

How Digital Marketers Can Prepare for the Changes AI-Powered Search Engines Will Bring



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Both Google and Bing have had momentary setbacks in the rolling out of AI-powered search, but the writing is clearly on the wall. A seismic shift is coming to how we conduct online searches, and it's going to throw all the old rules about SEO to the wayside in short order.

For marketers, search engines have always represented the lifeblood for website traffic, qualified sales leads and generating online revenue. While search engine algorithms have evolved over the years, the advent of AI-powered search

engines such as Microsoft's Bing presents significant, if not revolutionary, changes to the way we'll need to market to consumers going forward.

How do AI-powered search engines work?

AI-powered search engines use machine learning algorithms to understand the actual intent behind a consumer's every search query – and then provide that consumer with relevant and highly personalized results. This means the way businesses optimize their websites for search (SEO) will inevitably need to adapt to the way AI determines the results it displays.

With AI's ability to understand the context and intent of a search query, it's likely that the search results will become much more personalized as the algorithm "gets to know" that individual and shapes its responses accordingly. Ultimately, the algorithm will present different search results to a teenager in Des Moines than it will to a senior living in Florida, even though they're both searching for the same commodity.

The algorithm will know a host of pertinent information about the searcher before they input their request – their history of buying, their price-point tolerance, what's represented a pain point in previous interactions. As the search engine knows more about each consumer, the results are going to be much narrower and more refined ... spelling the end to random, incidental traffic coming to a specific site.

It's websites that provide high-quality content that closely matches the user's intent that are likely to see increased visibility and traffic. Conversely, websites that rely on archaic or even spammy techniques – like keyword stuffing or low-quality content – will probably see a significant decrease in online visibility and traffic.

What marketers need to focus on

For marketers, the focus will be on providing high-quality, user-centric content that appeals to the interests of their target audience – now more than ever. They will also need to focus on optimizing their website's user experience to provide a positive experience for the consumer. Those sites that remain clunky or unconcerned about navigation will not pass muster with the new gatekeeper, the AI algorithm, which will have learned not only from one particular consumer, but many consumers, which sites provide a better shopping experience.

Another impact of AI-powered search engines on the digital marketing industry is the potential rise of “zero-click” search. This occurs when the search engine provides the user with all the information they need directly in the search results, without their need to click through to an actual website.

Let's say you are searching for a restaurant in a particular city. In the past, you might have typed in the name of the restaurant and the city and then clicked on a link to a review site to find out more about it.

AI search, on the other hand, will consider your previous search history, location and other factors to provide more personalized results. For example, if you have previously searched for vegetarian restaurants in the same city, the search engine might prioritize vegetarian restaurants in its results. Overall, AI search engines can provide a more efficient and personalized zero-click search experience by providing relevant information directly in the search results page, without the need for the user to click on any links.

We're already seeing this when we input the name of a retail store, and Google, for instance, displays everything from the address and hours of operation to phone numbers and user reviews. AI search will further expand on the power while

narrowing down the options based on user intent.

How to capitalize on AI-powered search

To capitalize on the coming of AI-enhanced search, brand marketers should focus on creating content that provides value to their target audience. This means creating content that answers questions, provides solutions to problems and delivers a positive user experience. By focusing on providing value to their audience, businesses can increase their chances of being featured in zero-click search results.

Brand marketers should also focus on building their brand and reputation online. This means building high-quality backlinks, developing a strong social media presence and engaging with their audience on multiple platforms. By building their brand and reputation, businesses can increase their chances of being featured in search results, even if they don't rank highly for specific keywords.

We can also expect the rise of voice search to continue, with more and more users using voice assistants like Siri, Alexa and Google Assistant to search for information. This means that businesses will need to optimize their content for voice search by focusing on conversational language and long-tail keywords.

In conclusion, AI-powered search engines like Bing will have a significant impact on the digital marketing industry. Marketers will need to adapt by focusing on providing high-quality, user-centric content that meets the intent of their target audience. They will also need to focus on building their brand and reputation online to increase their chances of being featured in search results. With the continued evolution of AI-powered search engines and the rise of voice search, the digital marketing industry is set to undergo significant

changes in the coming years.

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