

MOBILE MARKETING

IMPROVING THE USER EXPERIENCE WITH
RESPONSIVE DESIGN





As consumers, we're a demanding bunch.

Some of us had the impulse embedded in our psyches long ago. Today, we all want products and content delivered in the precise form that best suits us.

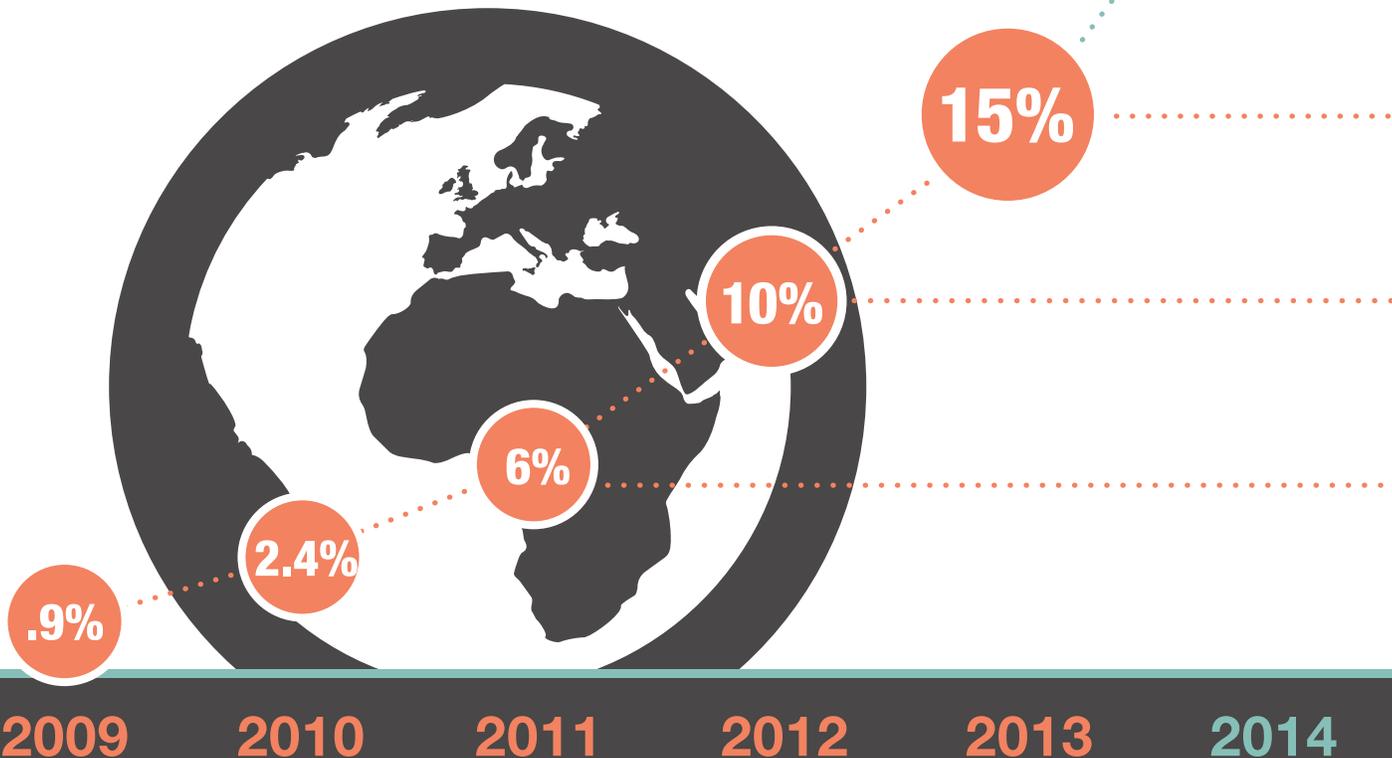
With 61%  **of US mobile phone users on smartphones,** most companies are aware of the need for a mobile site.



Unfortunately, enterprises that developed separate mobile sites quickly found their teams struggling to develop, manage and test multiple code bases. **Responsive design eliminates the need for this and allows companies to easily add mobile and tablet-friendly versions** —an important consideration with [52.4 million](#) US tablet owners as of December 2012 and tablet shipments expected to top notebooks by [2016](#).

GLOBAL MOBILE TRAFFIC

as % of Total Internet Traffic
with Trendline Projection to 2015





For companies, that means a careful examination of your online presence.



Is your website easy to view and navigate regardless of whether your visitor is on a desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone? If it's not, it's time for a revamp—especially if your competitors' content is more responsive than yours.

