Yandex, the big Russian search engine, releases Vega update

Yandex, the largest search engine in Russia, announced a new algorithm update named “Vega” that introduced “1,500 improvements to Yandex Search.” The biggest and most significant change with this update according to Yandex is that the company is bringing in more human elements into search.

Human elements. Yandex said it has “updated the ranking algorithm with neural networks trained on data provided by real experts in several fields, providing users with even higher quality solutions to their searches.” It seems Yandex has experts feeding signals to the machine learning algorithms on what the best outcomes should be and the machines are using these real human inputs to drive a better end result for the search results.

Yandex.Q. Yandex also said they are bringing in a Q&A service into search. “We’re also connecting people with answers to their searches from qualified experts, through our new question-and-answer service, Yandex.Q,” the company said.

Larger and faster index. Yandex was able to double the size of its index, while improving the speed of delivering search results to users. “Our search index is now twice as large, with 200 billion documents, thanks to a clever method for grouping similar web pages into clusters,” Yandex wrote. Yandex is also using pre-rendering technology for mobile users and other techniques to return these results faster.

“Our new search update combines our latest technologies with human knowledge,” says Andrey Styskin, Head of Yandex Search. “At Yandex, it’s our goal to help consumers and businesses

better navigate the online and offline world. With this new search update, users across the RuNet are helping us do just that. By contributing their knowledge, experts are enhancing our algorithms and helping our Search users, who continue to grow; over the past year, Yandex's search share on Android in Russia rose 4.8% to 54.7% in early December."

Examples. Yandex posted numerous examples, in Russian, on the company blog. If you speak Russian, you may understand the examples. So go take a look.

Why we care. Search companies often learn from their competitors. Will Bing or Google use any of what Yandex is doing here in a future update is yet to be determined. Both Google and Bing do not talk about the size of their index anymore but they both talk about speed and returning better results faster. The Q&A piece is interesting and many search engines have Q&A elements in search.

About The Author



Barry Schwartz is Search Engine Land's News Editor and owns RustyBrick, a NY based web consulting firm. He also runs Search Engine Roundtable, a popular search blog on SEM topics.
http://feeds.searchengineland.com/~r/searchengineland/~3/87cml l5Q908/yandex-the-big-russian-search-engine-releases-vega-update-326642