
THE HUFFINGTON POST

About the Huffington Post

Arianna Huffington founded the Huffington Post in 2005. The online publication has headquarters in New York, with offices in Washington DC, Los Angeles and cities worldwide. The site has more than 50,000 bloggers who contribute on a wide variety of topics across news, entertainment, and lifestyle topics.

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www.huffingtonpost.com

At a Glance

Mobile/Multi-screen Strategy Results

- 50% higher time spent on mobile site
 - 37% more mobile unique visitors since redesign
 - Reaching 29% of all mobile users in the U.S.
 - Growth in publication's mobile advertising
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Huffington Post boosts mobile visitors 37% following site redesign

The Huffington Post is an award-winning online source of news, features and entertainment, with millions of users and billions of page views every month. For devoted readers around the world, the publication offers digital editions in many languages. Reaching the multi-screen reader has become an increasingly important part of the publisher's online strategy.

Adapting to changing mobile behavior

"The Huffington Post never needed to adapt to the Internet, because it was built online," says Kia Makarechi, senior editor, mobile and innovations. "We want to be everywhere our users are." The publication first built a mobile site several years ago, anticipating changes in reader behavior in coming years.

Over the past two years, as more and more content is consumed on mobile, the publication has examined what types of content readers access on various devices. They pick up patterns and trends, such as when readers access news or entertainment stories, how they share content, etc. Huffington Post designers used this information during their redesign to better adapt the site to changing mobile behavior.

The team considered digital ergonomics, for example, "which is how people actually thumb or scroll or tap through the content," Makarechi says. They included infinite scroll, to keep readers finding new stories. They also wanted to increase time spent on the site, by increasing overall visits as well as the average number of articles read during a visit. Control over the landing pages based on location or language was important, too, with geographically relevant content served to the user wherever they are.

The large and ever-growing impact of social media was another big influence on the redesign. The editors see detailed, real-time reporting on referral data, mobile versus desktop visits, how often stories are clicked on, whether that click data is trending up or down, and other important metrics. They can use this data in real time to adjust on the fly, surface new content on the home page, and load the correct stories on the mobile site. "We have a lot more story engagement," Makarechi explains. "It's almost like a flash mob - we have short, intense spurts of activity."

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— Kia Makarechi, senior editor, mobile and innovations, Huffington Post

Mobile site redesign without disrupting desktop

An in-house "tiger team" revised the mobile site in just two months. "Our strategy allows us to focus on mobile browsers and test new layouts and features, without being disruptive to our desktop experience," says Sam Napolitano, the Huffington Post director of engineering. "We'll continue

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to develop our mobile site to be more responsive and introduce it to new viewports and devices, like tablets. But keeping the experiences separate allows us to experiment quickly, in a much more controlled way."

The publication uses advanced device and user agent detection to determine when the user is entering the site from a mobile device. "Our mobile site is completely API-driven and utilizes our internal content APIs to render the pages dynamically," Napolitano explains. "We chose this path as a first step toward a more responsive 'mobile first' strategy."

Time spent on the mobile site jumps 50% since the redesign

The results of the Huffington Post mobile redesign are impressive. Time spent on the mobile website has jumped 50 percent since the relaunch. Mobile unique visitors (from both apps and mobile web) have risen by 37 percent during the same period.

"We're seeing massive growth in mobile on a monthly basis," Makarechi says. "We are reaching 29 percent of the mobile Internet users in the U.S., meaning that nearly a third of all mobile Internet users are finding their way to our content." With such a huge mobile audience, mobile advertising has become a significant growth area for the Huffington Post.

