



# Barcelona International Search Summit



• Kevin Kapezi  
Growthack Digital

• **Merger, acquisition or restructure? Key considerations for international SEO**

# KEVIN KAPEZI

SEO Specialist  
& Co-founder

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As well as being the SEO and content marketing specialist, Kevin is an experienced digital marketing strategist.

He's clocked up years working for a vast range of brands from international credit giant Experian to specialised startups.

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Kevin's all-round experience allows him to take a comprehensive view of your online presence to spot gaps, seize opportunities and drive performance.

Hope you enjoy the talk!

'Really knowledgeable and always challenging us with new ways of thinking and ideas.'

**JADE WARWICK**

Marketing Manager, Ampa



# Why am I here?

- +6 years in SEO
- Agency + in-house
- Brands both large and small
- Now an independent consultant at Growthack



# What are we going to cover today?

- Overview of M&A
- What success looks like
- Working with non-SEOs
- Consolidating content
- Migration considerations
- Checklist of best practices

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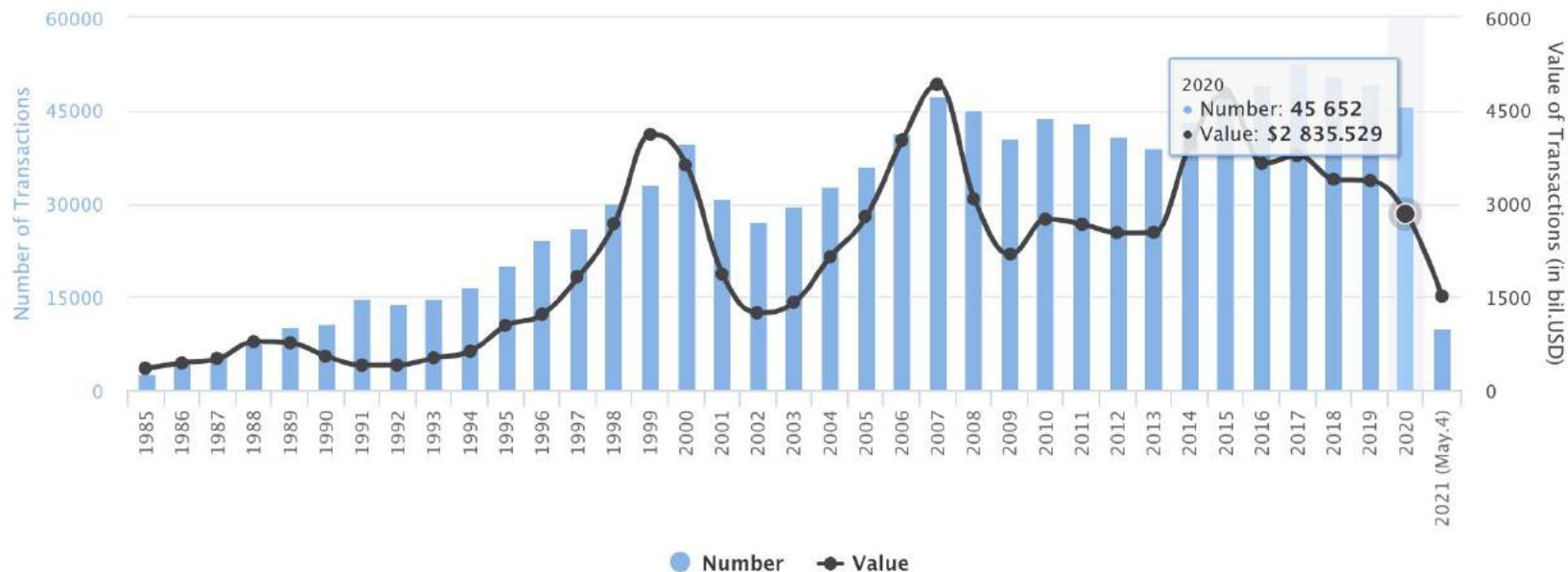
## Mergers and acquisitions worldwide

‘Since 2000, more than 790,000 transactions have been announced worldwide with a known value of over **\$57 trillion.**’

Source: [Institute for Mergers, Acquisitions and Alliances](#)

