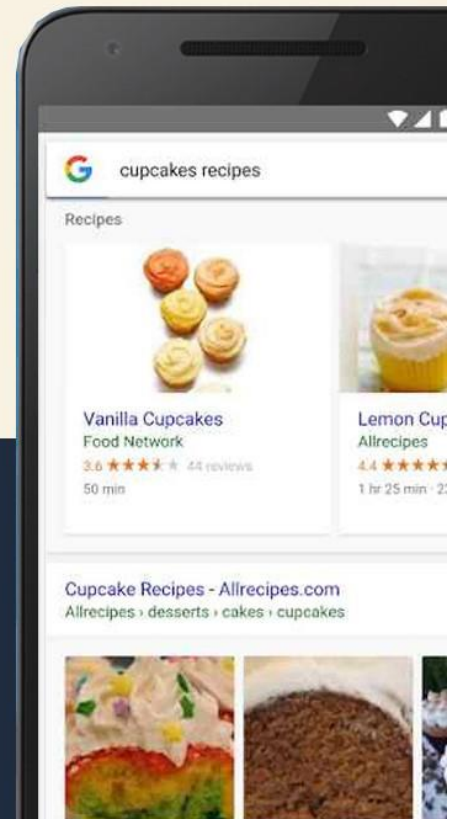


NEWSLETTER

December 2016



LATEST HAPPENINGS IN
THE WORLD OF LOCAL
SEARCH FOR THE MONTH
OF **DECEMBER 2016**



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LATEST HAPPENINGS IN THE WORLD OF LOCAL SEARCH FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2016

- Google is going to discontinue Map Maker and will add all the map editing features into Google Maps. Here's an [official confirmation](#).
- Soon you will be able to go to the top by just pressing a [single button](#) on Google as they are testing the "Back to the top" button on Mobile search results.
- Google now says they can crawl content within tabs. This information comes from people asking Google specific details about how content is seen and crawled with the upcoming mobile only index. This news shouldn't have you putting a ton of content behind tabs, but does take some of the pressure off if you have a lot of preparing to do.



- "If you don't ask, the answer is always No", this saying holds true for reviews as well. A recent [survey](#) by Bright Local has revealed that 7 out of 10 customers will leave a review if asked. So go ahead and ask your customers.

Key 'Takeaways' From Online Review Survey Research

- ✔ 84% of people trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation
- ✔ 7 out of 10 consumers will leave a review for a business if they're asked to
- ✔ 90% of consumers read less than 10 reviews before forming an opinion about a business
- ✔ 54% of people will visit the website after reading positive reviews
- ✔ 73% of consumers think that reviews older than 3 months are no longer relevant
- ✔ 74% of consumers say that positive reviews make them trust a local business more
- ✔ 58% of consumers say that the star rating of a business is most important

- You can also make use of our 'review widget' which sits on your website and helps you get positive reviews on Google, Yelp and Facebook. In addition, it helps to filter out negative reviews too.
- Bing has recently launched an updated version of the Local pack. This [updated local pack](#) is much more user-friendly and is on both mobile and desktop results.
- Google has introduced a new feature called '[Know before you go](#)' within Google Maps. It lets the users see the business in real time, so that they can get an idea of what to expect when they visit there, especially during peak hours. It can also be used to see what their competitors are up to. Give this [article](#) a read.
- Google has released a new [holiday guide](#) that provides data about how people shop and what they prefer. Give it a read as it can help you create a great marketing strategy.
- Google is testing a new feature named "[Chat with your customer](#)". If the initial response will be good, then they may fully launch it in coming days.



Chatting with customers is a new Google My Business feature that's currently available only to a select group of business owners. If you received an email from Google inviting you to participate in the pilot, click the link from the email and use the instructions below to start messaging with customers.

- You can now see [holiday hours](#) on Bing in real time. They are directly in touch with the business owners to ensure the highest accuracy. If your business isn't showing this feature then reach out to Bing directly from within your Bing for Business dashboard.

2

GOOGLE'S MOBILE-FIRST INDEX: HOW TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS



Google has announced that they are shifting from Desktop only index to mobile only index and this announcement has given sleepless nights to many SEO professionals. They are worried about their clients and their overall strategy. Until now, Google ranked websites as per the content in the desktop version, but after this major shift, websites will be ranked as per the Contents on their mobile version.

The major reason behind this shift is the dramatic escalation in the number of mobile users across the globe. We now officially have more people searching on mobile than desktop. But still, many websites shows comprehensive content on their desktop version and not so impressive content on the mobile version. And to fix this, Google has come up with the Mobile-only index.

