Why faster load times, faster search and quicker turnaround for deployment should be your digital commerce investment priority - and how PWA may be your solution to all three.
If you’re not fast, you’re last.

Speed and fulfillment are either how you’re winning, or how you’re getting beat. If you’re not fast, you’re last.

COVID-19 drove people indoors and online, exploding traffic and digital revenue. Pending digital investments quickly became “MUST HAVES”. The ROI for digital investment and customer experience multiplied almost overnight.

COVID-time shopping also exposed many business’ digital weaknesses as capacity was pushed to its limit.

In this document:

- Proven benefits of improved speed
- Tools to build a business case for an investment in this critical part of your customers’ digital experience.

This eBook will focus on Progressive Web Apps (PWAs), one of the hottest technologies available that combines the best features of websites and apps; with industry-measured averages of +43% in speed and each subsequent page loading faster than the last, PWA generates more growth and faster ROI than virtually every other current IT or marketing investment. Start building your business case for PWA to get ahead of the curve.

Completely new to PWA? See the cheat sheet on the next page
Cheat Sheet: Defining PWAs (and Headless Commerce)

How does PWA work, technically?

- Traditional websites couple the frontend and backend into a single product.
- Progressive Web Applications are “headless”, in effect separating frontend and backend.
  - The frontend is built and maintained independently of the traditional backend.
  - The frontend is immediately loaded on the end-user device (local) instead of remaining on the server and reloading with every click.
  - The backend is served headlessly via APIs.
- This reduces dependencies, complexity and maintenance; Implement changes and new features faster.

The takeaway:
This is a modern technology stack that will improve performance and sales while future-proofing your site.

Winning Move:
PWA is the new “responsive” or “mobile-first”. Expect to see it from virtually every leading digital experience and brand.

Progressive
Why progressive? When your customer is on your digital property, data is cached in their device - essentially turning their browser into an app, even without internet connection. It also gets perpetually faster.

Web
Your digital experience can be accessed through a URL on any browser.

App
Your customers won’t know it isn’t an app. They’ll just know that everything seemed easy.
Every one second delay in mobile load times can impact conversion rates by up to 20%.¹

Progressive Web Apps (PWAs) are an innovative, web-based technology which accelerates the digital experience.

How PWA cuts load times and accelerates your customer experience:

- The website is loaded only once onto the user’s device, instead of repeatedly on the server
- Page requests retrieve only crucial data
- API calls are optimized to be lightweight
- Returned data is cached in the browser and rendered to user
- Subsequent page loads retrieve cached data

Essentially, the frontend now resides on the user’s device, greatly reducing the server load, bandwidth and processing power required to render your digital experience.

¹ Think with Google: “Milliseconds earn millions: Why mobile speed can slow or grow your business”. February 2019
Skip the Line-ups

All the performance of the Starbucks app, without the app.

Starbucks’ daily users doubled after they introduced their PWA to reduce the friction involved with downloading a native app.

Roll-up

Mobile Conversion rate is almost 1:1 to Desktop.

Traffic: Daily active users DOUBLED!
Faster loading and near-instant digital experiences improve conversion rates by increasing traffic, reducing bounce rates and cart abandonment, and, interestingly, increasing time spent on site.

Each of these metrics is viewed favorably by Google’s algorithms and leads to improved SEO ranking as well as better ad relevance scores.

PWAs have also been shown to improve internal search and merchandizing, both of which influence relevance scores as well as key metrics like revenue-per-session.

Basically, better experience = better metrics = better ROI and ROAS.

The benefits of speed compound.
Building for the Builders

Selco, the UK’s fastest growing builders’ merchant, deployed PWA Studio and Magento 2 to implement a large catalog while improving site search.

They also added key omnichannel features such as Click & Collect, bulky item delivery, and a program for pros.

(SELCO) BUILDING TIPS: Digital revenue jumped +82%.

(SELCO) Transactions nearly doubled, up 94%.

(SELCO) The need for speed: the site is 3x faster than its predecessor.
Find the Product and Checkout Faster.

PWA is the next evolution in web design with responsive, accessible design and advanced features. It’s all about removing barriers for your customers and PWAs give you the opportunity to make that happen, thereby speeding up your customers’ path to purchase.

What this means for your commerce experience:
- Shopping carts and checkout flows are more logical
- Navigation is easier
- Product landing pages are clearer
- Accessibility isn’t an afterthought
- Time saving functionality like remembering product selection across app and desktop happens instantly between screens

In the Venn Diagram between business and IT, PWA merges the best of both worlds. PWAs repurpose the frontend to integrate the best of modern web engagement and interactivity. In short, PWAs deliver the essentials of a next-generation eCommerce experience.
Luxury, fashion and designer-focused consumers want NEW and they want it NOW.

