

Mobile Strategy Comparison Chart

Institutions that choose to mobile-optimize their websites can choose one of four options for doing so: responsive design, adaptive design, a mobile application, or a parallel mobile site. While responsive design is increasingly becoming the *de facto* method of choice, each approach comes with various advantages and disadvantages. The chart below will illuminate some of these considerations and can help COE leaders choose the best-fit option for their unit and educate and convince other stakeholders of the same.

	Mobile Application	Parallel Website	Adaptive Website	Responsive Website
What Is It?	A computer program that must be downloaded to a smart device.	A separate website, that is highly optimized to accommodate mobile traffic.	A website that will change to fit a predetermined set of screen sizes.	A website that fluidly changes and responds to fit any screen size.
Pros	✓ Demonstrates content more creatively ✓ Tends to load faster	✓ Can retrofit with existing site ✓ Design tailored to mobile ✓ Content can be pared down	✓ Tends to load faster ✓ Can retrofit with existing site	✓ Easier to administer and maintain ✓ Future-proof
Cons	✧ Limited content ✧ Must be actively downloaded ✧ Must be developed separately for each operating system	✧ Difficult to maintain ✧ Multiple URLs may confuse visitors	✧ Resource- and budget-heavy ✧ Difficult to maintain	✧ Tends to load slower ✧ Requires a redesign

The current and likely long-term favorite.