

Phillips MediaSource WhitePaper

So What is Google Hummingbird?

The Hummingbird is an entirely new algorithm. It approaches search engine queries in a brand new and intelligent way utilizing new technology combined with older features of the existing algorithms.

The Resurgence of Long Tailed Keywords

The Hummingbird is what Google is calling the latest (greatest?) algorithm that they slipped in under our radar in August. If the rumors are true, the Hummingbird will take a search engine query using long-tailed keywords and try to decipher the context of the question rather than chase the specific keywords within the question. The goal is to provide results that actually answer the question

The Knowledge Graph

When you think about it, an algorithm that looks for context within a question was inevitable. Google has been up and running for 15 years (as of September), and in that time it has been collecting what could very well be the largest database of knowledge ever recorded.

In theory, the Knowledge Base has collected data for only a short while; however, most people believe differently. To this very moment, knowledge is being gathered, categorized, cross-referenced thousands upon thousands of ways, and stored. This vast well of knowledge is available to the Hummingbird.

With such a Knowledge Graph, was it not inevitable that Google would eventually find a way to utilize this information with an algorithm that deciphers the context of all the words in a query rather than homing in on a few key words therein? This is exactly what Hummingbird is designed to do.

Was Hummingbird Really A Surprise?

This new algorithm may have surprised the majority, but many people saw it coming. These are the people who use Google's Conversational Search. The reason so many were caught off guard by Hummingbird is that very few paid that much attention when Conversational Search was rolled out nearly two years ago.

For those who do not know about Conversational Search, which is most of us, here is what you missed, which may have been the biggest hint to date that Google was close to cracking semantic search.

[> Read more](#)

Why did Google Create Hummingbird?

Here are three reasons why Google had to create Hummingbird, and why it now has to perfect it:

1. The ball is already rolling.
2. Google promised answers by creating its very first search engine. The problem is, people are asking questions, not typing in keywords.
3. More and more people are using their mobile devices to search. Google knows how important it is to understand a question, especially when you are driving. Comprehension is not new. It is just refined.

Technology Marches On

Google promised to answer our queries when it created the first algorithm that could answer them in the form of leading us to the answers. It takes this promise very seriously. In all, it has addressed the issue rather admirably. Of course, in providing the websites that hold the answers, it created its own worst problem in how to rank them.

The other problem is in the questions. We have always asked questions and up until now, Google has not answered any of them. It merely shows us where we might get the answers based on some of the words we use and making a guess. Now, Google wants to answer the questions by comprehending them and giving us the right answer the first time out.

Let's talk.

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