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Google's Suggestion Beta Search - New SEO & Webmaster Wonder Tool or Over Rated Popularity Meter.

By James R. Sanders

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With Google's release of their new Beta Google Suggest site, many SEO's are jumping on the bandwagon to preach praises about Google Lab's latest breakthrough. However, in a recent article published by Site Pro News by Mike Banks Valentine, noted SEO of SEOptimism.com, entitled "A is for Amazon, B is for Best Buy Google Suggest Feature", Mr. Valentine would have us believe that the "results" shown in Google Suggest are for the number of SEARCHES conducted at Google for a given search term. I would have to disagree with him given the research I've done behind the ground breaking new tool. However, before I put the cart before the horse, maybe I should explain this new "tool" just in case you haven't heard of it yet.

Google Suggestion Beta - Salvation for SEO's & Webmasters or a Marginal Tool to Gauge Search Popularity.

Google has finally rolled out a new tool touted as their latest breakthrough in logical search suggestion. In a nutshell, this tool follows your typing, letter by letter, and as you continue to formulate your search query, Google Suggest opens a drop down box of suggestions based on what it thinks you might be searching for. As you type each letter in your query window, Google Suggest continues to

update the list based on the information you type. The Beta site is located at <http://www.google.com/webhp?hl=en&complete=1>. After reading Mr. Valentine's article, I was quick to drop by the Beta Site to check this new tool out. I thought to myself, "If this actually reports the number of searches being done at Google for a particular search term or phrase, then boy is it going to be easy to evaluate the best search terms to use when optimizing a page for Google." I felt like a kid on Christmas morning running downstairs to see what Santa brought me.

The Investigation Begins - My Hopes Become Fears.

My first idea was to type web site design into the search box query area. No sooner than I finished typing "web si", up pops the box listing "web site design" as the top suggested pick, and the results showing "22,600.000 results". My first thought was "Holy crap, there's THAT many searches being done at Google on web site design?" My next question was "Now I wonder if that is a month, to date since Google has been in operation, or what?" Soon after additional thought, my mind began to clear and the horror struck me. The next question was "What if these are just the number of matching results in the Google database for the search term web site design?" My hopes and dreams of a new tool to demystify Google search popularity began to disintegrate as my mind started to rationalize the situation and ponder the question further.

Comparing Suggestion Beta "Results" with Google SERP "Results".

I decided to click the top suggestion "web site design" and see what happened. As I looked at the SERP, the top line stated "Results 1 – 10 of about 32,700,000 for web site design. (0.22 seconds)". At first, my hopes began to soar again as I pondered the wonderful SEO opportunities. 32,700,000 does not match the results of 22,600,000 reported in the suggestion tool. There seemed to be hope, but then my mind started to wonder again. The next question I asked was "What if the beta tool is using an older database than the present database used to distribute Google's main site results". The horror sat in again as I sat there pondering my thoughts and possibilities. Logical reasoning sat in, and

my hopes and dreams were dashed as a ship tossed into a rocky coast during a hurricane. 22,600,000 results a month would be an extremely odd amount of searches for the term web site design even given the number of webmasters and SEO's that normally check that search term to see competition rankings. In addition, given the closeness to the regular SERP results for the same search term, it just stands to reason that the results are from an older database snap shot of the web the lab is using for testing the beta release.

Further Investigation - My Hopes Continue to Diminish.

To investigate my thoughts as thoroughly as possible, I spent some time reading the FAQ located at <http://labs.google.com/suggest/faq.html>. Nowhere in this FAQ does it say anything as to what the "results" indicate other

than that the ranking of suggested terms are based on the popularity of searches done at Google. That does NOT come right out and say that the number reported for "results" in any way indicates the actual number of searches for the particular search term, but yes, one could infer that meaning, especially SEO's and webmasters so desperately looking for another way to help "properly" optimize their pages for Google. I can understand this thought process, and would have fallen prey to it had I not thought about it in a little more detail, but the facts speak for themselves, and common sense rules out.

Comparing Google's Usage of the Term "Results" Throughout Their Site.

The other proof I offer to substantiate my claims stems from the context Google uses everywhere else the word "results" appears on their site. They tend to use that word EXCLUSIVELY with the results being returned for the number of matches for a particular search term from their database. Add to the facts that Google has never been one to openly give webmasters or SEO's ANYTHING that can be used to manipulate their SERPs and it just goes to further prove that the experts are wrong in the assumption that the "results" are an indication of the search term's search popularity at Google. The way the terms are ranked to

provide the best possible suggestion IS based on search popularity at Google, but the number has nothing to do with the actual number of searches conducted. That synched it. I have no choice but to believe that the article written by Mr. Valentine is misleading, and that many other SEO's are jumping the gun to tout the "new salvation tool" to help us demystify Google search term popularity, or help us improve our page optimization. This "tool" isn't going to give SEO's and webmasters anything but a preview of the number of SERP results they will have to wade through to find their information.

