NEWSLETTER

Venerate
Media Group

GOOGLE WILL SWITCH TO MOBILE-FIRST INDEXING FOR ALL WEBSITES BY SEPTEMBER 2020

MYTH BUSTED:
GOOGLE MY BUSINESS DESCRIPTION HAS NO EFFECT ON RANKING!

SCRAPED CONTENT? IT'S NOT WORTH LOSING YOUR SLEEP OVER IT!

1 GOOGLE WILL SWITCH TO MOBILE-FIRST INDEXING FOR ALL WEBSITES BY SEPTEMBER 2020

2 MYTH BUSTED: GOOGLE MY BUSINESS DESCRIPTION HAS NO EFFECT ON RANKING!

**3** SCRAPED CONTENT? IT'S NOT WORTH LOSING YOUR SLEEP OVER IT!

4 BING WEBMASTER TOOLS GETS AN UPGRADE!

1 GOOGLE WILL SWITCH TO MOBILE-FIRST INDEXING FOR ALL WEBSITES BY SEPTEMBER 2020

Google is issuing notices, through Google Search Console, to sites with mobile-first indexing issues. Google communicates issues it faces while moving the sites over to mobile-first indexing through emails. These emails also say, "Google expects to apply mobile-first indexing to all websites in the next six to twelve months." Have a look at the screenshot that says, "mobile-first indexing issues detected."
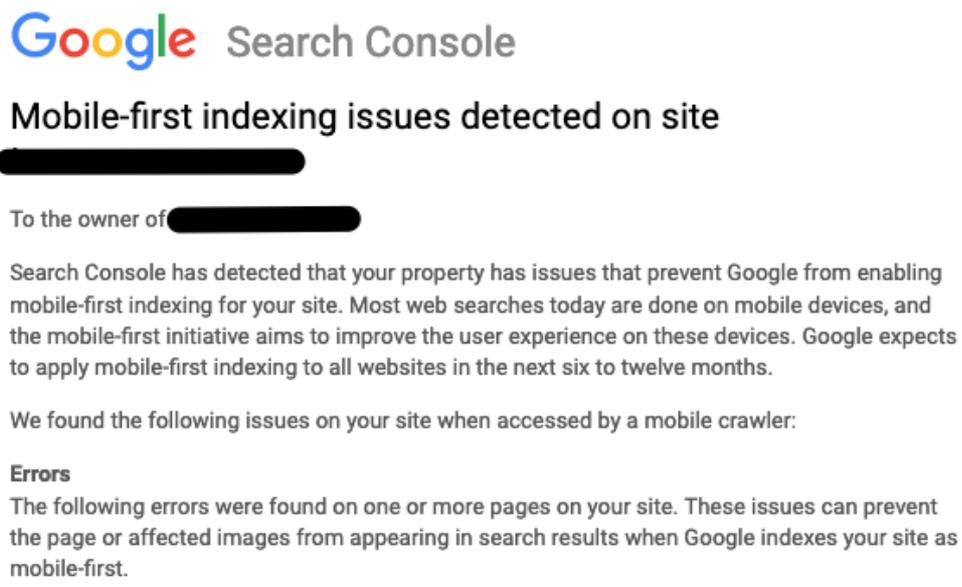
Google Search Console

Mobile-first indexing issues detected on site

To the owner of ▇▇▇▇▇▇

Search Console has detected that your property has issues that prevent Google from enabling mobile-first indexing for your site. Most web searches today are done on mobile devices, and the mobile-first initiative aims to improve the user experience on these devices. Google expects to apply mobile-first indexing to all websites in the next six to twelve months.

We found the following issues on your site when accessed by a mobile crawler:

Errors
The following errors were found on one or more pages on your site. These issues can prevent the page or affected images from appearing in search results when Google indexes your site as mobile-first.

Image Source: https://search.google.com/search-console/

In a recent **announcement**, Google has now confirmed that it will completely switch over to mobile-first indexing for all websites by September this year.

Mobile-first indexing was first **introduced** by Google in November 2016 and by December 2018, half of the sites in Google's search results were from mobile-first indexing. It means that Google crawls websites from the eyes of a mobile-browser and uses that mobile version indexing and ranking.

The prime reason why Google sends these emails to sites that are not yet moved to mobile-first indexing is to advise them on what needs to be done in order to become mobile-first indexing ready.

Our take on this:
When you receive any such notice, you should read it and take needed action. Failing to do so might impact the indexing and ranking of your web pages in Google. As always, if you need any assistance with making your website mobile-ready, we are ready to help!

2 MYTH BUSTED: GOOGLE MY BUSINESS DESCRIPTION HAS NO EFFECT ON RANKING!

There was some **discussion** on Twitter last month about an update in the Help Center that suggested that the description field in Google My Business played a part in helping you rank better.

We tested it ourselves and found that the description field has ZERO impact on your ranking in the 3-Pack. And this is how it should be; because if Google makes ranking a cakewalk, the results would be nothing short of mediocre, and that would be bad for both Google and its users.

The **document** said the following:

Describe your business(es) ∧

Enter unique and valuable information that describes your business. Think about the words customers would type to find your business, and make sure that your listing actually includes those keywords within it. The more unique your business name and description are, the easier your customers will find you. A well-organized and clear business profile may provide a better experience for customers, and make it easier for them to find you.

For example, if someone who lives in Dublin, California is looking for a NY Pizza restaurant and you also own that business, it'd be easier for the customer to find your listing on Google if your description included, "Harry's NY Pizza in Dublin, CA," instead of only "Harry's Pizza in CA."

