



Google Case Study

By using Responsive Web Design, The Japan Times offers an optimal cross-device user experience, consequently boosting user base by 50%

The Japan Times

About The Japan Times

- japantimes.co.jp
- Headquartered in Tokyo
- English language newspaper (printed), news website, Japanese textbooks

Goals

- Boost online ad revenue
- Expand user base by building a single browser-based site

Approach

- Used Responsive Web Design (RWD) to build a browser-based site focused on usability while ensuring compatibility between multiple devices
- Improved site design for mobile and tablet users

Results

- Unique users up by 50%
- New user visits up by 30%
- Mobile device traffic up by 79%
- Page views up by 11%



The Japan Times was founded in 1897 with the support of Hirobumi Ito, Yukichi Fukuzawa, and elder statesmen of the Meiji Era. It is well known as Japan's oldest English language newspaper and has readers in over 200 countries. The online edition, The Japan Times Online, not only provides Japanese news to locals but also aims to deepen understanding between Japan and other countries.

With the CMS getting outdated, the team at The Japan Times had been struggling to find a way to monetize their online business, and **going multi-screen came as a natural choice**. Developing an app was another consideration but, since The Japan Times Online is read by a wide age group, they decided instead to revamp the website using Responsive Web Design (RWD). This shift enabled them to **provide the best possible user experience across different devices while using a single URL**. What also led the team to choose RWD is that if the website is responsively built, **both the layout and content can be managed centrally, with a single update**.

Rebuilding the website to RWD generated a **50% boost in unique users**, and a **30% uplift in new visitors**. **Traffic from mobile devices increased by 79% while total pageviews grew by 11%**. According to Mark Thompson and Hiromitsu Chifuri, respectively Senior Web Editor and Digital Enterprise Division Deputy Manager at The Japan Times, "these results show that our new RWD offers a positive experience to our users."

About multi-screen

90% of the media we come into contact with is screen media. Users choose from multiple devices such as smartphones, tablets, computers or TVs depending on the situation, using them to meet a range of needs. With the development of multi-screen, the key to business success now hinges on whether your website is optimised for smartphones and mobile devices. Google's multi-screen resources provides hints for building websites capable of providing an optimised user experience for visitors using a range of devices.

See the following website for more information.

<http://www.google.com/think/multiscreen/whitepaper-multiscreenconsumer.html>

"The idea that the mere optimization of a single code snippet will enable our users to seamlessly access our online content, regardless of the device and screen size they're on, is very appealing."

Mark Thompson (Senior Web Editor, The Japan Times)

Hiromitsu Chifuri (Deputy Manager, Digital Enterprise Division, The Japan Times)

To date, Mark Thompson and Hiromitsu Chifuri have received **extremely positive feedback from users regarding the site redesign**. "Our next challenge is to further increase our user base by making the content easy to share on social media", Mark Thompson and Hiromitsu Chifuri say. "We are also thinking of implementing alerts when updating news in order to increase mobile user engagement."

Going multi-screen through RWD was aligned with The Japan Times' mission to "facilitate communication between Japan and the rest of the world" as users can now browse content from anywhere, and in a cross-device manner. "We achieved a significant milestone and can now focus on sharing news with the rest of the world."