**\$57 Tn**

# Mergers and acquisitions worldwide

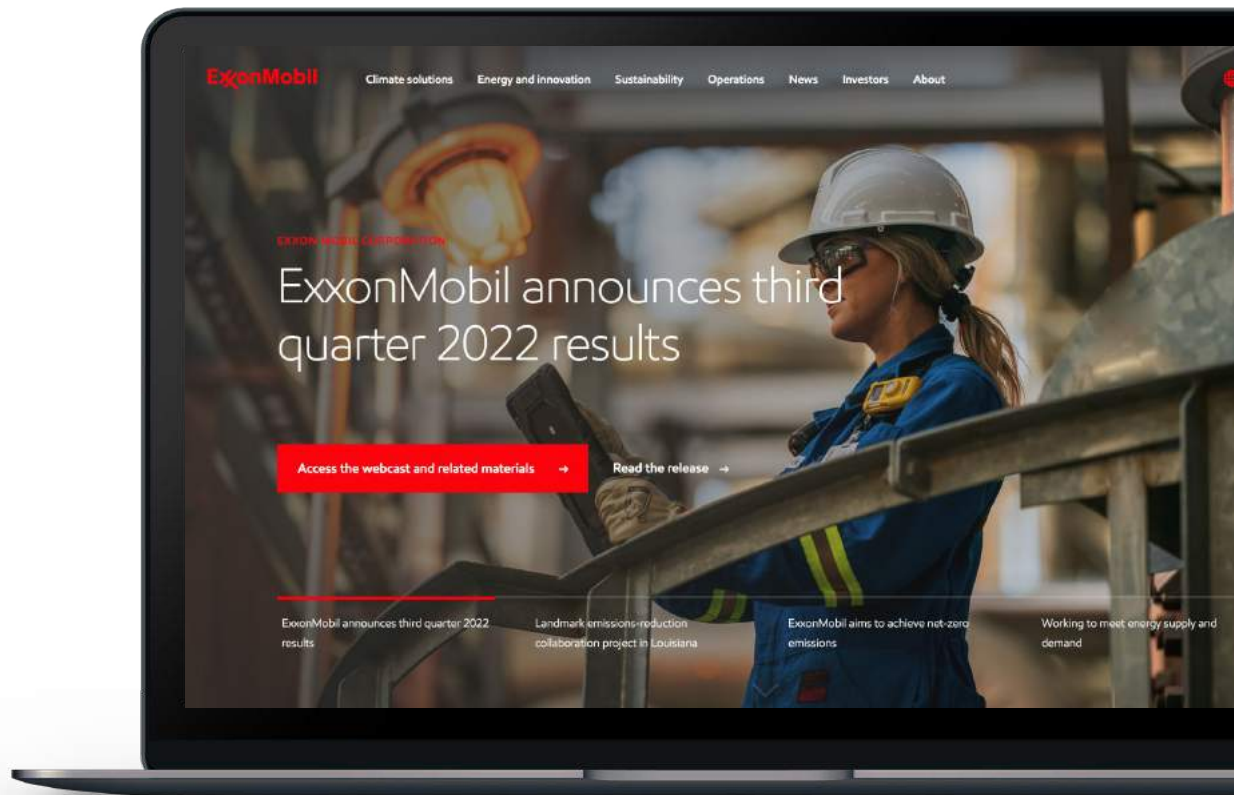


Source: IMAA analysis; imaa-institute.org

**Merger:** could involve a new firm being created from two separate companies.

# ExxonMobil

- Famous merger, becoming the 3rd largest company in 1998
- Corporate site with links to separate brand sites
- 23% increase in market share, according to Fortune 500
- Deal valued at **\$81 billion**





**Merger:** can also occur where brands retain their *separate identities*.

# Ampa + Mayo Wynne Baxter

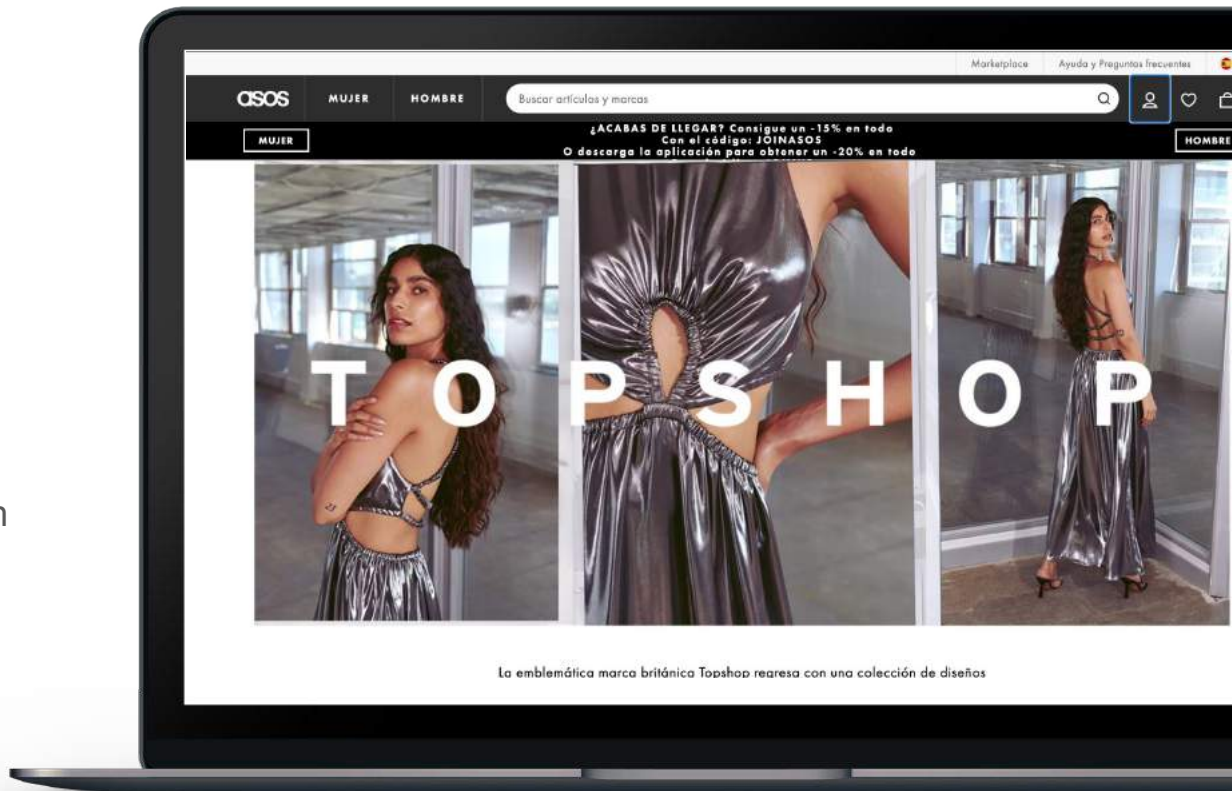
- No redundancies and no money exchanged as part of the merger
- Mayo Wynne Baxter join Ampa group, retaining brand and strengthening position in the market
- Ampa expands and increases turnover to over **£100 million**



