

Mobile Responsiveness for the Mobile Marketplace

A Comprehensive eGuide



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Introduction

Each year, eCommerce transactions bring in billions of dollars for retailers and shop owners, and the numbers continue to grow, surpassing expectations. The continued surge of popularity in online shopping has been spurred on by a new trend, a subset of eCommerce transactions conducted on mobile devices, also known as m-commerce. This new trend in shopping and buying behaviors, however, has created a significant gap in the ability of retailers to compete.

Mobile commerce places new demands on shop owners, at a time when customer expectations have never been higher. Many customers are turned away from online stores whose sites are not mobile-friendly, or "responsive," by design. Additionally, Google algorithms, adjusted this past April, penalize sites that are not mobile responsive by making them more difficult to find in search engine rankings. According to [research](#) conducted by CWS in the wake of Google's algorithm change, dubbed "Mobi-leggeddon" by many in the eCommerce industry, unoptimized sites suffered significant decreases in traffic:

- Number of sessions decreased by 33%
- Non-mobile friendly pages fell 27 slots on Google's search listings
- Bounce rate increased by 37%
- Mobile traffic dropped by 9%

What is mobile responsiveness?

Responsive design, also known as “mobile responsiveness,” “mobile-friendly design,” or “mobile optimization,” simply means that a website has been configured to adjust and scale for easy navigation on the smaller screens of mobile devices, including laptops, phones, and tablets. At the heart of mobile responsiveness is the primary objective of creating an experience for users that is just as enjoyable and just as easy as the experience on a desktop. This means websites often look quite a bit different on mobile devices, with more prominent menus and less text content. These design adjustments make content easier to process on handheld devices.



If you aren't sure whether or not your site has been optimized for mobile, Google provides a quick and easy [test](#) to find out.

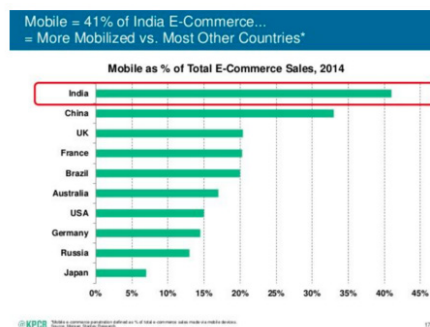
Growth of sales on mobile devices

While mobile responsiveness may at first seem simply a matter of aesthetics, its implications are much deeper and directly affect the bottom line of businesses who sell online. Year over year growth of mobile commerce has been impressive. Forrester Research projects \$31 billion in mobile transactions by the end of 2016, a \$6 billion increase over last year's numbers. According to [Internet Retailer](#), 1 in 5 holiday purchases during the 2015 season, for a total of \$12.65 billion in sales, was completed on a mobile device. This is a 58.5% increase over the 2014 numbers, and the trend is growing.

Growth of sales on mobile devices (continued)



These recent trends indicate that mobile is not just one extra channel that supplements the website of an online store. Rather, mobile is quickly becoming the preferred way that consumers interact with brands. For businesses who reach an international audience, the growth of sales on mobile devices is even more staggering. India leads the global m-commerce economy, with approximately 41% of all eCommerce sales conducted on mobile devices in 2014.



The trend is primed for even greater acceleration, given recent [announcements](#) by social media platform Facebook regarding increased investments in eCommerce advertising and integrations on the platform, including Shopping pages, buy buttons, dynamic product advertisements and retargeting campaigns. Facebook's new advertising products and integrations provide significant leverage for businesses poised to take advantage of mobile browsing behaviors. According to [The Street](#), average users spend 49 minutes a day on Facebook's mobile app, which comprises approximately one third of all time spent browsing mobile applications.

In even more recent news, social media platform Snapchat announced in mid-February of this year that it will be developing an eCommerce platform. Snapchat is the third most popular social media application among millennials, behind Facebook and Instagram, according to TechCrunch. For brands hoping to attract millennial buyers, the implications for this announcement are significant. And, with more apps expanding into the business of eCommerce, the gap will continue to widen among businesses who are equipped for mobile traffic and those who are not.

