



Big Web and Mobile Changes for 2018: Will They Kill You or Will You Kill It?

By Susan Saldibar

Have you noticed that you now get better website functionality and features via your smartphone than on your laptop? The folks at [G5](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner) tell me that 2018 will be the year that mobile really takes over the internet. According to G5, “70% of digital time is now spent on mobile (source: comScore “2017 US Cross-Platform Future in Focus”), and that number is only expected to increase. And here’s what I found interesting: having a mobile-friendly site isn’t enough anymore--now you need to be “mobile-first.”

There is a lot more to all of this, and here are G5’s recommended key areas you need to really nail for your community to compete in 2018:

1. Mobile-First Indexing. Soon to be the “new normal” for SEO. What does that mean for your website? It means that Google’s algorithms are eventually going to use “mobile-first indexing” to rank your web pages. So your mobile website has to be on point with its SEO capabilities to make sure Google recognizes it and shows snippets from your site in search results. G5 recommends senior living communities focus first on their mobile and second on the desktop. And make sure you understand what a “responsive” website really means. It’s a lot more than how it looks.

2. Voice Search. Lots of fun for us consumers, but not necessarily a piece of cake for your webmaster. G5 tells me that 40% of adults use voice search each day. Remember, we now have cool stuff like Amazon Echo and Google Home to take action on voice commands. That means boomers who are seeking a community for their moms and dads may decide to use their voice to search instead of their fingers. Just another thing you need to be ready for. Here’s what G5 recommends to get ready for voice search:

- Claim your Google My Business Listing.
- Prioritize long-tail keywords and optimize for natural language searches.
- Address FAQs using comprehensive FAQ pages or dedicated landing pages that ensure your website includes questions phrased as natural speech.

3. **Videos.** You already know how important video is, but what are you actually doing about it? Are you using more videos instead of static photos in your websites? According to a Cisco study, videos drove more than 70% of all internet traffic, and this figure is likely to grow upwards of 82% in 2020.

The good news is that you can now afford video. There are new platforms and DIY tools that can help businesses churn out professional-quality videos on a tighter budget, the folks at G5 tell me. You should check out G5's [Senior Living guide to making irresistible videos](#). After you produce your videos, it's time to create a distribution plan, such as adding them to your website and Youtube Channel, and using them in social media posts.

4. **Social Media Advertising.** One of the best ways to get your highly tailored messages in front of a highly tailored audience. You are probably using Facebook, since such a huge percentage of your target market uses Facebook.

G5 warns us, however, not to assume that, just because we post, we are being seen. A Forbes study found that only about 4% of social media followers will actually see your content in their newsfeeds. And as Facebook, Instagram, and other channels increase the importance of paid advertising, even fewer followers will see your posts unless you invest in paid and boosted ads. And, G5 shared another statistic. According to research by Statista, the social media advertising spend has doubled in the past two years, with \$13.5 billion spent in 2017 alone. So, what's happening is that organic social media engagement is being diminished as the growth of social advertising continues to skyrocket. In other words, it pays to do paid social media. Something to think about.

5. **Employee Advocacy.** This can be a bit tricky in the senior living community world because you need to be ever mindful of privacy concerns, such as HIPAA, as well as keeping a watchful eye over postings. Having said that, according to G5, employee engagement is now being recognized as a great way to organically catapult your reach. G5 shared an example. If a company only has 3% of their employees share content related to their company, that mere 3% can yield a 30% spike in "shares", "likes" and comments. Wow. Might be worth empowering trusted staff members to share your community posts with their Facebook friends.

Clearly senior living communities need to be ready to address these challenges. And you may not want to go it alone. G5 is an expert in the senior living space and they can help you stay up-to-date with the latest trends. A great way to start is by reading their [The Guide to Expert SEO](#).

And get going! It's already 2018!



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