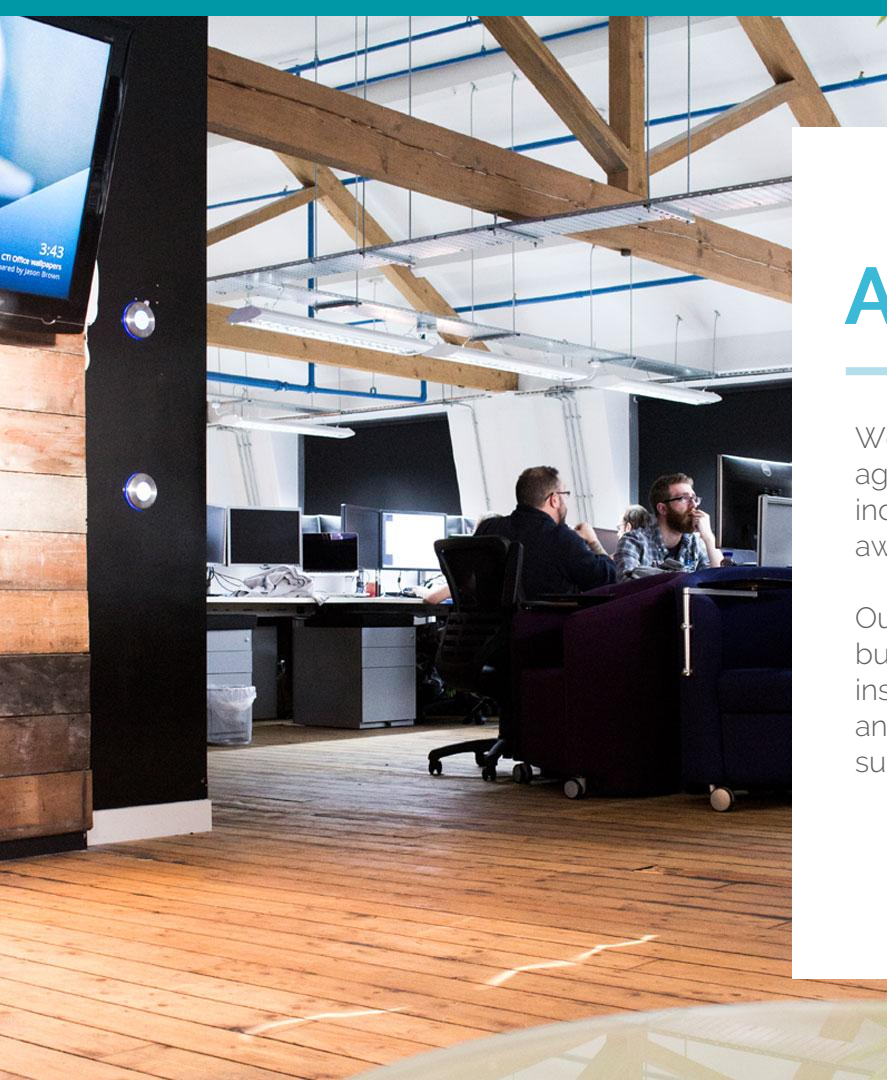# CTI Digital
User Experience for Mobile

A bit about us...

We are CTI Digital, one of the UK's leading full service digital agencies, with a growing team of over 70 talented and creative individuals. We've got over 15 years of experience in providing award-winning, innovative solutions.

Our mission is to help you achieve incredible results for your business by taking a user-centred approach to your project. This insights booklet aims to let you achieve results here and now, and remember, if you ever happen to need more long term support, we're always ready at the other end of a phone call.

UX for Mobile

Contents

Introduction

User experience is the experience of a person using your product or service. Mobile user experience differs greatly from computer user experience, due to the different device constraints and the context of use. To create a good user experience for mobile requires an understanding of the different people using your product and their expectations and intent.

