

Mobile Websites Are No Longer Optional

The mobile web will soon be the dominant choice in internet usage, overtaking web browsing on PCs and laptops by next year. Given the clear supremacy and growth of mobile web browsing, it's shocking to learn that 70% of businesses don't have a mobile website.

Standard websites designed to be viewed on laptop and PC screens are incompatible for the smaller screens of iPhones, Androids and other mobile web devices. Even if your non-mobile website can be seen on a mobile device, that doesn't mean it's functional on a mobile device. Only 1% of standard websites will render on a mobile device.

Your standard website may feature high-resolution graphics, flash video and lots of interesting content. The very things that make your standard site so interesting are what will make it unusable as a mobile website. Most smart phones can't play Flash programs, hi-res photos take too long to load and the volume of content will make the site slow to load and navigate.

Instead, you need to focus on the most critical information about your small business that a mobile web surfer needs. At a minimum, they need to know where you are, what you do, how to contact you and your hours of operation. For a mobile website, less is so much, much more!

Many of the best mobile websites launch with an opening screen that has just a few options that are large clickable buttons to easily navigate the user to the information they need including:

- How to Find Us – clicking this can take your potential customer to a page where they can see your address, click for directions or click to activate their smart phone's GPS function to automatically navigate to your establishment
- When We're Open – clicking this can take your potential customer to a page that simply lists your daily hours of operation – if there are holidays upcoming, you should also indicate whether you are open on the holiday as well as any days your hours will deviate from the standard
- How to Reach Us – clicking this can take your potential customer to a page where they can click-to-call your business number, click to send an email to you or click to send a text to you – just be sure that whichever option they choose is monitored so you can communicate on the spot
- What We Offer – clicking this can take your potential customer to a page that very briefly summarizes what you do, what you sell, what services you offers, etc.
- Special Deals – clicking this can take your potential customer to a page that offers them an incentive in the form of a discount or freebie to sign up for your mobile texting list – this captures them on the spot and allows you to reach out to them again to encourage a transaction with your small business

Two other options to consider when prepping your small business website are social media links and an option to link to your full website. Consumers are very engaged in social media and if you have a

presence on Four Square, Facebook, Twitter or other media sites, you should include links to your pages so they can follow you if they like. Another option that many mobile sites don't offer, but that may be desired is a link to your full website in case they want to browse all of your content.

No matter what, a mobile website, even a poorly executed one, is better than no mobile website at all. But it's easier than you can imagine to set up a mobile website for your small business in just a few hours to get found on the mobile web and drive business to your establishment.

Offer an option to see use your full site