

Be responsive online or risk being left behind

By [Felix Erken](#)

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The digitalisation of business is inevitable and companies that resist the change, risk losing customers, revenue and potentially, even their reputation.



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The stakes are even higher for companies whose websites are the first and only place interested customers visit. In reality, a website only has seconds to make a good first impression.

A responsive site is essential. The latest [Ericsson Mobility Report](#) states that smartphone subscriptions continue to increase and that the number will surpass those for basic phone subscriptions during the third quarter of 2016. According to the report, the growth will continue, especially in markets such as Africa and the Middle East, where smartphone subscriptions will increase more than 200 percent between now and 2021.

Talking from own experience, a transition to a responsive site can result in a 30 percent growth in mobile traffic and nearly 15% more conversions. In brick and mortar terms that is many more feet through a showroom and an increase in sales that in today's economic climate is considered an achievement.

Responsive sites are optimised gateways for mobile users because they provide the best possible user experience, no matter which device or browser they are accessed from. It enables visitors to find what they're looking for in seconds instead of minutes and they enjoy a seamless browsing experience.

Businesses that are serious about making a good first impression via their online showrooms have to continually invest in the digital platforms that drive ease of use. But it isn't only the ease with which visitors can navigate a site that will make them fill their online basket or complete an enquiry form. A site needs to reflect what is currently the norm in terms of look and feel - a site from the 2000s will repel visitors, it's as simple as that.

The current best practice is to design a site with aesthetics and viewer engagement in mind. Over-sized images are in. Long pieces of text are out. If a site requires visitors to concentrate on reading text, it will lose them because people simply can't be bothered.

The Ericsson Mobility Report also states that video will account for almost 70% of mobile data traffic in 2021. Today's teens are streaming natives and they are the heaviest consumers of smartphone data for video streaming apps. The next evolution will be much more visual with video, virtual reality and augmented reality becoming the new normal.

The digitalisation of business is here to stay and companies have to continuously evolve their digital solutions to retain customers or risk losing them.

Businesses that understand that curious customers may never make it into their brick and mortar store if the online one doesn't give them what they want will invest in their digital offerings to provide interested customers the best online experience possible.

The investment will stand businesses in good stead and even more so if they, for example, want to become sponsored locations within the Pokémon Go virtual game board in the near future. The premise being that it will drive traffic and will work on a cost-per-visit basis similar to Google's cost-per-click search advertising.

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