

The Great SEO Divide: Does Location Matter for Small Business Websites?

How well are UK small business websites performing in terms of SEO
and site speed across different regions?

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What's It All About?

Ever wondered how your website compares to other small businesses? This report is for you. Based on an analysis of over 4,000 websites across the UK, it provides a regional breakdown of SEO, site speed, and performance. So, how's your area doing, and can you beat the competition?

SEO

UK overview

Desktop vs Mobile

Performance

UK overview

Desktop vs Mobile

Site Speed

UK overview

Desktop vs Mobile

What Should You Do?

What's the outlook?

This report uncovers two clear opportunities for small businesses across the UK.

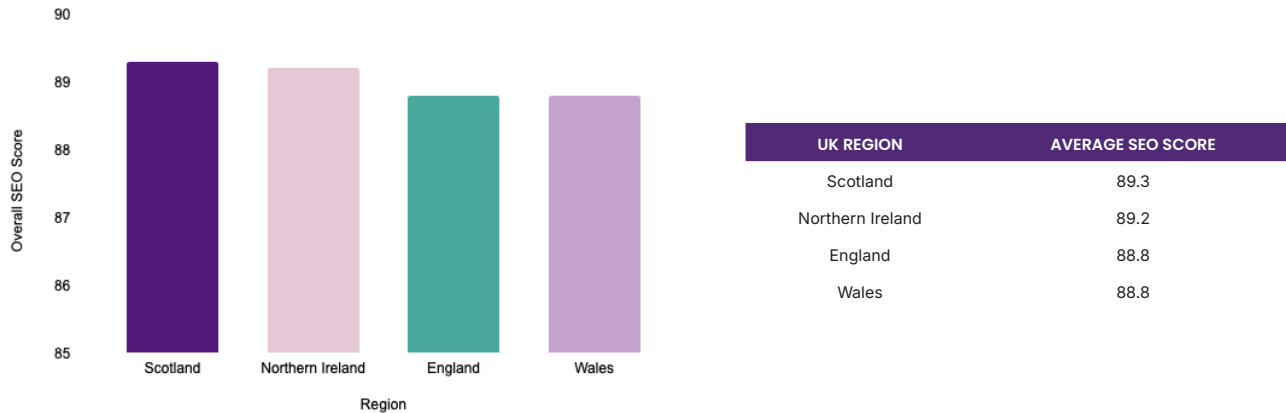
First, while the four UK nations have very similar average SEO scores, a significant "Great SEO Divide" is visible within England. Performance varies widely from the top-scoring South West to the lowest-scoring North East. This shows that a business's location can have a real impact on its performance, and it highlights a clear chance to stand out.

Second, the data reveals a universal divide between desktop and mobile performance. Across all regions, mobile performance and site speed consistently lag behind their desktop counterparts. This represents a massive opportunity, as a business that fixes its mobile site can easily get ahead of the competition.

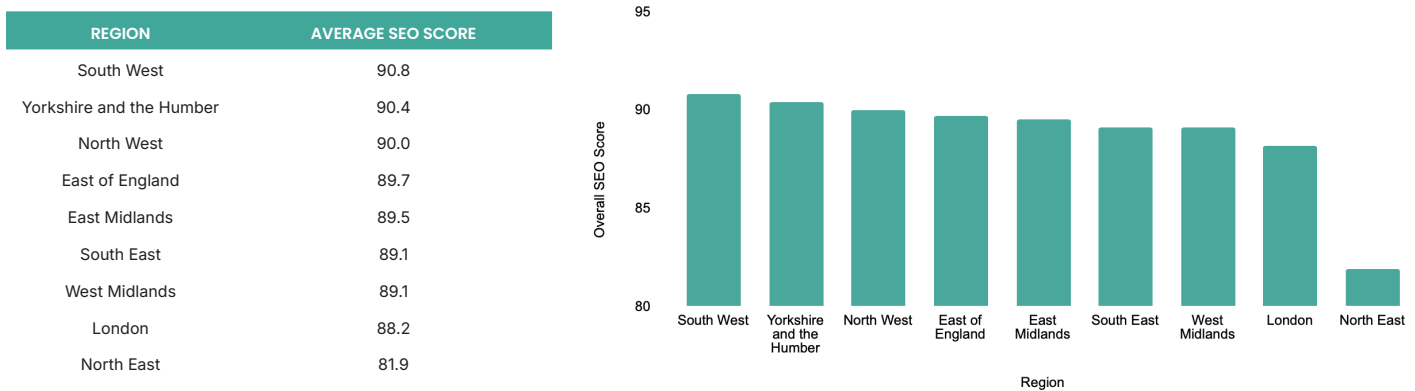
UK SEO Scores

UK AVERAGE
88.9

AVERAGE SEO SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN THE UK



AVERAGE SEO SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN ENGLAND



The first thing to know is that SEO scores across the UK are pretty solid, with the national average coming in at 88.9.

