

Core Web Vitals: How Prepared Are Leading Industries Today?

Core Web and Mobile Vitals Across Education, Finance, B2B and Retail

I Background and Importance

One of the most important issues this year facing digital marketers - across all industry verticals - is how to prepare for Google's upcoming [Page Experience Update](#).

This May, Google will begin using three key metrics to help assess the user experience of a given webpage based on actual browser data. The goal is to help ensure search results return sites that will provide a positive experience for users- devoid of slow loading times or content shifting while the site loads.

This particular update is unique because not only has Google been specific about the time it will roll out, but they've provided precise benchmarks site owners need to adhere to in order to receive a boost from the update.

Hypothesis*

In general, many websites aren't really hitting what Google considers "good" for the three core web vital metrics they are measuring, and few would see a lift in organic results out of this update. Some industry verticals may be more prepared than others, especially when looking at mobile core web vitals such as;

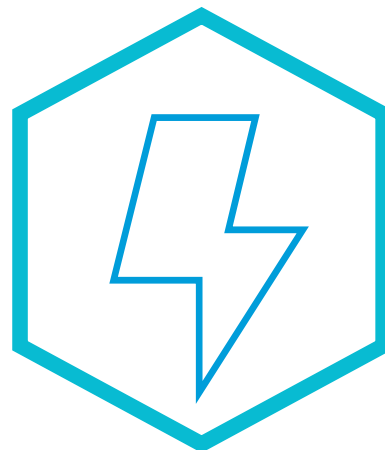
Largest Contentful Paint: Less than 2.5 Seconds

First Input Delay: Less than .1 Second

Cumulative Layout Shift: Less than .01 Second



*"There are a number of factors that come together and I think the general idea is if we can recognize that a page matches all of these criteria then we would like to use that appropriately in search ranking" **John Mueller, Google***



If that proves to be accurate, we were curious to see how the landscape in different categories may shift and how many of the sectors we identified would be able to receive such a boost.

Research Methodology

BrightEdge looked at the top sites across a number of sectors to see if there are variances across websites competing in different industries.

We highlighted four distinct markets that have different sites that dominate their categories.

Education, Finance, B2B and Retail.

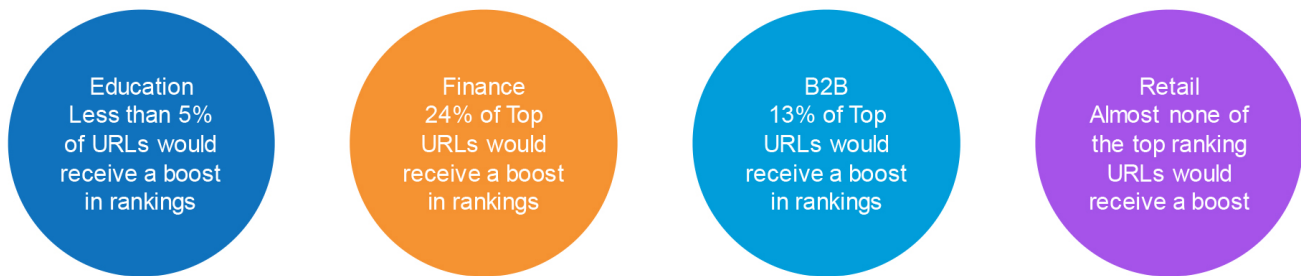
- We looked at who has the most share of voice for the top 500 Keywords in these industries and tested the core web vitals for the specific URLs that they have driving organic visibility.

*We believe this is an important nuance because, in many cases, it's not the homepage of a brand that a user interacts with organic search.

- Mobile page speed performance on all URLs was measured and aggregated from the [Crux Database](#).
- We tested this specifically for mobile because of the importance and roll-out of Mobile-First Indexing.

Key Findings: How would the roll-out look if it was today Some industries seem to be better positioned than others.

Core Web Vitals: How would the rollout look today?



Core Web Vital	Category Average	Core Web Vital	Category Average	Core Web Vital	Category Average	Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s	MOBILE LCP	5.04s	MOBILE LCP	7.05s	MOBILE LCP	9.17s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms	MOBILE FID	34.93ms	MOBILE FID	57.01ms	MOBILE FID	78ms
MOBILE CLS	.09	MOBILE CLS	.09	MOBILE CLS	.09	MOBILE CLS	.15

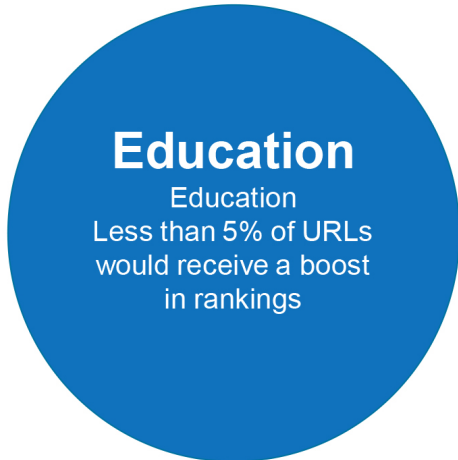
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Sources
Google CWV Guidelines | Crux Database | BrightEdge Research – March 2021

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Education

Core Web Vitals: How would the rollout look today?



Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

- Evaluated 253 unique Education URLs ranking for top education keywords
- Over half the URLs evaluated met all three criteria for desktop performance
- Sites that appear most challenged: App store listings and other dynamic loading pages
- Of the URLs tested, URLs from resources like Indeed.com and job listing resources are most commonly meeting Google's CWV threshold

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Finance

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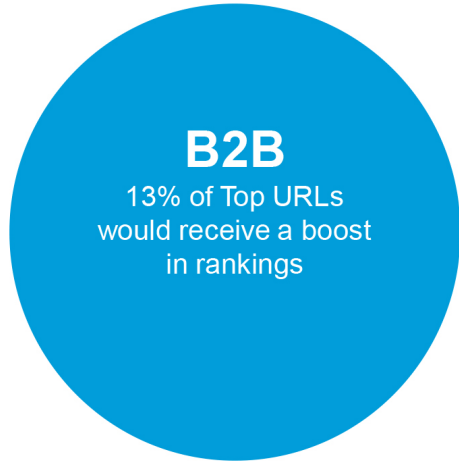
- Evaluated 328 unique Finance URLs ranking for top finance keywords
- Over 60% of URLs evaluated meet thresholds for desktop queries
- Sites that appear most challenged: banking sites and aggregator sites (mortgage brokers etc.).
- Of the URLs tested, URLs from resources like Investopedia winning informational queries are best positioned.

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Sources
Google CWV Guidelines | Crux Database | BrightEdge Research – March 2021

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Core Web Vitals: How would the rollout look today?



Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	7.05s
MOBILE FID	57.01ms
MOBILE CLS	.09

- Evaluated 302 unique B2B Tech URLs ranking for top B2B queries
- Almost 70% of URLs meet the criteria for desktop
- Informational resources such as Indeed or definition sites are best positioned for this update
- Pages most challenged appear to be app stores and transactional content. This could be due to videos and interactivity hindering contentful paint and layout shift.

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Google CWV Guidelines | Crux Database | BrightEdge Research – March 2021

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Core Web Vitals: How would the rollout look today?



Core Web Vital	Category Average
MOBILE LCP	9.17s
MOBILE FID	78ms
MOBILE CLS	.15

- Evaluated 689 unique retail URLs ranking for top retail queries
- URLs were higher here due to multiple product listings from the same domains dominating share of voice.
- Over half of URLs evaluated would meet the criteria on Desktop
- Page attributes like hero images of products and pop ups for sales seem to be driving largest contentful paint and layout shift.
- Of the URLs tested, reviews URLs from pages like Tech Radar and Consumer Reports are best positioned for this update.

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Google CWV Guidelines | Crux Database | BrightEdge Research – March 2021

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Key Takeaways

- 1) The Mobile Experience is critical for all categories.
- 2) Image compression seems to be a leading challenge for leading brands.
- 3) Pages doing well for CWV tend to be informational in nature.
- 4) Retail, in particular, could see significant disruption if second-tier retailers receive a boost.

Addressing Core Web Vitals means more than Rankings

1. Reducing your LCP reduces user bounce rates.

Reducing First Contentful Paint can improve conversions by as much as 15%.

Your audience has other things they want to do; respect their time.

2. Improving CLS provides your audience a visually stable and engaging experience.

Layout shift disrupts the user experience and annoys your audience.

Annoyed users don't convert well.

3. Improving FID helps a website respond more quickly to the actions your audiences take.

The quicker your site responds to a user's actions, the crisper their experience is.

Users are less likely to return to a website they feel is poorly designed or broken.

Enterprise Digital Marketers Need to Prepare and Make Their Organization Aware Now

Enterprise Digital Marketers need to prescribe the right course of action to meet core vital benchmarks; they must also convince the rest of the organization that the efforts will be worth the results.

Read more about Core Web Vitals on the BrightEdge blog

<https://www.brightedge.com/blog/core-web-vitals-preparing-page-experience-update>

<https://www.brightedge.com/blog/five-strategies-prepare-core-vitals-update>

For further insights and information related to this research please contact marketing@brightedge.com