Holland’s premier designer shoe and men’s clothing store implemented Magento 2 + PWA Studio to support their agile approach to UX and design while improving overall site performance.
Decrease Dependency on IT and Dev.

Who owns the digital experience?

Feels like you need a business case for virtually every new feature because of delays, complexity, costs, technical debt, etc.?

An unwieldy digital infrastructure hurts your ability to keep your customer experience fresh and consistent across channels. Which hurts revenue. Which hurts your credibility when building business cases.

The solution may again be a Progressive Web App, which makes it possible to rapidly add new features and functionality, all while reducing frontend risks, concerns and costs - including maintenance.

- The backend and frontend upgrade process is optimized
- Backend upgrades are less risky with frontend requirements removed
- Existing integrations can be maintained
- Cost of ownership goes down over the medium and long term

PWA speeds up not only the user experience, but your ability to quickly adapt your digital channels to evolving behaviors.
Leaders Disrupt Themselves

Structube is replacing their high performance and award winning website with a PWA in order to bring their digital and omnichannel experience to the next level, for consumers, store staff, and business users.

Starbucks introduced their PWA to reduce the friction involved with downloading a native application. As a result their daily active users have doubled and mobile orders are nearly matching desktop orders.

🌟 Winner: Website redesign of the year! Online orders tripled almost overnight.

COVID: Furniture + Home Decor Sector saw a 336% spike in digital revenue during the pandemic.

Regularly named a market leader, celebrated for their digital and omnichannel experience.
Because PWA works like an app with the frontend load on the customer’s device, the door to helpful app-like functionality is now open. We're talking notifications, barcode scanning and more!

This is particularly true for manufacturers and distributors who may not have ventured into the app space yet. Your field sales representatives and agents can purchase through your commerce platform and have a customized, tailored app-like experience that is connected to the same commerce platform with which you sell D2C and/or B2C.

With a Progressive Web App, you also:
- Won’t need Android or Apple programmers.
- Can provide access to mobile features which aren’t available on regular websites. (camera, scanner, etc.)
- Can have one code base and multiple platforms, lowering development and maintenance costs.

Your customers:
- Don’t have to rely on the App Store
- Don’t have to give up valuable space on their phone’s home screen
- Can fluidly pass from the app to the website, with no annoying requests to enter the same info.
- Can receive push notifications, for example when an order is shipped

Apps are often costly and high-maintenance. PWA isn’t.
Major League Adoption.

PWAs, originally pioneered by Google, have been deployed by several of the world’s biggest digital brands in order to improve performance and the user experience. These include:

- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Uber
- Twitter
- Forbes
- Tinder
- Spotify
- and more.

PWAs may quickly become the new device-agnostic standard for digital experiences.
1. Our marketers and IT are experiencing lots of frustration with the existing frontend

2. Technical debt associated with our current implementation causes delays or roadblocks

3. Implementing new features and maintenance cost too much.

4. We see poor performance due to navigation, PLP, PDP, cart and checkout.

5. Compared to some competitors, our User Experience feels sluggish or dated.

6. We are looking for the next phase of site evolution

7. We are able to handle an up-front cost in exchange for cost savings over the medium and long term.

8. We are looking to be pace setters in our industry

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**Individual Exercise or Team Activity**

**PWA Compatibility Checklist**

There are lots of newfangled technologies and buzzwords in the tech, IT and marketing worlds. Part of this is due to the fast pace of developments, and part of it is market hype.

After 20 years in IT and eCommerce, the Absolunet team is investing heavily in PWA because we’ve identified it as the technology of choice for the modern web. It is also fully aligned to Adobe’s headless vision.

Still, it may or may not be right for your business. This quick checklist will help you and your team take the pulse of your immediate business needs.

If you mark “yes” to 3 or more of these, PWA may make sense for your business. If so, we should talk.
We should talk.

About the authors

Absolunet is a professional services firm specializing in commerce and digital transformations. We help some of North America’s iconic brands and distributors fast-forward their digital transformation, bridge the eCommerce gap and put customers at the heart of their experience, profitably.

A top 5 Global Magento partner, Absolunet has been recognized by Adobe as a leader in PWA development with experience delivering Magento headless and PWA, internal developer training programs for PWA and Absolunet-driven thought leadership on PWA at recent conferences.

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