How Does Google Determine What is Displayed in a Search Result

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Ever wonder what makes up the pieces of Google's search results? Before that question can be answered, the process of how Google delivers results must be understood. There are three key processes in delivering search engine results.

First, Google "crawls" the World Wide Web and accumulates information about websites and their content. The program Google uses to accomplish this task is referred to as Googelbot. Googlebot uses an algorithmic process to determine which sites to crawl, and how many pages to read from each site. Next Google compiles a massive index of all the words and locations of the sites it crawled.

When a Google user enters a query, Google returns a result they feel is most relevant. The results that are displayed are referred to as Snippets. In general, Google reserves the right to display what they feel is best for their users. However, you have a great deal of control about what is displayed about your agency on Google.

There are three primary components that make up a Snippet.

Title

The first line of the Snippet is the title. The title displayed comes from the title of your webpage. We have found many websites where the designer will overlook this very important step when designing websites for their customers. Webpages not titled will appear in search results with the title as "Untitled" or "Home Page" which does not encourage the consumer to

click. Whereas a title listing your agency name and a slogan or short concise description of what your agency offers would encourage the consumer to click and learn more about your insurance agency.

Description

The description listed by Google typically comes from one of three places.

Open Directory - If for some reason, when Google attempts to "crawl" a site and they are unable to read it, Google will then sometimes rely on the Open Directory Project, which is listed at http://www.dmoz.org Within the Page - Sometimes, Google pulls the description from within the page. Google determines what part of the page it will use so the description gives some context as to what the page contains. Meta Description Tag - the most preferred method and where you have the most control of what description is displayed is the Meta Description Tag which is included in the code of your website. By including a Meta Description Tag, you have the ability to dictate what is displayed about your site.

Link Displayed

The last component displayed is the link to your website or the page on your website that meets the searchers' query. Providing a descriptive URL is another key aspect to converting a searcher. For instance, a URL such as www.sampleinsurancewebsite.com/page.php?id=5134, doesn't tell the searcher they have landed in the right spot, whereas a URL such as www.sampleinsurancewebsite.com/automobile/car_insurance_quote.aspx will.

AnMarie Bozick, CIC is the Communications Director for Insurance Technologies Corporation (ITC). ITC is a leading provider of automation solutions for the insurance industry. Our website solution, Insurance Website Builder, provides insurance agents with interactive, professionally designed websites. With no programming knowledge whatsoever, our insurance clients have complete control over the content of their websites, so their website can grow with them as their agency grows. Websites created using Insurance Website Builder allow agencies to compete on the internet, which is crucial to keeping up with the internet savvy consumer.