

New Google feature will compete with Facebook, Twitter in curating news

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Google is developing a new feature called Big Moments, which will compete with rivals Facebook and Twitter in delivering the latest breaking news updates during major events.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the [search engine](#) to react quickly and constantly to its users' needs for the latest and most authoritative [information](#), according to Google.

A team at Google has been working on the project for over a year, after the company struggled to provide the latest updates on the U.S. Capitol attack in January and Black Lives Matter protests last summer, says The Information, a Silicon Valley-based technology [news](#) site.

Big Moments hopes to build upon Google's Full Coverage feature, which it launched in Google News in 2018 and later integrated with its search engine in March of 2021.

Full Coverage allows users to tap into a news headline and see how that story is reported from a variety of sources.

Google's focus on breaking news comes when news consumption is surging and generating big profits for [tech companies](#), as highlighted by the recent testimony of Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen.

The coronavirus pandemic increased news consumption for [mainstream media](#) as well as the use of online and [social media](#), according to research conducted in 2020 by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and University of Oxford.

About a third of U.S. adults (31%) say they get news regularly on Facebook, while 13% go on Twitter regularly for news, according to a Pew Research study conducted in September.

In contrast, only 11% of U.S. adults report using Google News often, and about a quarter (24%) say they use it sometimes, according to a Pew Research study from December.

Providing better resources for breaking news could be a differentiating factor for Google and cause users to shift time spent on Google's competitors, according to The Information.

While a higher percentage of people get their news from Facebook and Twitter, many people don't trust news from social media, according to data from a Reuters and Oxford study.

The research showed 40% of respondents said they are most concerned about false information on social media compared to just 10% concerned about Google search.

Unlike social media sites, Google's context-building Full Coverage feature shows the same view to anyone searching the topic around the world and is not personalized to the specific user, says Google in a press release.

Google, with this new feature, plans to highlight the most authoritative facts about a specific event in real time, such as death and injury counts, and incorporate government data events like mass shootings or natural disasters, says The Information.

"We are continually experimenting with ways to ensure that people who come to Google can find the most authoritative and up to date information when they need it. This is an unreleased experimental feature right now and will continue to evolve," says a Google spokesperson.

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