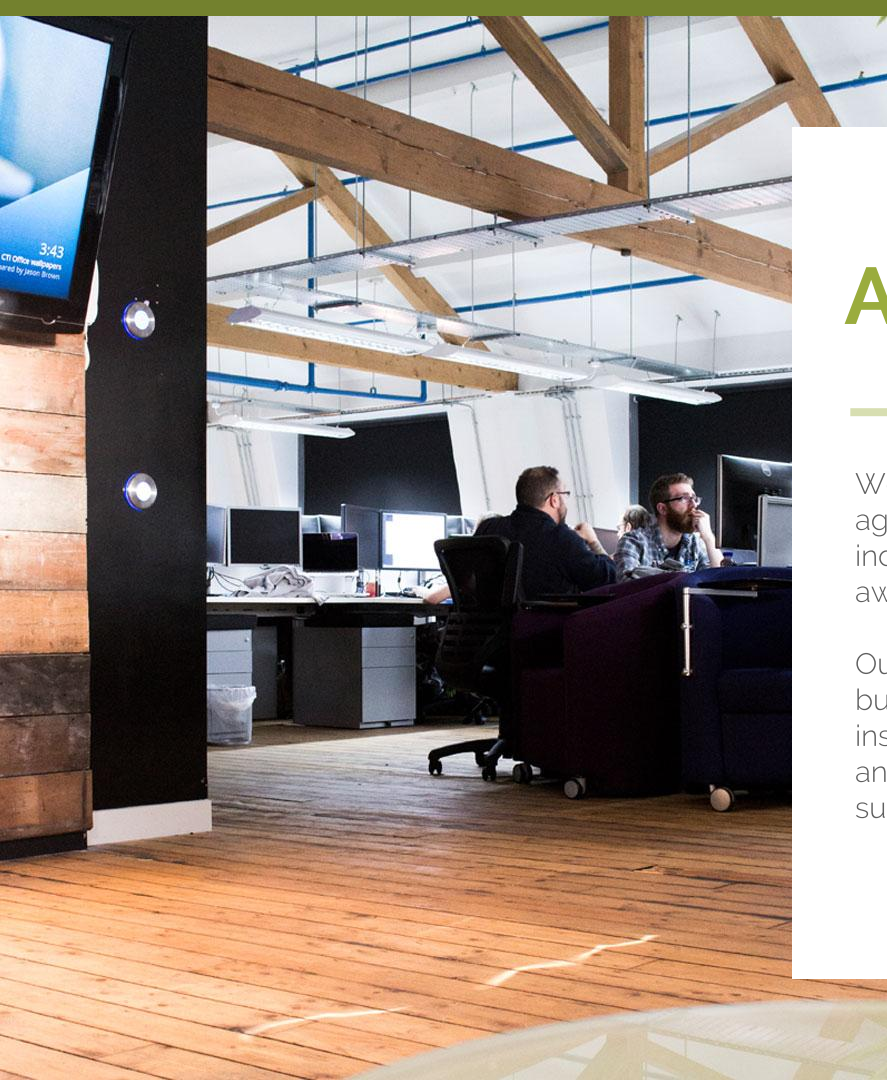




CTI Insights

Mobile First for SEO:
What You Need to Know



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.

Mobile First for SEO: What You Need to Know

Introduction

In this resource we'll be exploring mobile SEO and why it's more important than ever to consider your mobile website as part of your marketing strategy.

Last year Google announced one of their biggest ever updates to search results. The index will be moving mobile-first, which means that your desktop search results will be shaped by how well your mobile website is performing.

This is a reversal of historic rankings and something that Google has been working towards for a long time, as more people are accessing sites using mobile devices.

The need for mobile-first has been called upon because there are parts of the developing world where mobile is far and away the easiest method for people to go online. This update provides an even playing field essential for economic competition.

Google rolled out the update earlier this year, which means it's important to invest in improving your mobile website *now*, before you lose out on traffic.

This can also be a good time to conduct some SEO housekeeping to put you in a better position generally and to increase your organic visibility.

