



Are You Prepared for Google's Mobilegeddon?

Technology doesn't stand still and that's why no one was surprised when on April 21, Google, the planet's leading search engine, released changes to their algorithm giving mobile-friendly websites a boost on devices with smaller screens. It seems like an obvious move, but change is always painful and website operators don't like surprises, so many of them are allegedly shocked and perplexed. But, the seasoned pros out there are prepared for what people are calling the "Mobilegeddon" and many have already adapted all or most of their clients' web sites as they embrace this new regime.

Algorithm changes are never pretty, because businesses rely heavily on Google to send traffic to their websites. Google owns two-thirds of the U.S. search market, so when Google changes its code, companies have to move quickly to decipher and adapt to the new way of doing things. In 2011, a key Google algorithm change calculated to promote high-quality content caused the eventual ruin of several companies nationwide due to a significant dip in traffic and revenue.

Web developers and online marketers are understandably concerned about the change. The top spot on a search page characteristically attracts 20% to 30% of the page's clicks while slots #2 and #3 generate 5% to 10% of the clicks. And if you're not on the first page, you're going to receive roughly less than 1% of users' attention. In the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) world, Mobilegeddon is the Super Bowl, Masters and World Series all rolled into one. It's a make it or break it moment for every business with a web site in search of a mobile presence.

Luke Middendorf, president of WSI Connect in Concord, CA is telling body shop marketing people to Keep Calm and Carry On when it comes to Mobilegeddon. "Google's search engine is putting a new focus on mobile-friendly sites when it comes to their ranking algorithm," he explained. "This means that if your site is not mobile friendly it will rank lower, or perhaps not at all when it comes to customers using keywords to search for information. These changes will

allow customers to get the information they need from all of their mobile devices, but if your site is not mobile optimized (responsive) you may miss out on these customers' business."

Here's everything you need to know about Google's Mobilegeddon:

Only smartphones will be impacted. Google's search results on laptops and tablets will be unaffected by the new algorithm. But, it's still a pretty significant deal when you consider the fact that mobile makes up almost half of all Google searches. Studies also show that 70% of all mobile searches are performed by users ages 18-30, a demographic almost every business is hungry for.

Relax – time is on your side. Your website people received a two-month warning in preparation for Mobilegeddon, so if they look surprised, don't fall for it. Normally, Google doesn't pre-announce algorithm changes, but Mobilegeddon could have such a dramatic impact on mobile search results that they decided to give businesses a little time to get ready. Four months ago, Google released a "mobile-friendly" test that enables websites to see if their sites are equipped for the algorithm tweak. Mobile websites with clunky videos, sluggish mobile pages and blocked image files will suffer the wrath of Mobilegeddon.

Websites can adjust on the fly. Unlike previous algorithm tweaks, websites can upgrade their "mobile-friendliness" at any time to appear higher in Google's search results, so it doesn't have to be done immediately. Google also said that the algorithm tweaks will be rolled out over the course of a few weeks, so the changes might not be immediately noticeable anyway.

Some mobile-unfriendly sites could still get favorable search placement. Google's algorithm judges sites based on numerous criteria, of which mobile-friendliness is just one. The company's aim is to provide the most relevant results, even if it's to a site that isn't optimized for mobile.

Is this move to accommodate more mobility a timely re-adjustment by Google and how can it benefit body

shops? "With so many new collision-related apps out there and the fact that more and more consumers are using their smart phones for everyday tasks,



Angel Iraola, the president at Net Business Consulting & Solutions in Santa Rosa, CA said that small companies are paying way too much to switch over to Google's new mobile-centric algorithm, called "Mobilegeddon."

the very least, you'll get a soild shot at getting that vehicle. It may not become

body shops can definitely get business from their mobile sites," **Angel Iraola** an award-winning site developer explained. "If you have a site or app that will appear easily on someone's cell phone and for some reason your competitor hasn't adapted to this new algorithm, then obviously you'll capture that business and they won't. Or at

a huge part of your sales and marketing efforts, but if you get 10-12 new customers every year, why not be prepared for Mobilegeddon?"

Iraola, the president at Net Business Consulting & Solutions in northern California was able to change all of his clients' web sites to the new Google algorithm quickly and seamlessly, he said. "Some web developers are making mountains out of mole hills and overcharging small companies to changeover. I've heard crazy prices ranging from \$1,500 to \$2,000 and even more. That's ridiculous and a complete rip-off. To convert your web site, it should not cost you more than \$600-\$700 and it shouldn't take longer than 6-7 hours to complete the entire job."



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