What does it mean to have good E-A-T?
Everyone is talking about EAT:
- Expertise
- Authoritiveness
- Trustworthiness
Why has E-A-T become such a hot topic?
YMYL
Your Money
Your Life
Diet Site

- Surged in August
- Tanked in March
- Stabilized in June

Aug 1, 2018
Sept 27, 2018
March 12, 2019
June 4, 2019
Wellness Site

- Tanked in August
- Surged in March
- Tanked (again) in June
Drug Site

- Surged in August
- Tanked in March
- Surged (again) in June
Medical Site

‣ Surged in September
‣ Tanked in March
‣ Stabilized in June

Aug 1, 2018
Sept 27, 2018
March 12, 2019
June 4, 2019
Alcohol Site

- Surged in August
- Kept surging in March
- Tanked in June
Women’s Health Site

- Surged in September
- Declined in March
- Fell off the face of the earth in June

Aug 1, 2018
Sept 27, 2018
March 12, 2019
June 4, 2019
Why all the fluctuations?
Google pledges $300m to support journalism and fight fake news

Facebook, Google And More Meet With Feds To Confer About 2020 Election Security
September 5, 2019 - 11:24 AM ET

Google and Facebook Face European Vexation
Member of British parliament angrily questioned a Facebook vice president about whether the company might have known about Russian activity in 2014

When Cancer Meets the Internet
Dr. Google doesn’t always know what’s best.
Search engines & social media companies are facing government scrutiny.
**The New York Times**

Measles Cases Reach Highest Level in More Than 25 Years, C.D.C. Says

There have been more measles cases in the United States the first five months of 2019 than there were in all of 1992, when the last large outbreak occurred, ...

May 30, 2019

**New York Times**

One More Time, With Big Data: Measles Vaccine Doesn’t Cause Autism

But the findings come at a moment of resurging suspicion about vaccine ... to work together to combat the dangerous spread of vaccine misinformation online."

Mar 5, 2019

**Wall Street Journal**

**What Big Tech Is (And Isn't) Doing to Fight Antivaccine ...**

What Big Tech Is (And Isn't) Doing to Fight Antivaccine Misinformation ... and WhatsApp are trying to tamp down the spread of misinformation about vaccines.

May 13, 2019
77% of Americans admitted to going online to diagnose medical symptoms.

Source: Google, the Source and Antidote to Bad Medical Advice on the Internet, Eli Schwartz
"We have an important responsibility to our users and to the societies in which we operate to curb the efforts of those who aim to propagate false information on our platforms."
E-A-T: Google’s criteria for analyzing the trustworthiness of content – and the people who publish it – in order to mitigate the spread of misinformation.
When you ask SEOs about EAT...
What E-A-T is NOT
Something that matters for every single website.
Knitting
Celebrity gossip
Pet health
Cancer treatment
An explicit, confirmed Google ranking factor.
Huh?
Google’s algorithms identify signals about pages that correlate with trustworthiness and authoritativeness. The best known of these signals is PageRank, which uses links on the web to understand authoritativeness.
Search rater data is not used directly in our ranking algorithms. Rather, we use them as a restaurant might get feedback cards from diners. The feedback helps us know if our systems seem to be working.
E-A-T is NOT

A replacement for technical SEO.
The only factor causing websites to get hit by algorithm updates.

E-A-T is NOT
Something that is quick or easy to fix.

E-A-T is NOT
E-A-T is NOT

An SEO tactic that results in an immediate boost in performance.
Analyzed 64 net winners and losers between 8/1/18 and now

Used Sistrix Visibility Index

Used Archive.org to look at sites before they gained/lost traffic

Documented performance across 30 potential on-page E-A-T signals

Did not analyze backlinks (although they matter for E-A-T!)

Identified interesting trends
Small Sample Size

64 websites
Correlation does\textcolor{red}{\textbf{not}} imply causation.
This is not intended to be science.
How do you know what Google considers high quality content?
Category Breakdown
Winning Sites

- Health: 48%
- Financial: 8%
- Ecommerce: 8%
- Legal: 8%
- Housing: 4%
- News: 4%
- Parenting: 4%
- Science: 4%
- Travel: 4%
- Dating: 4%
- Drugs: 4%
- Dating: 4%
Category Breakdown
Losing Sites

- Health: 69%
- Ecommerce: 15%
- News: 10%
- Drug Beauty: 3%
- Beauty: 3%
FINDINGS
51% of losers were also hit by the unnamed update (AKA “Fred”) update in March 2017.
Fred Update: March 2017

- Thin content
- Aggressive monetization
- Poor user experience
- Emphasis on E-A-T?
Winning health companies are 28 years older on average than losing health companies.

