation of work on a project

Op-ed

Opinion piece on a subject area, generally pitched to mainstream / sector media

Staff stories

Designed to appeal to potential job applicants, and showcase breadth of staff and what it's like working here.

Potential types of future content

Whitepapers

Short reports deep diving into critical subjects, offering actionable insights.

Example: [is an outcomes-based partnership right for me?](#)

Impact report

Annual / biannual report updating on the metrics by which our work is governed

Video explainers

Short videos that break down complex topics for easy understanding.

Events

Impact strategies in action: SF experts presenting to external audience. Small-scale (eg LinkedIn Live)

So, what does content schedule look like?

Monthly

2-4 x blog posts

2 x project updates

14-18 x LinkedIn entries

1 x whitepaper

1 x email newsletter

Less frequently

Report: six per year

Project page: four per year

What should the content look like?

As part of its system for ranking websites, Google uses human raters to evaluate if search results is providing helpful, useful content that its audience is interested in. It does that by employing the acronym E.E.AT, which stands for:

Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness

We should consider each one when creating web content.

Experience

Demonstrate first-hand experience with and understanding of the topic; use 'I', 'we', etc.

Expertise

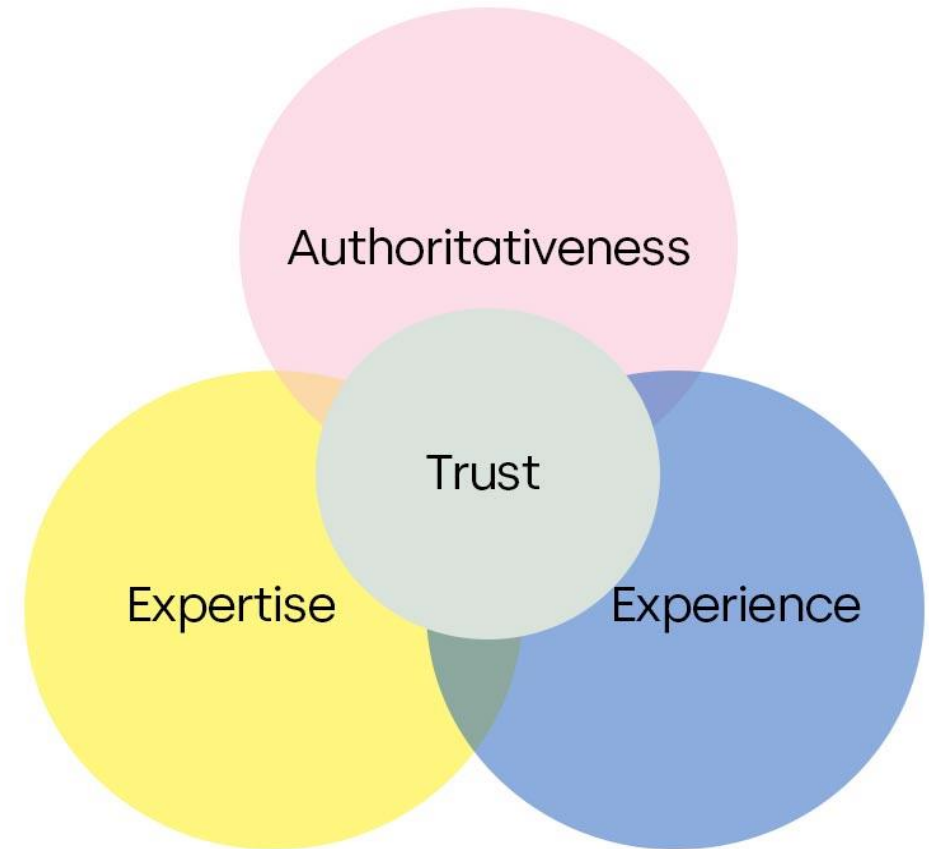
Who is the person writing this, where are they from, and why should we trust them? Include relevant credentials.

Authoritativeness

Keep the content focused on the core competencies and work areas that Social Finance operate in.

Trustworthiness

Include links and / or quotes from reputable sources, partners, etc.



Content distribution

Social media

Mainly LinkedIn. Between three-four pieces per week in a variety of formats (links, carousel posts, polls)

Frequency: 3 / 4 pieces / week

SEO and site optimisation

Ensure content is search-engine friendly and up-to-date on the organisation's website.

Email marketing

Send out newsletters, updates, and campaigns to engage with our existing audience.

