

A man with a beard, wearing a dark suit and a red and black plaid shirt, is holding a smartphone in his hands. He is sitting at a desk with a laptop and a white coffee cup. The background is a window with horizontal blinds, and the scene is lit with warm, golden light. The text 'Avoiding Mobile Mishaps' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Avoiding Mobile Mishaps

Five common mistakes companies make when recasting their websites for mobile, and how to avoid them

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A Clicktale e-book

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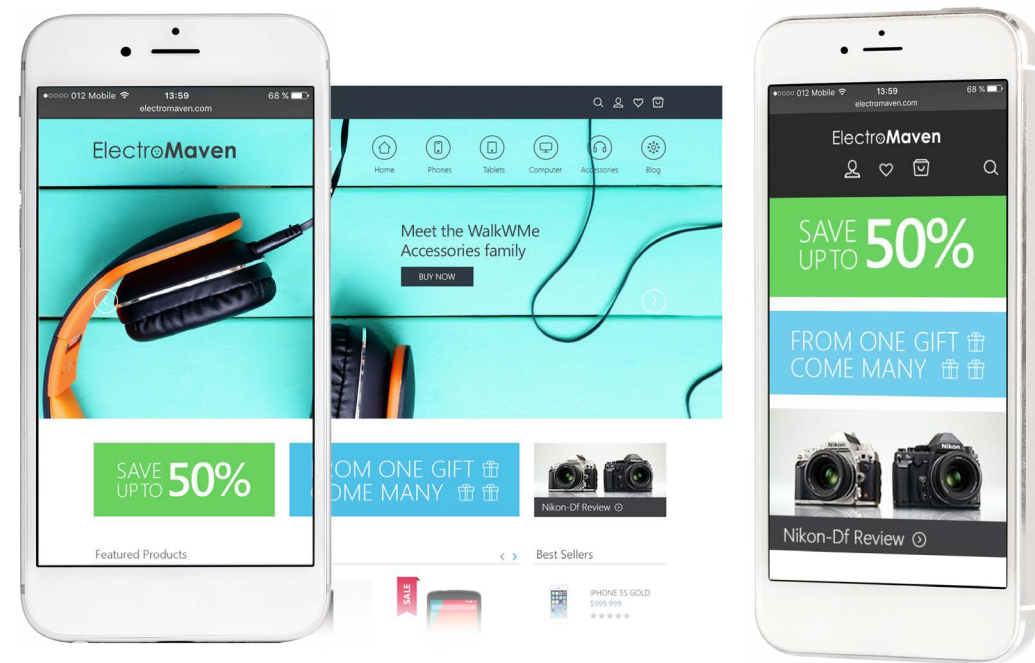
Overview

On small-format mobile devices like smartphones, users interact with in ways that are dramatically different from interactions via desktop and laptop computers, or even full-size tablets.

Despite this undisputable fact - which virtually all smartphone owners recognize from their own browsing - when recasting sites designed for the desktop to mobile, too many companies simply attempt to recreate the desktop experience.

Typically, to make their sites mobile-friendly, companies utilize either responsive or adaptive design. Responsive design adjusts a site to the size of the screen on which it is viewed by automatically rearranging site elements. Adaptive design allows for better control of how the website appears on each device, but requires more upfront investment in design than responsive sites.

Both of these approaches succeed at fitting lots of content onto a very small screen. But neither addresses the real mobile site challenge: How to adapt sites to the unique mobile user experience, not just to the mobile device.



The fact is that both responsive and adaptive sites – in attempting to duplicate the desktop experience on mobile – fall short in a number of key usability areas.

In this e-book, we present five common mistakes that companies make when porting sites to mobile, and suggest effective ways to fix them.