Websites created using responsive design are device agnostic and serve up the appropriate view based on screen size:



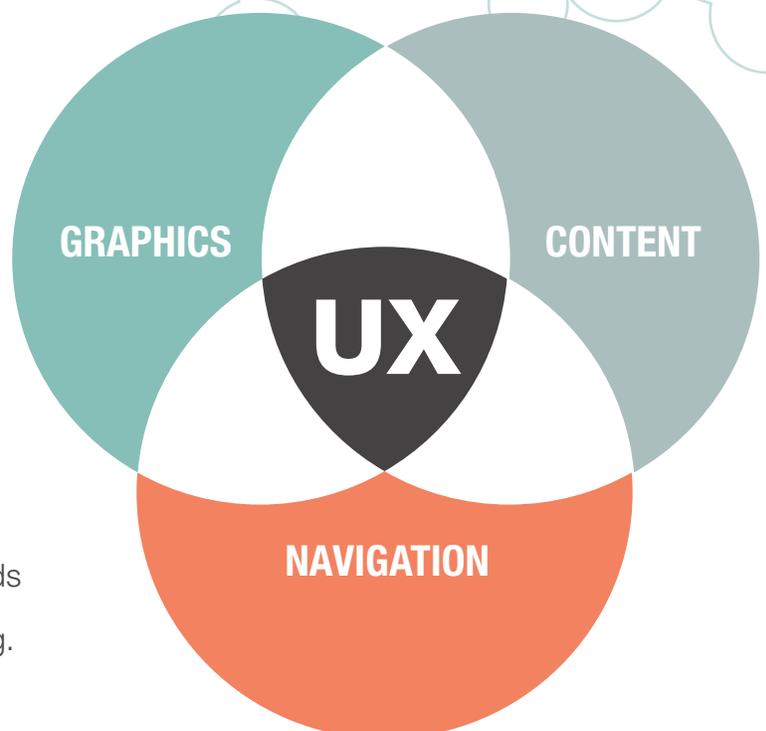
- **Desktop users** get a traditional site with multiple columns across the page
- **Tablet users** get a simpler version with swiping and fingertip-scrolling capabilities
- **Smartphone users** get a pared-down site designed for a small screen

Another reason to take responsive design seriously is the **continuing emphasis on content marketing.**

If this is a significant **part of your overall marketing strategy**, making all of your content as easy to read on as many devices as possible should be a top priority. After all, content marketing is only effective when potential customers can easily access and read it.

Improving User Experience (UX)

The most important benefit of responsive design is the user experience. If you're a desktop or laptop user visiting a corporate or retail site, you expect a rich experience with eye-catching graphics, robust content and multiple ways to navigate and explore. If you're a tablet user, a simpler layout and the ability to swipe and pinch is ideal. And smartphone users have a different set of needs still in terms of navigation and content viewing.



Savvy marketers take full advantage of responsive design

to create a tailored experience for smartphone users. This ranges from simple (a click-to-call button or content that doesn't require scrolling) to sophisticated (mobile sites that look and feel more like apps than websites). However, expert designers caution against removing too much functionality from your mobile template; you don't want to "punish" visitors for the device they're using.

Responsive design carries a multitude of other benefits:

A single content repository.

With all your content in one place, when you update your site, you are updating it for all devices.

No need for device mapping.

A responsive smartphone template adjusts for each device, eliminating the need to design templates for every smartphone OS.

Improved SEO.

Content duplicated across web sites (a "www" site and an "m" site, for example) dilutes your SEO efforts. Note that Google [recommends](#) responsive design for improved search results.

A consistent URL for social sharing.

Visitors on desktops are often directed to your mobile site from Twitter or Facebook; responsive design eliminates that. Plus, all backlinks go to a single page, improving your authority.

Reduced maintenance costs.

A responsive site reduces your overall code size compared to mobile sites.

Better positioning for future devices.

Be ready for people viewing the web on kitchen appliances, wearable devices and more.

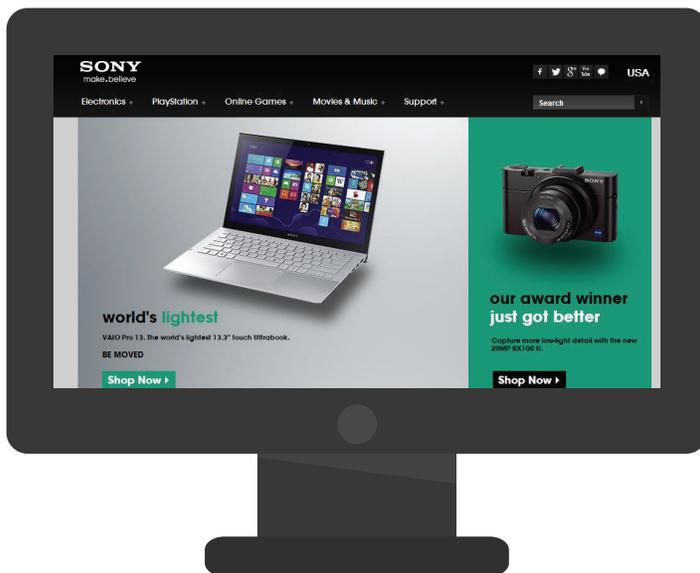
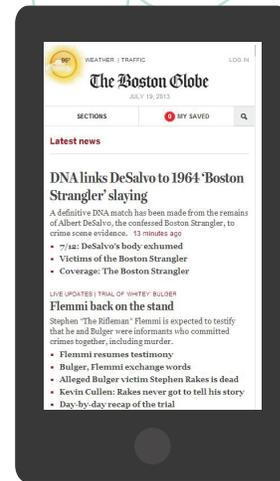


