



Can Bing Really Compete With Google

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In the last few months, we've seen a lot of activity from Bing, with heavy marketing investment aimed at raising its profile. It's perhaps worth examining the methods used to push Bing into the public's consciousness and to carve itself a slice of the search market. Have their campaigns made much of an impression? How will Google react to Bing and what does the future hold in terms of competition between the two?

Bing Campaigns

Most obviously, Bing has mounted a TV campaign aimed at raising its profile. While it's highly likely that you will have seen one such ad, there have been other forms of promotion that haven't been so apparent to those outside the industry.

One significant move is Bing's 10-year deal with Yahoo! which will see Yahoo! search results powered by Bing. As Yahoo! has the second-largest share of the search market, this allows Bing access to that.

Bing is also paying close attention to social media. This is reflected in the creation of bing.com/twitter and bing.com/social - sites that let users search Twitter and Facebook content for relevant updates, including tweets and Facebook fan pages. Bing is also responsible for Facebook's search option. With social media ever-expanding, this is a key audience to capture and increases Bing's influence greatly.

Bing has also tried to popularise 'Bing it' instead of 'Google it' and has even had a Bing-branded ice cream van giving away freebies in London. Is all of this working?

Google's response to Bing

Bing first appeared in May 2009 and ever since it has been spoken of as a potential rival to

Google. With the weight of Microsoft behind it, Bing could have an impact if marketed in the right way. It's notable that Google has reacted in several ways:

Background image for the homepage - recently, Google implemented a change allowing users to personalise their homepage with an image of their choice. Although it is only an option, this reflects the format of the Bing homepage. Results pages - Google has adopted several features from the Bing results pages. If you compare the two, you will see a number of similarities in terms of related searches and the like. PPC - Sponsored links are presented in a similar way on the two search engines. Some say that there are better conversion rates on Bing, which, if true, will doubtless be something that Google is looking into.

Conclusion

Google will remain top of the pile for a good while to come with regard to search engine optimisation, but Bing's profile is rising, perhaps more so than its current market share. By establishing the Bing brand in people's minds, it is better placed to make headway. TV adverts have created a certain buzz and the slogan 'Bing and decide' has proven quite memorable for many people, which could be marked down as a minor success.

In terms of SEO, the differences between the two search engines aren't huge. If you compare results pages for different searches, many are quite similar for both Google and Bing in terms of the links that are provided on the first couple of pages.

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