**Acquisition:** could involve one firm being acquired by another.

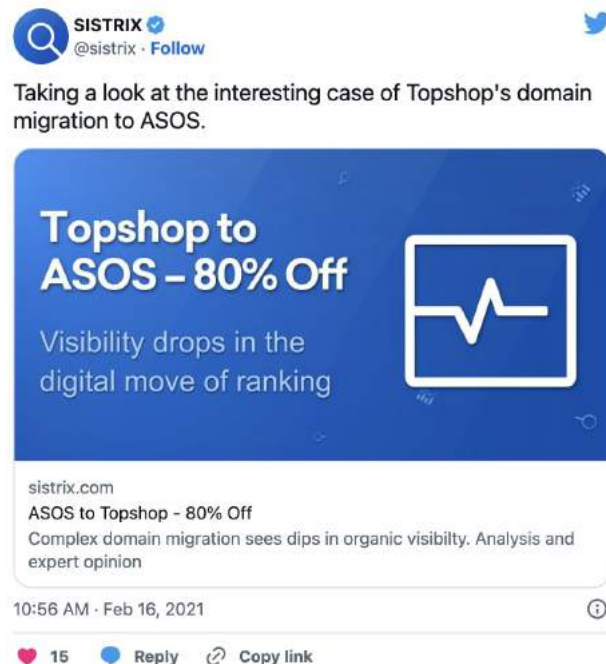
# ASOS acquires Topshop


- Arcadia Group (Miss Selfridge, Topshop, Topman etc.) went into administration
- Brands and not physical stores were acquired
- Topshop domain redirected
- Deal worth **\$364 million**



# ASOS acquires Topshop

- Wildcard redirects caused the Topshop brand to lose ~80% of its visibility at the time
- SERP retail space lost as a result of merging two sites into one




**SISTRIX**   
@sistrix · Follow

Taking a look at the interesting case of Topshop's domain migration to ASOS.

**Topshop to ASOS – 80% Off**

Visibility drops in the digital move of ranking



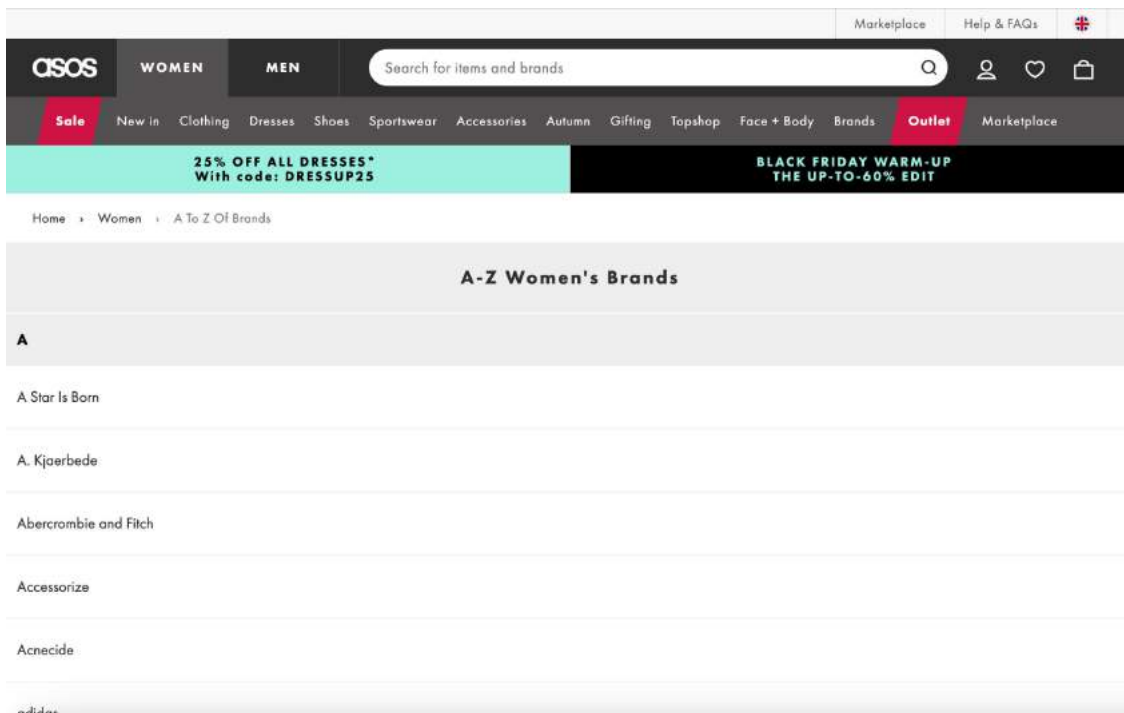
sistrix.com  
**ASOS to Topshop - 80% Off**  
Complex domain migration sees dips in organic visibility. Analysis and expert opinion

10:56 AM · Feb 16, 2021

15 Reply Copy link

# Lost amongst all other brands

Topshop now appears in a long list  
of other brands.



The screenshot shows the OSOS website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Marketplace' and 'Help & FAQs'. Below that, the main navigation bar includes 'OSOS', 'WOMEN', and 'MEN', along with a search bar. A secondary navigation bar lists various categories like 'Sale', 'New in', 'Clothing', 'Dresses', 'Shoes', 'Sportswear', 'Accessories', 'Autumn', 'Gifting', 'Topshop', 'Face + Body', 'Brands', 'Outlet', and 'Marketplace'. A promotional banner for '25% OFF ALL DRESSES\*' with code 'DRESSUP25' is visible. Below the banner, the breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Women > A To Z Of Brands'. The main content area is titled 'A-Z Women's Brands' and shows a list of brands under the letter 'A': A Star Is Born, A. Kjaerbede, Abercrombie and Fitch, Accessorize, Acneide, and aridac.