Mistake #1

Endless pages

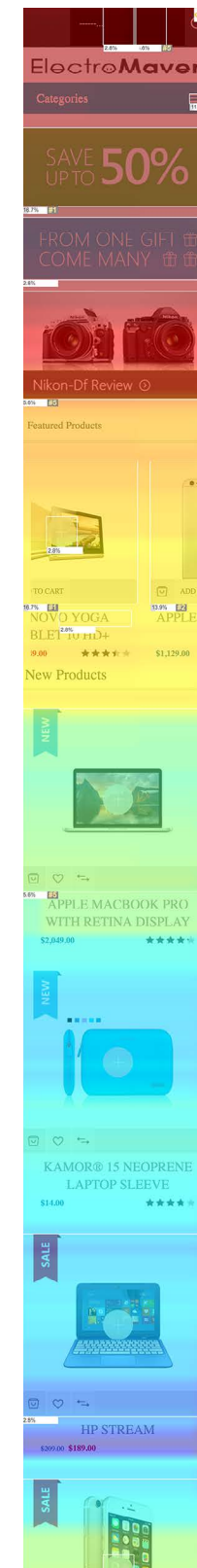
Mobile users show a clear pattern of behavior when they land on a new web page or open an app: They first scroll down to the bottom of the page or screen, then scroll back to the top. Why? They want to know up front what they're getting into. Visitors ask themselves whether it's worth committing to dive into the page. And indeed, the next step on long mobile pages or app screens is frequently abandonment. Now, perhaps these visitors are planning to revisit the site on their computers – and perhaps they'll actually remember to do so. But given the fickle nature of online consumers, don't count on it.

Immediacy is in the DNA of mobile browsing, and its greatest strength: It's available on the fly, when customers are between meetings or grabbing a bite to eat. Adapt your mobile design to the way users behave on mobile sites: Short pages, tight text, large fonts, and finger-friendly navigation. Need inspiration? Look at any good app, like 1-800 Contacts or Fidelity. That's the experience your users expect.

