



HOW TO OPTIMIZE YOUR SITE FOR VOICE SEARCH

Voice search is everywhere these days. You've heard about it before, but it's long past time to think of it as something to worry about in the future. The future is now. Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to embrace voice search and recognize that optimization is not optional.

However, there are some ways to improve your chances of ending up in the featured spot – the coveted position where your site is the one being offered as the solution to a search request.

#1: ANSWER A QUESTION

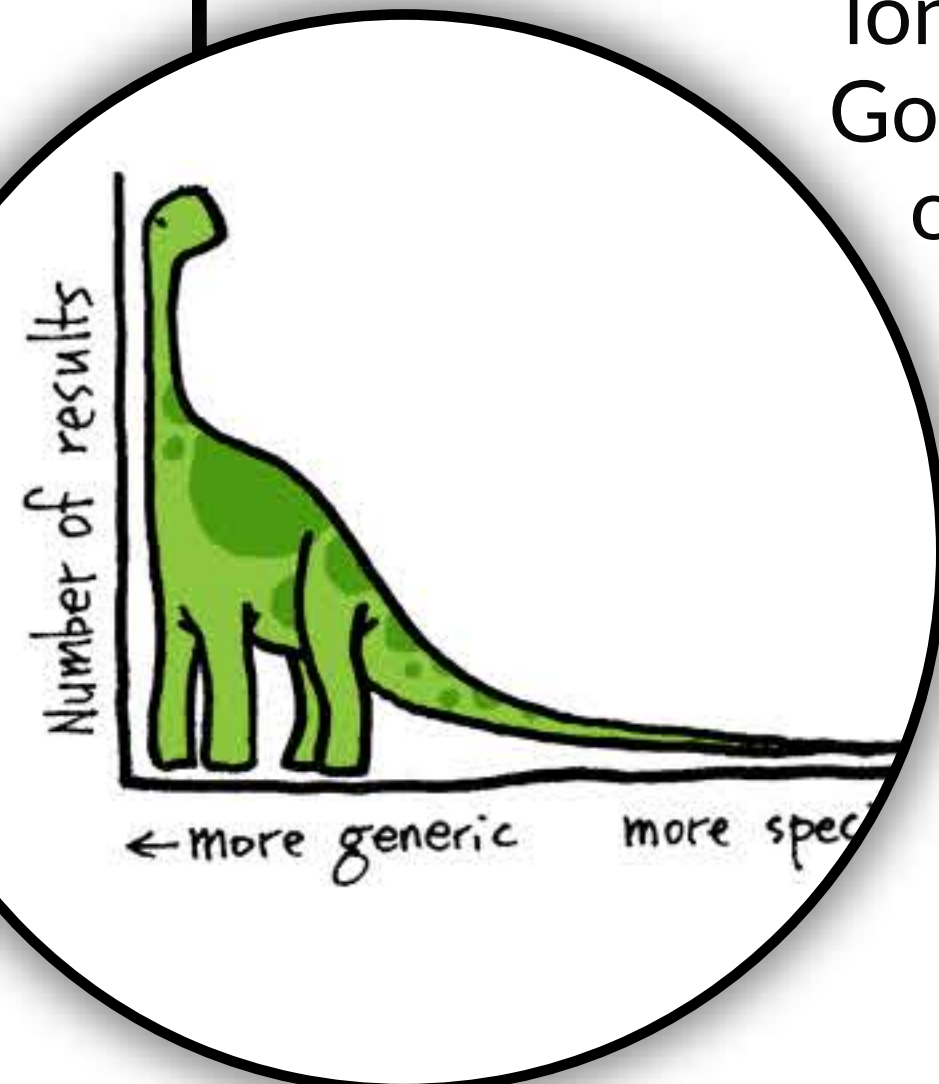
A lot of voice searches are worded as questions. Answering the most commonly-asked questions can help you move up the SERP to the featured position. You can try using Answer the Public, a site that generates questions based on the keywords you enter.

Pro Tip: Make the question itself an H2 tag in your content. Then, answer it as clearly and concisely as possible immediately under the H2. Google's always going to prioritize quality content. Getting right to the point in a way that's engaging will help Google see your response as the best answer.



#2: OPTIMIZE FOR LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS

Ever since Google released its Hummingbird update in 2013, the emphasis has been on long-tail keywords. To maximize your traffic from voice search, you'll need to identify the most likely search terms and highlight them in your content. One of the easiest ways to identify long-tail keywords is to scroll down to the bottom of the Google SERP after doing a search and check out the "People Also Ask" box, which lists questions that are commonly asked along with what you searched. It's a great way to identify variations and pinpoint the terms people are using to search.



#3: OPTIMIZE FOR LOCAL SEARCHES

76% of all voice search users use it for local searches at least once a week, and 53% make local searches daily. If you haven't standardized your NAP listings, optimized your site for local keywords, claimed your review listings, and optimized your Google My Business listing, you're probably not going to perform well in voice search.



#4: USE THE RIGHT WORDS

Approximately 20% of all voice searches are triggered by the same 25 words. Words like:

- How
- Best
- Top
- Define
- What
- Where
- New
- Types

Focusing your content on these words can help you jump ahead of your competitors and grab more than your share of voice search traffic. The key is to incorporate the right words into content that answers questions, using the proper tags and markers to ensure that Google can read and index your content correctly.



#5: SPEED UP YOUR SITE

Voice searchers expect to get search results nearly instantaneously. In fact, one study found that a site that took just 5 seconds to load was 90% more likely to get a bounce than a site that took only one second to load. Maximizing your site's speed increases the chances that you'll move to the top in voice search. A slow-loading site is not going to be Google's first choice. Remember, their goal is always to deliver the most relevant site to the searcher as quickly as possible.



Voice search is coming for all of us – and you can't afford to ignore it. SEO is never an exact science, but the tips here can help make your content what Google voice searchers want – and increase the chances that you'll land the coveted top spot.

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