Create a Mobile Friendly Course

Many students are accessing courses and completing daily course activities from their smartphones, tablets or other mobile devices. Therefore, it is increasingly important to ensure your courses are mobile-friendly. When transitioning a course to a mobile friendly format, it is best to focus on segments of the course in 2 or 3 weeks at a time.

Concentrate On A Single Learning Objective.

Mobile learning is best in small doses. Such as a "moment of need" online support tool or convenient knowledge refresher. In short, mobile learning courses should be bite-sized and easily digestible. As a result, you should focus on a single learning objective, goal, or topic for each mobile-friendly online resource. Break more complex subject matter into separate eLearning modules and activities. A complicated compliance online training course becomes 10 individual mobile-learning modules that center on a specific sub-topic. Concentrating on a single learning objective also allows you to stress the benefits and applications for each eLearning activity. For example, mobile learners know exactly what they'll receive from the mobile-friendly task tutorial, as well as how they can use the information in the real world.

Cut The Clutter And Keep It Concise.

There is no room for clutter or extraneous content in mobile learning. Mobile learners don't have the time to sort through unnecessary information. Not to mention that a cluttered course makes it more difficult for your mobile learners to navigate your course. White space is nothing to be afraid of. In fact, you should leave some space between elements to avoid cognitive overload and focus their attention. Bear in mind that our mobile learners are already dealing with a multitude of external distractions and stresses. And your course should be a place where they can escape the chaos and get the information they require.

Screen Space Is A Precious Commodity.

Screen space is prime real estate when you're creating mobile-friendly eLearning courses. Which is why you must cut your images down-to-size and remove large blocks of text. Break it down into easily digestible bullet lists that occupy less room and prevent cognitive overwhelm. Avoid bulky graphics, icons, and graphs that require a lot of screen scrolling.

Minimize Multimedia or Avoid it.

Mobile learning is often limited by bandwidth constraints. As an example, mobile learners who access your course on a Wi-Fi connection have slower download speeds. An image that shows up quickly on their lightning-fast internet tend to take much longer on their smartphones. For this reason, you should only use minimal multimedia elements, such as images, videos, and infographics – better yet avoid these for the next few weeks. Compress large files or include links to external sites that mobile learners can access at a later time.

Below are some suggestions for optimizing your course materials for students and accessing Moodle from mobile devices. Setting up the format of the course for next few weeks:

- Topics or weekly course format is best suited to mobile devices. In topics format, the first section or the highlighted section is shown by default in the app. In weekly format, the current week is shown.
- Don't use orphaned activities or direct links to activities (the links will work but is not the best experience for mobile).
- Site or course blocks are not displayed in the Mobile app, so avoid putting important information in blocks.

For course content:

- Use responsive HTML in pages.
- Use a page resource or Book instead of downloadable documents where possible.
- Avoid uploading many documents or having numerous, text heavy pages. Think more in terms of short "information-bytes".
- If you include YouTube videos, keep them short and consider providing them for download and offline viewing in a folder. Not all video formats are supported so add them in different formats. (MP4 is probably the most widely accepted format.)
- If you want to include large audio files in your course, consider including them embedded in a label or page rather than as a file resource. The reason is that embedded files will play even if the screen is locked but files won't play with the screen locked.

Media download for offline usage:

- To enable media files, such as video, to be downloaded
- The file must be uploaded to the course, rather than being linked to (from YouTube, Vimeo etc)
- The file must be small - less than 2MB for 3G users or less than 20MB for WiFi users

Test Before Reopening the Course to Students.

Mobile-friendly courses require the same amount of testing and attention as traditional courses. Preview your layout on multiple devices or use a browser that mimics different resolutions and screen sizes. Ensure that every element is in place and serves its purpose. This is also the time to omit unnecessary content that has slipped through the cracks and make last minute modifications. Evaluate every version or breakpoint and step inside the shoes of your mobile learners. For example, the graphics in your smartphone version may be a distraction or slow to upload. Thus, you need to consider whether they help or hinder the learning process. Do they really support the subject matter and simplify complex ideas? Or should you opt for less intrusive images or typography to convey the general tone?

By using some of these recommendations, you will be able to quickly transition any course into one that is more mobile friendly for students.