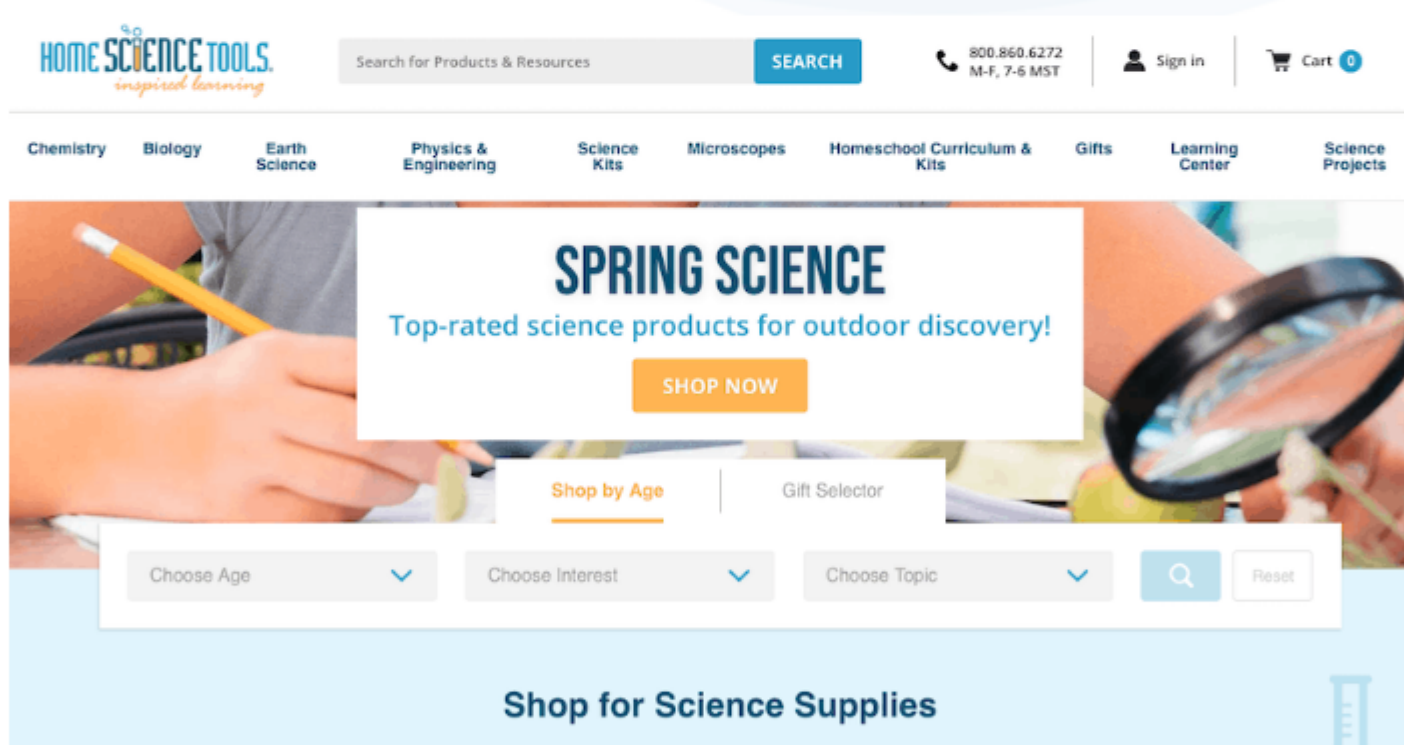


PRUNING DEAD WEIGHT: A REAL CLIENT EXAMPLE

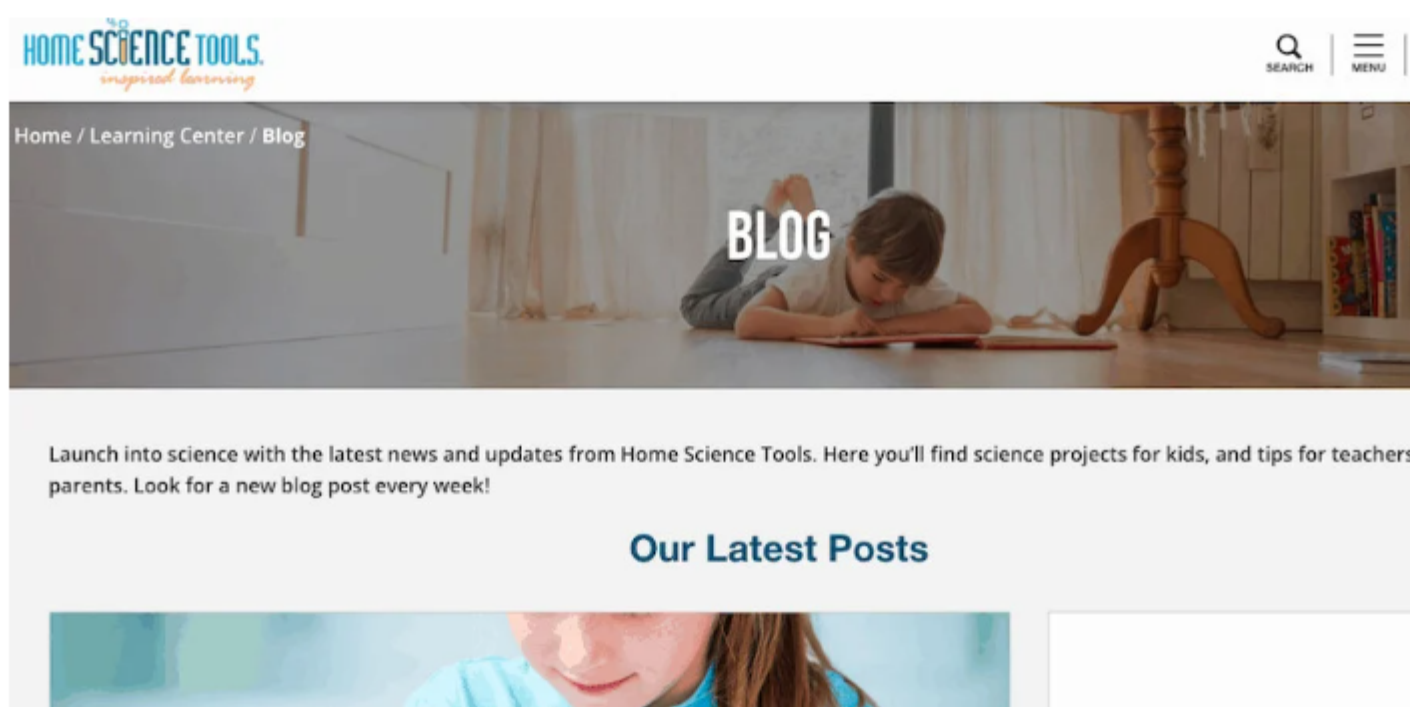
We know it sometimes takes a small SEO win of pruning a limited amount of content and seeing the results to get the confidence to do more. For that reason, we'll occasionally start with a strategic content audit (sometimes called a blog content audit) to "prove" the results from pruning non-catalog content first.

After seeing the positive and measurable results, most clients go on to perform a full audit of their catalog content, as well.

This was the approach we took for [HomeScienceTools.com](https://www.HomeScienceTools.com), an online store that provides educational scientific products.



At the time, HST's blog — called "Learning Center" — was hosted on its own subdomain. (That choice comes with its own SEO impacts, but [that's a topic for another case study](#).)



After performing a full content audit of this section of HST's site, we handed off our recommendations of pages to prune in early August 2018.

