ImageWorks
Internet Solutions • Web Development LLC

Mobile Design Manifesto
A Best Practices Guide for
Mobile Website Development

Special Edition for Business Owners, CEO's, and CMO's

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A Plan for Increasing Sales Revenues in Six Months

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A Scary Fact: You already have a mobile Web site.
Smartphones have browsers.

This means that your Web site is coming up in searches, and when people type in your Web address. So how has your planning (or lack thereof) prepared you for effectively meeting your business objectives when someone visits your site through the ever growing number of mobile web devices? And, more importantly, what can you do about it now?

Well, you can start by asking yourself the following questions:
- What percent of my Web traffic is coming from Google?
  (hint: You should be able to check this through your analytics tool set)
- What does my Web site look like on a mobile device?
- Can I easily navigate through the site?
- Is my site too complicated to use?
- Can I get to the relevant information fast and easy?

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So what are my options?
If you are not happy with what you find, what can you do about it?

The short answer is: You should consider designing and deploying a separate version of your Web site for mobile devices. These days, it's easy for a Web developer to "detect" which device the site is being viewed on, and visitors are "redirected" to the appropriate site.

This way, your new site can be designed to:
- Optimize the use of a small screen from a design perspective.
- Streamline your content for the mobile visitor.
- Optimize data so you only need to update content in one place for multiple platforms.
  - Can I easily navigate through the site?
  - Is my site too complicated to use?
  - Can I get to the relevant information fast and easily?

Of course, you always have the option of adapting your main Web site to be Mobile ready, or to creat an actual mobile App, but both of these platforms are expensive, and you will need to hire fairly experienced programmers and designers to come up with an "Adaptive Design".

So *now* what do I do?
Best practices and a planning guide to help get you on your way.

If at this point, you think you should really be considering a mobile version of your Web site, we agree. You will end up with a cost effective solution that will have a better mobile marketing impact, with content optimized for a mobile visitor, creating better relevance. The important thing to remember is, don't panic. Many Web developers have experience designing for mobile platforms, and if your developer is ill equipped, finding one should be relatively easy. Your job during the process will be to make sure that your goals and objectives are being met. Here are some best practices and a simple planning guide to help you through the process:

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- Keep the Brand.
    Branding is essential, and maintaining the brand you have worked so hard to develop is important, so ask yourself what are the *essential* elements that are *required* to maintain the integrity of your brand?

- Content and Context is King.
    Remember, the mobile user is a mobile user. The smartphone version of your site is being read on the move, so text needs to be designed with that in mind. Simple points, easy to read text.

- Keep Your Forms Simple.
    Remember, little keyboards are difficult to type on. Forms should have only the most important fields. Simpler is Better

- Limit Your Navigation.
    The mobile version of your site is a subset of your main Web site. You don't need all of the information. Contact, Home, Information, and product, with a call to action is all you need. If a prospect wants more information, they know how to ask for it. Make sure your navigation is big, bold, bright, and easy to click on.

- Forget About how Your Site Looks and Works on a Full Size Computer.
    This is about getting information to your site visitors as quickly and easily as possible. Forget about things like three column design, submenus, reliance on FLASH.

- Don't Worry About a Domain Name.
    Standards are easy to follow, and today's standards include a simple hostname change so that when your site detects a mobile browser, visitors will be automatically re-directed to m.yoursite.com, or mobi.yoursite.com.

- Practice makes perfect
    Before you roll your new mobile site out to the public, have a few non-biased eyes take it out for a spin to make sure that what is important to a site visitor easily shines through.

In Conclusion
It's a brave new world, but one that's easily controlled.

So go ahead. Take a look at your site on a mobile device, and try and navigate through it pretending that you are one of your own prospects. Do you like what you see? With a little bit of planning and an experienced developer, you can remedy the situation with little risk and high reward.

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About ImageWorks
Who we are, and how we got to be this way.

ImageWorks, LLC is a full service web marketing and technology company. We help businesses bridge the gap between their marketing and technology needs. ImageWorks, LLC is privately held and funded, and based in Vernon, Connecticut.

ImageWorks, LLC designs and implements cross-platform business workflow solutions that solve critical business problems and improve productivity for our clients. We help our clients by providing customized, single source, Web site design and hosting services in harmony with the focus and operation of their business to maximize ROI.

Founded in 1997, ImageWorks became an LLC in 1999. What began as a cottage industry selling advertising on a local town website quickly evolved into a Web design leader.

As a Web design company with over 14 years experience, our products and services now include: Full web design, database integration, social media, e-commerce, e-mail marketing, hosting, custom application development, and web site redesign.

As an inbound marketing agency we view our process as collaboration with our customers, not a product sale. We are looking for relationships with customers who want to succeed in inbound marketing, and we hope that we can create one with your company.

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