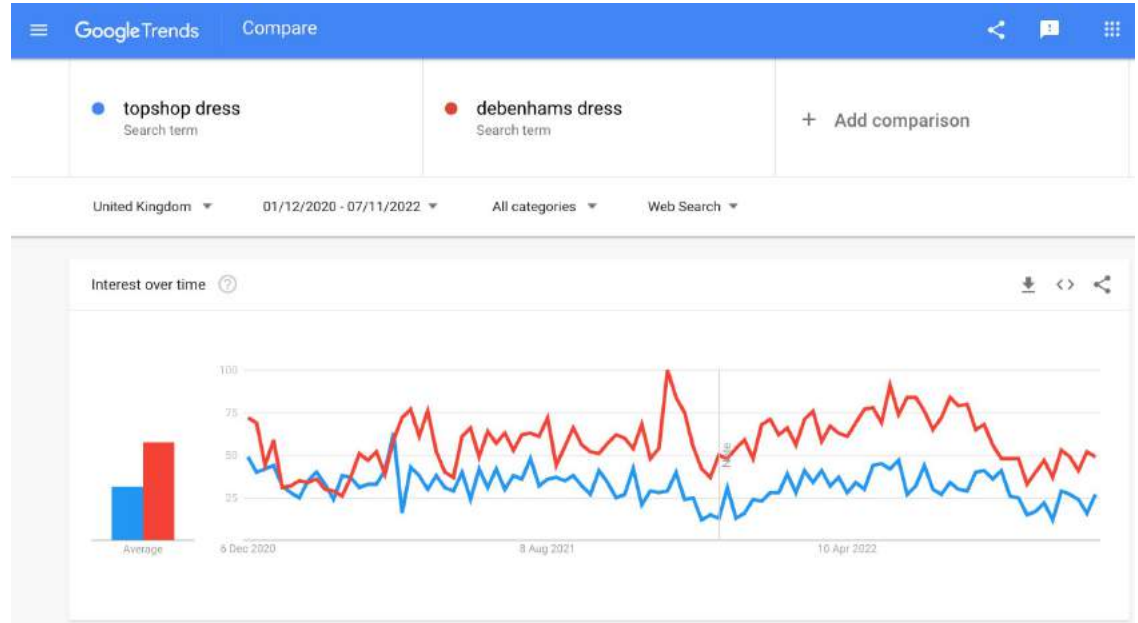
# Boohoo acquires Debenhams

- Major changes were made to the website in April 2021
- Traffic took a major hit and has not recovered since
- No major organic uplift for Boohoo website as a result
- Deal worth **\$75.4 million**



# Brand equity as a metric?

The value from branded search should not be underestimated when considering a merger and acquisition.





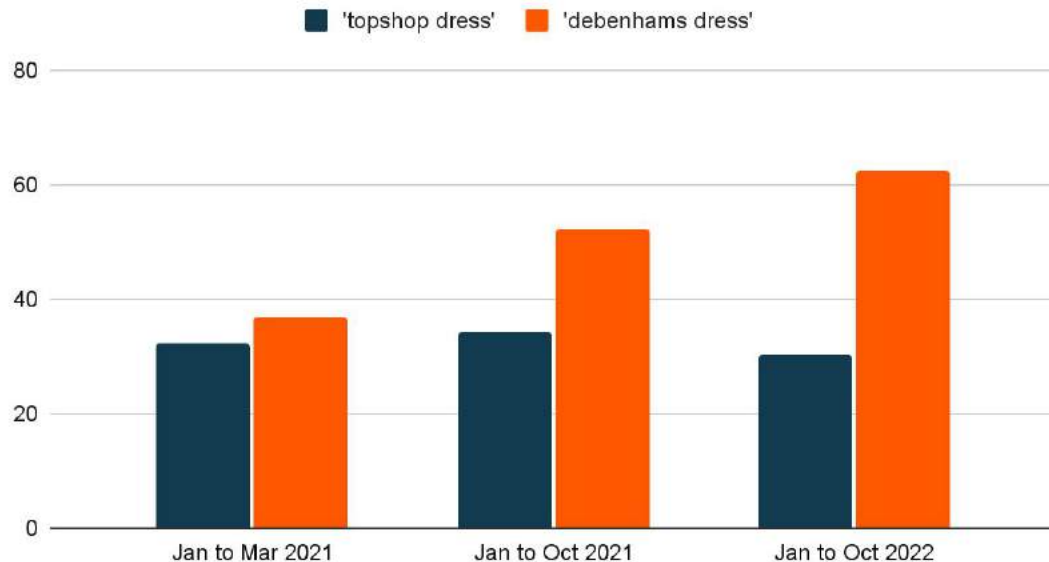
Should ASOS have retained the Topshop domain as a *separate brand*?

