NEWSLETTER

JAN 2015

TOP 7 UPDATES IN LOCAL SEARCH FOR JANUARY 2015

Let's jump straight in and go through the "Updates in Local Search" for January 2015.

1. **Google dropped the Local Carousel and Bing introduced one** as soon as Google dropped it. The only thing that is at all different is the emphasis on Yelp reviews.
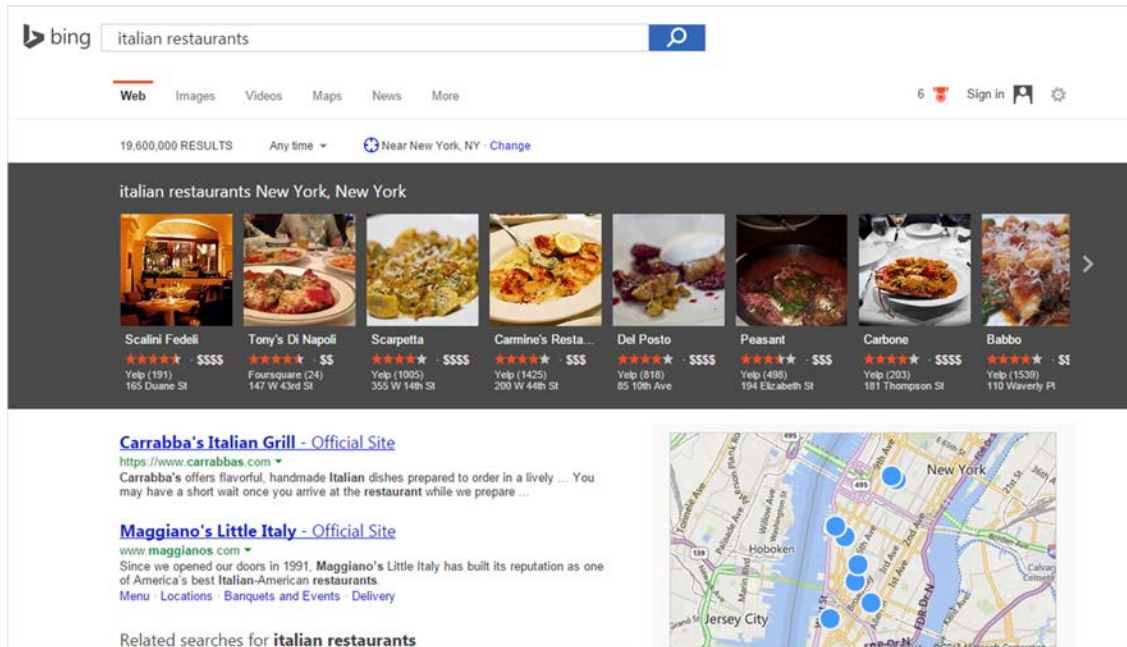
2. **Google's carousel in most cases has been replaced by a local 3 pack** that looks similar to what we see in the mobile search result pages. In case you didn't notice, these new style packs DON'T display the business' phone number.
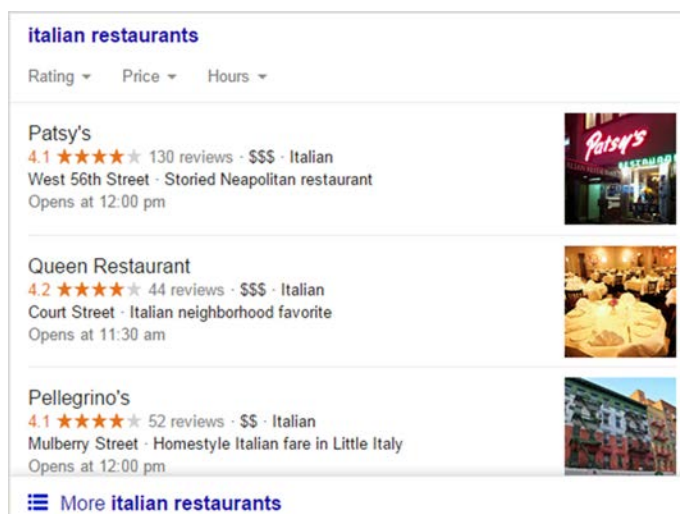
3. Bing prominently displays local "Fact Answers" in response to specific queries regarding details about local businesses. Below are some searches we tried in Bing.

