

<!-- BLOCK: HEADER -->

META: DEVELOPER_COLLAB

VERSION 1.0

<title>

The Execution Playbook: Shipping Technical SEO

</title>

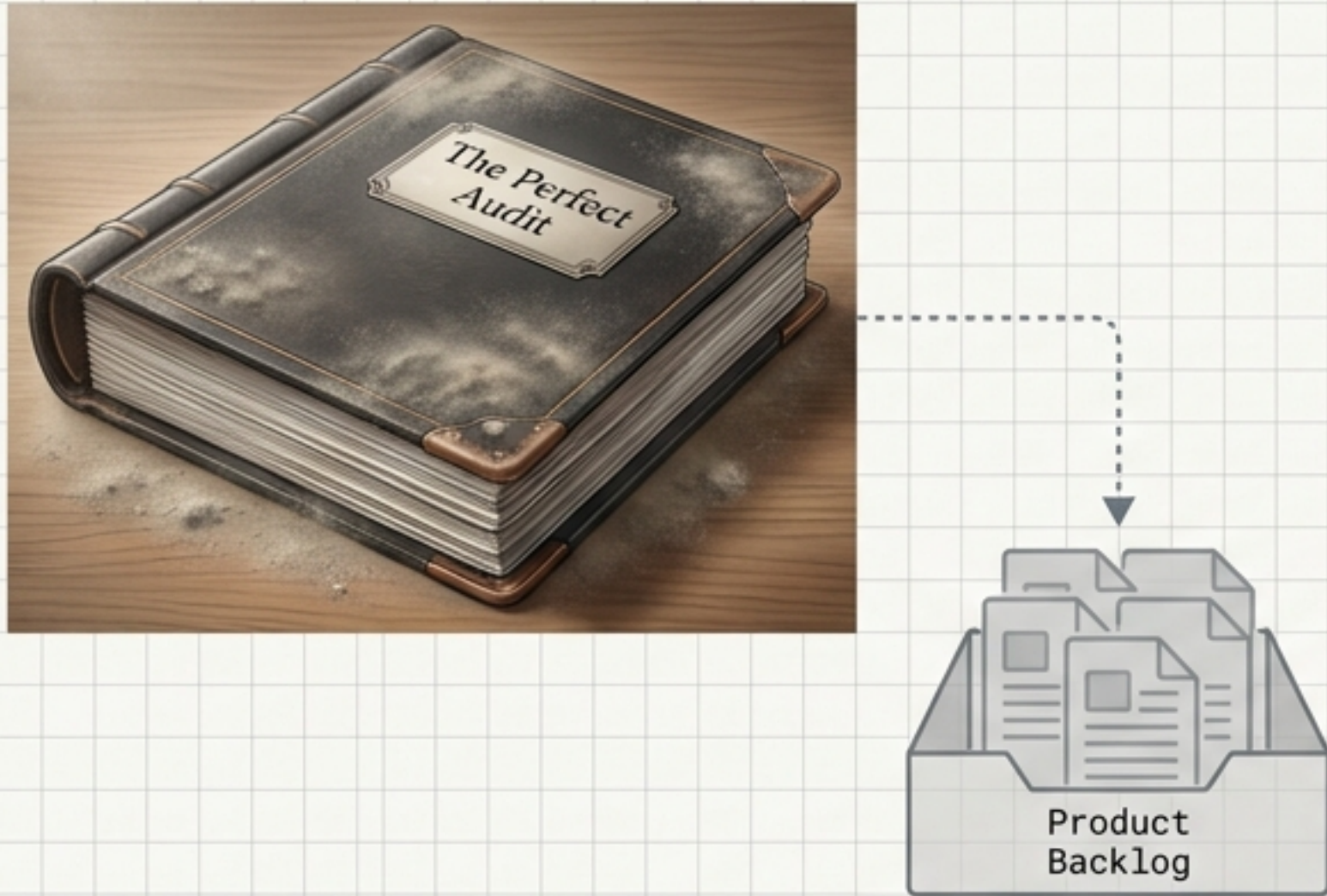
A field manual for developer collaboration,
sprint planning, and high-stakes site migrations.

