

# Microsoft testing new Internet search engine Kumo

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The logo for Microsoft at their office in Herndon, Virginia. Microsoft on Tuesday confirmed it is testing a new Internet search engine it hopes will power the US software giant out of distant third place in a market dominated by Google.

Microsoft on Tuesday confirmed it is testing a new Internet search engine it hopes will power the US software giant out of distant third place in a market dominated by Google.

A Kumo.com search engine being privately tested by Microsoft workers is reportedly based on semantic technology that enables it to understand sentences and relationships between words.

Current search engines, including software used by Google, rely on matching words typed into search boxes with those found at websites and in data found on the Internet.

"There's a good deal of excitement brewing over this test, both internally and externally, which we're always glad to see," Microsoft Live Search general manager Mike Nichols wrote in an online message.

"Our hope is that our employees will give us great feedback on our new features and that it all becomes part of the external experience soon."

The Internet has buzzed with speculation regarding whether Microsoft intends to replace its Live Search with Kumo since an internal memo written about it by Satya Nadella, a Microsoft senior vice president, was leaked online this week.

Microsoft said Tuesday that the memo that ricocheted quickly about the Web "is in fact accurate."

Nichols posted a "sneak peek" screenshot of Kumo with his message at an official Live Search blog website.

Nichols said it remains to be determined whether the Kumo codename will replace "Live Search" when it makes its public debut.

"We're using the Kumo brand and URL for this test experience to make sure employees understand they're in a test experience," Nichols wrote.

"We believe this will encourage more active feedback. As for rebranding, it's something we're still considering."

Nadella said in his memo that statistics show that people searching online often don't find what they seek and that Internet hunts take more than 20 minutes in nearly half of the cases.

"We believe we can provide a better and more useful search experience that helps you not just search but accomplish tasks," Nadella wrote.

"During the test, features will vary by country, but you'll see results organized in a way that saves you more time."

Microsoft tried last year to buy Yahoo! for 47.5 billion dollars in a vain effort to merge online resources to better battle Google, which rules more than 60 percent of the US online search market.

Yahoo!'s share of the market is about 21 percent and Microsoft trails with 8.5 percent, according to recent figures from industry tracking firms.

Microsoft chief executive Steve Ballmer has stated publically that he is still open to a deal with Yahoo!, which recently hired a new chief executive who is mulling the California Internet pioneer's options.

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