

Responsive Web Design offers FamousBirthdays.com a mobile advantage



About FamousBirthdays.com

- Santa Monica, California
- Offers birthdates and profiles of famous people, ranked by popularity

Goals

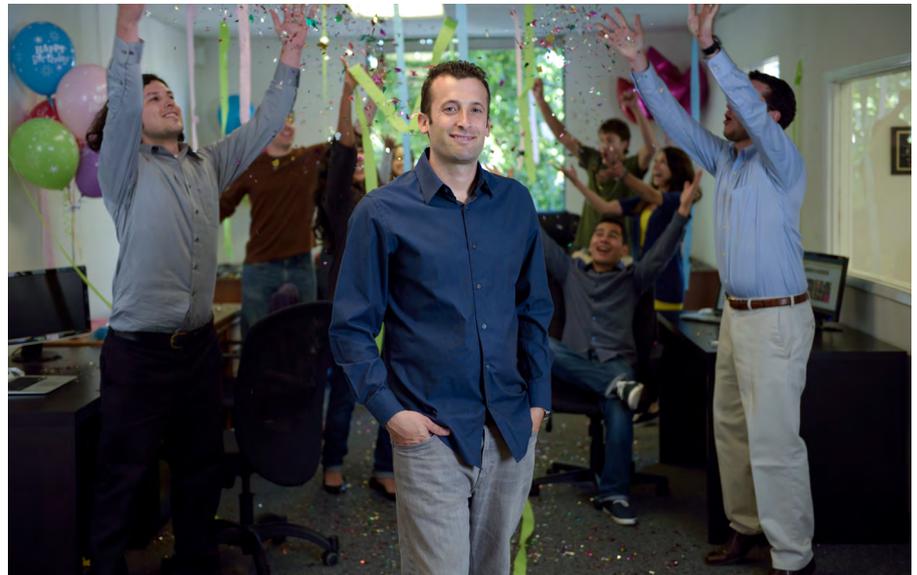
- Capitalize on mobile opportunity
- Create a fast, responsive website
- Offer a great user experience

Approach

- Embrace RWD
- Use RWD to improve overall website code quality
- Encourage and respond to user feedback

Results

- Mobile strategy led to 20-fold increase in smartphone visitors in two years
- Increased awareness of user trends
- Richer user experience



When Evan Britton and his team relaunched FamousBirthdays.com in 2012, they had the mobile web revolution in mind. Going mobile early offered FamousBirthdays.com the opportunity to put some competitive distance between their site and larger, slower-moving industry players.

The initial challenge was to create a fast, smooth and responsive mobile website that guaranteed users a great experience. Evan, the founder of FamousBirthdays.com, explains, “When you’re running a small business, it’s important to stand out. We wanted to be ahead of the game and get our mobile site up and running quickly. We also thought it was very cool to offer something better than some of the big players.”

“Without RWD, we wouldn’t have been able to grow as quickly.”
— Evan Britton, Founder, FamousBirthdays.com

Evan adds, “We were already leaning towards Responsive Web Design (RWD).” With Google’s added endorsement, FamousBirthdays.com decided to “put everything into RWD.”

Evan points out that RWD has many advantages over other methods. It’s scalable, allowing developers to adapt quickly. It is a complete solution that doesn’t require changes across multiple sites. RWD allows FamousBirthdays.com to use a single, centralized link, which the team believes is especially important when their link is shared using social media. Finally, RWD adapts to a device’s screen size which suits a multi-screen environment.

Assuring quality across all screens

RWD is actually based on browser width. So, for Evan and his team to guarantee an excellent user experience on all screens, the design, content and CSS coding were all equally important.



Google Case Study



“The important thing to realize is that growth in the mobile market is all about offering a better experience...the potential in the mobile space to grow ad revenue is huge.”

**— Evan Britton, Founder,
FamousBirthdays.com**

Although FamousBirthdays.com discovered that their existing site wasn't compatible with a number of browser widths initially, the team turned this into an advantage. Spending time on finding and fixing holes in their code led to considerable improvements to the user experience, and gave them an even better chance to move ahead of the competition.

It took the team around six months to implement RWD. Once FamousBirthdays.com saw the results, there was no question that it had been time well spent.

Astonishing results

In June 2012, before implementing RWD, FamousBirthdays.com received 100,000 visitors from smartphones. In June 2014, post-implementation, this figure had rocketed to two million. The reason for this astonishing growth is the sheer quality of the mobile user experience.

As Evan says, “The important thing to realize is that growth in the mobile market is all about offering a better experience.” Not only did FamousBirthdays.com's traffic grow 20-fold by improving the site experience on mobile, the team also took advantage of the “the potential in the mobile space to grow ad revenue.” As the mobile market matured, Famous Birthdays.com saw their CPMs grow over time.

Happy FamousBirthdays.com

FamousBirthdays.com now employs 12 people, including a dedicated developer, QA resource, and editor to make sure all content is approved.

Monitoring user activity and responding to feedback are essential. “We're currently receiving over four million monthly unique visitors organically on the site, so we have a lot of traffic. We encourage user feedback – for me it's the best part of the job – and responding to their requests makes the site more engaging to other users.”

Today, RWD is integral to everything FamousBirthdays.com does. Evan claims that “without RWD, we wouldn't have been able to grow as quickly.”

About Responsive Web Design

Responsive Web Design allows publishers to dynamically control the presentation of their websites according to the properties of the screen or device that these are being viewed on. For more information, see Building Smartphone-Optimized Websites on the Google Developers site.

To learn more, visit:

developers.google.com
