Findings and Recommendations for the Home Page

1) Use all your "real estate" Unlike social media platforms, your website is the one place on the internet where you "own the real estate." You derive the most benefit from making the most of the space allotted to you. Your website does not span the entire width of the screen. Were you to maximize this space, you could bring customer-focused, keyword-rich, search engine optimized content "above the fold" (the content seen on the first screen, with no scrolling).

2) **Main navigation** Expanding the design opens the opportunity to expand your navigation menu. It is properly positioned at the top of the screen but should include a "Home" button to return visitors to the home page. Not everyone realizes that clicking on a logo generally returns a visitor to a website's home page. You could also add a link here to your "Kitty Corner," currently not represented on the website at all. You have no "Contact" page; your "Customer Service" link goes to your shopping site, opening as a contact form.

3) **Local identity** As a local business relying on foot traffic, your address and phone number should appear prominently. In an expanded design, there is space to feature this important information at the top of the page, along with an email address. Your content should also feature your location.

 4) **Tag line** Your tag line is an opportunity to reinforce the benefit(s) of your offering. As part of your Audit Brief you indicated that creating a new tag line was paramount. Currently it is part of an image, and Google cannot read it. Your new tag line should be moved under your logo.

5) **Call to Action (CTA)** Your CTA invites subscription to a newsletter that does not exist! I suggest changing the offer to just the coupon and making the CTA more prominent.

6) **Social media integration** With a robust presence on Facebook (18,000 followers) and Instagram (2,332 followers) I recommend using widgets to integrate these channels into your website for a more engaging experience.
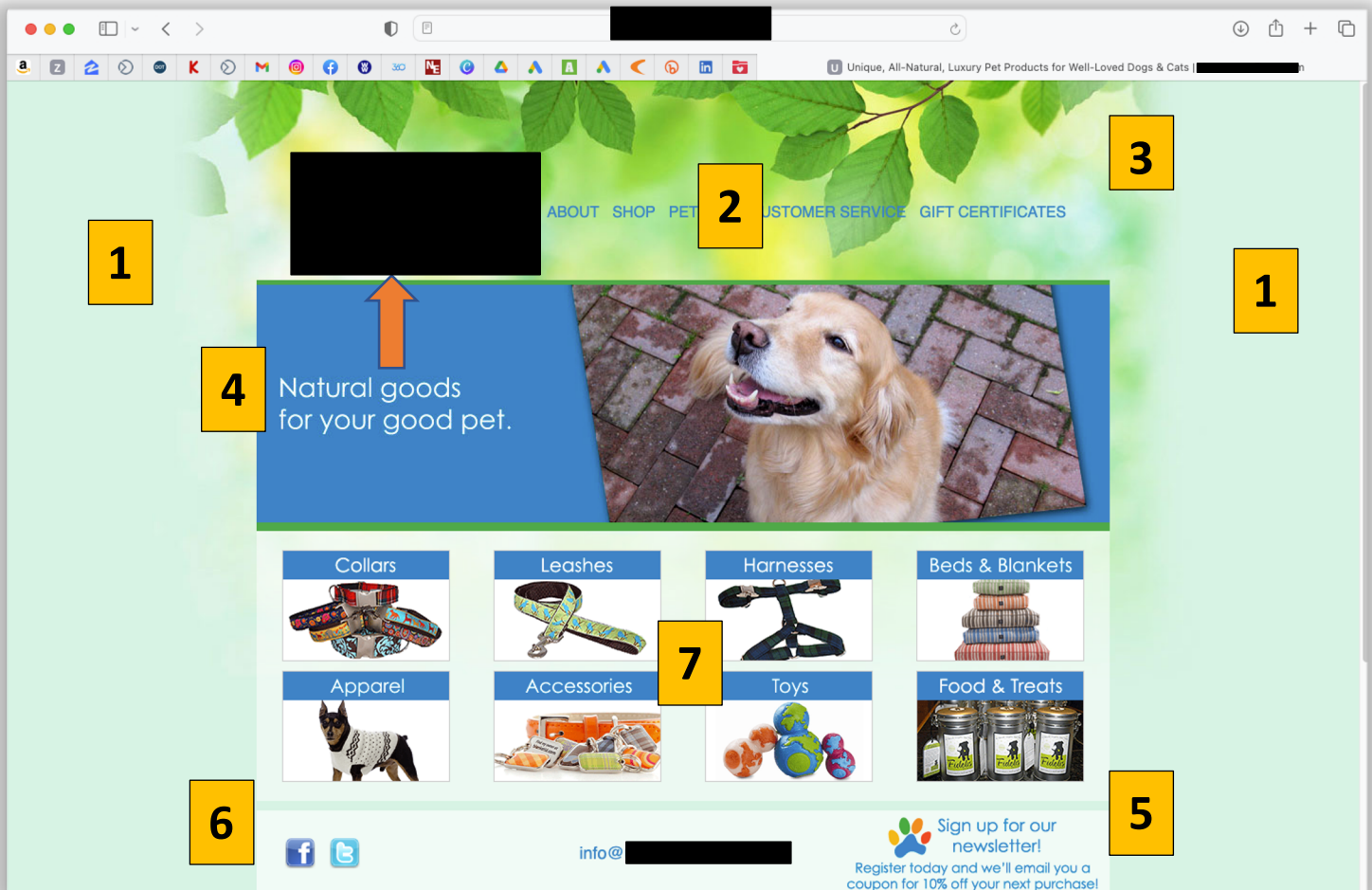
Findings and Recommendations for the Home Page (Cont'd.)

