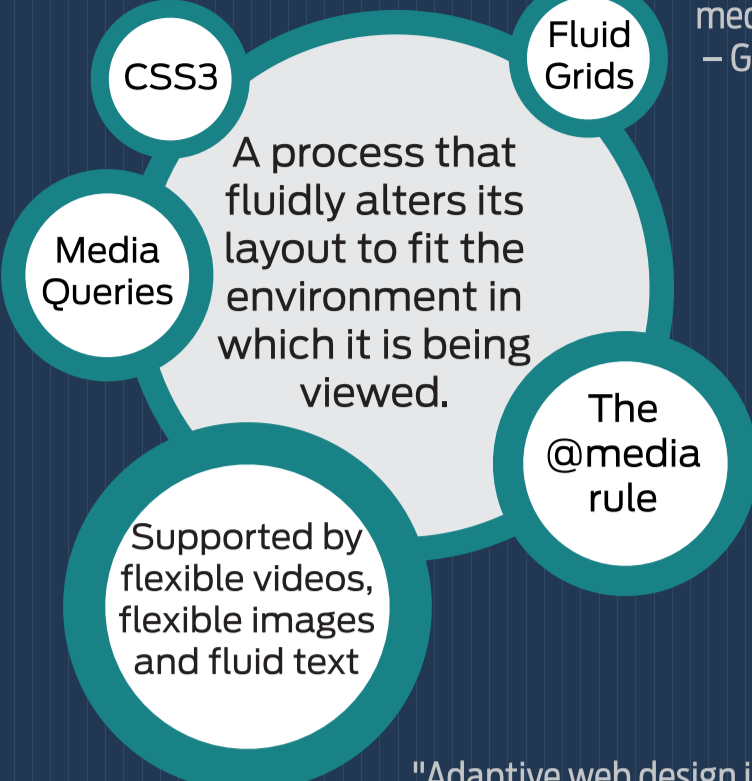


Responsive vs. Adaptive Web Design

Chalk and cheese, or two sides of the same coin?

Here are some of the differences, pros and cons that divide the two. What's the difference and which is better? Check out our Responsive Web Design vs. Adaptive Web Design infographic to find out more.

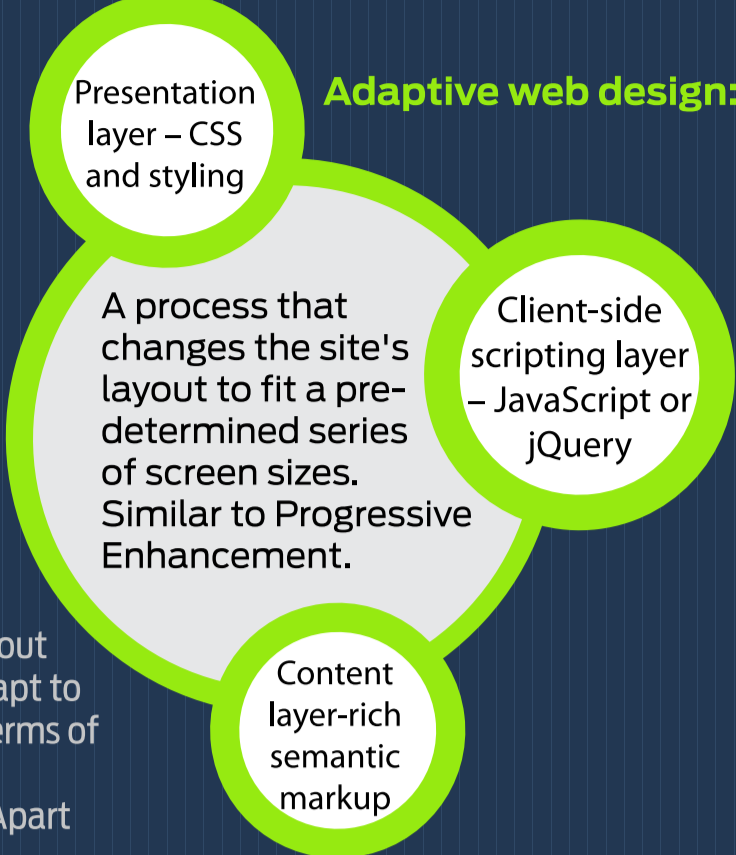
Responsive web design:



"Adaptive web design is about creating interfaces that adapt to the user's capabilities (in terms of both form and function)."
 – Aaron Gustafson, A List Apart

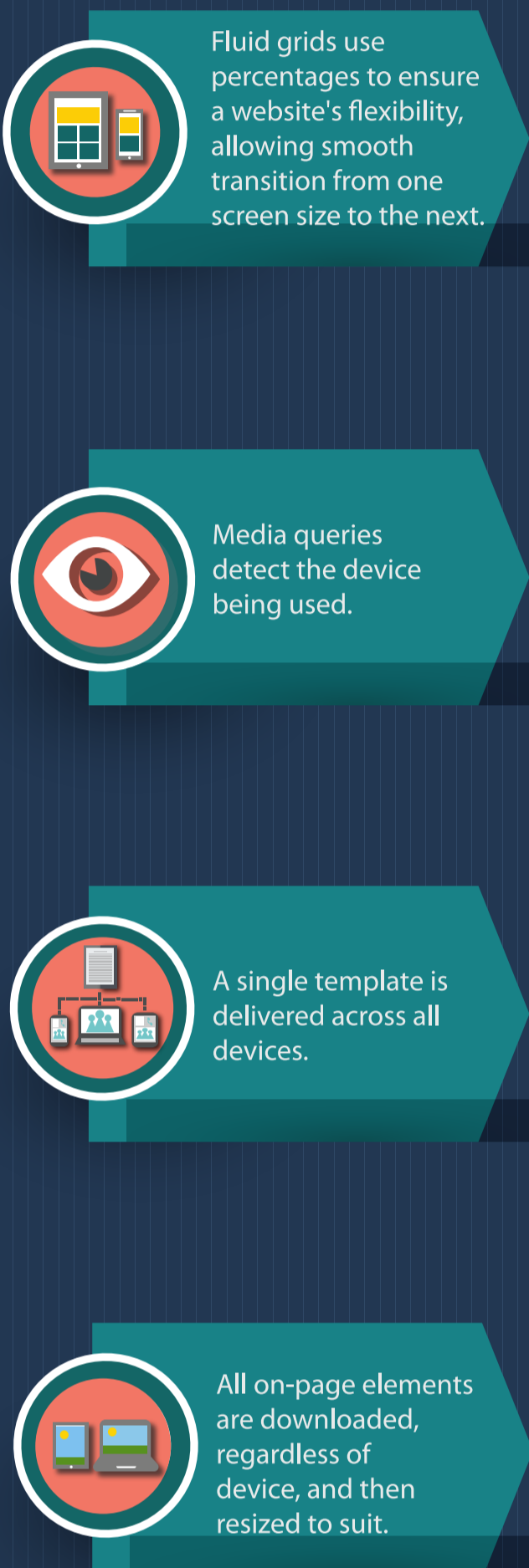
"Google recommends webmasters follow the industry best practices of using responsive web design, namely serving the same HTML for all devices and using only CSS media queries to decide the rendering on each device."
 – Google Webmasters

Adaptive web design:

