

COLUMNS

Moving beyond the mobile-friendly conversation

February 2, 2017



Itai Sadan is co-founder/CEO of Duda

By **Itai Sadan**

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

When Google announced in early 2016 that 85 percent of the search results returned on mobile devices were now mobile-friendly and dropped its mobile-friendly tag, it became apparent that marketing and Web professionals needed to stop telling marketers to go mobile.

It is time to move the conversation forward, and talk about the knowledge that marketers really need to find success on the Web.

Responsive versus adaptive Web design

Responsive and adaptive Web designs each boast their own pros and cons.

In the simplest terms, responsive Web design changes the layout of a Web site's content based on screen size.

Adaptive Web design also known as dynamic serving bases a Web site's layout on the device.

SMBs can create beautiful, conversion-focused designs relatively easily using either method.

However, while standard responsive design is now common across the Web design space with content management systems such as WordPress employing it, it has drawbacks.

For example, if a marketer sets up a responsive Web site but does not like the amount of screen space the header takes up on mobile, it has to change the code. This is time-consuming for Web design and marketing professionals, and often over the heads of business owners.

Using a platform that employs adaptive Web design makes it easier to adopt these changes because editing a Web site per each device often takes place within a drag-and-drop menu.

Additionally, responsive Web sites typically send the entire HTML payload, no matter on which device it is being viewed.

Adaptive design adjusts the HTML payload accordingly to better suit what the device can handle. This means

adaptive Web sites will load much faster on mobile devices than responsive sites.

SEO is no longer a niche specialty

Mobile SEO [search engine optimization] really just means "SEO," because mobile surpassed desktop as the main way users conduct searches a long time ago and is now the primary focus for achieving a good search engine ranking.

Web professionals need to stop treating the optimization of content on mobile for the purposes of boosting their results within Google as a niche specialty.

Google has even begun new mobile-first indexing, which means it will start looking at what content and keywords users first have on their mobile device.

Creating a mobile-friendly layout is still critical, but more considerations need to be made for overall user experience.

For example, Google will soon begin marking full-page interstitial ads that pop up right when a user hits a site as a negative ranking factor. If marketers treat the user poorly, their SEO ranking will suffer.

Upping the security factor

Finally, small businesses and marketers need to focus heavily on the need for encryption across the entire Internet via SSL certificates.

Adding an SSL certificate to a Web site moves it from HTTP to HTTPS, and essentially tells site visitors a few things:

The site they are on is actually the site the URL says it is

The content on the site has not been changed in any way by anybody other than the site owner

Any information shared between the visitor and the site through a contact form or reservation signup will not end up in the hands of a third party

The visitor's browser history is not being tracked by some unauthorized third party

Any payment gateways on the site are secure

It is easy to see how this solidifies a small business' credibility and puts potential customers at ease, especially if a business owner is running an online store.

However, some business owners incorrectly believe it is not worth the effort.

Web site visitors are starting to notice when they do not see that little green lock next to the URL, which indicates a site has an SSL certificate. This is especially true if the site visitor is using Chrome because browser actively notifies people when they are on a Web site that is not encrypted.

Google also views HTTPS as a positive ranking indicator for SEO.

A number of Web site builders have begun to offer up SSL certificates at no additional cost on top of their standard site plans, so there is really no reason why Web designers should not universally embrace encryption and start communicating its importance to business owners.

MOVING BEYOND the overly-simple mobile-friendly conversation and discussing the finer points of Web design, SEO strategy and encryption is the necessary next step that the Web design and marketing industry must take with its small to midsized customers.

With an educated clientele, Web designers can create beautiful, safe online destinations that benefit both businesses and consumers.

Itai Sadan is cofounder/CEO of [Duda](#), San Francisco. Reach him at itai@dudamobile.com.