7) **Product Image Links** These image links take the visitor to a shopping platform off the website. (This is addressed on page 4.) As part of the recommendation (below) to move most, if not all, of the content "above the fold," I suggest that these images link to a new "Shop" page on this site, which further directs visitors to the offsite shopping platform. Alternatively, they could become pop-up windows instead of links, whereby if a visitor mouses over the image a window pops up with a short description text and link to the new "Shop" page.

8) **Content** In its current state, the home page content is all located "below the fold," meaning a visitor must scroll down the page to find it. With a redesign utilizing the entire screen, content can be placed "above the fold" and optimized for visitors and search engines alike. A larger font, in black or a dark color on white, and standard use of blue text links will do much to improve the readability of the content. At 293 words, the page has a Flesch Reading Ease score of 47.6 and a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score of 12. Adding easy-to-read content is highly recommended to improve those scores.

Headlines and subheadings should be used to break up the content and organize it for search. Applying header tags during the development of the page will help SEO. Header tags, in decreasing numerical order, inform Google of the hierarchy, or importance, of content. Breaking up content with subheads adds to its readability.

9) **Footer** Currently the "Privacy Policy" link goes to the contact form on the shopping site. There is a short Privacy Statement present on the "Customer Service" page of the shopping sub-website. A policy page should be added. Standard use of a footer, which appears on every page of a website, is to include website navigation links and contact information.

Meta Data

Meta data, in combination with visible content, is used by search engines to return the most relevant results for a search query. Although programmed "behind the scenes," this data is often displayed in the search results.

Page title tags should be 60 – 70 characters (with spaces) maximum. Your home page title tag has 86 characters.

Meta descriptions should be no more than 150 characters (with spaces). Your home page meta description has 170.

There is only one headline on the home page.

Of the six images on the home page (the logo and the 5 images in the slider), none have titles and only the logo has an ALT tag.

In addition to SEO, using ALT tags is critical in meeting ADA accessibility requirements.

Fewer than half of the 35 links on the home page have meta titles.

The subpages all have similar findings. The recommendation is to employ best practices in creating keyword-rich meta data for all page titles, page descriptions, links, and image alternative descriptions (ALT tags). This should greatly improve your search engine results.

Findings and Recommendations for the About Page

There is an opportunity here to integrate more keywords, emphasize the local store, and introduce the online store. Including the photo of ███████████ personalizes the mission! At 293 words, this page has a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score of 8 and a Flesch Reading Ease score of 64.7. With 500 – 600 words being the optimal minimum content for a web page, there is plenty of room to build in more keyword-rich content.

