August 24, 2021 Press Release- For IMMEDIATE Publication:

On August 21, 2021, Google launched a major attack against a small business website, owned by a 60-year old US citizen who had been disabled by Stage 4 cancer in 2018, in which *in a single day,* Google removed close to **half a million pages from its search results** that Google had previously indexed and included in its search results for the website, leaving just 12 relevant links to his site.

The website, GolfTraxx.com features 40,000 courses in its database from 105 countries. According to its founder Frank DeBenedetti, roughly 30,000 of these courses contain course-specific information such as the course scorecard, a course map, hole-by hole maps, video flyovers of the course and its holes, lists of nearby courses, and ability to use the site as a rangefinder and scorekeeping tool on each of its courses. To provide all the information about all these courses, DeBenedetti and his team have created close to 2,000,000 pages intended for site visitors!

Google Search Console provides the ability to advise Google of all the pages for a website through sitemaps, which DeBenedetti has done repeatedly in Google's requested sitemap.xml format. Google places a strict limit of 50,000 URL's per sitemap so DeBenedetti has been required to submit many sitemaps then often wait __multiple months__ for Google to get around to indexing them. This type of delay is **not** Google's stated policy and would put many businesses **out of business** who are creating and updating content for their site. According to DeBenedetti, the submission dates represented by Google are all **incorrect** and they were actually submitted much earlier. In the screenshot shown below over 1.4 million links to Debenedetti's website are shown to have been indexed by Google.

Google Search Console — Sitemaps

Submitted sitemaps

Sitemap	Type	Submitted ↓	Last read	Status	Discovered URLs	
/sitemapmoving7.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 14, 2021	Success	27,250	
/sitemapmoving6.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 21, 2021	Success	27,269	
/sitemapmoving5.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 22, 2021	Success	27,262	
/sitemapmoving4.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 21, 2021	Success	27,269	
/sitemapmoving3.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 21, 2021	Success	27,269	
/sitemapmoving2.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 19, 2021	Success	27,269	
/sitemapmoving1.xml	Sitemap	Dec 18, 2020	Aug 21, 2021	Success	27,269	
/sitemap.xml	Sitemap index	Oct 29, 2020	Aug 19, 2021	Success	1,400,648	

Rows per page: 10   11-18 of 18

After DeBenedetti faced the major health issues in 2018, he made his website a top priority as he was unable to continue his previous work, and DeBenedetti states that for him "the website was like an unfinished symphony." DeBenedetti runs a small business, which engages assistance of contractors (and sometimes site visitors) to update golf course information. The website does not even generate income yet but definitely seems a labor of love for DeBenedetti. DeBenedetti created the website and software in 2006 that ran on early devices such as TREO, Pocket PC, and Garmin Ique and accurately provided distances to the hole the device's user was playing. Thousands of the initial courses were contributed by users of his application.

As of this writing, the second page of Google Search for golftraxx.com results now shows this:

Note that each link in the Google search results shown from the second page of Google Search results for golftraxx.com is **not** to a golftraxx.com website page!

In the bottom of the 2nd page, Google advises that it has *omitted* very similar entries, as if to suggest those were duplicates.

