

UBCMS TIPS

Assessing your Website's Readiness for Google Mobile-Search

On April 21, 2015, Google changes its search algorithm in such a way that websites that are not mobile-friendly will be diminished in or disappear from Google searches.

Specifically, **any website that is not configured for smartphones may not appear in Google search results.**

What does this mean for you?

If your website is not already mobile-friendly (i.e. configured for Responsive Web Design – RWD), your site will appear lower (below the fold) when users search for you – or may not appear at all.

How do I know if this is a problem for my website?

The first step is understanding your mobile footprint, meaning how many users find and visit your website by searching on Google using their mobile device. We created a custom dashboard in Google Analytics (all UBCMS sites have Google Analytics enabled) to give you an easy snapshot.

What's a mobile-friendly website?

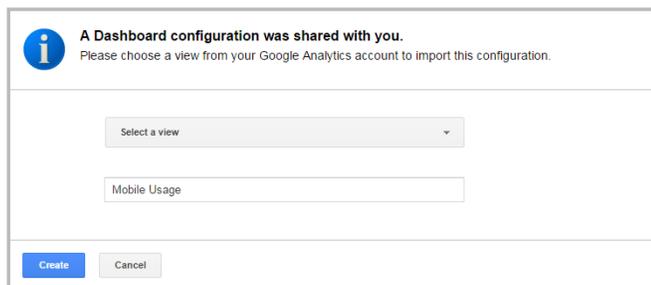
An RWD-enabled, or mobile-friendly, website automatically adjusts its layout and behavior for whatever device a user is using (e.g. desktop, smartphone, tablet). So people using small screens will be able to easily navigate your pages.

How to Determine Your Site's Mobile Footprint

Step 1: Create a Mobile Usage Dashboard in Google Analytics

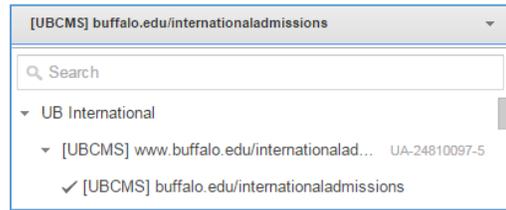
- Go to our custom dashboard in Google Analytics here:

<https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=-61hTSJSRQ-d2xSZwnTIPQ>

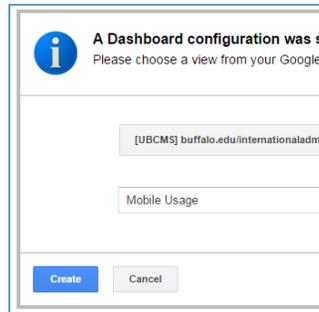


The image shows a dialog box from Google Analytics. At the top left is an information icon (i) in a blue circle. To its right, the text reads: "A Dashboard configuration was shared with you. Please choose a view from your Google Analytics account to import this configuration." Below this text is a dropdown menu labeled "Select a view" with a downward arrow. The selected view is "Mobile Usage". At the bottom of the dialog are two buttons: "Create" (in blue) and "Cancel" (in grey).

- Choose “Select a View” and find your website. (choose the bottom-most option in the tree, as shown). *Optional: change dashboard name by typing over “Mobile Usage.”*



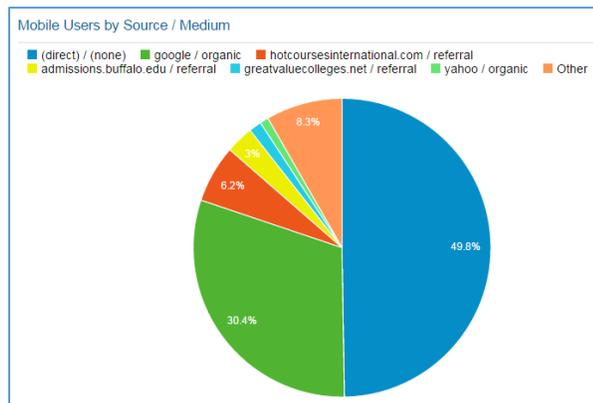
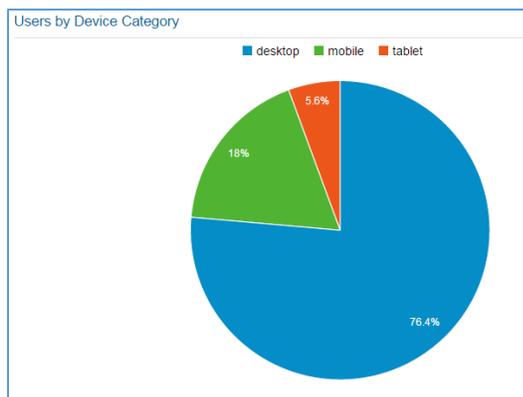
- Choose “Create”