So, why should we focus on the mobile experience when designing a website? According to a recent report by Ofcom, adults are proportionally more likely to use a smartphone than a computer to go online. The report also found that more than half of newer users of the internet go online using a mobile device and the number of people only using a smartphone to go online is increasing. The age groups presenting noticeable growth in smartphone use are 65-74 year olds, increasing from 28% to 39%, and over 75s, increasing from 8% to 15% since 2015.

What this shows is that people are using their smartphones more and, consequently, for more types of activities, such as presenting boarding passes for travel and contactless payment when purchasing. 63% of smartphone users have used their phone to complete a form or application at some point; this is evidence that not all people are switching device when completing more complex tasks.

Ofcom's report also highlights that users find managing their mobile data a challenge, highlighting the need to optimise the speed of sites for use on mobile.

The report overwhelming shows that people are using their mobile phones to go online more and more, and they are completing an increasing variety of tasks from their phones. Therefore, the expectation of a mobile experience that meets people's needs will likely increase as well, with people being less willing to accept a poor experience.

Understanding Users' Needs

Understanding Users' Needs

To create a good mobile experience, it is key to understand who will be using your site and why. It's also important to understand how the user's needs fit with the company's objectives, whilst also gaining insight into your market and identifying what competitors are doing.

A good place to start is by reviewing your analytics and performing user research, to uncover how users are actually engaging with your site. Use Google analytics to discover how people are viewing the content on your site and to see the journeys they are taking; this will give an indication of any potential problem areas. For example, pages with a low number of user sessions and a high bounce rate might indicate that content is hard to find or needs improving. Use this information to direct your user research and indicate which paths to test. It's also helpful to look at the terms that people are searching for, by checking Google Search Console. This will highlight what terminology your customers associate with your service and if there is any new content that you ought to include.

In addition to surveying analytics and search terms, it's important to get out to where your users are. This will prove vital in helping you to understand how they use your website in their own environment, ultimately providing useful insights to aid design decisions.


Understanding customers will help with creating **personas** for the different groups of people using the site. Personas are example portraits, defining typical users of your product and service. The personas will outline the user goals, motivations and frustrations; then you can map out what you think their journeys will be. Mapping a user's journey allows you to imagine customers' thoughts, emotions, devices and touchpoints as they use your service. This process helps to anticipate what users will want to do on mobile devices, which can be very different from how they use the site on a computer.

Designing for Mobile First

Mobile-First Design

Taking a mobile-first approach can save time and resources. Considering the constraint of a small screen first forces a designer to focus on the top tasks that users need to complete. This ensures an optimised experience for particular tasks, by prioritising content as the main focus of the design, rather than elements such as images and icons. Content is all about communicating to your audience and the right content will convey your messages effectively. Therefore, designers are also able to consider flow and hierarchy when making design decisions. An added benefit is that this will ensure a simplified product, removing non-essential features and functionality, to reduce complexity and cognitive load.

Designing for touch also involves consideration of how people hold the device, button size and area of clickable elements. As you can see in the heat map, mobile phones are often held in one hand and the thumb used to navigate and scroll; so consider providing key links within this area.


Left Hand   Combined   Right Hand
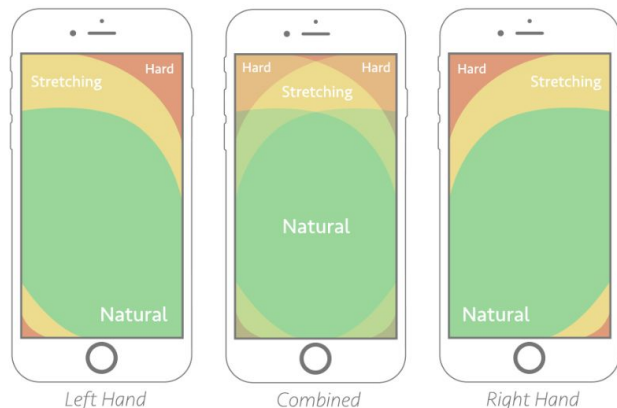
Design for Context

Context

By name and by nature mobile is, well, mobile. This means your site can be accessed anywhere and often without a good connection. Optimising the site for download speeds is a critical aspect of the user experience for mobile and informs the types of content needed. For example, if a customer is trying to locate your business from directions on your website, they won't want to be presented by an immersive video.

