



SEO Prediction for 2019:

**SERPs will create deep,
chunkable content your
audience can trust**

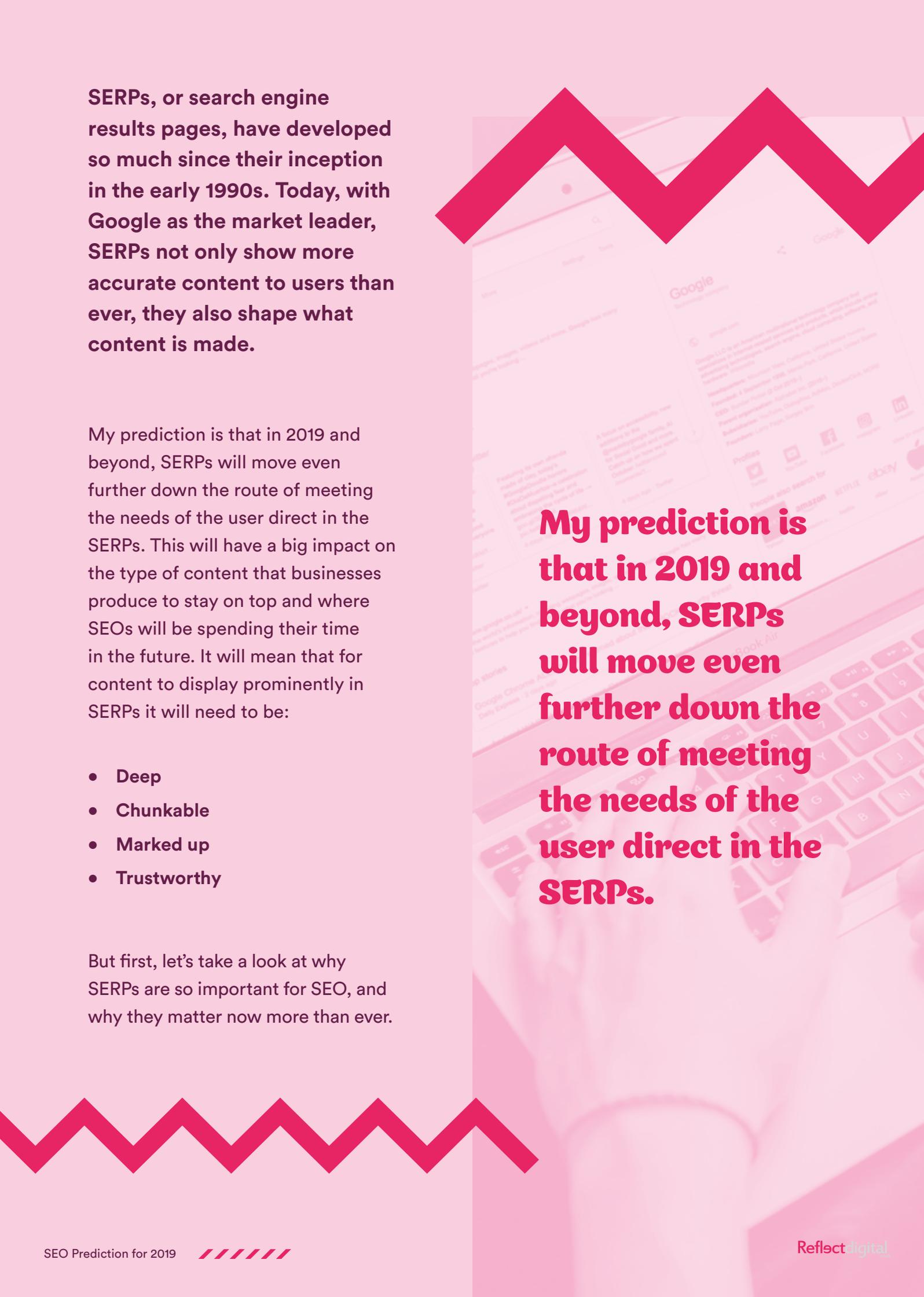
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SERPs, or search engine results pages, have developed so much since their inception in the early 1990s. Today, with Google as the market leader, SERPs not only show more accurate content to users than ever, they also shape what content is made.