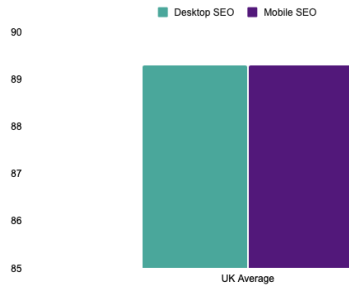
At a quick glance, the four nations look pretty similar. Scotland leads the way with a score of 89.3, with Northern Ireland not far behind at 89.2. Both England and Wales sit with an average of 88.8.

But here's the most important insight: looking at the nations as a whole hides a massive difference within England itself. The highest average SEO score in England belongs to the South West at a brilliant 90.8, while the lowest is found in the North East at just 81.9.

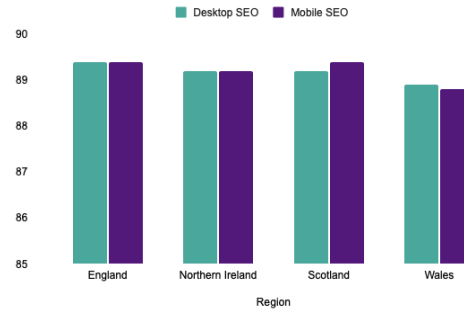
That's a huge gap and it proves that your location can have a serious impact on a business's average SEO performance.

SEO Scores: Desktop vs Mobile

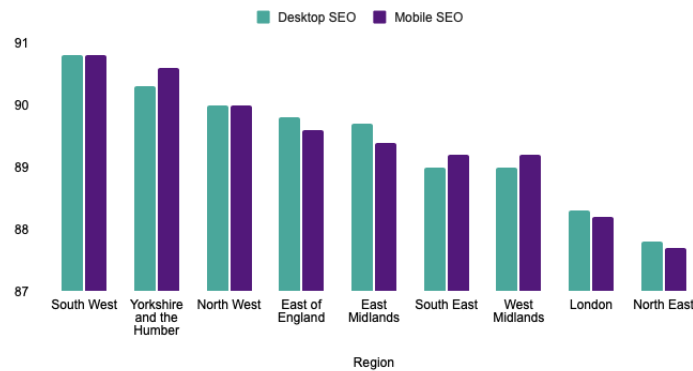
DESKTOP VS MOBILE SEO SCORES UK AVERAGES



AVERAGE DESKTOP VS MOBILE SEO SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN THE UK



AVERAGE DESKTOP VS MOBILE SEO SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN ENGLAND



UK AVERAGES		REGIONAL AVERAGES IN THE UK			REGIONAL AVERAGES IN ENGLAND		
DESKTOP	MOBILE	REGION	DESKTOP	MOBILE	REGION	DESKTOP	MOBILE
89.3	89.3	England	89.4	89.4	East Midlands	89.7	89.4
		Northern Ireland	89.2	89.2	East of England	89.8	89.6
		Scotland	89.2	89.4	London	88.3	88.2
		Wales	88.9	88.8	North East	87.8	87.7
					North West	90.0	90.0
					South East	89.0	89.2
					South West	90.8	90.8
					West Midlands	89.0	89.2
					Yorkshire and the Humber	90.3	90.6

This is where things get really interesting. You might expect to see a huge difference in scores between desktop and mobile, but our data shows something surprising. Across all UK regions, the average SEO scores for both are almost identical. The difference is less than 1% in all four nations.

