Multifaceted featured snippets begin rolling out in Google search results

Google has been rolling out many new search features over the past few months related to images, featured snippets, and the knowledge graph. Today the search giant released another feature called “multifaceted featured snippets.”

Multifaceted featured snippets will be surfaced for queries that are sufficiently broad enough to allow for more than one interpretation of what was submitted. In these instances, the

SERP returned will include more than one featured snippet, with the original query rewritten as the questions the algorithm assumes the user may have intended, and the results displayed in the multifaceted snippet will reflect those new questions.

From the announcement:

> *There are several types of nuanced queries where showing more comprehensive results could be helpful. We're starting first with "multi-intent" queries, which are queries that have several potential intentions or purposes associated. The query "tooth pain after a filling," for example, could be interpreted as "why does my tooth still hurt after a filling?" or "how long should a tooth hurt after a filling?"*

For example:

Google Multifaceted Featured Snippet

Multifaceted Featured Snippets vs. Multi-Perspective Answers

Back in December, Bing began rolling out AI-powered multi-perspective answers as part of its “Intelligent Search” set of new features, which includes Intelligent Answers, Intelligent Image Search and Conversational Search. Multi-perspective answers are just one of the “Intelligent Answers” features that has been live since the rollout. These results surface two (or more) authoritative sources on a topic, and will typically include differing perspectives/answers to the query.

Bing leverages its deep recurrent neural network models to determine similarity and sentiment among authoritative sources, and extracts the multiple viewpoints related to a topic – providing the most relevant set of multi-perspective answers (covered in more detail here).

Bing – Multi-perspective Intelligent Answers

Google's multifaceted featured snippets may appear not too dissimilar from Bing's multi-perspective answers, in that they also provide multiple rich results for a single query, but they are instead based on the presumed multiple intentions of a query (resulting in both multiple queries and results) vs. multiple viewpoints resulting from a single query. With these types of broad queries, many interpretations of what the user

is actually asking can exist.

Multifaceted snippets aim to provide a more comprehensive and actionable set of results for these multi-intent query scenarios. They differ from multi-perspective intelligent answers in that they presume a different question might be being asked altogether, and surface responses for each of the queries the algorithm assumes the user may have actually intended, as the screenshot below demonstrates:

Multifaceted Featured Snippet

Multifaceted snippets are rolling out first on mobile, and will be coming to desktop results over time. Google also plans to expand multifaceted featured snippets throughout 2018 to include other nuanced query types – beyond those that could have multiple intentions – and lists guidance-seeking queries as one example.

From the post:

> *"For example, guidance-seeking queries like "is it worth fixing my foundation?" have several components that could be important, such as cost, duration, methods and financing. We'll continue to experiment with multifaceted featured*

snippets over this year to expand coverage.”

With both Google and Bing having fully adopted deep learning methods and using artificial neural networks to drive search advancements, we can expect to see a steady stream of changes in search results enhancements and improved information discovery.

As always, Google encourages users to submit feedback on these new search features as you encounter them in the SERPs. Read Google’s full announcement here.

About The Author

Michelle Robbins, SVP Content & Marketing Technology, oversees editorial direction as Editor in Chief for Third Door Media’s digital publications, Search Engine Land, Marketing Land and MarTech Today, directing a full-time staff of reporters and editors managing contributed content. She is responsible for developing the content strategy across all properties and aligning those initiatives with the programming and audience goals for Third Door Media’s two leading marketing conference series, Search Marketing Expo and The MarTech Conference. In addition, Michelle oversees information technology operations, directing the marketing technology department. An experienced domestic and international keynote and featured speaker, she enjoys connecting with the community at SMX, MarTech and other industry events. Connect online with Michelle on Twitter @MichelleRobbins, and Linkedin.
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