Search: Keller Williams Memorial Houston Address
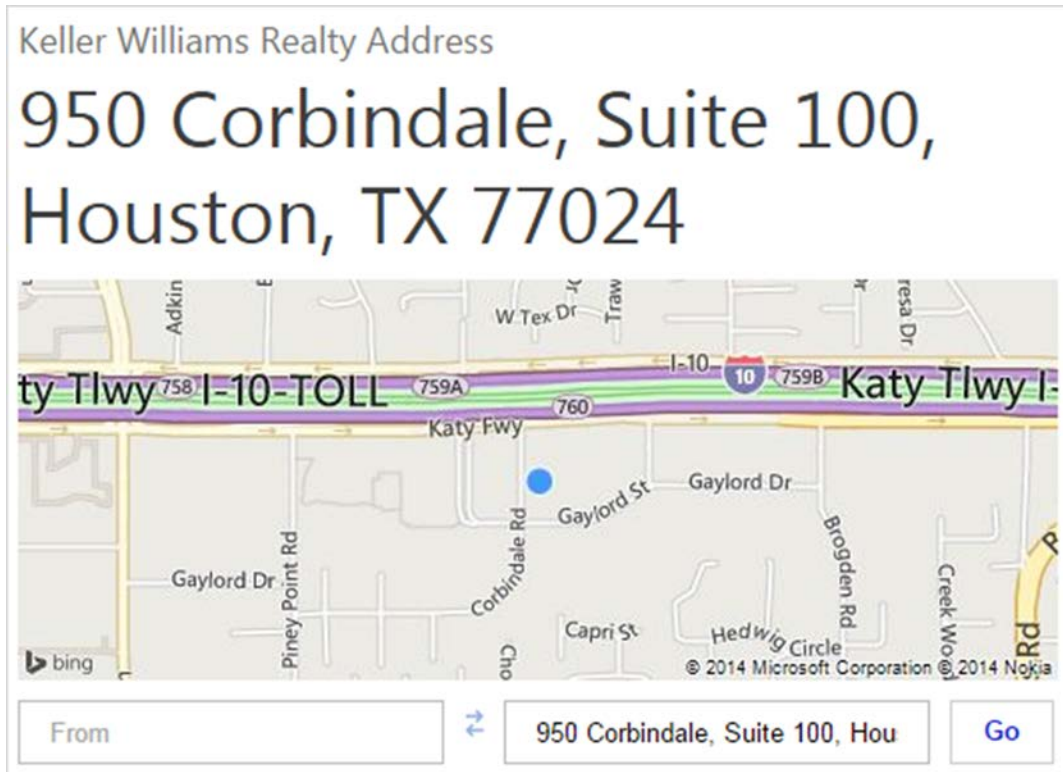
Keller Williams Realty Address

950 Corbindale, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77024

From ⇄ 950 Corbindale, Suite 100, Hou — Go

Search: Keller Williams Memorial Houston Hours

Keller Williams Realty hours today (Closed Now)
950 Corbindale, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77024

Fri 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Mon - Fri   9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Hours subject to change

Search: Keller Williams Memorial Houston Phone

Keller Williams Realty Phone Number
950 Corbindale, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77024