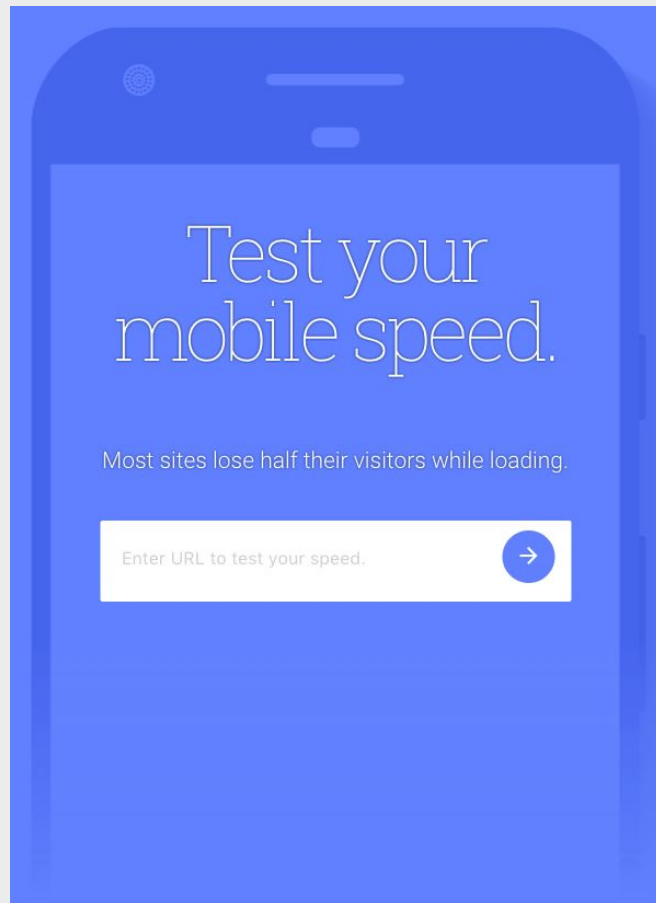


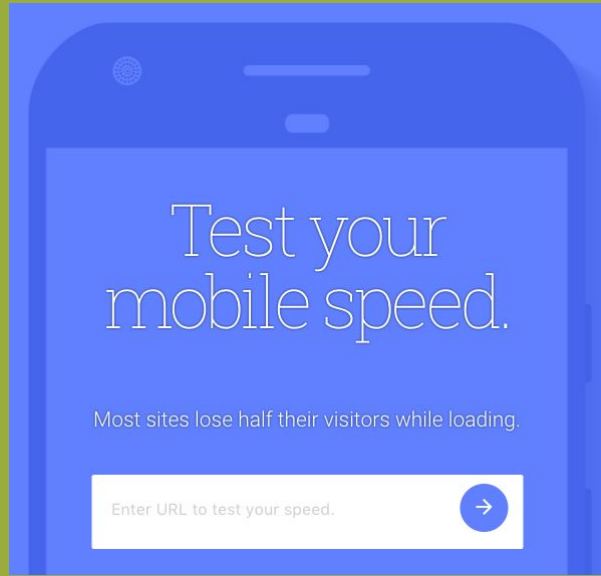
Load Speed

Your website's Load Speed is a key factor in how well your mobile website will perform, not only for search engines but for users as well. A fast website is not only a ranking factor, it's just good UX.

There are many tools to make it easier for developers to identify fixes which would provide the biggest benefit.

You can test your own website [here](#) to see how it's performing on mobile. But for now, we've put together an example for you.





Example

Load Speed Scores

It took 12 seconds to load our example site when running this test, which, as you would expect, is pretty poor.

The estimated visitor loss is at 31%. This is the probability of a user leaving this web page as a result of waiting for more than three seconds for it to load.

Users have more options than ever, and resultantly are more impatient than ever. Ranking highly is vital as users are unlikely to scroll through the thousands of results that Google can fetch. And if you're lucky enough to gain a click, it would be a waste to lose a potential client to slow load times. But don't worry, there are many ways to fix your load speed.