# Brand Equity as a metric

Jan to Oct 2022 Year-on-Year  
Google Trends data (UK)

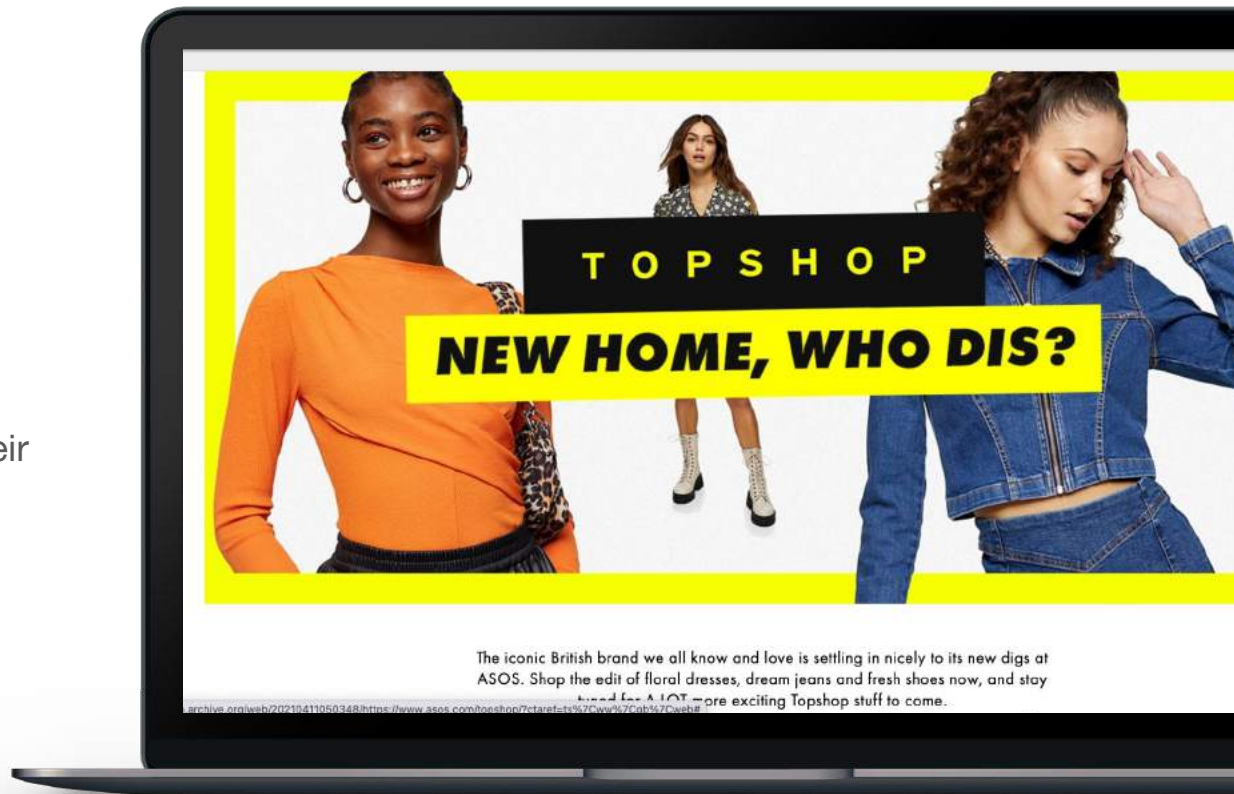
- 'Topshop dress' **-11.2%**
- 'Debenhams dress' **+19.5%**

'topshop dress' vs debenhams dress' interest over time



# The use of physical assets

Did ASOS maximise the use of their physical assets during the transition period?



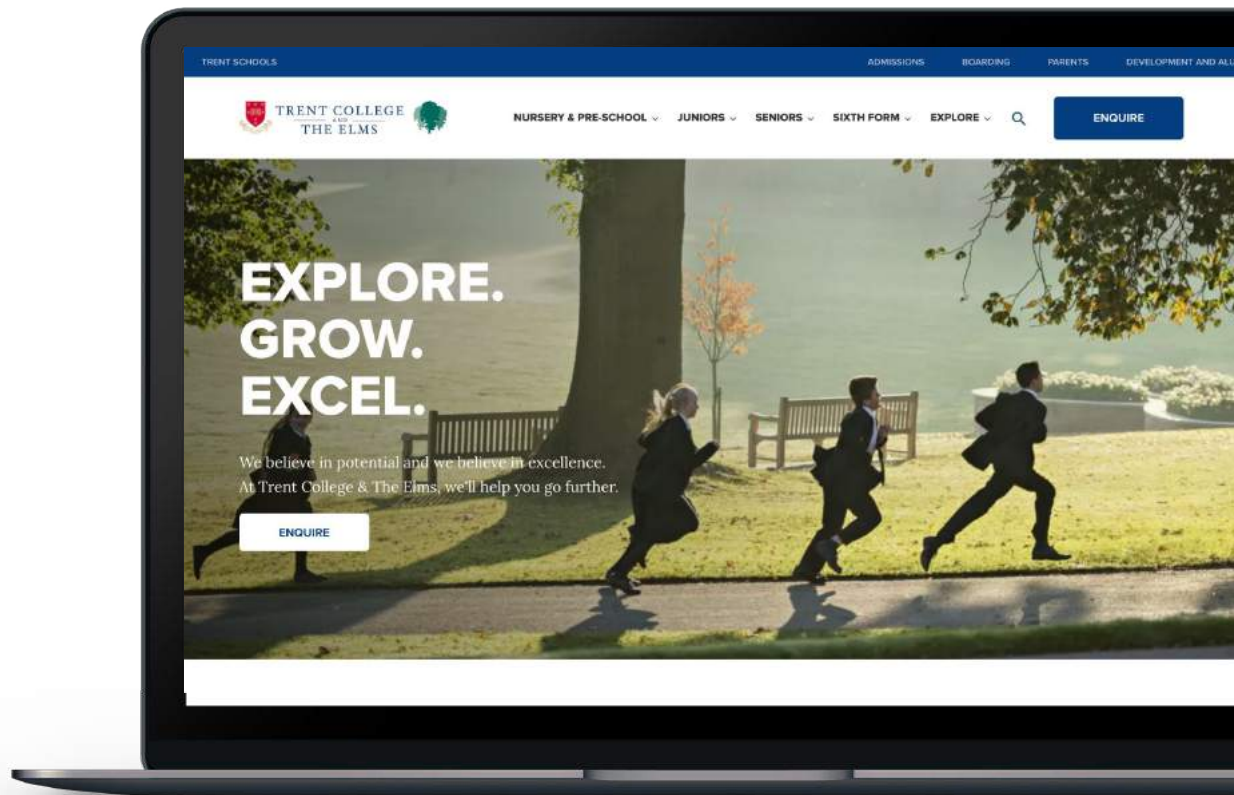
‘Debenhams dress’ is now 105% more popular than ‘Topshop dress’

