



Northern State University SEO Audit

<https://northern.edu/>

May 24, 2022

Audit Data Information



We are thrilled to present a comprehensive SEO audit report for Northern State University.

Our goal with your audit was to provide thorough insights in order to help answer 6 key questions, in sections that are color-coded for easy reference:

- 1 - What does your site traffic tell you?
- 2 - What are your competitors doing & how do you rank against them?
- 3 - How are people searching for you?
- 4 - How are your spotlight pages ranking?
- 5 - What are your on-page technical challenges?
- 6 - Are you ready for Google's zero-click environment?

We analyzed the domain below:

<https://northern.edu/>

Date Range: May 1, 2021 – April 30, 2022

We included analysis of the competitors you identified:

- South Dakota State University
- University of South Dakota
- Black Hills State University
- Dakota State University
- Lake Area Technical College

We analyzed the following pages:

- Home Page
- Admissions & Aid
- Tuition and Costs
- Degree Programs
- Elementary Education (selected because it gets the most traffic of pages in /programs/undergraduate/)

Section 1: What Does Your Site Traffic Tell You?

Traffic Channel

Engagement Metrics

Geographic Highlights

Top Performing Pages by Traffic Source

Industry Benchmarks

Key Takeaways

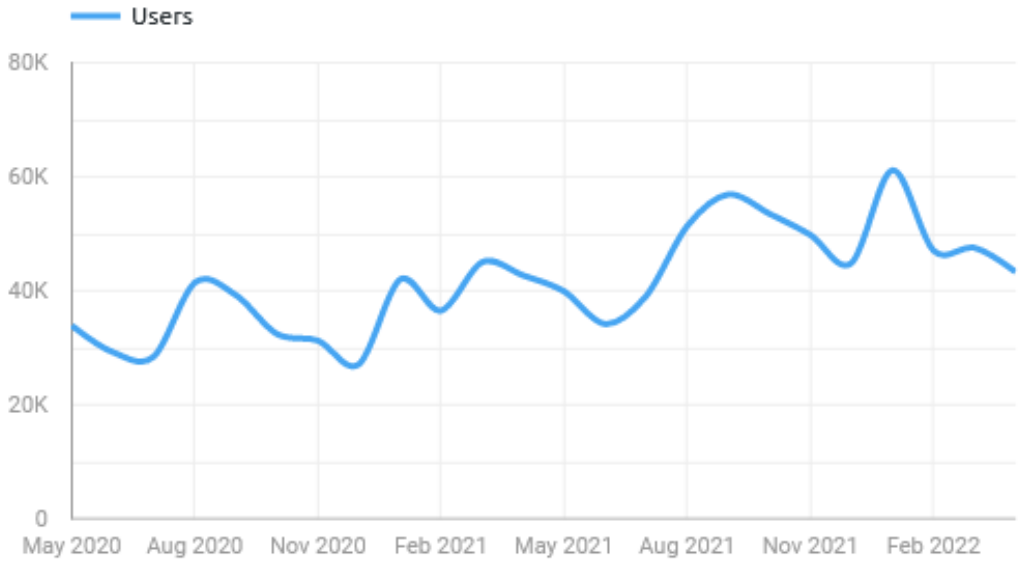
All-channels Traffic Overview

Total Users Increased

Total channel Users

503.7K

↑ 36.8%



Sessions

1.1M

↑ 14.4%

Bounce Rate

2.8%

↑ 44.0%

Pages / Session

4.0

↓ -7.3%

Returning Users

104.2K

↑ 11.7%

% New Sessions

44.6%

↑ 20.0%

Avg. Session Dur.

02:13

↓ -14.6%

1. Total number of users and sessions increased year over year.
2. Bounce rate increased 44% year over year.
3. Pages/sessions and Avg. session duration are strong even though they are down from the previous year.
4. User trend shows the peak of traffic in January 2022.



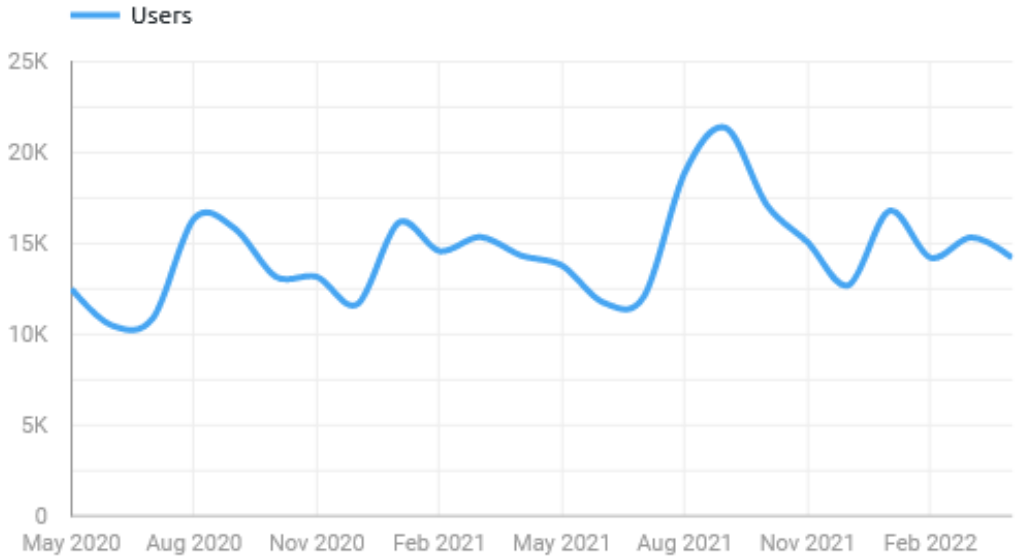
Organic Traffic Overview

Organic Users Increased 12.8% Year-Over-Year

Total organic Users

152.1K

↑ 12.8%



Sessions

365.8K

↑ 2.9%

Bounce Rate

1.1%

↓ 31.1%

Pages / Session

4.6

↑ 0.1%

Returning Users

47.8K

↑ 15.6%

% New Sessions

37.3%

↑ 9.6%

Avg. Session Dur.

02:34

↓ -7.5%

- 1. Strong organic traffic. Organic sessions and users both increased year over year.
- 2. Bounce rates are extremely low across all channels.
- 3. 37% of all organic sessions were new sessions.



An Expanded Look at Each Channel and Y-O-Y Channel Trends

	Channel	Sessions ▾	% Δ	% New Sessions	% Δ	Bounce Rate	% Δ	Avg. Session Duration	% Δ	Pages / Session	% Δ
1.	Organic Search	364.7K	2.6% ↑	37.43%	9.9% ↑	1.05%	31.2% ↑	02:34	-7.8% ↓	4.56	-0.1% ↓
2.	Direct	355.4K	60.3% ↑	68.83%	30.5% ↑	2.98%	40.2% ↑	01:09	-40.8% ↓	2.95	-18.2% ↓
3.	Referral	243.5K	-2.7% ↓	5.99%	7.6% ↑	4.83%	76.0% ↑	03:59	-0.6% ↓	5.24	-2.8% ↓
4.	Paid Search	49.1K	514.4...	42.32%	-13.6% ↓	0.93%	-29.7% ↓	01:42	-5.7% ↓	3.56	-7.1% ↓
5.	Social	45.6K	-24.9% ↓	82.87%	7.1% ↑	2.25%	10.1% ↑	46	16.1% ↑	2.59	0.2% ↑
6.	Display	24.8K	-40.9% ↓	78.92%	-5.4% ↓	1.76%	-14.8% ↓	23	15.7% ↑	2.24	-1.0% ↓
7.	Email	22.5K	-6.6% ↓	67.39%	5.5% ↑	14.74%	49.3% ↑	01:14	-12.4% ↓	2.89	-17.7% ↓
8.	(Other)	9.5K	-24.6% ↓	84.13%	19.8% ↑	1.58%	30.9% ↑	16	-41.1% ↓	2.25	-4.7% ↓

Organic bounce rate
better than industry
benchmark

EDUCATION INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS

Channel	Bounce Rate	Avg. Ses Dur	Pages/Ses
Organic	53%	03:34	2.55
Direct	47%	03:03	2.78
Referral	55%	01:31	2.31
Social	42%	04:22	3.20
Email	70%	01:01	1.68
Paid Search	50%	02:49	1.92
Display	74%	00:29	1.95
Other	67%	00:32	1.35

1. Organic traffic is the number one source of traffic to your site.
2. Organic and direct traffic are two of the most engaged audiences on the site with strong session durations and pages per session.



What Is the Origin Source of Your Traffic?

Source / Medium	Sessions ▾	% Δ	New Users	% Δ	Bounce Rate	% Δ	Avg. Session Duration	% Δ
(direct) / (none)	355,392	60.3% ↑	244,604	109.1% ↑	2.98%	40.2% ↑	00:01:09	-40.8% ↓
google / organic	329,485	1.8% ↑	123,796	12.3% ↑	1%	38.0% ↑	00:02:34	-9.0% ↓
northern.edu / referral	142,570	-5.9% ↓	520	11.8% ↑	6.74%	106.0% ↑	00:04:18	1.2% ↑
google / cpc	73,788	48.1% ↑	40,315	3.9% ↑	1.21%	-38.0% ↓	00:01:15	118.9% ↑
m.facebook.com / referral	25,920	-43.1% ↓	23,827	-38.2% ↓	1.84%	-24.6% ↓	00:00:19	20.4% ↑
bing / organic	25,453	11.7% ↑	8,141	16.5% ↑	0.89%	-2.3% ↓	00:02:40	6.8% ↑
slate / email	22,090	2.7% ↑	14,981	-1.0% ↓	14.64%	44.0% ↑	00:01:14	-5.5% ↓
catalog.northern.edu / referral	19,677	-5.4% ↓	15	-71.7% ↓	1.11%	77.2% ↑	00:05:29	-2.5% ↓
nsu-nac.northern.edu / referral	17,317	4.6% ↑	1,621	29.5% ↑	0.94%	-2.6% ↓	00:02:11	-25.4% ↓
d2l.sdbor.edu / referral	16,246	11.7% ↑	542	35.8% ↑	0.4%	38.5% ↑	00:02:54	-15.5% ↓
apply.northern.edu / referral	14,243	19.2% ↑	45	95.7% ↑	2.97%	2.0% ↑	00:04:02	12.6% ↑
portal.sdbor.edu / referral	7,658	49.5% ↑	45	28.6% ↑	0.38%	94.0% ↑	00:03:55	-12.4% ↓
yahoo / organic	6,632	-2.1% ↓	2,851	12.8% ↑	0.77%	18.3% ↑	00:02:15	3.3% ↑
snap / (not set)	5,939	-	5,731	-	1.7%	-	00:00:01	-
l.facebook.com / referral	5,269	-11.3% ↓	1,970	-25.4% ↓	1.2%	14.6% ↑	00:03:21	49.9% ↑

Source and Medium are important tools in Google Analytics because they tell you not only *how* people are engaging with your website, but also *where* they're coming from (acquisition).

Google is the dominant search engine and is sending 90% of all search engine traffic to your site.



User Behavior: Homepage is Top Page From All Traffic Sources

8

Which pages are most popular with all users?

	Landing Page	Sessions ▾	% New Sessions	Users	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
1.	/	440,729	31.52%	155,370	138,922	1.86%	4.61	00:02:51
2.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	96,297	89.4%	89,451	86,091	0.09%	2.17	00:00:22
3.	/mysu	76,112	14.74%	21,034	11,220	1.42%	3.29	00:02:42
4.	/admission-aid/info	32,245	81.32%	27,177	26,223	1.63%	2.23	00:00:20
5.	(not set)	26,927	0.16%	7,116	42	0%	0	00:01:14
6.	?param1=Google¶m2=dynamic	13,014	48.49%	8,859	6,311	0.74%	4.73	00:01:43
7.	/apply/	12,927	17.62%	8,418	2,278	42.25%	6.51	00:04:57
8.	/passwordreset	11,523	26.26%	8,290	3,026	0.29%	3.44	00:03:32
9.	/academics/academic-calendars-important-dates	9,748	38.93%	6,528	3,795	0.45%	2.97	00:01:34
10.	/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources	9,104	71.09%	7,475	6,472	0.27%	2.68	00:01:21
11.	/admission-aid/visit	8,107	62.5%	6,661	5,067	1.26%	2.57	00:00:40
12.	/admissions	6,874	41.14%	5,295	2,828	1.09%	4.89	00:02:06
13.	/academics/directory	5,588	20.2%	2,279	1,129	0.25%	7.95	00:05:04
14.	/campus-life/gypsy-days	5,490	68.07%	4,574	3,737	0.4%	2.85	00:01:02
15.	/campus-life/residence-life	5,308	30.97%	3,291	1,644	0.3%	5.57	00:03:01

1. 31% of all users land on the homepage when entering the site.
2. 16% of users to the top 15 pages, land on an enrollment related page.
3. 89% of users to the homepage were new users to the site.
4. Admissions and Apply page have some of the strongest engagement metrics.

User Behavior: What Pages Are Driving Organic Traffic?

Below are the top landing pages from your organic traffic

	Landing Page	Sessions ▾	% New Sessions	Users	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
1.	/	169,079	34.62%	72,445	58,531	1.2%	5.26	00:02:57
2.	/mysu	38,397	15.5%	11,949	5,951	1.59%	3.07	00:02:22
3.	(not set)	10,406	0.21%	3,496	22	0%	0	00:01:21
4.	/academics/academic-calendars-important-dates	7,097	40.9%	4,774	2,903	0.54%	2.83	00:01:24
5.	/campus-life/gypsy-days	3,955	64.55%	3,223	2,553	0.15%	2.85	00:01:02
6.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	3,573	17.41%	1,678	622	0.5%	3.4	00:02:31
7.	/campus-life/residence-life	2,674	28.57%	1,680	764	0.22%	5.84	00:03:15
8.	/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs	2,637	54.04%	2,217	1,425	0.42%	4.33	00:02:12
9.	/dacotah-bank-stadium	2,627	72.82%	2,282	1,913	0.38%	2.85	00:01:28
10.	/degrees	2,625	66.17%	2,327	1,737	0.15%	10.59	00:03:57
11.	/programs/undergraduate/spanish-online	2,355	87.43%	2,113	2,059	0.38%	5.28	00:02:04
12.	/academics/directory	2,179	29.05%	1,228	633	0.09%	8.45	00:03:58
13.	/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources	2,078	36.28%	1,355	754	0.19%	3.48	00:02:03
14.	/passwordreset	2,061	3.35%	1,482	69	0.44%	3.35	00:02:55
15.	/about/campus/campusmap	1,997	41.01%	1,493	819	0.35%	3.43	00:02:09

The Path of Organic Traffic From the Homepage

Internal traffic goes to...

	Page	Users ▾
1.	/mysu	20,094
2.	/degrees	7,631
3.	/academics/academic-calendars-important-dates	6,872
4.	/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs	5,786
5.	/academics/directory	5,436
6.	/admissions	4,650
7.	/passwordreset	4,316
8.	/admissions-aid/financial-aid	4,027
9.	/campus-life/gypsy-days	4,008
10.	/academics/graduate-studies	3,987
11.	/campus-life/residence-life	3,924
12.	/academics	3,815
13.	/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources	3,263
14.	/about/campus/campusmap	3,055
15.	/academics/college-arts-and-sciences	2,878
16.	/online-and-continuing-education	2,803
17.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	2,787
18.	/academics/records-registration/transcripts-and-diplomas	2,757
19.	/public-calendar	2,437
20.	/admission-aid/requirements	2,401

1. 5% of organic users navigate to the degree programs page as their next step.
2. Out of the top 20 pages visited after the homepage, 56% continue to admissions or prospective student information.
3. 12% of users search for the site organically, land on the homepage, then navigate to the MYNSU page.



What Pages Are Driving **Direct** Traffic?

