



DIGITAL UPDATE: Google to Reward Mobile-Friendly Websites



Overview

Google updating its Search Engine Algorithm to be more mobile-focused

From time to time Google updates the algorithm that works behind the scenes of the world's biggest search engine to determine the position of website search results. The detail of these updates is rarely released to the public, leaving SEO experts to draw their own conclusions post-launch. However, on this occasion Google has announced that the new algorithm will for the first time, be mobile-focused and is therefore set to have a greater impact than their previous 'Panda', 'Penguin' or 'Hummingbird' updates.

What does this mean?

Think back to the last time you landed on a site that wasn't optimised for mobile. You probably needed to zoom and swipe side-to-side just to read the page and most likely, the links were too small to click on. Well, Google has realised how frustrating this can be and is doing something about it.

Google has decided to give a higher ranking position to mobile-friendly websites within mobile search results in efforts to improve the user experience, penalising websites lacking mobile-friendly features. With 50% of all Google searches originating from a mobile device, their energies, including labels on mobile-friendly search results, will prioritise the mobile search experience.

Secondly, Google are making changes to the way they rank 'doorway pages' (sites or pages created to rank highly for specific search queries). These pages tend to lead the user to similar destination pages, contributing to a bad user experience. Essentially cutting down on search spam, the update will penalise sites trying to maximise their 'search footprint' without adding any clear, unique value.

The update will come into effect globally on 21st April with Google crawling sites in real time meaning any changes made to your site (mobile-friendly or non mobile-friendly) will immediately affect positioning within mobile search results.

Impact

- Non mobile-optimised sites risk losing out on search traffic.
- The change will affect mobile searches in all languages and in all countries.
- Duplicate or spam content will negatively effect search rankings.
- A greater expectation across all customer and consumer types to find content quickly and easily on mobile devices will lead to increased competition from mobile-friendly sites.

Opportunity

- Organic search traffic remains one of the top ROI-driving digital marketing tactics, therefore the first organisations to make mobile-friendly changes may be the first to be 'seen'.
- Companies should therefore make every effort to create mobile friendly websites, content and Knowledge Graph information going forward to maintain or improve search position.
- At this stage there is no reason to believe that the update will impact current TDC guidelines for SEO.

There are a number of free tools you can use to find out whether your website is ready:

[Google Mobile Friendly Test](#)

[W3C mobileOK Checker](#)

Or come and chat to TDC



Image: dudamobile