Consider how quickly each task will need to be completed and design the experience appropriately. There is also a higher risk of interruption on a mobile device from, for example, an incoming call or message. This can distract the user from completing a task, so make it easier to pick up a task where it was left off, by keeping the state of the page the same for when the user returns to it.

According to Google, data from Hotels.com states that 74% of mobile bookings are made for same-day check-in. This indicates that mobile users are looking for a quick solution when searching for somewhere to stay, so the mobile experience should match this requirement. You can use your analytic information to provide insight on how many mobile users you have and how they differ from desktop.
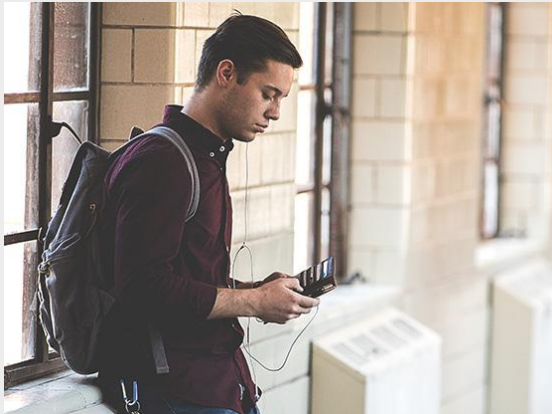
Content

Content

Content prioritisation is key to a good mobile experience and starts with defining what content will meet the needs of your user personas. When redesigning for a new site, we always carry out an audit of the current site, in order to understand how existing content performs. When doing this we turn most of our attention to;

- Pages with high sessions and low bounce rates. For example - /ux/content
- Pages with low sessions and high bounce rates. For example - /how-to-ux

When you highlight each unique page, examine them to see why they are performing the way they are. The traits you discover here will allow you to archive content that isn't performing and identify activities to avoid in the future. When planning content, it's also important to consider how the content will fit into the existing navigation. By ensuring people can get to the content they need quickly, users will have a better experience. To do this, it may be necessary to merge or separate content, to deliver information in the most convenient place for users.

Content	Sessions	Bounce Rate
/user-experience	2,333	45%
/ux/content	305	95%
/how-to-ux	3,002	15%
/unique-content	1,500	40%

Content

There are two things you can do with your existing content:

1. You can archive content that isn't performing
2. You can rewrite content to improve readability. Where content is complicated, start by getting straight to the point with key information and then drill down to more detail.

When planning content, make sure you will be able to keep it consistent, up-to-date and complete. Ensure that content helps users to follow a logical pathway and that related information is provided at relevant points.

When creating the designs for your site, make sure that you use real content to understand how it will fit. This will help you to avoid hiding important information within features like accordions, as this may cause busy users to miss it. To keep readers on your site and build credibility, provide a variety of supporting content, like case studies, testimonials and reviews. User-generated content, such as testimonials, give people a real example of how people use your service and the impact it had for them, and can help people to evaluate a product or service.

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Cross-Device

Cross-Device

It's likely that users will choose to switch devices when completing a task. How your users do this will be uncovered during user research, journey mapping and reviewing analytics. Users are more likely to make use of different functionality depending on the device. According to Google, mobile makes up 88% of all "near me" searches, with those mobile searches growing at 146% year-on-year.

Smartphone users often employ location-based services, so geographical optimisation is crucial for customer engagement on mobile. Providing ways to help users switch devices will improve the overall experience. For example, a customer may start researching their next summer holiday using a mobile, whilst on the train, and then continue researching on a computer, at work.