My prediction is that in 2019 and beyond, SERPs will move even further down the route of meeting the needs of the user direct in the SERPs. This will have a big impact on the type of content that businesses produce to stay on top and where SEOs will be spending their time in the future. It will mean that for content to display prominently in SERPs it will need to be:

- **Deep**
- **Chunkable**
- **Marked up**
- **Trustworthy**

But first, let's take a look at why SERPs are so important for SEO, and why they matter now more than ever.



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How Have SERPs Changed?



The conventional “10 blue links” displayed in search engine results are long gone. With Google’s stated mission being “to organise the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful”, Google and users needed SERPs that were more intelligent, nuanced and useful.

Now, SERPs have grown in complexity far beyond that of the simple 10 blue links. They contain the below and so much more:

- **Featured Snippets** - Boxes highlighting useful information and answers to users in search engine results themselves.
- **Rich Snippets** - Search engine results that show rich, additional information such as images, recipes and events.
- **Local Packs** - Showing information about local businesses and their services.
- **List Carousel** - Results in a scrollable, horizontal bar at the top of search results, showing list-based results for a query.
- **News Boxes** - Highlighting current news on a searched topic at the top of the page.
- **Knowledge Panel** - A distinct panel or box that displays more detailed information on a subject, item, person or place that Google has found and verified.
- **Related Questions** - Boxes containing questions and answers related to the initial query.

Google’s own algorithms determine what type of SERP is suitable for any given particular query, analysing the query, its intent and other information such as location and history to work out what SERP and content is the most useful and best meets the needs of the user.



Why do SERPs matter?



How SERPs function and how they present results has a big impact on:

- How content is discovered
- How and what content is presented to the user
- The number of searches that lead to website traffic

2018 research from Sparktoro, looking at CTR (click-through rate) and click-based engagement in SERPs has shown that:

- Desktop organic CTR **decreased from 71.6% to 65.7%** 2015-2018.
- Mobile organic CTR **decreased from 66.6% to 39.0%** 2015-2018.
- No-click searches across desktop **increased from 33.4% to 61.0%** 2015-2018.
- No-click searches across mobile **increased from 28.4% to 34.3%** 2015-2018.

What does this mean? It means that the overall organic CTR in SERPs has decreased over time, especially on mobile.

More users are finding the information they need on the SERPs themselves, rather than having to click through to a website to get what they need.

This is so important for how businesses and SEOs need to think about reaching, influencing and communicating with their users via organic search now and in the future.



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The Future of the SERP

Google will continue making information accessible and useful, and if they can use the SERP to give users what they need, why not? They have no obligation to send users to websites, only provide them with the information they need, when they need it.

With the rapid growth of mobile searches over the last few years, it's likely presenting information in SERPs will also continue to grow. More and more businesses should be considering how to increase their search engine visibility, as opposed to thinking solely about clicks and traffic.



How Will This Impact Content?



With SERPs increasingly acting as the final destination for users, this is having a huge impact on the type of content SEOs and businesses need to produce to stay on top in 2019 and beyond.



This is especially the case for queries with the intent of finding information, where users will be seeking content about a topic, item, person or place. How can your business increase your visibility and the likelihood of achieving those top placements?

I think Google will look to feature more content that is:

- Deep
- Chunkable
- Marked up
- Trustworthy

This content will be gold for Google, it will be detailed, easy to feature in SERPs and be information users can rely on.

Let's take a look at each of these more closely.





Deep Content

Businesses should be creating deep content.

This doesn't just mean long content, but content that is appropriately in-depth and meaningful to the user. This is going to be even more important in 2019.