Findings and Recommendations for the Shop Page

Clicking "Shop" in the top navigation of ███████████████ takes the visitor to an offsite storefront, without explaining they are leaving the █████████████ website. I understand that a new shopping platform will be integrated into the planned website redesign. Until such time, I recommend creating a new page for that "Shop" link which opens to explain where the visitor will go and adding a large "Shop Now" CTA button which will take visitors to the online store.

In its current format at shop.█████████████████, the shop sub-website has six subpages.
- The content on "About Us" differs from the website's "About" page.
- The "Customer Service" page clearly explains policies and processes.
- The "Gift Cards" page is merely instructions to call the store.
- The "Contact" page is just an online form; no phone number, email, chatbot, or mailing address is present. A spam checker code must be entered and then a Captcha verification must be completed.

Submitting the form returns a simple "Your message has been sent and we'll get back to you soon!" reply. There is opportunity here for deepening the relationship with a more personalized response.

Findings and Recommendations for the Customer Service Page

Here is the first mention of a local address, and an opportunity to link back to the main website. Payment, shipping, and return policies and procedures are clearly stated and here is the company's "Privacy Policy." The best practice for handling of the "Privacy Policy" is described in Item 9 on page 3 of this report.

Findings and Recommendations for the Pet Tips Page

The "Pet Tips" page presents a marvelous opportunity to add fresh, timely content to the website in the form of a blog. Engagement can be increased with downloadable tip sheets, instructional videos, surveys, trivia contests, etc. I recommend changing the menu name to "Pet Tips Blog" as most website visitors expect to see the word "blog" on a website and come to trust that feature for up-to-the-minute industry and business news and advice.

The Competition

More than a dozen pet food and supply stores are located within a 10-mile radius of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ including three "big box" chain pet supply stores. Narrowing the search to within 5 miles, I chose three stores offering similar products as ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, namely all-natural holistic dog and cat foods, treats, supplements, accessories, and grooming supplies. I evaluated the websites of those three stores using the 5C's™ and graded them from A to F, A being the best. I used four search terms and all three websites returned in Google search, along with ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

- "pet supplies xxlocationxx"
- "pet food xxlocationxx"
- "all-natural dog food xxlocationxx"
- "custom dog apparel xxlocationxx"

The competitive business I chose were:

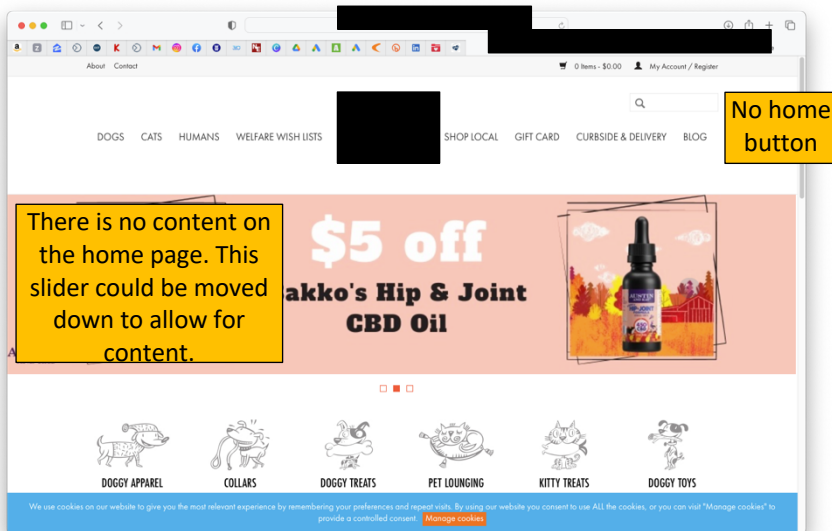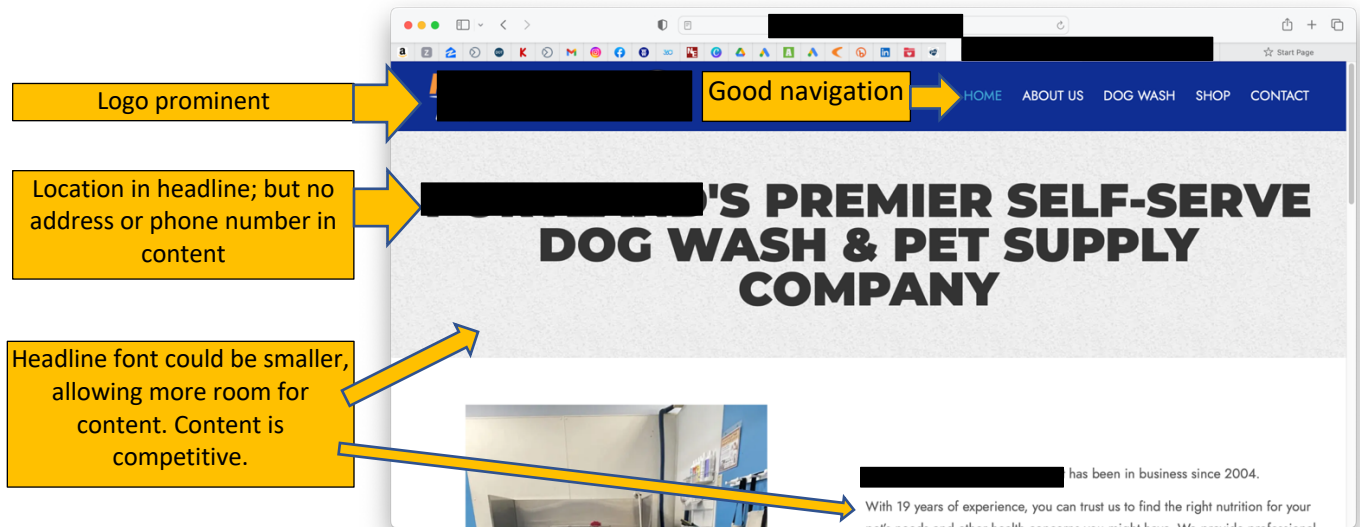▮▮