Taking the Final Plunge - Getting the Information Straight from the Horse's Mouth.

Nevertheless, being I'd rather hold on to some shred of hope that I am wrong, I have taken the liberty to question Google and am still awaiting their reply. Although the order can give some insight into search term popularity for the particular search terms, there is still no way to know just how much of a difference exists between the first and second terms suggested. In all reality, there could be thousands more searches for the first term over the second, or their

could be just a few more for the first over the second, but either way it really doesn't give us the useful information that I'd like to see for SEO work like Overture's suggestion tool does. When Google responds to my question, I'll be more than happy to try to edit this article or post the results to the forum. Until then, hopefully I am wrong, but I just can't hold out hope that Google would make things that much easier for SEO's and webmasters looking for ways to "optimize" their pages for the Great Google Bot.

James R. Sanders is the owner of Sanders Consultation Group Plus. He has been a webmaster and web site designer since 1997, and involved in self-employment ventures since 1992. He is presently a contributing author of NewbieHangout, and has been published through WebProNews. You can email him at webmaster@sanders-consultation-group-plus.com.

Free Online SEO Tools

By Arif Hanid

For anyone wanting to do a bit of their own Search Engine Optimisation, there is an abundance of free

online SEO tools available on the internet. Most of them provide some pretty impressive statistics and information to help you optimise your website, analyse search engine positions, research your competitors, plus much more!

There are two ways these free online SEO tools can be used:

(1) For those who are new to the area of search engine optimisation, these tools provide excellent insight on how a website is performing and ranking. They can quickly highlight issues and trends with their current website and provide a good insight as to where optimisation work is necessary.

(2) For the more experienced search engine optimisers amongst us, these tools will act as a complement to the more specialised SEO tools, like WebPosition Gold or SpyderOpts. They can even be used to supplement an SEO's internal knowledge base and experience.

Here is a selection of some choice tools for both the novice and the experienced search engine optimisers:

Keyword Research Tool

This helps to research appropriate words and phrases to include in your webpage's body text to aid promotion. It's simple and to use and requires the user to enter the sort of word or phrase you wish to be found under, the tool will then suggest some additional words and phrases you can think about using. One of the great things about this tool is that it gives you the option to select from a range of top search engines, e.g. Google, Yahoo, MSN, Teoma, etc.

Keyword Analyser Tool

This tool reads the body of the page you specify and gives a report on what words are used, and how many times they are used.

This is a valuable tool as most engines will rank your site depending on your keyword density (which typically ranges between 3% and 9%).

Search Engine Position Checker Tool

This tool checks whether your website appears in the first fifty results in major search engines for your chosen keyword or phrase.

If the URL is present, it will output what position it occupies. As an additional feature, the tool also informs you if any other URLs from your domain appear in the search results.

Link Popularity Tool

This tool measures the total number of links or "votes" that a search engine has found for your website.

This is a pretty cool tool because as well as tabulated data it also produces a nice graph of the resulting data. One final key element of this tool is its ability to compare your website to your competitors to help you with your overall marketing strategy.

Meta Tag Generator

This automatically generates a Meta Keyword tag by reading the page you specify, removing common words from it, and picking the most used words on the page. Extra weight is given to words in a heading tag (etc.)

Search Term Suggestion Tool

Displays how many times a certain keyword was searched for at Overture.com. Shows all related searches for the entered keyword. A good measure to use in determining frequency of search among related keyword phrases

Search Engine Optimisation Tool

A very impressive tool that tests the performance of a web site, by analysing a page on the important elements of web page creation, such as its title and content. It then scores the page against given criteria for the top search engines, followed by some valuable SEO advice to improve overall ranking. The report produced is well laid out and easy to follow for anyone doing their own optimisation.

A freebie tool that works better than many costly SEO tools I know!

The area of online SEO tools is an exciting area of growth as SEO developers come up with more and more tools to represent website positions on the internet. No doubt we will be revisiting this area again...

Arif Hanid

Internet Marketing Manager for Ambleton Computing.

Experts in all areas of Internet Marketing, inc. SEO and Web Design.

Free Online SEO Tools

What Makes For Ethical Search Engine Optimization Tactics?

What's Hot In Google Labs - Google Trends

What is Gmail?

Make Money From Google Or Yahoo. P/T

Email Spider Software

File Resource Meter Software

Clickbank Search Engine

Super Charged Linking

Clickbank Automation System



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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**