Below are the top landing pages from your direct traffic

	Landing Page	Sessions ▾	% New Sessions	Users	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
1.	/	141,305	49.75%	73,461	70,295	3.42%	3.69	00:01:53
2.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	87,704	97.09%	86,538	85,155	0.06%	2.05	00:00:06
3.	/mysu	13,969	36.77%	7,305	5,137	1.46%	2.96	00:01:53
4.	/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources	5,347	93.25%	5,112	4,986	0.34%	2.16	00:00:20
5.	(not set)	4,925	0.35%	2,042	17	0%	0	00:01:08
6.	/passwordreset	4,384	66.1%	3,556	2,898	0.39%	2.82	00:01:52
7.	/admission-aid/visit	1,821	79.63%	1,523	1,450	0.88%	2.24	00:00:25
8.	/academics/academic-calendars-important-dates	1,731	50.38%	1,227	872	0.46%	2.54	00:01:11
9.	/foundation	1,506	96.15%	1,478	1,448	0.8%	2.31	00:00:13
10.	/sports-complex-will-be-tallest-building-region	1,272	74.29%	1,116	945	0.16%	2.45	00:00:54
11.	/admissions	1,232	72.73%	974	896	1.38%	2.88	00:00:30
12.	/thunderbucks	1,173	67.43%	904	791	0.26%	3.14	00:01:08
13.	/apply/	1,144	78.85%	960	902	70.37%	3.9	00:02:43
14.	/coronavirus	1,134	69.4%	927	787	1.23%	2.6	00:00:37
15.	/programs/graduate/banking-and-financial-services-graduate	1,106	58.86%	668	651	0.9%	2.52	00:00:37

The Path of Direct traffic, Based on Top Direct Landing Page

Internal traffic goes to ..

	Page	Users ▾
1.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	87,246
2.	/mysu	17,847
3.	/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources	5,889
4.	/passwordreset	5,328
5.	/academics/directory	2,571
6.	/academics/academic-calendars-important-dates	2,389
7.	/admission-aid/visit	2,075
8.	/admissions	1,975
9.	/admissions-aid/financial-aid	1,746
10.	/foundation	1,733
11.	/degrees	1,692
12.	/academics	1,491
13.	/campus-life/residence-life	1,424
14.	/coronavirus	1,416
15.	/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs	1,356
16.	/academics/records-registration/transcripts-and-diplo...	1,336
17.	/admission-aid/info	1,314
18.	/public-calendar	1,229
19.	/campus-life/gypsy-days	1,216
20.	/thunderbucks	1,133

1. 62% of direct users are landing on homepage then navigating to the library page.
2. Top direct page traffic is often current student and faculty users.
3. Out of the top 20 pages visited after the homepage, 6% continue to admissions or prospective student information.



What Pages Are Driving Referral Traffic?

Below are the top landing pages from your referral traffic

	Landing Page	Sessions ▼	% New Sessio...	Users	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Durati...
1.	/	120,061	7.72%	18,992	9,273	0.94%	4.89	00:03:55
2.	/mysu	20,838	0.39%	3,700	81	1.22%	4.05	00:04:02
3.	(not set)	10,155	0.02%	2,060	2	0%	0	00:01:14
4.	/apply/	9,940	5.32%	6,415	529	38.83%	6.95	00:05:20
5.	/passwordreset	4,890	1.35%	3,677	66	0.16%	4.08	00:05:20
6.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	4,357	4.98%	1,935	217	0.39%	3.34	00:03:14
7.	/admission-aid/visit	3,537	49.76%	2,892	1,760	1.61%	2.92	00:00:57
8.	/apply/?sr=b69f5bb3-2459-4a16-a3f6-f150cfe18bf5	3,301	0.61%	1,957	20	40.5%	5.47	00:03:08
9.	/admissions	2,901	11.82%	2,176	343	1.69%	6.42	00:03:05
10.	/academics/directory	2,442	0.78%	492	19	0.04%	8.58	00:07:04
11.	/portal/campusvisit	2,007	1.1%	1,169	22	53.26%	2.61	00:02:29
12.	/public-calendar	1,832	2.35%	1,543	43	0.33%	5.13	00:02:30
13.	/online-and-continuing-education	1,804	0.78%	638	14	0.06%	7.74	00:09:55
14.	/degrees	1,682	8.98%	1,242	151	0.18%	15.72	00:07:00
15.	/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources	1,614	44.18%	1,054	713	0.19%	3.22	00:03:54

The Path of Referral Traffic, Based on Top Landing Page

External traffic comes from...

	Full Referrer	Users ▾
1.	m.facebook.com/	23,480
2.	northern.edu/	20,182
3.	snapchat.com/	4,374
4.	apply.northern.edu/	4,253
5.	catalog.northern.edu/	3,666
6.	l.facebook.com/	2,359
7.	d2l.sdbor.edu/	2,353
8.	lm.facebook.com/	2,262
9.	nsu-nac.northern.edu/	2,254
10.	t.co/	2,176
11.	newsbreakapp.com/	1,644
12.	facebook.com/	1,369
13.	portal.sdbor.edu/	996
14.	nsuwolves.com/	836
15.	baidu.com/	813



Internal traffic goes to...

	Page	Users ▾
1.	/	20,982
2.	/mysu	7,228
3.	/passwordreset	4,529
4.	/apply/	3,917
5.	/admission-aid/visit	3,662
6.	/admissions	3,367
7.	/degrees	2,902
8.	/admissions-aid/financial-aid	2,511
9.	/account/register?r=https://apply.northern.edu/apply/	2,489
10.	/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs	2,465
11.	/academics/beulah-williams-library	2,453
12.	/apply/certify	2,429
13.	/apply/review	2,399
14.	/apply/aca	2,227
15.	/account/password?s=n&r=https://apply.northern.edu/apply/	2,201
16.	/public-calendar	2,132
17.	/campus-life/residence-life	2,101
18.	/apply/frm?d37eccd3-f262-4c48-859e-3f48abe8871c=	2,084
19.	/apply/frm?b46b9d68-79e2-4801-9d7d-35e7f0a62d86=	2,034
20.	/apply/frm?39cc5ba9-8083-4a64-be31-927c6ae04c49=	1,975

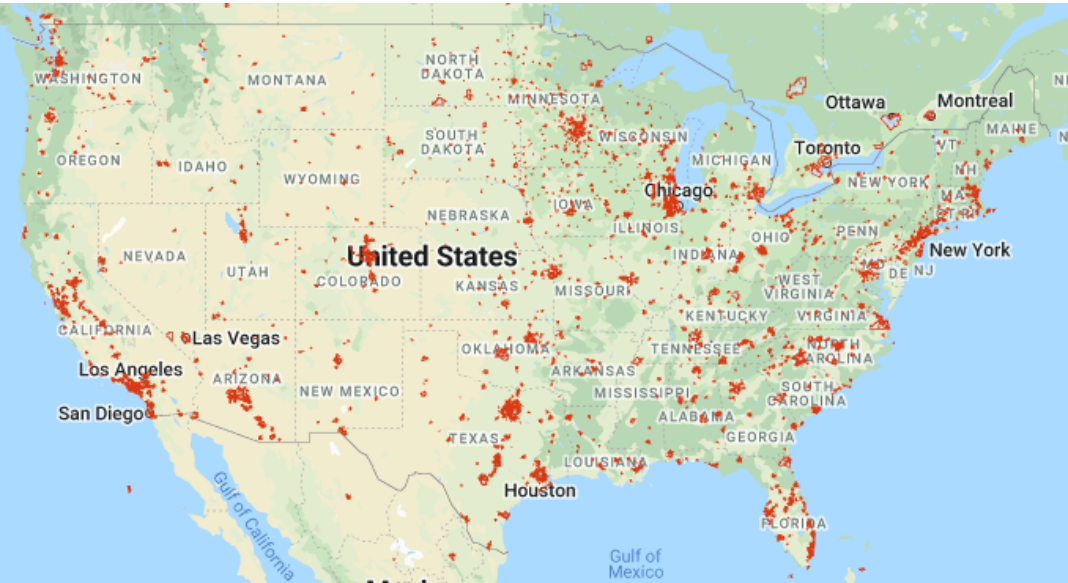
- Top referring traffic is coming from Facebook and your own domain. This is due to other subdomains things interlinking the site. You can add a filter to analytics to remove your domain as a referral source.
- Top pages that receive referral traffic are the homepage, mynsu, library, and password reset pages.

Geographic Breakout: Organic Traffic



39% of organic users are from South Dakota.

58% of organic sessions are from South Dakota

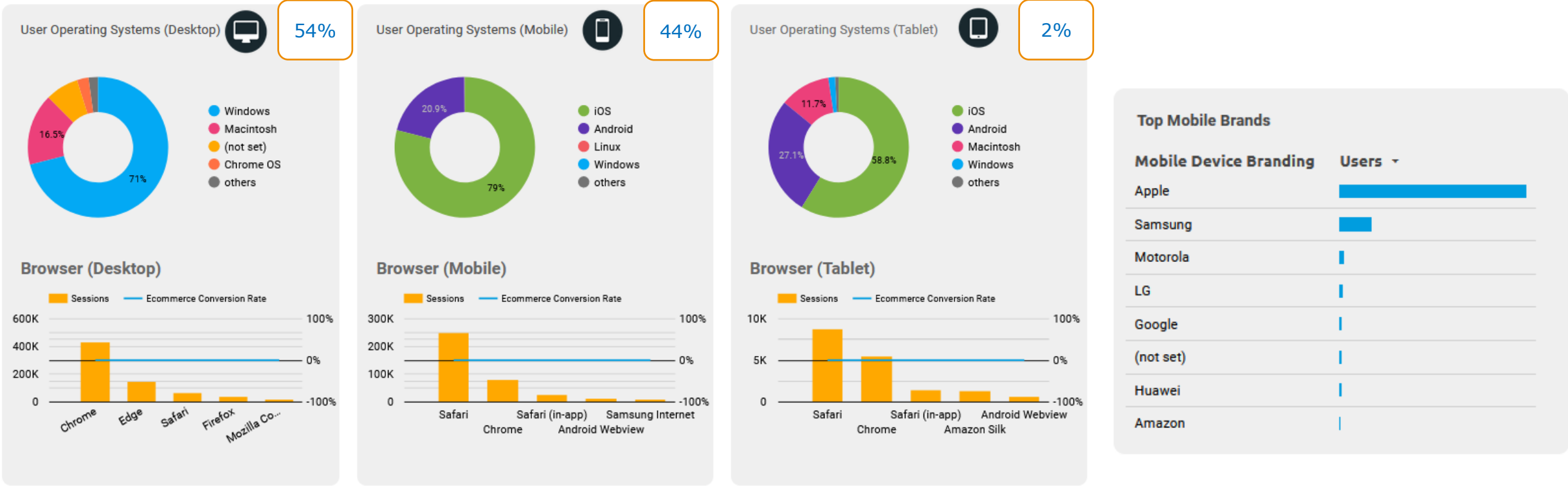


Region ?	Acquisition			Behavior		
	Users ? ↓	New Users ?	Sessions ?	Bounce Rate ?	Pages / Session ?	Avg. Session Duration ?
Organic Traffic	140,866 % of Total: 27.94% (504,117)	123,791 % of Total: 24.76% (499,921)	343,954 % of Total: 30.85% (1,115,003)	0.93% Avg for View: 2.79% (-66.83%)	4.48 Avg for View: 3.96 (13.06%)	00:02:35 Avg for View: 00:02:12 (17.20%)
1. South Dakota	60,856 (39.37%)	46,628 (37.67%)	200,400 (58.26%)	0.80%	4.49	00:02:49
2. Minnesota	15,446 (9.99%)	12,736 (10.29%)	28,391 (8.25%)	1.18%	4.33	00:03:17
3. Nebraska	11,578 (7.49%)	8,477 (6.85%)	18,708 (5.44%)	1.12%	4.11	00:01:52
4. Illinois	6,532 (4.23%)	5,140 (4.15%)	8,865 (2.58%)	1.26%	4.26	00:01:54
5. California	5,912 (3.82%)	4,877 (3.94%)	8,285 (2.41%)	0.75%	4.38	00:01:53
6. North Dakota	5,566 (3.60%)	4,607 (3.72%)	9,836 (2.86%)	0.96%	5.00	00:02:30
7. Texas	4,990 (3.23%)	3,993 (3.23%)	7,052 (2.05%)	0.98%	4.53	00:02:06
8. Iowa	4,138 (2.68%)	3,070 (2.48%)	5,974 (1.74%)	1.72%	4.70	00:02:02
9. Washington	3,145 (2.03%)	2,356 (1.90%)	4,743 (1.38%)	0.95%	4.45	00:02:02
10. Colorado	2,864 (1.85%)	2,338 (1.89%)	4,120 (1.20%)	0.92%	4.72	00:02:02



Technical Preferences of Users: Desktop Users Prefer Chrome, Safari for Mobile

All user channel traffic



Considering high rate of mobile usage, it's important to adjust your website content to ensure visitors accessing the site from mobile devices have an experience customized to their device. Optimized content flows easily between desktop and mobile devices to provide the user with an outstanding experience.

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- 1 Increases in organic traffic (sessions and users) as well as strong engagement metrics. Big increase in organic traffic in September and October of 2021.
- 2 Large current student and faculty presence on site.
- 3 Admissions pages are the most viewed pages after users land on homepage. (excluding mynsu traffic).
- 4 Northern.edu has a strong mobile and desktop audience. Desktop is slightly larger at 54%.
- 5 39% of users come from South Dakota. Large in-state and neighboring state presence. Minnesota, Nebraska, and Illinois all drive high numbers of organic traffic.

Section 2: What are your competitors doing and how do you rank against them?

