

DIGITAL REACH · MANUFACTURING SEO

The Manufacturing Shortlist Audit

A 12-point check of whether an industrial buyer can find, qualify and contact you before they ever call.



ORIENTATION

What this is, and *how to use it*.

An industrial buyer moves through four gates before your name gets written down: find you, believe you can make the part, clear you on risk, and start a conversation. Twelve checks, three per gate.

What it is

The paper twin of the shortlist readiness audit that runs on the Digital Reach manufacturing SEO strategy post. Same twelve checks, same four gates, in the same order — printed so you can walk the site with a pen.

Who it is for

Manufacturers, machine shops, fabricators and contract manufacturers whose work arrives through search as well as through reps. Three different people are looking: the design or project engineer, the buyer or procurement manager, and the plant or operations decision-maker. This audit checks whether your site answers all three.

How to use it

Open your own site in another window and work down the list. Tick only what is genuinely live today — not what is planned, not what is in a PDF, not what sales sends on request. Then count your ticks and read the band on the scoring page.

Nothing here is gated, tracked or timed. Print it, mark it up, hand it to whoever owns the site.

THE AUDIT

1. Discovery

1 – 3 of 12

Can a buyer searching your process land on you at all?

- ☐ A separate indexable page for every process you run — 5-axis milling, TIG welding, powder coating — not one "Capabilities" page listing them as bullets.
- ☐ A page per material family you actually work in, with grades written into the body copy (304 and 316 stainless, 6061-T6, PEEK) rather than hidden in a quote-form dropdown.
- ☐ Your equipment list on the page as crawlable HTML — make, model, axis count, work envelope — instead of a downloadable capabilities PDF.

2. Capability proof

4 – 6 of 12

Can an engineer confirm you can make *this* part?

- ☐ Published tolerance ranges per process, stated as numbers with units — not the phrase "tight tolerances".
- ☐ Maximum part envelope, weight limit and bed or bar capacity given per machine or cell, so a buyer can rule you in or out in one read.
- ☐ At least one real part story per capability — material, quantity, finish, what went wrong and how it was solved — with photographs of the actual part, not stock imagery.

THE AUDIT

3. Compliance + risk

7 – 9 of 12

Can procurement clear you without emailing for paperwork?

- ☐ Certifications named in on-page text with issuing body, certificate number and expiry date — readable without downloading a PDF.
- ☐ Your quality system described in plain HTML: inspection equipment by make and model, whether you run FAI or PPAP, and whether certificates of conformance ship with the parts.
- ☐ Material traceability and sourcing stated up front — domestic melt and pour where it applies, mill test reports on request, RoHS or REACH position.

4. Contact readiness

10 – 12 of 12

Can they start the conversation without picking up a phone?

- ☐ An RFQ form that accepts a drawing upload — STEP, DXF, PDF — and completes without a phone call or a gated account.
- ☐ What happens after they hit send, written down: who reads the RFQ, typical quote turnaround, and any minimum order quantity.
- ☐ A named human to reach — an engineering or sales contact with a real name, direct email and phone number, plus the hours they answer in your timezone.

SCORING

Count your ticks, then *read the band.*

/ 3 Discovery

/ 3 Capability proof

/ 3 Compliance + risk

/ 3 Contact readiness

/ 12 Total, out of twelve

WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

0 – 4 Invisible to the shortlist

A buyer searching your process today has no reliable way to land on you.

5 – 8 Findable, not yet credible

They can find you. They still cannot prove you make the part.

9 – 11 Shortlist-ready

You survive the vetting pass. Close the last gaps before the RFQ round.

12 Hard to leave off

Every question a buyer asks is answered before they contact you.

Score honestly: "on the site somewhere" does not count — the buyer has to reach it from a search result without asking anyone.

WHAT TO DO WITH THIS

Work the *unticked* boxes.

Take them in the order they appear. The four gates run in sequence — a buyer cannot clear you on risk if discovery never put you in front of them, so an empty box in Discovery outranks an empty box in Contact readiness.

Eleven of the twelve are writing jobs: a page that says the thing plainly, in text a crawler and a person can both read. Only the RFQ drawing upload is a build task. That is usually good news for the timeline.

Re-run the audit after the next round of site work and compare the two scores. The number itself matters less than which gate stopped moving.

The full strategy post this audit came from — including how an RFQ shortlist actually gets assembled — is on our site.

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