



The Chaffey Column - June 2009

Bing – Microsoft's new search engine

Microsoft's Bing search engine launched to a fair bit of hype on the 1st June. It's also received a fair few plaudits, so as with all major new releases I've been thinking through the implications for marketers and businesses.

We have to start with popularity - how many will use the new search engine? Microsoft has been somewhat successful in retaining market share in the US primarily through its cashback affiliate scheme and the launch is likely to increase this. In the US it has an 8% share of searches. But in the UK, Bing's forerunner, Microsoft Live Search had a lower share of around 1% according to Hitwise.

So, the proportion of searchers and searches is low, so it's now worth losing any sleep if you don't rank highly. But there are some issues you should take a quick look at. For the searcher is the main difference from Google at the search results page level.

1. Do you rank highly for brand searches?

Start out by checking out your brand searches. Check you still rank highly.

You will see more competitors listed on the left. There is potential for more brand leakage through Related Searches which show competitors.

2. How is your brand described?

The snippets beneath each listing is from the page meta descriptions if available, but watch for the Expanded snippets on the Right when you rollover your mouse to the right of the SERPs listing - do those describe your brand accurately?

There are also potentially Google-like site link listings beneath the site giving alternative content, although these seem harder to come by than within Google.

3. Retail implications

For retailers, Shopping is more closely integrated through a Google "Universal Search" type approach as you will see if you search for a retail product such as "LCD TV". In the UK, shopping gives a link to www.ciao.co.uk so we can expect this comparison site will increase in popularity.

4. Image and video search is more tightly integrated.

Again similar to the Google "Universal search", you are more likely to see image and video within the listings, so check these are visible if you are in a sector such as travel where this is important.

So that's my roundup of the implications of Bing. Although it launched without Help to learn about new features (it still used old Live Search Help), You can find out more about new features from the preview site: <http://www.discoverbing.com/>.

About the author

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He is the best selling author of several www.davechaffey.com/blog/ used by digital marketing professionals and on many University and College Courses globally. His latest book, Internet Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice, now in its 4th edition, was published in January 2009.

