

Should a Small Business Website Be Mobile Friendly?

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How important is it for a website to be compatible with small electronic devices such as tablets and smart phones? The answer is: extremely important. Mobile devices currently account for more than 55% of Internet usage in the US, and the trend is just getting stronger. As traditional media viewing time declines, mobile usage grew over 23% this year alone.

For this study, we looked at the websites for the world's 100 most valuable brands in 2014, published by Forbes. Forbes measures brand value based on each company's financials. The 100 most valuable brands span 15 countries and cross 20 broad industry categories. You can find the complete list here: <http://www.forbes.com/powerful-brands/list/>

Today, 4 out of 6 adults own a smartphone. 2 out of 3 smartphone users say they are more likely to buy a product or service from a mobile-friendly website. 8 in 10 users say they are more likely to return to a mobile friendly website. The statistics go on and on. However, instead of trusting available research, we decided to look at what the big boys are doing. We looked at every website for Forbes' list of most valuable brands in the world. We wanted to find out if the most powerful brands in the world think it is necessary to have a mobile friendly website.

92% of the world's most valuable brands' websites are mobile friendly

Mobile friendly websites are not a new thing. So, you would expect a large majority of known brands to present their content in the formats users are expecting. However, in the last few years, the concept of mobile websites has evolved to designing "responsive" or "fluid" websites instead. Responsive web design aims to create websites that provide an optimal viewing experience across different electronic devices, from large desktop or laptop computer monitors, to smaller tablets or cell phone

displays. In web design, an optimal viewing experience is achieved when you offer easy navigation and reading while keeping resizing, panning, and scrolling to a minimum.

The difference between a mobile and a responsive site is that a mobile site is designed separately and exclusively for mobile devices while a responsive site is designed to adapt to whatever device it is being viewed on. A responsive site is more elegant, sophisticated, and complex than a mobile version; however, more expensive and difficult to implement. Responsive design will be the natural evolution of mobile web browsing in years to come.

For brands that grew in value over the last year, 43% have responsive websites. For brands that shrunk in value, only 17% are responsive

As a small business owner, you should prioritize. First, it is imperative that you have a mobile-friendly website in order to stay competitive and relevant. Second, if budget permits or if designing a new site, you should strongly consider a responsive design. In today's world, it might sound silly that a company like Canon (with an advertisement budget of \$865 million), doesn't have a mobile site. Be better than Canon. Stay current. Stay relevant. Stay ahead, not behind your competitors.

You can check out more results of this study at:

<http://www.candamo.org/articles/>