Google will reward content that is detailed and valuable. This may mean that your business might want to move away from thinking purely about targeting those "high volume, low competition" keywords, and think more about content that tackles a broader subject area.

Specific, relevant keywords and topics aren't useless however, and should be tackled within the article itself. Google's ability to understand content is continually growing, so producing content that is detailed is a great way to ensure Google has enough information to present accurately in the SERPs in a variety of ways.

This deep content will also need to be refreshed and kept up to date over time to ensure its continued visibility and relevance to users.

Of course, no one wants or appreciates a 3,000-word article on the time difference between New York and London. They just want a quick answer. But for content that merits detail, businesses should move away from niche keyword targeting to creating rich content.

Chunkable Content



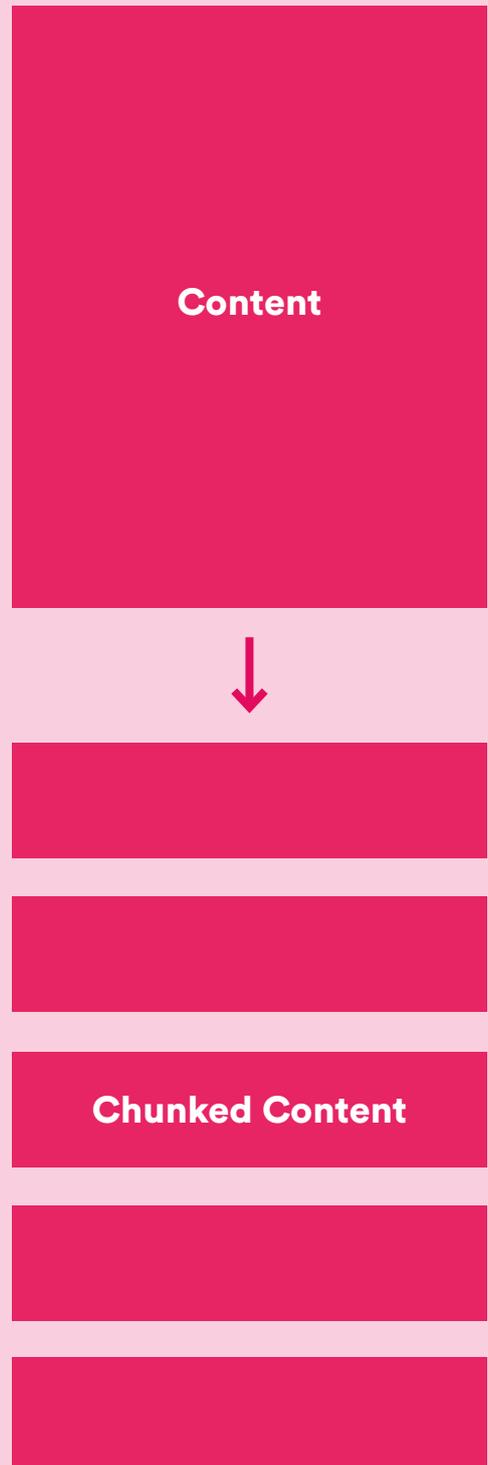
Making this content chunkable may also become crucial, as Google might look to break up more and more content to feature directly in SERPs.

This means having content that is well structured, with clear subheadings and paragraphs to correctly inform Google of the content and purpose of each section.

Making sentences in your content targeted to specific queries may also increase their likelihood of being featured in those top positions. The more direct, actionable and self-contained they are in response to a query, the better chance they stand of a featured snippet.

Google may even look to show content from different websites as part of the same SERP feature, panel or box to meet the needs of the user.

Making content chunkable will allow your detailed content to be broken up into snippets and used by Google in a variety of ways. But how can you maximise the chances of your content being understood properly? Through structured data.



