



Tips for Getting Cached Content Removed from Search Engines from ConnectSafely.org

We recently helped a 17-year-old get a topless photo and fake profile removed from a social networking site. But even though content was deleted, the picture and fake profile lived on as "cached" or archived content in the Google Search index. So the content removal process didn't end with the social networking site. The next step was to submit a request to remove the cached content from Google, called a "content removal request."

It's important to note that the picture and fake profile would have naturally dropped out of Google the next time its Web crawler indexed the updated page. But if you want to expedite the removal process, the way the user above did, here's how:

Submit a request to the host site to remove the content in question. A search engine can't remove content from its search index unless the host site (e.g., Facebook) removes the original copy first.

Submit a content removal request after you've confirmed that the original content or page has been cancelled by the host site. (You should see an error message such as a "404 error" if the page was removed completely.) We've included links to several search engines' removal tools below.

Follow the instructions for content removal closely. Google, for example, requires that users include the updated or cancelled page's old URL on the request form, not the Google cache URL.

Remember that content can be reposted. Removing offensive content doesn't always resolve problems, unfortunately. Online content is usually a reflection of offline relationships and experiences. So if the content is reposted, we're sorry to say you'll need to start the content removal process all over again – first with the site that's hosting the content, then with the search engines.

Google Search Content Removal Tool

Info: <https://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=164734&hl=en>
Select "The page has changed and I want the outdated information removed" then "If you don't own the site."

Tool: <https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/removals>

Google Image Search Content Removal Tool

Info: <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=181721>

Tool: <https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/removals>

Bing Live Search Content Removal Tool

Info:

http://www.bing.com/community/site_blogs/b/webmaster/archive/2009/01/29/removing-content-from-the-live-search-index.aspx

Tool: http://www.bing.com/community/site_blogs/b/webmaster/archive/2009/01/29/removing-content-from-the-live-search-index.aspx

Select the link "Launch the Live Search Support form." Fill out the form and select from the drop-down menu "How do I remove a site from Bing?" then "cached page removal."

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