



# Why Are You Waiting To Go Mobile Friendly?

A Special Report from The Creative Block





## Introduction

In early 2015, Google updated its search algorithms to factor a website's *mobile friendliness* into its result rankings. In other words, Google now rewards websites optimized for viewing on smartphones with higher rankings in search results. The changes were Google's attempt to make searching easier for mobile users looking for quality web experiences via their phones and tablets.

Research indicates that Google's changes could negatively affect the websites of more than 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies. Some search engine experts estimate that as few as 20 percent of overall business sites are mobile friendly. In the early months following the update, Google reported only a small increase in mobile-optimized sites.

If you're holding out for more proof that having a mobile-friendly website is critical to your business, we've analyzed the research and summarized some startling information for you in this special report. Our conclusion is that putting off optimizing your site for mobile users is costing you business—considerable business.

What are you waiting for?  
Read on to learn why you  
need a mobile-friendly website.

# What Does Mobile Friendly Mean?



Although it might seem obvious, *mobile friendly* refers to websites that are easily viewable—and usable—on portable devices, including smartphones and tablets. Website developers use the term *responsive design* to describe the process for making sites mobile friendly.

A responsive website is programmed so its content layout automatically adjusts to fit any size electronic device (i.e., desktop, laptop, tablet, phone). Responsive design has been around for more than a decade. Before responsive design, businesses had to create separate website versions for mobile and non-mobile access so not to force visitors to view a tiny, scaled-down version of a desktop layout on their smaller screens.

In addition to a clearer view of your content, responsive design makes links and calls-to-action easier to find and access, which helps mobile visitors navigate through the site.

If you're considering a website redesign, don't assume that your developer will make the new site responsive. After all, there's a reason so many businesses have current sites that are still not mobile friendly. Insist on responsive design—at no additional cost to you—or find a different developer.





# Give The World Access to Your Website

Of the 7.2 billion people in the world, **less than half** have reliable access to the Internet. The gap in Internet access results from a variety of geographical and socioeconomic factors.

Geographically, underdeveloped countries lack readily available home broadband service. And, even in developed nations such as the United States, many rural residents live beyond carrier infrastructures.

Economically, home Internet subscriptions are too pricey for the world's impoverished families. For that matter, so are the costs for desktop and laptop computers.

Luckily for those without home Internet service, mobile broadband **access is expanding** internationally. Global mobile cellular subscriptions now exceed 7 billion, and nearly half of those subscriptions include mobile broadband.

What's more, cellular carriers often include free or discounted smartphones in their contracted service plans. Widespread access to mobile broadband and low-cost smartphones put the Internet within greater reach. As a result, more people now access the Internet via mobile devices than from desktop computers.

With more and more website traffic originating from cellular devices, isn't it time you optimized for mobile visitors?



# Mobile-Only Internet Users Are On The Rise

More than 75 percent of American adults currently access the Internet on both mobile and desktop devices. But the **trend is shifting** toward mobile-only Internet usage.

While 21 percent of Millennials access the Internet using mobile devices only, it's not just younger generations driving the move to mobile; overall, 19 percent of Americans rely on their smartphones for access to the Internet. And Baby Boomers represent the fastest growing share of people accessing the Internet via mobile devices.

As the nearby chart shows, for many in **the so-called smartphone-dependent** population, age, income, and race factor into smartphone dependency.

- **15 percent** of young adults ages 18-29 depend on their smartphones for Internet access
- **13 percent** of Americans with annual household income below \$30,000 are smartphone-dependent, relying on their phones' data plans for high-speed Internet and email access
- **12 percent** of African Americans and **13 percent** of Latinos are smartphone-dependent, compared to 4 percent of whites
- **Low-income job seekers** are more likely than high-wage earners to depend on smartphones for finding employment opportunities and for actually submitting job applications
- **Two-thirds** of smartphone users turn to their phones for breaking news and for following local events

SOURCE: Pew Research Center, April, 2015, "The Smartphone Difference." Available at: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/01/us-smartphone-use-in-2015>

Making certain your website is mobile friendly makes your business inclusive to smartphone-dependent users, while ensuring accessibility to the widest possible audience.



## Mobile Visitors Are Trying To Find You Now

While studying consumer search behavior, **Google analyzed** how mobile searching affects local business traffic and sales. These eye-opening statistics should convince you that your company urgency needs a mobile-friendly site.

Half the people searching for your business on mobile devices are trying to do business with you *right now*. Consider what Google's research found: 54 percent of mobile searchers want to know your hours; 50 percent are looking for your address; and 53 percent need directions to your location. To put those numbers into perspective, think of it this way: 45 percent of those searching for your business via computer are trying to determine if you sell a specific item, while most mobile searchers are already on their way to you.

Need more statistical convincing? Of those who search for your business on smartphones, 50 percent visit your business within twenty-four hours, and 18 percent make a purchase within the same period.

Does a mobile friendly site really lead to greater sales? Absolutely. In fact, two-thirds of **smartphone users say** a mobile-friendly website makes them more likely to buy from that company.

By making their websites responsive, businesses ensure that customers can find the information they seek, while positioning their companies to compete in a mobile-driven marketplace.

# Get Attached To Your Customers

Question: Is your website deepening your connection with your customers, or driving them away?

Here's why we ask. Nearly half the nation's smartphone **users say** they can't imagine life without their mobile devices. In fact, 81 percent of Americans keep their smartphones close by throughout the day, and 41 percent say losing their phones for a day would cause them anxiety.

Those statistics reflect your customers' dependency on smartphones, and that attachment is likely to strengthen amid evolving features such as voice commands, electronic wallet payments, and online shopping capabilities. No wonder 70 percent of smartphone users say the devices have improved their lives.

For your business to be top-of-mind with customers and prospects, your website had better be close-at-hand. A responsive, mobile-friendly site puts your products or services at your clients' fingertips. Contact information that is easy to find and simple to use on smartphones helps customers find the way to doing business with you. And when your website helps improve your customers' live, they won't want to live without you.

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When it comes to designing a brand, people usually know what they like – and what they dislike. However, few know what actually works.

Our job at The Creative Block is to design and implement branding that looks great while meeting your marketing expectations. Or, put another way, to know what you like and to know what works.

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