Organic research for identified competitors

True search competitors

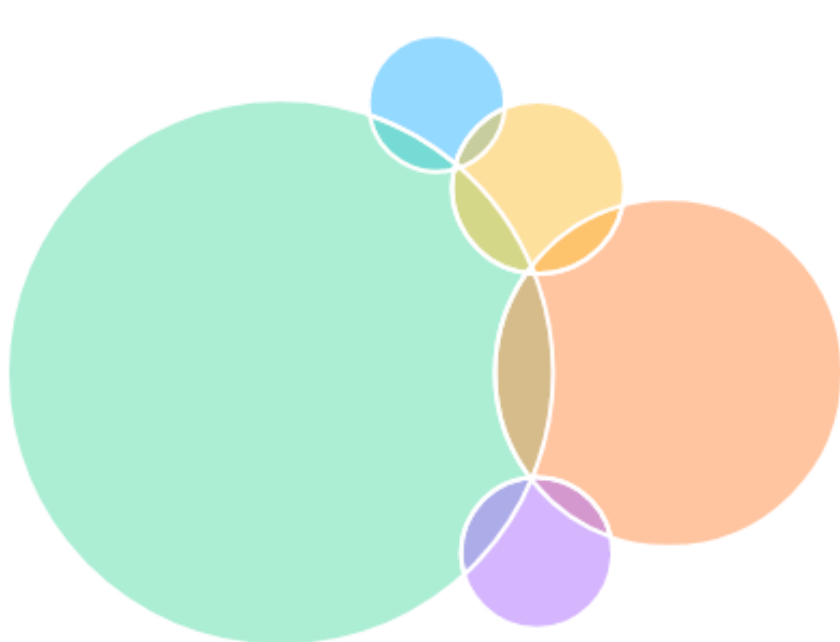
Ranking analysis

Competitor backlink analysis

Competitors: Northern.edu Has the Smallest Organic Footprint

Against all competitors except lakeareatech.edu

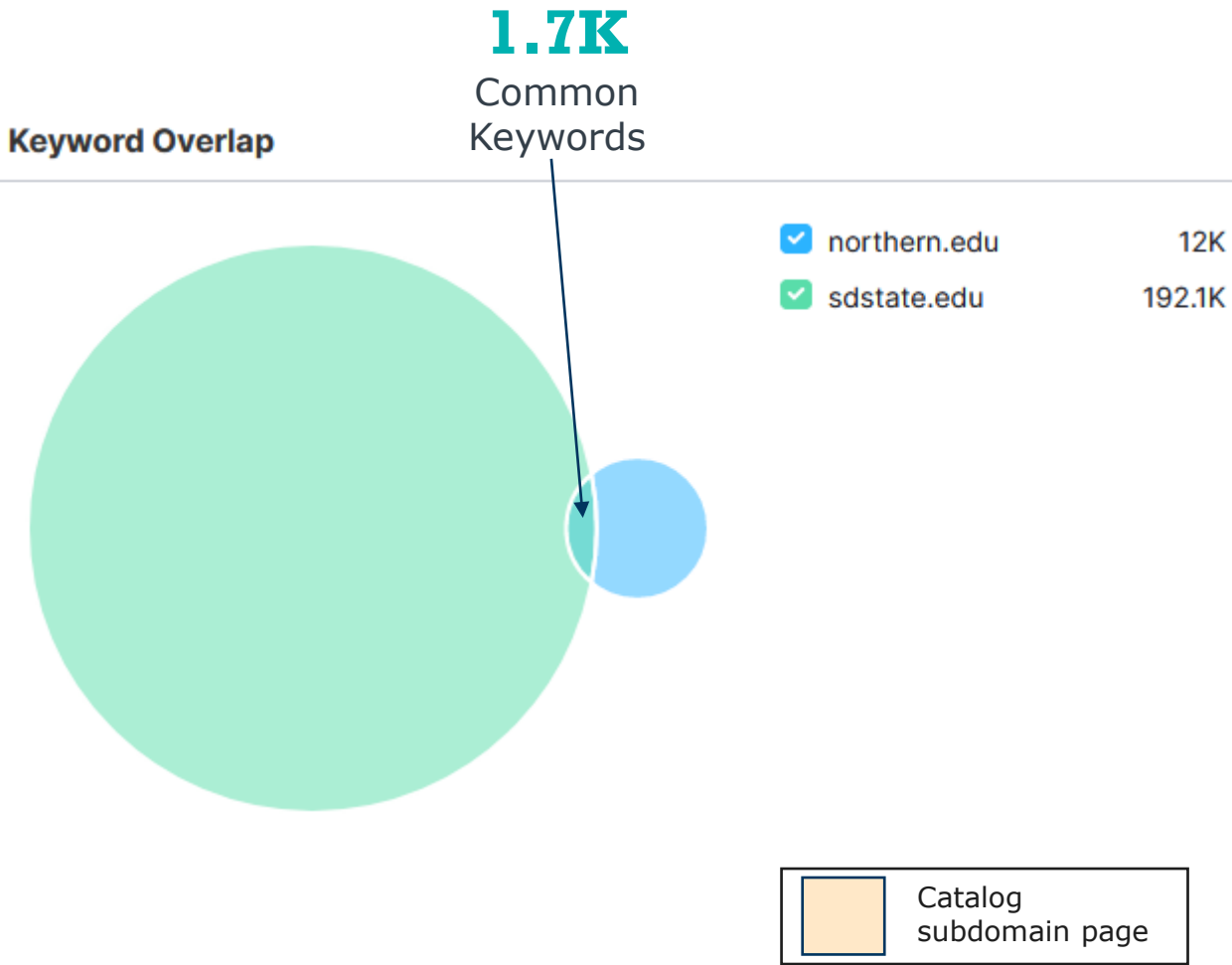
Keyword Overlap



✓ northern.edu	12K
✓ sdstate.edu	192.1K
✓ usd.edu	78.1K
✓ bhsu.edu	14.7K
✓ dsu.edu	19.1K

- Out of the competitors identified:
 - Sdstate.edu has the largest footprint with 192.1K keywords
 - Lakeareatech.edu has smallest footprint with 3.4K keywords
- There are 451 shared keywords across the 5 sites listed including (in order of search volume):
 - epsy
 - sd state
 - south dakota university
 - universities in south dakota
 - university south dakota
 - colleges in south dakota
 - snap.sdstate.bor
 - banner sdbor
 - south dakota universities

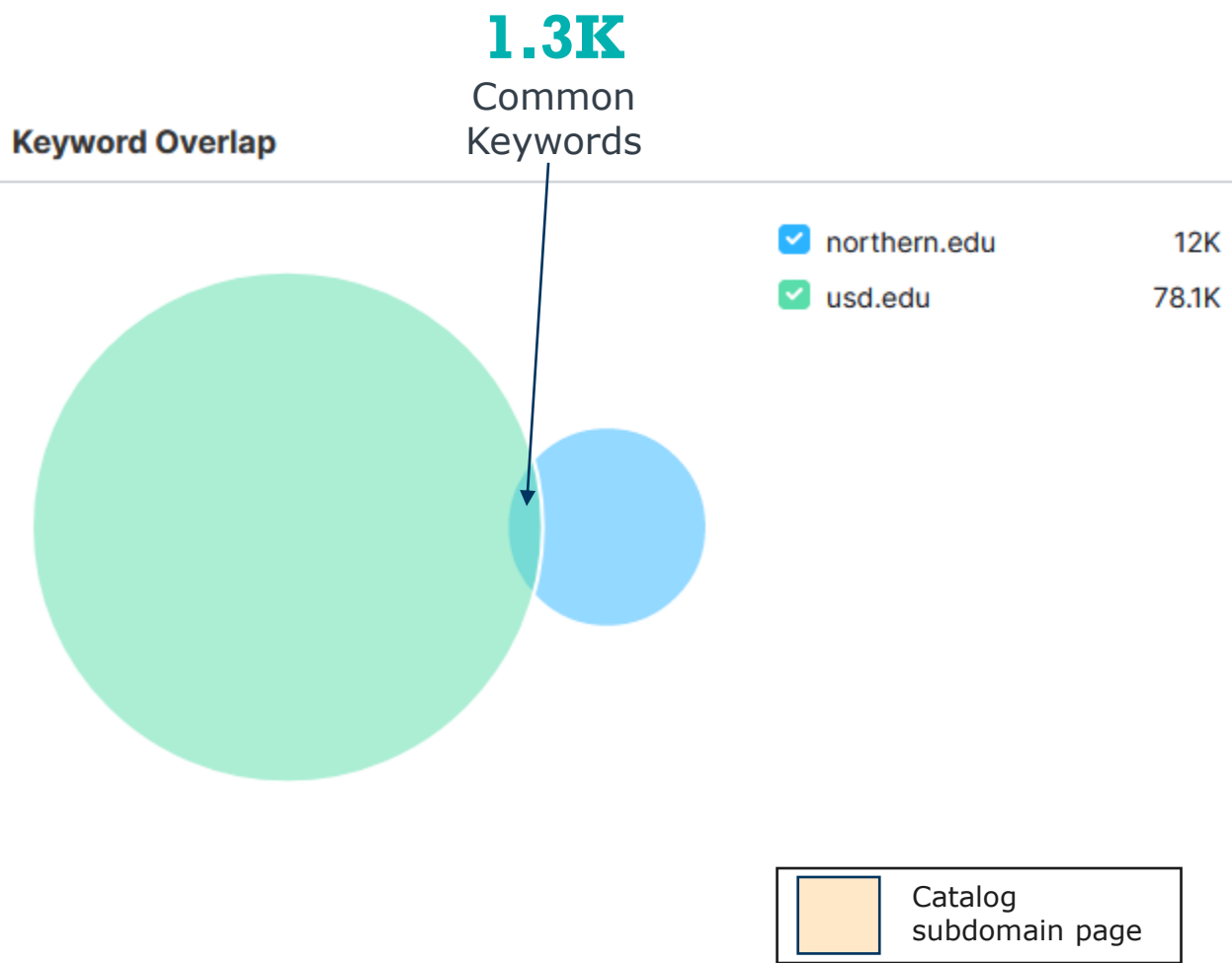
Competitor: South Dakota State University



Top Shared Academic Keywords:
sorted by competitor ranking

Keyword	northern .edu	sdstate.edu	Search Volume
south dakota accelerated nursing program	34	1	50
dental schools in south dakota	64	2	260
nursing programs in south dakota	53	2	70
south dakota dental school	23	3	70
sd teacher certification	17	5	70
south dakota teaching certificate	21	5	70
what is pre physical therapy	53	7	110
sd psychology	33	7	90
alternative teaching certification south dakota	29	7	70
south dakota alternative teacher certification	31	7	50
what is pre athletic training	39	7	50
pre chiropractic majors	95	9	320

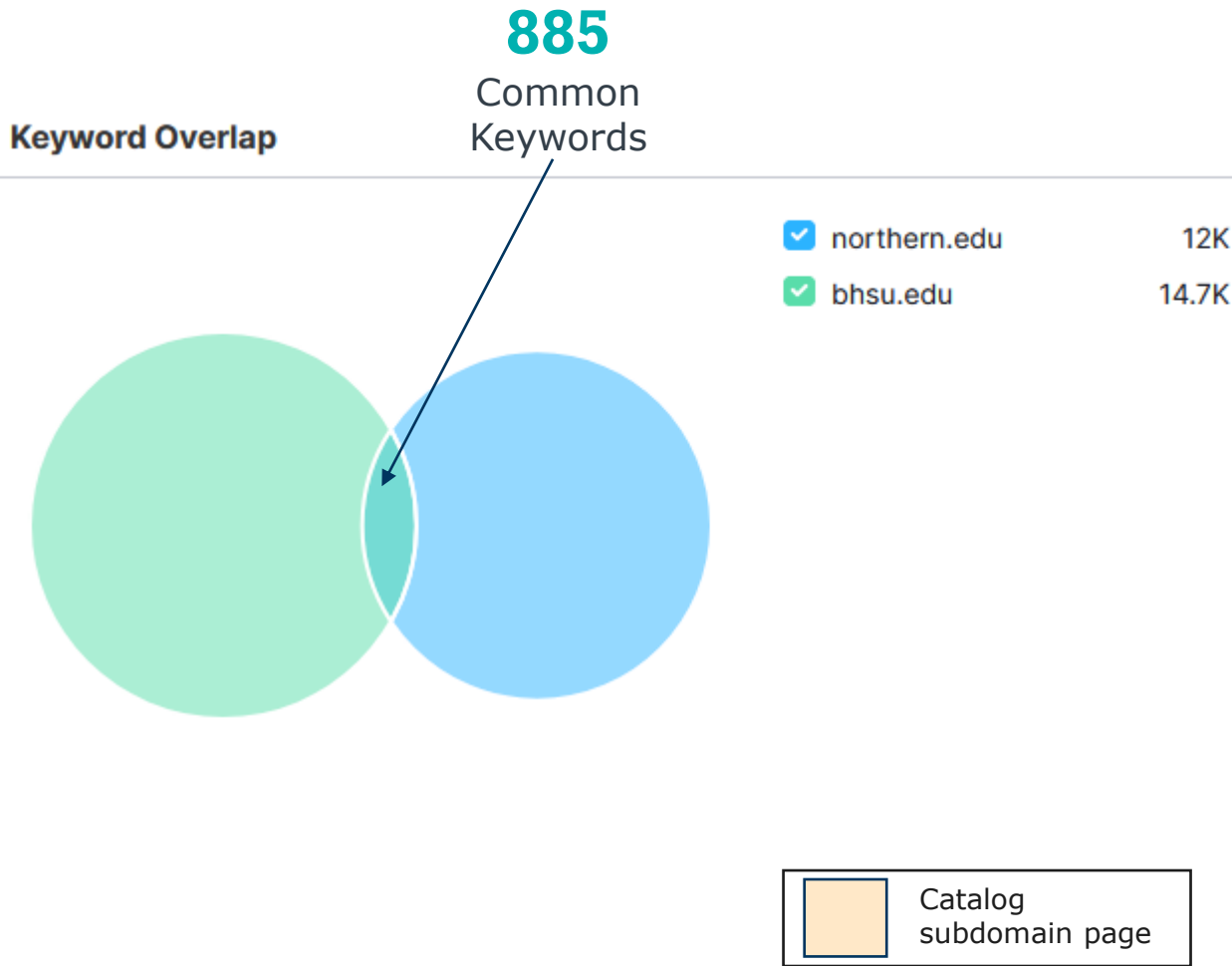
Competitor: University of South Dakota



Top Shared Academic Keywords:
sorted by competitor ranking

Keyword	northern.edu	usd.edu	Search Volume
south dakota dental school	23	1	70
sd alternative teacher certification	22	4	140
alternative teaching certification south dakota	29	4	70
nursing programs in south dakota	53	4	70
south dakota alternative teacher certification	31	4	50
dental schools in south dakota	64	5	260
sd psychology	33	5	90
sd teacher certification	17	8	70
south dakota accelerated nursing program	34	10	50
sports marketing degrees	55	11	110
lakota language course	44	12	50
sports marketing degree	67	13	590

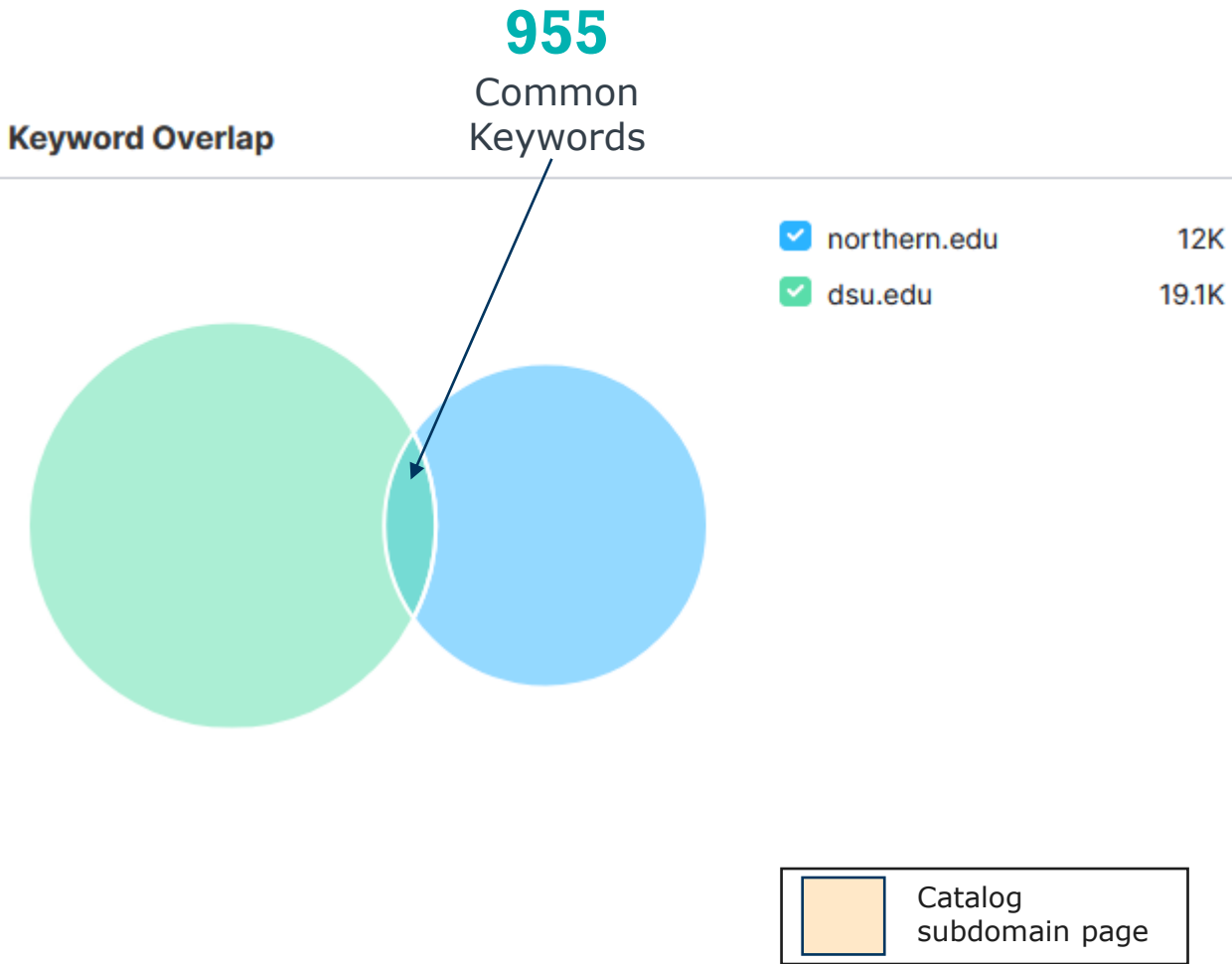
Competitor: Black Hills State University



