

(<http://www.lyonscgc.com>)

[Back To Insights \(/insights-white-papers/\)](#)

# Mobile eCommerce: 4 Points for Planning Your Website

July 5, 2015



<http://www.lyonscgc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/mobile-ecommerce.jpg>

Mobile eCommerce involves so much more than simply putting up a responsive website. Before you even start to think about the colorful design, slick images and amazing features of your site, you should take a step back. Planning for mobile eCommerce means understanding the who, what, when, where, how and why you are embarking on this venture.

Whenever we undertake a new eCommerce project, we start with a discovery phase where we work on-site with the client team to uncover the various aspects of their business that are driving mobile eCommerce as well as what areas will be affected by the initiative. Based on that experience, here

are some of the considerations you should take into account.

## **KNOW YOUR MOBILE ECOMMERCE CUSTOMER**

It's often tempting to pursue the cool and extravagant, but if you aren't serving your customers' needs, they won't remain customers for very long. You should develop as complete picture of who your customers are as you can.

You can't deliver a successful mobile solution for your customers without first understanding what their goals and expectations are in a mobile context. This is one of the core principles of user-centered design.

Start by gathering simple demographic data (age, income, level of education, where they live). You can deepen your understanding through ethnographic and psychographic research to uncover user's attitudes, values, interests, opinions, and even how these may be culturally inscribed.

Additional research can be conducted via site analytics, surveys, focus groups, feedback from customer service, as well as research reports from Forrester, comScore and others. You'll want to determine:

- how many customers are on mobile right now
- what devices they use
- what information do they seek
- what tasks do they perform on a regular basis
- do they use a smartphone in a totally different way than their desktop
- what and how often they choose to share on social media
- are device-specific features like geo-location important

You shouldn't expect customers to change how they interact with you. Mobile eCommerce should allow them to continue to shop the way they do already. And shoppers want it to be easy. Focusing on your customers' needs will enable you to build the best experience for your business.

Mobile shoppers shouldn't have to substantially compromise the functionality of their shopping experience if they are on their mobile device instead of their laptop. Consumers expect to be able to use nearly all of the same features as online eCommerce shoppers. Yet it can be tough to have a great mobile-optimized experience that has ALL of the features, so you have to make decisions about what features aren't as important to include.

## **KNOW HOW YOUR BUSINESS WORKS**

Ask yourself, "Are there aspects of my business that I could better support with a mobile

experience?” Just as you shouldn’t develop a mobile site if it doesn’t serve your customers’ needs, you shouldn’t embark on mobile if it isn’t going to make your business better.

One of the first questions to ask is whether or not you need a mobile-specific experience for your customers. This consideration speaks to what kind of mobile solution you’ll adopt. If your customers use mobile for a different type of experience/purpose than your desktop site, you’ll want to look at developing an adaptive site (one that displays differently on different devices) or a mobile app.

The same question applies when you look at your business to find out which areas play a large role either financially or in terms of customer relationship/service. Another way to think about your business and mobile eCommerce is to look at what information you have that would better serve your customers if they had access to it anywhere, anytime.

Take a look at these examples.

**Walgreens:** Two key services, pharmacy and photo processing, represent a large part of their business. In-store, the pharmacy and clinic experience is very interactive. Walgreen’s realized that on-the-go customers would want to create the same experience for mobile when it came to ordering and picking up prescriptions, so they developed an app which made placing a refill and locating a store very easy. The app also allows you to schedule an appointment at one of their Healthcare Clinics for an urgent need or to get a flu shot. The ubiquity of mobile phone cameras also justified the investment in developing an app. The ability to easily upload photos and send them for processing satisfies the “instant” gratification that mobile is all about.

**Lufthansa:** Like any airline, customers use the desktop site for planning and booking a vacation or business trip. When it comes time to leave for the airport, they switch to a mobile device for up-to-date information on flight status along with check-in. In the case of a flight delay or cancellation, they’ll hop on their phone to re-book.

**McMaster Carr,** a supplier of commercial and industrial maintenance, repair and operations supplies: B2B businesses can also benefit from mobile eCommerce. In many instances, their customers are not sitting in front of a desktop. They could be on the shop floor or at a building site where an urgent need has arisen. The ability to order in the field helps customers keep their business running. A mobile app can also facilitate starting a shopping cart in the field and finishing it on a desktop after the customer returns to the office.

## **KNOW YOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

You want to be clear about why you need a mobile experience. If your intent is to drive customers to your brick-and-mortar store, you’ll need in-store integrations. If you run a lot of in-store promotions to take advantage of the growing popularity of in-store pickup and returns, you’ll want location-based integration.

To increase sales, you’ll want to have cross-device integration. If a customer favorites a few items or places them in a shopping cart while on their desktop without buying, they should be able to find those items when they resume the transaction on their mobile device.

