

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL — WEBSITE ASSESSMENT

Spiritfilled.co.uk

SEO, Performance & Conversion Audit

Prepared for: Lee Harris, Spiritfilled

Subject site: <https://www.spiritfilled.co.uk/>

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Scope: Homepage deep-dive, with supporting checks across Buy Whisky Casks, Storage, Learn and site-wide technical files (robots.txt, sitemap.xml).

Methodology: Google PageSpeed Insights / Lighthouse (mobile & desktop, lab + 28-day field data), the W3C Nu Html Checker, live in-browser inspection of rendered markup, network activity and DOM, and manual SEO and UX review.

1. Executive Summary

Spiritfilled is a well-established, trust-led brand — five-star warehousing, a 4.9/5 Trustpilot score across 352 reviews, national and trade press coverage, industry award medals, a celebrity ambassador and quantified client case studies all appear on the homepage. That trust infrastructure is the site's biggest asset, and it is largely being under-used by where it currently sits on the page. The underlying Shopify build is competent and the on-page SEO fundamentals (titles, meta descriptions, sitemaps, robots.txt, structured data) are in reasonable shape. The two areas holding the site back are **front-end performance** — the homepage ships roughly 7MB of third-party scripts and tags, several of them duplicated — and **content sequencing**, where the strongest trust signals are placed too far down a very long page for most visitors to reach.

Headline scores (mobile)

Category	Score	What it tells us
Performance	49	Held back almost entirely by third-party scripts, not by Spiritfilled's own content.
Accessibility	96	Strong. A handful of missing image labels and heading-order slips to tidy up.
Best Practices	73	Fair. Driven down by invalid markup and duplicated tracking scripts (Section 4).
SEO (technical)	92	Strong technical foundation; the opportunity is content depth and structured data, not fixes.

The five things to fix first

1) Consolidate four duplicate Google tag IDs into one container. 2) Scope the bottling-calculator script so it only loads on the calculator page. 3) Move the Finn Russell endorsement and press logos up near the fold. 4) Add a homepage FAQ block with schema markup. 5) Fix the handful of invalid HTML nesting issues flagged by the W3C checker. Full detail and reasoning for each is in Sections 4–8; a complete, prioritised backlog is in Section 9.

2. Site Overview

Spiritfilled operates as a whisky cask broker and independent bottler, trading since 2016. The site is built on Shopify and serves three connected purposes: helping clients buy, store and eventually sell Scotch whisky casks; operating Braceside Bond, its own bonded storage facility in Fife; and releasing its own single-cask bottlings under the *Mythical Beasts* label. Rather than a self-serve catalogue with live prices, the primary path to purchase is consultative — visitors are guided toward booking a call or requesting the firm's cask investment guide. That is a sensible model for a considered, relationship-led purchase, and it shapes the right SEO strategy: informational and trust content will do more work than transactional "buy now" pages.

Key facts gathered during the audit

- **Platform:** Shopify (theme served from [cdn.shopify.com / spiritfilled.co.uk/cdn/shop](https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0000/0000/0000/assets/theme/2.0.0/2.0.0-liquid.js)).
- **Trust signals present:** Trustpilot 4.9/5 from 352 reviews; "helped over 1,500 clients"; 11 IWSC / World Whiskies award medals; press mentions from The Scotsman, The Standard, The Guardian, Forbes, The Drinks Business and 8 further trade/regional outlets; a testimonial from Scottish rugby international Finn Russell.

- **Navigation:** About Us, Cases (mega-menu: Buy Whisky Casks, Whisky Cask Investment, Storage, Management, Bottling, Sell Casks), Storage, Learn (blog), Bottles, Bottling Calculator, Contact.
- **Risk disclosures:** present under the hero and in the footer — cask investments are correctly flagged as unregulated in the UK, with capital-at-risk wording. This is good practice for a category that receives regular scrutiny from consumer-finance journalists, and it is worth leaning into further (Section 8).

3. Performance & Core Web Vitals

Two different pictures matter here, and they disagree — which is itself the finding.

3.1 Real-user field data (last 28 days, mobile)

Chrome's real-world usage data for the site currently shows a passing Core Web Vitals assessment:

Metric	Value	Verdict
Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)	1.2s	PASS
Interaction to Next Paint (INP)	136ms	PASS
Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)	0.01	PASS

Caveat: PageSpeed Insights reported insufficient page-specific traffic and fell back to origin-wide aggregate data, which blends the homepage with lighter pages elsewhere on the site. Treat this as a directional "most visitors are fine" signal, not proof the homepage itself is fast for everyone.