Responsive Site Examples

The most often cited examples of top-notch responsive design sites are the [Boston Globe](#), [Starbucks](#), and [Sony](#). Other sites you may want to explore include [Indocino](#) and award winners [Mustafa Demirkent](#), [Dassel und Wagner](#), [Squarespace](#), [GC Watches](#), and [Michael Heinsen](#).



The Boston Globe



Sony





Kuno Creative



Starbucks

Although only a few of the above sites are retailers, this segment should not overlook the potential of this approach.

Responsive design improves a customer's experience, and a better experience can lead to both improved [loyalty](#) and increased recommendations. **Several retailers have seen conversion-rate boosts, including O'Neill Clothing, which saw an increase of 65.7 percent on iPhone/iPod and 407.3 percent on Android devices.**

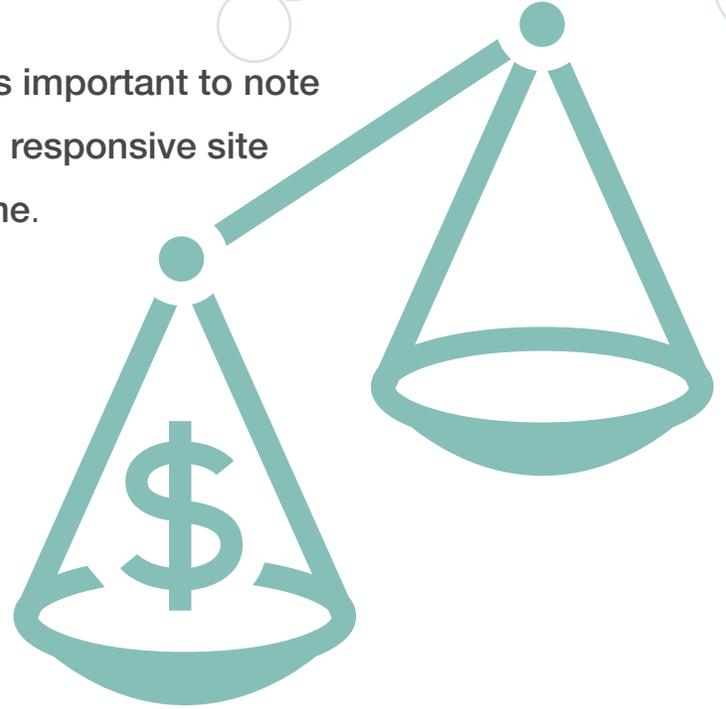


Considering Cost

When it comes to determining cost, it's important to note that the long-term benefits of having a responsive site can reduce maintenance costs overtime.

However, responsive design can result in additional upfront costs.

It takes more time to design a responsive site, so they can be more expensive up front. Marketers must work with designers and developers to create at least three templates: desktop, tablet and mobile. Some companies will want a fourth: small desktop.



Deciding what to include and what to leave out on the smaller templates can be a difficult task, involving several iterations. Testing can take longer than expected because multiple layouts must be reviewed before go-live.

Additionally, some legacy systems are not compatible with responsive design, so there are companies that may want to forgo the attempt. Older Windows systems still being used by some banks and insurance companies are good examples. If access by customers to those systems is a necessary part of the site, a custom-built mobile front end may be the only option.

Most companies, however, can easily transition to a responsive website, especially if the primary use is for marketing to potential buyers and current customers.



Rich, Flexible Design

In his [2010 article](#) laying out a plan for how responsive design could work, web designer Ethan Marcotte referred to a John Allsopp quote from A Dao of Web Design:



The control which designers know in the print medium, and often desire in the web medium is simply a function of the limitation of the printer page. We should embrace the fact that the web doesn't have the same constraints and design for this flexibility. But first, we must 'accept the ebb and flow of things.



Marcotte suggests this is the ultimate gift of responsive design—allowing web designers to finally exploit the richness of the web and begin designing for that much-desired ebb and flow.

This means it is essential for designers and developers to collaboratively work through the website development process. Together, with a solid inbound marketing strategy, your website can begin to generate and qualify leads on any device.



To discover if a responsive web design is right for your company,
contact us today.

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