Exposure heatmap



Attention heatmap



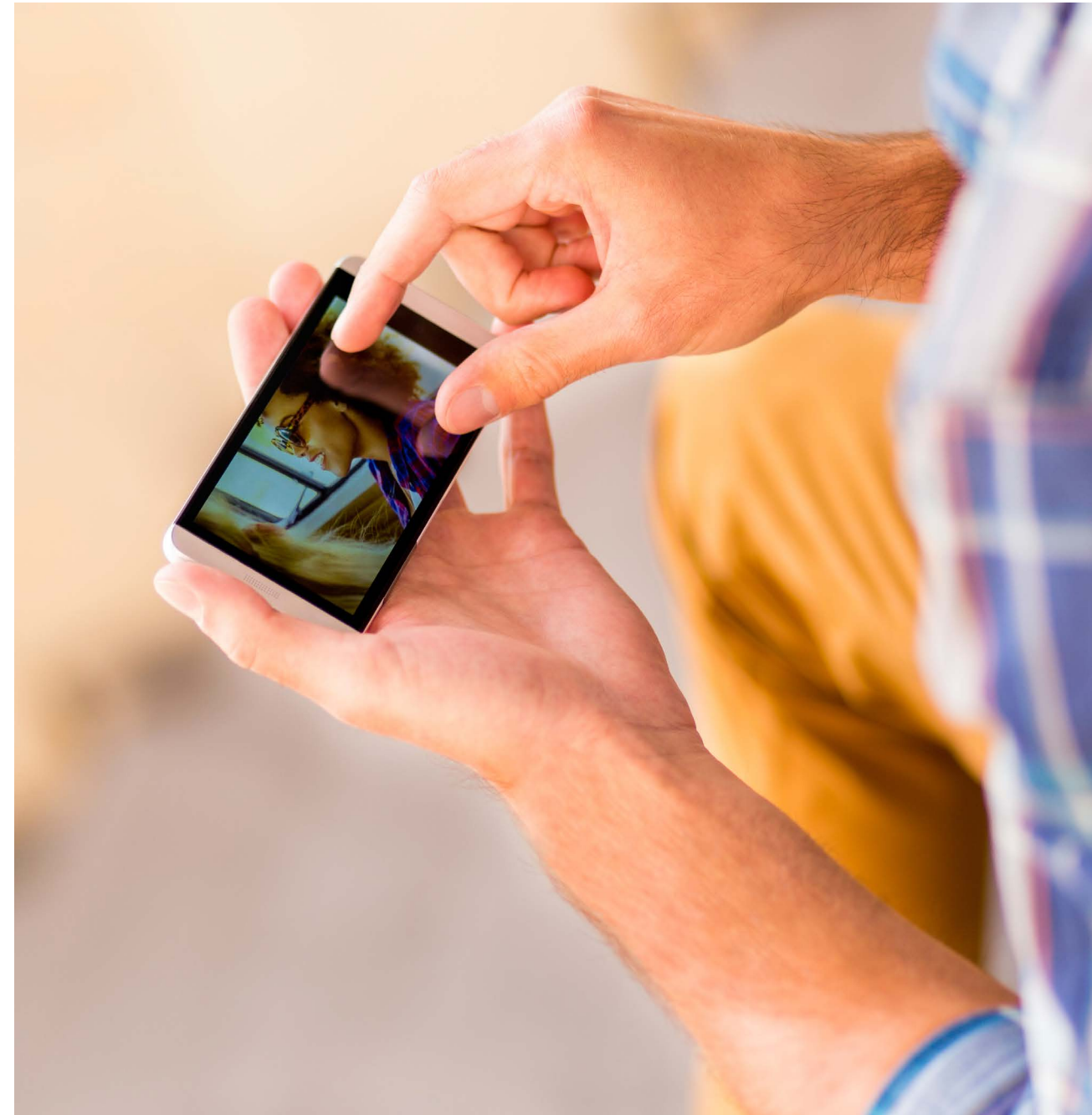
Mistake #2

Pinching and tilting

Session replays of actual mobile users using actual mobile web sites reveal a clear usage trend on text-heavy sites: Users spend massive amounts of time pinching, tilting, and zooming.

These customers really, truly want to see what your site has to say – but it's really hard on a screen. Mobile sites need to provide users with a sense of control. In today's best apps and mobile sites, you never need to pinch or tilt.

Get your message across with short, memorable headlines and text. If it's not comfortably visible on a five-inch screen without zooming, it's too much. Everything else needs to be available via **a clear information hierarchy accessible via a slide-out menu, and augmented by intelligent search functionality.**



Mistake #3

Too many CTAs

A mobile page with too many calls to action – links, buttons, banners, etc. – does not create a sense of rich choice in mobile visitors, as it does on the desktop. It confuses them, overwhelms them, and often chases them away.

On replays of customer interactions with sites featuring multiple CTAs, it's common to see numerous mistaken taps, and frantic clicks on the Back button to try and correct them. Users desperately pinch and zoom in an effort to hit elusive and microscopic text links. More often than not, they miss the links despite their best efforts.

CTAs on a mobile site should be **literally few and far between.**

They should be *full screen width* – making them amenable to one-handed use. If you must use text links, make them large. But best to focus on a few, well-spaced graphic CTAs.