Frequency: at least one / month

Content production

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Potential barriers

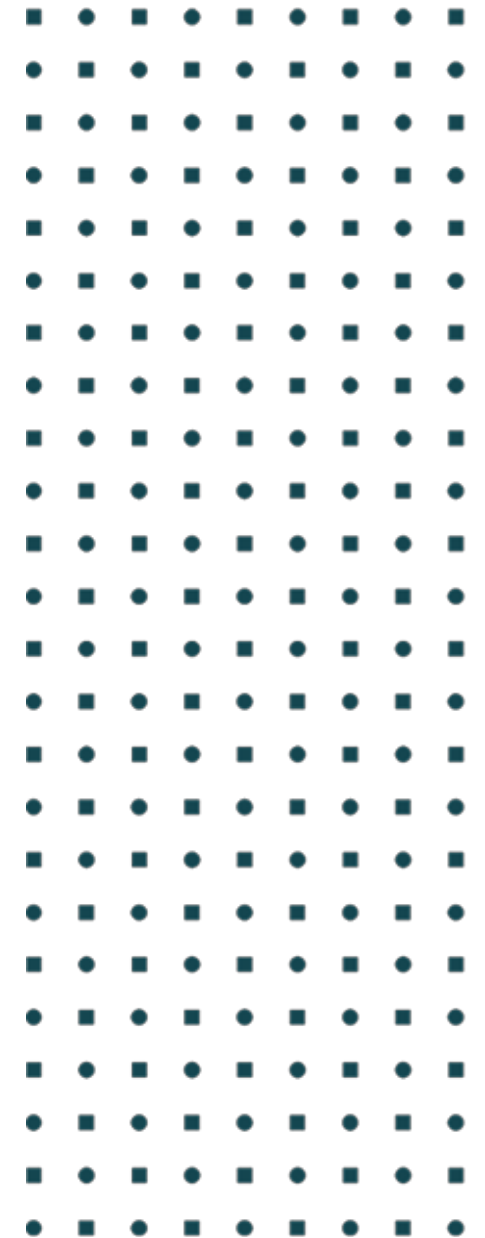
Resources

The proposals within this strategy require a significant increase in the resource commitment from individual teams. At present team members struggle to find time to commit to external content creation, and under current resourcing levels the same problems currently experienced are likely to return.

SEO challenges

There is a trade-off between finding the right kind of keywords that actually receive a substantial number of queries, and pitching our content so that is serving what users need, and we need to be mindful of not potentially misleading them.

For example, we wouldn't want to aim for something like 'end of life care' as a keyword. Most users searching that keyword will be looking for information on how to access care for family members; having our content surface at the top of results would be counterproductive and would damage the site's overall domain authority.



Social media overview

Twitter / X is a rapidly dwindling medium, with traffic and engagement on a rapidly downward curve and toxicity, misinformation, and hate speech now the norm. While BlueSky and Mastodon have emerged as potential replacements, neither has significant traction yet, nor do either have significant presence from corporate accounts at this time.

LinkedIn has always had more promise for Social Finance’s work. We are competitive on the platform but as the charts show, rank slightly below peers.

Two things the other orgs listed do well are events programme – including ones hosted on LinkedIn’s platform – and have more photography-led posts about new starters, offsites, etc. We’ve started with the latter to some success, and should continue with it.

Follower metrics			Ranked by new followers	
Page		Total followers	New followers	
1	 Nesta	55,628	1,185	
2	 The Global Steering Group for Impact Investment (...)	20,097	1,030	
3	 LocalGlobe	16,148	694	
4	 Impact Investing Institute	28,574	616	
5	 Big Society Capital	18,030	464	
6	 Bridges Fund Management Ltd.	14,876	341	
7	 TPXImpact	12,407	336	
8	 Social Finance	14,776	317	
9	 Social Finance	9,712	257	
10	 The SFI Group	2,227	10	

Organic content metrics			Ranked by total engagements	
Page		Total engagements	Total posts	
1	 Nesta	1,041	51	
2	 Big Society Capital	984	40	
3	 The Global Steering Group for Impact Investment (...)	731	15	
4	 Impact Investing Institute	539	17	
5	 Bridges Fund Management Ltd.	503	11	
6	 Social Finance	432	15	
7	 TPXImpact	432	33	
8	 Social Finance	411	18	
9	 LocalGlobe	298	6	
10	 The SFI Group	21	5	

Social media recommendations

LinkedIn

Aim for between two and four posts per week (this seems to be the LinkedIn sweet spot), a mixture of:

- Links to new content (projects, reports, blogs, videos etc.)
- Welcome to new starters / updates on staff reaching milestones / getting promoted
- Comments / sharing of partner and client content
- Events (this will require significant input from the wider organisation)

Twitter / X

Continue in current vein but remain aware of continuing deterioration and look out for potential reputational damage from remaining on the platform if things continue to worsen.

Monitor use of Bluesky, etc. to see if any emerges as a significant replacement

What does success look like?

- Increased page statistics, e.g. dwell time
- More inquiries through contact form and email