(713) 461-9393
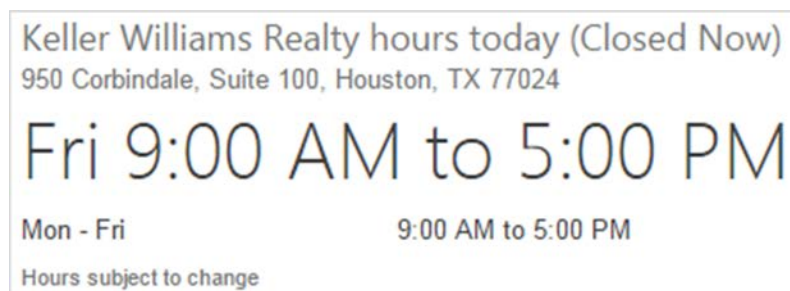
4. **On-going Penguin updates continue to affect Google Local Pack rankings as well as rankings in the localized organic search result pages**. It's too difficult to be able to rank in the Local Packs any longer without doing good Organic SEO.

5. **You can now create a sticky post to Pin at the top of your Google+ posts page**. This is a great new feature that enables you to leave important information as the first item people read on your page. You make it work for you by announcing moves, promoting sales, discounts or special events or providing links you'd like your Plus circles to click through to. You can also include an eye catching photo in the post so that it gets the attention it deserves. Official link - https://support.google.com/business/answer/6103831

6. **User Edits made to a Google listing now prompt an automated email from Google** if you're signed into an account.
7. **Facebook adds the ability to use calls-to-action on its timelines**. Choose from Book Now, Watch Video, Contact Us, Sign Up, Use App and Shop Now. Calls to action are good. Use them!

YAHOO DIRECTORY NOW OFFICALLY CLOSED

YAHOO!® DIRECTORY

We've been hearing about the closing of the Yahoo Directory, but it is now official. However, the new Yahoo Small Business Pages (directory) will soon be open for business. As of now, you can view few pages but clicking on categories most often returns an error page.

Here is a message from Yahoo, to previous Yahoo Directory listing owners –

"In the coming weeks, we will upgrade your Yahoo Directory listing to a new service from Yahoo Small Business that will include all the information that was in your directory listing and more. Your business will have a dedicated page displaying your business name, web address, and description. Additionally, you'll be able to login to a customized dashboard to manage your page and submit additional content such as logos, images, and special offers. This new page will also be optimized for SEO, helping to drive organic traffic to your site.

Your 2014 annual review fee for the Yahoo Directory will rollover to this new service at no additional cost. To welcome you to Yahoo Small Business, we have a special offer available now through Jan 15, 2015 for migrating Yahoo Directory customers: Yahoo Gemini is a new self-serve ad platform that helps get your message in front of millions of Yahoo users in just minutes. Create an ad once and it will automatically be optimized for smartphones, tablets and desktop. As a special promotion, you can use coupon code DIRECTORY to redeem a $50 credit for Yahoo Gemini."

We will obviously keep a close eye on this and keep you updated on pricing and quality of listings when the Yahoo Small Business directory actually opens.

Google recently released a **blog post** outlining a proposal that will warn Chrome browser users when a website they're visiting is "non-secure". At this point this is a <u>proposal</u>, but might soon enough be tested and then released.

Proposal

We, the Chrome Security Team, propose that user agents (UAs) **gradually change their UX to display non-secure origins as affirmatively non-secure.** We intend to devise and begin deploying a transition plan for Chrome in 2015.

The goal of this proposal is to more clearly display to users that HTTP provides no data security.

The blog post outlines the three categories websites will fall into:

1. **Secure**: Valid HTTPS, other origins like (*, localhost, *).

2. **Dubious**: Valid HTTPS but with mixed passive resources, valid HTTPS with minor TLS errors.

3. **Non-secure**: Broken HTTPS or HTTP.

As of now, there are no indications as to HOW the site visitors would be warned – full page warning, pop-up, etc. However, this is evidence of what we have been saying in our previous newsletters i.e. the importance of switching your site to HTTPS before Google starts scaring away your visitors.

Google Chrome currently has around 50% of the browser market share, which is a significant amount of traffic to lose if you don't want to take the time to get your certificate.