Case in point

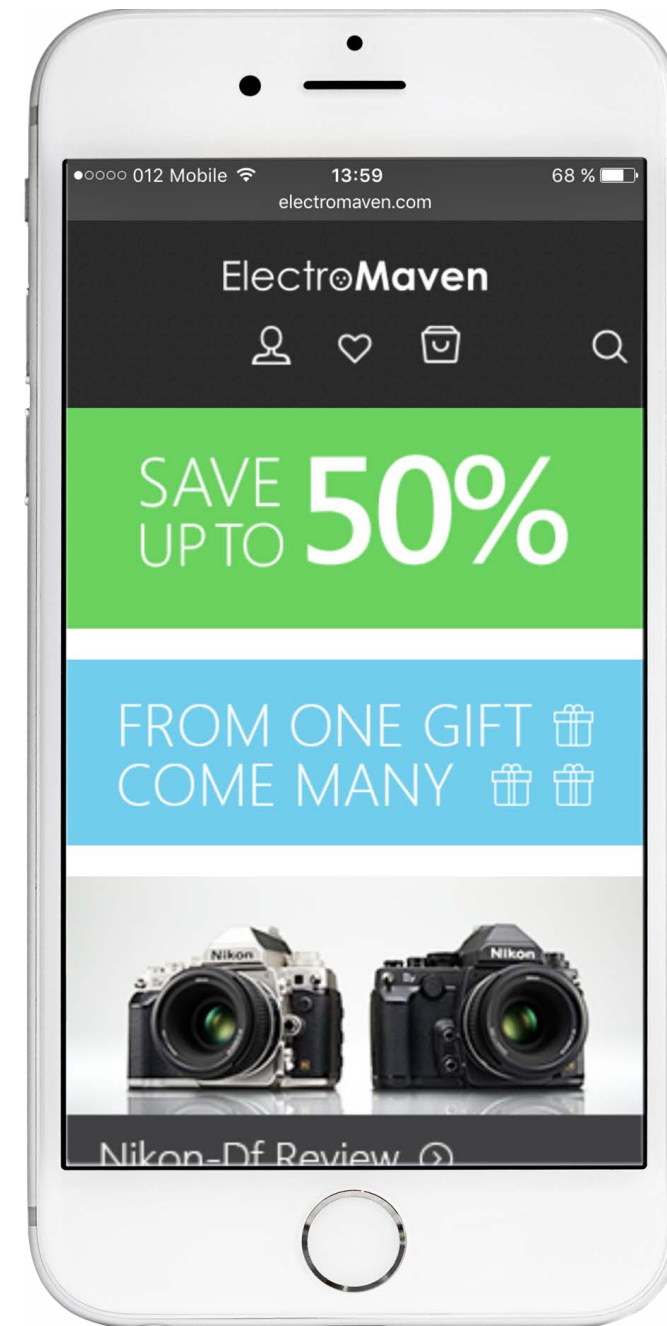
In addition to actual page content, the mobile site of one online retailer had a large header that displayed various promotions and discount offers.

As expected, visitor attention was more focused on the actual page calls to action further down the page, and less on the promotional header.

However, on mobile not everyone was scrolling down enough to see the calls to action.

By dropping this marketing promotion (the header) in favor of user experience (easily accessible CTAs),

the company raised conversions by OVER 4%, and saw a substantial bump in revenues.



Mistake #4 Frustrating forms

Forms are where your customers open themselves to you, and it's crucial that they feel comfortable doing so. They're one of the most sensitive friction points in any funnel. And this sensitivity is compounded on mobile.

If long forms are bad on desktop, they are a disaster on mobile. Drop-off and abandonment are more common on forms that extend below the fold, and there is a dramatically higher error rate on submissions from mobile visitors. Forms can also be hard to see, as they tend to get partially hidden by pop-up keyboards.

The remedy? Short forms in bite-size chunks. Cut out extraneous fields – mobile forms should require the absolute minimum of information.

Break the process into steps. Four no-scroll steps are better than one long form.

Make sure your mobile forms have:

**Inline validation
in all possible
fields**

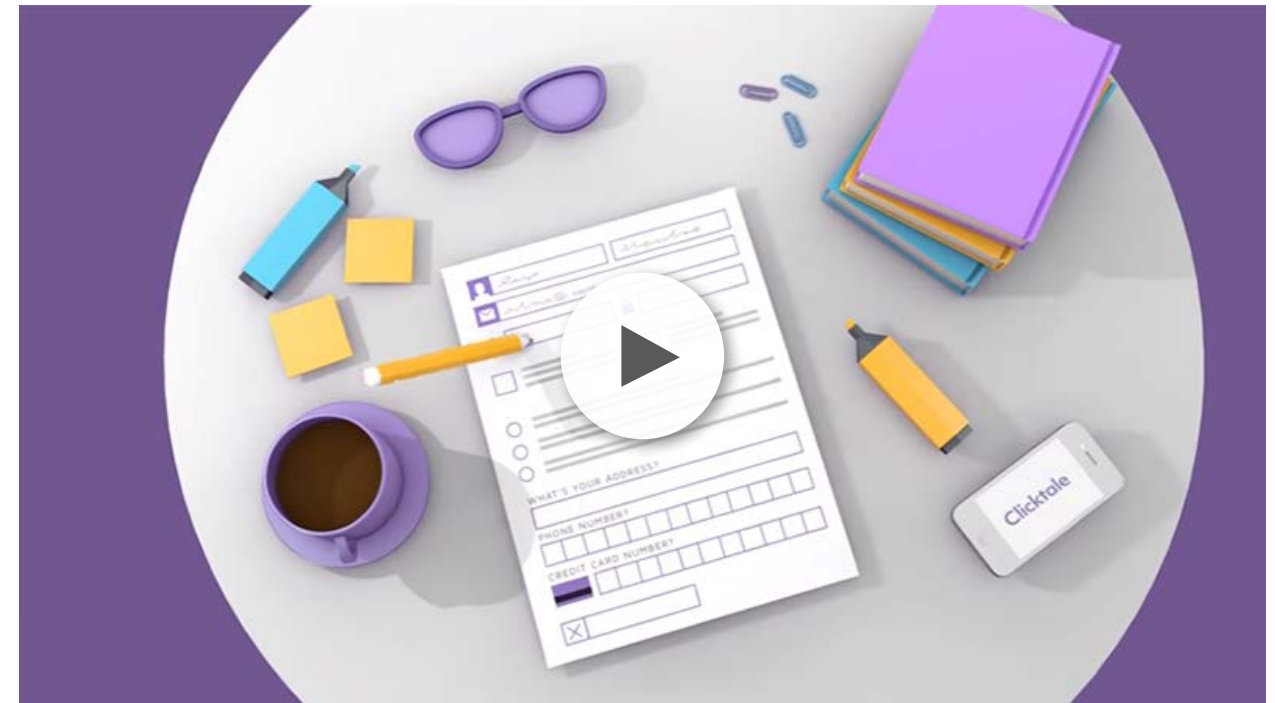
This allows users to correct errors on-the-fly, and avoids errors on submit. And **if there are errors on submit, don't erase the information users already typed in**, unless there's a serious security-based reason to do so.

**A "show
password"
option on login
forms**

Let users see what they've typed and correct errors as they go. Wherever possible, lower the typing required by offering pop-up visual interfaces like calendars for date entry.

**Open space
at bottom of
screen**

Allow users to see all fields of a form, even when the keyboard is open, so they do not need to scroll to reveal fields that are hidden behind the keyboard, and reopen the keyboard to complete them.



Click ► for more Clicktale actionable insights on forms

Mistake #5

Slow load times

Your visitors expect the mobile experience to be as fast as the desktop. However, weaker mobile computing power and lower bandwidth over mobile data connections make this a challenge. It's not uncommon to see multiple, frustrated taps on top-of-page CTAs from users who itch to interact even before the full page has loaded. Abandonment often follows when the site – not yet fully loaded – fails to respond.

To eliminate visitor impatience with page load, **lighten your mobile pages drastically. Reduce image weight, even at the expense of resolution. Avoid complex and heavy navigation gimmicks like carousels. Streamline JavaScripts and other code, and simplify CSS.**

After page load, try to **provide instant feedback wherever possible**. For example, instead of having users wait for a response to a form they've submitted, provide instant graphic feedback with a "pressed button" or "processing..." graphic. Adopt "lazy load" technology, which loads below-the-fold content only when the user scrolls down, freeing up bandwidth for fast loading of above-the-fold content.



The bottom line

Keen awareness of marked differences between mobile and desktop usage patterns are key to creating a smooth, satisfying mobile user experience for your site.

Users behave differently on their mobile devices than they do in a desktop environment. Whether your site uses responsive or adaptive design to recast the online experience for on-the-go users, make sure that the end result is a mobile customer experience that is in line with app usability standards.

Keep in mind that every site, business, and target audience is unique. Today, advanced technology can provide you with real-life insight into how actual customers interact with your site on their mobile devices. Watch what your users are doing, so you can identify – and quickly overcome – your own mobile mishaps.



How Clicktale can help

Clicktale reveals customer behavior and intent on mobile sites and apps to provide valuable insights that help businesses create a smooth, mobile-friendly customer experience:

- Pinpoint drop-off points on too-long content pages and forms
- Detect behaviors that indicate poor usability
- Uncover customer confusion as to which CTA to choose
- Show customer frustration with slow-loading sites
- Identify error-prone form fields where hints and content guides can help

Find out how Clicktale can help you identify and quickly overcome **your mobile mishaps,** and improve the overall customer experience on your website, mobile site & apps.

[Request a demo](#)