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SEO & Social Media Trends to Look Out for in 2018!



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Google has been known to roll out a few big changes throughout the year, each year. While some updates are larger than the others, it's worth keeping a track of and knowing what each update is about. Merely responding to the changing SEO and social media trends is passé!

If you'd like to stay ahead of your competition and always have an edge over them, predicting how the face of SEO will look in the coming months is equally, or may be even more crucial than staying in line with the current trends. So how will SEO and social media look in 2018? Let's take a quick look.

All the Focus is on Mobile Devices

We just can't stress enough the role mobile devices play when it comes to SEO and social media. In a generation of selfies and

stories, mobile-focused platforms like Instagram and Snapchat are the most used platforms around the world. As of September 2017, Instagram had over 800 million users. As of May 2017, Snapchat had 166 million daily active users. That said, there was a time when websites were designed keeping only the desktops in mind. Very few focused on mobiles.

At the time, navigating the web on a mobile device was tedious – especially because web designs for mobiles was still in its infancy and badly-designed websites were the norm rather than an exception. However, today and in the future, not having a responsive website made for mobile devices is like committing SEO suicide.

Image and Video Search will Improve Drastically

Faster internet speeds, visual-friendly social media platforms and a general desire of people to engage with more videos and images has led to an increase in visual online

interactions. This clearly shows how online interactions has evolved and become more visual. So it'll be interesting to see how Google and other search engines treat videos and images in an online environment.

Individual Customization will Change the Way Rankings are Calculated

For the most part of a decade, Google has been pushing the development of more personalized search results. They have been able to do this by relying on browser cookies, individual search histories, and other details to give better and more customized search engine result pages, (SERPs) for the users. So the advent of speakers, increased convenience of search and better technological sophistication – all point to the fact that the personalization factor will increase in 2018. This will make it more difficult to predict how your company will rank or what you'll rank for.

Machine Learning to End the Traditional Search Algorithm Updates

RankBrain, Google's algorithm learning artificial intelligence system, helps it process the search results and provide the most relevant results for its users. This has remained Google's deepest dive into machine learning to date, in how it's applicable to its search algorithm. Google hasn't released any official news about when or even if it plans to roll out any more machine learning updates to its core algorithm. But by the end of 2018, a greater influence of machine learning over the typical search results is expected.

SEO will go Beyond Google and Bing

No, this doesn't indicate that another search engine is on the horizon. Although, over the years, there has been an increasing trend of various companies competing for

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
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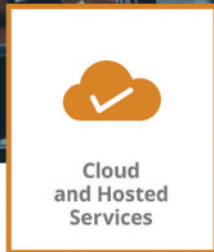
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ranking space aside from Google. But lately third-parties like Amazon and Yelp and digital assistants like Siri have become relevant search engines in their own right. So if you want your business to be found by a bigger percentage of users and introduce yourself to a wider audience in 2018, thinking beyond Google's range of influence is crucial.

Hyperlocal Results will Take Off

In our last article, we emphasized the need of a local SEO plan and how important it is to put into action if you're looking to generate more customers. Well, by the end of 2018, with more smartphone users in the market than ever before, and the increasing relevance of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), businesses that are already involved in local SEO will need to do much more to target hyperlocal keywords and optimize for even more locally relevant appearances. By hyperlocal, we're referring to the process of targeting customers or presenting search results based on physical proximity. In fact, down to less than a block radius!

How Can All of This be Achieved?

There are a ton of things that can be done to ensure a good ranking in the SEO world, but here are a few items that can basically take you through the majority of what's required to rank in 2018.

Crawlable and Accessible URL

It's imperative that the URL is crawlable, accessible and whose content Google can easily crawl and parse. The main aim is for Googlebot's spiders to come to the page, understand the content that's there in a text readable format, understand visuals, images, videos, embeds or anything else that's on the page in such a way that they can put all the information into their web index. Nothing is more important than this.

Optimal Keyword Research

It's vital that you know and figure out the keywords and phrases that users are actually using to get answers or solve their problems. They should be problems that your business — your website is actually working to solve and the content will help them to solve. So you'll need a primary keyword and a set of related secondary keywords that are relevant as well as share the user's intent.

Investigative SERP Analysis

You need to do some SERP investigation. This simply means is that perform a search query in Google and see the results. This will help you figure out what Google believes is relevant to keyword searches. What you're trying to make sense of is the intent, the type of content that's needed and whatever missing pieces may not be there. If you find gaps where no one is serving any specific search query, you can create content accordingly and take over that ranking position.

Compelling Title and Meta Description

It may seem like Google doesn't use the meta descriptions sometimes but, in fact, they use it quite frequently. There's a high percentage when the actual meta descriptions from the page is used, and an even higher percentage where the title is used. So how Google displays your results essentially determines whether people want to click on your page or your competitor's. These are only a few things that can affect your ranking in Google and other search engines.

By the time you learn what needs to be done and implement them; it's quite possible the strategies that worked at one point of time will change. SEO is very dynamic and it's very hard to predict what will work and what won't. Things that had great results maybe four or six months ago may no longer have the same results.

In times like these, it simply makes sense to get in touch with a digital marketing agency like Hureka Technologies that is always on top of these updates and what's trending in the world of SEO and social media.

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