Here is a great resource from Google to get started.

https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/6073543

A few months ago, a new AdWords tool was introduced by Google – Ad Customizers, a tool that lets you show highly relevant text ads to your customers, in real-time, even when you have thousands of products, services, and promotions – all changing by the day.

What Are Ad Customizers?

Think Dynamic Keyword Insertion on steroids: Using a series of parameters, Google automatically updates your ad, in real-time, by inserting a keyword, countdown timer, or any other information that you want. That means you upload one ad and get nearly unlimited variations, automatically.

Benefits of Using Ad Customizers

- **Tailored messaging**: Ads are hyper-specialized to each search or webpage being viewed.
- **Time-sensitive calls to action**: The COUNTDOWN function can say that time's running out to take advantage of a promotion.
- **Scalability**: Customizers let a single text ad have hundreds of variations, and show the most relevant variation to each potential customer.
- **Reporting**: The automatic updates that happen when an ad is triggered don't reset the ad's performance data.

Where Can You Use Ad Customizers?

You can use Ad Customizers in any text ad on the Google Search or Display Networks. They can be used in any part of the ad except for the display URL.

How Do They Work?

Ad Customizers work using parameters that sit within brackets {like this}. These parameters get replaced in real-time by information that you have previously designated using Ad Customizer Data, COUNTDOWN functions, or both.

How Are The Parameters Structured?

Parameters are made up of two parts; a data sheet reference and a column reference.

Data Sheet Reference   Column Reference

{Discounts.PercentOff}

What Kinds Of Things Can You Use As Customizers?

Here are the Ad Customizer standard attributes. Of course, you can add any type of data you want, but these are the essentials.

Attribute	Function	Accepted Values
Device preference	Limits a row of data to ads that appear on smartphones (not tablets or computers)	mobile or all
Scheduling	The days and times of the week you want your ad customizer to be shown.	Day, start time - end time. If you wanted to schedule from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mondays, for example, you would enter Monday, 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM. If you want to schedule for multiple days, separate your days with a semicolon. For example, you could schedule for both Monday and Tuesday using Monday, 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM; Tuesday, 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM.
Start date	Start serving the feed item on this date	yyyy/mm/dd hh:mm:ss (24 hour time)
End date	Stop serving the feed item on this date	yyyy/mm/dd hh:mm:ss (24 hour time)
Custom ID	Basically anything else - You can use any value you want for a row of data as long as it falls within one of the four kinds attributes	Any combination of letters and numbers

For advertisers managing huge volume of ads, ad customizers can be especially helpful for managing product variations, pricing adjustments and promotions at scale. Maybe you've been using the countdown script in AdWords. Now ad customizers can also power event countdowns, as you'll see in the example below.

Here are Google provided suggestions for using Ad Customizers:

5 Quart Kitchen Mixer
www.kitchenmixer.com
5 Quart Tilt Head Stand Mixer.
Starts at $400 with Promo "SAVE15"!

8 Quart Kitchen Mixer
www.kitchenmixer.com
8 Quart Tilt Head Stand Mixer.
Starts at $500 with Promo "SAVE15"!

Tailor one ad to show product and price details specific to what each customer is searching for

Cheap Flights from NYC
www.cheapoflights.com
130+ Routes Starting at $78
Hurry, Sale Ends Soon!

Cheap Flights from NYC
www.cheapoflights.com
150+ Routes Starting at $58
Hurry, Sale Ends Soon!

Keep your ads updated with route availability and pricing each day

50+ LCD TVs on Sale
www.buytvs.com
30% Off LCDs. Sale ends in 4 hours.
Ships free in the US. Shop Now!

50+ LCD TVs on Sale
www.buytvs.com
30% Off LCDs. Sale ends in 1 hour.
Ships free in the US. Shop Now!

Show up-to-the-hour promotional timing for an event

Don't forget to use ad customizers to dynamically show your customers:
- The number of days, hours, or minutes left to ship their products in time.
- Daily discounts or promotions for your hottest deals.
- Most up-to-date inventory availability on your products, or even the number.