Some general observations:
- All three competitor websites were mobile-friendly.
- All three sites made the most of their "real estate" in their design, presenting ample opportunity for increasing their SEO through keyword-rich content. Sadly, none of them take that opportunity.
- Each website had a robust footer section with contact information, navigational links, applicable social media links.
- Two offered sign-ups for newsletters, offers, etc. They also both had blogs integrated into their website, making it easy to add new, fresh content (a Google plus).
- All three websites were secure sites (using https://). This is necessary in order to provide safe, secure online shopping.
- Arguably the most visually appealing website, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ does not make use of best practices in SEO. There are no keywords; image titles and ALT tags are missing; the title tag is underutilized; and there is no meta description.
- Although ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ has a title tag and meta description, there are no keywords designated.
- ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ makes good use of SEO best practices, employing a title tag, meta description, and designating keywords.

A Closer Look at the Competition

Here's a closer look at the home pages of the competing websites, viewed "above the fold."

Logo and tag line prominent

No home button

An engaging image, but no content above the fold!

This is a 3-location chain. Contact info is in the footer on the individual location pages. However, a toll-free phone number could be employed and placed at the top of the website.

No CTA linked to a benefit

Logo prominent

Good navigation

Location in headline; but no address or phone number in content

Headline font could be smaller, allowing more room for content. Content is competitive.

No home button

There is no content on the home page. This slider could be moved down to allow for content.

Your Opportunity

Each of these competing websites has their strengths and weaknesses.

Where they all lack, and where you can overtake them in search engine results and positioning, as well as in providing a more enjoyable user experience, is in adding engaging, optimized, keyword-rich content above the fold and in maximizing your meta data.

21-Point Checklist: How Your Website Performed

I conducted an in-depth review of your website's performance against these key metrics, inserting a few suggestions along the way (in bold red font).