3.2 Lab data (simulated mid-tier mobile device, throttled network)

This is where the third-party script weight shows up. Lighthouse's simulated test — designed to represent a realistic, less-than-ideal mobile visitor — tells a much less comfortable story:

Metric	Value	Verdict
First Contentful Paint	2.3s	WARN
Largest Contentful Paint	5.7s	FAIL
Total Blocking Time	564ms	FAIL
Cumulative Layout Shift	0.15	WARN
Speed Index	7.2s	FAIL
Time to Interactive	38.4s	FAIL

A 38-second Time to Interactive is the standout number. It means that on a throttled connection, the page can look ready long before it actually responds properly to taps and clicks — a real risk for anyone converting on a slower phone, in poor signal, or on an older device, which for a UK-wide audience is not a small group.

3.3 Why: total page weight and where it goes

The homepage transfers approximately **7,155 KB (~7MB)** and fires around **299 separate network requests** before it settles, including 109 script requests. Almost none of this is Spiritfilled's own content — it is marketing, analytics and third-party app scripts stacked on top of a normal Shopify theme:

Script / tag	Transfer size	Note
Google Tag Manager / gtag.js (combined)	~1,126 KB	Loaded as 6 separate requests across 4 different Google IDs — see 3.4.
Calconic (bottling / investment calculator widget)	~1,044 KB	Loads sitewide, not just on the calculator page; also the single largest main-thread task recorded (42.1s).
Shopify checkout-web "hydrate" bundle	~204 KB	Pre-loading checkout machinery on the homepage, before any cart activity.
Zoho Forms (lead-capture widget, 5 files)	~183 KB	Powers the "Book a Call" forms.
Facebook Pixel (fbevents.js)	~107 KB	Standard retargeting pixel.
LinkedIn Ads Insight Tag	n/a (beacon)	B2B retargeting; confirm this audience is actually being targeted before keeping it.

3.4 The tag-duplication problem

The single highest-leverage fix on this list: Google Tag Manager and Google Ads/Analytics are currently being loaded four separate ways on one page load.

- GTM-NFGXT92 (a Google Tag Manager container)
- G-ZRRNKKVRC1 (a GA4 property, loaded twice — with and without GTM's linker parameters)
- AW-629735186 (a Google Ads conversion account, also loaded twice)
- GT-MR2PN447 (a further Google tag ID, also loaded twice)

This strongly suggests analytics/ads tags were added by hand in the theme at some point in addition to — rather than instead of — the GTM container, and possibly by more than one app or team over time. Beyond the ~1MB of duplicate script weight, this risks double-counting conversions and skewing the marketing data used to judge campaign performance. **Recommendation:** audit every tag currently firing (GTM's own preview mode will show this in minutes), keep one canonical GTM container as the single loading mechanism, and fire GA4/Google Ads/Meta/LinkedIn from inside it.

3.5 Other performance opportunities identified

Opportunity	Estimated saving
Use efficient cache lifetimes on static assets	~1,024 KB re-downloaded needlessly on repeat visits
Optimise/compress hero and card images	~291 KB
Reduce render-blocking CSS/JS requests	~300ms
Apply font-display: swap to web fonts	~170ms
Remove unused CSS rules	~32 KB
Minify CSS	~7 KB
Reduce excessive <link rel=preconnect> hints	More than 4 preconnects found; several point at origins (shop.app, cdn.shopify.com) the page never

Opportunity	Estimated saving
	actually calls — each unused preconnect wastes a connection setup for nothing.

Full third-party-by-third-party breakdown (transfer size, CPU time, and long-task detail) is available on request — this report summarises the material findings.

4. Code Quality: W3C HTML Validation

Running the homepage through the W3C Nu Html Checker returned roughly 70 messages (around 55 shown before the checker's own de-duplication filter, plus 22 further instances it grouped as repeats). **None of these are the kind of thing a visitor will consciously notice today** — modern browsers are forgiving — but invalid markup is technical debt: it makes the page more fragile to future browser changes, harder for accessibility tools and search engine parsers to interpret reliably, and it is contributing to the Best Practices score of 73. Almost all of it originates in the Shopify theme and its installed apps rather than in content anyone at Spiritfilled typed by hand, so remediation is a theme-developer task, not a content-editing one.

