

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT



MOBILE-FIRST MARKETING

It's a fact: More than 60% of all website visits in the U.S. are from mobile devices like smartphones, and that percentage is growing every year.¹ Additionally, m-commerce (retail sales on mobile) hit \$359.32 billion in 2021, an increase of 15.2% over 2020.² You can take advantage of this growing behavior — and help level the playing field for your small business — by optimizing your website experience for small screens. Here are five things to know about mobile-first marketing.

1. MOBILE-FIRST IS NOT MOBILE RESPONSIVE

Starting with your website, think “mobile first,” not “mobile responsive.” Mobile responsive is merely a website developed for desktop that was retroactively made to scale down for mobile screen sizes.



A mobile-first website is developed specifically for mobile users visiting, researching, and shopping solely from their smartphones — it’s optimized for small screens. One way to get started with the mobile-first mindset is to look at your current site on your mobile phone, and note what does and doesn’t work about the experience. Moving forward, design all your digital marketing communications in a mobile template first, adding desktop once you’re satisfied with the look and feel on mobile.

2. PUT YOUR WEBSITE FIRST

80% of Synchrony cardholders reported using a mobile device during the purchasing process of a big-ticket \$500 item in the last year, so making sure your website is mobile-optimized is critical.³

Before they can do anything else, potential customers must be able to find your website. Optimizing for mobile also optimizes it for Google’s search algorithm, which **favors mobile-first websites over others**, all else being equal.

Also, given that mobile phones have built-in, always-on GPS, a search for a business on mobile will favor businesses near the user. This alone has the potential to greatly expand your reach as those traveling through town or those who have recently relocated will see a search result based on an auto-filled search that ends with “near me.”

When someone visits your website, the user experience plays a huge role in determining how long their visit is, and whether or not they click through to where you want them to go. If your

website isn’t optimized for mobile, users may have to manually zoom in just to be able to access things like the menu and may struggle to read the content.

Given the shorter amount of time mobile users typically spend on any given website (**about half as long as desktop**), many users may not bother and could move on — maybe to your competitors.

There are tools you can use to see the behavior of your website visitors. You can use **Google Analytics** to determine where people are dropping off or spending time, and compare it on mobile to your desktop experience. Make updates based on your insights, and also use the opportunity to customize based on your own customers’ mobile preferences. If you notice visitors leaving your website using a mobile device, but not when they are using a desktop, think about how you could change the mobile experience. You could consider making the font size larger or reducing the number of clicks to move through the shopping process.

3. BEYOND THE WEBSITE

There are other types of marketing communications that your customers and prospects may experience on mobile devices. Some of these are emails, SMS (text) messages, social media posts, and QR codes.



QR codes have exploded in popularity, and you can use them in many ways: in your physical store, on your website, and in your email and social media marketing. They can also be effective ways to solidify customer engagement and solicit feedback — QR codes allow users to “click links” on printed materials with ease, simply by using their phones.

People tend to have their phones nearby or with them at most times, which means mobile-first advertising and SMS messages can deliver your ads and notifications to potential and existing customers wherever they are. Since **text messages have a 98% read rate**, SMS has the potential to be a very effective form of advertising for your small business.

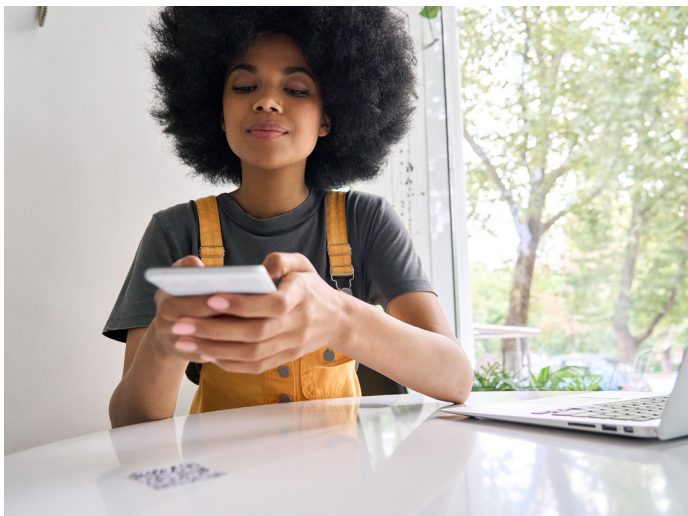
Once you’ve optimized your website, you could also consider creating an app. Keep in mind that an app requires more budget, time and hours to create and maintain. For most small businesses, a well-optimized, mobile-first website can be very effective on its own.

4. A MOBILE-FIRST STRATEGY SHOULD ALSO BE AN ACCESSIBLE ONE

There are many shoppers and buyers who face challenges with website accessibility. You may have website visitors with low vision or who are hearing impaired, for example. Consider these individuals when creating or optimizing your website.

The mobile accessibility guidelines from the **Website Accessibility Initiative** can help you achieve optimal mobile accessibility for your website. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it allows more people to engage with your website and business.

Because a small screen size will be harder for people with low vision to read, consider first breaking up long paragraphs into smaller sections and using a fixed, consistent font size for content and website controls to minimize zooming in and out. That consideration alone could make your site easier to access on a smartphone and smartwatch.





5. THERE ARE ADVANTAGES TO MOBILE-FIRST MARKETING

Cookies are a way for businesses to track where their customers browse online after visiting their website. You've probably "agreed" to cookies on dozens of websites. Cookies provide valuable marketing data. However, since 2020, internet service providers have been removing this technology. Google announced that **that 2022 would be the last year of third-party cookies on Chrome**, signaling the last of the major providers away from the practice.

As data privacy rules change and customer behavior shifts, having a mobile-first strategy ensures that you can get more new customers to your website and the first-party data to help them finish a purchase.

With a mobile-optimized, accessible website and some basic mobile-first marketing efforts, you could reach more people, capitalize on additional marketing channels, connect more deeply, and more often with your customers, and get more insights in a changing internet world.

For more information or to connect with an expert, contact us at synchronyconnect@synchrony.com.

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¹Enge, Eric. (2021, March 23). **Mobile vs. Desktop Usage in 2020**. Perficient.com

²Meola, Andrew. (2022, February 7). **Rise of Mcommerce: Mobile Ecommerce Shopping Stats & Trends in 2022**. Business Insider.

³8th Major Purchase Journey Study, Synchrony Bank, August 2021

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