Ask An SEO: Is It Better To Refresh Content Or Create New Pages? via @sejournal, @rollerblader

This week's Ask An SEO asks a classic content conundrum:

> *"Are content refreshes still an effective tactic, or is it better to create new pages altogether?"*

Yes, content refreshes are still an effective tactic in cases such as:

- Product releases where you only continue to sell the new product (new colors or sizes and other variants, but the same product).
- Data is released and should be updated for the content to be helpful or accurate.
- New customer or reader questions that are something readers are considering and thinking about.
- New brands enter the space and others close down, making shopping lists non-helpful if there's nowhere to shop.
- New ways to present the content, such as adding bullet lists or tables, or a new video.

With that said, not every page needs to be refreshed. If there is a similar topic that will help the reader but isn't directly related to an existing header or sub-header, refreshing the page to include the new content could take your page off-topic. This can make it somewhat irrelevant or less helpful for users, which makes it bad for SEO, too. In this case, you'll want to create a new page.

Once you have the new page created, look for where it can tie into the page you initially wanted to refresh and add an internal link to the new page. This gives the visitor on the page the opportunity to learn more or find the alternative, and then click back to finish reading or shopping. It also helps search engines and crawlers find their way to the new content.

New pages could be a good solution for:

- Articles and guides where you want to define a topic, strategy, or theory in more detail.
- Ecommerce experience to bring users to a sub-collection or sub-category, or a product alternative for things that are better for specific needs like size, fit, make, or model, etc.
- Lead gen pages where you have a few service options and want the person to find the more relevant funnel for their specific needs.

For example, a recipe site that offers a regular, gluten-free, and vegetarian option doesn't need to stuff all three recipe versions into the main recipe page. They can use an internal link at the top of the main recipe that says, *"Click here for the gluten free version,"* which helps the user and lets the search engines know they have this solution, too. Clothing brands can talk about tighter or looser fits and recommend a complementary brand if a customer complains about the same thing for a specific product or brand; this can go on product or category and collection pages.

If a client asks if they should refresh or create a new page, we:

- Recommend refreshing pages when the content begins to slip, does not recover, and we realize that the content is no longer as helpful as it could be. If refreshing the content can keep it on topic and provide a more

accurate solution, or a better way for visitors to absorb it.
- Add new pages when the solution a visitor needs is relevant to the page that we thought about refreshing, but is unique enough from the main topic to justify having its own page. SEO pages aren't about the keywords; they are about the solution the page provides and how you can uncomplicate it.

Complicated pages are ones with:

- Tons of jargon that regular consumers won't understand without doing another search.
- Multiple sections where the content is hard to scan through and has solutions that are difficult to find.
- Large bulky paragraphs and no visual breaks, or short choppy paragraphs that don't have actual solutions, just general statements.
- Sentences that should instead be lists, headers, tables, and formatted in easier-to-absorb formats.

But knowing what you could do or try doing doesn't mean anything if you aren't measuring the results.

How To Measure The Effectiveness

Depending on which one you choose, you'll have different ways to measure the effectiveness. Here are a few tests we do with clients in these same situations:

The first option is to have a control group with a couple of pages or topics, and we leave them alone as a control group. We then either expand with an equal amount of new content or refresh the same amount. The control group should be about as competitive to rank as the test groups, and from there, we watch over a few months to see if the test group begins climbing or gaining traffic while the control group remains the same.

The second test you can run, assuming you have a reasonably reliable rank tracking tool, is to monitor how many new keywords the content group has in the top 100 positions, top 20 positions, and top 10 positions after a couple of months. If the keywords and phrases have the same user intent as the topic (i.e., shopping vs. how to do something vs. informative and educational), then it looks like you made a good decision. On top of this, look for rich results like increases in People Also Ask and AI overview appearances. This is a sign the new content may be high quality and that you made the right decision.

Summary

I hope this helps answer your question. Refresh when the content is outdated, could be formatted better, or because it is fluffy and doesn't provide value. Add new pages when there is a solution for a problem or an answer for a question, and it is unique enough from an existing page to justify the page's existence. SEO keywords and search volumes do not justify this; an actual unique solution does.

More Resources:

Featured Image: Paulo Bobita/Search Engine Journal

https://www.searchenginejournal.com/ask-an-seo-is-it-better-to-refresh-content-or-create-new-pages/553877/