However, they are not acting like a teacher with a stick in the hand but are trying their level best to address everyone's concerns during the initial stage. They have published some recommendations and information for you to understand the upcoming changes and how you can stay on the top after the shift. Although, this advice is only for those who don't have a responsive website, those who already have don't have to worry about anything because they will not be impacted at all.

Google's advice for the Non-responsive websites:

- Make sure to serve structured markup for both the desktop and mobile version.
- Use the robots.txt testing tool to verify that your mobile version is accessible to Googlebot.
- When adding structured data to a mobile site, avoid adding large amounts of markup that isn't relevant to the specific information content of each document.
- Sites do not have to make changes to their canonical links; we'll continue to use these links as guides to serve the appropriate results to a user searching on desktop or mobile.
- If you are a site owner who has only verified their desktop site in Search Console, please add and verify your mobile version.
- If you only have a desktop site, we'll continue to index your desktop site just fine, even if we're using a mobile user agent to view your site.

If the mobile version of your site is showing less content than the desktop one, make sure you change it before the shift:

Google will only look at the mobile version of your content. If it's lacking compared to your desktop version then you'll lose the rankings (and visitors) that your desktop content was bringing in.

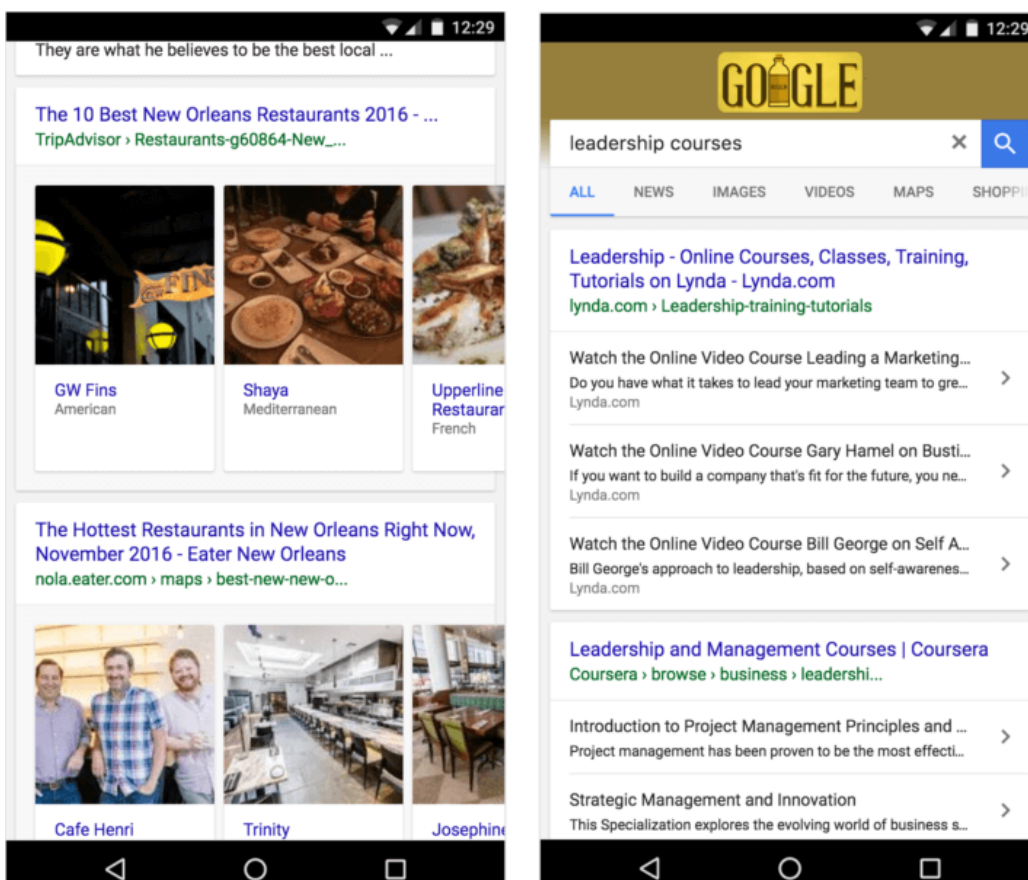
In case If you are serving mobile content on the AMP format, then Google will use your desktop website's content for ranking.

Also, if you have previously removed the structured data from your mobile site for better speed, you will want to add it back before the shift happens, otherwise you will lose your rich snippets. We will keep you updated on further developments.