**Winners**

1977

**Losers**

2005
Author Bios

Winning sites are 16% more likely to have author bios than losing sites.

Winners

86% have author bios

Losers

74% have author bios
...But are the authors really experts?

Winning sites are **258% more likely** to use real experts than losing sites.

**Winners**
- 93% are experts

**Losers**
- 26% are experts
Medical Reviewers (Health Sites)

Winning sites are 34% more likely to use medical reviewers than losing sites.

**Winners**
- 67% have medical reviewers

**Losers**
- 50% have medical reviewers
Winning sites are **45% more likely** to have a clear editorial policy than losing sites.

**Winners**
- 55% have an editorial policy

**Losers**
- 38% have an editorial policy
Health Sites: Calls to Action on YMYL Content

Losing sites are 433% more likely to have calls to action on pages containing medical content.

**Winners**
- 15% have calls to action on YMYL content

**Losers**
- 80% have calls to action on YMYL content
Losing sites are 117% more likely to have affiliate links on YMYL content.

Winners

29% have affiliate links

Loseers

63% have affiliate links
Used to rank #2 for “fasting for diabetes”…

More Information

If you’re among the 80 percent of people who are insulin resistant, get yourself a copy of Fung’s brand-new book that comes out April 3, “The Diabetes Code: Prevent and Reverse Type 2 Diabetes Naturally.” Fung’s book, “The Complete Guide to Fasting,” is another excellent resource. As Fung says, we’ve known that fasting is beneficial for thousands of years. We just strayed away from it, and we need to re-embrace this foundational aspect of health.

…now ranks #94.

MERCOLA
Take Control of Your Health
Company Has Wikipedia Page

Winning companies are **21% more likely** to have a Wikipedia page.

**Winners**

- 64% have a Wikipedia page

**Losers**

- 53% have a Wikipedia page
Awards and Accolades

Winning companies are 850% more likely to clearly list their awards and accolades.

**Winners**
- 76% clearly list awards & accolades

**Losers**
- 8% clearly list awards and accolades
Winning health sites are 213% more likely to be Honcode certified than losing sites.

Honcode “promotes transparent and reliable health information online.”

Winners
50% comply with Honcode

Losers
16% comply with Honcode
Winning companies are 24% more likely to link to external citations within their content.

**Winners**
68% link to external citations

**Losers**
55% link to external citations
Winning sites’ average Trustpilot score is 1.9 points higher than that of losing sites.

**Winners**

Trustpilot: 5.5 / 10

**Losers**

Trustpilot: 3.6 / 10
BBB Rating: No Clear Correlation

Losers
- A+: 8%
- A: 15%
- B: 8%
- C-: 69%

Winners
- A+: 75%
- A: 12%
- B: 13%
UGC on YMYL Content

Losing sites are 94% more likely to include user-generated content on YMYL pages.

**Winners**
- 36% contain UGC on the page

**Losers**
- 70% contain UGC on the page
Flesch-Kinkaid Reading Level

Winning sites’ average Flesch-Kinkaid reading level score is .7 points higher than that of losing sites.

**Winners**  
9.2

**Losers**  
8.5
Sentiment Analysis:

Winners are 728% more likely to use “very formal” writing on YMYL content.
Examples of Stellar E-A-T
Healthline’s Ad & Sponsorship Policy

- We choose the ads.
- We don’t endorse any products.
- We will not accept certain types of ads.
- We clearly distinguish ads from editorial content.
- We clearly distinguish between sponsored and nonsponsored content.
- We clearly distinguish content that is part of a cobranded program.
eMedicineHealth’s List of Medical Writers & Editors

- Names approximately 150 medical writers
- Lists their credentials
- Establishes their editorial role
The Recovery Village’s Editorial Team Page

- Company editorial policy on fact checking and reviewing all content
- 100 author bios with relevant experience
- Links to all authors’ associated professional websites & LinkedIn profiles
Diet Doctor’s Keto Diet Page

- 6,000+ words
- Jumplinks to navigate content
- Citations to trusted sources
- Fact-check labels
- Shows both sides of the story
- Easy to understand
- Evidence “trust-meter”
Takeaways
1. YMYL content should evidence-based, objective, thorough and heavily researched

2. Include high-quality citations in your content & support statements with facts from trusted resources

3. Author bios are not enough; the authors must be real experts

4. Avoid affiliate links or salesy language in YMYL content

5. Maintain an editorial policy & disclosures around your advertisements