



GOOGLE BERT AND SEO

Basic is the new algorithm

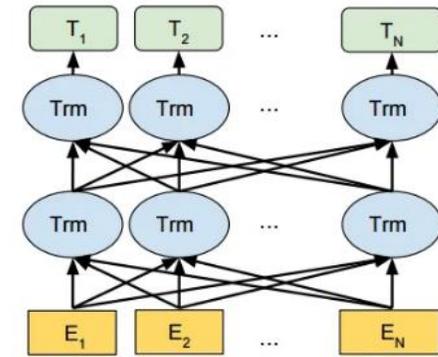
What is BERT?

BERT stands for **Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers**. It is Google's biggest and most important update in five years after RankBrain.

In definition, the Google BERT update is a deep learning algorithm on natural language processing processing.

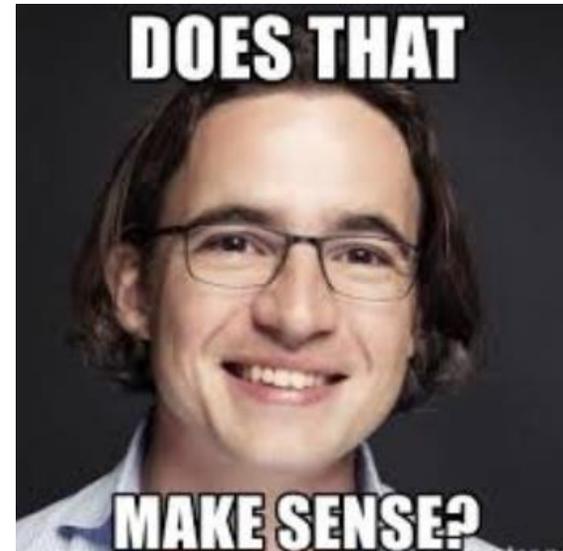
What the BERT algorithm does is help Google understand what the words in a sentence mean, taking the context into account. In essence, it is a way for Google to better understand what is important in search queries.

The algorithm only analyses search queries and not web pages. More so, it only impacts 10% of search queries.



How BERT Works – A Quick Breakdown

- The main aim for the BERT update is to help the user find more relevant information on their search query.
- The algorithm is particularly meant for understanding longer, more conversational search queries.
- Searches with prepositions such as “for” and “to” matter a lot to the meaning. In this instance, Google will be able to understand the context of the words in the query.
- But, users can still search in a way that feels natural to them.
- In terms of ranking results, the algorithm will help Search (Google) better understand one in 10 search queries.



Okay...

