FAQs on new Google Speed Update: AMP pages, Search Console notifications & desktop only pages



Google has just announced its latest algorithm update, named the Speed Update, that will be launching in July of this year. We asked Google several questions about this update, including how this impacts desktop pages, whether pages with AMP URLs but slow canonical URLs will be impacted, if webmasters will get Search Console notifications and more.

Here are the questions and answers from a Google spokesperson:

1. Are you still going to be using the desktop speed factor for the desktop index?
Correct, no changes to announce for desktop.

2. With the mobile-first index, will desktop rankings use mobile page speed and not use desktop page speed?
No, this change is about the mobile search results. As mentioned in our mobile-first indexing blog post, while our index will be built from mobile documents, we're going to continue to build a great search experience for all users, whether they come from mobile or desktop devices.

3. What about the sites that get the "unavailable" message in the PageSpeed Insights report? How do they properly prepare for this?
Developers are encouraged to think broadly about how performance affects a user's experience of their page and to consider a variety of user experience metrics. We encourage developers to use all the tools that make sense to them.

PageSpeed Insights uses data from the Chrome User Experience Report. For sites that are not in the Chrome User Experience Report data set, we recommend using Lighthouse to evaluate the performance of a page.

4. Can you give us a percentage of queries impacted by this?
This will affect a small percentage of queries.

5. Will there be a significant drop in ranking if the site is impacted?
Speed is just one of many signals that are used to rank pages. Keep in mind that intent of the search query is still a very strong signal, so a slow page may still rank highly if it has great, relevant content.

6. Will there be a notification of some sort in Google Search Console, or it is completely algorithmic?
This is completely algorithmic. There is no tool that directly indicates whether a page is affected by this new ranking factor.

7. Is it using the same data you use in the PageSpeed Insights tool? The Chrome User Experience Data?
The intent of the signal is to improve the user experience on search. While we can’t comment on the types of data, we encourage developers to think broadly how about performance affects a user’s experience of their page and to consider a variety of user experience metrics when improving their site.

8. What if the site has AMP URLs but the canonical URLs are super slow? How does a site with AMP get impacted by this?
The same standard is applied to all pages, regardless of the technology used to build the page. The goal of this change is to improve the search user experience. In this example, since users from Search would be seeing an AMP page, the speed of the AMP page would be taken into account. However, if a page built with AMP provides a slow experience to users, it may also rank lower in the results.

About The Author



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