


Rich Organic Search Results  
on Average Get 58 Clicks Per  
100 Queries vs. 41 for  
Non-Rich Results

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The click curve has a significant influence on the traffic each site can get from organic search and provides guidance on how to prioritize rich media categories. 58 clicks per 100 queries means tens of billions of visitors that search engines share with brands and is why SEO is still very much worth focusing on.

While some people in the industry complain about the decreasing share of organic clicks that go to brand sites, it is important to note that TV, radio, magazine, newspaper, and billboard have zero percent CTR, yet brands spend hundreds of billions on those channels each year.

**Direct response marketers in traditional media channels would be satisfied with a 5% response rate, according to the Direct Marketing Association. Organic search rich results effectively have over a 58% response rate.**



**The engagement is 11.5 times higher with SEO.**

# Research Methodology and Data Collection

The data was collected in July 2020 and covers a 13-month period back to July 2019 that included over 2,736,000,000 impressions and 157,460,000 clicks for 4,527,000 queries on Google for 175 different domains and primarily US traffic. The data sample included branded and non-branded keywords, which were analyzed together and separately.

As you review the data, keep in mind that some queries generate no clicks and some generate multiple clicks, which is why the expression of clicks per 100 queries is used but is also interchangeable with CTR in this report.

For each SERP type, the basket of keywords is used to create a click curve that maps the CTR at each position. Then the aggregate CTR for positions 1 through 15 was calculated by adding them together. This approximates the total organic click yield of the page 1 SERP and provides an estimate of total clicks per 100 queries for the SERP type.

Let's break down the CTR by SERP type to understand the specific opportunities better.

Here is the click curve for combined brand and non-brand queries for all layout types. The aggregate CTR is 58%, which is down from the **95% CTR reported in 2011** due to the following factors: no-click searches, paid ads, and voice searches, but 58% means the majority of traffic still goes to organic.

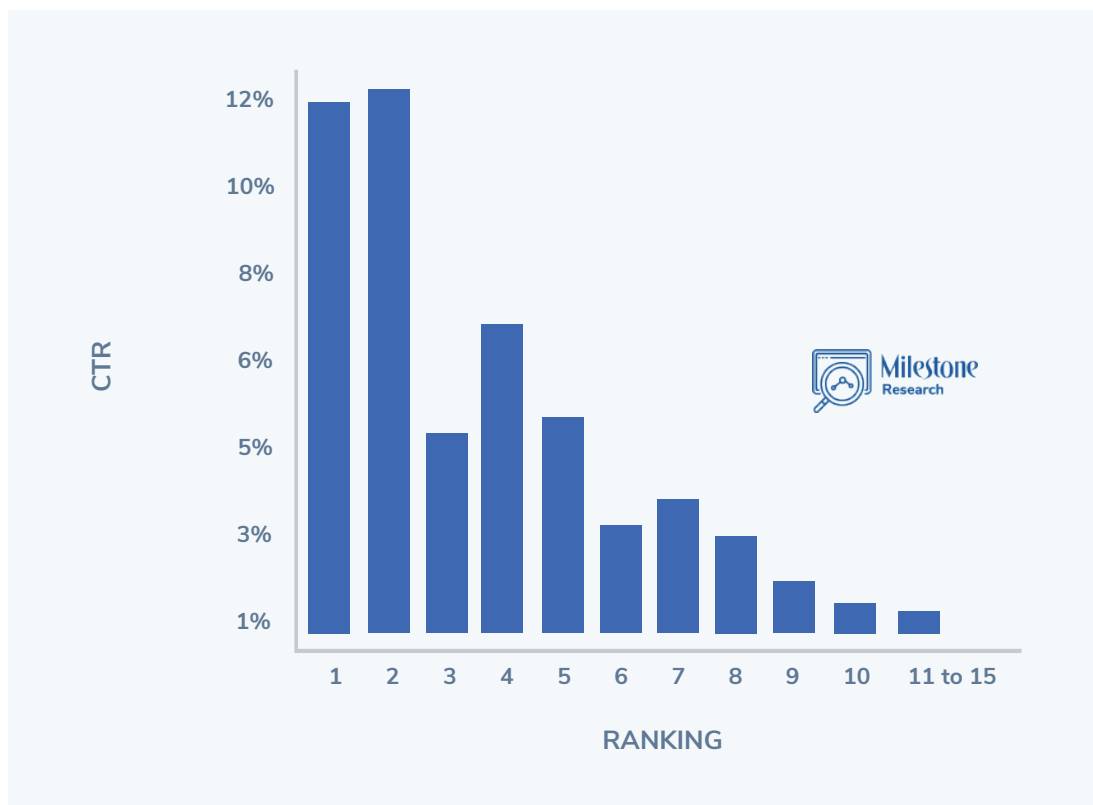
Additionally, no-click searches for local businesses on mobile still have value as they provide address, phone number, open hours and review ratings and because the majority of those searches lead to transactions within 24 hours.

