Don’t give up on Google Posts

Are Google Posts worth businesses’ time and effort? That question has been on the minds of many search practitioners lately. That’s because Google has been giving the content-sharing format less visibility, leading to businesses reporting declines in clicks on their content. This is an issue that demands closer inspection as businesses look for ways to keep attracting organic traffic in a world that has increasingly become pay to play.

About Google Posts

The Google Posts feature – technically known as Posts with Google – makes is possible for organizations with Google My Business (GMB) listings to share updates, announcements, and other content by posting images, events, stories, GIFs and videos. The content appears in an organization’s knowledge panel, or the information about a business that appears in a box alongside a search result, both in Google and Google Maps.

Google made the function available to businesses in 2016. Since then, Google Posts have been a boon for location-based businesses. With Google Posts, businesses can update their knowledge panels with dynamic content, such as special events, changes in hours or opening of a new location. Google Posts are even more important at a time when GMB listings are increasingly influential local search signals.

But in recent months, Google Posts have been losing their prominence. As Search Engine Land reported, not only have Google Posts been getting buried at the bottom of the knowledge panel, in mobile searches they’ve actually become detached from the knowledge panel. There have been scattered reports of Google moving Posts back to their original position at the top of the knowledge panel. But the consensus is that the posts continue to remain at the bottom.

Why has Google moved Google Posts to the bottom of the knowledge panel? One theory is that Google wants to push businesses toward paid content especially as Google defends its advertising turf against the encroachment of Amazon Advertising. But no one can really claim to have the answer. Google Posts are only a few years old, and Google often experiments with and tweaks features. Regardless of the reason, I'm advising my clients to keep using Google Posts. Here's why:

- As I noted, Google Posts are a component of a company's GMB listings, which command more and more attention in local search results. As noted in Moz Local Search Rankings Report, the importance of a Google My Business (GMB) listing as a ranking signal increased 32 percent year over year. A GMB listing is now the largest local ranking factor for a business. Keeping your GMB listing fresh with content such as Google Posts improves your findability in search.
- Google Posts are especially critical if your business depends on high-value purchases, and your goal is to create a valuable, long-term customer relationship. Examples of these kinds of businesses include automotive retailers and wealth management advisors. Once click on a Google Post could make the effort to update your posts easily worthwhile.

In addition, be smart about your Google Posts. For instance:

- Leverage content you're already creating and posting in all the other places that customers find you. Repurposing content is a far more productive way to attract customers with brand consistency.
- Use strong calls to action with URLs that will attract customers to do business with you.
- Make sure you compliment your Google Posts with accurate location data such as your address and phone number, as well as compelling content such as customer

ratings/reviews. Keep your knowledge panel up to date, accurate, and compelling.

Google Posts still matter, and they are not going away. I suggest businesses calculate the lifetime value of each customer they attract against the cost in productivity required to keep the content fresh. Is the trade-off worth it? I suspect it will be.

Opinions expressed in this article are those of the guest author and not necessarily Search Engine Land. Staff authors are listed here.

About The Author

Adam Dorfman is Director, Product Manangement at Reputation where he leads the teams responsible for the best in class local automation platform Velocity. Follow him on Twitter @phixed.
http://feeds.searchengineland.com/~r/searchengineland/~3/r0EdodcdvLU/dont-give-up-on-google-posts-310882