Google removes its algorithmic ‘Your News Update’ from Assistant

Google has quietly removed its “Your News Update” feature from Assistant, axing the algorithmically personalized audio digest in favor of the company’s existing (and more traditional) news briefings, as spotted by *9to5Google*.

Originally launched in 2019, Your News Update was an attempt at bringing the same kinds of algorithmic feeds that had been so successful on Facebook or other areas of Google’s products to audio news.

Instead of users picking their three specific new sources (like NPR, *The New York Times*, or CNN), Your News Update would rely on Google’s wealth of personal data to offer far more specific and relevant news updates from a broad range of partners that Google was licensing news from.

As *The Verge’s* Dieter Bohn pointed out at the time of release, the issue with that kind of system is that it relies on being very, very accurate, especially for audio – where you have to listen through each news story, which is far more time consuming than a text-based version. Plus, as anyone who’s used Google’s algorithmic headline feature in its apps lately knows, Google’s guesses at what you’re interested in can be pretty hit or miss. And of course, there was the same issue with algorithmic feeds here as anywhere else on the internet – that of falling into a self-selected bubble of filtered news.

There’s no official word from Google as to why it’s deprecated the feature, so we may never know for sure the reasoning

behind Google abandoning it to its ever-increasing product graveyard. Google Assistant still offers its original news digest option, however, so users won’t be left in the lurch.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/11/5/22765782/google-assistant-your-news-update-algorithmic-audio-digest