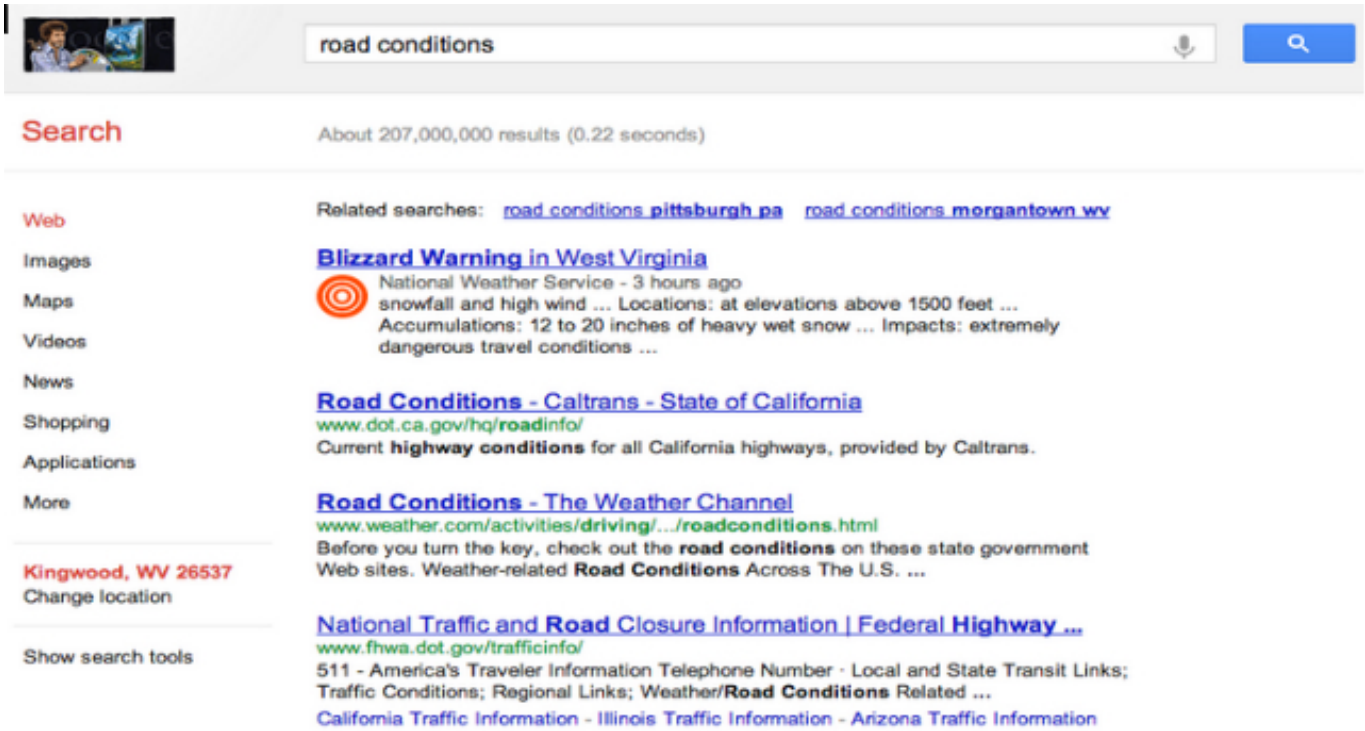
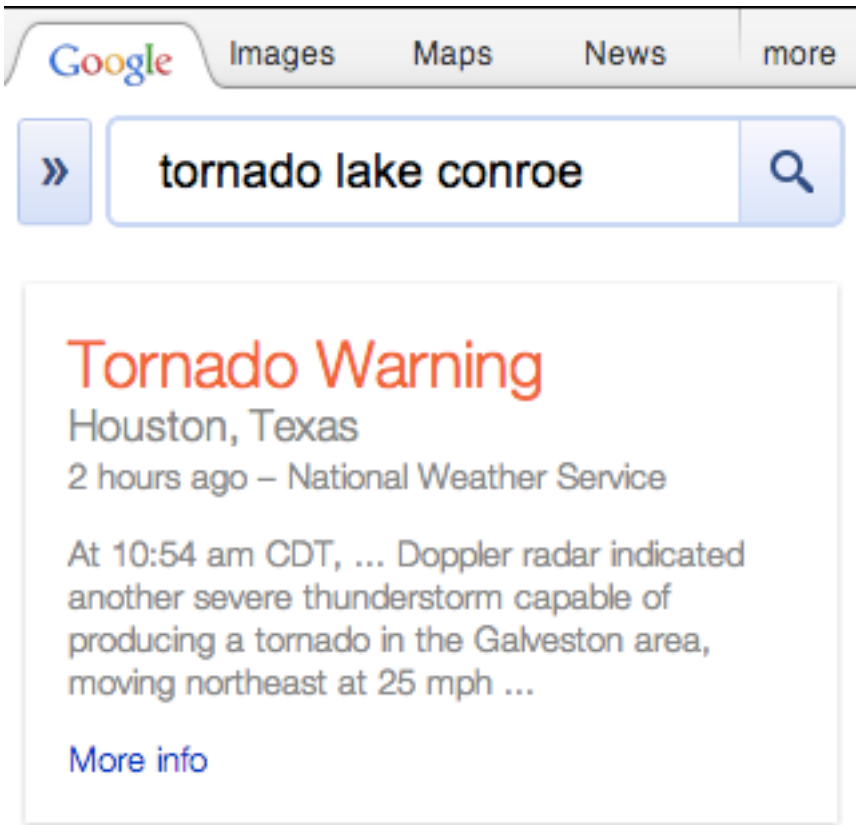
Google Adds ‘Public Alerts’ to Search and Maps for Sandy, Other Disasters