Top Shared Academic Keywords:
sorted by competitor ranking

Keyword	northern .edu	bhsu.edu	Search Volume
lakota language course	44	4	50
professional accountancy	37	6	210
nursing programs in south dakota	53	6	70
music appreciation 100	22	11	140
lakota language 101	15	11	70
elementary education course	92	12	50
education elementary	93	15	260
sd teacher certification	17	15	70
south dakota teaching certificate	21	15	70
alternative teaching certification south dakota	29	16	70
spanish degrees	24	17	140
what is bachelor degree in spanish	88	17	110

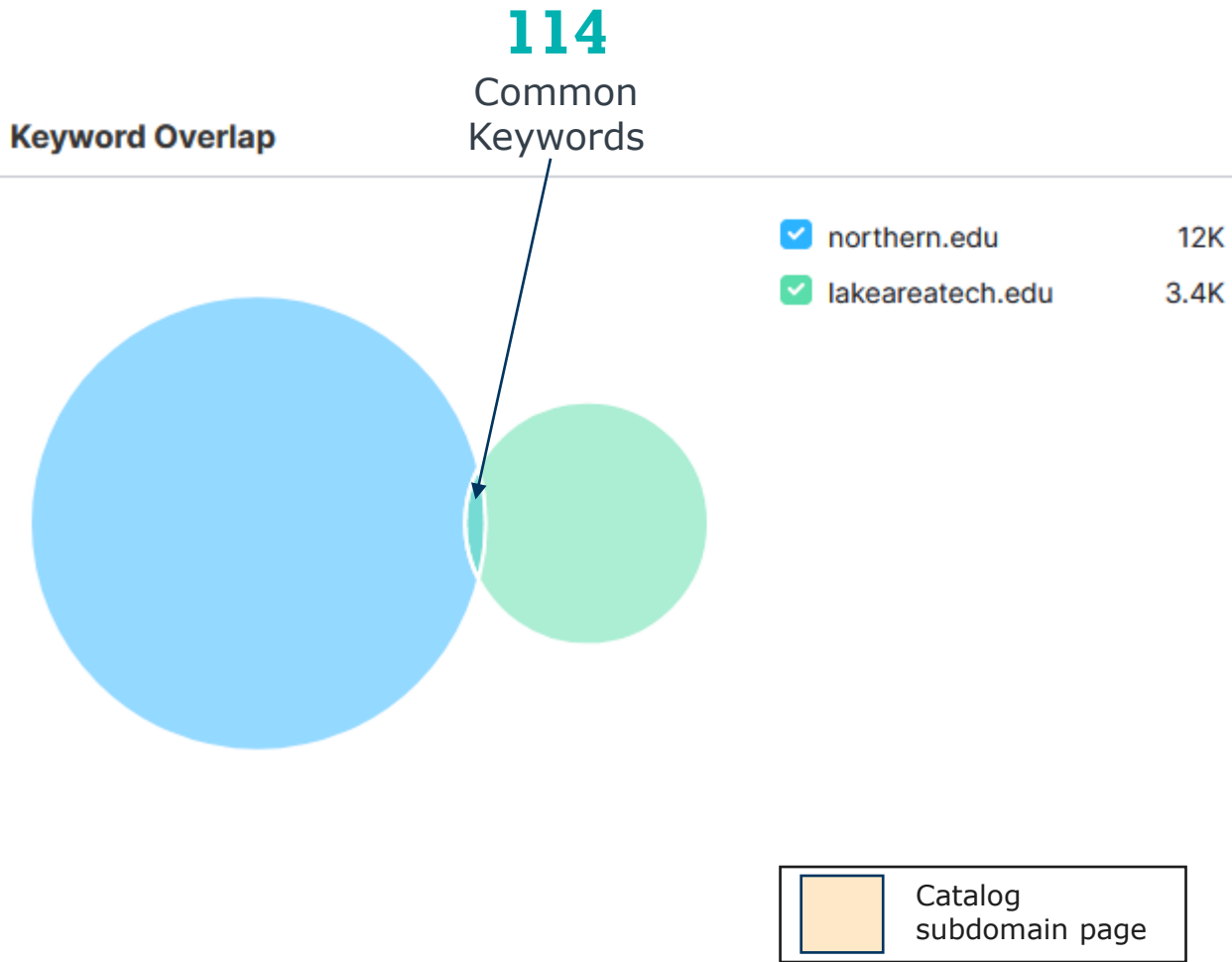
Competitor: Dakota State University



Top Shared Academic Keywords:
sorted by competitor ranking

Keyword	northern .edu	dsu.edu	Search Volume
certificate in mathematics online	67	11	70
quantitative literacy math	72	16	260
m.s.ed.	46	18	170
what is quantitative literacy math	41	20	70
elementary education degree name	46	26	50
certificate math	77	28	70
biology education degree	90	29	50
bs accountancy	32	36	720
certificate in mathematics	73	36	110
professional accountancy	37	38	210
alternative teaching certification south dakota	29	38	70
what is general studies aa	49	38	50













Competitor: Lake Area Technical College



Top Shared Academic Keywords:
sorted by competitor ranking

Keyword	northern .edu	bu.edu	Search Volume
nursing programs in south dakota	53	40	70
vet tech schools in south dakota	91	41	50
vet tech programs in south dakota	69	46	50
dental schools in south dakota	64	81	260
south dakota dental school	23	89	70

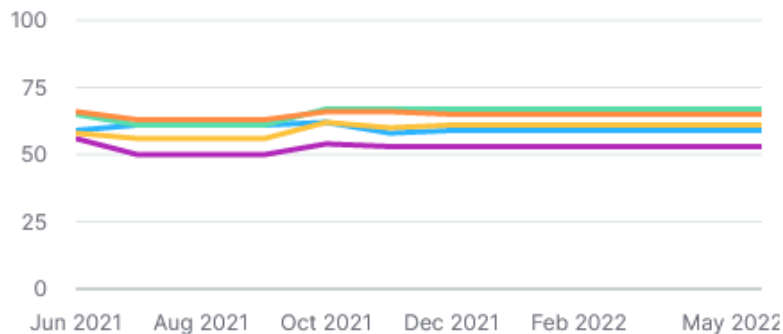
Backlink Comparison

Domain/URL	Authority Score	Referring Domains	Backlinks	Referring IPs	Monthly Visits	Keywords
 northern.edu	59	7K	480K	7.1K	57.1K	17K 
 sdstate.edu	67	19.6K	1.6M	19.3K	822K	313K 
 usd.edu	65	16.7K	2.2M	15.9K	523K	125K 
 bhsu.edu	53	4.1K	60.1K	4.3K	99.6K	24.4K 
 dsu.edu	61	6.6K	8.7M	6.9K	231K	33.9K 
 lakeareatech.edu	39	2.1K	19.9K	2.5K	140K	4.8K 

Authority Score

Widget Scope: Root Domain

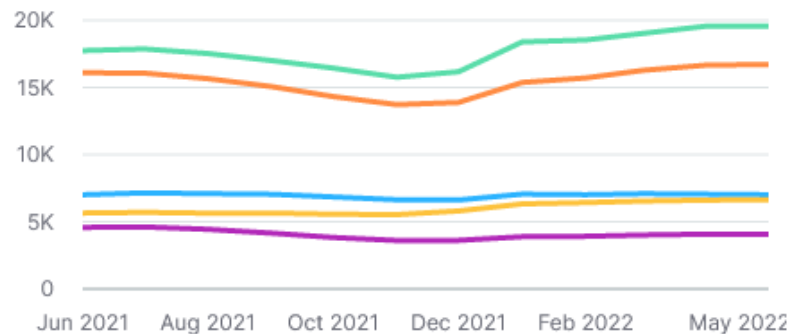
Last 12 months



Referring Domains

Widget Scope: Root Domain

Last 12 months



 northern.edu  sdstate.edu  usd.edu  bhsu.edu  dsu.edu

- Sdstate.edu has a strong backlink profile which presents an opportunity to research and target links from where they are getting them from now.
- Lakeareatech.edu, being the smallest of the competitors, was only included in the top table. But due to its size, it was omitted in the other tables so the larger schools could be evaluated.

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- 1 Sdstate.edu has largest organic footprint against competitors with 192K total keyword rankings.
- 2 Northern State University and South Dakota State share the most keywords (1.7K keywords)
- 3 Northern.edu does not rank well for non-branded degree or program related keywords against competitors.
- 4 Opportunity to optimize and target competitors high ranking keywords.

Section 3: How Are People Searching For You?

Organic Search Visibility & Trends

Google Search Performance

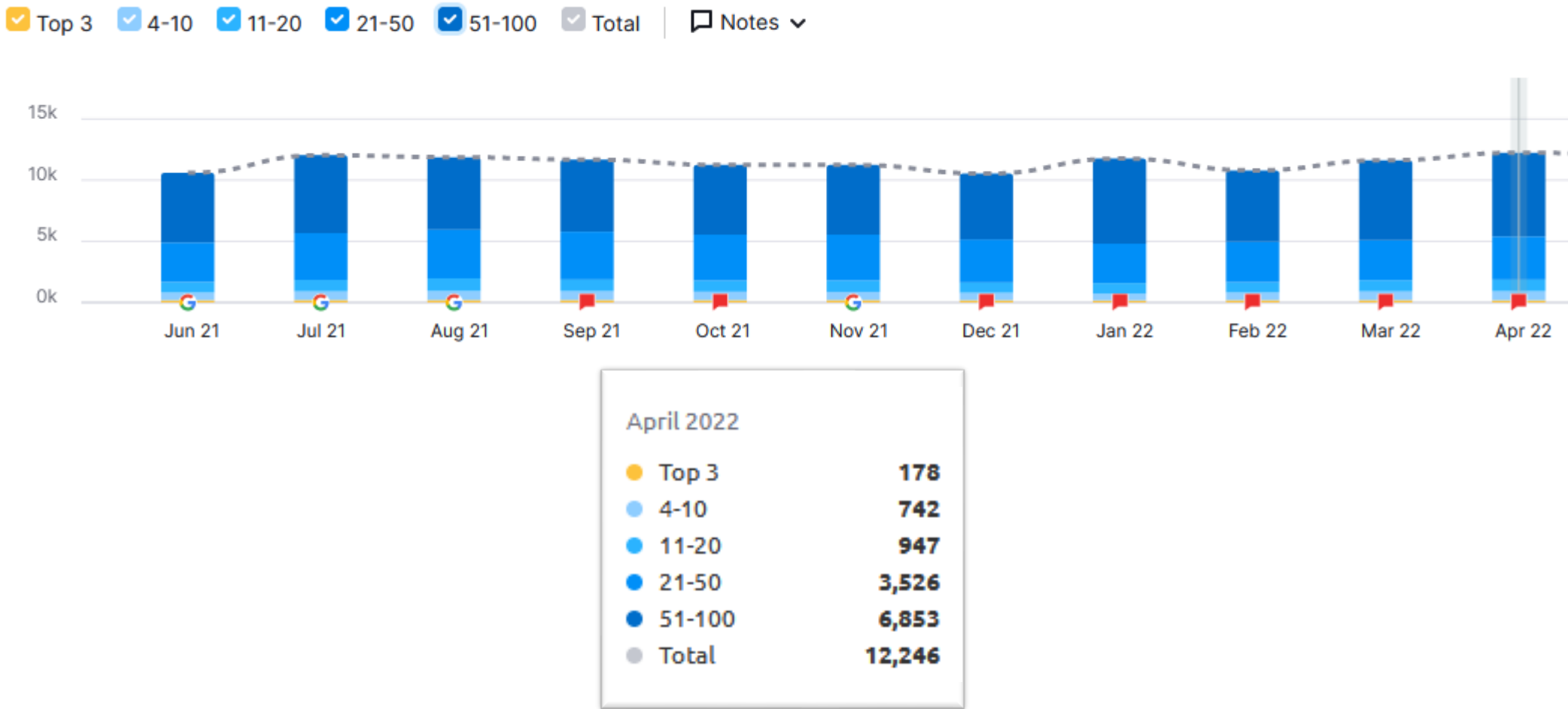
Organic Search Competition

Share of Voice

Search Visibility: Only 7.5% of Your Organic Footprint is on Page 1

The entire site is ranking for a total of 12,246 keywords
This is also considered your total search visibility.

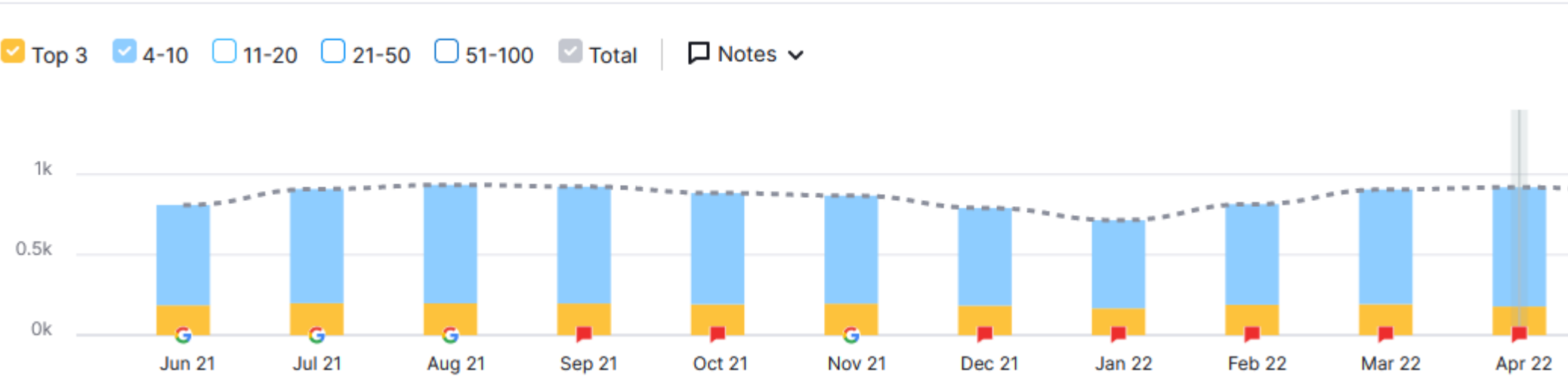
Organic Keywords Trend



Search Visibility: Page 1 Rankings Have Grown

Your site is ranking for a total of 920 keywords on page 1
This is also considered your site's best search visibility.

