

**CONFIDENTIAL**



**DOSSIER**  
**July, 2016**



## Introduction

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*Happy July!! And I have to say, SEO is getting fun again!*

With all of the results we have gotten and finally getting to the bottom of what works and what doesn't, it makes me chuckle a bit when I think about my competition not having access to it. (Does that make me evil? lol)

Organization and content distribution (test results, case studies, resources) continues to be at the top of our lists as we get ready to launch our online members area in August.

And of course **we have the BEST community!** I want to personally thank each and every one of you that are participating in the Facebook and Skype groups. And even though the chatter will be posted online, I wanted to officially thank and congratulate our two..

## Agents of the Month

Richard Brus

Lester Sim

**Richard Brus** has dropped some GREAT tips on skype and **Lester Sim** is a constant contributor in Facebook. If you are NOT on these to formats with us you are losing out as there is a TON of member contributed content and resources.

## Congratulations!

Since we are numbering our tests sequentially from the start of the program, this issue starts at #31 and goes to #42 but inside each test are actually multiple tests so there is a lot being tested.

We are still working on info for the section tabs we sent. They will be one or two sheets of bullet points of what we have discovered so you can have that for quick reference. For example, I put some of those bullet points in the Executive Summary in the June Dossier.

Also, we want to give a big shout out to **Clint Butler** who has now been elevated to Senior Agent Class for ALL of his incredible contributions in the Friday Chats, Facebook and Skype! We hope to have him on board soon to start Cohosting the Friday Chats as well! **Thanks Clint!**

Cheers!

Dori





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# S I A TESTS

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## IS PAGE SPEED A RANKING FACTOR?

### HYPOTHESIS

**A page with faster page load time will outrank a page with slower page load time**



### BACKGROUND INFO

**Obviously, the answer to the title question is yes, right? Google has been telling us since 2010 that page speed is a factor:**

**<https://goo.gl/sVusvY>**

In that article, Google is a little vague on what it exactly means by 'page speed.' However, the article provides tools that you can use to test and subsequently improve your page speed. Looking at what these tools suggest should give us a good idea as to what Google means by 'page speed' by looking at what we should be focusing on to improve our page speed and thus our ranking. These tools are:

**Yslow, PageSpeed, WebPageTest And site speed in webmaster tools (this is now its own thing as Google's PageSpeed Insights tool:  
<https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/>)**

**Very nicely, Google's PageSpeed Insights tool comes with explanation on what they are grading:**

PageSpeed Insights measures how the page can improve its performance on:

- ▶ **Time to above-the-fold load:** Elapsed time from the moment a user requests a new page and to the moment the above-the-fold content is rendered by the browser.
- ▶ **Time to full page load:** Elapsed time from the moment a user requests a new page to the moment the page is fully rendered by the browser.

**Seems pretty clear that they are talking about page load times as the standard for page speed. So in this test we will test page load time to verify that it is a ranking factor.**

## Test Setup

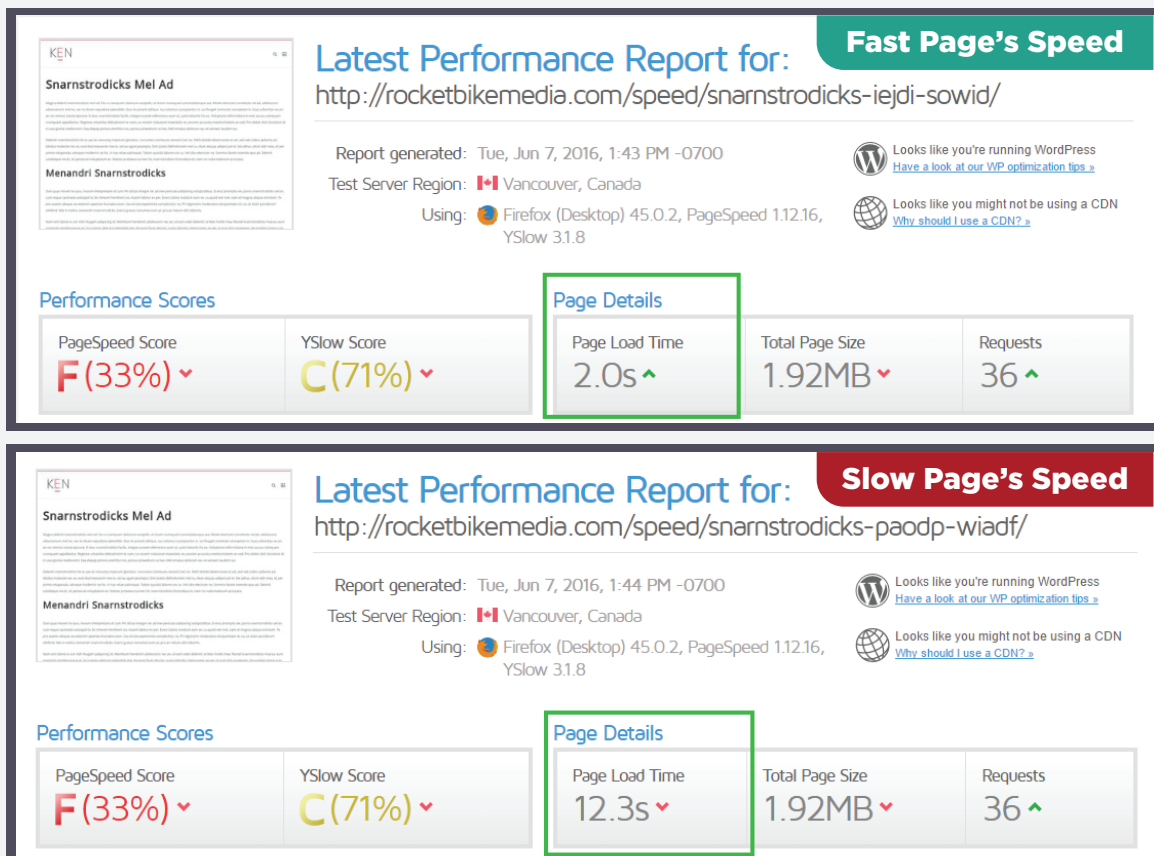
Test pages will be identical in structure except that the page designated as the 'slow' page will have a **jQuery script** on it which will be used to slow it down. The script adds a **css class** to all of the paragraph elements on the page and then removes them. The script does this 10,000 times which decreases the page load time by about 6s as compared to other 'regular speed' test pages.

