



11-8-2002

Vol. IX, Tab 46 - Ex. 7 - Email from Jeff Dean to Google

Jeff Dean

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Dean, Jeff, "Vol. IX, Tab 46 - Ex. 7 - Email from Jeff Dean to Google" (2002). *Rosetta Stone v. Google (Joint Appendix)*. Paper 77.
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From: Jeff Dean
To: googlers-misc@google.com, council@google.com
Cc: [redacted]
Bz: [redacted]
Subject: "AdWords without color"

Apparently we recently made some ads UI changes that cause the shading on the background for the top ads to be so light that they can't be distinguished from white. A bunch of people on webmasterworld notice:

<http://www.webmasterworld.com/forum81/147.htm>

For example:

<http://www.google.com/search?q=flowers>

This problem seems especially pronounced on LCD monitors (and laptops). On those monitors, I really can hardly tell at all that these are not search results.

This seems like a "very" dangerous slope, as I can't imagine a reason that we've done this other than that we want users to not realize that these are ads and to click on them, which would seem to go against any policy that we give people the best search experience possible. If we want to do things to increase ad clickthrough, I would much rather we do things that make the ads more noticeable than that we do things that make them blend into the background and look more like search results.

Thoughts? Is this a short-term experiment or a conscious long-term policy decision?

-Jeff

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GOOG-RS-0262011