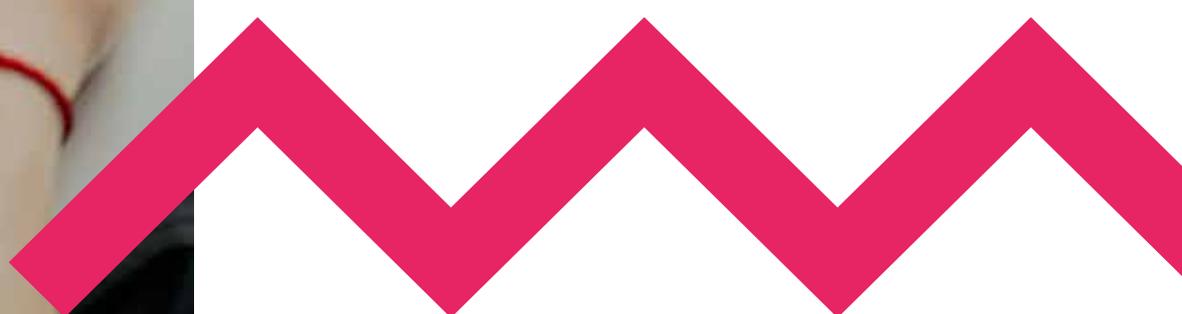


Markup Your Content

Structured data is used to explicitly tell Google about, and to classify, the different types of information on a webpage.

In the future, this could be mandatory to maximise the chances of your content appearing in the widest variety of SERP placements. New structured data properties may evolve to better describe different subsections of content that should be used by Google in SERPs.

Businesses should now be thinking seriously about their use of structured data and how it can be best used to describe their content to search engines.



Trustworthy Content

Since Google's 2018 E-A-T update, which focused on assessing websites on the grounds of expertise, authority and trustworthiness, making sure your content is accurate and authoritative will be more important than ever.

Google does and will look to increasingly promote the visibility of content that can overtly demonstrate expertise, trust and authority to them. Whether this is through structured data on the content page, or information present on the website more broadly.

Google may look to roll out more SERP features that display this information to users before they click. This could include:

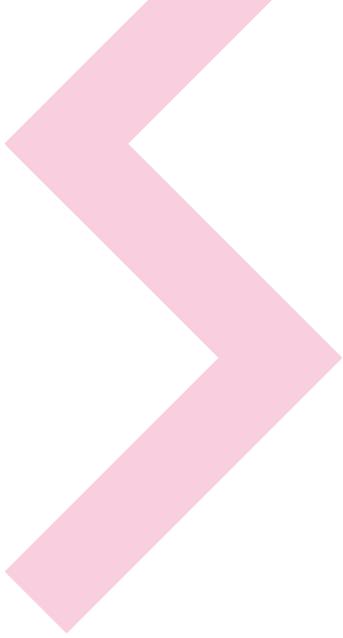
- Information about the website, the author and their expertise.
- Comparisons with other websites, so users can compare authoritativeness.
- Star-based user reviews of the content where applicable (for guides or how-tos for example).

Businesses should be looking to place their authority at the forefront when writing content, including information that not only sells the content, but allows the user to build a sense of trust in the brand.



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Key Takeaways: What Your Business Needs To Do Right Now



That's my prediction for 2019 and beyond; **Google will look to include more on SERPs, and especially content that is deep, chunkable, marked up and trustworthy.**

But what should your business be doing right now to prepare for SEO on the SERPs?

- **Create in-demand, deep, quality content** - Make sure the content you create is detailed and meaningful for the user. Write for users, not search engines, and focus on giving the user rich information on what they're looking for.
- **Use structured data** - Implement structured data across your website to give Google accurate information about as much of your website content as possible. This can help increase the visibility and accuracy of your content in SERPs.
- **Focus on chunking** - Make your content chunkable. Use a clear structure with heading tags and make sure subsections and headings focus on topics that users will be searching for and want information on.
- **Demonstrate your authority** - Show Google and your users that you can be trusted. Talk about your authority and expertise in your content and across your website.

Start doing the above, and you'll be well on your way to getting your brand and content featured prominently in 2019!





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