Step 2: Calculate your Google Search-driven Mobile Footprint

You’re now on the Mobile Usage dashboard which displays 2 channels:

- Users by Device Category
- Mobile Users by Source/Medium



- From the **Users by Device Category** chart, find the % for “Mobile” (example: 18%)
- From the **Mobile Users by Source/Medium** chart, find the % for “Google/Organic” and express it as a decimal (example: 30.4% becomes .304)
- Multiply **Users by Device** x **Mobile Users by Source** (decimal)

- The result is your website’s mobile footprint for the date range listed at the top of your dashboard (i.e. how many users get to your website via Google search using a mobile device)

Example (see charts above)

Users by Device: 18

Mobile Users: X .304

5.47% Mobile Footprint

Step 3: Determine Impact & Plan to Rectify

If your website’s mobile footprint is small there should be little impact to your website traffic and no action is necessary.

If your website’s mobile footprint is larger, you will see a dramatic drop in website traffic beginning in late April.

There is no formula to help guide your decision. For some units, even a loss of the smallest amount of traffic affects their business (e.g. loss of prospective student visits). For others, particularly those whose audience is very familiar with their website (e.g. current students), the concern may not be as great.

How do I know if my website is set up on Google Analytics? At least one member of your team should have access to your website’s analytics by logging in to Google. If you are unsure, please request assistance from the DCT Help Desk here: <http://ubcms.buffalo.edu/contact.html>

You may want to ask yourself:

- Who is my primary audience? (Look to your business strategy to inform this)
 - Do they rely solely on Google Organic Search to find my site (or key information on my site)?
 - E.g. if my primary audience is UB Students, they can use the **UB Google Search** to find my site (NOTE: **UB Google Search** is NOT affected by this change).

To counteract the effect, you have a few options:

Begin the process of RWD-enabling your website *(Permanent solution, longer-term)*

- Do a business and technical audit of your site
- Develop and execute a remediation plan
- Request that RWD is turned on
- Find out more: <http://ubcms.buffalo.edu/help/advanced-topics/rwd.html>

If your Unit Web Leader feels that the site’s traffic is going to be heavily impacted by the changes, and your unit is unable to get the site RWD ready by April 21, you can also try these measures:

Purchase Google Ad Words / Keywords *(Stop-gap measure, short-term - immediate impact)*

- For a relatively low investment, Google Ad Words will elevate your website in Google searches. Learn more at: <http://www.google.com/AdWords>

Note: Watch for University Communications’ upcoming “How to Use Google AdWords” tip sheet. It will explain where to purchase keywords and recommend vendors who can help.

Retain a Vendor to Help

- Contact the UBCMS Help Desk for a list of vendors that can support your efforts.

What we need from you:

Determine which of your sites are critically and immediately affected and let us know so we can give you guidance and plan for turning on RWD for your site (s).

More Information:

UBCMS and Responsive Web Design (RWD)

Reference hints, tips, videos and background information

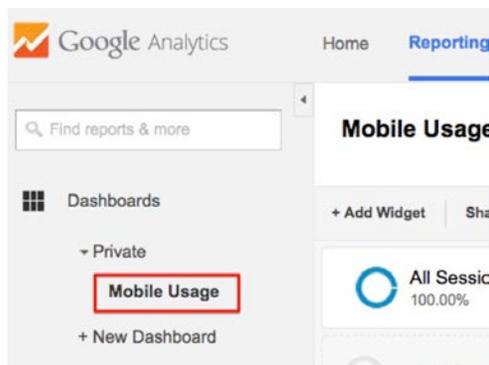
<http://ubcms.buffalo.edu/help/advanced-topics/rwd.html>

RWD & Google Search (4/9/15 Solutions Group presentation)

<https://mediacenter.buffalo.edu/ess/portal/section/df1d1375-b87e-4d1e-82a8-cd5f42d430f1>

Hints:

- Keep in mind:
 - Each person using a Google Analytics account needs to add the [Mobile Usage Dashboard](#) in order to see it in their account.
 - You have to add the [Mobile Usage Dashboard](#) for each separate site
 - Once you load in the [Mobile Usage Dashboard](#) once, you can find it again here:



- There are 4 channels in your dashboard. You can use the **Mobile Organic Searches by Keyword** and **Mobile Pageviews (Top 10)** channel to help guide your decision and later to inform your remediation strategy.
- You can click on the title of any dashboard channel to see the full detailed report
- You can change the date range of your report (default is one month) by clicking on the dates in the upper right of the page