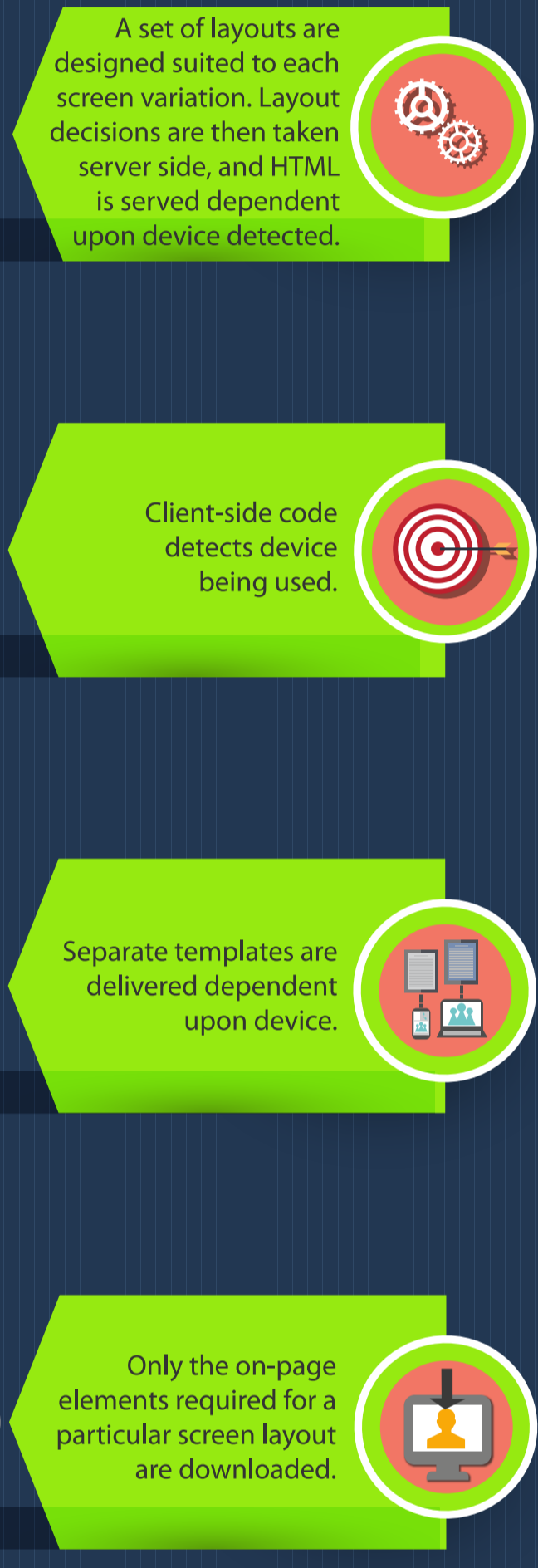


THE DIFFERENCES

Responsive web design:



Adaptive web design:



PROS AND CONS

RWD Pros

- The experience is usually as close to the 'full site' as mobile can get
- Easier to put in place for new websites or complete rebuilds of existing sites
- SEO can be better as only one website to manage

RWD cons

- Longer page load time – all elements are downloaded, whether used or not
- Existing websites need rebuilding from the ground up
- Incompatible with some older devices/browsers – due to reliance on CSS3 media queries

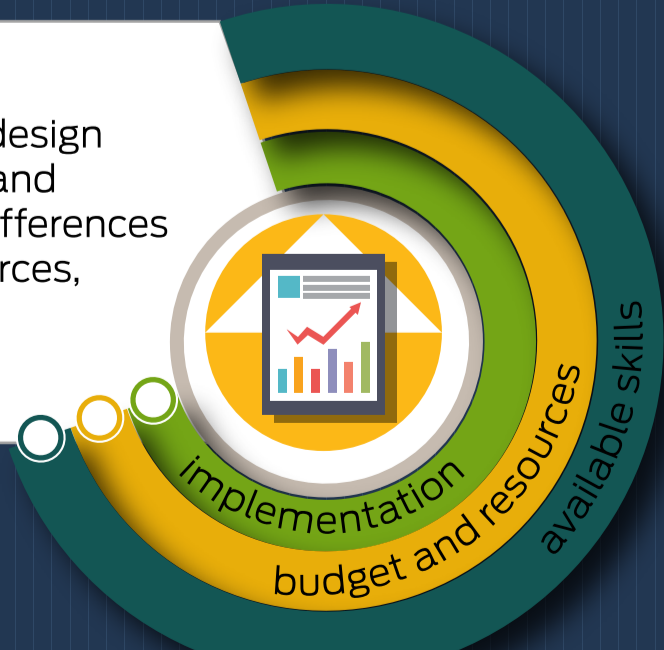
AWD Pros

- Fast page loads – only required elements are downloaded
- User experience can be tailored to the device it is viewed upon, renders on older devices and feature phones
- Existing website doesn't require alteration

AWD cons

- Costly and resource intensive
- Complex – advanced understanding of JavaScript and CSS are needed for successful implementation
- Internal cross linking can be complex with multiple website versions to choose from

Both responsive and adaptive web design allow a website to be viewed clean and efficiently across devices. The key differences lie in implementation, and the resources, budget, and skills available to you.



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