Nearly three in four UK trades websites tested take over 4 seconds to show main content on mobile

Tuesday 8 September, 2026

Nearly three-quarters of UK trades websites with a usable mobile content-loading measurement took more than four seconds to display their largest content element in automated laboratory testing, new research has found.

The State of UK Trades Websites 2026, published by Websites for Tradespeople, found that 72.5% of the 30,399 websites returning this measurement exceeded four seconds. The median was 6.7 seconds.

The measurement, called Largest Contentful Paint, records when the largest visible image or block of text appears during page loading. The findings come from Google Lighthouse lab tests rather than measurements of actual customer visits.

The research attempted mobile and desktop audits of 43,738 UK trades websites, with 31,030 returning a usable result on at least one device. The sample includes businesses such as plumbers, electricians, roofers, builders and landscapers.

Fewer than one in six achieved a ‘good’ mobile Performance score

Among the 30,397 websites returning a mobile Lighthouse Performance score, just 15.7% reached the tool’s “good” band of 90–100.

A further 73.6% fell into “needs improvement”, scoring 50–89, while 10.7% scored below 50, the “poor” band. The median mobile Performance score was 67 out of 100.

John Wozniak, founder of Websites for Tradespeople, said:

“There is a huge amount of advice online telling small businesses what a good website should look like. We wanted to step away from opinions and actually measure what is happening across tens of thousands of trades websites.”

The study also compared mobile and desktop results for the same websites. Among 29,969 websites returning Largest Contentful Paint measurements under both strategies, 99.5% recorded a longer time in the mobile test. The median difference calculated within each website was 5.1 seconds.

These comparisons describe results under two laboratory testing configurations. They do not establish how long individual customers waited or whether businesses lost enquiries.

The full report also examines website platforms and WordPress page builders. It includes the methodology, downloadable charts and an anonymised dataset. The report and charts are available for reuse with attribution to Websites for Tradespeople.

Notes to editors

Data was collected between 30 July and 1 September 2026, in two collection waves. The headline findings held when analysed separately within each wave.

Websites were identified through UK business-directory searches by trade and town. The sample is not random or nationally representative.

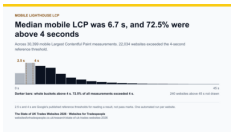
Each reported measurement rests on a single retained Lighthouse run per website and device. Sample sizes differ because some audits returned only part of the requested information.

Of the 43,738 websites attempted, 12,708 returned no usable audit on either device. This represents unsuccessful measurement, not evidence that those websites were broken.

About Websites for Tradespeople

Websites for Tradespeople provides fixed-price websites, SEO and ongoing website support for UK trades businesses. It is operated by JW Digital Services Ltd.

Media:





Related Sectors:

Computing & Telecoms :: Construction & Property :: Media & Marketing ::

Related Keywords:

Websites For Tradespeople :: UK Trades :: Mobile Website Speed :: Website Performance :: Lighthouse :: PageSpeed Insights :: Web Design :: Small Businesses ::

Scan Me:

Media contact

John Wozniak
Websites for Tradespeople
hello@websitesfortradespeople.co.uk
0161 399 4054

Company Contact:

Websites for Tradespeople

T. 0161 399 4054
E. hello@websitesfortradespeople.co.uk
W. https://www.websitesfortradespeople.c...

View Online

Additional Assets:
https://www.websitesfortradespeople.co.uk/research/state-of-uk-trades-websites-2026#media

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.websites-for-tradespeople.pressat.co.uk