Organic Keywords Trend



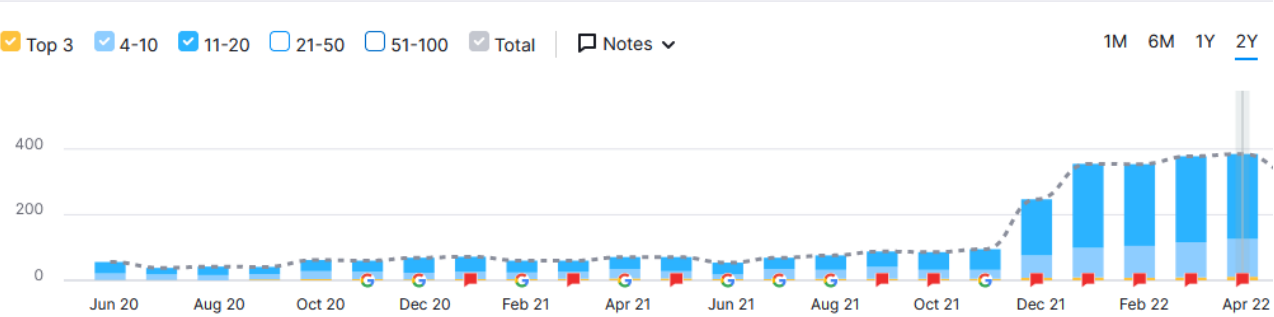
Your total page 1 keywords have increased 20.4% from April 2021 to April 2022 – from 764 keywords to 920.
In April 2022:

- 8.2% of your page 1 keywords appear in position 1, the top position. 75 keywords
- 75.7% of your page 1 keywords are below the fold, in position 5 or higher. 696 keywords

Catalog Subdomain Keywords



Organic Keywords Trend



April 2022

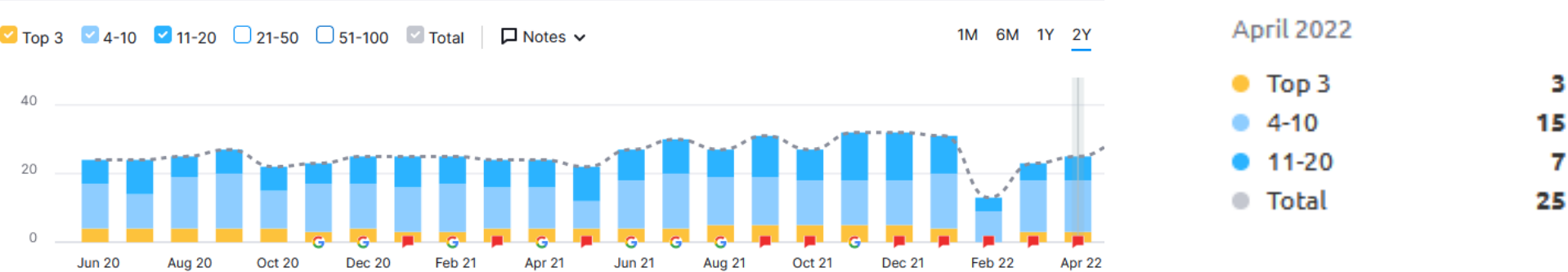
Top 3	11
4-10	115
11-20	259
Total	385

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
411 theory	1	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_course_nopop.php?catoid=8&coid=14595
northern state university course catalog	1	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=901
non traditional bank products	2	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_course_nopop.php?catoid=8&coid=15292
northern state university tuition	2	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returnto=search
northern state university course catalog	2	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/
northern state university cost	2	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returnto=search
northern state university requirements	3	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=796
northern state university admissions office	3	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=724
northern state university course catalog	3	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/misc/catalog_list.php?catoid=13
northern catalog	4	110	http://catalog.northern.edu/
northern state university cost	4	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=793
nsu degree programs	5	90	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=1013

Admission Keywords



Organic Keywords Trend

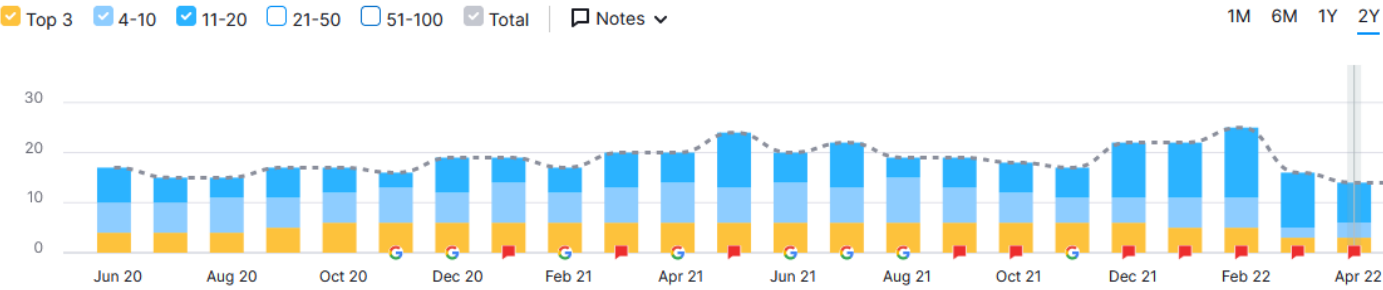


Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
northern state university admissions office	1	50	https://www.northern.edu/admissions
northern state university admissions office	2	50	https://www.northern.edu/contactadmissions
northern state university admissions office	3	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=724
northern state university admissions office	4	50	https://apply.northern.edu/apply/
northern state university admissions office	5	50	https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/requirements
nsu admissions phone number	6	70	https://www.northern.edu/contactadmissions
northern state university admissions office	6	50	https://www.northern.edu/admissions-staff
nsu admissions address	6	50	https://www.northern.edu/contactadmissions
nsu admissions	7	390	https://www.northern.edu/contactadmissions
nsu admissions office	7	260	https://www.northern.edu/contactadmissions
admissions nsu	7	140	https://www.northern.edu/admissions
nsu admissions number	7	70	https://www.northern.edu/contactadmissions

Tuition Keywords



Organic Keywords Trend



April 2022

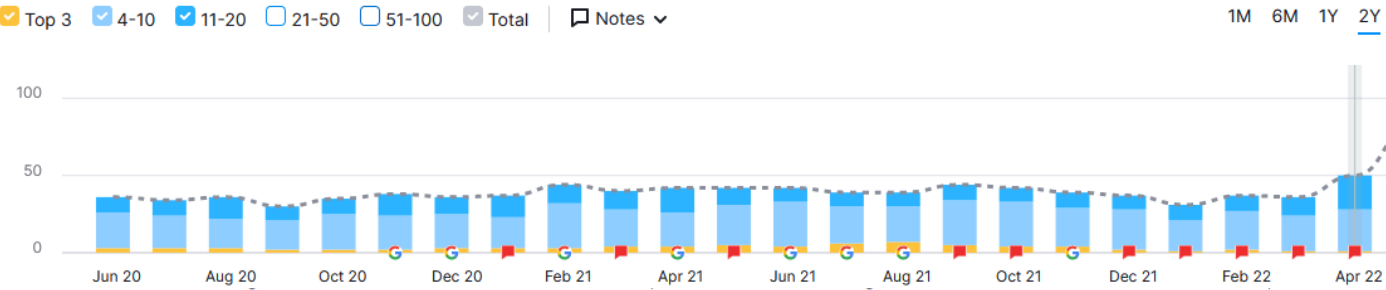
Top 3	3
4-10	3
11-20	8
Total	14

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
northern state university tuition	1	50	https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs
northern state university tuition	2	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returunto=search
northern state university tuition	3	50	https://www.northern.edu/fees
nsu tuition	8	590	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returunto=search
nsu tuition cost	10	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returunto=search
nsu in state tuition	10	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returunto=search
nsu tuition and fees	11	50	https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs
nsu graduate tuition and fees	12	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returunto=search
nsu tuition 2021	13	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returunto=search
usf senior citizen tuition waiver	16	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648
nsu university school tuition	17	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648

Cost Keywords



Organic Keywords Trend



April 2022

Top 3	0
4-10	2
11-20	5
Total	7

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
nsu credit hour cost	8	70	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returnto=search
nsu tuition cost	10	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returnto=search
nsu cost	12	90	https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs
how much does mortuary school cost	14	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=8&poid=1824
nsu cost of attendance	15	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=793
nsu room and board cost	16	50	https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs
nova southeastern university cost per credit hour undergraduate	18	210	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=912
university of south dakota cost	25	90	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=793
north cost	28	260	https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs
usf room and board cost	29	90	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=648&hl=refunds&returnto=search
cost cutters aberdeen sd	31	110	https://apps.northern.edu/flippingbook/survivalguide/files/assets/common/downloads/page0020.pdf

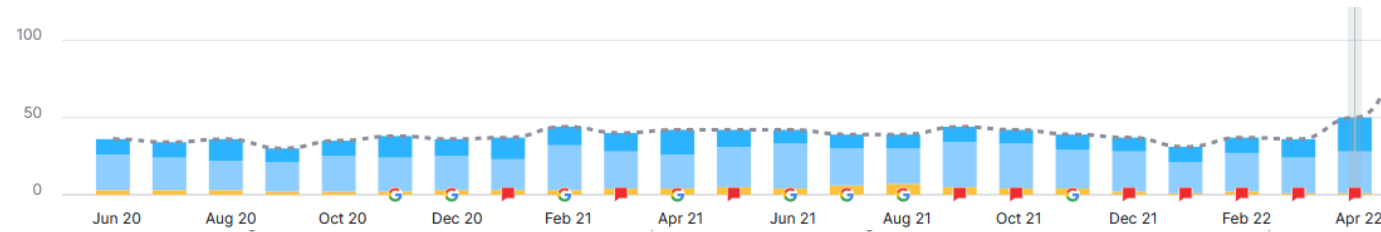
Degree Keywords



Organic Keywords Trend

Top 3 4-10 11-20 21-50 51-100 Total Notes

1M 6M 1Y 2Y



April 2022

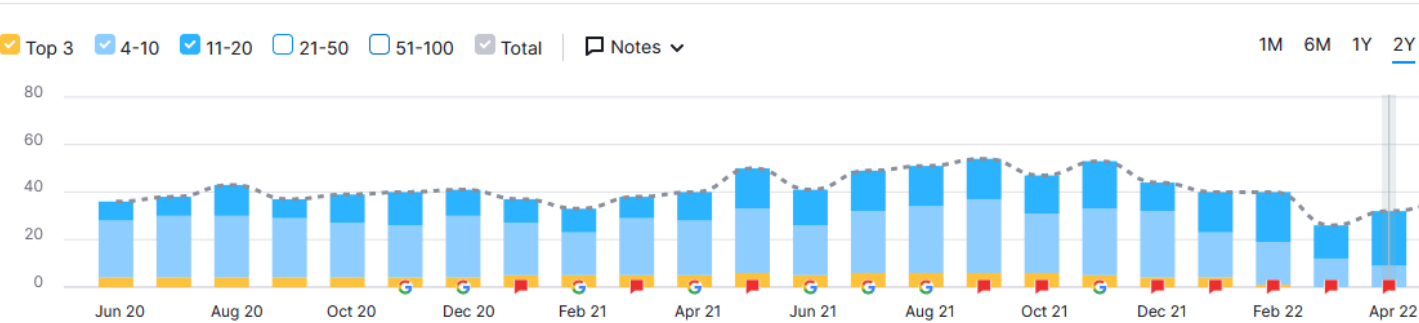
Top 3	1
4-10	27
11-20	22
Total	50

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
banking degree online	2	170	https://northern.edu/programs/graduate/banking-and-financial-services-graduate-online
degreeworks nsu	4	110	https://www.northern.edu/news/banner-degreeworks-other-systems-be-temporarily-down-march
degreeworks nsu	5	110	https://www.northern.edu/mynsu
nsu general studies degree	5	70	https://www.northern.edu/programs/general-studies-online
nsu degree works	5	70	https://www.northern.edu/news/banner-degreeworks-other-systems-be-temporarily-down-march
degree works nsu	5	50	https://www.northern.edu/news/banner-degreeworks-other-systems-be-temporarily-down-march
online degree in spanish	6	140	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/spanish-online
nsu degree programs	6	90	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=1013
cheapest online spanish degree	6	90	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/spanish-online
bachelor's degree in spanish online	6	90	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/spanish-online
nsu general studies degree	6	70	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=2827&returnto=1011

Program Keywords



Organic Keywords Trend



April 2022

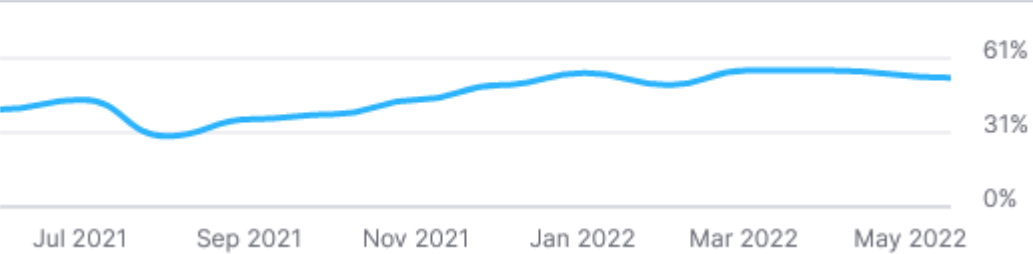
Top 3	0
4-10	9
11-20	23
Total	32

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
sdsu accelerated nursing program aberdeen	4	50	https://www.northern.edu/news/nsu-grads-eligible-guaranteed-admission-sdsu-accelerated-nursing-program
northern nursing program	5	50	https://www.northern.edu/programs/pre-nursing
nsu degree programs	6	90	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=1013
sdsu accelerated nursing program	6	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=2756
nsu criminal justice program	7	50	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/criminal-justice
online spanish degree programs	8	210	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/spanish-online
nsu masters programs	8	110	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=927
nsu bsn program	8	70	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=2756
sdsu nurse practitioner program	8	50	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=2756&returnto=1013
nsu nursing program	11	390	http://catalog.northern.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=2756&returnto=1013
nsu undergraduate programs	11	70	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=912

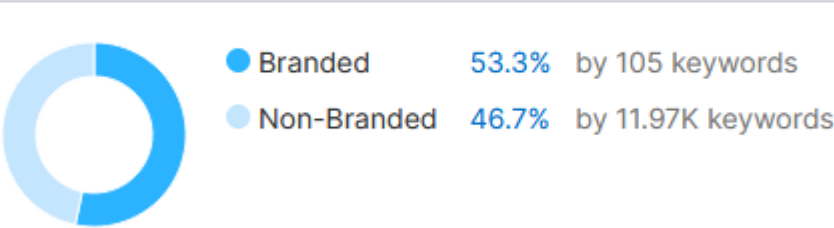
Brand Vs. Non-Brand Keywords

More Branded than Non-Branded Traffic

Branded Traffic Trend



Branded vs. Non-Branded Traffic



Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume	URL
northern state university	1	9900	https://www.northern.edu/
northern state	1	1300	https://www.northern.edu/
jon schaf	1	590	https://www.northern.edu/directory/jon-schaff
aberdeen college	1	480	https://www.northern.edu/
nsu aberdeen sd	1	260	https://www.northern.edu/
dacotah bank stadium	1	170	https://www.northern.edu/dacotah-bank-stadium
where is northern state university	1	170	https://www.northern.edu/
gypsy day parade 2021	1	170	https://www.northern.edu/campus-life/gypsy-days
colleges in aberdeen south dakota	1	170	https://www.northern.edu/
gypsy days 2021	1	140	https://www.northern.edu/news/nsu-gypsy-day-parade-registration-now-open
aberdeen college south dakota	1	140	https://www.northern.edu/
badlands fossils	1	140	https://www.northern.edu/natsource/earth/Fossil1.htm

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- 1 Northern.edu ranks for 920 keywords on Page 1, with 8% ranking in position 1.
- 2 53% of all organic traffic to the site over the last year has been from branded traffic.
- 3 Catalog pages are ranking for a lot of the high performing keywords. Are these pages providing the best user experience and answering search intent?
- 4 Opportunity to target and optimize for non-brand keywords such as degree-related keywords and improve share of voice for priority keywords.
- 5 EAB will provide a list of striking-distance keywords, which are keywords that you rank for on the bottoms of pages 1 and 2. These keywords should be included in content strategy and optimization changes to improve search rankings.