When you use customizers well, they give people confidence that you have what they're looking for, as well as an incentive to buy it from you. We're definitely looking forward to both the increased control and hopefully the increased performance.

05 WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM SOCIAL MEDIA IN 2015

This year, BIG changes are expected afoot for the likes of Twitter, Facebook and others. With all these updates, it can be rather difficult to predict the future of social media. With that caveat in mind, here's a look into the crystal ball at what we should expect from social media in 2015.

Videos are going to play a vital role in Social Media. Twitter is on the way to launch it's version of Video ads. Many people are expecting it to be similar to "Vine" but there's no official confirmation on this yet. On the other hand, Facebook is more focused on its newly launched Video Ads. By these moves we can expect a year full of Videos!

Paid Media - All social Media sites especially Facebook is focusing on Paid Media rather than organic. So now onwards if you need exposure of your business over Social Media platforms you have to emphasize on Paid Adverting campaign in your Marketing strategy.

Can't Get Rid of Ads - As per Facebook's new algorithm, you will see more paid content on your timeline. Using 'Newsfeed Ads' by Facebook and 'Promoting Tweets' by Twitter, marketers can showcase their content to the specific targeting audiences.
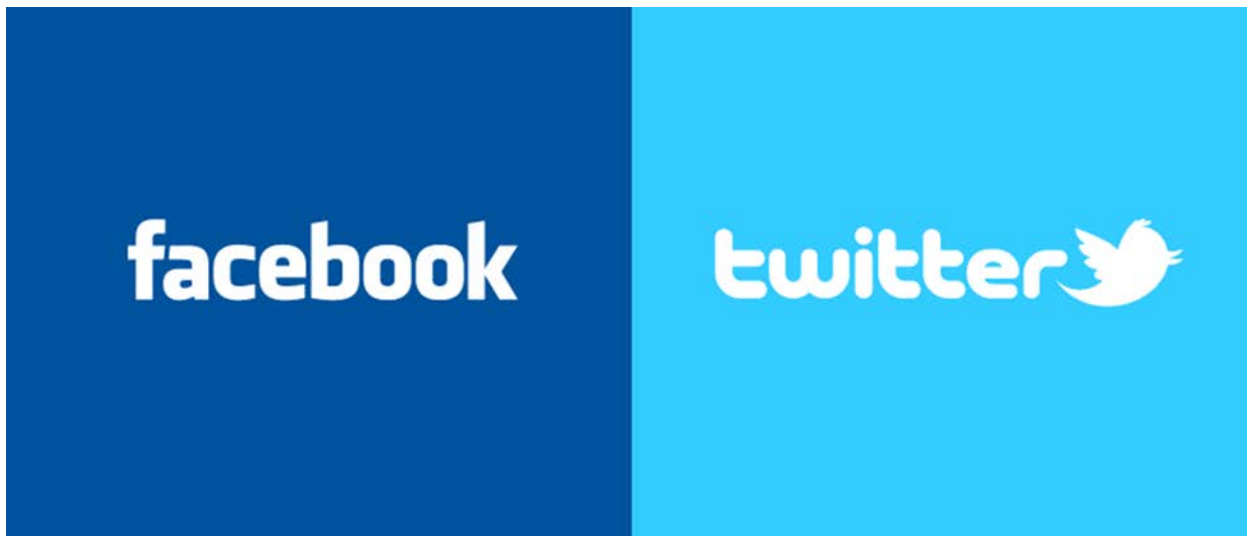
World of Smart Phones - It's a known trend that people are using mobile phones as part of their life. So Marketers are exploring the option of targeting people who are using smart phones. For instance, Facebook Ads has come up with a special targeting option only for Smartphone users.

Apps Integration - Almost all the Social Networking sites are providing the options to promote your mobile apps in front of your audience. Facebook and Twitter are providing special ad segment for App Advertising.

Happy Socializing!!