4.1 Structural errors (highest priority)

Issue	Where	Why it matters
Unclosed <code><div></code> and a <code></section></code> tag closing while elements are still open	Near the footer / logo-award section (~line 4127)	Genuine malformed HTML. Browsers auto-correct it today, but it is the kind of error that produces unpredictable layout bugs after a theme update.
<code><style></code> blocks placed inside <code><aside></code> , <code><header></code> , <code><section></code> , <code><footer></code> and <code><body></code> (10+ instances)	Throughout — mostly app-injected widgets	Style tags are only valid in <code><head></code> (or inside <code><noscript></code> in <code><head></code>). Scattering them through the body is a sign that third-party app embeds are being dropped in without cleanup.
<code><div></code> not allowed as a child of <code><summary></code> ; <code>aria-label</code> misused on generic <code><div></code> / <code><cart-drawer></code> elements (6+ instances)	Mobile nav dropdown; cart drawer; case-study and video carousels	Breaks the semantic contract screen readers rely on — directly touches the Accessibility score.
<code>href</code> attribute rejected on 13+ <code><a></code> tags in the "As Featured In" press-logo carousel	Scotsman, Guardian, Forbes, Drinks Business and 9 other press logos	These links are one of the site's best authority signals. Invalid nesting around them risks inconsistent handling by crawlers and assistive tech — worth a clean rebuild of this component.

4.2 Content & SEO-adjacent errors

Issue	Where	Why it matters
Heading levels skip from H2/H3 straight to H6 (5 instances)	"A simple four step process" block	Breaks the logical outline of the page for screen readers and dilutes the semantic keyword structure search engines use to understand page topics.
Malformed CSS <code>calc()</code> in the <code>sizes</code> attribute (incomplete formula, 3 instances)	Blog post preview card images	The browser silently discards this sizing hint and may fetch an oversized image for a small thumbnail — quietly adding to page weight.

Issue	Where	Why it matters
srcset supplies a width descriptor without a matching sizes attribute (2 instances)	Awards/medal banner image	Same effect — the browser can't make an informed choice of image size.
Duplicate-width candidates inside srcset (13+ instances)	Press-logo images	Harmless but wasteful markup; a sign the logo component was not carefully finished.

4.3 Lower-priority / cosmetic

Redundant `role="list"` on plain `<ul>` elements (~10 instances), an obsolete `frameborder` attribute on the Zoho pop-up iframe, and a handful of non-standard custom attributes (reveal-on-scroll, media-type, allow-hash-change) used on standard elements. None of these need urgent attention, but they are quick to fix in the same pass as the items above.

5. On-Page SEO Audit

Element	Finding	Status
Title tag	"Spiritfilled Whisky Cask Broker and Investment Specialists" — 58 characters. Clear, includes brand and primary category terms, within safe display length.	PASS
Meta description	158 characters, accurately summarises the offer. Currently descriptive rather than persuasive — no explicit reason to click over a competitor.	WARN
H1	Single H1 present: "Whisky Cask Broker and Independent Bottler".	PASS
Heading hierarchy	6 H2s, 7 H3s, but the outline is broken by out-of-sequence H6s (see 4.2).	WARN
Canonical tag	Present and self-referential.	PASS
robots.txt	Well-formed, sensible Shopify defaults, sitemap declared, and includes an explicit policy on AI shopping-agent checkout behaviour — an unusually current touch.	PASS
XML sitemap	Valid sitemap index covering products, collections, pages and blog, plus a dedicated agentic-discovery sitemap (an emerging Shopify capability aimed at AI answer engines).	PASS
Structured data	WebSite, Organization and BreadcrumbList JSON-LD present. No FAQPage or Review/AggregateRating schema, despite a prominent 4.9/5, 352-review Trustpilot display that is a natural fit for a star-rating rich snippet.	WARN
Image alt text	35 images on the homepage; 4 missing alt text — specifically the four client testimonial headshots.	WARN
Indexability of core pages	"Buy Whisky Casks" and similar pages are lead-generation pages (no live catalogue/pricing), by design. This limits ranking potential for transactional, price-comparison search terms but is not itself an error — see Section 8 for the content implication.	WATCH

What this means in practice

The technical foundation is genuinely solid — better than most independent brokers in this category. The opportunity is less about fixing errors and more about **capturing rich-result real estate** Google already offers

(star ratings, FAQ accordions in search results) and writing meta descriptions that sell the click rather than just describe the page.