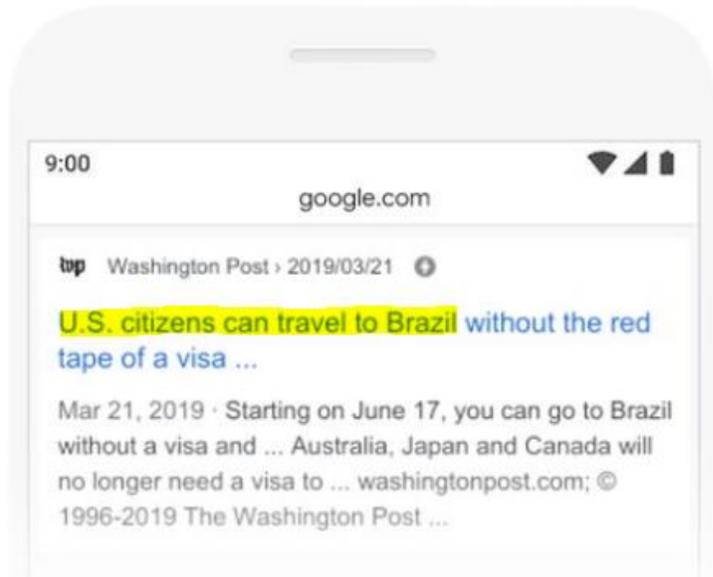




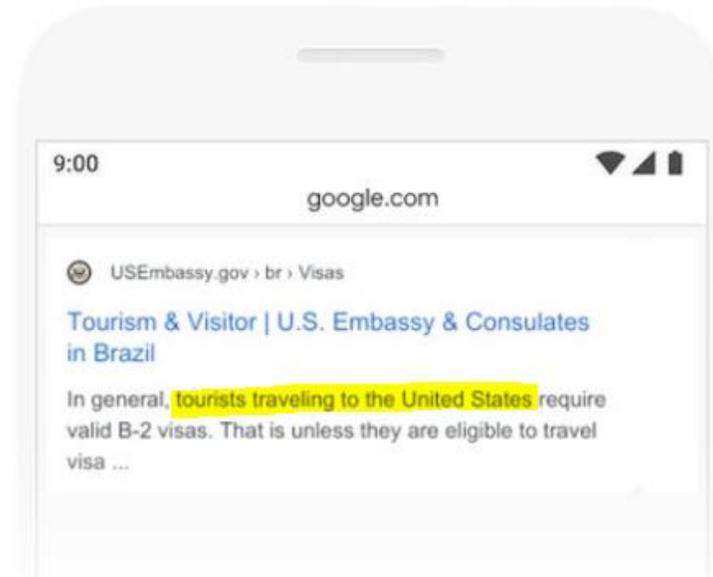
How Google Cracks Queries – *Example 1*

2019 brazil traveler to usa need a visa

BEFORE



AFTER



- Here, the preposition “to” and its connection to the other words are important to help understand the meaning of the query. It’s about a Brazilian wanting to travel to the USA and not Vice Versa.

