

RYLAND HOMES®

<http://m.ryland.com>

Goals

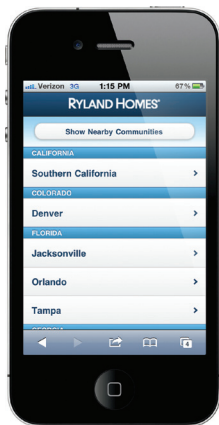
- Generate leads via calls, site registrations and community visits
- Deliver priority content and fast access to local community information via mobile
- Ensure a seamless brand experience
- Drive local conversions and sales

Solutions

- Adapted uniquely mobile location-tracking and calling functions
- Designed for small-screen, intuitive navigation, and streamlined content
- Prioritized mobile content such as photos, directions, pricing and phone numbers
- Ran locally targeted, mobile-only Google AdWords campaigns

Results

- 300% increase in mobile-driven site traffic
- 30% savings in cost-per-conversion on mobile vs. desktop AdWords campaigns
- Strong growth in mobile-driven leads and conversions
- First home sold from a mobile-generated lead



Location-based features and finger-friendly buttons help create a positive mobile experience

Ryland Homes opens doors to local sales with mobile site for home-buyers

Overview

Ryland Homes is one of America's top five production new-home builders, having constructed more than 294,000 homes in 13 states since its founding in 1967. The tech-savvy company is focused on direct sales to consumers, and uses its website to connect home seekers with information about Ryland communities in their areas. Ryland Homes also uses Google AdWords to target online searchers seeking new home information in Ryland markets.

Making the move to mobile

With a steady increase in mobile traffic to the Ryland desktop site, the company recognized it needed to better support its growing base of on-the-go prospects. Ryland launched a revamped mobile site in March 2011, an effort led by Diane Morrison, Ryland's Vice President of Sales and Marketing. The mobile site, Morrison says, empowers Ryland to be "wherever the customer is, and gives them the ability to find us and engage with our brand."

Mobile website best practices employed include:

Keep it Quick

Content was prioritized for mobile, with a focus on the most in-demand content, from maps and photos to floor plans and model details. The team also used mobile functionality for click-to-call and location-based mapping to quickly connect customers with nearby Ryland communities.

"Our customers are out there moving around with their mobile phones, and they need to find things very quickly. They've got to be able to find our locations, look at the product, register with us, and call directly. Those were the kinds of easy choices we wanted to have on the mobile site because those are the kinds of things our customers want to make decisions."
 —Diane Morrison, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Ryland Homes

Simplify Navigation

The site's compact, vertical-scrolling design and persistent "back to" button at the bottom of the screen for reverse navigation speeds the user's progress.

Be Thumb-friendly

Ryland's mobile site uses buttons instead of links. "It gives more room and space for people to touch the screen and work with the screen. It's better

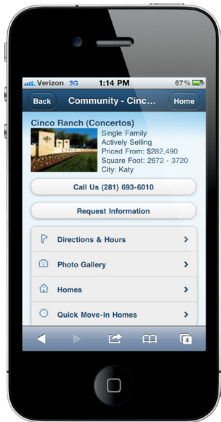
About GoMo

GoMo is a Google-led initiative dedicated to helping businesses “Go Mobile” by providing them with the tools and resources they need to make their websites more mobile-friendly. On the GoMo website, businesses can see how their sites look on a mobile device using the GoMoMeter tool and get personalized recommendations for creating a more mobile-friendly experience. The site also has information on current mobile trends and mobile site best practices, as well as a list of developers ready to help companies build their mobile sites.

For more information visit
<http://howtogomo.com>

“For mobile, it seems like it’s not only the source of leads that end up buying homes, but that mobile also contributes to the conversion of leads. A customer may not start on mobile, but they may pass through mobile, and it’s an important experience for that customer to get as well.”

*—Jason Grovert, Chief Technology Officer,
The Ryland Group*



Click-to-call phone number and fast access to key features like photos and directions make it easier for customers to convert

than trying to get your finger to hit the little spot where the underlined text is,” notes Jason Grovert, The Ryland Group’s Chief Technology Officer.

Design for Visibility

Content for Ryland’s site is easy to read and fits on the screen without requiring users to pinch and zoom. Ryland also applies consistent colors and button styles for each content type to make it easier to use.

Make it Accessible

To ensure a consistently high-quality experience across mobile devices, Ryland uses jQuery Mobile software and responsive web design to load the right site variation for each user’s smartphone or tablet. The site also avoids Flash, which is unsupported by many devices.

Make it Easy to Convert

Ryland focused on features such as clickable phone numbers, location-based driving directions to nearby communities, and brief online registration forms to increase mobile conversions. “Our customers are out there moving around with their mobile phones, and they need to find things very quickly,” Morrison says.

Make it Local

To localize the mobile experience, the development team took advantage of uniquely mobile functionality. “For example, we use the location of the mobile device to show our nearby communities in order, by distance. You just can’t do that on the desktop,” Grovert says.

Listen, Learn and Iterate

Ryland has continued to iterate and improve on the current site, and is planning additional features such as forward-to-a-friend functionality and events information. The team also built an iPhone / iPad app, but Grovert says their development strategy was “web first, not app first,” because of the mobile web’s wider device coverage.

Mobile site + mobile ads = local leads and conversions

Even the best mobile sites need a traffic engine. The Ryland team used locally targeted, mobile-only Google AdWords campaigns to drive site traffic. The results? The mobile-targeted AdWords campaigns not only spurs leads and conversions, but costs about 30 percent per-conversion less than the desktop web-targeted campaigns. Conversions are ultimately driven by the site’s well-optimized user experience, which makes it easy for prospects to find what they’re seeking quickly on mobile devices. As a result, the mobile site has also shown steadily increasing traffic, up an impressive 300 percent by August from its March launch.

The ultimate sign of success: The first home sale that began with a mobile lead. “We got really excited about having a sale that originated from the mobile site,” Morrison says. That landmark, along with the surging site traffic, Morrison says, are “early-on proof that the mobile site is really working for us.”