6. Homepage Content & Block-Order Audit

The homepage was reviewed top to bottom in a live browser. Its current structure, in order:

- 1. Announcement bar (free cask investment guide) + main navigation
- 2. Hero: headline, two CTAs (Buy Casks / Buy Bottles), full-bleed landscape image, risk disclaimer
- 3. Trustpilot rating widget (4.9/5, 352 reviews)
- 4. "Since 2016, Spiritfilled has specialised in" — three service cards (Cask Supply / Cask Management / Independent Bottler)
- 5. "A simple four step process" — how cask investment works
- 6. Client testimonials — four video testimonials
- 7. "As Featured In" — six press logos
- 8. Award medals — 11 IWSC / World Whiskies badges
- 9. Investment case studies — three real client return examples with figures
- 10. Whisky Cask Supply service deep-dive (checklist + two CTAs)
- 11. Braceside Bond storage service deep-dive (checklist + CTA)
- 12. Mythical Beasts own-label bottling cross-sell
- 13. "Welcome to Spiritfilled" team/video block
- 14. Blog article previews (three posts) + "See all our articles"
- 15. Finn Russell (Scottish rugby international) ambassador testimonial
- 16. Repeated trust-icon row (Cask Supply / Secure Warehousing / Expert Care / Bottling Support)
- 17. Repeated Trustpilot widget + full award-medal row (duplicate of section 8)
- 18. Footer: company/legal information, further links, cask/risk disclosure, social

What's working

The narrative arc is logically built — introduce the offer, explain how it works, prove it with testimonials and press, prove it again with real numbers, then go deep on each service. For a considered purchase, that is broadly the right shape, and the case-study cards with real invested/returned figures are a genuinely strong, specific piece of proof most competitors don't show.

Six issues worth fixing

1. The strongest trust asset on the site is buried

The Finn Russell endorsement (section 15) is a rare, specific, hard-to-fake credibility signal — and it currently sits below the blog previews, roughly 90% of the way down an unusually long page. Most visitors, especially on mobile, will never scroll far enough to see it. **Recommendation:** pull a condensed version — photo, one-line quote, "Spiritfilled Ambassador" — into the press/trust band near the top of the page, and keep the fuller story lower down for those who want it.

2. Trust badges are duplicated

The Trustpilot widget and the full 11-medal award row both appear twice — once mid-page, once again immediately before the footer. This adds scroll length and page weight without adding new information. Keep one instance (the earlier, more visible one) and use the freed space for the FAQ block recommended below.

3. No on-page FAQ

A FAQ page exists (linked from the footer) but nothing from it surfaces on the homepage. For a purchase with real perceived risk and unfamiliarity, answering the top objections in place — before someone has to hunt for a separate page — reduces bounce and doubles as prime content for Google's FAQ rich-result format and "People Also Ask" boxes. Suggested questions: Is whisky cask investment safe? What's the minimum to get started? How is my cask stored and insured? How do I sell or exit? Are returns guaranteed?

4. No visible starting price or minimum

Nowhere on the homepage is there a number that tells a first-time visitor what this actually costs to get into. Even an indicative range ("casks typically from £X") answers the single biggest unspoken objection — "is this only for wealthy people?" — and pre-qualifies leads before they book a call, saving sales time on unsuitable enquiries.

5. Inconsistent call-to-action language

"Find out more", "Book a Call", "Request the Guide" and "Arrange a Call" are all used as competing primary actions across the page. Settling on one consistent primary CTA (e.g. "Book a Free Cask Consultation") repeated throughout, with "Download the Guide" as the one clear secondary option for people not ready to talk, will make the intended next step obvious at every scroll depth.

6. Risk transparency is good — make it a feature, not just a disclaimer

The unregulated-investment risk warning is present and appropriately worded under the hero, on the case studies, and in the footer. Given how often this product category is scrutinised in the consumer press, that transparency is a genuine differentiator, not just a compliance box to tick. A short, dedicated "How we protect you" block — bonded storage, full insurance, AWRS registration, three years included storage — would let Spiritfilled take ownership of the trust conversation on its own terms.

7. Recommended Homepage Structure

Bringing Sections 3, 4 and 6 together, here is a suggested rebuilt running order. Items marked NEW are additions; everything else already exists and simply needs to move, tighten, or de-duplicate.

#	Block	Change
1	Hero	Keep — add one micro-proof line under the CTAs: "1,500+ cask owners · From £X · Fully insured bonded storage".
2	Trustpilot strip	Keep, single instance only.
3	NEW: condensed press + ambassador band	Finn Russell quote combined with the six press logos into one compact credibility strip, moved up from position 15/7.
4	"Since 2016..." three service cards	Keep as-is.
5	Four-step process	Keep — add an indicative starting price/typical cask value to Step 1.
6	NEW: FAQ accordion (5–6 Qs)	New block with FAQPage schema markup.
7	Testimonials	Keep; consider trimming to the two or three strongest to reduce

#	Block	Change
		video weight.
8	Investment case studies	Keep — this is a standout section, change nothing structurally.
9	Services deep-dive (Supply / Storage / Bottling)	Keep; remove the award-medal repeat that currently sits inside this stretch.
10	Mythical Beasts cross-sell	Keep — good diversification for browsers not ready to invest.
11	Welcome video	Keep, but load the video player only on interaction (click-to-play) rather than eagerly.
12	Blog preview	Keep.
13	Repeated trust-icon / medal / Trustpilot block	Remove — content already covered earlier; fold any unique line items into the footer.
14	Footer	Keep — well organised, good legal transparency.

