

'Search' 2014: Content & Authority Will Lead Your Web Optimization Mantras

With Google's latest algorithm update 'Hummingbird' affecting 90% of the searches worldwide, the search guru has more up its sleeves to steer you back to basic, 'generate genuine content'

— Interviewed by Mastufa Ahmed



Google search gets a major refresh in their incessant efforts to make googling even more conversational for users to arrive at documents on the web easier. Ever since Google embarked on their semantic web move, search marketers and webmasters have been jostling to ensure their search engine result page ranking intact. While SEO is now more about credibility and trustworthiness and less of a technical thing, the onus now shifts to the 'content'. The authority of your web content will define its search friendliness and not keyphrases. Because Google's ultimate goal is to help users find documents on the web that best match their criteria. And to ensure this, there is also Google Penalty which downscapes a webpage's visibility if it does not conform to the set standards.

We spoke with the *CEO of Page-Traffic WebTech, Navneet Kaushal,* to



Navneet Kaushal, CEO, Page Traffic, Web Tech

guide you on how stay atop search results and never fall victim to Google Sandbox Effect.

1. Now that Google search is going semantic in true sense, what's the way forward for search engine marketers and web optimizers?

Semantic search is all about understanding the searcher's intent and the reason behind his query, which is a level above just parsing through keywords. Hummingbird is the biggest algorithmic change introduced by Google since 2000. It is aimed at making the web increasingly mobile and conversational. Semantic search will play a great role in ensuring that Hummingbird acquires its due objective. This algorithm is a new approach to search. It will get users results based on key phrase search intent, geo location, inter relation of words and more. I think the time has come to focus on the real cause of people visiting your website. If your goal is to provide high quality content, the task will seem easier to you. SEOs would need to focus more on market research instead on keyword based research. Since, Google will be delivering results on the basis of context of the question & content on your webpage, you will likely have to add long-tail key phrases to your content. As Matt

Cutts said, "the future is about things, not (keyword) strings", we have to accept the fact.

2. 90% of search results are affected by Hummingbird! What does Google Hummingbird algorithm translate to for an website optimizer?

Hummingbird is affecting 90% of the searches worldwide but most of the people didn't notice. The reason being, Hummingbird is targeted towards making the results more useful & relevant, especially when one asks a

long and complex questions on Google. For website optimizers, it is much required to make the content easy to read & remember. Make sure that writing is tight and based on subjects that are easily identified by people as well as Google Search.

3. Are businesses going Google+? How can businesses leverage Google+?

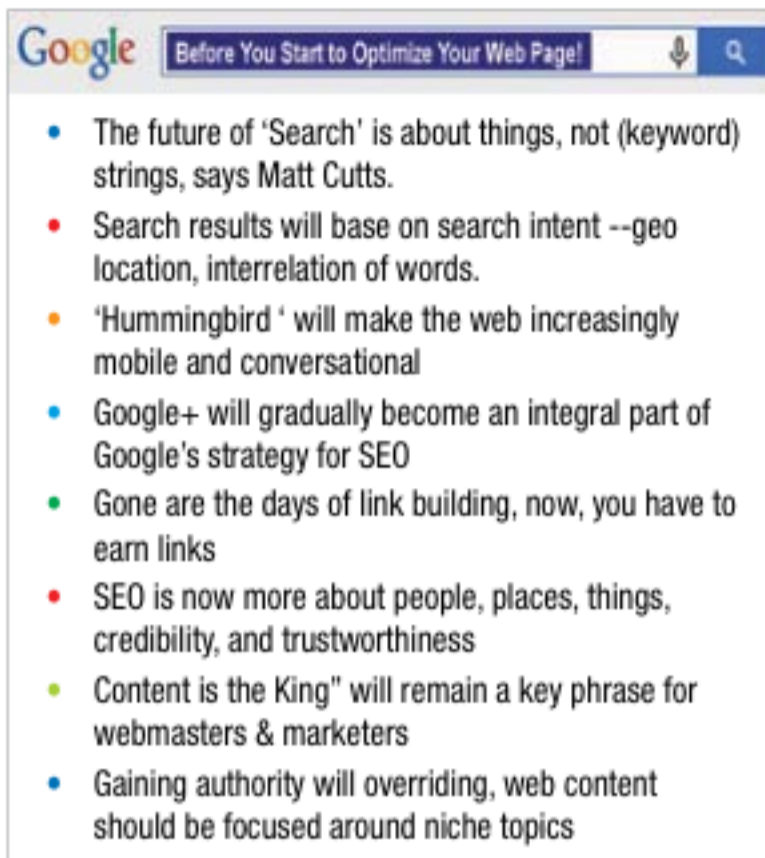
Google+ has the second highest number of monthly users after Facebook. Businesses are going Google+ and the trend will continue to grow in 2014. Businesses should not think Google+ as just another social network. It is gradually becoming an integral part of Google's strategy for SEO, social signals, and providing an improved personalized search experience.

