

HOW TO TACKLE THE num=100 CHANGE

Evidence-based strategies for digital marketers

⚡ Immediate Actions (This Week)



DO: Communicate Transparently

Template for stakeholders:

"On September 10-12, Google disabled num=100. Analysis of 319 properties shows 87.7% saw impression drops in GSC. This reflects bot traffic removal, not user behavior changes. Our clicks and revenue remain stable."



DON'T: Compare Without Context

- ✗ Stop MoM comparisons crossing Sept 10
- ✗ Don't report "improved rankings" without explanation
- ✗ Avoid panic over impression drops
- ✗ Never ignore the data quality improvement



DO: Verify Your Data

- ✓ Check if clicks remained stable (they should have)
- ✓ Verify desktop dropped more than mobile
- ✓ Confirm Sept 10-12 as exact drop date
- ✓ Document as baseline for future reports

Budget Strategy Matrix

Small Budget

< \$2K/mo

- Cut to top 500 keywords only
- Track positions 1-30 daily
- Quarterly scans for 31-100
- Focus on revenue-driving terms

Medium Budget

\$2-5K/mo

- Negotiate hybrid tracking models
- Daily top-30, weekly 31-50
- Demand transparent methodology
- Monitor competitor positions 11-30

Enterprise Budget

\$5K+ /mo

- Custom enterprise solutions
- Real-time top-20 tracking
- Weekly deep scans to position 100
- API access with raw data



Critical Questions for Your Agency/Tool Vendor

Q1: How did you adapt to num=100 removal?

Look for: Detailed technical explanation, not vague promises. Platforms like Semrush and Accuranker acknowledged disruptions—your vendor should too.

Q2: What's your new data collection methodology?

Look for: Specifics on request volume, update frequency, position depth. Red flag: "Nothing changed on our end."

Q3: How will pricing change with potential 10x request costs?

Look for: Honest pricing roadmap. Options for position-limited tracking. Contractual guarantees on data frequency.

Q4: Can you track positions 31-100 cost-effectively?

Look for: Weekly or monthly deep scans as compromise. If they promise daily 1-100 tracking at old prices, be skeptical.



New KPIs That Actually Matter

Top 10 Dominance Rate

Why: Fewer queries now show on page 3+, more surface in top 3. Focus where clicks happen.

Action: % of target keywords in positions 1-10

Share of Voice (Top 20)

Why: Total keyword count was inflated by bot data. Quality over quantity.

Action: Your visibility vs competitors in positions 1-20

Featured Snippet Capture

Why: Position 31-100 tracking is now expensive/unreliable. Go for position zero.

Action: # featured snippets owned / target opportunities

Click-Based Performance

Why: Impressions were polluted with bot traffic. Clicks tell the real story.

Action: Organic clicks, conversion rate, revenue per session

Position 11-20 Opportunity

Why: Short-tail and mid-tail keywords took the biggest hit. Push these to top 10.

Action: High-value keywords in 11-20 needing optimization

Revenue Per Tracked Keyword

Why: Tracking costs increased. Only monitor keywords that drive actual business value.

Action: Calculate revenue / # tracked keywords monthly