The user should be able to easily locate the page where they left off and see the same information and tools. Things like location, availability, room information and reviews should be readily available, as they will help customers decide to book. If this key information is not available on one of the devices, it's likely the customer will become frustrated and search elsewhere.
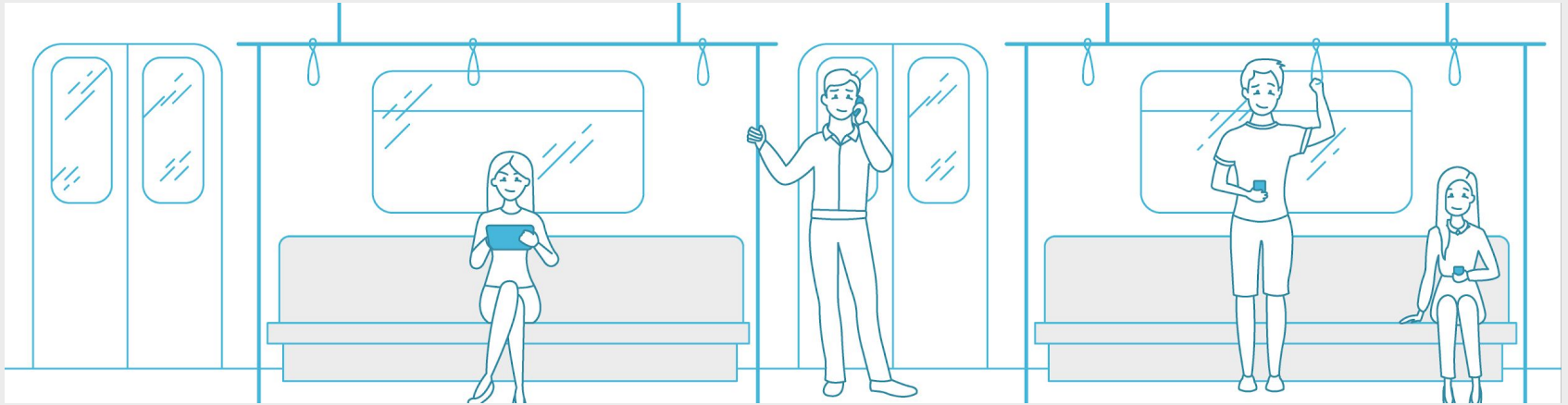
Channels

Channels

It is key to plan how you help a potential customer engage with your service, based on the channels you use. A user may find your website via an article on Twitter, link to it and land on your website; they could then either take up your service via the website or by calling, depending on how you direct them.

The customer will also choose how they will get in touch based on factors such as their location, the device they are on and how much time they have. Mapping out the user journeys will help to identify the likely channels they will take.

The important thing is to provide consistency across devices and channels. Pre-empting what the user will want to do forms part of your strategy.

Attract	Convert	Close	Delight
Social Media	Blog	Product recommendations	Social Sharing
Email	Service landing page	Contact form	Resources
Google Advert	Product category	Checkout	Click and Collect

IA and Navigation

Navigation

Navigation is the functionality which helps the user to navigate through the website, by providing links to relevant content in the user interface. Aim for a single approach to navigation that works across devices and is not too deep. The aim of navigation is to allow people to get to content quickly. The navigation should be prominent and consistent across devices.

Sub-navigation provides a consistent way of displaying content on deeper pages, allowing users to get to further content easily. On mobile, sub-navigation is often accessed via the main navigation expanding, or clicking through to two or three levels.

Where there is a need for deeper levels of content, then provide navigation within pages, with clear call-to-actions at appropriate points.

Search should also be placed prominently and provide auto-suggestions, to help new users get started. The results should be filterable and be ordered by relevance.

Information Architecture

Information architecture (IA) is the structure of all of the content on your website, linked or unlinked. A good IA for mobile has a shallow structure and allows the user to drill down to information. The information that is most important to users should be presented first. There should be a consistent number of levels. Labels should be descriptive and match the user's mental model. The structure should meet content editors' requirements and be scalable. Use card sorting with real users, to find how they group and label content, and look at search terms, to understand which labels are used.