VERSION 1.0
STATUS: DEPLOY_READY

GRID: ALIGNED
RENDER: SUCCESS

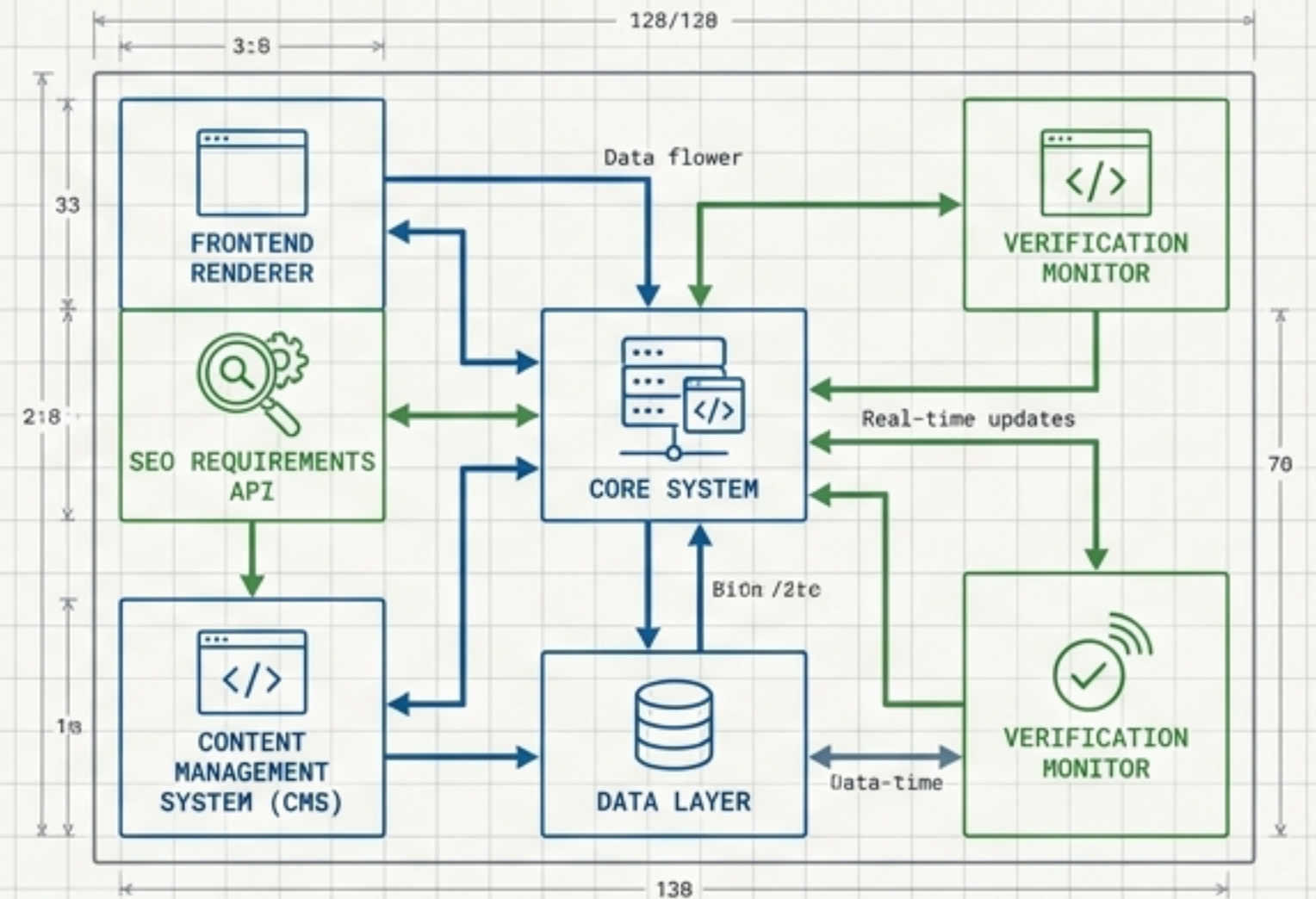
SYSTEM_ID: SEO_EXECUTION
CODEBASE: BLUEPRINT

THE TRAP



Passive ticket filing loses to product work every sprint.

THE STANDARD



Active advocacy. Translating SEO requirements into system-reliability language that competes on equal terms.

An audit finding stays **theoretical** until a developer understands **exactly what to build** and **how to verify it**.

SEO-Executable

Rule: Live in GSC settings, CMS fields, or 3rd-party tools.

Action: Execute directly. Do not enter sprint planning.

Examples: Meta description updates, Disavow file uploads, GSC Change of Address submission.

Developer-Dependent

Rule: Require changes to server config, CMS templates, JS, or database output.

Action: Requires a scoped Jira ticket and sprint prioritization.

Examples: Server-side redirect rules (HTTP 301), JS rendering improvements.

Warning: Never mix the two in sprint planning. Conflating them inflates scope estimates and wastes engineering time.

[SEO-REDIRECT] Implement 301 redirects: /hotels/* to /en/hotels/*

Description

✓ SEO health

Implement permanent 301 redirects for all URLs matching the pattern /hotels/* to the new locale-specific pattern /en/hotels/* to ensure indexing and link equity transfer.

Example 1: /hotels/paris -> /en/hotels/paris

Example 2: /hotels/resort-spa -> /en/hotels/resort-spa

Example 3: /hotels/listing/123 -> /en/hotels/listing/123

Acceptance Criteria ✓

1. Verify status code: HTTP/1.1 301 Moved Permanently
2. Verify location header: Location: /en/hotels/...
3. Verify via curl: curl -I https://www.example.com/hotels/paris
4. Verify 404s for original /hotels/* URLs after redirect
5. No redirect loops

Impact

📊 Risk

Estimated impact: Preserves 98% of organic traffic for 500+ URLs.
Improves locale targeting.

