



The Chaffey Column - September 2009

Keeping up-to-date with Google's changes

One of the reasons Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is so challenging is because of the number of changing factors that the search engines take into account which naturally they don't fully disclose.

Matt Cutts, head of the web spam team at Google has said that typically there are 300 to 400 changes to the ranking algorithm made each year, many of them to thwart the efforts of SEO spammers.

Keeping up-to-date and filtering out the important changes is particularly important for me since I train, consult and write on SEO, but what if SEO is less important to you.

For example, if you're a business owner or marketer who has many other issues on your plate? If this your situation, my recent compilation of the major changes in the first half of 2009 (<http://bit.ly/gupdates09>) could help. There at least 10 major changes which site owners must know about, including the canonical link element; search refinements and snippets; changes to the query string; the show options; nofollow treatment and most significant the Vince algorithm update.

Then, on the 10th August, Google pre-announced the Caffeine infrastructure change which it says is intended to "let us push the envelope on size, indexing speed, accuracy, comprehensiveness and other dimensions" and offered companies a sandbox to test their listings before rollout.

These changes highlights the importance of having at least one person in every company that focuses on SEO, monitoring rankings, results and changes so that these can be disseminated to others who need to know the implications of the latest changes.

Talking of ranking factors, something else you may find useful is this new v3 Search Engine Ranking report from SEOmoz (www.bit.ly/2jdia). I think this is essential reading for anyone involved "hands-on" on digital marketing whether you're involved in design, content editing or traffic building. I think the new structure and inclusion of many more ranking factors make it a "must read".

About the author

Dr. Dave Chaffey, is the Director and lead consultant for [Marketing Insights Ltd](#), an independent digital marketing consultancy.

He is the best selling author of several Internet Marketing books 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. If you have enjoyed this article please consider logging it on your favourite social bookmarking site - see icons at the bottom of the webpage.