

# Why responsive websites are a must have

 By [Amanda James](#)

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Websites are marketing tools and about enhancing user experience when users interact with your content - regardless of where or how they are viewing it.

*"Be like water making its way through cracks... be formless... If you put water into a cup, it becomes the cup. You put water into a bottle and it becomes the bottle... Be water, my friend." - Bruce Lee*

When legendary martial artist and actor Bruce Lee spoke about having the ability to adjust and adapt to situations effortlessly, he could have easily been talking about responsive web design. In very simple, non-technical language, we will share with you why having a responsive website has become imperative for every business.

## What is a responsive web design (RWD)?

RWD is a web design approach aimed at presenting a website in a way that makes it easy to read the content and navigate from one section to another across a wide range of devices, such as mobile phones and computer monitors. If you have visited a website recently on PC or any mobile device and the content adjusted to your respective device, then you have probably experienced responsive web design.

## Why is it important to have a responsive website?

How many times in the past week have you searched for something using your smartphone instead of your PC? 80/90% of the time?

Did you know that, according to research, about 80.2% of internet users find local businesses using their mobile phones and tablets? According to the March 2014 *South African Mobile Report*, about 92% of the internet users own a smartphone. If so many people, who could be your customers and clients, are using mobile devices, it is crucial that your website is mobile friendly and easy to access. The major benefit and advantage of having a responsive website for your business is that users will receive the same quality web content for any type of device that they use. All the important elements of a site should display on a multitude of devices.

Some may ask: Why not have different designs for web and another for mobile? The answer is that designing a responsive site saves time and money in the long run as you need to maintain only one website instead of updating both a desktop website and a mobi site. But more importantly, you would just have one URL and a single content source to serve on multiple devices. Further, Google prefers RWD because responsive-built websites often mean improved search engine

visibility, which in turn improves your website's SEO ranking.

## **Responsive email design**

If you regularly read your email using your smartphone or tablet, you have probably come across emails that would look perfect on your computer, but then look terrible on your smartphone or tablet. Common issues could be anything from squashed or small columns and small illegible fonts to ugly and broken layouts.

Designing mailers for mobile has become a necessary skill for any designer. Responsive emails create a positive user experience, which will result in a higher return of investment (ROI). Considering that, the majority of smartphone users receive emails (which contain promotions, alerts or any marketing messaging) on the go.

## **The future of responsive web design**

With the invention of Google Glass and wearable tech such as wrist-worn gadgets like the Samsung Galaxy Gear and iWatch from Apple, designers are going to have to work towards "future-proofing" their sites, and although responsive web design is still in its infancy, it's a step in the right direction to tick all the boxes.

Websites are marketing tools; brands need to ensure their intended customers encounter the same experience as they would if they had to visit your shop or office in person. Ultimately, it is about enhancing user experience when they interact with your content regardless of where they are viewing it.

## **ABOUT AMANDA JAMES**

Amanda James is a UI Design Lead at CREACHA - a full service Agency, where, with the rest of the CREACHAs, they have embarked on a journey to creatively change the world.  
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