

NEWSLETTER

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ALPHA SEO

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1

ALL ABOUT THE GOOGLE HELPFUL CONTENT UPDATE

In August, Google announced a new big search ranking algorithm update, named the helpful content update, probably its biggest update in a decade.

What We Know

The helpful content update will target websites with a relatively high amount of unsatisfying or unhelpful content, where the content has been written explicitly for search engines to leverage rankings.

Unlike many Google algorithms that get applied page-by-page, this new helpful content update will be site wide. That means that if Google determines your site is producing a relatively high amount of unhelpful content, it will impact your whole site.

This reminds us of the early Panda and Penguin update days. Just as a quick reminder – or in case you weren't working in SEO a decade ago – those updates did a lot of damage back then, and we made significant changes to our SEO strategies to recover and protect our client websites.

Which Sites Were Likely Impacted?

According to Google, this update impacted these types of content the most:

- Online educational materials.
- Arts and entertainment.
- Shopping.
- Tech-related.

This is because content written in those areas has historically been written more for search engines than humans.

These are the folks that were hit the hardest:

- Publishers focused on a broad range of topics like CNET, Forbes, etc.
- Sites that collect and monetize organic search traffic without providing unique value.
- Sites that have content created with AI tools like Jasper or Copymatic.
- Sites with SEO doorway pages created for the sole purpose of boosting rankings.
- Sites with spammy content with a very high keyword density.

Our Observations:

We were quick to run a deep ranking audit of more than 3.5K websites, and we are happy to inform you that so far, this update did not have any significant negative impact on our client's websites. In fact, we have seen good improvement in positions for the sites we are working on. This implies that our content strategy, in conjunction with our other SEO efforts like on-page optimization and link building, is working well and protecting our client's websites.

2

NEW GBP CONTENT GUIDELINES YOU SHOULD KNOW

Are your GBP posts getting rejected? Well, that's because GBP has added more restrictions to its list of guidelines. As stated in their support document under the "Avoid Spam" header, Google warns business owners to avoid uploading duplicate photos, posts, videos, or logos. Here's a screenshot of the other guidelines that you should know.

Avoid spam

Content published on this service should not mislead your customers. It should be upfront and honest about the information presented.

Examples of such content that is not allowed include:

- Misspellings, gimmicky character use, gibberish, or automated or distracting content such as blurry or poor image or video quality, or unrecognizable content
- Images, videos, or links that negatively distract the reader's attention
- Links to malware, viruses, or other harmful software
- Links to sites irrelevant to the business
- Phishing scams
- Duplicate photos, posts, videos, and logos

So, using original images & relevant content is the only way to get your posts accepted.

Need help? Get in touch with our technical support team for assistance.

3

NOW GOOGLE MAPS WILL NOTIFY CUSTOMERS IF THEY FIND A FAKE REVIEW!

Recently, it has been discovered that Google Maps is emailing customers who have posted a review for any business when their review is flagged as fake and, therefore, not posted.

It came to light after Lucio Laria – Consultant SEO International raised this issue on the Google Business Profile community. When a help forum titled Legitimate Review started getting flagged as "Fake Engagement", he wrote:

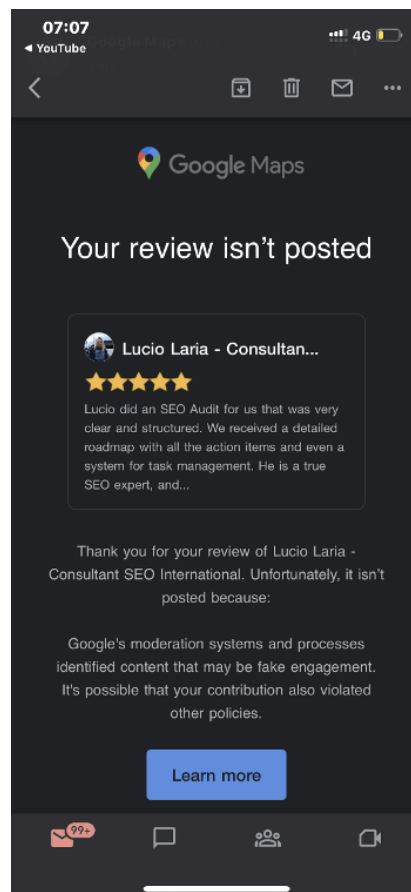
Hello,

I just settled my Google profile and asked my client for a review. Google is filing this review as a fake engagement when this person is a legitimate client of mine.

I'm waiting for this to be fixed before asking any other of my clients for their reviews.

Why is this happening, and how can I fix it?

Thanks,



Among the many conjectured reasons and suggestions put forth by knowledgeable forum members are the following:

- It may be related to the review content. See prohibited and restricted content. Ask the reviewer to delete it and then write a new review.
- It may be due to a problem with the reviewer's account.
- Because the provider is in France and the client is in Argentina, the distance between them could be the reason.
- Ask the reviewer to try again, leaving a 4-5 sentence review, and add specifics about the services provided and, if pertinent, the location at which they were provided. If that fails, ask them to leave a review from another account.

The reviewer received the email notification about 15 minutes after posting the review. As the forum community pointed out, the review was being "filtered by an algorithm that enforces Google's content policies".

Why You Should Pay Attention to This Issue:

As we all know, getting legitimate reviews is not an easy task. It takes a lot of effort to impress a client, and even more to convince the client to post a good review. It is disappointing when our sometimes hard-to-get legitimate reviews get taken down for "algorithmic" reasons, as requesting the client to post it again can be a bit awkward.

So, it's crucial to learn how to get our good reviews to stick. The better we can prep our customers and clients, the better chance to get it right the first time.