Revenue impact: Protects approx. \$25k/month in bookings.

Problem Description:

Anchors the fix to scope.
Always include real example URLs (e.g., old-url.com/a to new-url.com/b).

Testable Acceptance

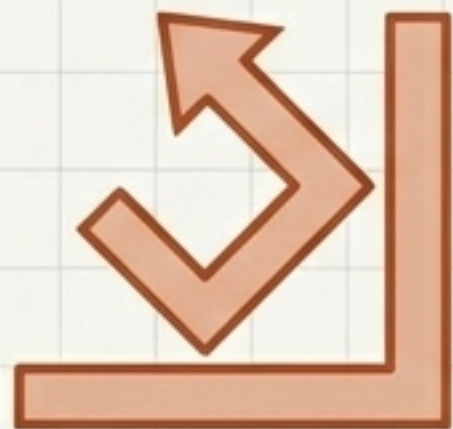
Criteria: Eliminates interpretation.
Specifies the exact HTTP status or HTML attribute.
Must be testable via curl -I or DevTools.

Impact Statement:

Answers "Why this sprint?"
Connects the fix to indexed URL count, organic traffic, or revenue impact.

The Prescriptive Trap

Ticket: Add this specific PHP snippet to the header file to force a redirect.



Developer Reaction: Pushback. Prescribed method conflicts with stack framework. Requires re-work.

The Outcome Standard

Ticket: Ensure any request to /old-path/ returns an HTTP 301 pointing to /new-path/.



Developer Reaction: Shipped. Defines required outcome and lets developers pick the implementation that fits their stack.

Diagnostic Check 01

Question: Which three elements are required in a developer-ready SEO ticket?

A: Ticket title, plain-text description, time-to-fix estimate.



B: Problem description with example URLs, testable acceptance criteria, and an impact statement.

C: Target keyword, fix category label, and sprint priority score.

Diagnostic Output:

Acceptance: A developer-ready ticket needs (1) scope anchored to real URLs, (2) an exact definition of 'done', and (3) an impact statement to survive sprint triage.

What SEOs Say	What Engineers Hear	What You Should Say
We need canonical tags.	<i>Abstract best practice.</i>	Without canonicals, Google indexes 4x duplicate URLs. It's the SEO equivalent of a sustained cache miss flood on the index.
Fix the 302s.	<i>Low priority typo.</i>	302s tell Google this is temporary. We are bleeding ranking equity daily on revenue-generating pages. P1 Risk.
Remove staging noindex.	<i>Launch checklist item.</i>	If staging noindex survives to go-live, Googlebot faces a technical block. Estimated impact: 100% visibility loss for approx 4 weeks.

P3: Roadmap (Structural)

Belongs in quarterly planning.
Examples: Schema implementation, JS rendering, pagination architecture.

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P2: Next Sprint (Indexation Health)

Link to GSC Coverage error count.

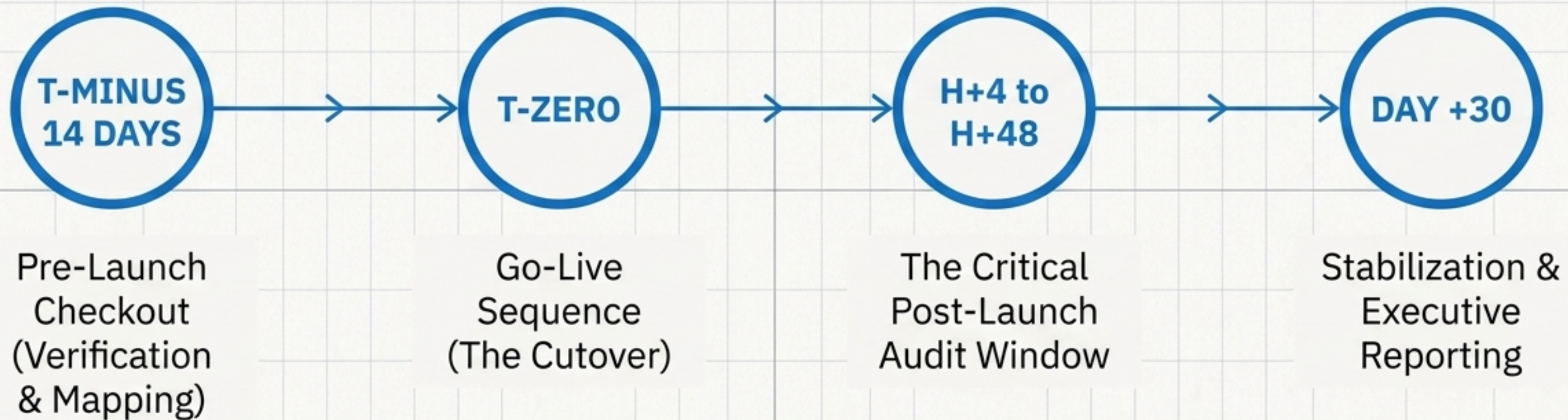
P1: This Sprint (Revenue-Impacting)

Attach organic traffic value.
Examples: 302 to 301 fix, Core Web Vitals regression >500ms.