Criteria	Description	Yes	Sort of	No	Notes
MOBILE-RESPONSIVE Google indexes "mobile-first"	Mobile-responsive (Google penalizes if not)			X	Site is not mobile-responsive.
	Short headlines			X	There are no real headlines. One long line of <H1> text.
	Most important information first			X	Difficult to discern what's important; too many text links.
	Appealing, inviting CTA above the fold	X			Sign up for a (**non-existent**) newsletter; coupon.
INSTANT SITE IDENTITY Where am I? What is this?	Company name, logo prominently displayed	X			Name and logo prominently displayed.
	Name, address, phone if local business			X	No address, phone on home page.
	Customer-focused tag line			X	Owner agrees tag line needs to be revised.
	Headline informs what's there for visitor			X	No headline above the fold; no "What's In It For Me? Content
COMPANY INFORMATION Who is the company? Build trust.	About Us: what it means to visitor		X		Content assumes visitor cares about issues owner cares about.
	Contact information (not just a boilerplate form)			X	No "Contact" page; "Customer Service" page goes to shopping
	Footer w/name, address, phone			X	site but opens as a contact form.
	live link to email	X			
	link to privacy policy			X	"Privacy Policy" link goes to contact form on shopping site.
CLEAR CONTENT You have 8 seconds to get attention	What company does		X		It is clear that the company sells pet products.
	Why it offers the best solution		X		No case presented as to why **natural** or **handmade** is best.
	How to find...	X			No search bar, but image links to categories are clear.
	What to do next...			X	Add "Visit Us" button > location pg; "Shop Us" button > Shop pg.
	Is text readable?			X	Too small; not enough contrast in copy/text link colors
CUSTOMER-FOCUSED CONTENT	Speaks to one visitor at a time			X	Copy is not customer-focused.
	Instantly solves a need w/persuasive copy	X			If the need is for unique pet products; it's obvious they sell them.
	Shows the way to success		X		There are image links to categories, but no directional copy.
COMPETITIVE CONTENT Reasons to choose THIS company	Search results/descriptions			X	Did not return in search results unless word ▮▮▮▮ ncluded.
	"Why choose us?" is answered			X	
	Copy sets client apart from competition			X	None of these points are addressed in the scant copy.
	Best solution			X	
	Invitation to act			X	
ENOUGH CONTENT	500 - 600 words minimum			X	Home page = 241; need to add more.
	Enough information to help in a Google search			X	About page = 293; need to add more.
	New content added regularly			X	Pet Tips page could be turned into a blog.
CONTENT EASY TO SCAN, ABSORB Organized content flows to guide reader	Relevant, solution-focused headlines			X	No headlines
	Short paragraphs	X			
	Benefit-rich, benefit-first bullets			X	No bullets, no benefits
	Recap why visitor should choose this now			X	
	Strong, clear Call To Action			X	
	Readability: Flesch-Kincaid =/< Grade 7			X	Home page = 12; About page = 8
CONTENT INVITES ENGAGEMENT	Watch a demo	N/A			i.e. Create demos "How to fit a harness" "How to measure"
	Sign up for a newsletter	X			Disclaimer - there is no newsletter! Create one.
	Join a social media channel; icons displayed	X	X	X	Has Twitter icon, no account; has IG account, no icon/link.
	Participate in a survey	N/A			Could add a changing pet trivia question, answer for a prize.
CURRENT CONTENT	Content is current, fresh, topical, timely			X	Solve with a blog.
	Give readers reason to come back for more			X	Perhaps a "New Items" or "Sale" featured on home page.
CONTENT FLOW	Advertising does not disrupt flow	N/A			No advertising on site.
	Images, graphics support main content flow	X		X	Images are not part of content, except on About page.
CONSISTENT CONTENT	Voice, tone, and flow are consistent			X	Shift in voice from 3rd person on Home page to 1st on About.
	If taking visitor offsite, make that clear			X	
	All content areas are consistently formatted			X	No formatting.
CONVERSION-OPTIMIZED CONTENT	Reason to act, to DO something			X	
	CTA includes big benefit, HOW to act			X	
	CTA uses big, bold button, "Get my" language			X	
CONTENT LINKS	Standard color, underlining used for links			X	
	In-text links used sparingly; don't distract			X	
	Link text is specific; uses keyword/phrase	X			But an overabundance.
	Indicate where visitors are going			X	