If you want to increase time spent on your website, then consider a combination of content and commerce. Content is tied to business intent. If the site is straight ecommerce, then you need minimal distractions and information that drives purchase and doesn't distract. If intent is stickiness, then have good content that people will enjoy and share.

## **KNOW YOUR RESOURCES**

Your budget, timeline, and internal resources will determine what kind of project you can take on. Think not only about development costs; but ongoing costs to make sure you can stay on top of maintaining your mobile strategy.

First, do you have the right technical knowledge in-house to select an eCommerce platform? Is there someone who can write the detailed RFP you'll use to solicit bids from digital agencies? Getting these right will play a major role in the success of your venture. You might want to think about using a third-party to handle these tasks.

Once your site is up and running, you'll need to promote it. Do you have an in-house team to plan and execute SEO, analytics, PPC, email marketing and social media? Outsourcing digital marketing for all or even part of these activities could make sense.

A website is always changing. Under normal circumstances, you'll be adding or removing products and services, changing prices, running promotions and more. Do you have the available staff to handle updates? If you set up adaptive sites (each is different based on different devices), you'll need to maintain each site separately.

[http://www.lyonscg.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Selecting\\_ecommerce\\_Web\\_Hosting\\_and\\_Support.pdf](http://www.lyonscg.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Selecting_ecommerce_Web_Hosting_and_Support.pdf) are also critical to maintaining your site so traffic and conversions don't suffer. Your choice of eCommerce application may be driven by your ability to maintain updates to your software. A SaaS system such as Demandware which automatically pushes updates could make more sense if you don't have a large or experienced technical staff. If you have a highly customized eCommerce website, integrating updates with your existing systems can be problematical if your staff doesn't have extensive knowledge of the platform.

## **MAKING THE MOVE TO MOBILE ECOMMERCE**

You've got a desktop site, great. But what about your mobile experience? The continued rise in mobile adoption by shoppers (50% of US online retail traffic comes from smartphones and other mobile devices) is driving more and more eCommerce Managers to undertake the move to mobile. Further making it more of a necessity is Google's move to penalize search results from sites that aren't optimized for mobile.

Before you rush out to create a mobile-ready site or re-launch your eCommerce store, you should take a look at several building blocks that will affect the success of your venture.

What do your customers want in terms of a mobile experience?  
How will mobile eCommerce make your business better?  
What do you want to accomplish with mobile eCommerce?  
Do you have the resources to support mobile eCommerce?

If you need help focusing your thoughts about how your company should approach mobile eCommerce, please [contact LYONSCG \(http://www.lyonscg.com/contact/\)](http://www.lyonscg.com/contact/).

Posted by [Lisa Mayer \(http://www.lyonscg.com/author/lmayer/\)](http://www.lyonscg.com/author/lmayer/) in [mobile eCommerce \(http://www.lyonscg.com/tag/mobile-ecommerce/\)](http://www.lyonscg.com/tag/mobile-ecommerce/), [planning for mobile eCommerce \(http://www.lyonscg.com/tag/planning-for-mobile-ecommerce/\)](http://www.lyonscg.com/tag/planning-for-mobile-ecommerce/)

Share It



[Twitter \(http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http://www.lyonscg.com/insights/mobile-ecommerce-4-points-for-planning-your-website/&text=Mobile eCommerce: 4 Points for Planning Your Website%20%7c&via=LYONSCG\)](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http://www.lyonscg.com/insights/mobile-ecommerce-4-points-for-planning-your-website/&text=Mobile%20eCommerce:4%20Points%20for%20Planning%20Your%20Website%20%7c&via=LYONSCG)



[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=http://www.lyonscg.com/insights/mobile-ecommerce-4-points-for-planning-your-website/&t=Mobile eCommerce: 4 Points for Planning Your Website\)](https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=http://www.lyonscg.com/insights/mobile-ecommerce-4-points-for-planning-your-website/&t=Mobile%20eCommerce:4%20Points%20for%20Planning%20Your%20Website)



[LinkedIn \(http://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle?mini=true&url=http://www.lyonscg.com/insights/mobile-ecommerce-4-points-for-planning-your-website/&title=Mobile eCommerce: 4 Points for Planning Your Website\)](http://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle?mini=true&url=http://www.lyonscg.com/insights/mobile-ecommerce-4-points-for-planning-your-website/&title=Mobile%20eCommerce:4%20Points%20for%20Planning%20Your%20Website)

## NEWS & EVENTS

---

[\(HTTP://WWW.LYONSCG.COM/NEWS/\)](http://www.lyonscg.com/news/)

## CAREERS

---

## ABOUT US

CAREERS ([HTTP://HIRE.JOBVITE.COM/COMPANYJOBS/JOB](http://hire.jobvite.com/companyjobs/jobs.aspx?c=qbu9vfwj)  
CONTACT (/CONTACT/) CLIENT PORTAL ([HTTP://REDMINE.LCGOSC.COM/](http://redmine.lcgosc.com/))

© Lyons Consulting Group Inc., All Rights Reserved