Image Source: https://searchengineland.com/google-use-relevant-keywords-in-your-google-my-business-description-329112

We got in touch with Google to bring misleading information to light, and a day later, the part at the top was removed. The removed excerpt was:

> *"Think about the words customers would type to find your business, and make sure that your listing actually includes those keywords within it."*

The new and updated text **read**:

Enter complete and accurate information ˅

Describe your business(es) ˄

Enter unique and valuable information that describes your business. The more unique your business name and description are, the easier your customers will find you. A well-organized and clear business profile may provide a better experience for customers, and make it easier for them to find you.

For example, if someone who lives in Dublin, California is looking for a NY Pizza restaurant and you also own that business, it'd be easier for the customer to find your listing on Google if your description included, "Harry's NY Pizza in Dublin, CA," instead of only "Harry's Pizza in CA."

Image Source: https://www.localsearchforum.com/threads/google-updated-its-internal-document-on-ranking.55772/#post-164210

Our take on this:

Although the information is still unclear and misleading, we are sure Google will keep updating to give a clear understanding that using a ton of keywords is not the way to improve rankings.

3 SCRAPED CONTENT? IT'S NOT WORTH LOSING YOUR SLEEP OVER IT!

What is Scraped Content?

Scraped Content is the content that is copied from other places on the web and pasted on a particular website as if it belongs to the site owner. For well over 15 years, scraping has been predominantly active.

Heart of the Matter

Recently, Google's Webmaster Trends Analyst – John Mueller said on Twitter that he wouldn't lose sleep over people scraping copyrighted content. He wrote, *"there's a lot of scraped content out there which has minimal visibility, it's not always worth losing sleep over it."*

John tweeted the following:

Image Source: https://twitter.com/JohnMu/status/1233302892221779973

Our Observation:

Many times when websites publish their articles, it is scraped almost within seconds. Such scraping is automated scraping, the rest use it for articles and newsletters, days later. Scrapping happens, and it is normal. People do copy and paste.

Back in 2011, Matt Cutts shared a **video** on Stolen Content Outranking You. Later in 2013, we **understood** that if you get penalized, then it is possible that Google may rank the stolen content above your original work.

Bing Webmaster Tools, which were often reported to be slow and outdated, just got a serious upgrade. The new and improved Bing Webmaster Tools portal, which was earlier released to a select group of users, was set to be made accessible to all users by the first week of March 2020.

The Idea Behind This New Development

According to Bing's **blog post**, the backend datastore has been updated to improve data extraction and the user experience has been redesigned in an effort to make it more intuitive and user-friendly. Moreover, it states that the portal's responsive design offers users the flexibility to access it across devices.
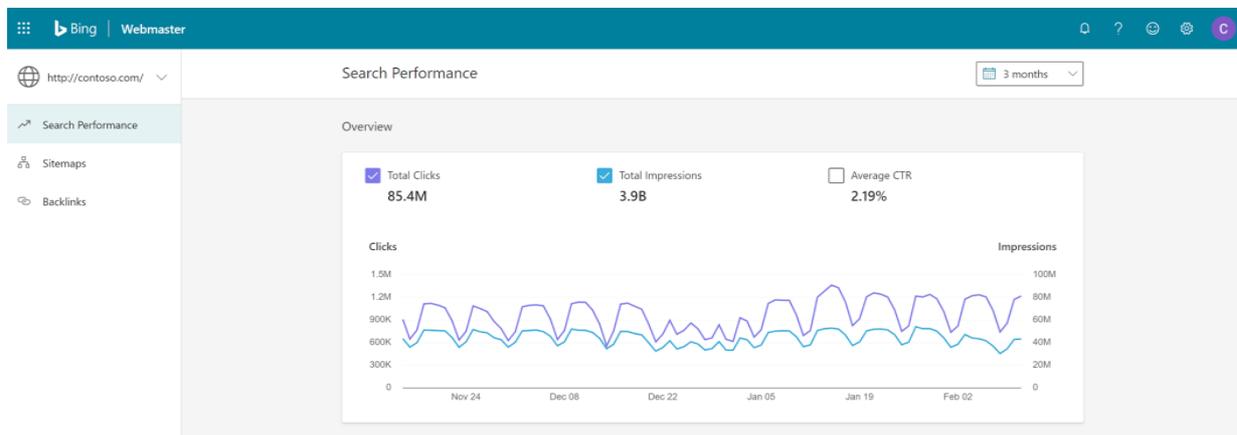

Image Source: https://blogs.bing.com/webmaster/february-2020/Announcing-the-new-Bing-Webmaster-Tools

In their words, *"The refreshed portal is being built with key principles of keeping the design Cleaner and Responsive with Faster and more Accessible tools."*

Key Features of the Upgraded Webmaster Tools Portal

The new portal is said to have 3 key features:

1. **Backlinks** – The new Backlinks report that features in the refreshed portal is the Inbound Links report integrated with the Disavow links tool.

2. **Search Performance** – Page Traffic and Search Keywords reports have integrated to become the new Search Performance report.

3. **Sitemaps** – The new Sitemaps page is the refreshed version of the previous Sitemaps page.

Final Takeaway

Now would be the best time to get familiar with the new portal. It is being said that it will only be a few weeks before they start deprecating the functionality from the old portal. Users that use webmaster APIs to get data programmatically, can continue doing so as the Webmaster APIs will remain as-is.

Bing invites users to leave their feedback on **Twitter** and **Facebook**, and **raise a service ticket** with their support team, in case they encounter any issues with the new portal.