



The Real Reason Mobile-Friendliness Matters (The Answer Is Not What You Think It Is)

By David Evans, PhD, Ceatus Media, L.L.C.

Mobilegeddon, the name given to Google's 2015 update that wasn't, may not have been such a bust after all.

Google dramatically announced that, effective April 21, 2015, the mobile status of a website would count as a ranking factor going forward. But that day came and went with little change in rankings for those who failed to get in line. However, converting to a thumb-friendly mobile site isn't just about keeping or improving your rankings; there's more to it.

Reach Patients Where They Are



Google told the world that mobile search had overtaken desktop search in May 2015.

The search powerhouse confirmed that this trend is worldwide, according to SearchEngineLand.com. Desktop search isn't falling; it continues to grow rapidly—just not as rapidly as mobile search.

Fully 62% of all adults, and 75% of those aged 18 to 29, used a mobile device to search for

healthcare information during the last year, according to data from the Pew Research Foundation. What's more, a growing percentage of online users are relying on mobile devices as their main, or only, entry point to the Internet.

The bottom line is that mobile-friendliness matters regardless of how it affects your keyword rankings.

“ *The question is no longer whether you should convert to a responsive format, but rather how you can make sure you are giving current and prospective patients the right mobile experience.*

A study by HubShout, an Internet marketing company, provides some simple tips:

- Hours of operation should be front and center. Office open times are particularly important for practices with extended and weekend hours.
- “Click to call” counts. Your phone number should be prominently displayed and in a text format, so it's clickable. (Phone



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numbers that are shown only as images are not clickable.)

- Office address and driving directions shouldn't be hard to find. Place these key details on your home page.

Sorry Not Sorry

If mobile users can't find the information they need, they're gone. Fifty-five percent of mobile searchers will immediately move on to Yelp or other business listings to find the desired information, the HubShout study found. This may be disadvantageous if your reviews are lackluster and outdated.

Once disappointed, many mobile users are gone for good. Six percent of HubShout's respondents said they would not use a business that failed to meet their mobile needs; and many more (39%) said they would move on to search for information about a competitor. Furthermore, 78% said that when they were searching for information about a business on a smartphone, they had discovered businesses they previously did not know existed.

Perhaps most importantly, 72% of respondents said a high-quality mobile website makes a

good impression. In the aesthetic business, impression is everything.

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