

HOW TO ADAPT YOUR WEBSITE TO BERT, THE NEW GOOGLE ALGORITHM



Launched in late October on its English search engines, Google is deploying its new algorithm in more than 70 other languages around the world. Here's what's changing and how to adapt your travel website to the new algorithm.

What is Bert?

Bert is the acronym for Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers, or automatic natural language processing. **This technology was developed by Google in 2018 to better handle the meaning of queries.** The idea: to better understand the questions asked by Internet users. According to Google, this is "the most important improvement of the last five years."

As an anecdote, the name of this technology is a humorous nod to Bert, one of the puppets from the Muppets Show. Google's computer scientists also like to have fun!

How Does Bert Work?

The new algorithm relies on artificial intelligence and machine learning to interpret queries by taking into account the context of words and by studying the links between the words before and after, especially the linking words. The goal is then to understand the intention behind the query in order to display more relevant results. "When we do a search on the Internet, we're never sure how best to make the request," says Pandu Nayak, vice president of Google Search. "Ultimately, research is based on the understanding of language, so it's the job of the engine to understand what everyone is looking for, no matter how they write or combine words." The challenge is to understand what sense the user gives to the use of prepositions like "for" or "with."

In the end, Bert allows us to get rid of keywords to perform much more natural searches. Everything is obviously completely transparent to the user: the search is just as fast.

Can Bert impact Site Traffic?

Yes, as the search engine refines its answers much more precisely. Depending on the prepositions used, the ranking of sites may be totally different.

At Bert's launch in the United States last October, Pandu Nayak estimated that the change would affect 1 search out of 10! When you know that Google processes more than 63,000 requests a second, billions every day, it gives you an idea of the consequences of the new algorithm.

Note that Bert will not stop there: the machine learning algorithm will develop itself over time. Pandu Nayak explains that lessons learned from use in one language can be applied to other languages.

What to Do to Keep Your Site Visible on Google?

Google's goal is to offer the most relevant answers possible. The principle is to play the game by

avoiding cheating on page content. **The more relevant the pages are for a given subject; the more Google will promote them for the relevant searches.** Ultimately, Bert is a way to counter all optimization attempts in terms of SEO via the misuse of keywords, anchors or tags. Note that the algorithm also takes into account the page loading times and voice searches.

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