Responsive Web Design TipSheet

Whether you're re-designing or creating a completely new website, it can be difficult to keep track of all the necessary implementations. So here are some helpful tips to keep in mind when creating responsive websites to maximize your customer retention.

1 Start small

When creating responsive websites, begin with wireframing for the smallest screen size and work your way up. By designing for mobile first, not only will you have an easier time adapting to larger and more spacious sizes, you will avoid unnecessary complications.

2 Create highly adaptable layouts

There are millions of browser sizes out there. From desktop computers, tablets, smartphones and even watches now, it's impossible to design specific pages for them all. But you don't have to. Use ratios and percentages to create layouts that adapt to any browser size and save yourself the hassle of having broken pages when the next gadget comes out.

3 Optimize images

We all want crisp and high resolution images on our websites, but when customers view them on their mobile phones those images have slow loading times. Create multiple optimized versions for each image and let your website swap in the lower resolution versions on mobile browsers. Not only will your website load faster, but your customers will appreciate the lighter load on their mobile data plan.

4 Make things bigger for mobile

Designing for the small mobile screening doesn't mean scaling everything down. Actually it's quite the opposite! Think back on how frustrating it was to pinch your fingertips against your mobile screen to click on a tiny button or read some tiny text. Make buttons and font sizes reasonably large on mobile layouts.

CSS over Javascript

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Since you're designing for the millions of screen sizes that are in the hands of your customers, you should be doing most of the work in CSS and not Javascript. Using CSS for the resizing of elements on your website will increase its delivery speed.

Use flexible font units

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Flexibility is the name of the responsive game and fonts should be scaling with the rest of the content on your web page. Like how ratios and percentages are used for defining grid sizes, font sizes should be defined using em instead of px.

Don't forget about view orientation

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With so much to do it's easy to forget that your customers can view your websites with different orientations on their mobile device. So while your design may look great vertically on mobile, some elements may not be optimized for the horizontal view. So keep orientation in mind when you're wireframing.

Collapse into fewer columns

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Content should be organized into fewer columns for each smaller browser size. Desktop may have a 4 column grid for the news section, but then collapse into a 3 column grid for tablet, before finally collapsing into a single column for mobile. This helps direct the customer to the content you want them to see.

Keep sections short

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Page layouts grow longer as window sizes shrink in width. Keep each section short to prevent overly long vertical scrolls in mobile. Doing so helps to make sure all your content is quick and easy to access for your customers.
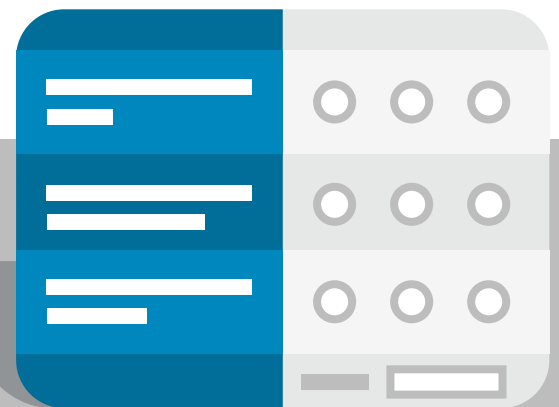
Now that you know the best practices when it comes to Responsive Web Design, go ahead and download our *Responsive Web Design Worksheet* and put these best practices into action.

You're on the right path for maximizing customer retention!

Responsive Web Design WorkSheet

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