P0: Block Go-Live

Must be resolved before launch.
Examples: Staging noindex not removed, redirects missing, GSC unverified.

Migration Trajectory Flowchart



Site migrations are the highest-risk SEO events in a deployment calendar. Sequence matters as much as the steps themselves.

Pre-Launch Checkout: T-Minus 14 Days

- GSC Pre-Verification:** Verify BOTH old and new domain properties.
Alert: Domain properties require DNS TXT/CNAME records, taking 2-3 days to propagate. **Do not wait for launch day.**
- 1:1 Redirect Map:** Export all old-domain URLs and map direct equivalents.
- Staging Lockdown:** Block staging using BOTH password protection AND meta robots noindex. Relying on just one leaves a gap.
- DNS Prep:** Lower DNS TTL for the old domain to 300s (5 min) 48 hours before go-live.

Risk Vector: The Staging Noindex Trap

Step 1 (Staging)

Page built with meta robots noindex.

```
<meta name="robots" content="noindex">
```

Step 2 (The Flawed Go-Live)

DNS flipped, 301s activate.
Noindex tag not removed from templates.

```
old.domain -> 301 -> new.domain  
new.domain: Contains noindex tag
```

Step 3 (Googlebot Arrives)

Googlebot follows the 301 redirect perfectly, lands on the new URL, and immediately reads the noindex tag.



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Step 4 (The Fallout)

The new domain is instantly dropped from indexation. GSC Coverage spikes in 'Excluded by noindex' within 24 hours.

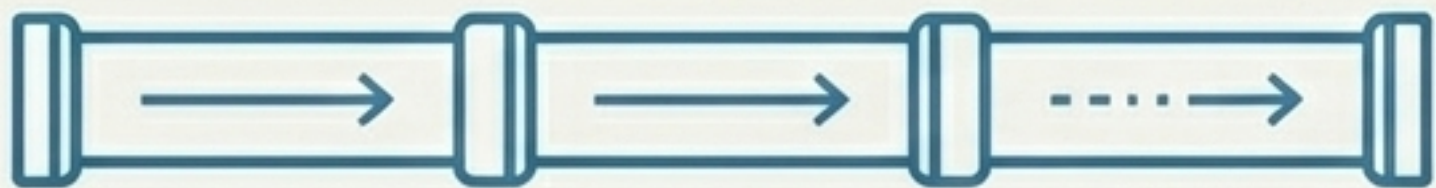


Prevention Rule: Re-run a site audit after noindex removal and confirm zero pages carry the tag before signaling engineering to flip DNS.

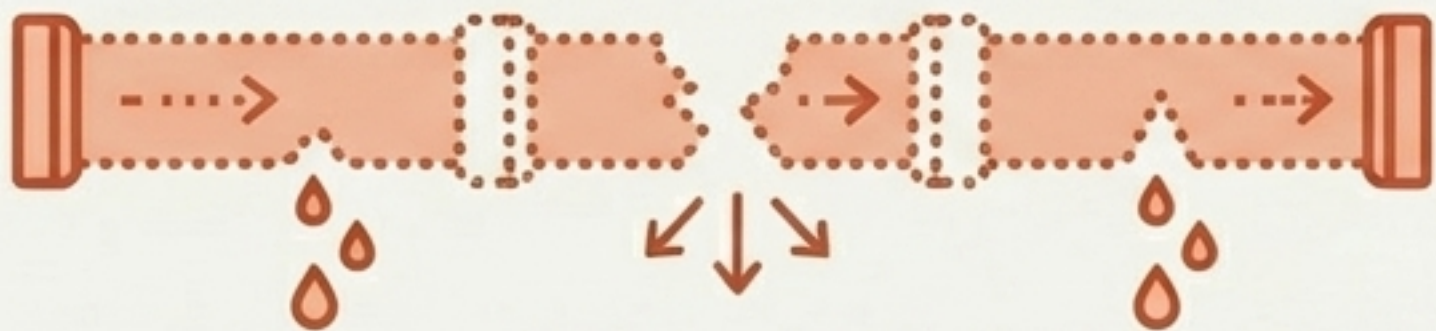
Technical SEO: Redirect Strategy & Performance

The Redirect Pipeline

HTTP 301 / 308 Permanent: Ranking signals flow smoothly to the destination. Google updates index.



HTTP 302 / 307 Temporary: Ranking signals leak out. Google retains old URL in search results.



