



Exact Match Domain

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On September 27 2012, Google made a slight but significant change to their algorithm which altered the code for website rankings. The aim of this was to increase or decrease the websites rankings in relation to the quality of content and use of 'exact match domains'.

Essentially an exact match domain is using a 'keyword' as a company name or webaddress. If say, 'emergency plumber London' was searched for 1000 times a month and you had decided to name your company involving these keywords while uploading a small website to target these searchers with no care for the content, look or design then Google would penalise your results.

This exact match code update only impacted a small percentage of online businesses however ensured that more care went into to the name and website layout and prevented people taking advantage of keywords in the domain name. Beforehand those websites which ranked well because of using keywords were being ranked better than those websites which had original brand names and better designs.

This update did not mean that all websites that had used exact match as a domain name were to be forever ranked poorly. Instead, those who had used a keyword in their name and had built up a great website with relevant and quality content and marketing received a positive ranking. As long as these businesses meet the same relative positive engagement metrics which other websites had used they would continue to rank well.

The main impact of this was that a lot of the websites that had used exact match domains

were dropped from search results altogether. This greatly benefitted those well-made websites and put the poorly thought-out websites to be where they legitimately belong, off the searches. However you should keep in mind that this does not necessarily mean that using keywords in the domain name is a bad thing, it helps to establish at first glance what the subject of the website is. The change has targeted the low quality sites who can only increase their rankings by exact matches. Focussing on content will allow for a better ranking due to increased relevance and quality.

Instead of piling in the keywords into your website, try to keep keywords relevant and to a minimum. This eliminates the possibility of falling into the exact match algorithm and having your webpage deleted. Your website will look far more professional with less forced keywords and will have a much greater look to it. The main reason for this update was not to penalise those websites who had used keywords in their domain names but instead to stop other 'businesses' from taking advantage of the system to promote their poorly thought out site.