



In the past few years, SEO has completely changed its meaning.

From simply matching the user search term - through providing useful information - to addressing user queries at greater level of ease and speed. SEO has become a marketing tool that is more about processing user queries rather than being a channel of increasing business revenue.

Google says that they change their search algorithm 1-2 times per day ([around 500 times](#) a year) just to improve their user experience. And only those websites can rank higher in search results that are built around the same objective.

Initially Google would only focus on finding the exact match of "strings of words" entered by users to display search results. But after countering the highest level of spamming and lower user satisfaction, Google now considers only those websites to rank in SERPs that are useful to its users. Everything else is penalized.

Based on these recent updates by Google and the ever changing user behavior, we believe the following 5 SEO trends can be seen in 2017.

1. **Rankbrain**

This is an artificial intelligence system launched by Google in October 2015, which brought

a new level of user experience and SEO challenge in 2016, and is expected to show its full potential in 2017.

Currently, the system tries to identify the behavior/language of the users by analyzing the words/phrases searched by them and keeping a record of what sort of results they choose. Then it uses its advanced formulas to bring the most relevant results each time the same query is searched by a user. And it is also equally effective at handling search queries never seen before.

In the coming year 2017, we expect Rank Brain to present greater challenge for search marketers as it continues to understand different user behavior for both text and voice search.

2. Voice Search

Even though it was introduced a few years back (in 2013), but not many users showed interest in voice search until the end of 2015.

A survey conducted in 2013, showed around 85% of respondents had not used voice search at all. But a similar study conducted in December 2015 showed over 60% of respondents using it for some personally preferred search terms. And ever since, there has been a constant rise in the popularity of voice search. In 2017, we expect voice search to bring new opportunities for marketers as it attracts more user attention this year.

3. Bounce Rate

Just like being an important quality measure of an Adwords campaign, Bounce Rate of a website is known to have great influence on organic rankings of a website too. The webpages with high bounce rate are considered to be less preferred by users (particularly for their search term). For example, a user searching for [Chicago seo](#) techniques may not be interested in SEO tips from a marketer based in Australia. And as soon as he realizes that the SEO recommendations are made by an expert outside Chicago, he clicks the back button without exploring the website.

Google now considers bounce rate as an important ranking factor for search results. So, it will be more challenging for marketers to match up with this quality parameter in the coming year.

4. Accelerated Mobile Page (AMP)

For users who browse the web on-the-go, the major reason for poor web experience is the unstable internet connection. And Google planned to counter this issue by introducing the AMP open source platform that lets webmasters create pre-renderable [Mobile friendly version](#) of the websites that is super lightweight, and is critically designed to load quickly even with an unstable internet connection.

And ever since the idea of AMP got popular and appreciation by all mobile users, Google has now introduced a mobile-friendly indexing system which checks each website for AMP files and ranks those sites higher in SERPs which are mobile phone compatible. This new trend is believed to bring a new level of SEO competition and opportunities in the year 2017.

5. High-Quality Links

One of the oldest yet consistently important ranking factors for all search engines is the quality of backlinks pointing to a website. Google in particular has strict guidelines for creating backlinks for a website. It discourages a webmaster from getting involved in unnatural link building techniques like, large scale article marketing, directory submission, link exchanges, paid links and more.

Google is still very active in penalizing such websites employing unnatural link building techniques. Therefore, the best way to ensure a high ranking performing website in 2017 is by creating unique, useful, relevant content that your users like to share with others, which ultimately generates more backlinks for your site. The more informative or useful content you have, the greater are your chances of getting linked by your readers.

Apart from the SEO trends listed above, there are some other critical SEO quality parameters like, **Microformats**, **Incorrect Robots.txt**, **Browser Caching**, **Active Social Profiles**, **Brand Searches**, [HTTP Page Requests](#) that cannot be ignored in 2017. A marketer must keep updated with the latest SEO trends and design super-actionable strategies to get higher search rankings.

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