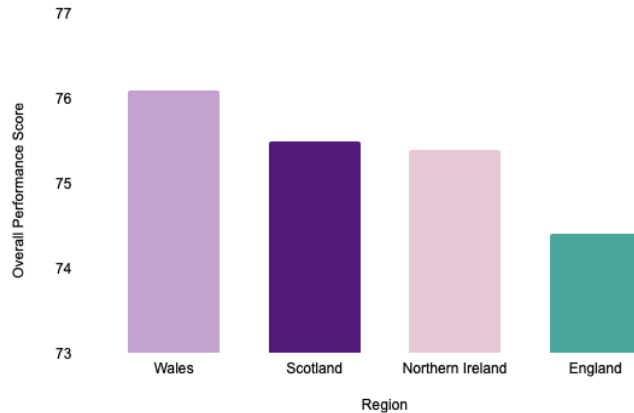
What this tells us is that businesses are either applying the same SEO practices across the board, or the technical optimisations needed for mobile aren't having a big impact on the overall score.

Within England, this trend holds true. The scores for mobile and desktop are tightly aligned in almost every region, with very little difference between the two.

UK Performance

UK AVERAGE
74.7

AVERAGE PERFORMANCE SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN THE UK



UK REGION	AVERAGE PERFORMANCE SCORE
England	74.4
Northern Ireland	75.4
Scotland	75.5
Wales	76.1

AVERAGE PERFORMANCE SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN ENGLAND

REGION	AVERAGE SEO SCORE
East Midlands	74.7
East of England	74.1
London	73.6
North East	76.1
North West	73.8
South East	74.5
South West	73.1
West Midlands	74.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	74.9

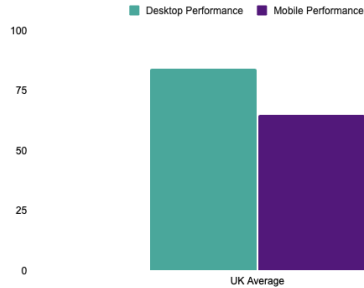


Now let's talk about performance. This is all about how well a site is put together and how quickly it works for a user.

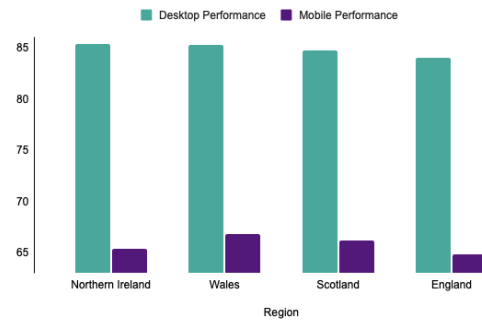
Across the whole of the UK, the average performance score for small business websites is 74.7. Just like the SEO scores, this number is quite consistent across the four nations. Scotland leads at 75.5, with Northern Ireland (75.4) and Wales (76.1) right there with it. England comes in with an average of 74.4.

Performance: Desktop vs Mobile

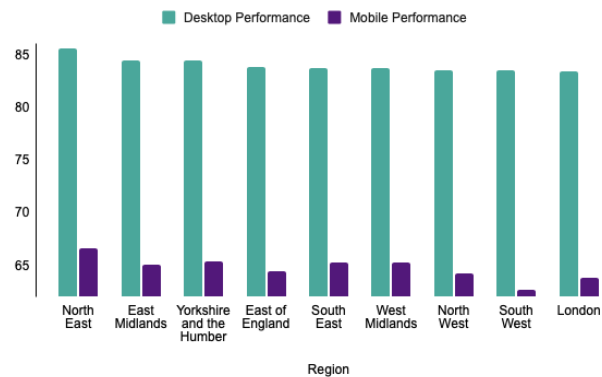
DESKTOP VS MOBILE PERFORMANCE SCORES
UK AVERAGES



AVERAGE DESKTOP VS MOBILE PERFORMANCE
SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN THE UK



AVERAGE DESKTOP VS MOBILE PERFORMANCE SCORES ACROSS REGIONS IN ENGLAND



UK AVERAGES		REGIONAL AVERAGES IN THE UK			REGIONAL AVERAGES IN ENGLAND		
DESKTOP	MOBILE	REGION	DESKTOP	MOBILE	REGION	DESKTOP	MOBILE
84.3	65.1	England	84.0	64.8	East Midlands	84.4	65.1
		Northern Ireland	85.4	65.4	East of England	83.8	64.4
		Scotland	84.7	66.2	London	83.4	63.8
		Wales	85.3	66.8	North East	85.6	66.6
					North West	83.5	64.2
					South East	83.7	65.3
					South West	83.5	62.7
					West Midlands	83.7	65.3
					Yorkshire and the Humber	84.4	65.4

There is a huge difference between desktop and mobile performance.