Forms

Forms

The best practice principles for desktop forms apply to mobile, with the added consideration for screen constraints and native inputs. If the amount of information to be gathered is small, then a single form page is recommended, to save time against completing multiple steps. However, if users are required to input a large amount of information then stepped forms work well on mobile; they take longer to complete, but also reduce cognitive load, therefore offering a better experience. Stepped forms improve usability, by presenting only the minimum data required for the task in hand at each step. Provide a visual indication of the steps, so users know where they are in the process.

If there are prior requirements for completing the form, such as providing specific information, let users know what this is upfront, to reduce the chance for errors or abandoning the form as users go through the process. Where appropriate, show form fields with inline text to help users understand how to complete a field like password requirements. Only ask for information that is required; additional information can be gathered later on, so the more fields to fill in takes more time and increases the chance of errors.

Where possible, populate forms with popular defaults to act as a guide and to save time. This is particularly helpful when starting a booking process. Try to anticipate the most likely options that the user will need to search by and provide those as a default, this will help new and existing users.

Always provide an onward journey when the form has been completed, such as a link to a related article or product.


Source: www.moneysupermarket.com

Test With Users

Test With Users

Testing a prototype will allow bad ideas to be highlighted and amended before development, avoiding expensive rework.

Before creating a prototype, it can be helpful to start by sketching out ideas, in order to think about different scenarios and get a feel for how the design will work. These sketches can be used for quick feedback before creating wireframes or prototypes.

For testing the solution, create a prototype of the design and take the time to observe how people are using it, preferably in their own environment. Recruit test participants who match the personas and schedule in some time to test. There are various ways to recruit participants: if real customers can be brought in then that's a great place to start; alternatively, use an agency who specialises in user recruitment.