3

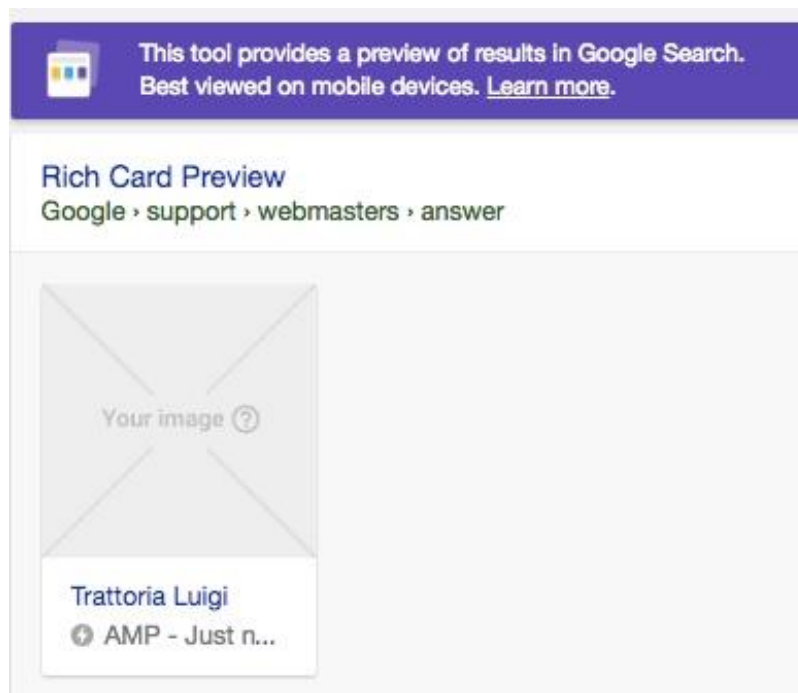
GOOGLE RICH CARDS EXPAND TO LOCAL RESTAURANTS

Good news for restaurant owners! Now you can display your restaurant within a carousel at the top of the mobile search result using the [new structured data markup](#). However, it's in the testing mode so we can't say that it would be fully launched, but the chances are high. Google has made available the codes you will need for the [restaurant-rich card](#) & [online course rich card](#).



A recent study has revealed that structured data increases clicks, so make sure you use any structured data that is relevant to your industry.

You can see good examples of both the new features in the Google's support documents. Also, you can just click the preview button and see what your rich card looks like.



Google has made it clear that they are just testing this feature and hence it's only available to a limited group. However, you can show your interest by filling up this [form](#). We recommend you to take the time and fill up the form because it really can get you the exposure you were seeking. It will only take few minutes to fill the form but can offer mammoth benefits.

Here's what Google has to say about it:

"By building Rich Cards, you have a new opportunity to attract more engaged users to your page. Users can swipe through restaurant recommendations from sites like TripAdvisor, Thrillist, Time Out, Eater, and 10Best. In addition to food, users can browse through courses from sites like Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, EdX, Harvard, Udacity, FutureLearn, Edureka, Open University, Udemy, Canvas Network, and NPTEL."

4 GET READY FOR A NEW PROMOTION EXTENSION IN TEXT ADS

Moz's Dr. Pete has recently spotted a new AdWords ad extension. And he tweeted about it right away!



It's easy to ignore any changes because there's a lot of things that has been added, but very subtly. Only those with eagle eyes can spot them at first sight. Below is the breakdown of the new extension:



As you can see in the image, TBA features an offer followed by a copy. The icon shown in the promotion extension was available in the Google shopping ads since 2012 in the form of [Merchant promotions](#). The extension spotted is for the retailers, but it is highly likely that it will be available for the advertisers of other verticals as well. Also, from now on, advertisers will be able to change a single ad extension rather than updating the entire ad copy.

5

INSTAGRAM STORIES WILL NOW FEATURE LIVE VIDEOS!

Taking a leaf out of its parent company's book, Instagram now plans on introducing Live Videos in Instagram Stories. However, these videos are going to be slightly different. While Facebook's videos are all about sharing media content, Instagram's implementation is supposed to be an amalgamation of Periscope and Snapchat.

Here's what's going to be unique about Live Videos – they will disappear once you stop streaming! The idea behind this concept is to make people more “comfortable with sharing anything, anytime”.

How Will It Work?

The steps to sharing a Live Video will be pretty simple. Swipe from the right of your feed to launch the camera, tap on 'Start Live Video' and go for it! Instagram says users will be able to stream a live video for about an hour.

Once you go live, your Instafriends will be notified. To let your friends know what the video is about, you can pin a comment that they can read when they access your live feed. If you wish to, you can even disable the comments on these videos.

Similarly, when your friends get busy sharing in the moment, you will see “Live” written under their contact names in the app.

There's More...

Live Videos will also be available in other parts of Instagram, such as the Explorer section. Here you will be able to see popular live feeds from around the world under 'Top Live'. To access these feeds, all you have to do is swipe through them like you would in Instagram Stories.

You will also be able to send Snapchat-like pictures and videos to your friends via Instagram Direct, the app's messaging platform, that will disappear once your friends open and view them.