There are ample evidence which proves that Google+ authorship improves the authority and search performance. Google gives higher weightage to authoritative content in the search, therefore, businesses should pay emphasis on creating high quality content that is liked & shared by readers. Use the featured links in Google Plus post, as it will pass rank to the page it is linked to. The best way is to connect your website to the Google plus page, as this will increase the relevancy of the website content as well as contribute to search ranking. Use of hashtag will increase amongst businesses in 2014. By using hashtag in Google Plus, every post can be connected to a search on the Google platform.

4. Links continue to reign supreme as the ultimate SEO authority signal! How can businesses gain popularity of their online contents?

It is important for us to understand that "Gone are the days of link building. Now, you have to earn links". Develop content that earns you links, user votes, likes and share. For years, link builders were using keywords as anchor texts to build links. With the recent Google algorithmic updates, the concept of using keywords in anchor text has perished.. Google has made link building far more challenging.

You no longer can buy a few links or blog posts for ranking. Post Hummingbird, long tail keywords have become more vital for your link building strategy. It is essential that you rely less on anchor text and more on long tail



Google Before You Start to Optimize Your Web Page!

- The future of 'Search' is about things, not (keyword) strings, says Matt Cutts.
- Search results will base on search intent --geo location, interrelation of words.
- 'Hummingbird' will make the web increasingly mobile and conversational
- Google+ will gradually become an integral part of Google's strategy for SEO
- Gone are the days of link building, now, you have to earn links
- SEO is now more about people, places, things, credibility, and trustworthiness
- "Content is the King" will remain a key phrase for webmasters & marketers
- Gaining authority will overriding, web content should be focused around niche topics

keywords, synonyms, theme of the page you are hoping to get a link from, author of the page, and credibility Google is showing for that site. There are several factors worth paying attention to, which start from set of keywords and remain important even when planning a content creation & outreach strategy. Keyword and SEO is now less of a technical thing. It has become more about people, places, things, credibility, and trustworthiness. There's no need for the keywords to be present in anchor text but it should be present in the content, where you are seeking a link from.

5. What can we expect from Google search in 2014?

When Google tells us to be prepared for more algorithmic changes and updates in coming time, it is easy to predict that 2014 will see a major overhaul in terms of SEO & SEM. Matt Cutts too in his Keynote at Pubcon 2013 talked about "moonshoot" changes, communication, future of search, and core quality & webspam changes.

Hummingbird has made semantic search more important and so will the coming updates. "Content is the King" will remain a key phrase for webmasters & marketers. Google Voice Search, Conversational Search, and Google Now will pay a more important role in pushing semantic search. Gaining authority will be another focus area.

Who Needs to Be Careful?

1. Porn & payday sites are getting all-Google Attention and will continue to getting so.
2. Google has placed restriction on publishers involved in selling ads that appear as editorial & have dofollow links. So, if you are paying for links to pass PageRank, Beware!

The year 2014 will see more experiments with the content strategy by SEOs. We can expect it to be the year of information rich web pages, interesting infographics, detailed whitepapers, brochures, short videos, and more. So, businesses have to create more authoritative content & emphasize higher on social media & sharing. □