



HOW TO INCREASE MOBILE TRAFFIC & CUSTOMERS

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A person is shown from the chest up, wearing a plaid shirt, holding a smartphone in their right hand. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent blue overlay. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

HAVING A POOR USER EXPERIENCE ON MOBILE IS LEAVING MONEY ON THE TABLE.

With mobile devices becoming the predominant way people find a storage unit, having a strong mobile presence on search engines and a positive mobile shopping experience is absolutely vital to your online sales. Is your site ready for the mobile customer base?

Let's face it: having a poor user experience on mobile is leaving money on the table. At minimum, people want to weigh competitors, research their options, contact a company, reserve a unit, and pay rent all from their device. Your mobile experience needs to meet them every step of the way so they not only convert, but become successful long-term clients who spread recommendations and keep occupancy rates high.

Let's review how we know increased mobile performance means increased mobile traffic, and what mobile-friendly recommendations we can implement to turn that traffic into leads.

Find out more at golocalinteractive.com

WHY MOBILE MATTERS

On April 21st, 2015, Google rolled out an algorithm update marketers jokingly refer to as “Mobilegeddon”. This update added a “mobile-friendly” label to all websites that earned the tag and pushed their rankings higher, while penalizing sites that weren’t mobile-friendly. Google warned us about this update months in advance, so most companies were able to get ahead of the changes before it affected their SERP rankings.

Google pushed this because they know how much time consumers spend online with their mobile device, and they want businesses to provide their users a good experience. People are looking on their phones around the clock; surveys show that 82 percent of smartphone users use a search engine when looking for local businesses. Another 82 percent of smartphone users consult their phones in a store when deciding what to buy. And an astonishing 68 to 84 percent of Americans, by demographic, use a smartphone over desktops and tablets.

Having a mobile-friendly site is crucial to keeping customers engaged, and if your site isn’t designed for mobile conversion, customers can easily find a competitor’s site that is. Your first step today is to test how mobile-friendly your website is and how fast it runs on mobile (both tests can be done free right here; see “Tools to Test” below). Mobile matters because you won’t succeed without it. That’s priority number one.

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HOW MOBILE MATTERS

Once your website works well on all devices, it's time to consider the mobile-only path. Pull up your site on your phone right now. Is it easy to use? Inviting? Actually walk through the site as a consumer and confirm that buyers can quickly and easily make these crucial sales steps:

- Can they call with a click?
- Can they fill out a short form for fast answers?
- Can they research your storage units?
- Can they view all open storage units?
- Can they reserve a storage unit?
- Can they pay online?
- Can they view and use coupons?
- Can they research and evaluate your company?
- Can they easily view and compare amenities (climate control, delivery acceptance, etc)?

Your site needs to meet customers wherever they are on the conversion path - whether they're still comparing competitors or ready to pay their first month's deposit. That's how mobile matters: people are researching, watching, sharing, and buying in little on-the-go moments from their smartphone device. Ensuring your site meets their needs in a frictionless and friendly way means that they'll turn to your product time and time again.

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TOOLS TO TEST

Whether you're still making the switch to a responsive design or invested in the upgrade before Mobilegeddon, it's always important to review the performance of your mobile site. Fortunately, Google makes that free and easy with two important online tools:

Mobile-Friendly Test

<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/mobile-friendly/>

Just plug your URL in to see whether Google registers the site as mobile-friendly or not. This is a two-second test that can revolutionize your lead generation, so don't miss out! And keep in mind: This tool tests on a page-by-page basis. If your home page is mobile-friendly that's a good sign, but there might be individual pages that are suffering technical problems. Ask your SEO team to do a complete site test to determine if you need an upgrade or if your site is functioning perfectly.

Page Speed Insights

<https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/>

Just plug in your URL and see how fast your site is performing on mobile devices. Google provides a score out of 100 and, helpfully, technical recommendations to improve that score, like JavaScript updates or image compression. Keep in mind that we're balancing speed with performance. The more functionality your site has, the slower it'll be, even if that functionality is as streamlined and recompiled as possible. So the site doesn't need to have a perfect 100 to be performing well. That said, you definitely want to score as high as you can, preferably in the 60+ range.

Another thought: This tool also tests on a page-by-page basis. Your homepage may be fast, but individual pages could be experiencing technical problems. Ask your SEO team to do a complete site test to determine if you need an upgrade or if your site is functioning well.

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TACTICS TO INCREASE TRAFFIC

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If you're investing in an upgrade, go responsive.

There are different ways to build a mobile-friendly site, but the predominant way (and the preferred method by Google) is responsive design. This style fluidly adapts to any size, from smartphone to TV screen, while preserving the same content and functionality to all users.

““Responsive web design,” or RWD, means that the page uses the same URL and the same code whether the user is on a desktop computer, tablet, or mobile phone – only the display adjusts or “responds” according to the screen size. Google recommends using RWD over other design patterns.” - Google Developers

Pay attention to your business listings.

The second most significant tactic to increase mobile traffic is to claim your business listing in Google+. A claimed and robust Google+ profile with complete and up-to-date information is crucial to showing up in Google's Local searches. Take out your phone and search something with the phrase “near me” - like storage units. You'll see that Google provides only three local businesses top results on a map that provides phone numbers, directions, and more. This is the “Map Pack” that used to contain five to seven local businesses, but Google just updated to a “Snack Pack” view with three. That makes competition for this top result even stronger, and a verified G+ profile with reviews is the easiest (and arguably the only) way to grab it. Keep an eye on this space; Google is rolling out ads for it, too.

A strong SERP presence with the mobile-friendly tag from a responsive website will encourage traffic and new customers. Beyond these two key tactics you can start today, a strong SERP presence is going to require an ongoing traditional SEO campaign.

IMPROVE THE MOBILE EXPERIENCE

The work doesn't stop at simply making your website responsive. After confirming the site is fully mobile-friendly and implementing technical recommendations for page speed, we want to make sure the mobile experience is top-notch. That's how we earn the sale from the new customer traffic you've earned. Think again of the checklist and where design or functionality changes could improve the sales path. There are two tactics to improve the experience you can take today:

Ensure that you have linked phone numbers so mobile users can call with a single click. Don't make them copy the phone number to paste in their phone app and call; the more awkward and time-consuming the path is, the more users will jump out and select another business. Make sure that this works on multiple devices, not just your iPhone or Android.

A mobile-friendly contact form is necessary for converting on-page leads. More users, especially younger buyers, would rather email in information and wait on a response than talk by phone -- unless the matter is urgent. Ideally they can complete the entire sales process online. (Remember that these "on-the-go" users are often multi-tasking, and the less interruption the better.) It's important to make mobile contact forms as short and simple as possible. No one wants to fiddle with a Captcha or enter in their entire address by phone. Ask for only the most basic information and then get back in touch as quickly as you can, especially if they require any sort of follow-up. Also ensure that any processes, like a reservation or online payment, has a confirmation message to confirm success or clear failure messages if they need to make changes.

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IF YOUR WEBSITE ISN'T MOBILE-FRIENDLY, YOU'RE LOSING CUSTOMERS.

While correcting that mistake isn't a complete recipe for success, it is a step you can take today to boost lead generation tomorrow. Just think like a customer: Is it fast? Is it friendly? Can I accomplish what I want to? That's a strong site, and a strong lead platform. If you have any questions after testing out your site or aren't sure how to put these improvements in place, don't hesitate to email. We'd be happy to walk through your current marketing and look at the website together.



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