2018 START

SEO in 2018: The Top 5 Trends, Opportunities, and Threats

1 GOOGLE'S MOBILE-FIRST INDEX ROLLS OUT SOON

Desktop sites will be a side show rather than the main attraction, and mobile page speed will be a ranking factor starting in July. Have your site checked for mobile speed, and make sure the same content is rendered on mobile and desktop sites.

2 SEARCH BECOMES MORE PERSONALIZED

Rankings become more difficult to discern, since every search engine results page (SERP) is now a custom SERP. Keyword rankings can vary based on a searcher's location, browser history, and previous search data. The concept of empirical keyword rankings is likely to shift, as there's no clear indication of which SERP could be considered "true" or "accurate."

3 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

If your site gathers email signups, cookie data, or other user data, you'll likely fall under the jurisdiction of the GDPR. Make sure your website complies with GDPR requirements and your third-party vendors comply as well by May 25.

4 VOICE CONTINUES TO SHAPE SEARCH ENGINES

Because voice queries are made in everyday language, search engines have learned how to parse everyday language for searcher intent. Rather than tweaking content to match keywords, content teams should use more natural language aligned with searcher intent rather than bot-based best practices.

5 POSITION ZERO MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

Voice-first searches return only one result and prioritize the content of the search engine itself. Many SEO tools have daily data on what results appear in featured snippets, so marketers can form strategies to capture that position.

SEO FOR PERSONALIZED SEARCH

◊ **Location:** make sure your local SEO is on point, even if you don't interact with customers face to face

◊ **History:** keep publishing interesting, rewarding content so visitors come back often, increasing your site's presence in their browser history

◊ **Semantic connections:** optimize your technical SEO, meta content, and markup to help search engines understand what your pages are offering and tie that back to search queries

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