Free Google product listings expand to knowledge panels

Following the significant move of bringing free product listings to Google's Shopping tab results in April, Google is starting to extend them into the main Search results. The company announced Monday that the product listings in Search knowledge panels will now all be organic and included in Surfaces across Google inventory.

"We wanted to make sure that as consumers make a dramatic shift to e-commerce that we're doing everything we can to make it easy for consumers to find all the best products from all the best sellers," said Bill Ready, Google's president of commerce who joined the company from PayPal in December, in an interview Friday.

What's new. The product listings that appear in product knowledge panels when users search for specific items will now all be free, organic listings. These listing are currently all sponsored.

Product knowledge panels are typically triggered when a users searches for a specific product. Google began showing paid product listings in these panels in 2017. They will now all be organic.

Clicks from free listings in product knowledge panels will be reported in "Product results" in Google Search Console.

As with the free listings in Shopping, this will be live in the U.S. to start and will be rolling out on mobile first, then desktop.

Ready told Search Engine Land that free listings on Shopping will roll out globally by the end of this year.

The product listings in product knowledge panels will be organic in the U.S. starting this summer.

Results so far. Asked what Google has seen from the addition of free listings in Google Shopping so far, Ready said the company has seen "significant lift in user engagement from the changes." He cited the following data points:

- 70% lift in clicks on the Shopping tab.
- 130% lift in impressions on the Shopping tab.

"And we've seen that every segment of seller has benefited, but small and mid-sized sellers have benefited disproportionately," Ready added, noting that more sellers have joined the services and that retailers already advertising in Google Shopping have uploaded more of their product catalogs for organic visibility.

Why we care. Google does show product information on the main search results in rich snippets and sections such as Popular Products for apparel and accessories by crawling structured data on sellers' websites. This will be the first organic presence powered exclusively by merchants' feeds in Google Merchant Center. "We are still crawling the web to make sure we bring back the best results from across the web, but we are also now including those free listings that the merchants provide to us," said Ready.

We can expect more developments to come in this area as Google aims to greatly expand the universe of retailers and products discoverable across its properties – and tries to regain product search share from Amazon.

How to be eligible for organic knowledge panel Shopping listings. You'll need to open a Google Merchant Center account and upload a product feed. Then opt-in to "surfaces across Google" to be eligible for organic visibility in Search,

Shopping and Image results.

About The Author

Ginny Marvin is Third Door Media’s Editor-in-Chief, running the day to day editorial operations across all publications and overseeing paid media coverage. Ginny Marvin writes about paid digital advertising and analytics news and trends for Search Engine Land, Marketing Land and MarTech Today. With more than 15 years of marketing experience, Ginny has held both in-house and agency management positions. She can be found on Twitter as @ginnymarvin.
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