

Phillips MediaSource WhitePaper

5 Keys to a Successful Mobile Site

Are you ready for the mobile web?

Smartphones and tablets now generate 8.2 percent of U.S. web traffic according to analytics firm NetApplications, and that means it's important to have an effective mobile website in order to stay competitive. While mobile apps can create a highly interactive online experience, they aren't a substitute for mobile web browsing. Apps still require an initial software download. The mobile web is everywhere.

If you don't have a successful mobile website today, consider these five guidelines for your site mobilization strategy.

1. Don't Sacrifice Your Brand on Mobile

Consumers build a connection to your company through your online presence, making it important to reinforce your brand image whether they access your site through a traditional desktop web browser or through the browsers on their mobile devices.

Visual brand consistency is as important as consistency of copy and content. In addition, because consumers on the go often turn to mobile devices for instant gratification, it's critical that your mobile site provides visual cues that demonstrate quickly that visitors are in the right place.

2. Know your Mobile Platforms

How much you need to customize your site for different mobile platforms depends upon your audience and the purpose of your site. Keeping in mind that there are still differences in screen sizes and supported web browsers, it's a reasonably straightforward process to create versions of your site that will satisfy a significant majority of mobile visitors. In fact, a large percentage of companies choose to target only the Apple iOS and Android operating systems with customized delivery. This can be a reasonable strategy.

3. Take Advantage of Tablets

Mobile devices vary widely in their capabilities, from the media they can support to the types of network connections they offer. However, that doesn't mean you should sacrifice style or function just to meet the limitations of the lowest level platforms.

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For consumers, the more a mobile device can do, the higher the expectation for a rich and rewarding website experience. The growth of tablets, starting with the iPad, has created an entirely new mobile device classification. Tablets offer a much more advanced platform for delivering rich, interactive content than their smartphone counterparts. Take advantage of this by providing consumers with a mobile site experience that plays to these strengths, yet can be gracefully tailored to target the larger smartphone audience that exists today.

4. Use a Single Source for Content

Feed your traditional site and your mobile site with content from a single repository. If everything lives in a centralized database—text and multimedia files—then you only need to create and update content once before sending it out, as needed, to different locations. This approach helps eliminate errors and inconsistencies, while also making it easier to filter and track content as your library grows. By separating the content layer of your site, you also gain flexibility to make broader and faster changes at the presentation level. You can continually optimize site layout without worrying about the impact to or from the content supporting it.

5. Always Deliver Performance

Just as smartphones and tablets have raised consumer expectations for the mobile web, so too have faster Internet connections. It may be unreasonable to compare the mobile experience to desktop web browsing on a fixed broadband network, but consumers increasingly expect near-parity of performance between the two.

The line between the traditional and the mobile web is blurring. Luckily, there are ways to improve site performance no matter what type of network connection is in use. Acceleration technologies at the browser and network levels can dramatically increase site responsiveness, speeding up the time it takes for consumers to engage with your content, and often prompting them to take further action both online and off.

Let's talk.

Michael Grant
T. 214-741-1300, extension 202
michael@phillipsmediasource.com

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Phillips MediaSource | 750 N. Saint. Paul | Suite 1000 | Dallas, TX 75201 | 214-741-1300 | phillipsmediasource.com