

MAKE TRAFFIC HAPPEN

SAMPLE



SPEED OPTIMIZATION

THE EASY WAY

**THE COMPLETE SPEED STRATEGY
FOR WORDPRESS WEBSITES**

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Introduction

By purchasing this book, you have taken the first step towards understanding and improving your site's speed. Site speed is a critical factor in improving user experience, driving traffic, and keeping users on your site longer. This book will give you the information and resources necessary to take control of your site speed.

Knowing that speed is important doesn't make it any easier to learn. We know that from personal experience. However, I truly believe that anyone can learn the basics of how to optimize their site for speed. It's just about understanding the concepts and taking the time to implement them.

This book will teach you:

- Speed optimization concepts in the easiest way possible
- How to eliminate many speed-blocking issues and reduce page load times
- Fine-tuning techniques to gain a higher speed score

I encourage you to first read and learn the concepts, then follow along with the workbook to put it all into practice. By the end, you'll have a fully optimized site. Take it one piece at a time or finish it all in one sitting. It's up to you.

Whichever way you choose to tackle speed, I'm excited that you've taken this first step. I know your blog will benefit from it.

About the Author



I am Laura Lynch, travel addict, expat, self-proclaimed foodie, and owner of the blogs, [Savored Journeys](#), [Savored Sips](#), and [A Food Lover's Kitchen](#). I also co-created a consultancy business, [Make Traffic Happen](#), with my colleague Gemma Armit, of [Two Scots Abroad](#).

You may have read [other guides](#) by Make Traffic Happen, like [SEO the Easy Way](#) and [Revive Old Content](#). We also have an [SEO video course](#) for visual learners.

All of our guides share the information I've learned from blogging in an easy-to-follow way so that no matter what level you're at, you can learn it quickly and easily.

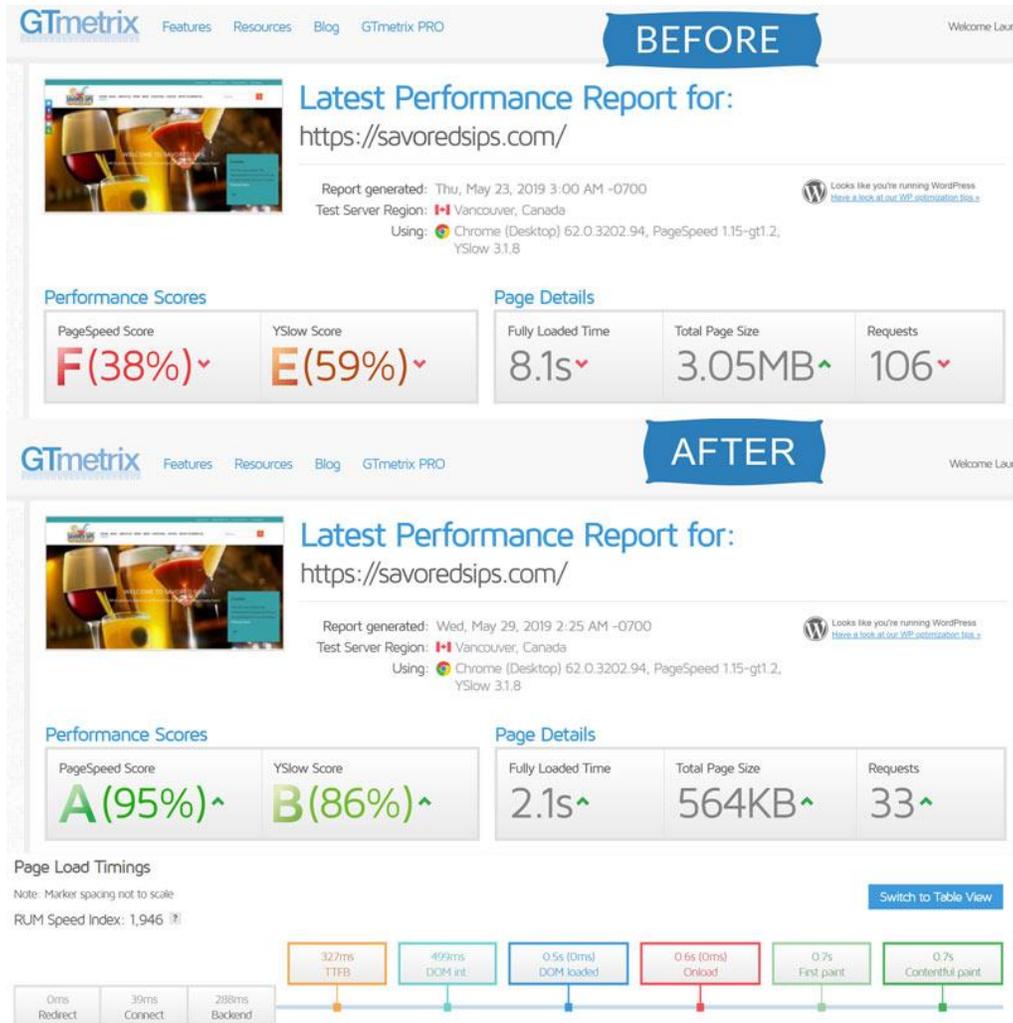
When it came to speed optimization, I struggled for a long time with bad results and slow load times. Every once in a while, I would run a speed test and throw myself a pity party because I didn't know what any of the suggestions meant or how to fix them.

When my speed score dipped to single digits, I decided it was time to stop ignoring speed optimization. I was going to have to teach myself how to do it.

Through experimenting on my own sites and consulting with speed experts, I compiled a set of plugins and optimizations that vastly improved my speed timings and scores. I still don't achieve 100% perfect speed scores—it's not realistically to reach that level without constantly tinkering and fine tuning—but the improvement is incredible.

