4 SEO Trends Likely to Have a Maximum Impact in 2018

As we move into 2018, it’s fair to expect that the coming year will demand of SEO experts a lot of innovation, quick-footedness and smart work, to make sure their websites keep getting the greatest visibility possible on search engine result pages. Here are several SEO trends likely to dominate in 2018.

Related: Google’s New Mobile-First Index and the Death of Desktop SEO

Mobile-first indexing – a game-changer

Google’s 2016 announcement of its coming mobile-first index is the final call for websites to hop on board the mobile-readiness juggernaut. The *SEJ Annual Report* suggested that around 60 percent of traffic is coming from mobile devices; and the likelihood is that Google probably won’t delay implementing its mobile-first index beyond 2018. This may mean that websites whose mobile versions are suffering from common issues will experience a sudden dip in rankings.

So if you want to get in on this trend, begin by taking your website through the Google Mobile-Friendly Test; it crawls your website like Googlebot and shows you what you need to improve. The test couldn’t be any easier.

Next, take your website through Google Page Speed Insights; again, this is a brilliant and super-easy to use tool, with a lot of insight on factors you can target to improve page-loading speed for your mobile website.

This is another great tool you can use to evaluate the mobile-

fist index readiness of your website. It will compare your mobile and desktop pages for common issues and important SEO signals (such as hreflang tags, rel=”prev/next”, and canonical), and for content issues (page title, alt=”text”, links, etc). It also evaluates structured data markup, apart from checking your website’s mobile friendliness via Google’s APIs.

Voice search – poised to go bigger.

Because of the increasing proportion of voice searches, it’s natural that search engines (with Google, of course, leading the way) are emphasizing voice search, and optimizing their algorithms accordingly. Throughout 2018, voice search is likely to become increasingly important, slowly but surely requiring website SEO leads to re-think and voice-charge their keyword strategies. Below are some ways to boost your voice search SEO:

- Rather than single or two-word keywords/phrases, voice search emphasizes more “humanized” search strings; such as “Fun places to visit for Christmas in NYC” instead of “NYC Christmas options.”
- Questions are the core of how humans interact with machines; this will need to reflect on how brands choose keywords. For instance, you’ll likely see more of “What to do in NYC on Christmas?’ rather than “NYV Christmas options.”
- Microdata elements such as your business’s name, location, phone number, brands, prices and address are important parts of voice searches. Think about creating a comprehensive site map for your website with these information bits easily available.

Voice search and mobile readiness go hand in hand; in the

latter half of 2015, for instance, 40 percent of mobile users started using voice search. So, any marginal effort you put into either mobile-readiness or voice-readiness will deliver tremendous benefits.

LSI – empowering the move toward highly comprehensive and relevant content

Latent semantic indexing (LSI) is a natural language processing technique that analyzes relationships between a set of documents and the terms they contain, producing a set of concepts related to the documents and terms. Slowly and steadily, latent semantic indexing has helped Google:

- Identify related terms for keywords by researching through billions of pages
- Use these findings to evaluate whether a web page offers truly comprehensive content related to a topic

Related: SEO 2018: 15 Rules for Dominating Online Search Results

Because of LSI, it will become increasingly impractical for tricksters to fool Googlebots into treating their web content as valuable, and will even attract penalties. To improve your own web content so that it appears to Google as highly relevant, check out Website Auditor, and follow these steps:

- Go to content analysis, then TF-IDF, and select a webpage.
- The app will take you to Google search results.
- There, it will analyze the top 10 pages and calculate TF-IDF scores for each term used on each page.

- This will give you a list of highly relevant phrases sorted on the basis of the number of competing websites using them.
- You can include these terms in your content (it’s possible to edit your website content right from within Website Auditor).

SERPs –ever evolving

It’s almost like nobody noticed: Google has made so many incremental changes to its search engine result pages (SERPs) that today, the No. 1 spot on the search result list is not the only treasure SEO enthusiasts are digging for. Local packs, featured snippets, knowledge panels and more can be found, too: In short, Google has continued to add more dimensions to its SERPs.

Here, Rank Tracker is a pretty useful tool, helping you track your website’s performance on 15 Google SERP components. MWhat’s most important is that it tells you which SERP features are triggered for your keywords, and which ones your keywords rank for. This insight can help you target the most valuable SERP feature where you can claim your space and get tremendous visibility.

Related: 8 SEO Trends You Need to Pay Attention to in 2017

Final words

SEO is a lot like language. It keeps on evolving. New ideas evolve into well-known words, then slowly lose their sheen, and ultimately get replaced by brighter and more novel expressions. This guide will help you evolve as well. So, get started!

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/305596