

# Why Your Self Storage Needs A Mobile Website Right Now!

Can you imagine trying to operate your self storage operation without a website? Your website has grown from modest beginnings when you started with a one pager that proudly announced you to the World Wide Web and also added a little panache to your business cards and print advertising with its new "WWW" address.

Over time, it has grown to include Search Engine Optimization, lead tracking, Search Engine Marketing with pay-per-click, call tracking phone number, comprehensive web analytics tools, online payments, as well as all the measurement tools you need to see where you are and where you are going and what resources are helping drive prospective customers to your Web site.

..... and all along, you have seen consistent increases of leads, walk-ins and income..

That's the good news.....

Stupendous Growth of Mobile devices. As a result of what's happened in the past year or so, we now know that folks are using their Mobile devices more than they use their PCs. In fact, Gartner, the well known research company, predicts that by 2013, more people will use Mobile devices than PCs to get online.

But, the not-so-good news is that your traditional website, designed for PCs, will not cut it for iPhone@s, AndroidTMs, and other Mobile devices unless it is optimized for them. If left as is, it will even turn prospective customers away. What that could mean is that, without a Mobile website, more than half of your Internet potential prospects are going to disappear!

Website Issues on Mobile devices. As the picture on the top right shows, a site designed to be viewed on a desktop PC comes across as totally inadequate on a Mobile device. Say you're accessing such a site on your iPhone® or on your AndroidTM, the first thing you're likely to notice is that it takes a relatively long time to load.

Next, you will notice that the text is hard to read and that you spend more time trying to navigate the page.

Perhaps, at that point, you probably have started looking around. Compuware, the technology performance company, in a 2011 survey of 4,014 global mobile web users found that consumers have high expectations for Mobile website and application performance. They found that "40% of users have turned to a competitor's site after a bad mobile experience."

The Importance of a Mobile site. According to Luke Wroblewski, the internationally recognized digital product leader, "Ignoring a Mobile site is like a record company clinging to CDs while digital passes them by." So, here are five good reasons to add a Mobile website to your Internet marketing repertoire:

1. Mobile Screen Size. Smart phones are designed to be held in your hand. Common sense tells us that what fits on a 15" monitor will not fit on 3.56" screen. Trying to make it work takes time and lots of scrolling and zooming. So there is no question that if your website looks something like what is shown in the picture above, viewers will take much longer to find the information they are looking for. While

the Mobile website should be a smaller version of the standard website, it is essential that it be designed differently to accommodate the mobile user. Text needs to be large, buttons need to be thumb friendly, phone numbers need to be auto-dial-able, and navigation should be easy with just the touch of a finger.

2. Faster Load Time. "Time is of the essence" for younger and affluent people on the go. The Canadian company Strange Loop, specialists in Web Performance Optimization, tell us "74% of Mobile users say they'll bounce after waiting 5 seconds or even less for a Mobile site to load."

3. Mobile Search is Different, Fact not fiction! Mobile sites get indexed separately by the search engine companies. Your regular website may have good organic rankings but if you don't have a Mobile site, you probably will not come up in a mobile user's search results. On the positive side, if you have a Mobile site, chances are pretty good that you will be found by local mobile users.

50%, and this figure is growing, of all local searches are made on Mobile devices. Without a Mobile site how can you possibly capture any new prospects?

4. Mobile sites Drive Traffic to Location. Isn't the web site's purpose to drive traffic to your location? Consumers do research on the go by using their smart phones to search for information. As an example, a potential customer has just moved to town. Their only connection to the Web is through a smart phone and they have a whole bunch of extra furniture to store. They want to know where the closest Self Storage property is located, plus they would like directions to get there. For you, the Self Storage operator, to capture this prospect means that your Mobile site needs to show available storage, rates, promotions, directions with a map, and a telephone number that can be automatically dialed.

5. Provide a Place for eCommerce Transactions. A Mobile site should provide the medium to reserve storage space, obtain a quotation, or pay a month's rent. Take this scenario for example, a prospective customer needs a 5' X 10' climate controlled unit on the first or second floor and she is ready to reserve a unit on the spot. On her smart phone, she does a self storage local search and ends up on a site that isn't mobile compatible. After trying to navigate with lots of scrolling and pinching, she gives up and goes back to search to find another. The next site is a Mobile site and she quickly finds what she is looking for, ends up reserving the space, and is on her way.

Lesson learned, Mobile sites are indeed mobile user friendly.

How to get started with your Mobile website. If you are the DIY (Do It Yourself) type, there are lots of good tools to get started. The first place to start is with Google's GoMo, a Google initiative to help businesses go mobile.

GoMo will help you learn more about Mobile sites, show you how your current site looks in mobile, and will help you find other resources to help build your Mobile site.

On the other hand, it may make more sense and actually may be more cost effective to work with a company that is self storage centric, in other words, a company that specializes in

Self Storage Internet Marketing. They will know the "ins and outs" and idiosyncrasies of your business, so there is no learning curve on their part or any teaching on your end.

The picture below on the bottom shows a Mobile Site developed by a self storage centric Internet marketing company for one of their customers.

It comes across clean and it loads very quickly and works across all Mobile devices.

There are two thumb-friendly action items, one lets you pick a location, the other lets you pay online.

Subsequent pages include maps and directions, display inventory and prices, have the ability to dial numbers automatically, work seamlessly, use Mobile Site redirects, and finally the whole package was thoroughly tested before launching.

So, now that you are more aware of the importance of a Mobile Site for your Self Storage operation, isn't it time to contact your Internet marketing provider from your Mobile device?

Right Now!

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