According to Google Trends (UK) data from January to October 2022

**Restructure:** could involve a brand within a business being separated, absorbed or *repositioned*.

# Trent College & The Elms

- New site and rebrand
- trentcollege.net migrates to trentschools.net
- elmsschool.net homepage has canonical to new site
- Restructure to showcase junior and senior schools



# Migration considerations

1

'Business' decisions are typically made first

2

Brand equity and user trust should be carefully considered

3

Prove a 'business case' for ideal SEO implementation

4

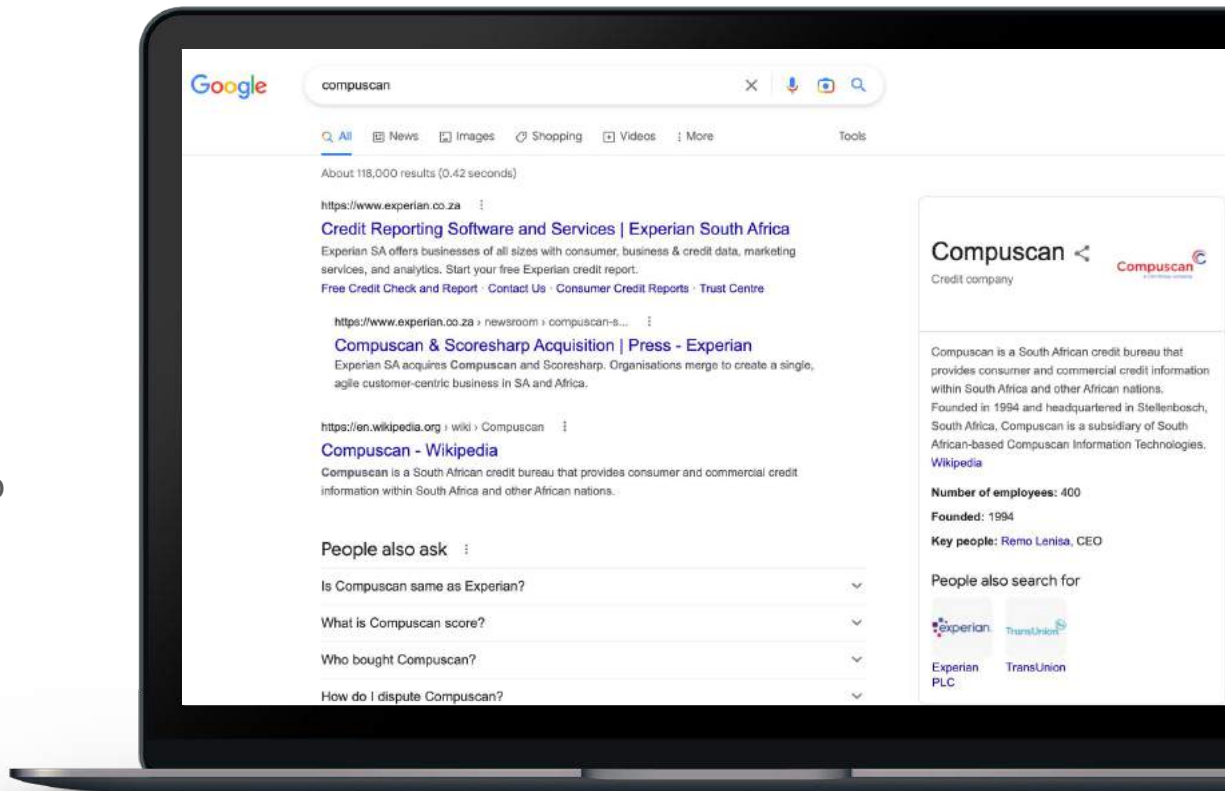
Report results to key stakeholders and demonstrate value

OK, what about International SEO?



# Experian + Compuscan

- Regional market leaders Compuscan and Scoresharp were acquired in 2019
- Experian extends presence and investment in Africa as part of their global strategy
- Deal worth **\$263 million**



