

What publishers need to consider before dropping AMP [Video]

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Next year, Google will lift the AMP restriction on its Top Stories section and instead use page experience factors to determine what content shows up in the Top Stories. This news has publishers reevaluating AMP and their mobile strategy. During our AMP session of Live with Search Engine Land, Matt Dorville, SEO manager at BuzzFeed, shared some important considerations for publishers ahead of the change.

Wait and see. How the Page Experience update affects the Top Stories carousel and competitors' visibility will be vital information for publishers thinking about moving away from AMP.

"When Top Stories becomes available to publishers that don't have AMP, we're wondering where they're ranking; how many times AMP shows in Top Stories versus [non-AMP pages]; we're also wondering if the visibility of certain publishers that go off AMP changes in a monthly time frame," Dorville said of the factors that will influence whether BuzzFeed continues using AMP.

Meeting UX standards without AMP. "The great thing about AMP is it does provide a really good experience for people going and browsing, reading a quick article and then going to something else, so we're going to want to match that," he said.

The majority of AMP pages already perform well across page experience factors, Google's Rudy Galfi told Search Engine Land. Mobile sites that already match or exceed the page experience of their AMP counterparts may be more prepared to

handle the transition away from AMP without losing visibility in the Top Stories carousel, as where sites that haven't reached that benchmark may want to continue using AMP, at least until they're able to improve their mobile user experience.

Related: *Top SEOs on Google's Page Experience update and what you need to know*

The internal bandwidth factor. Maintaining AMP versions of pages consumes internal resources, but so might optimizing your mobile user experience to a point where you can step away from AMP.

"It's been a really, really tough time to say, 'We're going to put a priority on certain things, like tickets for our site that will help speed, that will help things in the page experience,' but at the same time we have less engineers, we have less bandwidth, we have less people on staff to go and do that," Dorville said, noting that many publishers may be operating with less staff and tighter budgets due to the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Ad revenue vs. AMP. "We have to weigh the pros and cons of having a website that relies on advertising for revenue which, at times, doesn't give us the [performance] metrics we would like," Dorville previously told Search Engine Land.

Removing AMP enables advertisers to explore more opportunities to generate ad revenue, but those opportunities may also result in longer load times, which could negatively impact visibility in the search results.

Why we care. The Top Stories carousel can provide a significant visibility and traffic boost for publishers, which also facilitates their revenue. Since so much is at stake as Google moves to lift the AMP restriction, publishers should take their mobile site experience, internal resources, revenue model and competitor performance into account as they create

their own plans to navigate the change.

Related: *Will publishers drop AMP when it's no longer a requirement for Top Stories?*

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