

Google search gets semantic

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A visitor walks past the logo of Internet search engine giant Google at a trade fair. Google on Tuesday modified its globally popular Internet search service to understand relationships between words, as the company bids to better grasp what Web users are looking for.

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Along with taking into account intended meanings of [search](#) terms, [Google](#) beefed up results pages with longer snippets in summary paragraphs focused on what people appear to be seeking.

"We're deploying a new technology that can better understand associations and concepts related to your search," Google [search quality](#) team technical lead Ori Allon and snippets team engineer Ken Wilder wrote in a blog post.

"We are now able to target more queries, more languages, and make our suggestions more relevant to what you actually need to know."

Internet search services have traditionally been based on matching key words typed into query boxes with words at websites or in other online data.

There has been growing interest in "semantic searches" that are smart enough to go beyond simply matching words to understanding what sentences or combinations of words mean.

A longstanding concern has been whether companies will be able to implement technology that can process the increasingly complex searches with the high speed that Internet users have come to expect.

Microsoft recently confirmed it is testing a Kumo.com [semantic search engine](#) it hopes will be more popular than its Live Search service that has long been mired in a distant third place behind Yahoo! and market leader Google.

Google on Tuesday rolled out semantic search capabilities in 37 languages.

Examples given by Wilder and Allon included a search in Russian for "fortune-telling with cards" yielding search results that included "tarot" and "divination."

A Google search in English for "principles of physics" triggers suggestions to inquire about "big bang" and "quantum mechanics."

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