# Compuscan migration to experian.co.za

## SEO Visibility & Share of Market

Show: **Events**

Google Updates

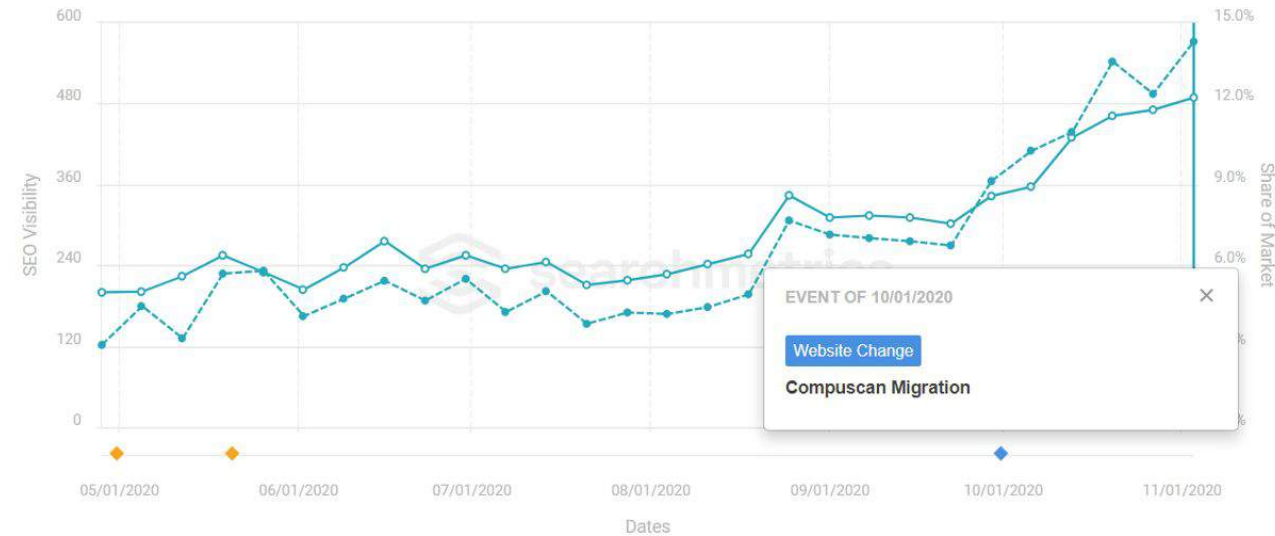
Select date range: 04/28/2020 - 11/03/2020

Date: 11/03/2020

**experian.co.za** Value: 489

SEO Visibility 489

Share of Market 14.3%



# Compuscan migration to experian.co.za

Organic Paid

### Distribution by Country

Countries	Traffic Share	Traffic	Keywords
Worldwide	100%	87.8K	4.1K
ZA	99%	87.1K	2.8K
US	<0.1%	215	245
NA	<0.1%	77	54
UK	<0.1%	70	88
Other	<0.1%	324	917

Compare

### SERP Features

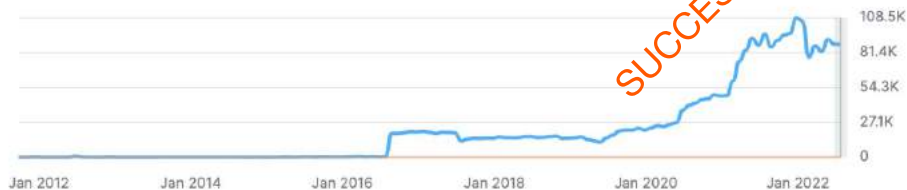


1M 6M 1Y 2Y All time

Export

### Organic Traffic 87,779/month

Organic Traffic  Paid Traffic  Notes



### Organic Keywords 4,133

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



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# Key international SEO considerations

1

Track visibility of the acquired domain prior to the migration

2

Monitor impact of domain migration in tandem with web changes

3

Work closely with the regional team to ensure best practices

4

Report results to key stakeholders and demonstrate value

# Consolidating Content

## 1. Audit

Identify high-value pages i.e. loads of links, high traffic, or a key part of the user journey.

**Gather data from CMS, Analytics, GSC, Crawls and team members.**

## 2. Merge

You can ensure all valuable pages are mapped, merged and consolidated.

**Enhance the site with additional information and close any gaps.**

## 3. Redirect

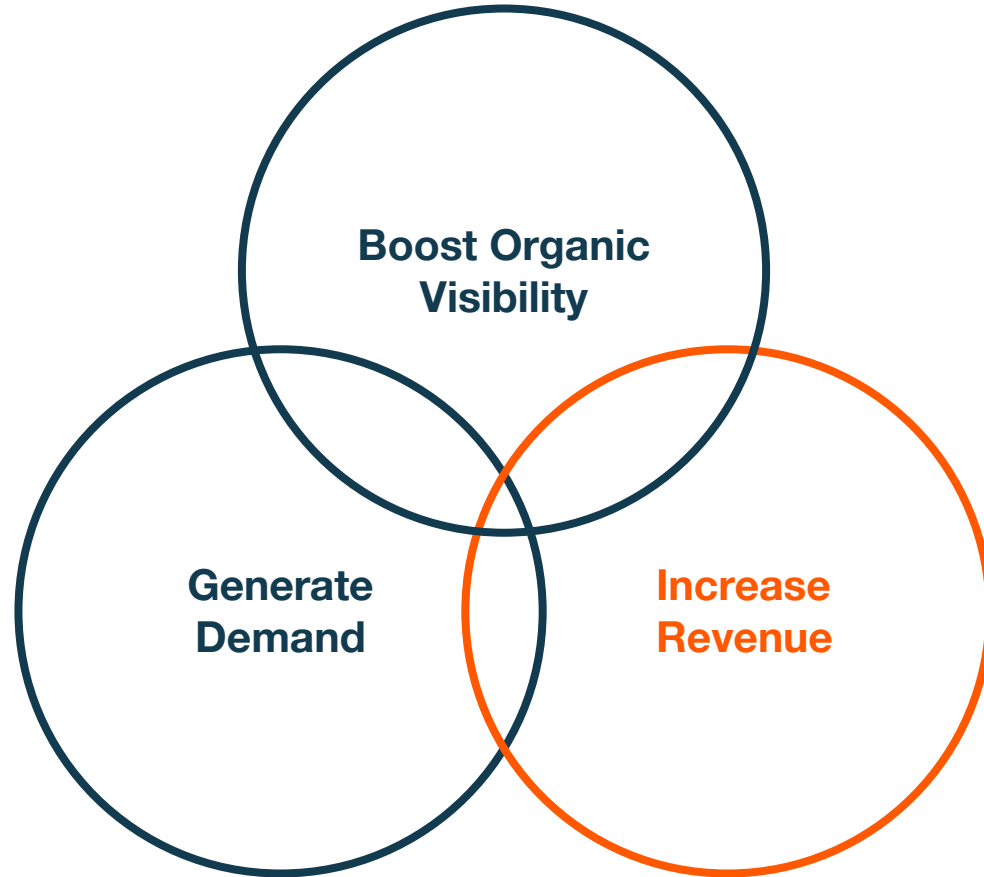
These need to be handled on a page to page basis if possible as this is where the equity is maintained.