Section 4: How are your spotlight pages ranking?

Top Rankings Keywords

Overall Search Performance

Search Volume

Home page

https://www.northern.edu/

Current Page 1
Keyword Rankings

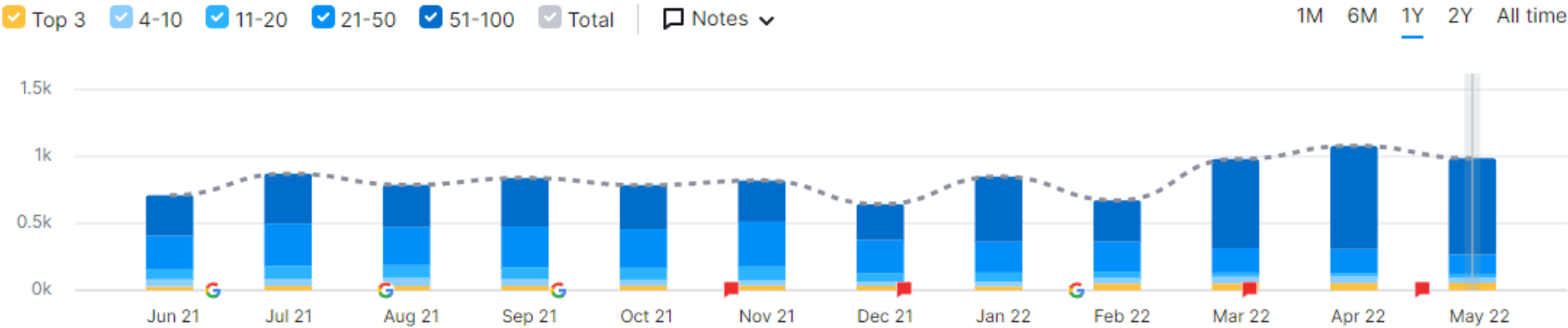
104

Top Ranking
Keyword

1080 Total Keyword Rankings

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume
northern state university	1	9900
northern university	1	1600
northern state	1	1300
nsu aberdeen sd	1	260
where is northern state university	1	170

Organic Keywords Trend



April 2022

Top 3

4-10

11-20

21-50

51-100

Total

53

51

24

178

774

1,080

Home page - Additional Keywords Ranking

Keyword	Rank	Search Volume	Category
colleges in aberdeen south dakota	1	170	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask
aberdien sd college	1	110	Carousel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask
northern university south dakota	1	110	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ
northern state	1	90	Knowledge panel, Local pack, Top stories, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, Video Carousel, People also ask
northern state university aberdeen sd	1	90	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, AdWords bottom, People also ask, FAQ
colleges in aberdeen sd	1	70	Knowledge panel, Site links, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ
nsu aberdeen	1	70	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ
northern state university location	1	70	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, People also ask, FAQ
northern state university in aberdeen south dakota	1	50	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ
northern university aberdeen south dakota	1	50	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, Video, People also ask, FAQ
northern university aberdeen sd	1	50	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, Video, People also ask, FAQ
northern state university south dakota	1	50	Knowledge panel, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, Video, People also ask, FAQ
aberdien south dakota university	1	50	Knowledge panel, Site links, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ

Admissions

https://www.northern.edu/admissions

Current Page 1
Keyword Rankings

7

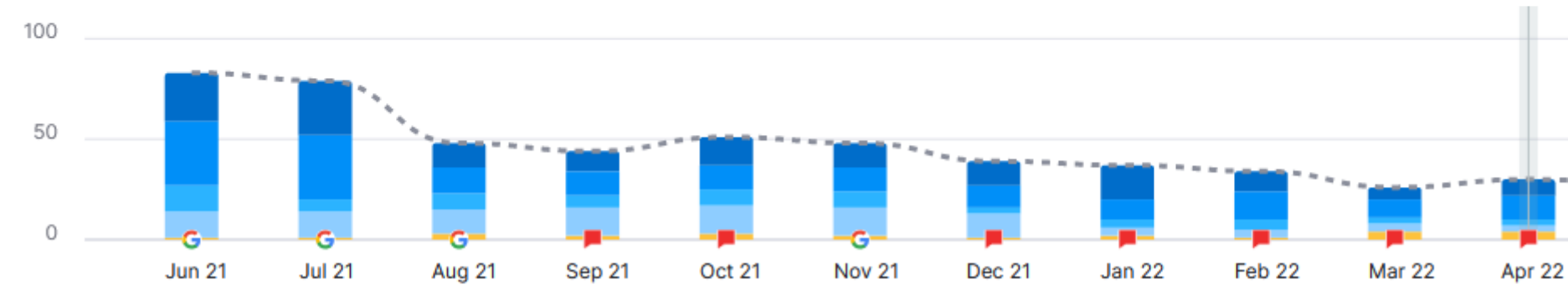
Top Ranking
Keyword

30 Total Keyword Rankings

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume
northern state university admissions office	1	50
northern state university application	1	50
northern state university requirements	2	50
northern state university enrollment	3	70
admissions nsu	7	140

Organic Keywords Trend

☒ Top 3 ☒ 4-10 ☒ 11-20 ☒ 21-50 ☒ 51-100 ☐ Total | Notes



April 2022

Top 3

4-10

11-20

21-50

51-100

Total

4

3

3

12

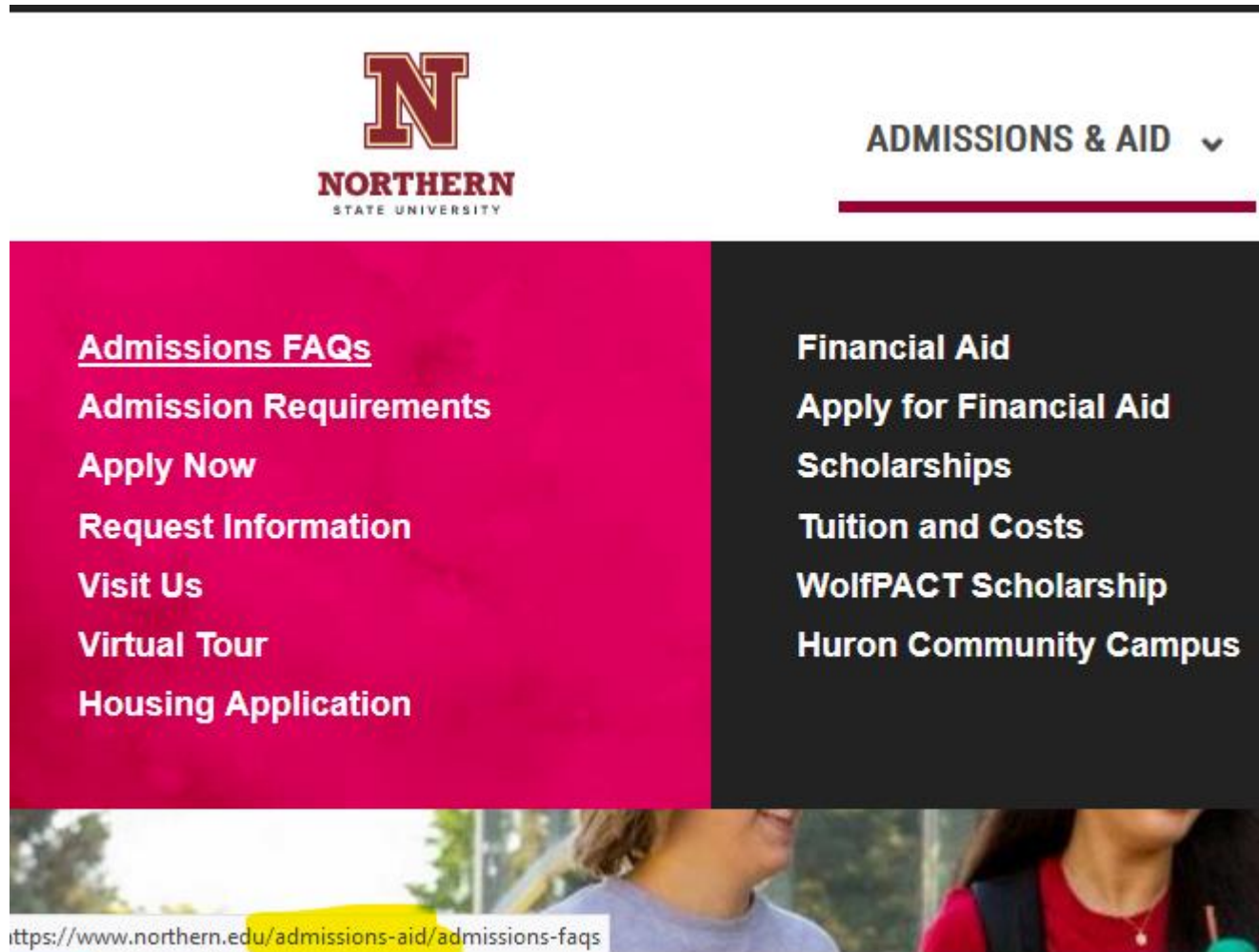
8

30

Keyword Ranking Data: April 2022

Admissions Page URL Structure

46



- There is confusion across admissions URLs.
- The main nav is /admissions. But then all the pages in the section are in /admissions-aid
- The /admissions-aid pages only rank for 2 keywords
- The /admissions pages rank for 15 keywords just on page 1.

Admissions - Additional Keywords Ranking

Keyword	Rank	Search Volume	Category
nsu application	8	260	Site links, Reviews, Video, AdWords top, People also ask
nsu application deadline	8	50	Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Tweet, Video, Featured snippet, People also ask
nsu application deadline fall 2021	11	140	Image pack, Reviews, Featured snippet, People also ask
northwestern state university admissions number	16	50	Image pack, Reviews, Featured snippet, People also ask
nsu secondary application deadline	18	260	Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask
north state acceptance number	21	50	Local pack, Site links, Reviews
northwestern state university application deadline for fall 2021	22	70	Image pack, Reviews, Featured snippet, People also ask, FAQ
nsu acceptance rate	25	1000	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Video, Featured snippet, People also ask, FAQ
northwestern state university application deadline	27	50	Image pack, Reviews, Tweet, People also ask, FAQ
the most northern state	34	50	Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Video, Featured snippet, People also ask
what is the most northern state	35	50	Site links, Reviews, Video, Featured snippet, People also ask
nother	36	4400	Instant answer, Image pack, Site links, Video Carousel, People also ask
north state acceptance	37	2900	Local pack, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Video
northwestern state university admissions	38	140	Knowledge panel, Site links, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ

Tuition and Costs



<https://www.northern.edu/admission-aid/tuition-and-costs>

Current Page 1
Keyword Rankings

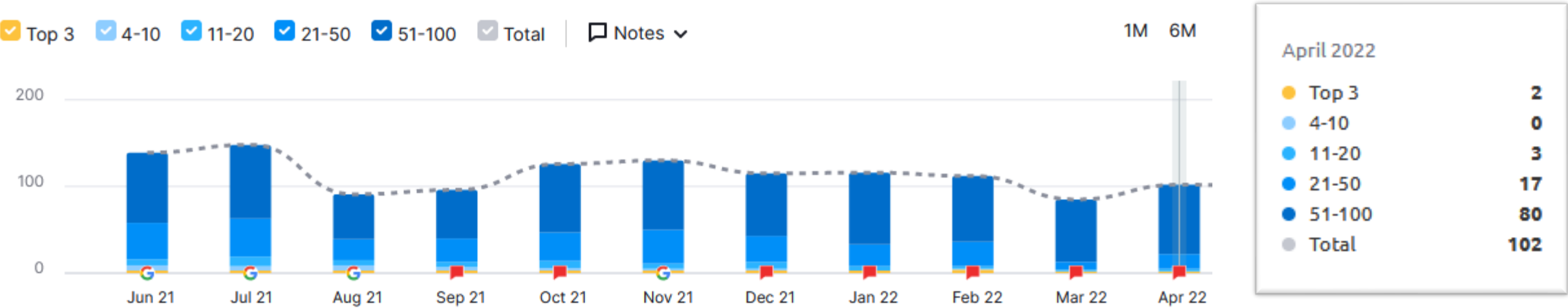
2

Top Ranking
Keyword

102 Total Keyword Rankings

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume
northern state university wue	1	210
northern state university tuition	1	50
nsu tuition and fees	11	50
nsu cost	12	90
nsu room and board cost	16	50

Organic Keywords Trend



Tuition and Costs - Additional Keywords Ranking

Keyword	Rank	Search Volume	Category
university of north dakota out of state tuition	25	50	Instant answer, Knowledge panel, Site links, People also ask
north dakota state out of state tuition	26	70	Instant answer, Knowledge panel, Reviews, People also ask
tuition north dakota state university	27	50	Instant answer, Knowledge panel, Reviews, Video, People also ask
north cost	28	260	Image pack, Site links, Reviews, People also ask
university of south dakota tuition per credit hour	28	50	People also ask
nsu florida tuition	31	480	Instant answer, Knowledge panel, Image pack, Reviews, People also ask
cooper medical school cost of attendance	33	210	Image pack, People also ask
north dakota state university tuition	34	170	Instant answer, Knowledge panel, Reviews, People also ask
university of north dakota cost of attendance	34	50	Knowledge panel, Reviews, People also ask
aberdeen fees	36	50	Image pack, Reviews, People also ask, FAQ
university of northern iowa tuition per semester	44	70	Site links, Reviews, Featured snippet, People also ask
university of wyoming dorm cost	44	50	Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Featured snippet, People also ask
cost to attend south dakota state university	44	50	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Reviews, People also ask
university of north dakota undergraduate tuition and fees	45	50	Instant answer, Knowledge panel, Site links, Reviews, Video, People also ask

Degree Programs

https://www.northern.edu/degrees

Current Page 1
Keyword Rankings

0

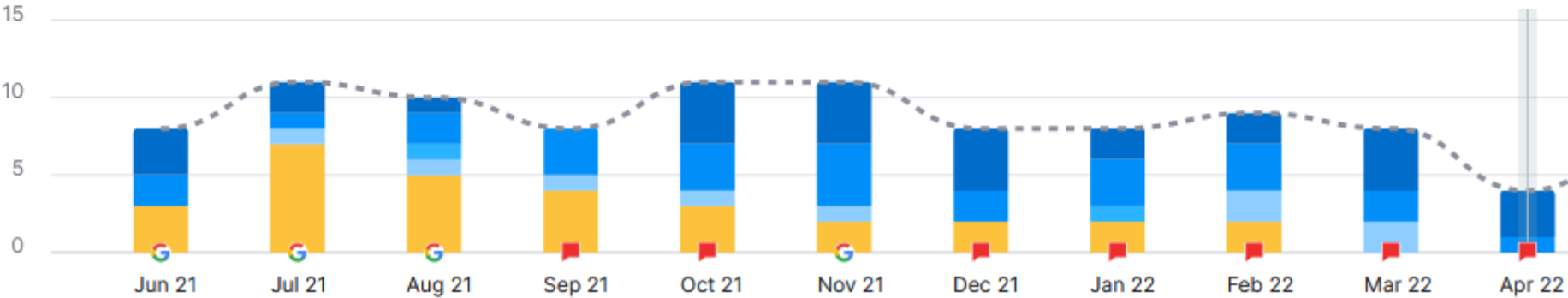
Top Ranking
Keyword

4 Total Keyword Rankings

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume
what are all the northern states	33	50
university of south dakota graduate programs	57	260
university of kansas graduate programs	76	210
k state degree list	80	50