If possible, record the test to share with the team; aim to record both what's happening on the screen and the test participants face, to observe facial expressions and eye movement. If recording isn't possible it shouldn't prevent testing, it just means that notes taken will have to be thorough. The test should be planned by writing a test script and defining the key tasks to be completed. These will be the most critical tasks and will test enough of the journey to uncover problems. Assess whether the participant successfully completes each step. The final step is to amend the solution, based on the findings from the test.
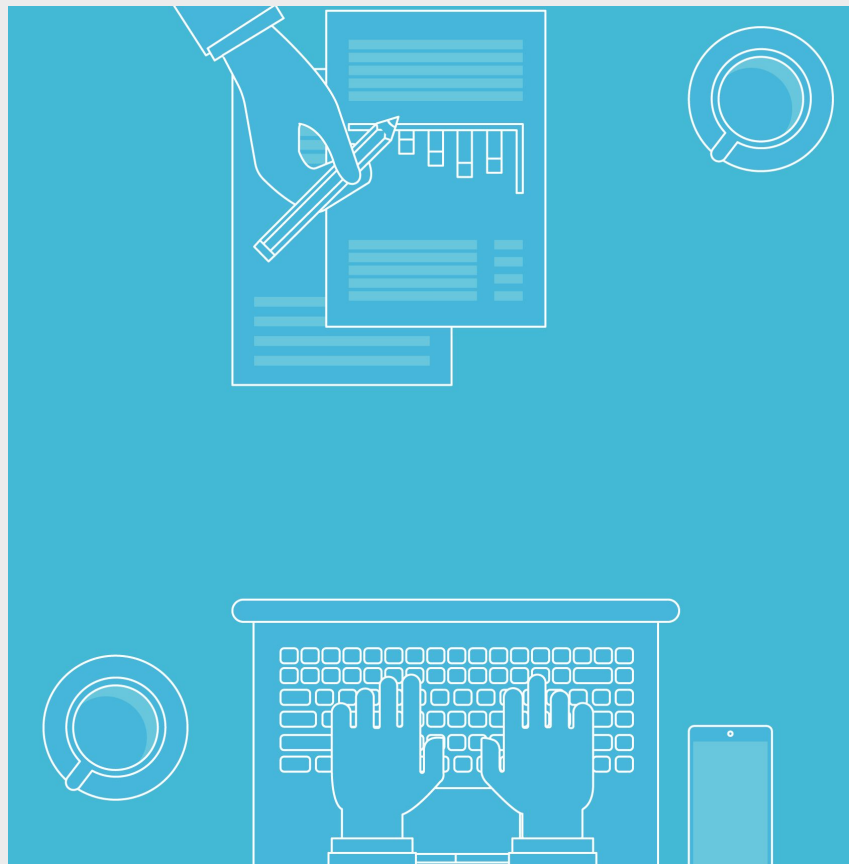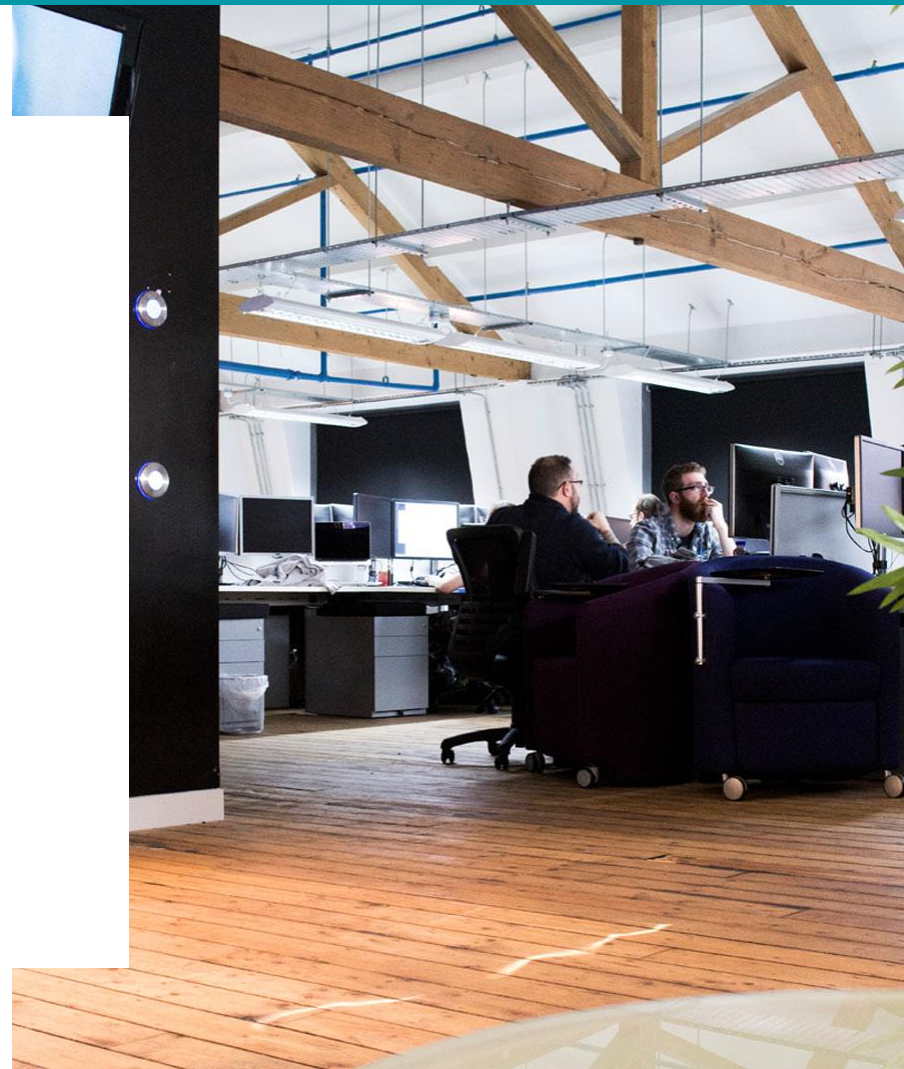
Conclusion

If you want some more advice, why not drop us a line?
Our dedicated digital marketing team is always on hand to help.

The Digital Marketing Experts
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PPC
Email Marketing
Content Marketing
Social Media Marketing

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