**Can be problematic for larger sites so always consult developers.**

Every business change is *unique* but some principles remain unchanged.

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# SEO Success



# International SEO success for each stakeholder

## Content + PR

Help to ensure content drives more relevant traffic to the website(s) and prove that the work we are doing is yielding positive results.

## General Marketing

Support and report on visibility for each business unit that they are involved in so they can better enable the sales team.

## Product

Provide guidance on what areas require priority according to market research and report on launches and project success.

## Leadership

Create top-level reports for SEO activities and how these impact business objectives across each market or business unit.

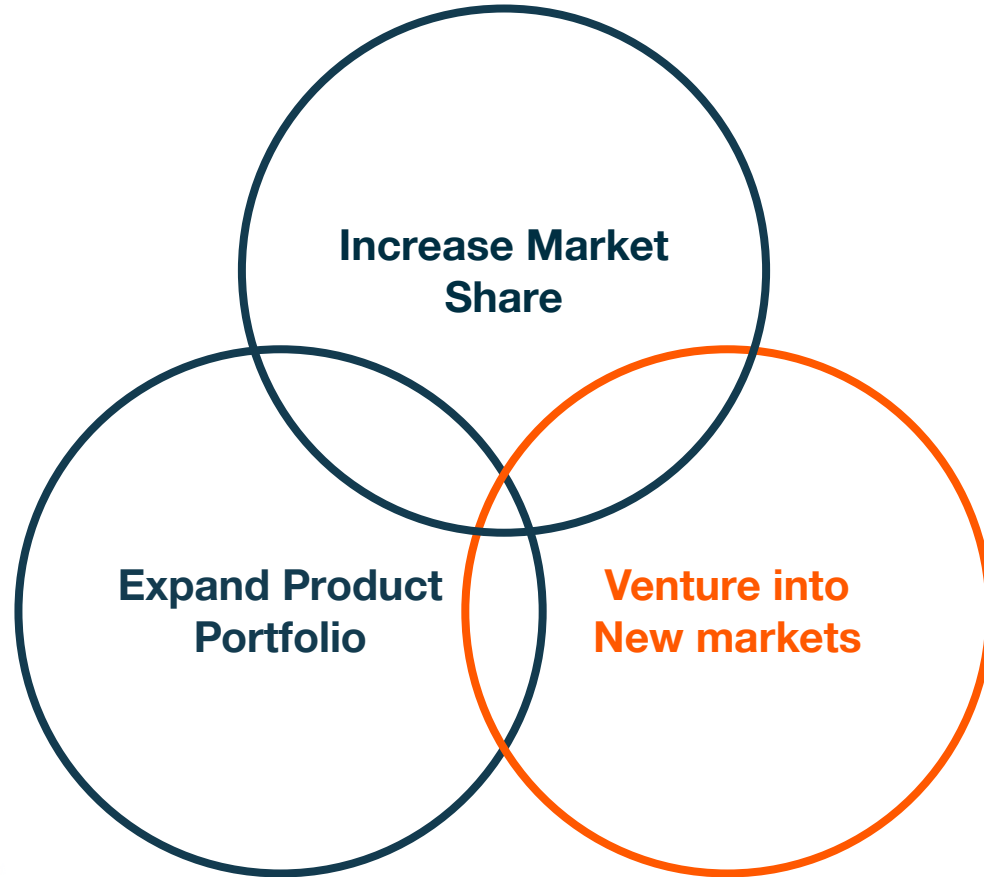
## International

Ensure each international team meet their country specific business objectives and initiatives that drive overall growth.



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# Business Success



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# What's Next?

# Next acquires Made.com

- Next has acquired the brand, domain names and intellectual property
- Excludes the company's remaining inventory
- Deal worth \$3.9 million

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Next buys Made.com after the UK furniture retailer collapsed due to falling demand and surging inflation



[bloomberg.com](https://www.bloomberg.com)  
Next Buys Collapsed UK Furniture Retailer Made.com  
Next Plc has struck a deal with the insolvency administrators of Made.com Group Plc to buy the brand and intellectual property of the...

1:24 PM · Nov 9, 2022

22 Reply Copy link

Read 3 replies

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# Checklist of best practices

- ❑ Redirects: Easier said than done
- ❑ Risk assessment: Check website profiles for each domain
- ❑ Transition period: 3-6 months and consider rel=canonical or temp redirects
- ❑ Brand Assets: How can we retain as much equity as possible from page-to-page?
- ❑ Update: Any major touch points informing as many users as possible
- ❑ Collaborate: Work with PR, Development, and Content teams etc.
- ❑ UX: Consider effect of any major changes on all channels as part of wider strategy
- ❑ Report: to key stakeholders according to their 'success' metrics

# Thank you

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