

# BUILDING A BETTER WEBSITE

## MOBILE SITE **VS.** RESPONSIVE DESIGN

DID YOU KNOW? THERE ARE ...**91.4 Million Smartphones in the US**

5.42% Website traffic from Smartphones in **2012** ▶▶10.44% Website traffic from Smartphones in **2013**

2.51% Conversion rates on traditional devices ▶▶**2.60%** Conversion rates on **tablets\***

### 1 RESPONSIVE DESIGN

**One website.** This single site will automatically reformat itself to appear well on any device screen width.



### 2 MOBILE SITE

**Two websites.** Your desktop site plus one built specifically for mobile. Your customers will be automatically redirected to the best site for their device.



### 3 MOBILE PLUG-IN

**One Website.** The single website will selectively reformat some content when viewed on a smartphone. Your customers can switch back and forth between mobile and standard versions.



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Both a mobile site and responsive design will optimize your site on smaller screens, but there are pros and cons to each. Which one is right for you?

#### MOBILE SITE PLUG-IN

##### User Experience

The site is only generally optimized for mobile devices, so there will always be elements that are not completely responsive. Site visitors can switch between the mobile and standard versions.

*A cost-effective choice for existing WordPress sites that aren't prepared to redesign responsively.*

#### MOBILE SITE

A mobile site is essentially a second version of your website that has been optimized for a smaller screen. Site visitors will be automatically directed to the right version for their device by the server.

*A good choice for existing sites, when it might be cost-prohibitive to redesign responsively.*

#### RESPONSIVE DESIGN

In responsive design, one website is developed to automatically reformat itself for any device screen width (large or small) and orientation (landscape or portrait).

*A very good and flexible solution. May be most cost-effective solution for new sites.*

##### Domain Management

Most plugins don't require a different domain from the main site.

*Avoids the need for redirects, which can affect the accuracy of your analytics.*

Mobile websites require a different domain from the main site. Many businesses use m.mywebsite.com, for example.

*Can add to website management because you have to maintain two separate silos of content.*

Responsive design doesn't require a separate domain, as there is only one website.

*Avoids the need for redirects, which can affect the accuracy of your analytics.*

##### Search Engine Optimization

As with Responsive Design, WordPress plugins don't require a different domain so link equity for your website is preserved.

*Having your link equity in one place will give you an edge.*

Because a mobile site uses its own domain, links shared from mobile browsers will split your link equity among multiple sites (mobile and non-mobile).

*May negatively impact SEO by reducing link equity.*

Google recommends a best practice of using responsive design, namely serving the same HTML for all devices and using only CSS media queries to decide the rendering on each device.

*Having your link equity in one place will give you an edge.*

##### Future Updates

Wordpress and its plugins are built on third-party open source applications, meaning WP updates may not always be compatible with older versions of a plugin.

Website updates need be done only once to appear on all devices.

*Because initial investment is lower this may be a good option for new businesses, but future maintenance needs should be considered*

Re-working of a mobile site may be needed in order to stay current with next-generation phones and mobile browsers.

Website updates will often need to be done twice: once on the main site, and again on the mobile site.

*Could require higher maintenance and future expense.*

As mobile devices evolve, the responsive site will continue to work without requiring recoding.

Website updates need only be done once to appear on all devices.

*A better return on your investment, with lower maintenance costs.*