

Google redesigns search results on PCs (Update)

March 13 2014, by Michael Liedtke



Web surfing through the Internet's main gateway now looks slightly different on personal computers, thanks to a few cosmetic changes to Google's search engine this week.

The tweaks to the way Google's search results appear on desktop and laptop computers mirror a makeover on smartphones and tablets introduced a few months ago.

The new presentation increases font sizes and removes the underlines below the blue links of each search result on PCs. Ads appearing along the top and the right-hand panel of the results page no longer are presented in boxes shaded in blue and yellow. The marketing pitches are now marked by small ad tags to distinguish them from the rest of the

results.

Google Inc. rolled out the new design on PCs with little fanfare, even though it will be seen by almost everyone who searches for information on personal computers. That's because Google processes about two out of every three search requests made on PCs.

The company's lead search designer, Jon Wiley, announced the makeover Wednesday with a post on his Google Plus page.

The changes are meant to make it easier to scroll through Google's search results and present a "cleaner look," Wiley wrote in his post.

Google's decision to transfer a design originally tailored for mobile devices to PCs also underscores the company's increasing emphasis on smartphones and tablets.

"Improving consistency in design across platforms makes it easier for people to use Google search across devices, and it makes it easier for us to develop and ship improvements across the board," Wiley wrote.?

Google, based in Mountain View, California, didn't immediately respond Thursday to requests for further comment about the new look.

As with any redesign of a popular Internet service, some users were expressing their dismay and frustration with Google's new search design on PCs. There were also compliments mixed in with the complaints on Twitter's short-messaging service and the comments section below Wiley's Google Plus post.

The main gripes about the makeover seemed to center on the larger and different font and the lack of color on the results page.

Google, though, typically faces much louder protests when its engineers complete a radical overhaul of the formula that determines rankings of search results. Those revisions can dramatically reduce the traffic of websites exiled to the back pages of the search results after a new formula is introduced.

In this case, Google is tinkering with the style of the search results, and not the substance.

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