

Google's new mobile search algorithm and why it matters to you

 By [Boris Dzhingarov](#)

13 May 2015

While Google's ranking algorithm is always foremost in the minds of SEO's around the world, there are generally only small ranking alterations we need to be mindful of on a month to month basis.



Image via [123RF](#)

That has all changed with Google's new approach to mixed search queries (i.e. mobile search vs. traditional search). There has traditionally been only one search algorithm that governed all search results, regardless of what device was used. The 21 April mobile algorithm update changed that.

We asked Robert Cairns, the Marketing Director of [Caseo Digital Marketing Services](#) to clarify the situation for us:

"There are currently two Google SERP algorithms in place: one for mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) and the other for traditional search platforms (desktops, laptops). Rather than take into account the search platform used during a query, Google instead elected to target business websites. In effect, Googlebot crawls a website in order to determine whether it is responsive (i.e. mobile-friendly) or not, and if it finds evidence that it is, it assigns a ranking bonus to the website. Sites that are unresponsive (i.e. not mobile-friendly) are assigned a ranking penalty."

This flies in the face of the party line towed by Google for years which effectively states that they want to provide users with a quality experience by creating an arena where only relevant, useful data results from each and every search query. Instead, the system they have created effectively penalises business owners who do not possess an up-to-date website. This is particularly problematic as many businesses do not have any use for a responsive theme but will now be forced to acquire one in order to keep up with their competition.

For example, it makes complete sense for a restaurant to have a responsive website. Someone searching for a place to eat is just as likely to be on the go with their smartphone as they are to be on their laptop at home. Gas stations and government offices are also in line for mobile-friendly websites, as their clients are likely seeking their services, locations or products while on the move.

On the flipside, it is unlikely that furniture stores or plumbers stand to gain much from a dedicated [mobile search algorithm](#) as most clients they stand to gain through search engines will likely be looking for their services from home. For these businesses, the new mobile update stands to affect their SERP rankings while creating a responsive site does not stand to help their traffic numbers to any significant degree.

But how does this affect you?

Since businesses are being rated on the responsiveness of their website, some traditional companies will be impacted negatively in terms of search results, meaning that your search for a local plumber may provide you with a company which features a responsive theme on their website rather than the most talented or best-reviewed company in your area. Effectively, you stand to receive poorer service and products due to [Google's algorithm shift](#), and there is nothing business owners can do other than to redesign their websites in a way that meets Google's criteria.

ABOUT BORIS DZHINGAROV

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