Reaping the benefits of going mobile

For brands like [O'Neill Clothing](#) and others, who have made the switch to mobile, the rewards have been great, with increased traffic and booming sales. According to [economy](#), O'Neill's switch to responsive design resulted in:

- Conversions increased by 65.71% (iPhone) / 407.32% (Android)
- Transactions went up 112.5% (iPhone) / 333.33% (Android)
- Revenue increased by 101.25% (iPhone) / 591.42% (Android)

Luckily for businesses hoping to compete in 2016's highly competitive and mobile optimized marketplace, there are a number of different pathways to mobile responsiveness that can be matched to the nature and needs of your business.



Choose a responsive theme or template

For businesses just getting off the ground and developing a site from scratch, the solution is simple. Choose a responsive theme or template for your online store or, if you are having a customized site built, make sure the developers know from the outset that you want the site to be mobile responsive. Many of the templates and themes on the market today come with built-in mobile responsiveness, and web developers who build custom sites are very familiar with the need for mobile responsiveness in custom sites.

Redesigning existing sites for mobile

For businesses with existing non-responsive sites, the possibilities are slightly more complex. The first pathway to mobile responsiveness is to simply reformat your existing site for mobile responsiveness. The site will appear exactly as it always has on desktop computers, however, significant adjustments to the underlying code of the website will change the way the site appears on mobile devices. These adjustments will make the site's content more easily navigable on handheld devices, although the general branding and aesthetic will remain unchanged. Because this transition requires significant adjustments to the underlying code of the website, businesses who do not have web developers on staff will most likely need to outsource the project. The process of reformatting the site can take several days or even weeks and cost anywhere from \$1,000 to many thousands of dollars, depending on the complexity of the existing site. For businesses with highly complex sites or for those site owners who are satisfied with the current look and feel of their website, this may be the best option.

PROS: Hands-off for site owners, minimal in-house effort required for business owners

CONS: Does not update the site's appearance; can be expensive for complex sites; will likely require outsourcing unless there are developers on staff

Switching to a new, mobile responsive theme

These days, most of the new templates available on the market are designed with built-in mobile responsiveness. This means that the template is already optimized for mobile devices, no redesign or adjustments are needed. For businesses with an outdated template or those who are not married to the look and feel of their existing template, switching to a new, responsive template may be the best option. After all, why spend hundreds or even thousands of dollars making an outdated or unattractive template mobile-friendly? Updating to a new, responsive site may even be more cost effective, as responsive themes are available for very little money. Switching to a new, responsive theme takes care of the need for mobile-responsiveness, but will require some effort on the part of the site owner to install the new template and make the necessary site customizations.

PROS: A modern updated look for your business with built-in mobile responsiveness; likely more cost effective

CONS: Will require some front end effort on behalf of the site owner (or some outsourcing) install and customize the new template

Investing in a customized mobile site

For businesses who are highly complex or highly branded, or for those who hope to adopt a mobile-centric strategy for their businesses, the time may be right to invest in a new, customized responsive site. While templates provide enough flexibility for some businesses, oftentimes, businesses will want to personalize their sites with highly branded content. Customized sites provide many benefits that templates cannot - and this extends to mobile performance. The rigidity of templates can be limiting for businesses who have unique products or for those who hope to create a unique, omnichannel experience for visitors to the site.

PROS: Businesses can create a highly customized experience for website visitors, can adapt site content to meet specialized needs of the business.

CONS: Can be a time consuming and expensive process.

CoreCommerce can take you there

Whatever option you decide is best for your business, CoreCommerce can help. If you are not sure which path to take, our customer support team is here to answer any questions you might have.

We are now offering a 10% discount across the board on mobile responsive services, including:

- Existing site conversion to mobile responsive design, starting at \$880.
- Installation of a brand new responsive theme with starter package of 2-hours of basic customizations, starting at \$450
- Custom mobile responsive theme development, starting at \$2500

Contact us today and make the switch to mobile! 1(800)747-4270.



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