STUDIOPRESS SITES

The Need for Speed (and Why Slow Websites Are Unacceptable)

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It's been said that expectations are the root of all disappointment.

Nowhere is that more true than on the internet.

A decade ago, people might have patiently waited a few seconds for your webpage to load.

But things have changed.

Expectations are now based on typical page load speeds measured in *milliseconds*.

On today's web, nothing less than a super-fast website is even close to acceptable.

It's what people have come to expect because it's what serious websites deliver. Which is why dissatisfaction and impatience grow with every tick of the clock. With each second that passes while your website loads, you lose visitors and burn a poor impression into their memories.

It would be akin to popping into a fast food restaurant but having to wait 15 minutes for your order. *What?* No way.

But here's the kicker ...

You're being judged by more than just your visitors

It's not just your visitors who make snap judgments about you based on your page load speeds. Your visitors are only the most visible segment of your audience.

There is another segment of your audience, a silent lurker, that influences how many new visitors end up on your site in the future.

Search engines.

And whereas your page load speed really only impacts human visitors in one way, search engines will view slow page load speeds as a double whammy.

Here's why:

Search engines, like Google, want to deliver the best possible experience to the people who use their search services. It increases the likelihood that people will keep using them for search.

Google doesn't want to recommend a page with flimsy content or poor security ... and it doesn't want to recommend a page that will take an eternity to load (think: three seconds) once people click on it.

You already know that content quality has been an important ranking factor for a long time. And now, so is page speed — for both the desktop and mobile versions of your site.

It makes sense.

[According to Google's own research](), "53% of mobile site visitors leave a page that takes longer than three seconds to load."

Three seconds.

Google also found that as "page load time goes from one second to seven seconds, the probability of a mobile site visitor bouncing increases 113%."

And here's where the double whammy comes in.

Google has added page load speed as an official ranking factor in its algorithm, but page load speeds were *already* being incorporated because of how they influence the visitor experience.

Google has long looked at how many quality links a page has, how quickly visitors bounce when they visit your page, and other factors.

Do you think quality bloggers are going to link to a page that loads slowly? Heck, they might not have stuck around in the first place to read it!

And the stat above from Google shows you *exactly* how slow page load speeds affect your bounce rate.

Fortunately for you, the solution is simple

The bottom line is that a fast-loading site is no longer a nice-to-have feature. It's a must. You should consider it as fundamental to your website as your domain.

And while you can make cosmetic changes that will impact your site speed (like optimizing images and reducing the number of scripts loading on each page), nothing will impact your site speed like investing in [premium hosting that is optimized for the unique needs of WordPress](#).

If your host also happens to be specifically optimized for the theme framework you're using, all the better.

You can't do anything about your visitors' expectations: they expect your website to load in about the time it takes them to snap their fingers.

That expectation isn't going away. It will only become more entrenched.

So give your visitors (and the search engines who cater to them) what they expect.

You'll be fighting a losing battle for attention if you don't.

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