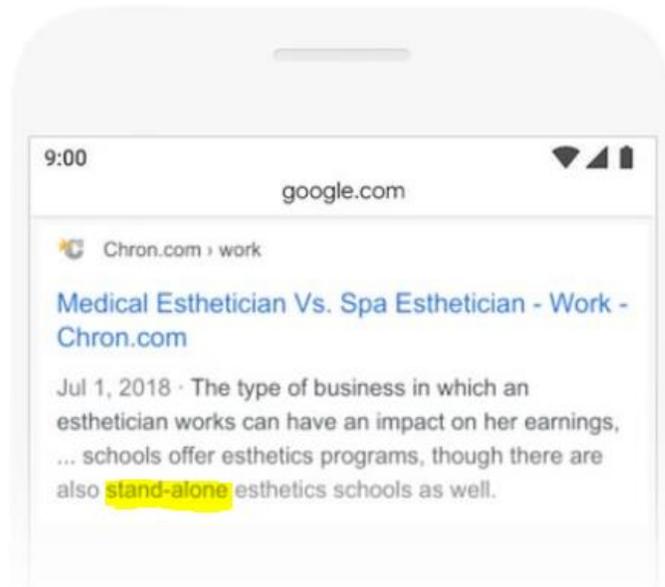




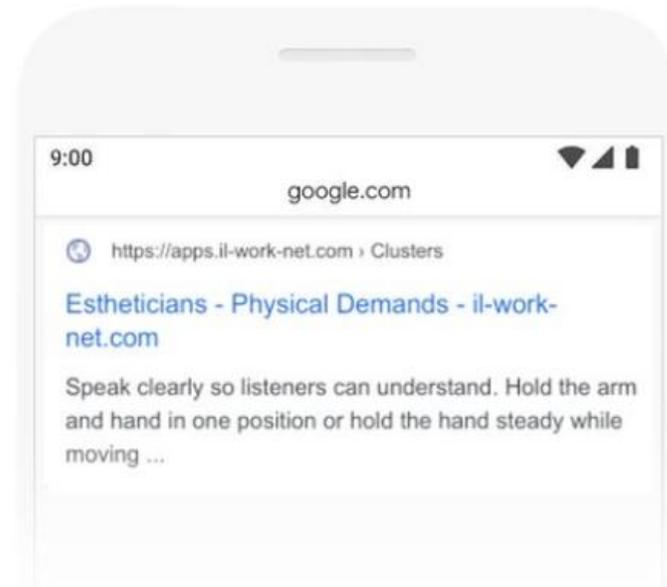
How Google Cracks Queries – *Example 2*

do estheticians **stand** a lot at work

BEFORE



AFTER



- Previously Google would consider **matching keywords** instead of understanding the overall context. In this instance, Search previously matched the term “stand” in the query with the keyword “stand-alone” in the result, despite the post not really matching what the query is about.





How Google Cracks Queries – *Example 3*

Can you get medicine **for someone** pharmacy

BEFORE

9:00 google.com

MedlinePlus (.gov) › ency › article

Getting a prescription filled: MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia

Aug 26, 2017 · Your health care provider may give you a prescription in ... Writing a paper prescription that you take to a local pharmacy ... Some people and insurance companies choose to use ...

AFTER

9:00 google.com

HHS.gov › hipaa › for-professionals

Can a patient have a friend or family member pick up a prescription ...

Dec 19, 2002 · A pharmacist may use professional judgment and experience with common practice to ... the patient's best interest in allowing a person, other than the patient, to pick up a prescription.

- The BERT model understands that “for someone” is an important part of the query. Previously search would miss the meaning of the overall query and have general results about filling prescriptions, whereas now it includes results of that someone; either a family member or friend getting medication for a patient.

