In 2015, Flipkart, India's largest e-commerce site, adopted an app-only strategy and temporarily shut down their mobile website. The company found it harder and harder to provide a user experience that was as fast and engaging as that of their mobile app. But then, Flipkart decided to rethink their development approach. They were drawn back to the mobile web by the introduction of features that made the mobile web run instantly, work offline, and re-engage users.

They soon began building Flipkart Lite, a Progressive Web App that combines the best of the web and the best of the Flipkart native app. It leverages new, open web APIs to offer a mobile web experience that loads fast, uses less data than before, and re-engages users in multiple ways. Users visit via their browser and find a fast app-like user experience. When they come back, it loads nearly instantly, even on flaky networks. Users can choose to add the site to their homescreen with just two taps, making it easier for them to come back. Amar Nagaram, an Engineering Director at Flipkart shares, “We know that everyone needs to build mobile-first experiences. With Flipkart Lite, we’ve developed a powerful, technically-advanced web app that performs as well as our native app. We now feel we have the best of both worlds.”

### Goals
Provide a faster, more engaging mobile web experience

### Approach
Developed Flipkart Lite, a Progressive Web App

- Added service workers for quicker load times
- Smooth navigation and scrolling at 60 frames/second
- Created an “Add to Home Screen” prompt to encourage users to add the mobile webpage to their home screens

### Results
- **3X** more time spent on site
- **40%** higher re-engagement rate
- **70%** greater conversion rate among those arriving via Add to Homescreen
- **3X** lower data usage
A fast and streamlined site

With 63% of Flipkart Lite users reaching the site via a 2G network, a fast user experience was essential. To decrease load times, Flipkart added service workers and streamlined the site to help consumers quickly reach the product they are looking for. Users can even continue to browse categories, review previous searches, and view product pages—all while offline.

Taking advantage of the web’s low friction

Reaching a broad set of users is important for Flipkart. With Flipkart Lite, users are one click away from accessing content and many new users are first-time internet users. In addition to easy access, Flipkart Lite requires less data. A key metric for Flipkart is tracking data usage to complete first transaction: when comparing Flipkart Lite to the native app, Flipkart Lite uses 3x less data. Nagaram continues, “Having a strong and engaging mobile website means we’re no longer turning away potential shoppers who don’t want to use data or space to download an app.”

Bringing users back with home screen icon

Flipkart wanted to be able to re-engage with mobile web users just as they would with mobile app users.

The company implemented an “Add to Home Screen” prompt. Now, 60% of all visits to Flipkart Lite come from people launching the site from the homescreen icon. Add to Home Screen also delivers high-quality visits, with customers converting 70% more than average users.

These two activities alone resulted in engagement numbers that were 40% higher than before.

Building for future success for the evolving online shopper

Flipkart will continue using progressive web technology to reach their evolving online shoppers. Nagaram concludes, “Flipkart Lite has enabled us to find some of our highest-value customers. We will continue to expand progressive web app technology across all of our platforms, investing significant resources to maximize the potential scale. We truly believe that this is a new way to experience mobile and we’re just getting started.”