8. Prioritised Action Plan

Grouped by effort so the team can sequence work sensibly: quick wins first, then medium efforts, then strategic/ongoing items.

Quick wins (days, not weeks)

Action	Area	Why
Add alt text to the four testimonial headshot images	Accessibility / SEO	Closes the last gap in an otherwise strong 96 Accessibility score.
Fix the H2/H3 → H6 heading-order skips in the four-step process block	Code quality / SEO	Restores a clean semantic outline for screen readers and search engines.
Fix the malformed calc() in blog card image sizes attributes	Performance	Stops the browser silently over-fetching blog thumbnail images.
Remove the duplicate Trustpilot + award-medal block before the footer	Content / performance	Cuts page length and weight with zero information loss.
Move a condensed Finn Russell + press-logo band up near the fold	Conversion	Surfaces the site's strongest, hardest-to-fake trust signal to the visitors who currently never see it.
Standardise CTA wording to one primary action, repeated	Conversion	Removes decision friction at every scroll depth.

Medium effort (roughly two to four weeks)

Action	Area	Why
Audit every tag firing via GTM preview mode; consolidate to one GTM container feeding GA4 / Google Ads / Meta / LinkedIn	Performance / data quality	Removes ~1MB of duplicate script weight and fixes likely double-counted conversions.
Scope the Calconic calculator script to load only on the Bottling Calculator page, not sitewide	Performance	That single script currently accounts for the largest main-thread task on the homepage (42 seconds, throttled).

Action	Area	Why
Investigate why the Shopify checkout "hydrate" bundle (~204KB) loads on the homepage and defer it until cart activity begins	Performance	204KB of unused-on-arrival code on every homepage visit.
Add a homepage FAQ block with FAQPage schema	SEO / conversion	Targets "People Also Ask" visibility and reduces first-visit objections.
Add AggregateRating/Review schema reflecting the Trustpilot score	SEO	Opens the door to star-rating rich snippets in search results.
Clean up the invalid HTML flagged in Section 4 (stray <style> tags, broken anchor nesting in the press-logo carousel, srcset issues)	Code quality	Removes technical debt before it causes a harder-to-diagnose bug after a future theme update.
Enable longer cache lifetimes on static assets; remove unused CSS; add font-display: swap	Performance	Straightforward, low-risk wins worth ~1.3MB combined across repeat visits.

Strategic / ongoing

Action	Area	Why
Set a lightweight script-approval process for any new marketing pixel or Shopify app before install	Performance governance	Prevents the tag-soup problem in Section 3 from recurring.
Expand the Learn/blog content calendar, and link new articles into the Buy Whisky Casks page	SEO	Given the consultative sales model, informational content is the main lever available for organic growth.
Consider publishing an indicative price range or a gallery of typical available casks	SEO / conversion	Opens up ranking potential for higher-intent, comparison-style search queries while keeping the actual purchase behind a consultation.
Monitor Core Web Vitals monthly via Search Console and the CrUX report	Performance	Confirms fixes are landing for real users, not just in lab tests.

9. Closing Note

Spiritfilled's underlying trust story — genuine reviews, real award recognition, national press coverage and a credible ambassador — is stronger than the site currently lets it be. None of the findings in this report point to a rebuild; they point to a focused clean-up of third-party scripts, a handful of code fixes a Shopify theme developer can work through in a single sprint, and a reshuffle of proof points that already exist but are sitting in the wrong place on the page. Addressing the quick wins and medium-effort items in Section 8 should measurably improve both the Lighthouse performance score and, more importantly, how quickly a new visitor is persuaded this is a business worth trusting with a five-figure decision.

This report reflects a point-in-time audit conducted on 18 August 2026 using automated tooling (Google PageSpeed Insights / Lighthouse, the W3C Nu Html Checker) alongside manual review. It is a marketing, SEO and technical-performance assessment only, and does not constitute financial, legal, or regulatory advice regarding the products Spiritfilled offers.