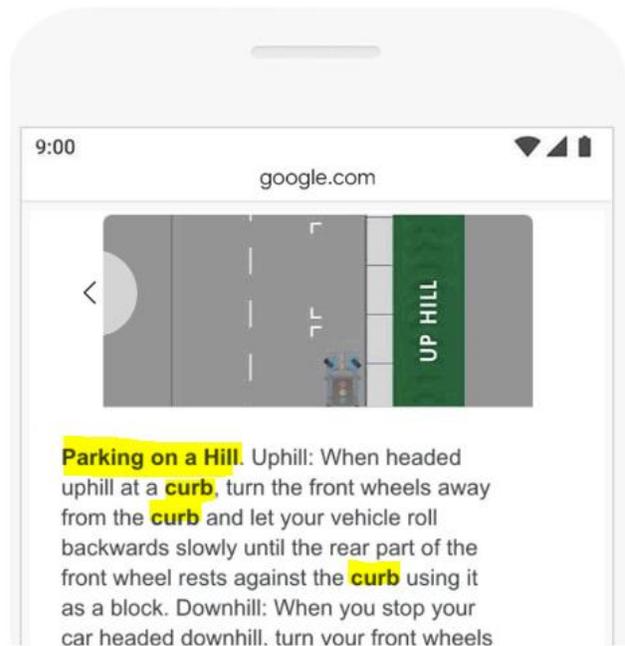




How Google Cracks Queries – *Example 4*

🔍 parking on a hill with **no curb**

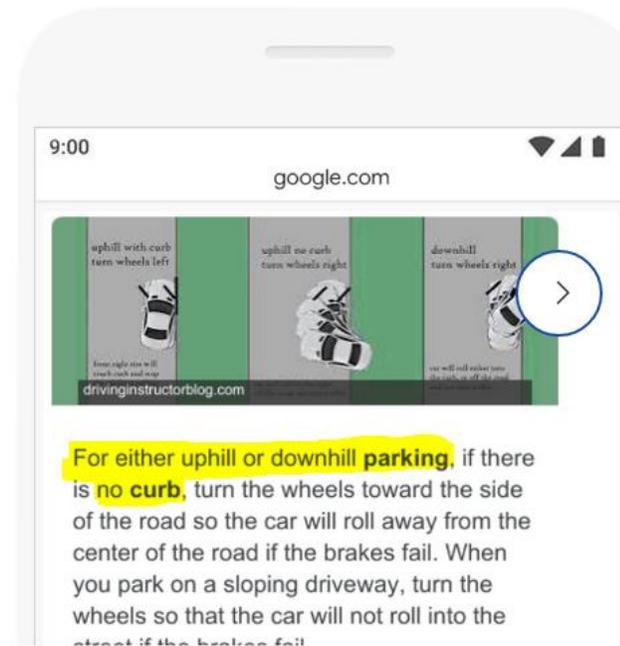
BEFORE



9:00 google.com

Parking on a Hill. Uphill: When headed uphill at a **curb**, turn the front wheels away from the **curb** and let your vehicle roll backwards slowly until the rear part of the front wheel rests against the **curb** using it as a block. Downhill: When you stop your car headed downhill, turn your front wheels

AFTER



9:00 google.com

uphill with curb
turn wheels left

uphill no curb
turn wheels right

downhill
turn wheels right

For either uphill or downhill parking, if there is **no curb**, turn the wheels toward the side of the road so the car will roll away from the center of the road if the brakes fail. When you park on a sloping driveway, turn the wheels so that the car will not roll into the street if the brakes fail.

- Previously, Search would get confused with overall the meaning of the query. It would place more importance on the term “**curb**” and ignored the term “**no**” - not understanding how important ‘no’ was to respond to the query.

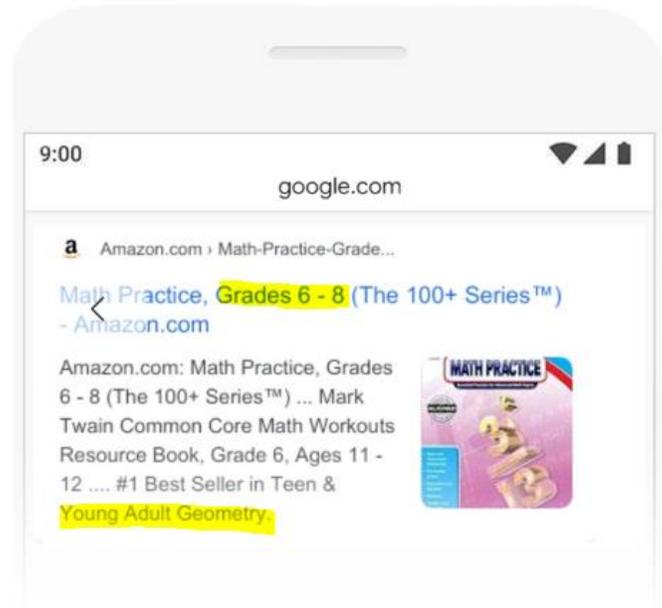




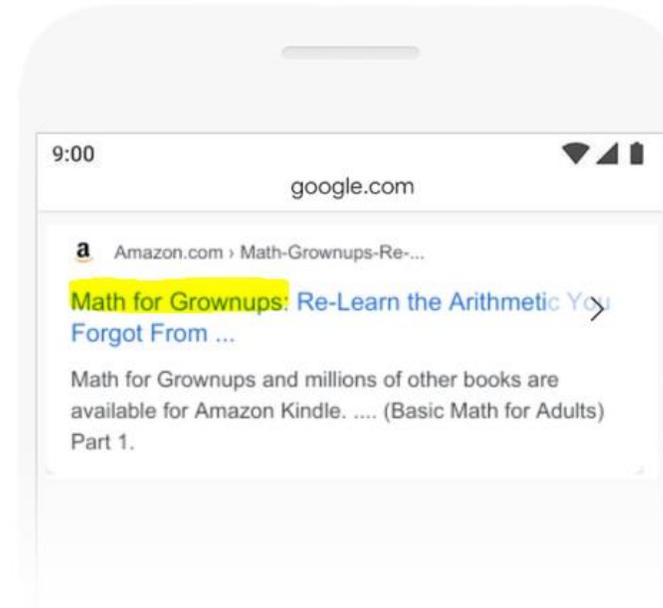
How Google Cracks Queries – *Example 5*

math practice books for adults

BEFORE



AFTER



- In this example, Google no longer confuses the “adult” context with young adults, which means younger persons.



