

COLUMNS

3 common mobile Web design mistakes that could cost brands

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It should come as no surprise that a shift to the mobile-first mentality has quickly become essential for a brand's digital growth.

Brands without a strong mobile presence could easily fall behind in terms of generating leads, garnering online sales and engaging their customers.

Too few brands take the time to truly look at their mobile experience and try to improve it.

In a lot of ways, the most important sales and marketing tool that you have is the mobile experience that you offer your users. This holds especially true for luxury brands where the expectations that consumers have is higher.

Any deterrence to properly engage and interact with your Web site could easily cause users to leave and not return.

To help foster greater engagement and more conversions online, avoid these three common mobile Web design mistakes:

1. Using a small font for your messaging

Sometimes companies think that if they use a smaller font, they can fit more copy.

While this technically could be true, this can be a costly mistake.

Small fonts are hard to read on a desktop, but even more difficult to read on a mobile screen.

Whatever it is that you are offering on your Web site, whether it is a service or a product, if you use a small font that is hard to decipher, users are not going to read it, and thus will not be able to grasp the value you present.

Stick to simple messaging that highlights your value without being overly wordy, and keep the font size readable.

Take out your own smartphone, and do a test for yourself. If you have to squint, your font should definitely be larger.

2. Difficult navigation

Too often brands create navigations for mobile devices without keeping in mind how the user will actually be using the functionality.

Your menu is ultimately how users access the rest of your Web site, aside from your homepage, and making this feature difficult to engage with will prevent users from actually using your Web site and moving further down the conversion funnel.

If your navigation is even the slightest bit confusing for the user, this could deter conversions and engagement.

Unclear labels for categories or buttons that are too close to one another can contribute to a poor user experience.

Navigation buttons should be easy to click on from a small screen.

Display your navigation in a way that mirrors the user pathways that a user would likely take on your site.

Users are becoming increasingly familiar with the "hamburger" menu on mobile devices. This icon tends to be intuitive for visitors and requires the least amount of effort from the user perspective.

3. Not using a responsive design

The first mistake that some brands make with their mobile presence is not using a responsive design. It is still surprising to see how many companies do not realize the importance of this.

Even if your brand is going to invest in a mobile application, it is almost always most effective to create a responsive Web site before you develop an app, and in addition to it.

A responsive design creates an optimized onsite experience for all of your users, regardless of the device from which they are accessing your Web site.

Whether your visitors are coming from smartphones, tablets or desktops, this sort of design ensures that your Web site renders appropriately and offers an onsite experience that is tailored to the size of their respective screen.

If your site does not adjust to meet the needs of the user's device, there could easily be issues viewing content, scrolling, looking at images, entering text or even clicking on an item.

Without a responsive design, something as simple as clicking on a "buy now" button could be difficult for a user on mobile.

If the button size is not optimized for the size of a thumb, you could prevent a purchase.

With luxury brands where the price point is generally significant trouble buying a product could certainly dissuade a customer from going through with the purchase if she has lost trust with your brand as a result.

IT IS NO surprise that your mobile presence is important to your digital growth as a brand.

As a starting point, do your own research and take a look at your mobile experience yourself.

If you are finding your site is not rendering well, buttons are difficult to touch or your navigation is tricky to use, it may be time for an update.

While the above three elements are essential, there certainly are more that you can include on your site to ensure that you are offering an excellent mobile user-experience.

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