In clicking on the link shown at the bottom of the second page of results, Google re-runs the search and a few hundred more results were displayed. Especially noteworthy was the fact that **none** of those additional golftraxx.com pages displayed in the additional Google results originally omitted by Google were in fact duplicates of the original twelve golftraxx.com pages shown in the Google Search results for golftraxx.com. On the 30th page of results we observed this:
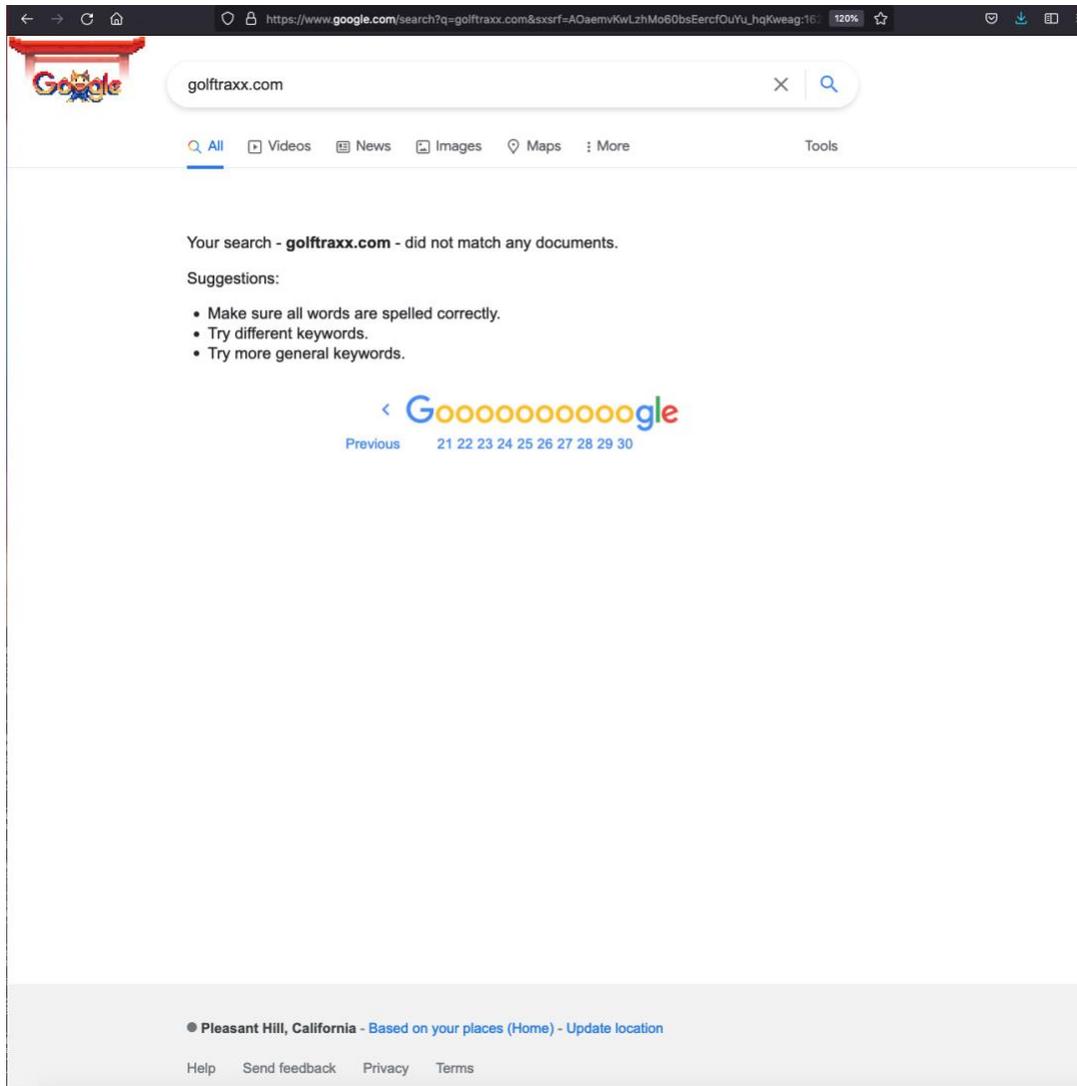
Therefore, of 1.4 million pages Google admits to have indexing on the golftraxx.com website, it now includes links to less than 300. and some of those Google-created links are to websites having nothing to do with golftraxx.com and some of those Google-created search results contain bad links.

DeBenedetti explains that to prevent duplicate pages, Google **requires** a *unique* canonical URL on each and **every one** of his two million pages and that Google won't index those that don't have it. Debenedetti also attaches metadata tags and JSON attributes (per Google's specifications) to each and

every one of his pages to **uniquely** identify the course, the city, state, and zipcode it resides in, as well other course-specific information. Given these unique identifiers that attach to each and every one of his pages, according to Debenedetti, it is impossible for Google to have reached the conclusion that the pages were duplicates worthy of exclusion from its results.

