Google: Page experience signals for ranking apply only to mobile

Google has published a list of frequently asked questions regarding Core Web Vitals, the company's set of performance metrics pertaining to user experience, and the upcoming Page Experience update, which will roll out in May 2021.

Page experience signals for ranking apply only to mobile search. In the answers to the questions "Why are there differences in scores between mobile and desktop?" and "Is there a difference between desktop and mobile ranking?" Google states, "At this time, using page experience as a signal for ranking will apply only to mobile Search."

Follow Core Web Vitals guidance for progressive web and single page apps. "Core Web Vitals measure the end-user experience of a particular web page and don't take into account the technologies and architectures involved in delivering that experience," Google said. This means that, with respect to the Page Experience update, Google prioritizes the observed user experience above all else.

Of course, the relevance and quality of the content will continue to be more important than page experience.

If you're on AMP, you're probably prepared for the update. "There is a high likelihood that AMP pages will meet the thresholds," Google said, noting that AMP's evergreen release enables performance improvements without site owners having to invest more resources or change their codebases.

However, sites can also meet, or exceed, these thresholds without AMP, which may be a more suitable option for businesses that rely on display ads for revenue, or do not

wish to maintain AMP versions of their pages. Google lifting the AMP restriction on its Top Stories section may also push publishers away from the framework.

Why we care. The forthcoming Page Experience update signals that Google wants site owners to put a focus on mobile user experience. It will even begin testing a visual indicator in the search results to highlight pages that provide a great user experience. For businesses in highly competitive sectors where having quality content is table stakes, improving your user experience ahead of the update may provide you with an advantage in the rankings.

The FAQ page itself supplies insights about how Google assesses user experience across mobile, desktop, and the various technologies that are used to deliver those experiences.

To help you prepare for the update, we've created a *Guide to Core Web Vitals for SEOs and Developers* and published an article about *What to evaluate ahead of Google's Page Experience update*.

About The Author



George Nguyen is an editor for Search Engine Land, covering organic search, podcasting and e-commerce. His background is in journalism and content marketing. Prior to entering the industry, he worked as a radio personality, writer, podcast host and public school teacher.

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