

A Top 2019 digital marketing trend - Linda Graham FinCommunications

Embrace the voice search revolution

The festivities are over; it's back to the drawing board and time to plan and importantly stay ahead in the digital marketing game. In this newsletter, we discuss one of the most significant changes taking place right now .. and the good news is ... it's super easy to factor into your brand's current online presence.

Voice search: the real deal

Recent research has shown that by the end of the year, 50% of all web searches will be done through voice commands. It makes perfect sense. Voice searches allow us to multi-task like never before! We can hunt for work-related information while driving, cooking, fishing or walking through the shopping mall.

Voice search is also on the increase by people who are sitting in front of their keyboards as searching with voice is 3.7 times faster than typing. 25% of desktop searches are already done via voice. So, if the rate of change of the way the internet is used continues, it's only a matter of months until voice search will be considered as the norm by all.

Voice search changes how we search in three significant ways in that our searches are:

1. Longer,
2. More conversational, and
3. More often posed as questions seeking very specific information.

In fact, Google states that 70% of searches using Google Assist use natural language in the form of questions.

Answer engines: the speedy deal

Another significant change is that *search engines* have become *answer engines* and our internet experience one of dipping our toes into websites, rather than truly visiting them. When we search, we're presented with featured snippets of information from various sites on the SERP, and we don't have to click through to the sites to get answers to our queries. And better still, if using voice search, the snippets are read out to us.

Adapt or die

The opportunity is simple: as a brand, you need to understand the questions that your clients will ask, so that those voice assistants – and search engines – will return answers from YOUR website.

First up is to redraft your web copy into conversational language and then sync your brand with the sweet tones of voice assistants such as Google Assist or Siri by expanding the keywords you target in your website content and SEO settings to include ones that reflect how someone would speak a search, rather than write it. Think about long tail keywords, a group of at least three words that are descriptive and align well with how voice searchers pose their questions.

There are multiple SEO tools that can help you to identify what questions your clients are likely to be asking. Another great SEO practice is to use the likely questions into the H1 headers on an FAQ page and to link to blogs that address the questions in greater detail.

Integrate into your clients' audio lives

The other obvious way to effortlessly keep up with the trend to voice search is to expand the amount of audio content you make available. Don't be daunted! Going audio can simply be in the form of a short recording of your monthly blog uploaded onto your website. And as you get more comfortable with your professional voice, you can include some storytelling, shown to be one of the most effective marketing techniques as it captures our minds and helps us to relate easily to the content.

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