



SECRET 13

HEY GOOGLE, WHAT ABOUT VOICE SEARCH?

Hey Google, What About Voice Search?

One thing that all marketers agree on is that voice search is the fastest growing trend in SEO.

The good news is that we're still in a transitional period, as more users move to voice searches over traditional searches. In fact, **Gartner predicts** that voice activated searches will account for **30% of all web-browsing sessions in 2020**. This trend will only grow as more people embrace mobile and home devices such as Amazon Alexa, Apple HomePod, Google Assistant, Microsoft Cortana, and Samsung Bixby.

It is estimated that at the end of 2018, **48% of American households** will own at least one of these devices. So get ready, Alexa's listening!



Use Natural Speech

The fact is this: the way we speak is quite different from the way we write, or in this case, search. While our fingers and thumbs have grown accustomed to using keywords and locations, our speech is more free-flowing and far less robotic (usually).

We might **type** a search like this: "basketball shoes Los Angeles." While **speaking** the same search, we might say, "Where can I buy some basketball shoes?" This natural way of speaking is something that voice search technology has learned to adapt to.

According to a **2017 Google study**, 70% of all searches utilizing the Google Assistant are using a more natural speech pattern.

What does this mean? It means that digital assistants (for the most part) understand what we are trying to say. This also means that, to take advantage of voice search, you want to start incorporating a more natural, conversational flow into your content. Adding more questions and answers on your site is a great way to get started.

Try Long-Tail Keywords

Did you notice something else about the example about basketball shoes I shared with you?

If you didn't catch it, the voice search contained more words than the written search. In SEO, we refer to these as "long-tail keywords" or "key phrases." When we speak, we add details and context that make our searches more specific. Contextual words like "today," "in the color red," or "artisanal," can make simple keyword searches into long-tail keyword searches (which tend to run from three to five words in length).

Short vs. Long Tail Searches

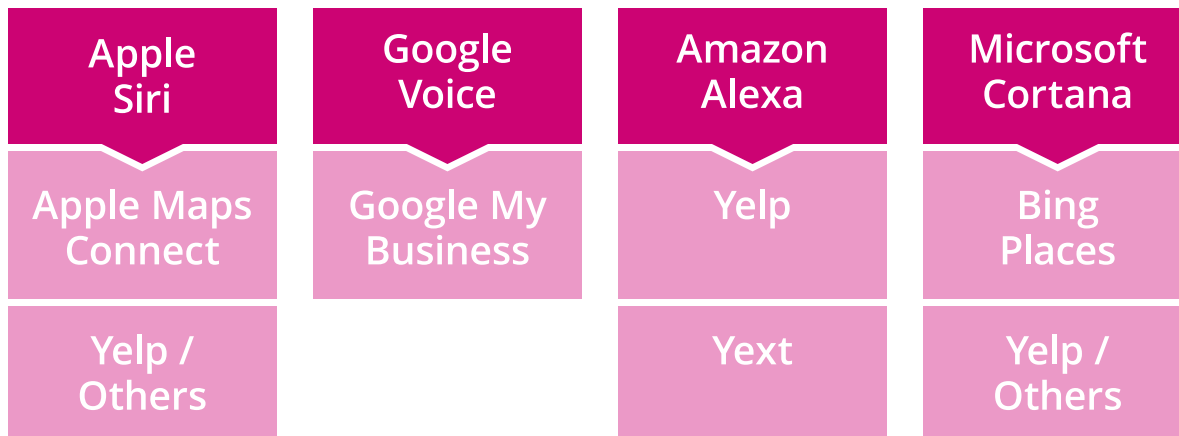
- "Pizza" vs. "Where can I get New York style pizza?"
- "Designer shoes" vs. "Where can I get a pair of Yeezys?"
- "Living room furniture" vs. "Reclaimed distressed wood coffee table"

Voice search is here to stay, and the more people who use it, the more we will need to adapt.

The good news is that using natural speech patterns and incorporating longer-tail keywords often go hand in hand. Before going live with your content, read it out loud to make sure it follows a natural cadence like a regular conversation.

Optimize Your Local Listings

Each of the voice search engines use different local directories to make local business recommendations. It is important that you optimize your local listings for each of the voice-based search engines (see image below).



In Secret 7, I discussed schema markup and how you can format your data so that it is easily read, indexed, and formatted by the search engine servers. One of the ways to get your answers chosen by the search engines is to set up a frequently asked questions page that answers questions around your business. According to Backlinko, the typical voice search result is 29 words in length, so make sure to make your answers within that range.



- **Start to build voice SEO into your strategy. Make sure you are listed in all of the directories that are most important to voice search (GMB, Yelp, etc.).**
- **Make sure to focus on voice-related keyword selection, schema markup, and FAQs to capture voice search traffic.**

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