The Chain of Latency

1 Hop:
Optimal



5 Hops:
Risk of drop-off
engineering cap



3 Hops:
Latency
warning;
practical
engineering cap

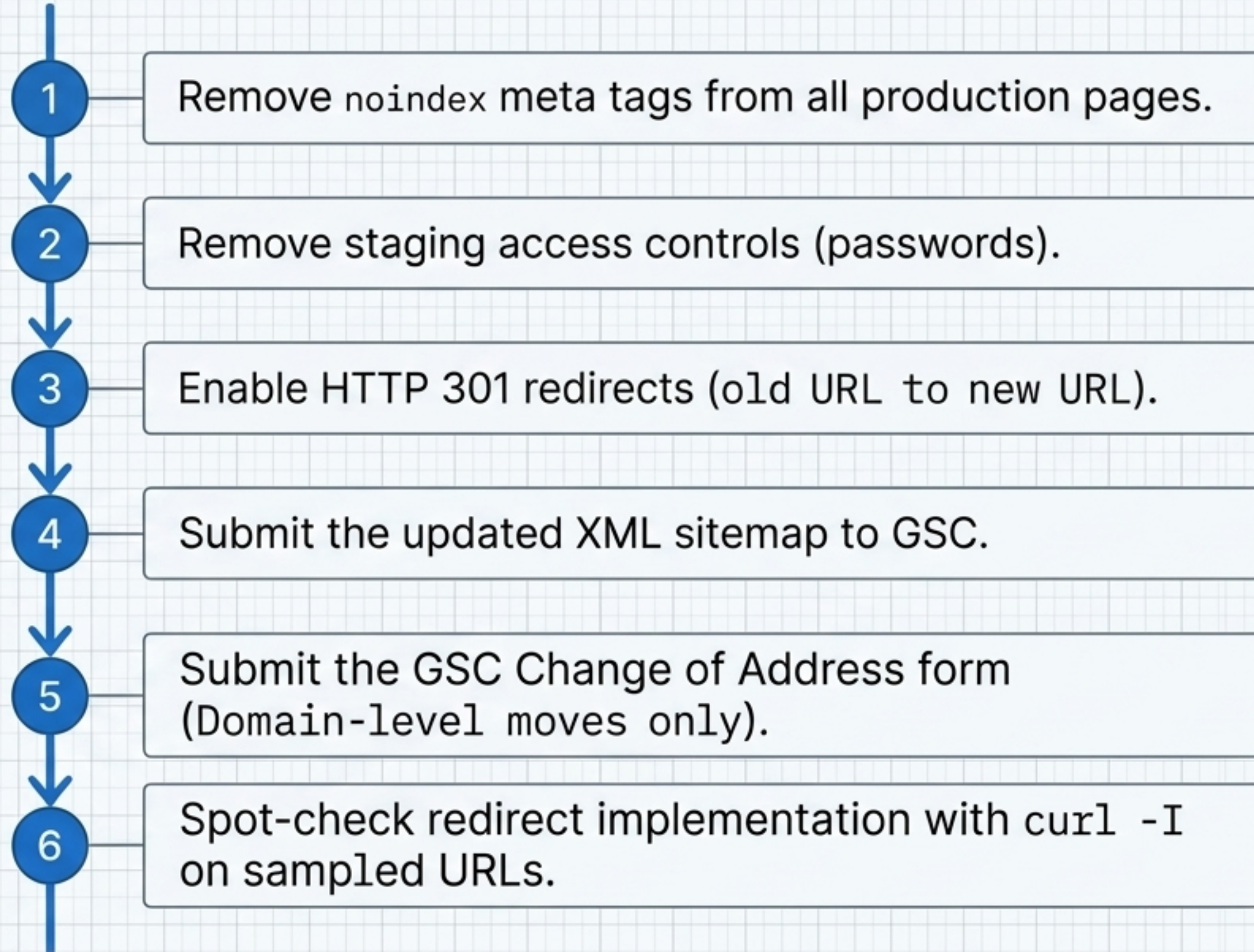
5+ Hops:
Risk of
drop-off

10 Hops:
Blackout;
Googlebot
terminates
crawl



Retention Rule: Keep redirects active for a minimum of 1 year (indefinitely preferred).

Go-Live Sequence: T-Zero



Diagnostic Check 02

Question: Which migration step **MUST** be completed weeks before launch day, not on launch day?

A: Submit the Change of Address form in GSC.