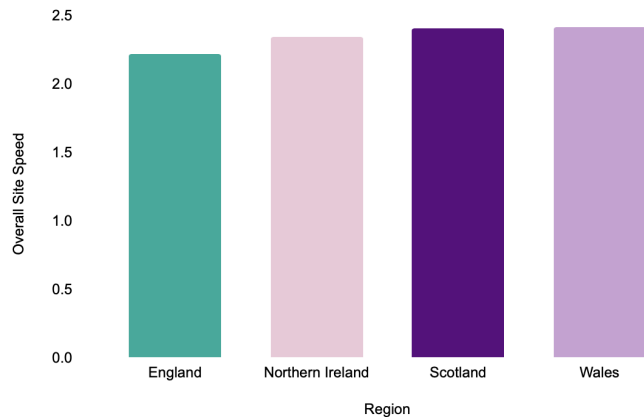
On average, a desktop site performs almost 30% better than its mobile version in the UK. This gap is most obvious in Northern Ireland, where desktop performance is over 30% higher, and least in Scotland.

Within England, the gap is all over the place. While the trend is always the same (desktop is better than mobile) the difference ranges from a low of 27.7% in Wales to a high of 33.2% in the South West.

UK Site Speed

UK AVERAGE
2.19
SECONDS

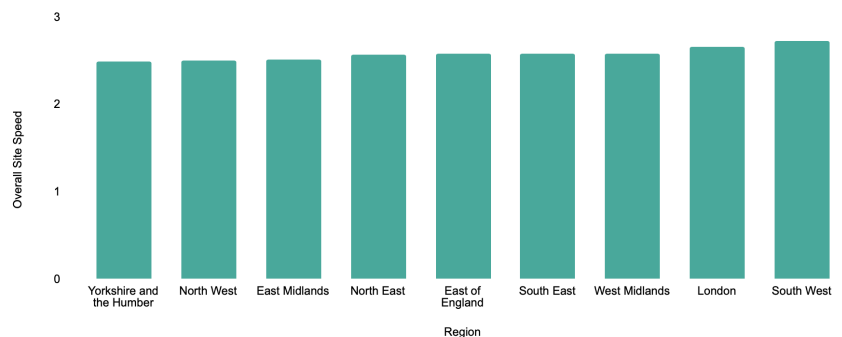
AVERAGE SITE SPEED ACROSS REGIONS IN THE UK



UK REGION	AVERAGE SPEED (SECONDS)
England	2.22
Northern Ireland	2.34
Scotland	2.41
Wales	2.42

AVERAGE SITE SPEED ACROSS REGIONS IN ENGLAND

REGION	AVERAGE SPEED (SECONDS)
Yorkshire and the Humber	2.49
North West	2.50
East Midlands	2.51
North East	2.57
East of England	2.58
South East	2.58
West Midlands	2.58
London	2.66
South West	2.73



Let's break down what's happening with site speed across the UK.

The average small business website loads in 2.19 seconds across the entire country. That's a good benchmark to keep in mind.

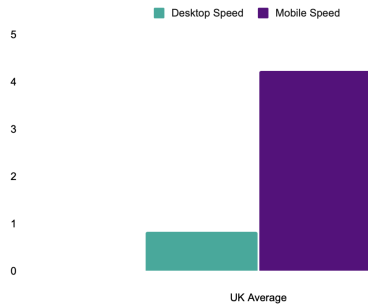
When you look at the four nations, site speed is fairly consistent, though some are a little quicker than others. Northern Ireland (2.34 seconds), Scotland (2.41 seconds), and Wales (2.42 seconds) all have very similar average speeds. England is the fastest overall, with an average of 2.22 seconds.

But the real story is within England itself. There's a big difference in average speeds from one region to the next, with the fastest being Yorkshire and the Humber (2.49 seconds) and the slowest being the South West (2.73 seconds).

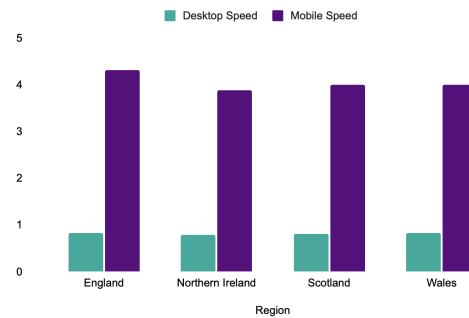
This shows that your location really can impact how quickly your site loads.

