

RESEARCH

## Google exec gives inside scoop on shortening mobile Web conversion process

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By MACKENZIE ALLISON



A Google executive offered tips and best practice on shortening

the mobile Web site conversion process during a presentation the company gave May 3.

A click-to-call functionality is an obvious way that companies can shorten the conversion process on their mobile Web site. The exec also said that prioritizing content with the mobile user in mind is key.

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"Users are already searching for a site on their mobile phone," said Shiv Kumar, San Francisco-based mobile specialist for Google. "Speed is important when it comes to

mobile.

“Users have high expectations for mobile sites—they want them to load quickly,” he said. “Eleven percent of users have screamed at their phone for poor loading.”

Mr. Kumar noted that a lot needs to be taken into account when trying to convert consumers on mobile.

[Google Inc.](#) is an American multinational public corporation invested in Internet search, cloud computing and advertising technologies.

The company hosts and develops several mobile Internet-based services and products.

### **Moving to mobile**

During its presentation Google revealed that consumers are increasingly using their mobile devices to search.

Finance and insurance-related searches make up 15.4 percent of queries on mobile.

Consumers are turning to mobile devices to find restaurants, search for products and manage finances.

However, a whopping 79 percent of large advertisers do not have a mobile-optimized site.

That means that when consumers are conducting mobile searches and find a company or Web site and tap to visit, the majority of the time they are not getting a mobile-optimized experience. This could severely damage a brand.

Consumer can get annoyed with the experience and move on to a brand that does take the mobile user into account.

“Consumer Web adoption took off in the ‘90s,” Mr. Kumar said. “Although consumers were going online, businesses were hesitant.

“They did not think consumers would convert to them in the Internet space,” he said.

“Those who hesitated were playing catch up and in the next few years not having a mobile strategy will be the same as not having a desktop strategy.”

Businesses adopting a mobile platform should make content viewable at arm’s length, which gives a feeling of space while at the same time maintaining the brand experience.

Choose one prominent image or video. If a business has a ton of content, the mobile site should use a prominent search box to get users to content quickly.

For users on the go, only relevant information should be incorporated in the mobile platform.

The design should be geared at preventing accidental clicks. Additionally, Google recommends building a site for scrolling in only one direction.

Additionally, the company recommends building a site for a mobile-to-store experience.

Users can look to a desktop device to get more involved information on companies.

Business owners should also provide an action-oriented experience, which gives users a sense of immediacy.

Mr. Kumar provided best practice tips: keep the layout simple, design for thumbs not mice, prioritize content, use uniquely mobile features and make it easy to convert.

### **Apps vs. Web debate**

Google found that users prefer mobile sites to apps.

A whopping 79 percent claim they prefer the mobile browser to a mobile app for product reviews. Fifty-eight percent prefer mobile sites to apps for video, 81 percent for researching prices and 64 percent for checking in-store features such as location and maps.

Additionally, when using the mobile Web, users have high expectations.

Fifty-eight percent of mobile phone users expect mobile sites to load quickly or faster than desktop sites.

Mobile users value speed as well. Thirty-eight percent of users are willing to wait 30 seconds to complete a simple transaction.

The study also found that mobile users hold grudges and move on if they are not satisfied. In fact 61 percent said they are unlikely to return to a mobile site that they have had trouble accessing from their phone.

Additionally, 40 percent said they would visit a competitor's mobile Web site instead. And, 19 percent of people would have a negative overall perception of the company if they were dissatisfied with the performance of the mobile site.

### **Location is key**

A mobile site should display content based on a user's location—allowing a business to promote products and services near the consumer—and leverage other phone functions.

Esurance, for example, lets mobile device users know step-by-step what to do if a crash occurs, including take a picture of the accident and locate the nearest repair shop on a map.

Business owners should make sure consumers opt-in to location services. Opt-in builds trust.

In evaluating the process, business owners should first create a landing page then product specific microsites and finally a fully optimized site.

"Remember your phone is a super computer," Mr. Kumar said. "The fact that a phone is mobile allows you to connect with users through touch, sound and sight."

Final Take

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