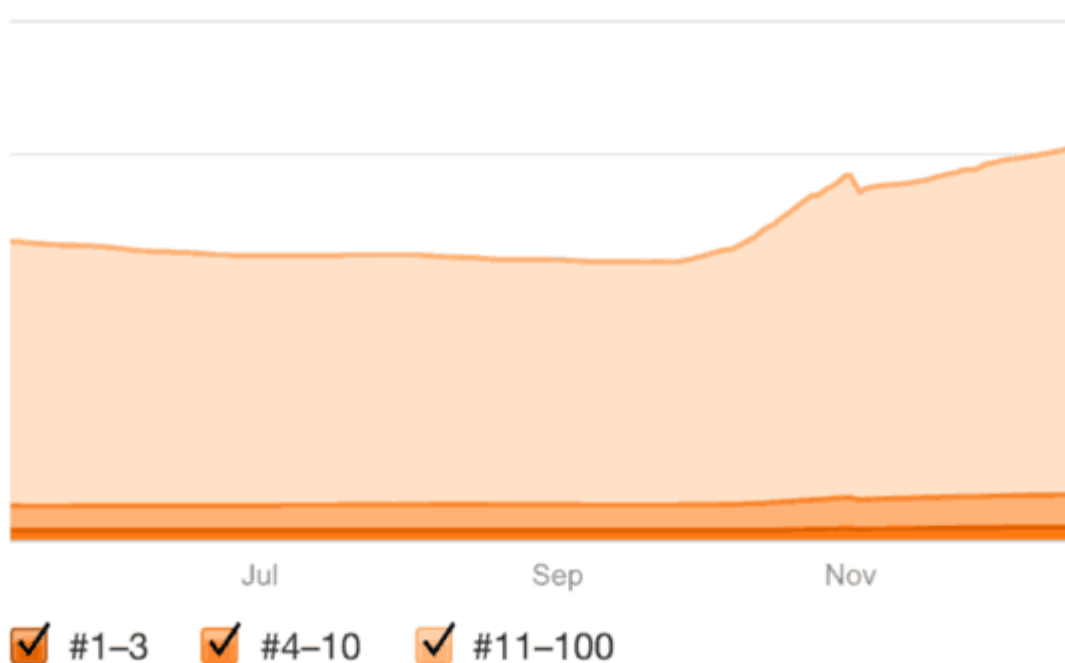
Their team pruned roughly 200 pages (about 10% of the total blog pages), starting with the worst quality offenders. These were pages with little or no organic traffic, total pageviews, conversions, and backlinks — our basic criteria for what constitutes an "underperforming" page.

The Results

After the content pruning in August, we kept a close eye on a few key metrics for HST.

Initially, the site's organic keyword footprint dropped slightly — but then went on to increase quite a bit in the 90 days after pruning (a typical pattern for these kinds of efforts). From there, the keyword footprint continued to steadily grow over time.

Organic keywords ⁱ



Organic clicks and impressions to the store's website reflected the upward trend in rankings, too, as shown below.



In short, after pruning blog content from HST's subdomain, the site saw some impressive results:

- 104% increase in organic sessions
- 102% increase in transactions
- 64% increase in strategic content revenue

While a full-on audit of the site's vast amount of catalog content could yield similar but larger improvements, even our limited blog pruning scope alone allowed the best content on the site to stand out in terms of overall quality — and to get recognized by Google's algorithm with better rankings.

What HomeScienceTools.com Had to Say

Of course, results are great — but satisfied customers are our top priority.

So, we followed up with [Brandy Hansen](#), then-marketing director at HST, to see how our content pruning (and its results) fit in with her team's ongoing improvements to the website.

Noting that they were continuing to see an upward trend in performance, Hansen also said:



"At Home Science Tools, we continually focus on improvement — what needs to be done to take our service, business, and offerings to the next level. This audit was timely, necessary, and strategic; it helped us not only appropriately remove underperforming assets but synergistically brought together what we needed in order to escalate our organic growth."

In other words, our content pruning initiative was a crucial part of a larger overall growth framework for improving website performance, and it provided tangible and significant results to meet the brand's needs.