Instead of a single-digit speed score on Pagespeed Insights, I now hover around an 80 on mobile and 95 on desktop. Instead of an 8 second load time, my site now loads in 2-3 seconds.

Below are the speed improvements I made on one of my sites. The page load time decreased from 8 to 2 seconds, and the score of F turned into As.



I've now made these improvements on all of my sites, and you can too. All it takes is understanding what you're doing and putting in the effort to make it happen.

What to Expect from This Book

First of all, this book contains general information about speed concepts and improvements that any blog can benefit from, but it is aimed specifically at **WordPress blogs**.

The methods in this book will provide the most benefit to those who have no speed optimization currently set up on their site, but it will also help those who were not strategic with their optimizations or have not implemented a complete speed strategy.

We do not promise you'll reach a particular speed or score. Everyone's situation differs and it will require personalized and detailed instruction to get the highest possible score. What we do promise is to help you take control of your speed optimization, finally understand what you're doing, and be able to do it yourself.

The optimization methods in this book will get you about 85% of the way there, which is considered more than good enough when it comes to ranking on Google. If you want a screaming fast website that hits every best-practices benchmark, you'll have to continue working with a speed professional to get the other 15%.

We are not speed experts who spend every day immersed in speed optimization. We are bloggers, just like you, who struggled to improve speed and taught ourselves how to do it. This guide is intended to help you understand speed in a non-technical manner.

There will always be competing opinions on how to improve speed, on which tools are best, which plugins to use, whose advice to follow. There isn't just one right way. Others may tell you to do it different than we have. We aren't claiming this is the only strategy out there. It's the one we have tried and tested ourselves

and wish to share with you. The changes you make on your site are entirely up to you. You can mix and match the advice in this book with others, if you wish.

Over the course of this book, I will be sharing the speed testing and optimization of my own website, Savored Sips. I stripped this site of its optimization for the purpose of this book, then built it back up, step-by-step, using the workbook that is included with this book. I will use the optimization of Savored Sips to demonstrate the speed improvements of each step as we go along.

In case you're worried about making technical changes to your site, I want to assure you that we will make it as easy as possible with these step-by-step instructions.

Gemma, the other half of Make Traffic Happen, is notoriously reluctant to touch technical-related issues on her site. She prefers to pay someone else to do it, which is perfectly reasonable. However, after reading this book, she agreed to implement this strategy on our website and improved its fully loaded time from 15.3 seconds down to 1.3 seconds in just one day.

If she can do it, so can you!

Fair warning, however, sometimes things go wrong. To mitigate against that, make a backup of your site before beginning, so you can revert back if necessary. You should also check your site thoroughly after each change you make, to ensure all is well. You can fix issues easily just by undoing what you last did.

There's no need to worry. A little trial and error will be necessary, but it's nothing to be afraid of. Everything you do is reversible, if necessary.

The joy of learning to do this yourself is that you will be able to manage your own speed results from now on, without the need to hire someone.

A Few Things to Note

- Speed is dependent on many things: server, theme, plugins, images, ads, extra design elements, etc. Your site speed can be impacted by all of these things. If you're not willing to change them, you might not be able to improve your speed.
- Every website is different, so don't compare yours to others. You cannot expect the same speed results as another blog. Some are leaner. Some have ad networks running on them. Some are running on faster servers.
- The leaner the site, the faster it will be. However, not everyone should strive for that, nor is it necessary for every website to load that quickly. It should be dependent on your goals and priorities.
- Running an ad network, like Mediavine or Ezoic, will have a major impact on your speed and speed score. You can implement all of the suggestions in this book and still have depressingly low results. If you're on Mediavine, there is an adjustment you can make to your settings that will greatly improve your scores. We recommend reading the Mediavine section of the book first thing ([jump there now](#)) before proceeding, so you fully understand the impact and can benefit from this adjustment as you go through the book.
- Google has stated that ranking is only negatively impacted on the slowest loading sites, so shaving off that last stubborn second isn't going to improve your search rankings that much, if at all.
- The benchmark metrics we give in this book are meant as a guide only and should not be taken as the be all, end all of speed. You should strive for the

best that you can reach, without compromising the integrity of your website. If that's a PageSpeed Insights score of 70, so be it.

- There are some elements on your site, like 3rd-party scripts that you can do nothing about, unless you remove them. If you want to keep those 3rd-party scripts, you will have to accept that your PageSpeed score will be affected by it. This is why we encourage you to be realistic about your score, not overly zealous for a perfect score.
- If you would like to see the initial and final speed testing reports for my example site, four different speed tests with results can be found in [Appendix A](#).
- We offer additional help plus a friendly place to hang out on our Make Traffic Happen [Facebook Group](#), which is free and open to all bloggers and niche site owners.
- We would love to see the improvements you make on your speed. Once you've optimized your speed, we'd love for you to share a screenshot of your progress on the Make Traffic Happen Facebook Group.

What You Will Learn

In this book, you will learn the common issues that affect speed, as well as what you can do to mitigate these issues. We will show you how to run and read speed tests from four of the top speed tools. And we'll recommend a plan of action to fully optimize your site for speed—step-by-step, in easy-to-understand terms.

The main speed-related concepts we will discuss are:

- Site hosting

- Theme
- Plugins
- Images
- Caching and CDNs
- Advanced techniques like inlining CSS and browser hinting
- Fine Tuning and Optimizing HTML, JavaScript, CSS
- The Effect of Ads on Speed (+ Optimizing Mediavine)

Are you ready to get started?

I know it might sound intimidating, but we're going to talk you through it The Easy Way. When you're done, you'll be so glad you did it.

Close all of your browsers, put your phone away and let's begin.