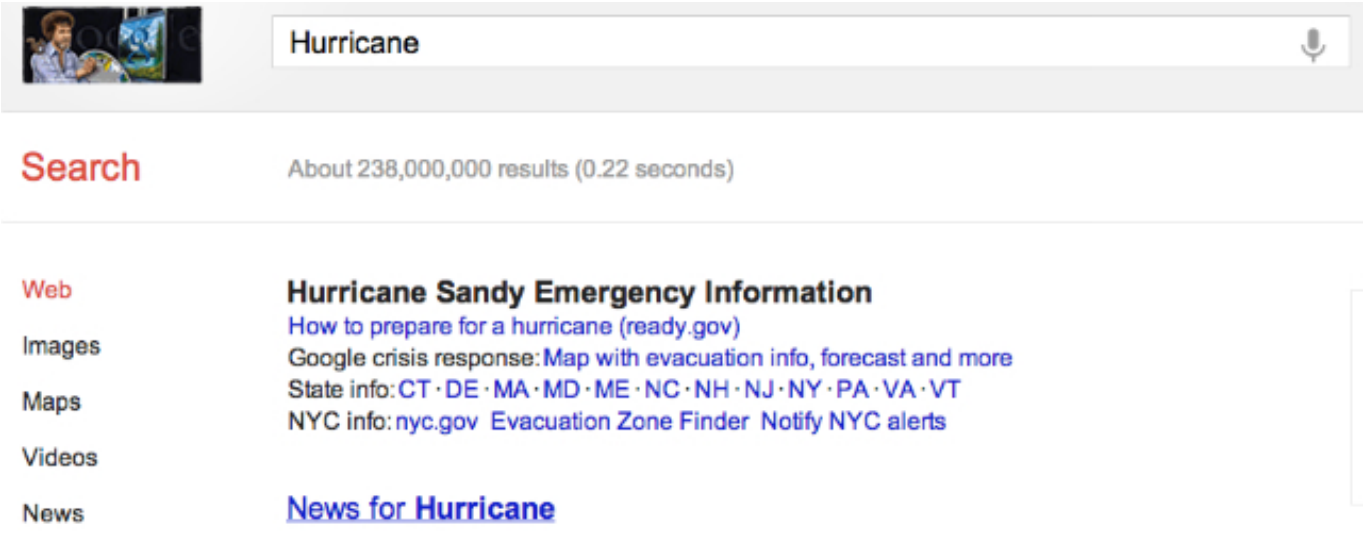


Shortly after launching a crisis map for Superstorm Sandy [1], Google has rolled out “Public Alerts” on Maps and Search.

The service provides warnings for natural disasters and emergency situations, such as Sandy, which hit the northeastern U.S. on Monday night. Public Alerts [2], which Google announced in a blog post [3] Tuesday, aims to show “relevant weather, public safety and earthquake alerts” from the U.S. National Weather Service and the U.S. Geological Survey. It is available in-browser, on Google Maps for Android and Google Now for Android devices running Jellybean (4.1).



Users can look up targeted Google searches, such as "Superstorm Sandy," and location-based search terms, such as "New York." Typing the latter, for example, produces a search result called "Coastal Flood Statement in New York." Clicking the link brings you to a page that includes a description of coastal flooding from the National Weather Service. The page also features an area map, news of flooding in NYC, as well as "recommended actions" that inform readers of what to do before, during and after a coastal flood.



Public Alerts also provide evacuation routes, crisis maps and shelter locations, according to the blog post.

For now, the service is primarily available in English for the U.S., but Google says

it’s working with data providers to expand.

“We were planning on announcing the new features in a few days, but wanted to get them out as soon as possible so they can be helpful to people during this time,” Nigel Snoad, Google Crisis Response product manager, wrote in the post. “This is part of our continuing mission to bring emergency information to people when and where it is relevant.”

For more on Public Alerts, check out its FAQ page [4]. Do you find the service helpful?

Read More [5]

October 31, 2012

Source URL (retrieved on *09/15/2014 - 12:17am*):
http://www.wirelessdesignmag.com/news/2012/10/google-adds-%E2%80%98public-alerts%E2%80%99-search-and-maps-sandy-other-disasters

Links:
[1] http://mashable.com/2012/10/29/google-crisis-map-hurricane-sandy/
[2] http://google.org/publicalerts
[3] http://googleblog.blogspot.ca/2012/10/public-alerts-on-google-search-and-maps.html
[4] http://support.google.com/publicalerts?hl=en&gl=US#1753666
[5] http://mashable.com/2012/10/31/google-public-alerts-sandy/