| Criteria	Description	Yes	Sort of	No	Notes
CONTENT NAVIGATION	Primary navigation along top or on left	X			
	Group similar items together	X			
	Use standard naming conventions	X			Need a "Home" button.
	If using shopping cart, access in upper right			X	Shopping is offsite.
GRAPHICS	Optimize graphics to web-appropriate sizes	X			
	Use relevant, content-supporting images			X	No cat images; no images on Pet Tips page.
	Where possible, use real people images	X			Only 1; owner on the About page.
	Add SEO captions to photos			X	
	Do graphics interfere with readability?			X	
VIDEO AND AUDIO	Should be in the off position	N/A			
	Give visitor option with a clear PLAY button	N/A			Google LOVES video - you have a great opportunity here!
	Include MUTE button for sound	N/A			
	Appropriate thumbnail image or title slide	N/A			
READER-FRIENDLY FONTS	Limit font styles to two or three per site	X			
	Is site "over-designed to distraction"?			X	
	Use special styles sparingly (CAPS, bold, italics)	X			
	Use black (dark) type on white (light) background			X	Colored type used on light green background.
ACCESSIBILITY AND COMPLIANCE	Accessible to assistive technologies			X	
	Includes appropriate PDFs, transcripts, etc.			X	
	Is site ADA compliant?			X	
SEO ESSENTIALS IN THE CONTENT ON EVERY PAGE	Headlines			X	No headlines.
	Subheads			X	No subheads.
	Bold text	X			
	Link text	X			
	Captions			X	No captions.
SEO IN TAGS ON EVERY PAGE	Title tag: 60-70 character/space maximum			X	Home = 68; About = 60; Tips = 76; Cust. Svc. = 23; Gift Cert. = 83
	Meta description: Up to 150 characters/spaces			X	180 characters; not optimized for keywords.
	Alt tags: on all images, graphics			X	No alt tags.

Additional Findings

Mobile responsiveness. Why is it important to have a mobile responsive website? This explanation is [from Google itself](): "Google predominantly uses the mobile version of a site's content, crawled with the smartphone agent, for indexing and ranking. This is called mobile-first indexing. While it's not required to have a mobile version of your pages to have your content included in Google's Search results, *it is very strongly recommended.*" (italics mine) I tested your website with Google's Search Console with the result being that the Home page, from where all other searches would start, is not mobile-friendly.

The same result was returned when checked on [www.websiteplanet.com/webtools/responsive-checker]() and on [www.browserstack.com/responsive]().

The inset photo is a screenshot of the home page as viewed on an iPhone 14ProMax. It is rendered at approximately 50% of the actual width, but even when scaled to actual size the content is difficult to read.

Addressing the findings and implementing the recommendations in this report will Improve your website's mobile responsiveness, and positively impact its ranking in search results.
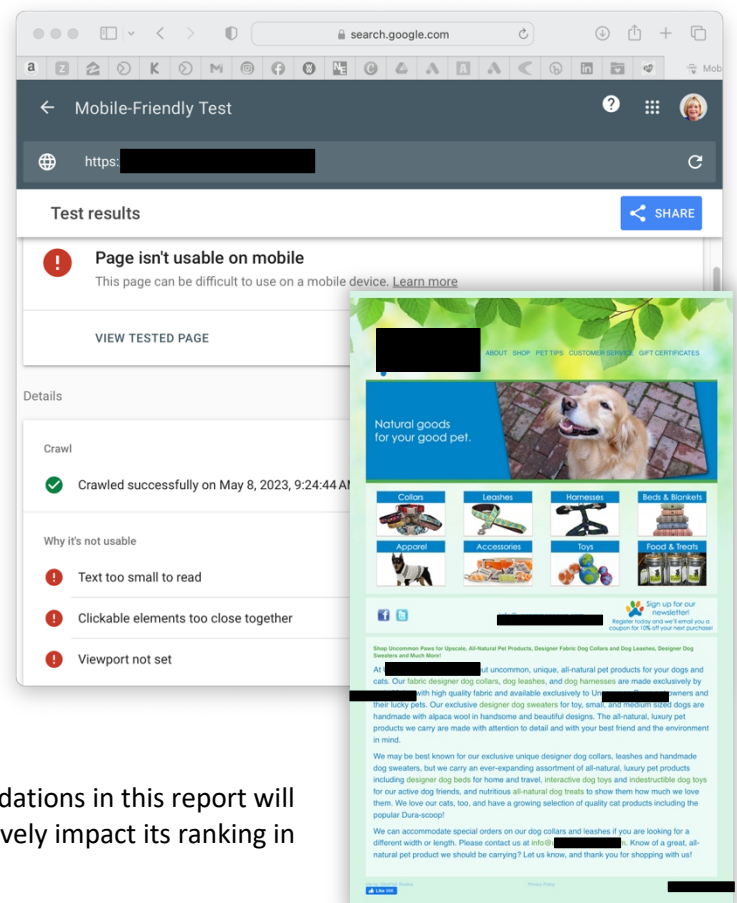
Additional Findings (Cont'd.)

Accessibility. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all businesses open to the public (Title III) to have web content that is accessible to the disabled and offers guidance on how to make that content accessible. Accessibilitychecker.org indicates the ████████████ website is not ADA compliant.
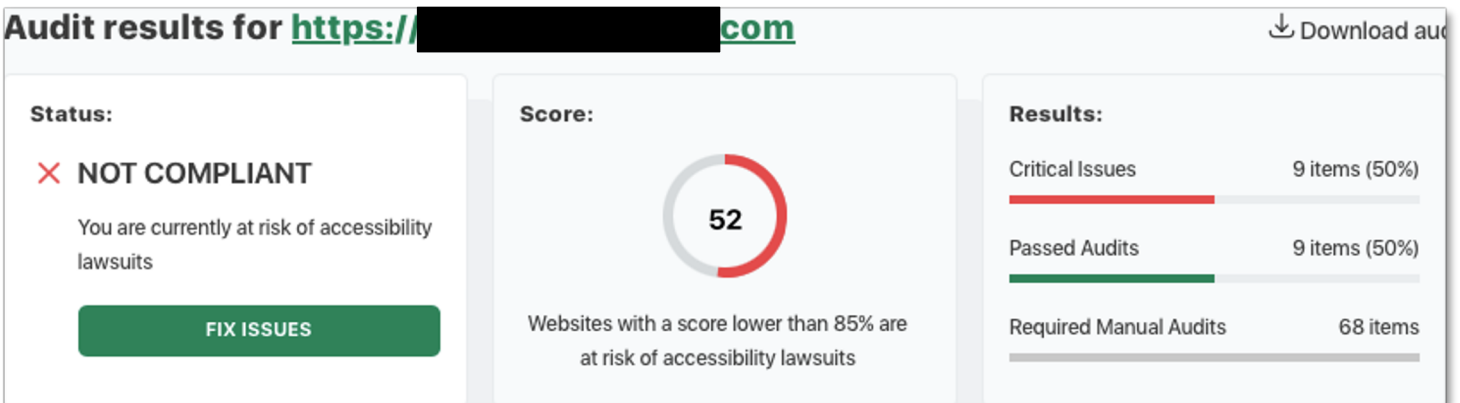
Although these are technical items, most of them are in the purview of best practices for SEO website content writing and can be easily addressed. I will be happy to share the full report with your webmaster.

In Summary

During the conversation which resulted in the Site Content Audit Brief, you indicated your desire for a new tagline and to better communicate the fact that you also have products for cats. You also mentioned that you have a new website under construction. Incorporating the recommendations in this report will ensure that new website is attractive, engaging, reflective of your unique market position, and optimized for both the search engines and your customers' experience.

Thank you for the opportunity to review your website and offer these recommendations for improvement. May I add one more? If you will instruct that your new website be built on a content management system (CMS) such as WordPress, it will be a simple task for you or your webmaster to apply these recommendations and others, as well as to keep the website updated with fresh content, as in the case of the "Pet Tips Blog." I find WordPress to be a delightfully easy platform on which to work.

I look forward to working with you to create an "uncommon" experience for your customers! To that end, I have attached a proposal to complete the work described in this audit. I will give you a call next week to discuss your next steps.

Best regards,

Ginny Peterson

Ginny Peterson Copywriting
239-297-3638

*Bonus Another way to continually add new content to your website would be through a Testimonials page. Solicit testimonials (with photos if possible!) that speak to your keywords and rotate them on and off the site.

*Bonus Potential tag line:
Premium Pet Products. Personal Service.