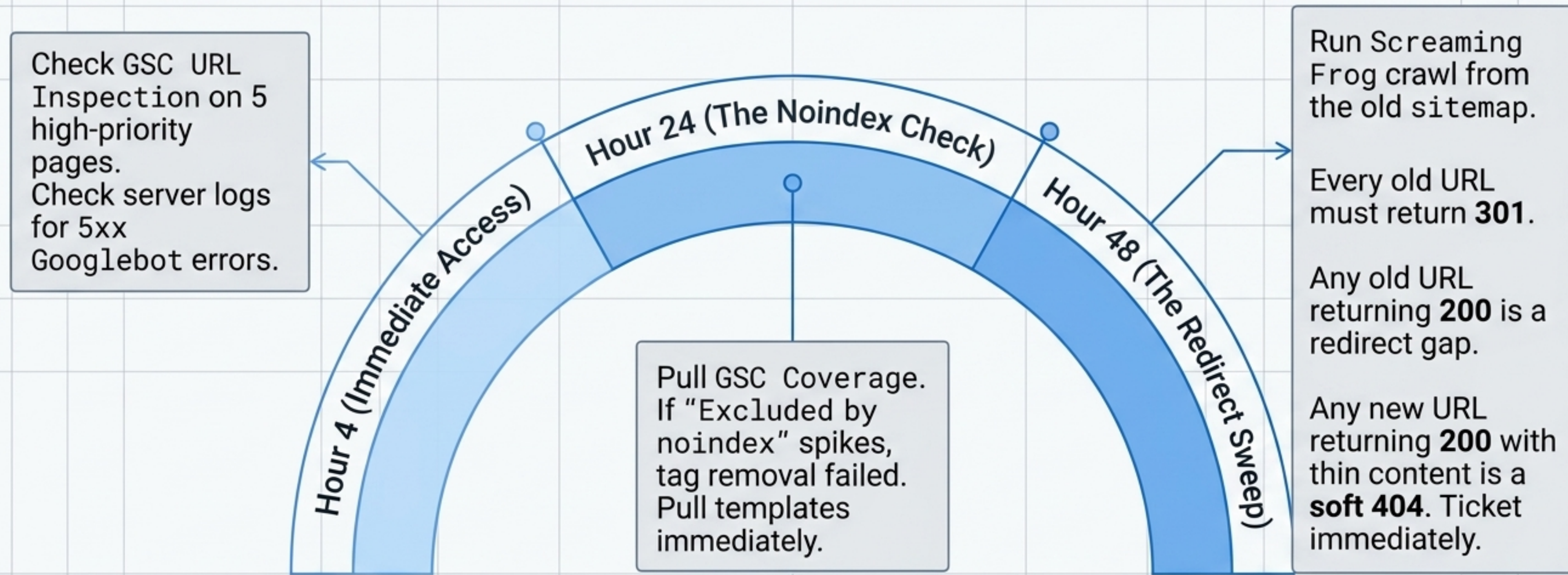
B: Verify both the old and new domain properties in GSC and build the redirect mapping.

C: Submit the new XML sitemap to GSC.

Output

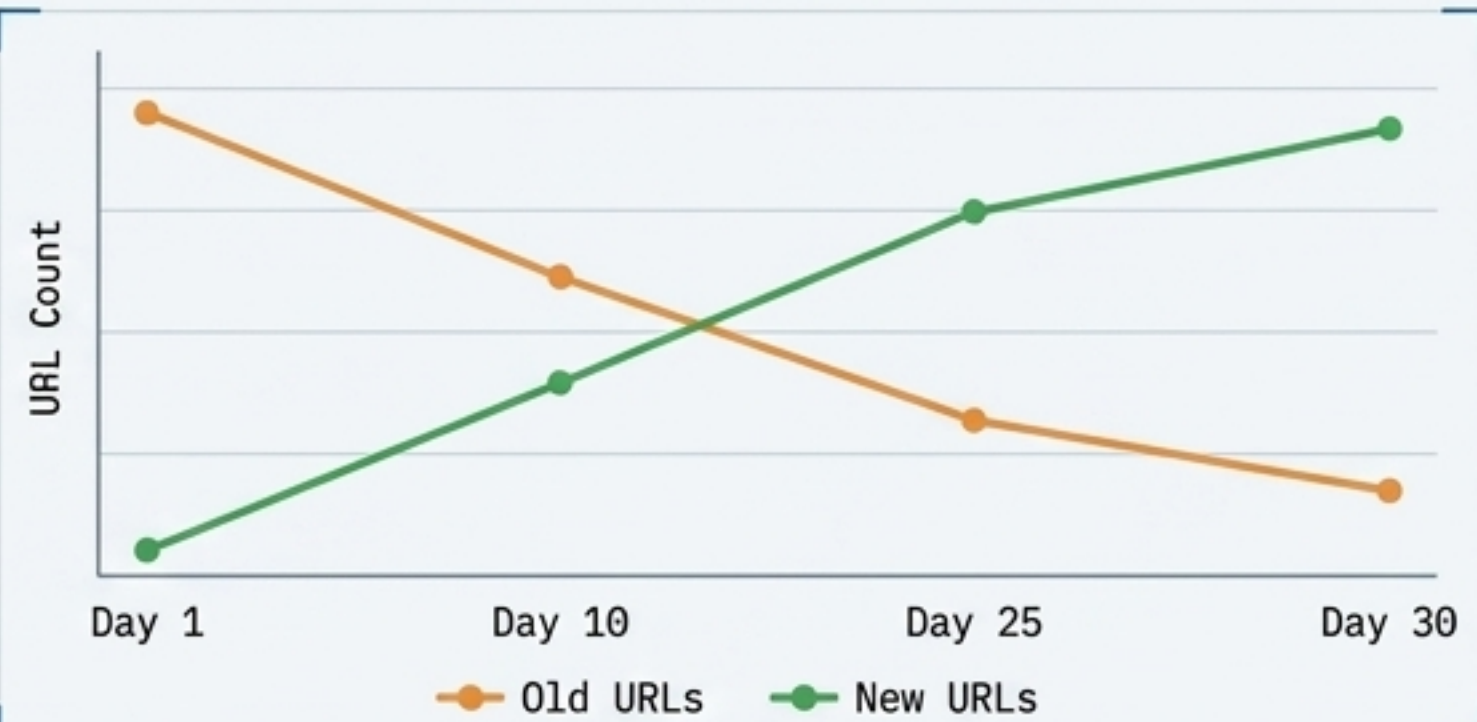
Diagnostic Output: The Change of Address form is inaccessible if either property is unverified. Because DNS record verification can take 2-3 days, discovering an unverified new domain on launch day stalls the entire Googlebot re-crawl signal.