- **All Rich and Standard Results SERPs, Brand and Non-Brand Keywords: 49.5% CTR**

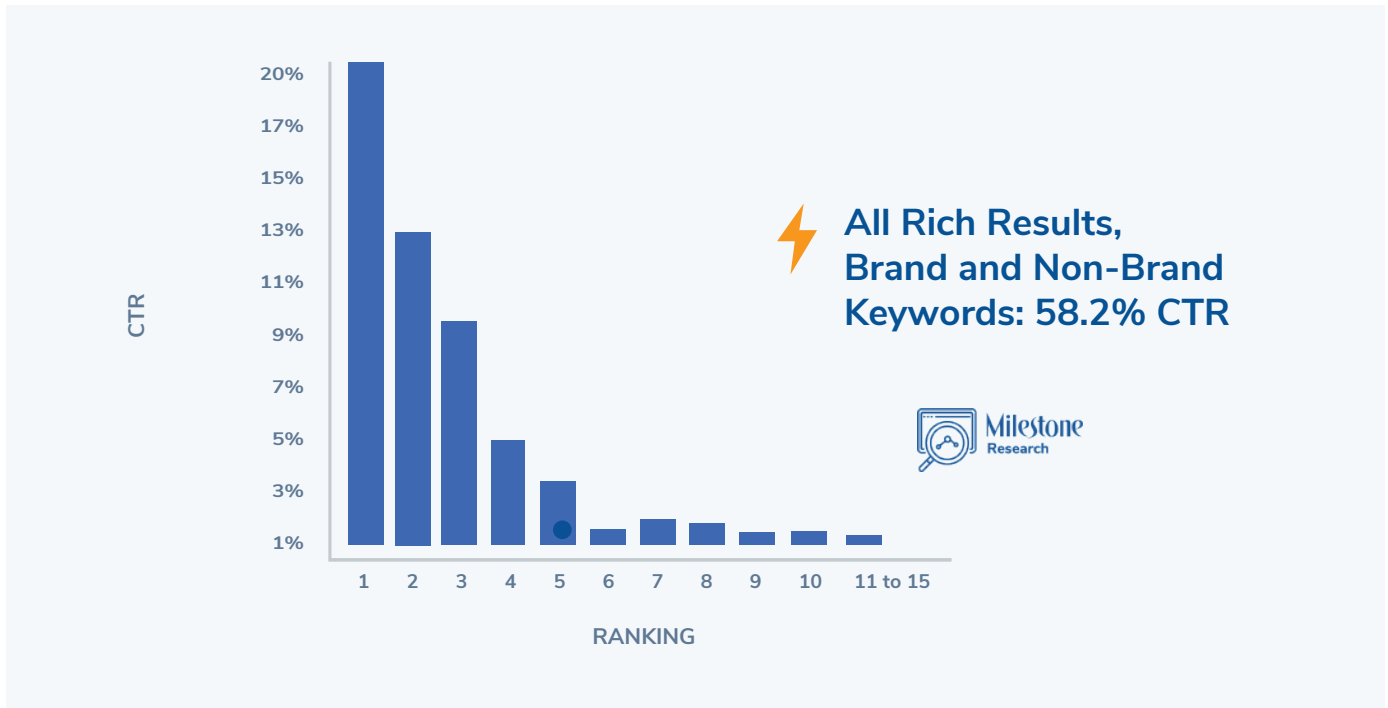
The striking conclusion from comparing these two charts is that rich results are extremely beneficial for brands. On the left is an aggregation of all results types from text-only to FAQs to AMP and on the right is all rich results reported in GSC.

The page 1 CTR across all types is 49.5% and the CTR for the search appearance rich results is 58.2%. The 49.5% number includes rich results, so the estimated CTR of text-only results is 41%.

***It is interesting that position 2 CTR is slightly higher than position 1, which was found in multiple non-rich segments.***



- All Rich and Results, Brand and Non-Brand Keywords: 58.2% CTR



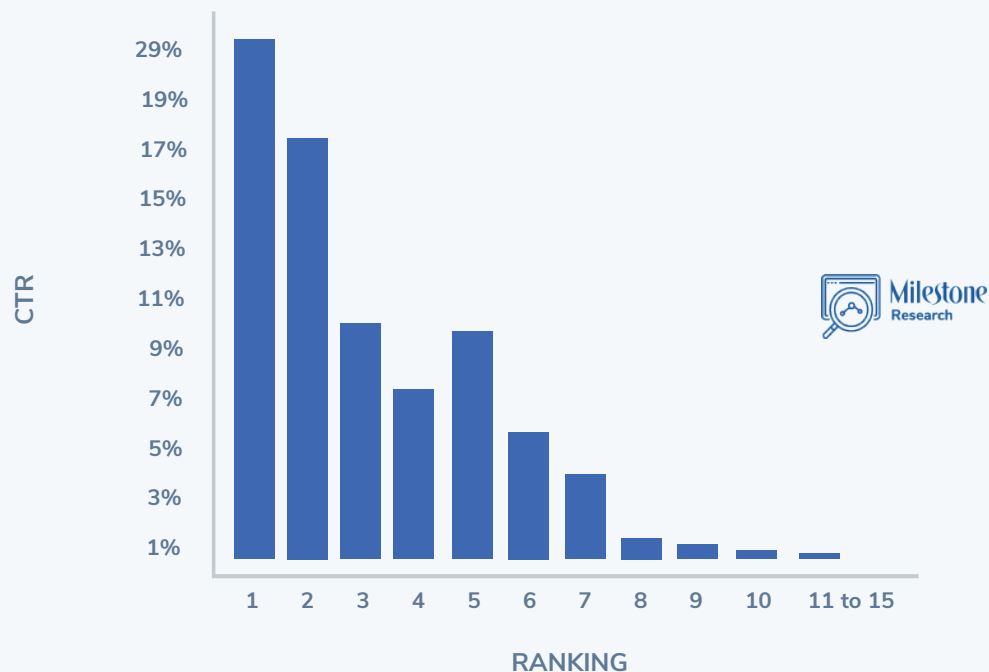
- All Rich Results SERPs, Brand and Keywords: 59.7% CTR



- **AMP Non-Rich Results, Brand and Non-Brand Keywords: 83.7% CTR**

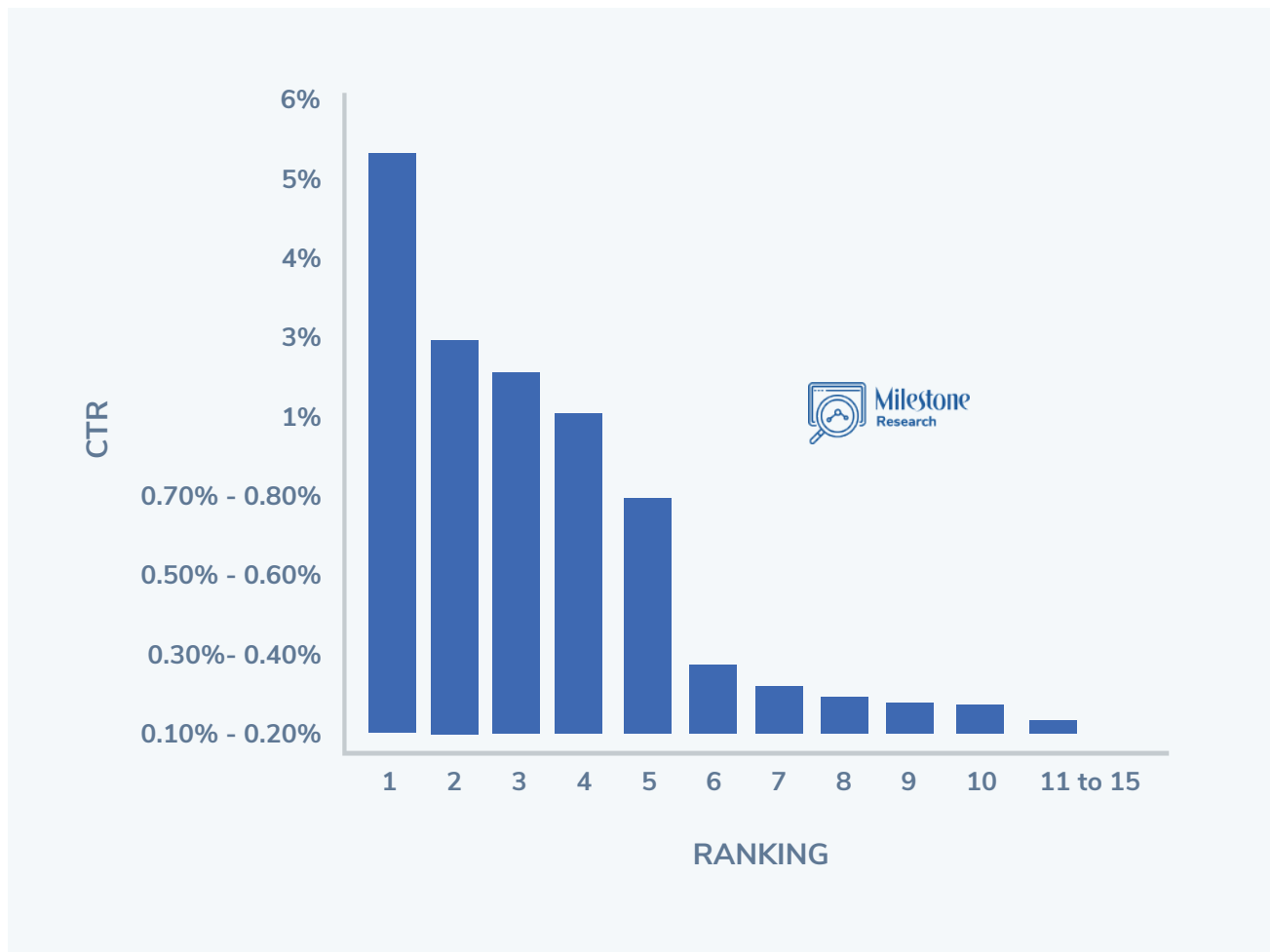
Milestone Research found that AMP Non-Rich results have the highest CTR at just over 92%, but AMP Article results had the lowest at 15%. This disparate result of the first AMP use case being on the very low side overshadows the huge value that AMP can contribute to customer experience and marketing performance outside of AMP Articles. This will become more true in 2021 when Core Vitals play a larger role in rankings. See Milestone Research's Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) Increase, Speed, Impressions, Traffic, and Revenue report.

**AMP Non-Rich performance starts with higher CTR in the SERP, AND those pages will perform better on site because of the fast load times and increased pages per session.**



- **AMP Article, Brand and Non-Brand Keywords: 15% CTR**

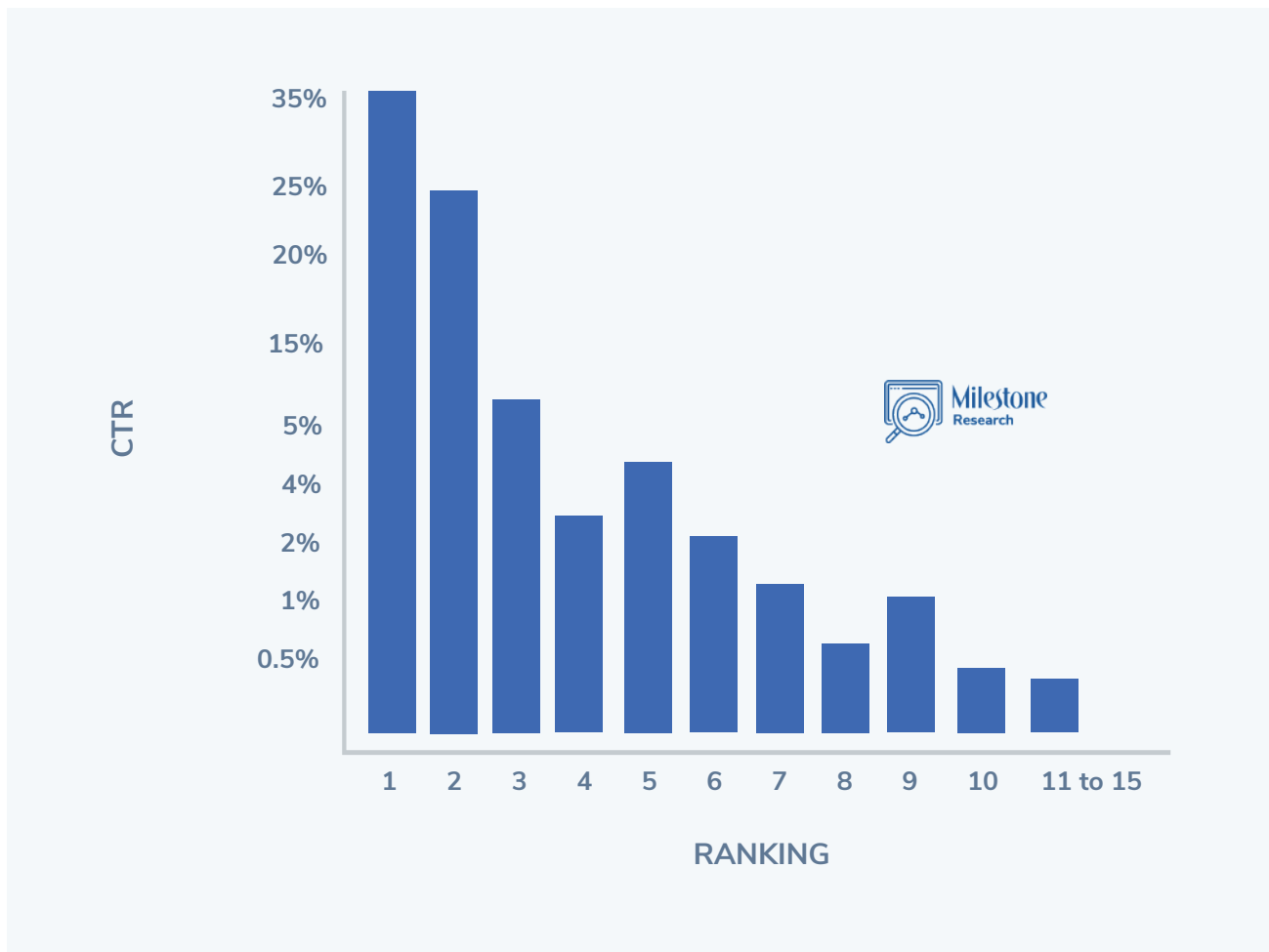
The CTR in this category is the lowest. This rich media type has altered consumers' consumption behavior. But the 2% average CTR still represents a meaningful business opportunity.



# FAQs are highly effective at engaging searchers

- **FAQ Rich Result, Brand and Non-Brand Keywords: 87.0% CTR**

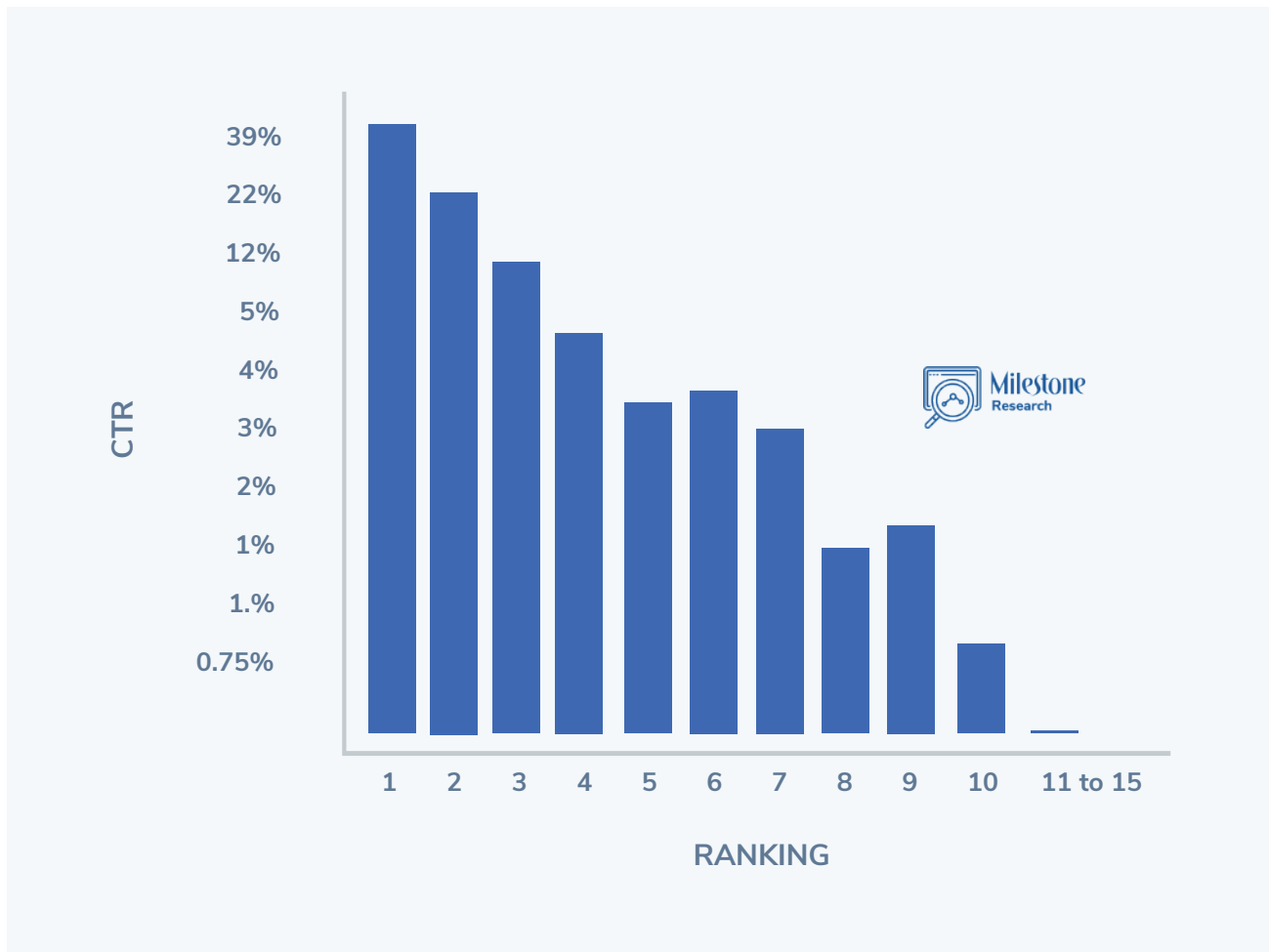
FAQ rich results had the highest CTR at 87% of any search result, which leverages the trends of entity-based SEO, semantic or conversational search, and being the right answer to increase search visibility. Information seekers on high information queries often click on multiple results as they build out the answer





- **FAQ Rich Result, Non-Brand Keywords – The second-highest CTR of any SERP or Query Type: 76.9% CTR**

It is very interesting that non-brand FAQ Rich Results have an even higher CTR than combined and brand results. Non-brand searches are more likely to be true top-of-the-funnel and generates a 91 clicks per 100 queries. Non-brand queries drive informational searches and are an excellent opportunity for brands.

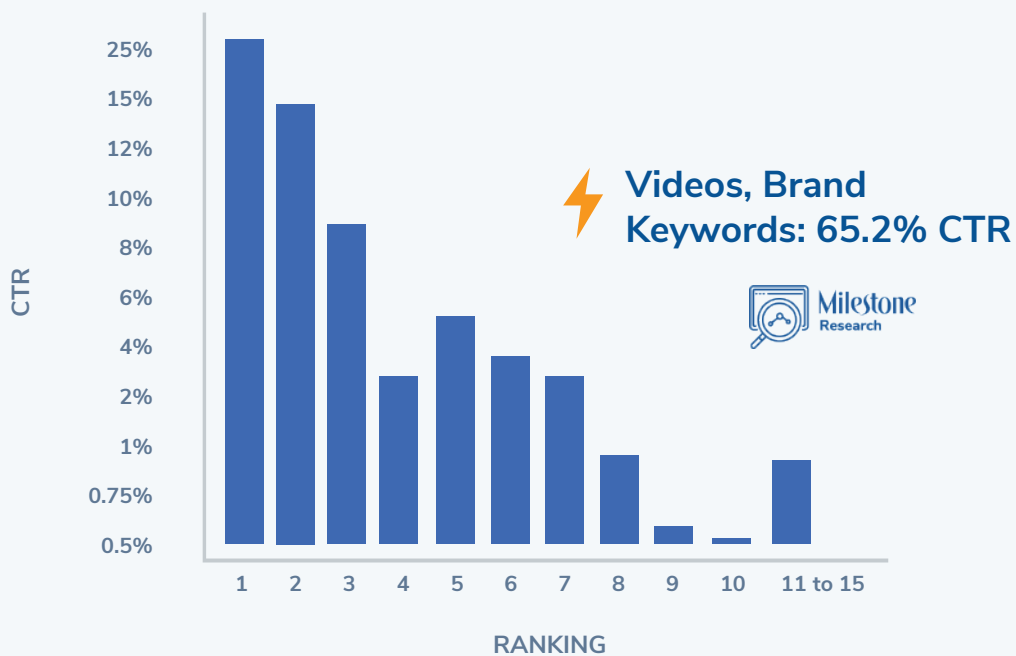


- **Videos, Brand and Non-Brand Keywords: 61.6% CTR**

Video thumbnails are showing up in more than a quarter of search results and more than half the clicks are going to those thumbnails. That is the power of rich media and why brands have to pay attention to all asset types. Videos in the thumbnail carousel are sourced more than half the time from YouTube, so brands must maintain and populate that as their video home page. By doing so, they will also reap the benefits of search done directly on YouTube as well.



**Visual rich media results sometimes cast a shadow on the listing directly below, which gives it a lower CTR than the next listing below it.**



**The average CTR for a page-1 all SERP types brand and non-brand listing is 5.75%**

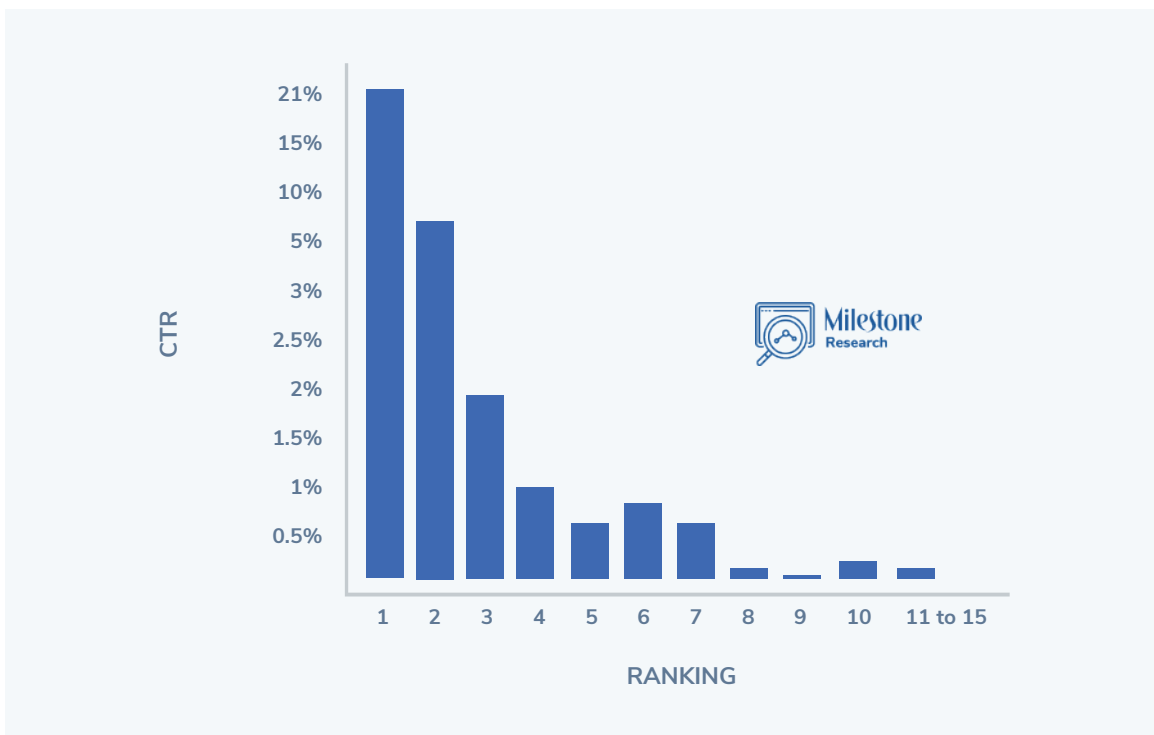
**The average CTR for a page-1 all rich SERP types non-brand listing is 4.57%**

- **All Rich Results, Brand and Non-Brand, Mobile: 58.7% CTR**

Mobile CTR is slightly higher than the combined device average and shows that even in that small screen space that organic rich media results are still pulling the majority of the traffic.