Google BERT and SEO - How to Optimise Your Content

Although BERT is not for webpages, there is a pretty good chance that it will impact your site. If not, as the traffic grows, it will eventually affect your site. But also, there is no direct way to optimize your pages for BERT, however, you can optimize your content for users.

- The best way to go about it is to follow **entity SEO** – which is basically optimizing your content in a way which establishes a relationship between two things. After all, Natural Language Processing is meant to connect a question to an answer. So, your web pages should look to answer: **Who, What, When, Where, Why and How**.

This means you will need to:

- have content that is more relevant.
- be able to establish a connection between ranges of search intent – (*the 5Ws & 1H*).
- build authority through links – the more you write on a particular niche, the more authority you have.

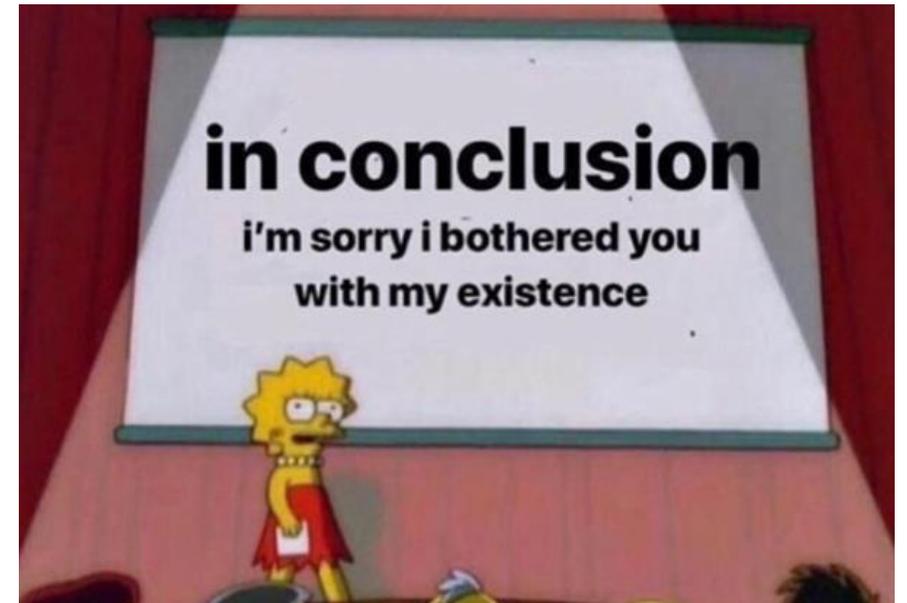
How to Optimise for Google BERT cont'...

- Clearly answer the user's query by creating content that is focused, disambiguated and well organized for Google to select. This includes using prepositions and transition words in a proper manner. This also improves your chances of winning a featured snippet.
 - The word "is" is also regarded a big trigger word to get a featured snippet. Research shows that Google usually picks paragraphs with the word, besides the lists. In addition, you need to be definitive.
- Use long-tail keywords.
- Make use of FAQs (another way to get featured snippets) as well as Google suggestions.
- Use conversational phrases in your content since more searches are also being done using voice.

Conclusion

More improvements on the BERT model are still underway as Google is looking to make Search better for people around the world...

- The BERT update was first rolled out in October 2019 for US English and for 70 more languages in December 2019.
- At the moment, the model is able to take learnings from one other language (in this case US English) and apply them to others. They are planning to expand and make it useful in every other language.
- BERT is also used to improve featured snippets in languages like Korean, Hindi and Portuguese.
- This doesn't mean Search will always get everything right.



Sources

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