Post-Launch: The Critical 48-Hour Protocol



Day 1 to 30: Stabilization

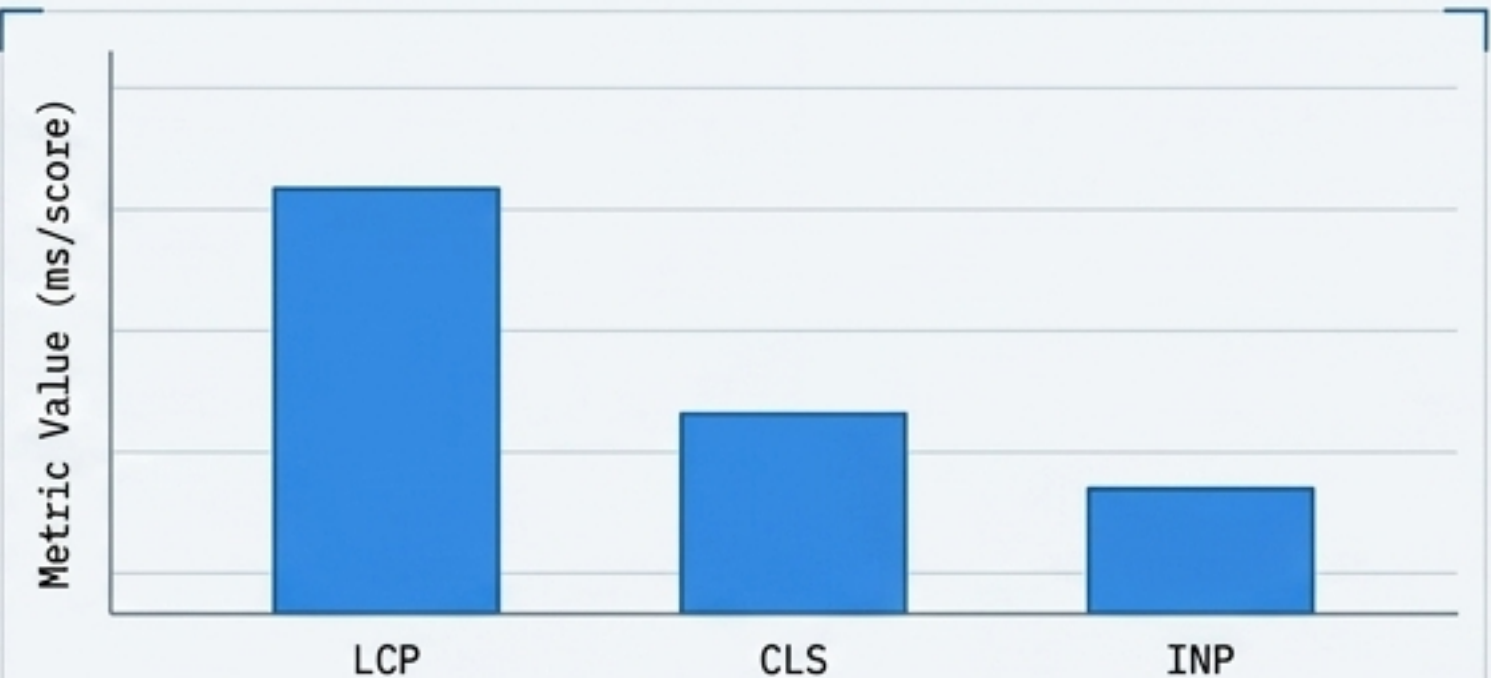
Panel 1: Page Indexing Report



- **Watch:** Old URLs deindexing while New URLs discover and index.

⚠️ **Anomaly Trigger:** If old URLs remain indexed >80% of pre-migration count at Week 2, verify Change of Address was successfully submitted.

Panel 2: Core Web Vitals Report



- **Watch:** Unseen platform regressions (LCP, CLS, INP) introduced by new CDNs or CMS rendering paths.

⚠️ **Anomaly Trigger:** Performance degradation softening rankings without any visible crawl errors. Escalate to P1.

Diagnostic Check 03

Question: What is the correct way to verify staging `noindex` tags are fully removed before go-live?

A: Check GSC Coverage for a spike in the 'Excluded by noindex' status.

✓ B: Re-run a site audit after removal and confirm zero pages contain the tag.

C: Inspect one representative staging URL in GSC.