Organic Keywords Trend

Top 3 4-10 11-20 21-50 51-100 Total Notes



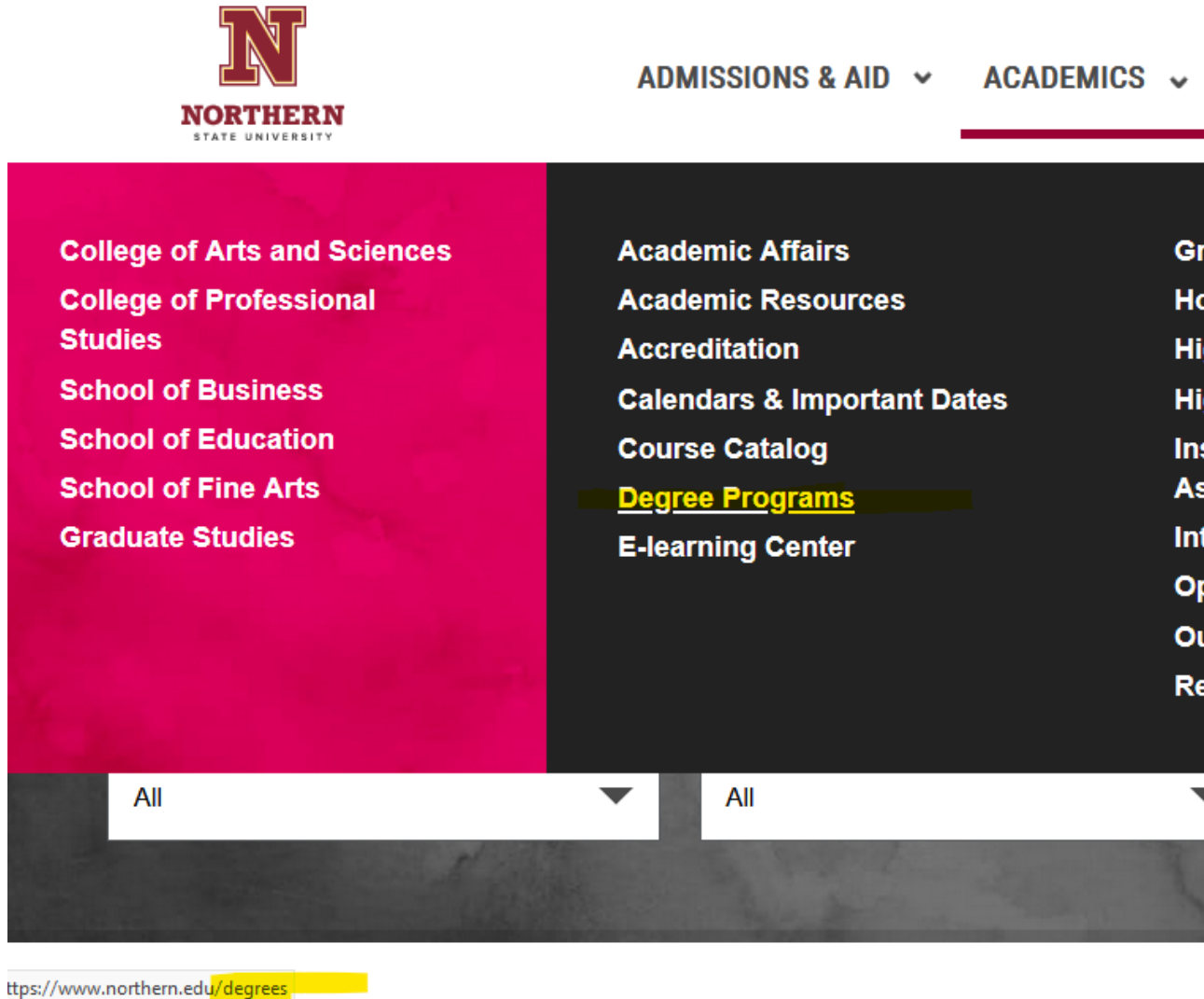
April 2022

Top 3	0
4-10	0
11-20	0
21-50	1
51-100	3
Total	4

Keyword Ranking Data: April 2022

Degree Page

51



N
NORTHERN
STATE UNIVERSITY

ADMISSIONS & AID ▾ ACADEMICS ▾

College of Arts and Sciences
College of Professional Studies
School of Business
School of Education
School of Fine Arts
Graduate Studies

Academic Affairs
Academic Resources
Accreditation
Calendars & Important Dates
Course Catalog
Degree Programs
E-learning Center

Graduate Studies
Honors Program
High School
High School
Institutional
Assessment
International
Open Access
Our
Research

All ▾ All ▾

<https://www.northern.edu/degrees>

- Is this page meant to be a landing page?
- It doesn't live in the /academics folder. And the links on the page go to pages like:
<https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/accounting-online>
which lives under /programs
- The subdomain catalog.northern.edu ranks for more degree related keywords. (1,166 keywords)

Degree Programs - Additional Keywords Ranking

Keyword	Rank	Search Volume	URL
northern state university degrees	1	40	https://www.northern.edu/degrees
northern state university degrees	2	40	https://www.northern.edu/majors-and-minors
banking degree online	2	110	https://www.northern.edu/programs/graduate/banking-and-financial-services-graduate-online
spanish education degree online	2	40	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/spanish-online
northern state university degrees	3	40	https://www.northern.edu/
northern state university online degrees	3	40	https://www.northern.edu/online-and-continuing-education
northern state university online degrees	4	40	https://northern.edu/program-type/online
banking and finance degree online	4	40	https://www.northern.edu/programs/graduate/banking-and-financial-services-graduate-online
degreeworks nsu	4	110	https://www.northern.edu/mynsu
northern state university online degrees	5	40	https://www.northern.edu/degrees
nsu degree programs	5	90	http://catalog.northern.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=1013
nsu general studies degree	5	70	https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/general-studies-online
degreeworks nsu	5	110	https://www.northern.edu/news/banner-degreeworks-other-systems-be-temporarily-down-march
nsu online degrees	6	210	https://www.northern.edu/online-and-continuing-education

Elementary Education



<https://www.northern.edu/programs/undergraduate/elementary-education>

Current Page 1
Keyword Rankings

0

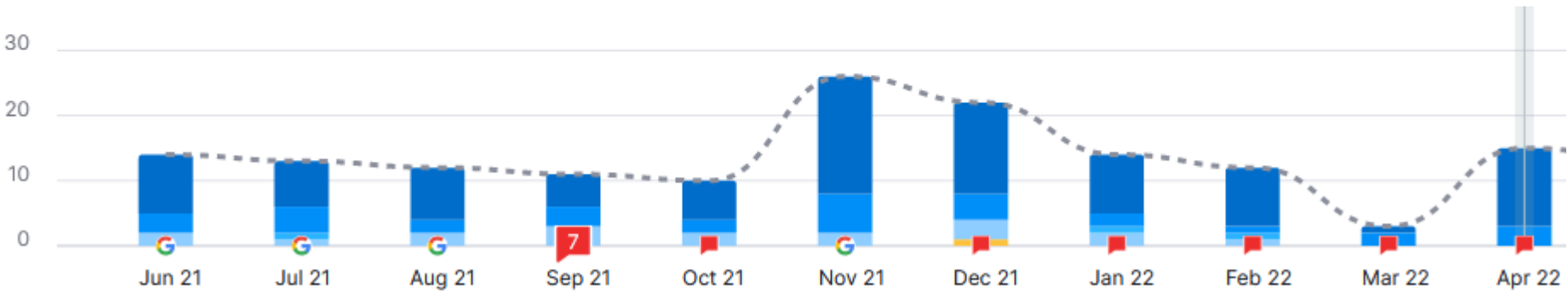
Top Ranking
Keyword

15 Total Keyword Rankings

Keywords Ranking	Page Position	Search Volume
und elementary education	35	50
elementary education degree name	46	50
northern elementary	47	390
elemtry school	61	260
ms state elementary education	63	50

Organic Keywords Trend

☒ Top 3 ☒ 4-10 ☒ 11-20 ☒ 21-50 ☒ 51-100 ☐ Total | Notes



April 2022

Top 3

4-10

11-20

21-50

51-100

Total

0

0

0

3

12

15

Keyword Ranking Data: April 2022



Elementary Education - Additional Keywords Ranking

Keyword	Rank	Search Volume	Category
dr bartel huron sd	65	50	Knowledge panel, Reviews, FAQ
elementary school education	70	170	Knowledge panel, Site links, Video Carousel, People also ask
elementary education in	70	590	Site links, People also ask
study elementary	75	170	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Reviews, People also ask
what is elementary education	81	110	Knowledge panel, Site links, Video Carousel, People also ask
elementary education online	81	210	Site links, People also ask
tt elementary school	89	50	Knowledge panel, Image pack, Site links, Reviews, Video
elementary education course	92	50	People also ask, FAQ
education elementary	93	260	Top stories, Image pack, People also ask
elementary school how many years	97	50	Image pack, Site links, Featured snippet, People also ask

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- 1 Admissions pages only have 7 keywords ranking on page 1. There is confusion about URL structure and what pages should be ranking.
- 2 The main degree page has 0 page 1 rankings. Opportunity to optimize for keywords like “northern university degree programs”, “Degrees at northern”.
- 3 Identify key pages and optimize for keywords with higher monthly search volume and search intent that aligns with the content on the page.
- 4 Important to understand intent behind keywords and to note what content or featured snippets Google is showing in search results. Build content to support these featured snippets.

Section 5: What are your on-page and technical challenges

- ✓ Technical Site Errors
- ✓ Key SEO Best Practices
- ✓ Site Structure Best Practice
- ✓ Mobile Speed Test
- ✓ Competitor Speed Test comparison

Technical Audit Summary



A workbook of errors will be provided with descriptions of the error and recommended fixes

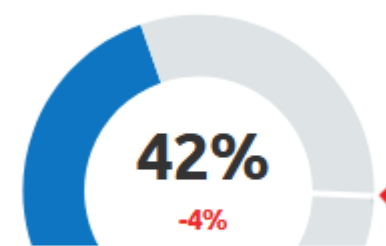
Crawled Pages

36,540



Healthy	373
Broken	165
Have issues	34,364
Redirects	1,262
Blocked	376

Site Health



Your site	42%
Top-10% websites	92%

Site Health Breakdown

- Crawlability: 40%
- Site Performance: 56%
- HTTPS Implementation: 16%
- Internal Linking: 42%

- The **Site Health score** is based on the number of errors and warnings found on the site, and their uniqueness. The higher the score, the fewer problems the site has.
- **Crawlability** describes the search engine’s ability to access and crawl content which is important because that is how the search engines discover pages and index them.
- **Site Performance** looks at CSS and Javascript resources on the site's pages for all speed-related issues.
- **HTTPS Implementation** shows potential issues surrounding certificate registration, server support, and website architecture.
- **Internal Linking** looks at the click depth of pages as well as any broken links.

Breakdown of Errors



Errors
127,756

Issues of the highest severity detected on your website during the last audit.

- Redirect chains and loops
- Duplicate title tags
- Duplicate meta descriptions
- Duplicate page content
- Broken internal links



Warnings
247,506

Issues of medium severity detected on your website during the last audit.

- Unminified & uncompressed JavaScript and CSS files
- Outgoing internal links with nofollows
- HTTPs pages leads to HTTP page
- Missing meta descriptions



Notices
160,695

Notices detected on your website during the last audit. Although notices are not considered high-impact, we recommend that you fix

- Permanent redirects
- Pages more than 3 clicks to reach
- Pages with only one incoming internal link
- Links with no anchor text

Meta Descriptions Should be Concise and Relevant

What is a Meta Description?

Google will sometimes choose to pull in content from page for meta-descriptions instead of using the one provided because the content is more optimized

Issue	Current Page	Recommendation
Missing Meta-Description	N/A	Google does not always use the meta-description if content on the page is a better match for a users search query. Make sure to optimize and include a call-to-action that engages the user.

EAB will provide best practice guide to help with writing descriptions.

- Placing top traffic keywords into meta description along with clear messaging will improve CTR
- Goal character count of 160

These pages do not have meta descriptions. Google then pulls content from the page to display in the listing, depending on the search phrase used. For Virtual Tour, the listing description works well.

<https://www.northern.edu> ⋮
Northern State University | Aberdeen, S.D.
Search form · Explore **Northern**: Set up an on-campus visit · Register for new student orientation · Apply now and **unleash your potential**.
[Academics](#) · [Admissions & Aid](#) · [About](#) · [myNSU and Self-Service Banner](#)

<https://www.northern.edu> > [academics](#) > [college-arts-an...](#) ⋮
College of Arts and Sciences | Northern State University
Here you'll have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of academic programs that offer hands-on learning and research opportunities.

Page Title Optimization

What is a Title?

Issue	Recommended
Optimization	Optimize page titles for high-volume keywords that closely match with the page content.

EAB will provide best practice deliverable

- As an example, **optimal title length should be as close to 60 characters** to avoid truncation on the SERP
- Think of the search query when defining titles

Page Titles should be unique.

<https://www.northern.edu> > academics > Academics | Northern State University
Caring, accessible faculty; Real-world experiences and internships; Undergraduate research; Extraordinary student support programs; Tight-knit campus community.

<https://www.northern.edu> > news-categories > academics > Academics | Northern State University
The program, a collaboration between **Northern** and the **University** of South Dakota, guarantees admission for five NSU Honors Program students into the USD Knudson ...

The /news-categories/ & /event-categories/ areas are duplicating other page titles

<https://northern.edu> > news-categories > arts-entertainm... > Arts & Entertainment | Northern State University
ABERDEEN, S.D. — The **Northern State University** Annual Spring Choral Concert will take place at 3 p.m. May 1 in the Johnson Fine **Arts** Center Harvey and Cynthia ...

<https://www.northern.edu> > event-categories > arts-enter... > Arts & Entertainment | Northern State University
Northern State University Theater will present Shakespeare's "Hamlet" at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 28 on the NSU campus. The one-hour adaptation will be ...

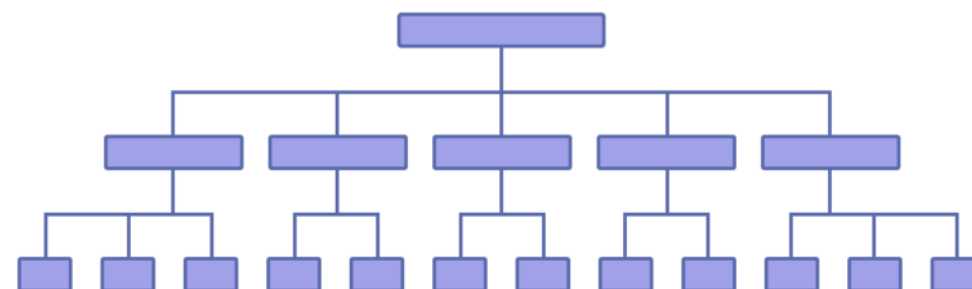
Organized Site Structure is Recommended

Why Site Structure is Important?

- Crawling and indexing issues happen due to poorly designed site structure.
- Site structure affects everything you do to optimize your site, from URLs to your sitemap to using robots.txt to block search engines from certain pages.
- Important to consider site structure when adding or moving content.

Google has found the same pages under <https://www.northern.edu> and <https://northern.edu> so it is counting these as duplicates. This could be hindering rankings and should be resolved.