12s

Loading time on 3G: poor

31%

Est. Visitor Loss

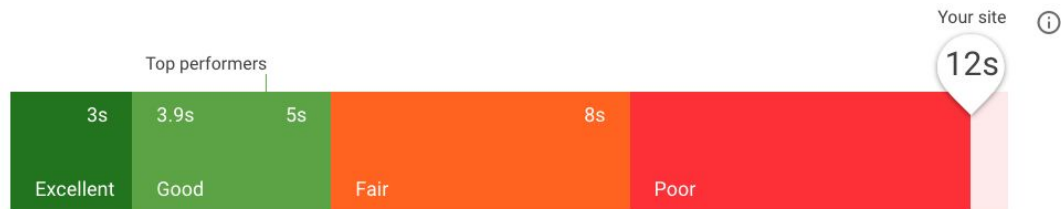
Industry Comparison

This is a Speed Index. It shows how long the visible content of your page takes to appear using Chrome on a Moto G4 device within a 3G network. Loading time can vary based on server location, device, browser and third-party apps.

If your site contains carousels, overlays or interstitials, this may impact your loading time results. When we look at the industry comparison provided by Google, we can see how this site is performing when compared to other sites in the industry.

If you feel like it has miscategorised your website, you can choose from a list for a more appropriate comparison. Here we can see that 12 seconds is on the extremely slow side, with the best performing competitors averaging between around 4 and 5 seconds to load.

Industry comparison



<https://ecommerceshownorth.co.uk/> is slower than the top-performing sites in the **Business & industrial** industry

Top Fixes



Top Fixes

Once you have your load speed score, Google outlines multiple fixes with tangible benefits. In this example Google outlined the following changes:

1.

Compressing and resizing this site's banners and logos could reduce their size by 83%. This opportunity could also be used to update the site's alt text on images.

2.

Look at some sort of lossless compression. Compressing CSS resources on this site could reduce the transfer size by 74%.

3.

Renderblock JS or CSS. Above the fold content had to wait for the JS to load.

You can look at render blocking this or even moving critical portions inline to the HTML.

4.

There are other elements that you could look at, like leveraging browser caching.

Google AMP

AMP project is an open source project to help mobile run smoother. In a mobile-first website speed is important to reach users. Over half of users abandon slow sites, but over 75% sites still take 10 or more seconds to load on 3G. Intrusive ads and unresponsiveness can ruin a user's experience; but there doesn't need to be a trade off between monetary value vs. performance and beauty.

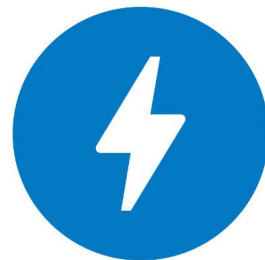
AMP helps publishers to create fast loading websites and allows them to manage sites that work on mobile.

Publishing in AMP means pages will be fast and achieve UX goals, whilst still being beautiful and customisable.

The feature has been favoured by Bing, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google, Twitter, and Medium, providing widespread distribution.

AMP is built on a few components. AMP HTML restricts what HTML you can use, to ensure it works better with all other languages to let pages load quickly. AMP Cache then helps to make pages load quickly in all situations.

Currently, AMP isn't used favourably in e-commerce, and so changing to be an early adopter could provide a competitive advantage.









AMP

AMP Project

Here we can see some of the AMP modules that would appear at the top of a search query for news about cats. They present the publisher's logo, an image, the title, and the time posted.

The modules strip the HTML from your page and present the best of your content to the reader. Resultantly, the page loads extremely fast and presents a stress-free reading environment for consumers.

However, the stripped-back format can reduce brand familiarity. To maintain users on your website, AMP pages can have simple navigation bars and CTA pop ups, to encourage users to explore your wider offerings.

  Cats and robbers: police force considers using felines to fight crime ⚡ AMP - 8 hours ago	  Girl sends adorable letter asking why police employ dogs but not cats - and g... ⚡ AMP - 9 hours ago	  Cat crime fighters could collar County Durham criminals ⚡ AMP - 8 hours ago
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Alt search engines

Of course, Google isn't the only search engine out there. And what works for one search engine may not work for another.

Bing also have a mobile friendliness test which you can access in their webmaster tools.

This will let you know whether users will have a good experience on your site, by checking whether it configures correctly on different screen sizes.

Yahoo have their own open source project called Yslow.com. The tool can search across multiple browsers, provide a listing of the sites components and provide site improvement recommendations.

