Google: Indirect Benefits of Improving Page Speed

Google talks a lot about page speed being a ranking factor, but you don't hear them talking too much about the added benefits of page speed that aren't ranking specific. When answering a question about page speed and load times, John Mueller from Google also talked about some of the things that can improve when a site improves their page speed.

The question came up in a Google Webmaster Office Hours with Mueller, specifically with how Google uses load times as a metric and how Google is calculating them.

> *At the moment we essentially differentiate between really, really slow sites and kind of everything that's in the normal range. So if you're looking at milliseconds and calculating time to first byte and kind of looking at the difference between data centers and different locations of the world then you're probably already way into the normal speed area, you're not into that really slow site section.*
>
> *So from that point of view you're probably fine and this is something that from my personal point of view you will definitely see a lot of indirect effects in that they change user behavior quite a bit in that when people go to your website, it really changes how they interact with your website, how they interact with your content, what they look at, how many pages they look at on your website, if they look at other products and services that you offer, if they actually complete the checkout flow or whatever you have that you want to do as kind of as a conversion on your website.*
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> *That's something where a lot of ecommerce websites have done studies on this and they've really found quite significant differences when it comes to even like a couple hundred*

> *milliseconds difference where you'd think normal people wouldn't really notice that but it does have a measurable effect on the general conversion rate there.*
>
> *So that's something where if you're already in this area that's fantastic, I wouldn't worry about it from a Google point of view but you can still use this as a metric to kind of help improve your website further on. And with regards to local servers or CDNs, that's something where you know your users best, you know where they are, you have the metrics and based on that you can optimize for that.*

In other words, don't work on page speed for Google's benefit alone, there is a great deal to be gained from a user experience point of view, especially for sites that have goals and conversions for their visitors.

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