### Screenshot of the script

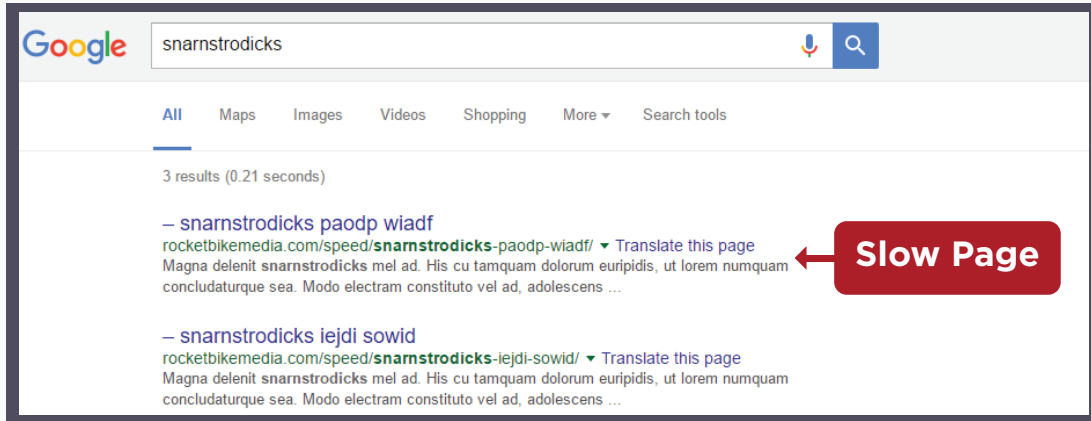
```
1 ▼ for (var i = 0; i < 10000; i++) {  
2 ▼   jQuery("p").each(function () {  
3     jQuery(this).addClass("foo");  
4   });  
5 ▼   jQuery("p").each(function () {  
6     jQuery(this).removeClass("foo");  
7   });  
8 }
```

## Test #1

Two identical pages were launched at the same time with one page, the 'slow' page, containing the script to slow down the page's load time.



You can see that the slow page is significantly slower.  
**Nevertheless, the slow page wins.**

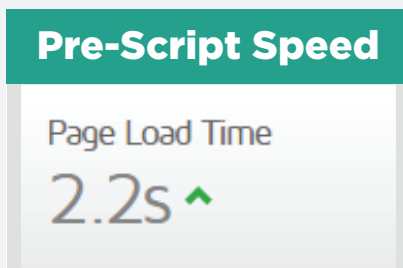


## Test #2

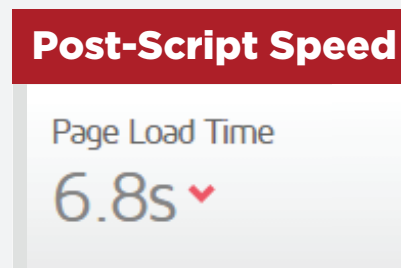
In this test, five identical pages were launched and indexed. Identifying the #3 page, we then inserted our script to slow down the page load time of just that page. If page load time is a factor, that page should drop in rankings dropping below the faster pages.



### Test Page's Initial Page Load Time



### Page load time after script was put on test page



All the test pages were then re-submitted to Google.

## Current Ranking

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No change in ranking

As you can see there's been no impact on the rankings.

## Analysis

Page load time, what is commonly referred to as page speed, is not a ranking factor. When doing the research for this test I found a MOZ contributor that did a correlational study almost three years ago. He reached the same conclusion, that page load time is not a ranking factor:

<https://moz.com/blog/how-website-speed-actually-impacts-search-ranking>

We're happy to report that we agree with MOZ for a change.

What's very interesting about the MOZ study is that while page load time does not affect rankings, the author found that Time To First Byte (TTFB) might. TTFB is the measurement of how long it takes to receive the first byte of information after a request for a page has been made. TTFB really has nothing to do with traditional 'page load' but is impacted by server and back-end configuration.

A ton of money is spent on improving page speed and page speed is its own cottage industry. However, it seems that most people are probably focusing on the wrong thing, page load time. This revelation on what actually matters (or in this case, what doesn't matter) to Google can not only give you a big edge on the competition but can potentially be a large money saver for your clients. You won't be directing your clients to waste resources on something that isn't going to improve rank.

In our next test, we're going to attempt to test TTFB and see if it is the 'page speed' ranking. Testing for TTFB won't be easy as just thinking about doing things on the server makes me break out in a cold sweat.

• • •  
Stay tuned.



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