Site Speed: Desktop vs Mobile

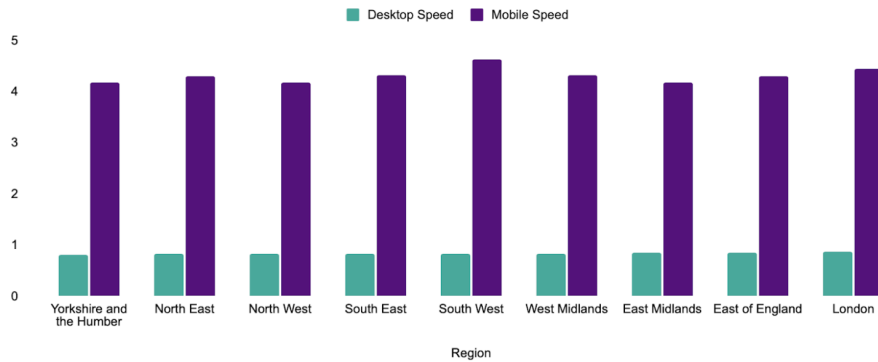
DESKTOP VS MOBILE SITE SPEED UK AVERAGES



AVERAGE DESKTOP VS MOBILE SITE SPEED ACROSS REGIONS IN THE UK



AVERAGE DESKTOP VS MOBILE SITE SPEED ACROSS REGIONS IN ENGLAND



UK AVERAGES (SECONDS)		REGIONAL AVERAGES IN THE UK (SECONDS)			REGIONAL AVERAGES IN ENGLAND (SECONDS)		
DESKTOP	MOBILE	REGION	DESKTOP	MOBILE	REGION	DESKTOP	MOBILE
0.84	4.23	England	0.84	4.32	Yorkshire and the Humber	0.81	4.18
		Northern Ireland	0.80	3.89	North East	0.83	4.31
		Scotland	0.82	4.0	North West	0.83	4.17
		Wales	0.83	4.0	South East	0.84	4.33
					South West	0.84	4.62
					West Midlands	0.84	4.33
					East Midlands	0.85	4.17
					East of England	0.86	4.30
					London	0.87	4.44

This is where the real “Great SEO Divide” shows up. It’s not about how fast sites are in different regions, but about how big the difference is between desktop and mobile. Across the UK, the average desktop site speed is a super-fast 0.84 seconds. But the average mobile site speed is a much slower 4.23 seconds. This massive gap is a universal problem for small businesses everywhere.

When you look at the four UK nations, the trend is the same. Desktop speeds are consistently quick, all loading in under a second. But mobile speeds vary, ranging from a slow 3.89 seconds in Northern Ireland to a sluggish 4.32 seconds in England.

And within England, the gap gets even bigger. While desktop speeds are consistently fast, average mobile speeds range from 4.17 seconds in the North West to a slow 4.62 seconds in the South West. The bottom line? There is a huge opportunity to beat the competition simply by having a faster mobile website.

What Should You Do?

This report shows that while the UK's SEO landscape is generally strong, there are some key opportunities for you to get ahead of the competition:

1.

PRIORITISE MOBILE OPTIMISATION

This is the most important thing you can do. The data shows a huge gap between desktop and mobile performance and site speed. By making sure your mobile site is fast and works perfectly, you'll be ahead of the vast majority of other small businesses.

2.

BENCHMARK AGAINST YOUR REGION

Your real competition isn't the whole of the UK; it's the businesses in your area. Use this report to see how your region is doing and find the specific SEO weaknesses you can fix to get ahead.

3.

INVEST IN A TECHNICAL SEO AUDIT

The differences we've found in scores point to technical issues that a simple SEO check won't fix. A technical audit can pinpoint the exact problems with your site and give you a plan to solve them, particularly for mobile.

4.

CHECK YOUR OWN SCORE

The best way to get a clear picture of your website's performance is to check your score yourself. Use my free [SEO Score Checker](#) to see where your site stands.

Ready to go deeper? If you need a full SEO audit or a complete SEO strategy to get your site where it needs to be, you can get in touch with me directly at www.ryangibsonseo.co.uk