Output

Diagnostic Output: GSC Coverage spikes are post-launch signals. By the time it appears there, Google has already seen the block. Re-running a full crawl before `DNS` cutover is the only guarantee.

Executive Reporting Architecture

Top Tier: 2-Minute Exec Summary

ROI framing. What moved, organic traffic delta vs baseline, and if variance (plus/minus 5-10%) is within expectations. Never lead with crawl errors.

Middle Tier: Metrics Table

Indexed URL count, organic sessions, average position, CWV status.

Bottom Tier: Open Risks

Unresolved engineering tickets and structural roadmap (P3) items generated from the migration.

The Execution Flywheel

5. Synthesize

Report business ROI, not technical jargon, to stakeholders.

4. Audit

Execute precise operational sequences (e.g., the 48-Hour Post-Launch protocol).

3. Advocate

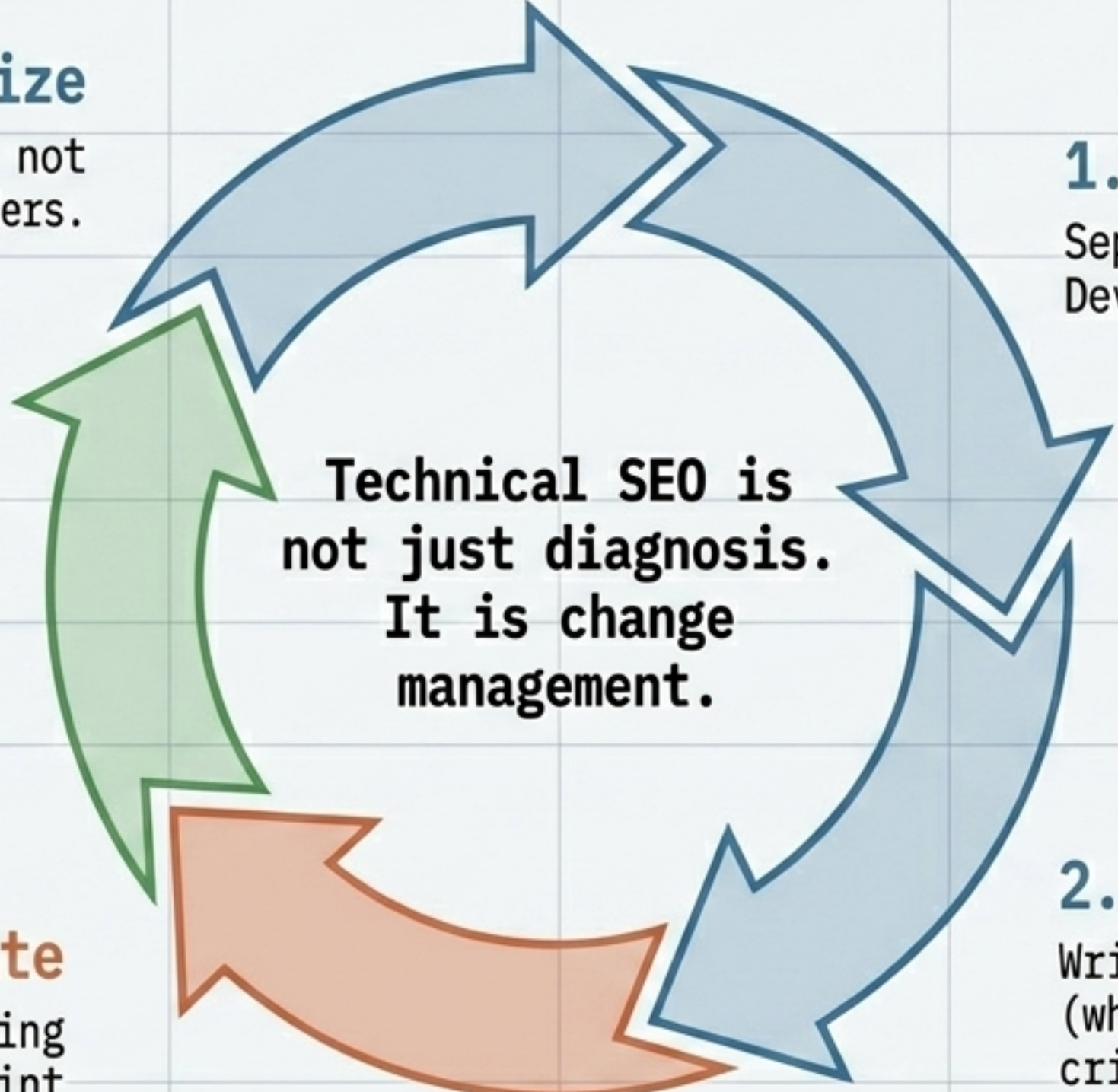
Map risk to engineering severity (P0-P3) in sprint planning.

1. Isolate

Separate SEO-executable from Developer-dependent tasks.

2. Translate

Write outcome-based tickets (what, not how) with testable criteria (curl -I).



Technical SEO is not just diagnosis. It is change management.