Google Search Console provides a summary of the pages that have indeed been indexed by Google and their status as to indexing and inclusion in its search results. DeBenedetti states that just two days ago, a huge jump in Google-excluded pages occurred on pages that Google had previously included in its results, leaving just 308,000 valid pages, according to Google's Search Console. We are at a **complete loss** to reconcile Google Search Console report of 308,000 valid indexed pages with the Google search results returned of 12 links.
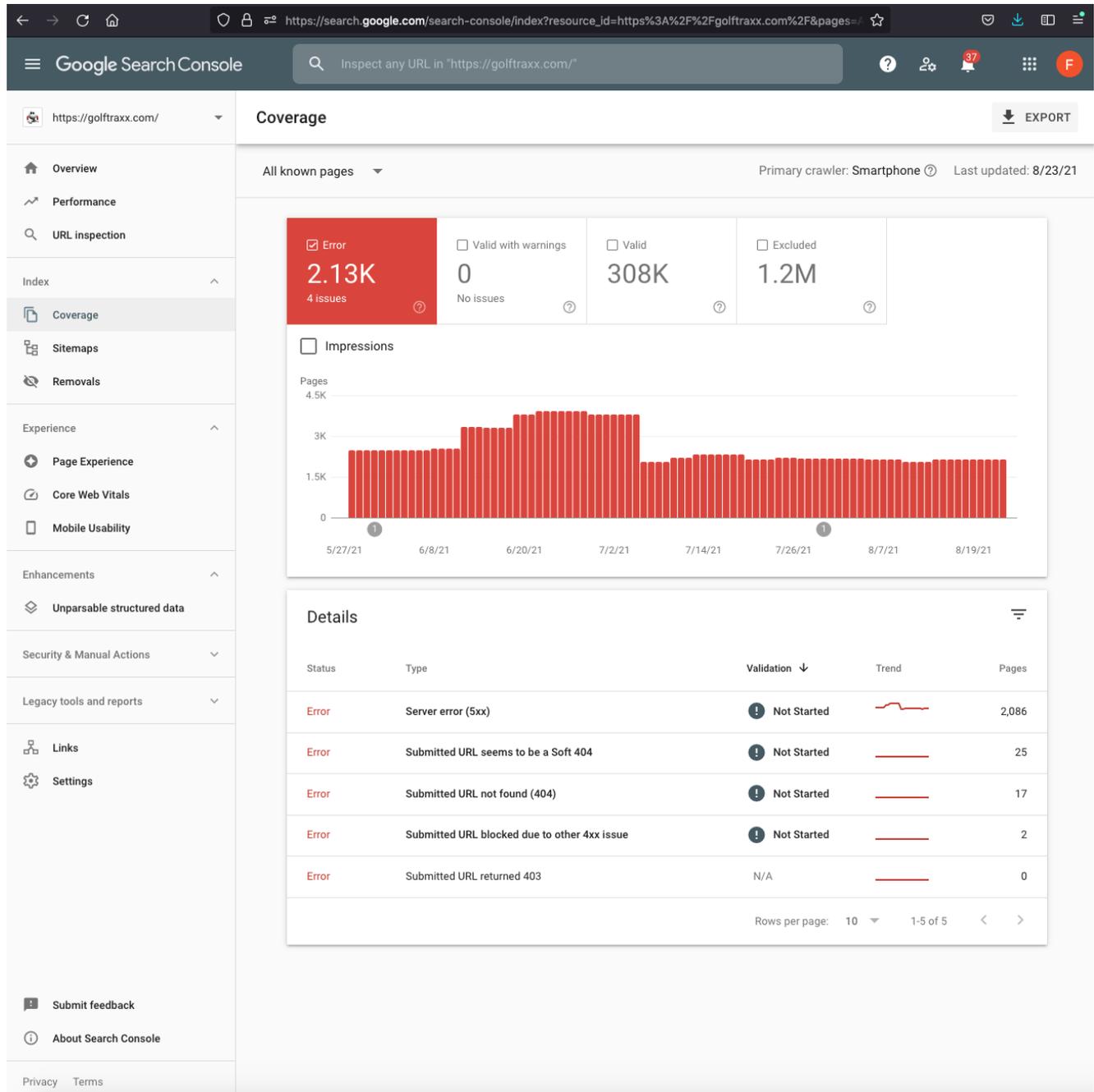
We observed that within a few of the Google-created links to the Golftraxx.com website, that the

webpage link *created by Google* itself had been <u>*manipulated*</u> to include a space in the middle of the link, which as we all know can result in page incorrectly loading.

DeBenedetti alleges that shortly after he began to work intently on the site back in 2018-2019, attacks on his site began occurring. The attacks included deletion of data in thousands of courses, changing of data in thousands of courses, and continued in waves between 2019-present. These attacks left clues as to the perpetrators so beginning in 2019 DeBenedetti began notifying federal and state regulators of the attacks.

According to DeBenedetti, he has reported at least one <u>hundred</u> attacks on his website to state and federal regulators since 2019 where Google was implicated in the clues left at the scene of the crime. DeBenedetti states that he has received multiple calls from regulator offices advising him that they have received the information he has provided and are reviewing it and to not hesitate to provide further information.

DeBenedetti also points out that Google is not the only major corporation to have been implicated. Multiple complaints have also been filed with the FCC against COMCAST, as well as complaints against Microsoft, and Amazon with the FTC and other state and federal regulators.

DeBenedetti makes the point that had Google suddenly lost overnight (without explanation) virtually all of the links it had created and published over the years of its existence, such that <u>none</u> of its content could be found by searching, in its early days, Google would have <u>perished</u>. Why should Google have the right to capriciously do that to any other business who has toiled to create content and publish that content?

In reviewing other news, press, and documentation on the website, it becomes clear that the vision of DeBenedetti for Golftraxx.com is no ordinary vision. DeBenedetti does dream the impossible dream for the adaptation of technology in his website and for the growth of the website to every corner of the globe. The collecting and organizing the incredible amount of data is no small undertaking at GolfTraxx. Just consider what adding even a single attribute for each hole means for a database of 40,000 courses. Hole flyovers for all 40,000 courses <u>alone</u> represents close to three quarters of a million links....NEW data elements to be captured organized, and added to the site.

The attacks by Google corporation and other powerful tech corporations against DeBenedetti and his website raise <u>serious</u> questions as to the proper levels of regulatory authority, not to mention about the inhumanity of executives within these powerful tech corporations who would place their egos and greed above social conscience to order such attacks against a person known to have been disabled by cancer.

In the view of this author, neither regulators nor law enforcement, nor the agencies set up for the protection of human rights should tolerate these types of corporate abuses, and Google itself (as well as the other corporations implicated in these attacks- Microsoft, COMCAST, and Amazon)) should police their own operations sufficiently to preclude these types of malicious abuses and attacks.

<u>Contact:</u>

Frank DeBenedetti

877-354-4653

916-806-4036 cell

frank@golftraxx.com

frank_debenedetti@yahoo.com