

Authority and Freshness Audit

Companion worksheet to "Authority vs Freshness: What Matters More for AI-Driven Results"

Freshness is a relevance proxy; authority is a trust proxy that compounds over years. Use this worksheet to sort your archive by which signal each post lives on, confirm your authority anchors, and catch the date-only updates that quietly backfire.

1. Sort the archive into two buckets

Most posts live mainly on one signal. Use these definitions to sort, then count each bucket.

Time-bound (freshness carries it)

- Monthly market reports
- Hot sheets on recent listings
- Regulatory or financing changes
- 60 to 90 day trend shifts

Evergreen (authority carries it)

- Buyer and seller process guides
- Neighborhood guides
- Decision frameworks
- How-it-works explainers

Posts that are time-bound _____

Posts that are evergreen _____

2. Confirm your three authority anchors

Pick your three best evergreen posts. Each one only anchors authority if all three boxes are true.

- ☐ **Each carries a named author byline tied to a real About page**
AI treats the About page as the canonical reference for who is behind the content.
- ☐ **Each links internally to other related posts**
Coherent internal linking is what makes an archive read as one expert, not scattered pages.
- ☐ **Each has real substantive depth, not a thin conclusion-only post**
Thin length loses on both axes: too little to build authority, too little to benefit from a date.

3. Catch the date-only trap

Pushing the published date forward without changing the substance reads as gaming freshness, and AI weights it below honest staleness.

Any posts where the date moved forward but the content did not, and what real revision each one needs:

4. Your commitments

Turn the audit into three concrete moves.

This week.

Sort your existing archive into the two buckets above. The post I was most surprised to find in the wrong bucket:

This month.

Take your three best evergreen posts and bring each up to all three anchor standards. First anchor I will strengthen:

Ongoing.

Layer a steady cadence of time-bound content on the evergreen base, and only update dates on genuine revisions.
Cadence I will hold: