

Why doesn't searching my Start menu with Cortana find Internet shortcuts in my All Programs list?

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20170522-00

May 22, 2017



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A customer had a program that installed a number of shortcuts to the Start menu. Among them were some Internet shortcut files, like “View Contoso User Guide” and “Get Online Support from Contoso”. In Windows 7 and 8, if the user searched the Start menu for “Contoso”, these shortcuts would appear in the search results. But in Windows 10, they do not. Why not, and what can they do to get them to show up?

The Cortana team explained that they intentionally filter out URLs from search results. They ran an A/B test, and the results showed that leaving URLs in the search results was worse for users.

To get the shortcuts to appear in the Cortana search results, you can create a shortcut to a regular program. For example, you can create a shortcut that points directly to the Web browser executable, with the URL on the command line. Or you can create a shortcut that runs a helper program bundled with your application, and the helper program calls `Shell-Execute` to open the URL in the user's preferred Web browser.

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