Mobile Friendliness Test Tool ⓘ

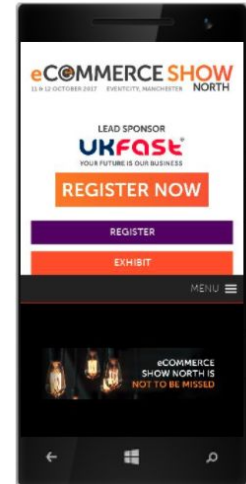
<https://ecommerceshownorth.co.uk/>

This page is mobile friendly

- ✓ Viewport configured correctly
- ✓ Page content fits device width
- ✓ Text on the page is readable
- ✓ Links and tap targets are sufficiently large and touch-friendly

Making pages mobile-friendly increases user engagement on mobile devices. It can also help you rank better in Bing search results on mobile devices. [Learn More](#)

ANALYZE



Results

By following Google's recommendations, the suggested fixes could reduce loading time by 5 seconds, which would move the site into the 'Fair' zone. By running the changes that Google recommends for your site, you can quickly improve your SEO ranking to keep up with competitors. However, to achieve an 'Excellent' ranking, more complex on and off-page SEO would be necessary.

5s

Reduction in load time



Conclusion

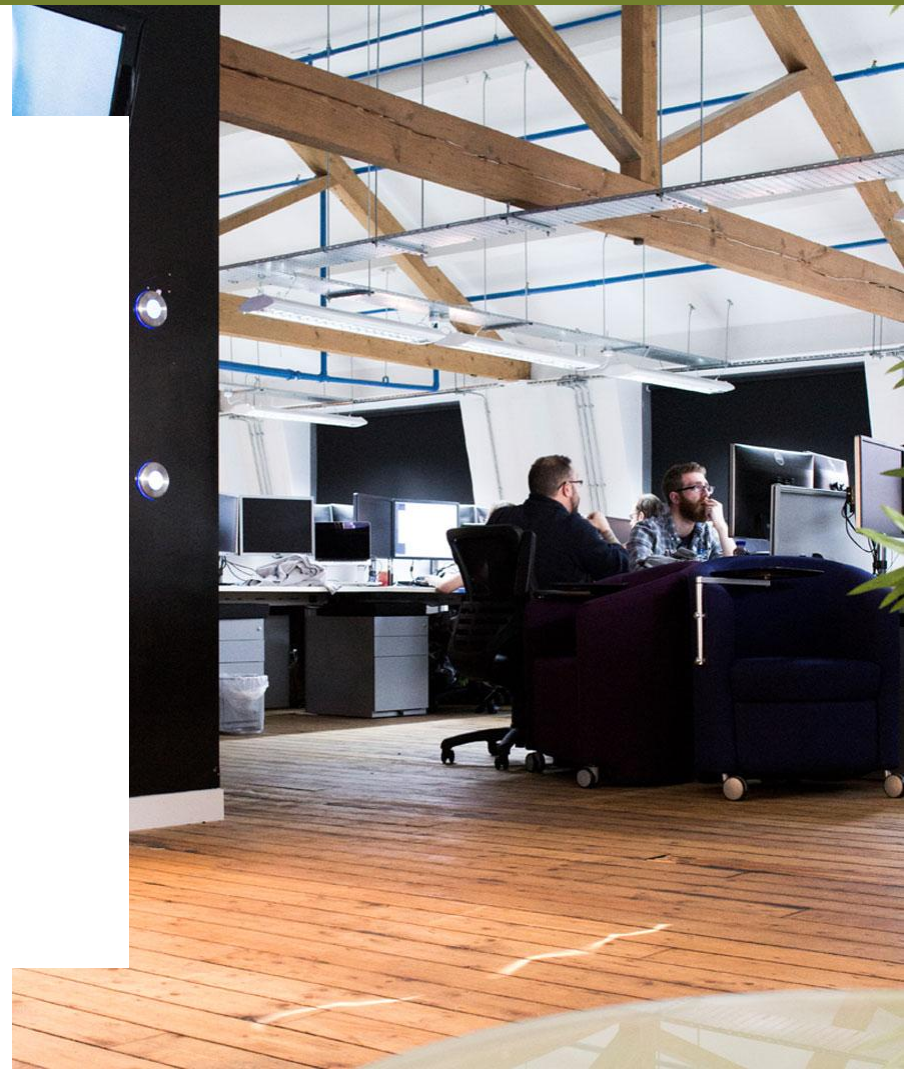
If you want some more advice, why not drop us a line?
Our dedicated digital marketing team is always on hand to help.

The Digital Marketing Experts

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