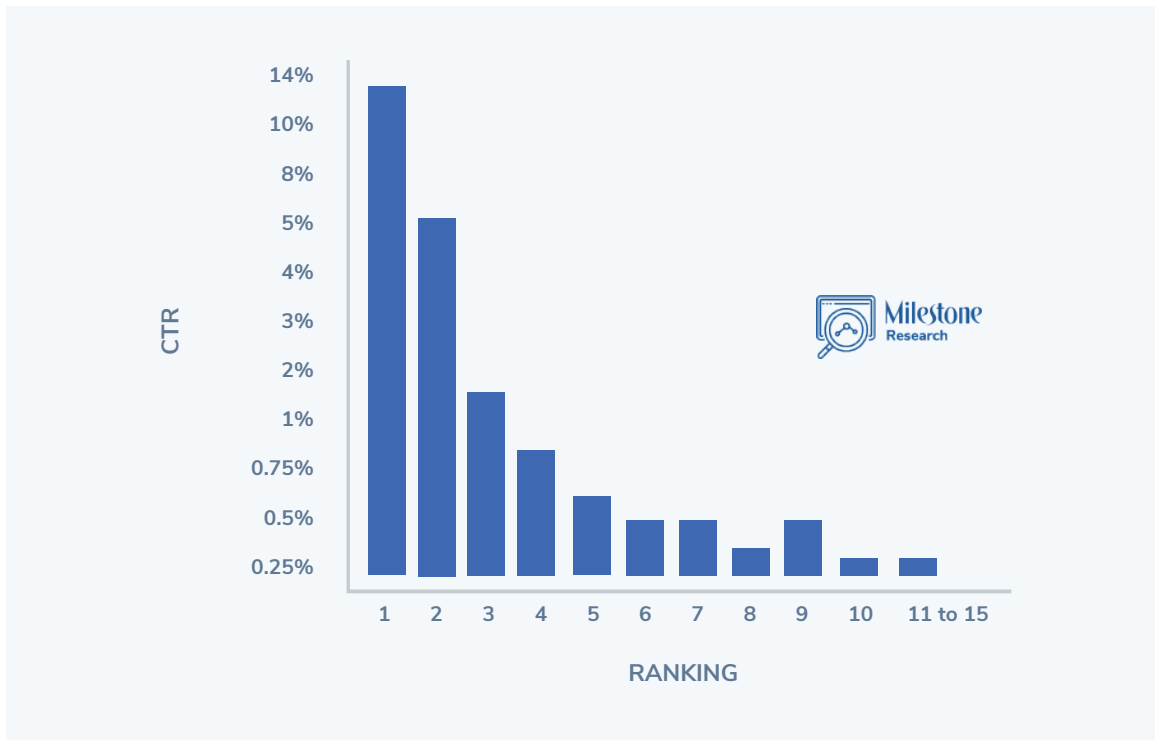


- **All Rich Results, Brand and Non-Brand, Desktop: 56.9% CTR**



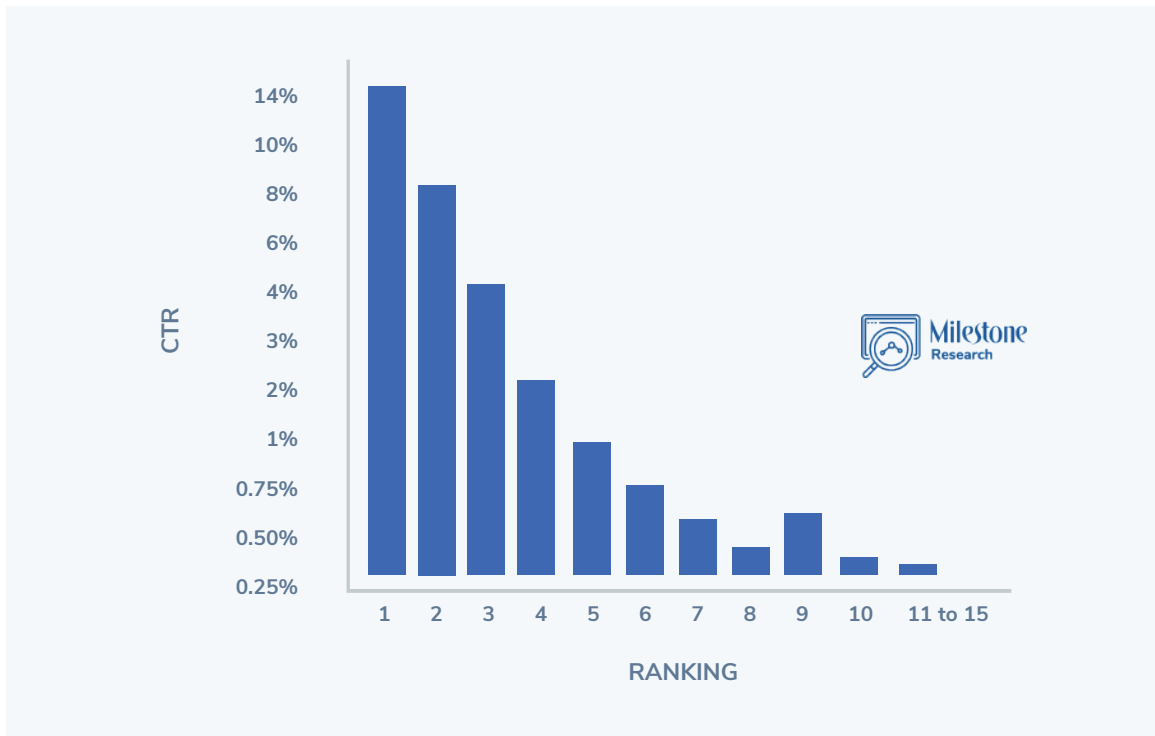
- **All Rich Results, Non-Brand, All Devices: 50.1% CTR**

This finding shows that non-brand queries, which is the true battlefield of search marketers, pulls a slight majority of the total traffic from the SERPs.



- **All Rich Results, Non-Brand, Mobile : 50.2% CTR**

In rich media, mobile slightly outperforms desktop.



# Recommendations

Brands need to create original content in multiple media types and formatting: text, images, videos, FAQs, HowTos, and QAs to maximize their exposure opportunity.

Schema markup will help define your site elements or entities and make it easier for the search engines to index in their knowledge bases, and AMP will make the content it faster and more stable to provide a better user experience on mobile.

Aim for 10 and 10. Customer experience and core vitals must be measured and optimized with a target of 90 score or better. That means your page load speed needs to be in the top 10% of your industry cohort and your content layout shift should be below 10%.

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If you would like to discuss these findings in more detail, please email us at [\*\*sales@milestoneinternet.com\*\*](mailto:sales@milestoneinternet.com) or **call us at 408 200 2211**.

# Conclusion

Milestone Research was surprised to find that mobile click engagement is at parity or above desktop, which is a development over data looked at in prior years. This is great news for marketers in majority-mobile device industries. Google has emphasized mobile-friendly, mobile speed, and mobile core vitals. Since the proportion of organic traffic is still well into the majority at 58%, the mobile efforts will yield return for marketers.

An effective rich media strategy has the potential to DOUBLE your organic performance in some types and categories. The rich media both engages customers on Google AND brings them to your site.

Rich media is good for SEO and good for user experience, so it should be a primary focus of organic performance marketing efforts after speed and core vitals.

SEO is alive and well with up to 87 clicks per 100 searches on some devices, queries, and SERP types. Rich media is less competitive and crowded than plain text as it takes more resources to create and publish, so it presents an opportunity for brands to increase visibility, traffic, and results.