

Kiddicare.com discovers that optimising the customer experience for mobile is vital in growing revenue from users on the go



Goal

- To create a consistent shopping experience across all channels
- Enable shopping baskets to transfer seamlessly between devices

Solution

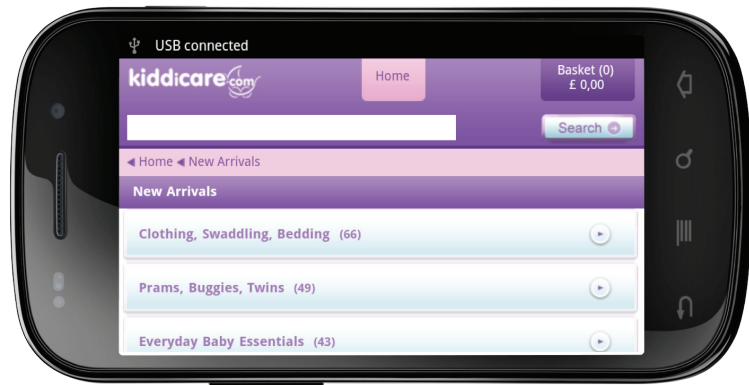
- Replicated desktop website functionality and content on mobile
- Retained important elements such as price, stock numbers, reviews and video
- Eliminated aspects from desktop website that weigh down pages unnecessarily

Results

- Recorded first order four minutes after launch
- Mobile conversion performance consistent with desktop: same categories of purchases, same conversion rate, same average order value (AOV)
- Increased traffic on mobile by 36% since March 2011
- Mobile now accounts for 6% of business; projected to grow to 20% by the end of 2012

Overview

Established in 1974, today Kiddicare is the largest online nursery and baby supplier in the UK. The company cites commitment to customers as the key to success, so when Kiddicare.com noticed rising visitor numbers via mobile they knew they needed to take action. "We were seeing an increase in traffic coming from mobile devices and we knew that consumers were getting a poor mobile experience," explains Simon Harrow, Kiddicare Technology Officer. With approximately 7% of traffic coming from mobile, it was important to optimise the experience for visitors on mobile devices to maximise conversions. This was especially true for Kiddicare since the desktop version of their website utilised Flash elements, which generally does not work on mobile.



As traffic volume from mobile devices increased, Kiddicare designed for these customers by creating a mobile optimised website

No kidding

Keen to give their customers what they clearly needed, Kiddicare.com wasted no time. "Our mobile website from concept to launch took seven weeks," explains Simon. The mobile site was built entirely in-house and "used existing IBM WebSphere infrastructure". What was their process? "We went through the desktop website user journey and took out the elements that were important to our customers such as price, stock numbers, reviews and video. We tried to move as much of the functionality as possible to mobile. We removed anything that would weigh the pages down unnecessarily."

The build revealed further best practices. "Get your mobile designs onto a mobile device as fast as possible," is Simon's first piece of advice. "The 'Add to Basket' button has to be within reach of a thumb. Having more pages and clicks is not necessarily a problem in mobile, where on desktop you may want to keep clicks to a minimum." He also recommends large buttons to accommodate the clumsy human thumb, as well as pages that resize automatically according to the orientation of the user's device.

For Kiddicare.com, a major priority was to enable the customer's shopping basket to transfer seamlessly between channels so users would have exactly the same shopping experience across any device they chose to use. "Our mobile solution is very clean and neat. When you visit by mobile you visit the full Kiddicare.com website rendered to a mobile device UI, it isn't a m. site and uses no re-directs. That was important because it retains our link equity; in other words when you click natural search results it renders the page perfectly to your mobile, not re-directing you to the homepage," Simon says. "Importantly, we wanted it to be intuitive so that anyone who went to the website could find what they were looking for."

Mobile website v. Mobile app:

Many companies struggle with the question of whether to create a mobile application or a mobile website. Kiddicare.com developed both to appeal to brand loyalists and new customers regardless of how they accessed Kiddicare.com on the go. They see the majority of revenue coming from their mobile website.

"If you can only do one, do mobile website over app because you can gain a wider reach. Provide something for a positive mobile experience." — Simon Harrow, Technology Officer, Kiddicare.com



Kiddicare's mobile optimised website makes it easy to search, browse and purchase from a mobile device

Growing leaps and bounds

Kiddicare.com tracks performance with Coremetrics tags on the mobile website, and have seen a 36% increase in traffic on mobile since March 2011. "Mobile is fundamental to the customer purchase journey now," Simon observes. Already 6% of Kiddicare.com's business is conducted via mobile. "We think by the end of next year, 20% of our business will be through mobile."

Even more exciting for Kiddicare.com is that this mobile business appears to be incremental to desktop purchases. "The only difference we see is that we get orders earlier in the morning and later at night than we do on desktop," Simon shares. Developing a mobile experience made Kiddicare.com more accessible and useful for customers during different parts of the day.

Kiddicare.com has also discovered that the mobile website is serving to immediately address two of the most common questions they receive from customers: When will the company release a catalogue? When will the company open more stores? "The mobile website gives customers a real time catalogue in their pocket, particularly important as our stock changes relatively quickly," says Simon. "Plus, with our barcode scanning iPhone app and our mobile search feature, it also turns our competitor's stores into our showrooms. This gives us a chance to convert retail store customers to Kiddicare.com customers through our price-match guarantee, next day delivery and a 365-day return policy - giving us visibility on the high street."

So what would Simon say are the benefits of optimising for a mobile audience? "We don't believe consumers differentiate between devices. Customers are touching your brand; they expect the same experience and the same behavior. If we are able to sell cots, car seats and other highly considered purchases through mobile, we believe you can sell anything." And for Kiddicare.com, Simon says this realisation came not a second too soon. "We had our first mobile order four minutes after going live – our technical team were still testing the website!"

"Although arguably in its infancy; it is absolutely fundamental for consumers to be able to interact with you and your brand through a mobile device."

- Simon Harrow, Technology Officer, Kiddicare.com

