

When running a business today, online presence is everything

Google is about to turn everyone's world upside down with a major Page Experience Algorithm Update, with its much-anticipated Core Web Vitals becoming ranking signals from mid-June. This won't actually come into full force in search rankings until the end of August—so you have a little more time to get ready, but not much!

Temps de lecture : minute

1 July 2021

To put it bluntly, the days when it was all about gaming the Google algorithm are well and truly over. The algos are now going to be really, really good at analysing a wider range of metrics to work out the extent to which you are offering your site visitors valuable, interesting, and accessible content, in a user-friendly way.

So it's just about the words, right? Nope! This is where the game is really changing. The *imagery*, from your logos to your brand pictures and videos - essentially everything visual on your site - also has to deliver an exceptional user experience (UX). So if your page can't load your main content—usually a large visual element, such as a hero image, in less than 2.5 seconds—you're going to be in trouble. And if Google thinks your website is too unstable due to an unexpected shift of visual content during page load, your SEO ranking could plummet and you'll lose valuable traffic.

Most likely, you haven't been thinking about the visuals in the context of SEO. You've been focused on making the copy longer and more authoritative, and the terminology more subtle. That means you risk overlooking multiple technical changes to your visual media required to

preserve your carefully-built Google result page rank.

It's essential to have the optimal video formatting to match the different sizes of screens your site visitors are viewing through, and perfect Core Web Vitals alignment across browsers.

If you're an ambitious startup or new business that relies on SEO to acquire new customers, build a loyal community of followers and advocates, failing to adapt your images and video for Core Web Vitals could be extremely damaging. The good news is that Google isn't trying to trip anyone up here, and there's lots of guidance on what needs to be done. But if you haven't started on this prep, it absolutely has to rise to the top of your to-do-list.

It's probably safest to get your technology experts to handle all this, as in practical terms all your visual assets will probably have to be re-encoded by hand to fit different screen sizes and social platforms. They will also have to get down into the weeds to ensure post-mid June you'll be getting fully optimised page load times and perfect Core Web Vitals alignment across browsers across different platforms.

The action plan should comprise:

- Optimise page loads by compressing images so that they take up less bandwidth, but still display in high quality, while also finally shifting everything over to modern formats like AVIF, JPEG XL, JPEG 2000, and WebP
- Ask your tech resource to move to delivering media through a Content Delivery Network (CDN) (or even multi-CDNs) to enhance site reliability and scalability

- Get to know and use one or more of the various developer tools available for measuring and improving the various Core Web Vitals metrics. *[This article](#)* provides a thorough rundown of the available tools and what they're used for.

Personally, I'd look to automate this where and whenever you can to both take the grunt work out of it, but also to minimise as far as you can the risk of things getting missed or insufficiently addressed. Otherwise, you risk having to do a lot of manual work dealing with media asset variants, cropping, reformatting, and resizing files over the next few weeks.

It sounds like a lot of work, but with the right plan and automation tools in place you'll get a handle on this quickly - hopefully ahead of your competitors.

Bottom line: you need to do this, or face a very uncertain and challenging stretch ahead playing catch up and potentially losing site visitors. So start today!

Tal Lev-Ami is cofounder & CTO of [Cloudinary](#).