Good Site Structure



Bad Site Structure

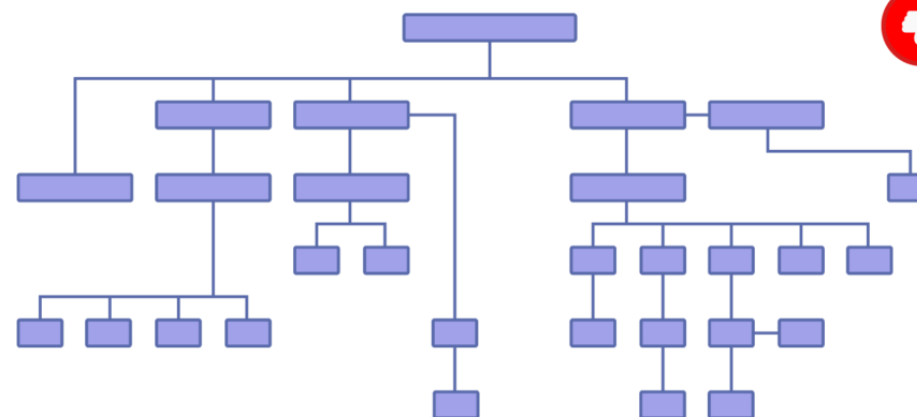


Image 1: <https://cdn-backlinko.pressidium.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/flat-site-structure-960x370.png>

Image 2: <https://cdn-backlinko.pressidium.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/bad-site-structure-960x507.png>

Load Time for Site Pages



3.3s

Avg. Home Page Load Time

Industry Avg.
5s

4.53s

Avg. Page Load Time – Sitewide

Industry Avg.
7.2s



- High load times can discourage users from interacting with site, causing an increase in bounce rates.
- The primary entry point to a site *should load* as quickly as possible.

Mobile Site Speed is Strong for Industry



Mobile Site Speed Ranges – Education

Google’s tool to measure site speed



northern.edu

2.2s

Mobile load time
on 4G networks



Mobile Site Speed Competitor Comparison

Northern.edu is slower among competitors.

RANK	DOMAIN	SITE SPEED
1	lakeareatech.edu	1.4s
2	dsu.edu	1.5s
3	sdstate.edu	1.6s
4	usd.edu	2.2s
5	northern.edu	2.2s
6	bhsu.edu	2.3s



- Opportunity to improve mobile site speed through compressing images, limiting JavaScript and code that hinders load time.
- Mobile site speeds for .edu sites typically range from 1.3s to 2.4s.
- Northen.edu is slower among competitors.

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- 1 Update all pages with optimized meta descriptions and avoid duplicate meta descriptions.
- 2 Optimize other on-page elements (page titles, H1s, page copy) for highly searched keywords.
- 3 Optimize pages for user intent to ensure users land on the right pages.
- 4 Fix any internal broken links.
- 5 Optimize for mobile and work on improving mobile site speed.

Section 6: Are You Ready For Google's Zero Click Environment?

Featured Snippets
Google My Business
Knowledge Panel
Structured Data

The screenshot shows a Google search for "northern state university". The search results include a Knowledge Panel for Northern State University, which displays structured data about the institution.

Search Results:

- Google** northern state university
- Tools: All, News, Images, Maps, Videos, More
- About 1,200,000,000 results (0.52 seconds)

Knowledge Panel:

- Northern State University** (Logo: Northern State University)
- Aberdeen, SD · Public · 4-year
- Overview, Admissions, Cost, Programs, Outcomes, Students

URL: <https://www.northern.edu>

Northern State University | Aberdeen, S.D.

College of Arts and Sciences · College of Professional Studies · School of Business · School of Education · School of Fine Arts · Graduate Studies.

myNSU and Self-Service Banner · Degree Programs · Academics · NSU Campus

People also ask

- Is Northern State University d1?
- What GPA do you need for Northern State University?
- What is Northern State University known for?
- Is NSU a good school?

About

northern.edu

Northern State University is a public university in Aberdeen, South Dakota. NSU is governed by the South Dakota Board of Regents and offers 45 bachelor's degrees, 53 minors, six associate degrees, 16 pre-professional programs, 23 certificates and 10 graduate degrees. [Wikipedia](#)

Avg cost after aid	Graduation rate	Acceptance rate
\$16K	43%	79%

Graduation rate is for first-time, full-time undergraduates. [more](#)

From US Dept of Education · [Learn more](#)

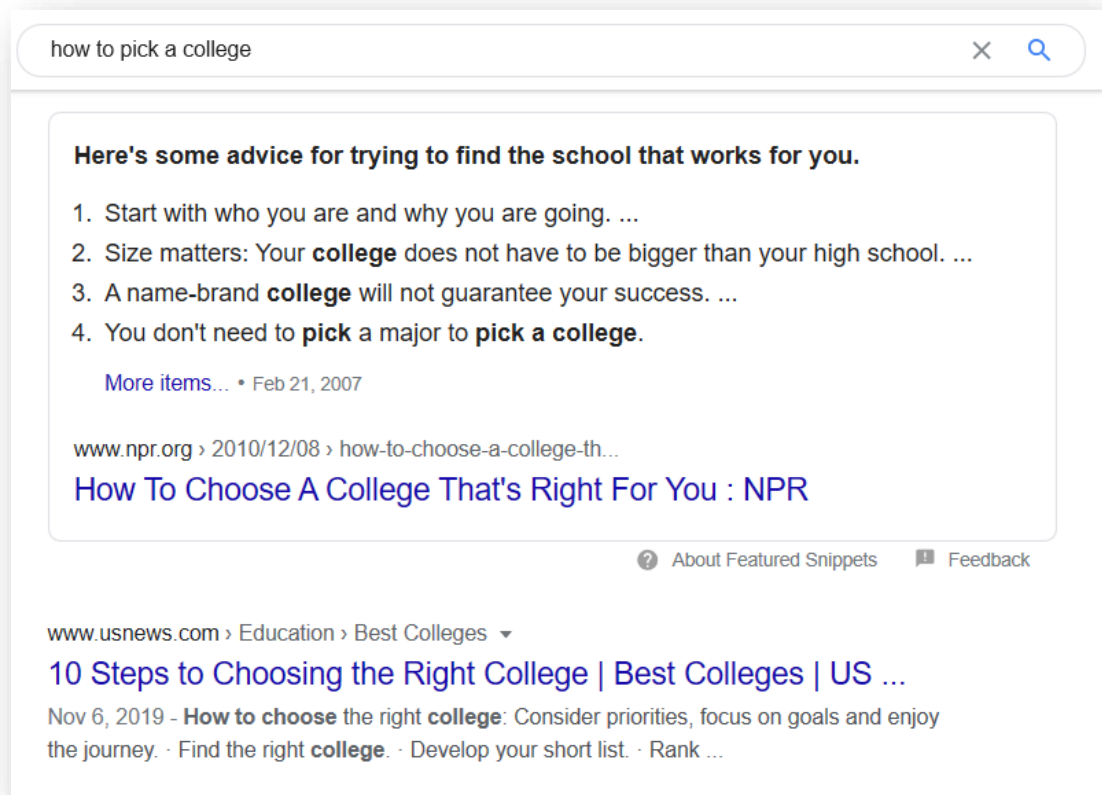
Address: 1200 S Jay St, Aberdeen, SD 57401

Phone: (605) 626-3011

What is Position Zero?



Position zero is the term used to describe the quick answer *featured snippet* block at the top of the Google search results page.

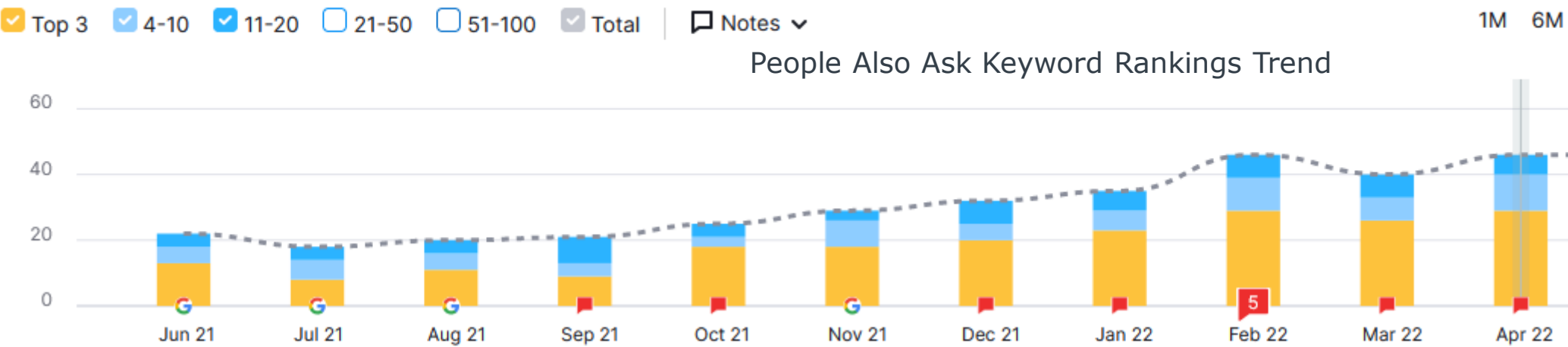


Featured snippets are most likely to show up when the search is in the form of a question.

Is Your Content Winning Position Zero?



Organic Keywords Trend



Keywords	Position
northern state university	1
northern university	1
northern state	1
nsu aberdeen sd	1
gypsy day parade 2021	1
where is northern state university	1
colleges in aberdeen south dakota	1
gypsy days 2021	1

Creating a Strategy for Optimizing Search Result Page Content

Trend:

Zero Clicks Are the New Normal

Thanks to such SERP features as featured snippets, College Search Boxes, Google's Local Packs, Knowledge graphs, and so on, more than half of all searches are now "zero-click searches." That means the user's query is answered on the SERP itself, without them having to click away anywhere.

Win:

Optimize keywords and queries based on volume search and CTR. Focus on page title, meta descriptions, and H1 headers!

Colleges
Near Aberdeen, SD

In-state In US Public Private, non-profit MORE FILTERS

Northern State University
Aberdeen, SD
Public · 4-year

Presentation College
Aberdeen, SD
Private, non-profit · 4-year

→ More colleges

Rating Hours

Northern State University
4.6 ★★★★★ (56) · College
Aberdeen, SD · (605) 626-3011
Open · Closes 5PM
"Loved going to college here."

Website Directions

Presentation College
4.4 ★★★★★ (13) · College
Aberdeen, SD · (800) 437-6060
Open · Closes 5PM

Website Directions

Mount Marty College - Yankton, SD
5.0 ★★★★★ (2) · College
Sioux Falls, SD · (605) 362-0100
Open · Closes 5PM

Directions

See photos
See outside

Northern State University

Website
Directions
Save

University in Aberdeen, South Dakota

Northern State University is a public university in Aberdeen, South Dakota. NSU is governed by the South Dakota Board of Regents and offers 45 bachelor's degrees, 53 minors, six associate degrees, 16 pre-professional programs, 23 certificates and 10 graduate degrees. [Wikipedia](#)

Avg cost after aid	Graduation rate	Acceptance rate
\$16K	43%	79%

Graduation rate is for first-time, full-time undergraduate students who more [Learn more](#)

Address: 1200 S Jay St, Aberdeen, SD 57401

Phone: (605) 626-3011

Undergraduate enrollment: 1,383 (2018–19)

Average annual in-state cost

Before aid	After aid
\$23,075	\$15,851

Aid includes grants and scholarships from the institution, state, and federal government

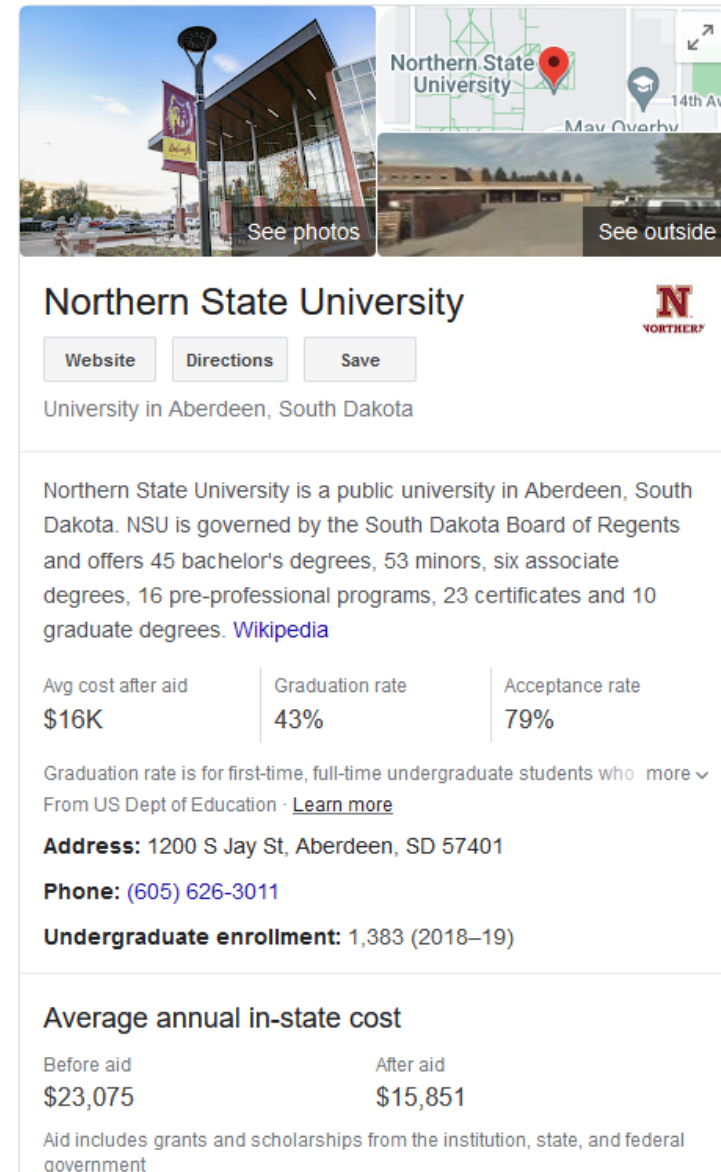
Verify Your Institution, Set Up Google My Business

Why is getting verified important?

- Once verified, institutions can request changes directly from Google and update that information in the SERP directly
- You'll be able to choose the URL that users are linked to when they click inside of the knowledge graph
- More accurate information for your users

How to Best Optimize Your Google My Business

1. Add a full description
2. Include updated photos and videos
3. Fill out all fields with as much information as possible
4. Utilize Google Posts, add updates and new information directly into the knowledge panel with Google Posts. They show for a set amount of time, but this is a great way to capture more space in the Google zero-click environment.



The screenshot displays the Google My Business profile for Northern State University. At the top, there are three images: a building entrance, a map showing the university's location in Aberdeen, South Dakota, and an aerial view of the campus. Below the images, the university's name "Northern State University" is prominently displayed, followed by its logo. Navigation buttons for "Website", "Directions", and "Save" are visible. The location is listed as "University in Aberdeen, South Dakota". A detailed description follows, stating that NSU is a public university governed by the South Dakota Board of Regents, offering various degrees and programs. Key statistics are presented in a table format, including average cost after aid, graduation rate, and acceptance rate. Contact information such as address and phone number is provided, along with undergraduate enrollment figures. A section for average annual in-state cost compares before and after aid amounts.

Avg cost after aid	Graduation rate	Acceptance rate
\$16K	43%	79%

Average annual in-state cost	
Before aid	After aid
\$23,075	\$15,851

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- 1 Update and optimize Google My Business Profile.
- 2 Consider voice search queries in content strategy.
- 3 Format and code pages so that Google can easily find and pull information directly into search results pages.
- 4 Utilize Google Posts to keep updated information directly in your knowledge panel.

- 1 What Does Your Site Traffic Tell You?
- 2 How Are People Searching for You?
- 3 What Are Your Competitors Doing and How Do You Rank Against Them?
- 4 How Are Your Spotlight Pages Ranking?
- 5 What Are Your On-Page and Technical Challenges?
- 6 Are You Ready for Google's Zero-Click Environment?
- 7 **What Are the Next Steps?**

What Comes Next

Technical Error Workbook & How To Fix Guide

You will be provided a workbook with technical errors that were found to be affecting the SEO of your site.

Action Plan

Receive a detailed phased action plan to tackle the opportunities and recommendations found in the audit along with our goals for SEO.



Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis | New York

202-747-1000 | eab.com