Google’s CEO Predicts Search Will Become An AI Agent Manager via @sejournal, @martinibuster



In a recent interview, Google’s CEO, Sundar Pichai, explained how search is changing in response to advances in AI. The discussion centered on a simple question: If AI can act, plan, and execute, then what role will search play in the future?

Information Queries May Become Agent AI Search

The interviewer asked whether search remains a product or becomes something else as AI systems begin handling tasks instead of returning results.

They asked:

> *“What do you view as a future of search? Is it a distribution*

> *mechanism? Is it a future product? Is it one of N ways people are going to interact with the world?”*

Had Pichai been interviewed by members of the publishing and SEO community, his answer may have received some pushback. He answered that search does not get replaced, but continues to expand as new capabilities are introduced and user expectations change.

He said:

> *“I feel like in search, with every shift, you’re able to do more with it.*
>
> *And we have to absorb those new capabilities and keep evolving the product frontier.*
>
> *If it’s mobile, the product evolved pretty quickly, you’re getting out of a New York subway, you’re looking for web pages, you want to go somewhere, how do you find it? So you’re constantly shifting, people’s expectations shift, and you’re moving along.*
>
> *If I fast forward, a lot of what are just information seeking queries will be agentic search. You will be completing tasks, you have many threads running.”*

In the first example of a person coming out of a New York subway, yes, someone may search for a web page, but will Google show the user a web page or treat it like data by summarizing it?

The second example completely removes the user from search and inserts agents in the middle. That scenario implicitly treats web pages as data.

Will Search Exist In Ten Years?

Pichai was asked what the future of search will be like in ten years. His answer suggests that the future of search will involve many information-seeking queries being handled as tasks carried out by agentic AI systems. Furthermore, search will be more like an orchestration layer that sits between the user and AI agents.

The exact question he was asked is:

> *"Will search exist in ten years?"*

Google's CEO responded:

> *"It keeps evolving. Search would be an agent manager, right, in which you're doing a lot of things.*
>
> *I think in some ways, I use anti-gravity today, and you have a bunch of agents doing stuff.*
>
> *And I can see search doing versions of those things, and you're getting a bunch of stuff done."*

At this point, the interviewer tried to get Pichai to return to the question of the actual search paradigm, if that will exist in ten years. Pichai declined to expressly state whether the search paradigm will still exist.

He continued his answer:

> *"Today in AI mode in search, people do deep research queries. So that doesn't quite fit the definition of what you're saying. But kind of people adapted to that.*
>
> *So I think people will do long-running tasks, can be asynchronous."*

What he described is a version of search that manages actions across multiple steps, where multiple processes can run at once instead of returning a single set of ranked results. And yet, it's weirdly abstract because he's talking about queries but fails to mention websites or web pages in that specific context.

What's going on? His next answer brings it into sharper focus.

Who Is The Flea And Who Is The Dog?

The interviewer picked up on Pichai's mention of adaptation, made an analogy to evolution, and then asked:

> *"It's almost like, does that former version or paradigm eventually go away? And what was search becomes an agent and your future interface is an agent, and the search box in ten years or n years is no longer the—"*

Pichai interrupted the interviewer to say that it's no longer possible to look ahead five or ten years because the models are changing, what people do is rapidly changing, and given that pace, the only thing to do is to embrace it.

He explained:

> *"The form factor of devices are going to change. I/O is going to radically change. And so …I think you can paralyze yourself thinking ten years ahead. But we are fortunate to be in a moment where you can think a year ahead, and the curve is so steep. It's exciting to just do that year ahead, right?*
>
> *Whereas in the past, you may need to sit and envision five years out, unlike the models are going to be dramatically different in a year's time.*
>
> *…I think it'll evolve, but it's an expansionary moment. I think what a lot of people underestimate in these moments is,*

> *it feels so far from a zero-sum game to me, right? The value of what people are going to be able to do is also on some crazy curve, right?*
>
> *I think the more you view it as a zero-sum game, it looks difficult. It can become a zero-sum game if you're innovating or the product is not evolving.*
>
> *But as long as you're at the cutting edge of doing those things, and we're doing both search and Gemini, and so they will overlap in certain ways. They will profoundly diverge in certain ways, right? And so I think it's good to have both and embrace it."*

What Google's CEO is doing is rejecting the possibility of becoming obsolescent by deliberately focusing on competitive agility and embracing uncertainty as a strategic advantage.

That might work for Google, but what about websites?

I think businesses also need to embrace competitive agility and get out of the mental attitude of fleas on the dog. And yet, online businesses, publishers, and the SEO community are not fleas because Google itself is the one feeding off the web's content.

What About Websites?

The interview lasted for over an hour, and at no point did Pichai mention websites. He mentioned web pages twice, once as something to understand with technology and once in the example of a person emerging from a subway who is looking for a web page. In both of those instances, the context was not Google Search looking for or fetching a web page in response to a query.

Given that Google Search is used by billions of people every day, it's a bit odd that websites aren't mentioned at all by

the CEO of the world’s most successful search engine.

https://www.searchenginejournal.com/googles-ceo-predicts-search-will-become-an-ai-agent-manager/571526/