

COLUMNS

6 mobile holiday must-haves to eliminate friction

October 30, 2014



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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

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Mobile marketers have a dizzying array of opportunities to surprise and delight customers. But often we are neglecting the basics in favor of the futuristic.

It does not pay to develop personalized, location-aware content if customers cannot log onto your application. And the majority of customers do not have your app, so how are you communicating with them?

On file

I had a friend whose apartment was a disaster – you could barely walk through it. But she mentioned proudly that she had typed labels for her file folders. I see a lot of this malady today.

Marketers who want to be on the leading edge but whose emails – still the primary ecommerce traffic driver – are illegible on Android devices.

Have you seen how your messages render on an Android device with images blocked? I assume that is why Android has the majority of market share yet a small fraction of mobile

opens and clicks.

As Ryan Bartley of Staples said at *Mobile Commerce Daily's* Mcommerce Summit on May 1 in New York, eliminating friction is more important than engagement. It relates to something that Jakob Nielsen told me: Usability is important for everything, but for low-commitment mobile experiences, it is life or death.

In other words, we will never get to engagement if we do not eliminate friction. Friction in mobile experiences is deadly. Let us consider ways to eliminate friction as we enter the holiday season.

1. PIN-based app login. I cannot enter my email address and password correctly without several retries. My likelihood to do so diminishes with every try.

Financial institutions and other smart mobile marketers allow for a four-digit PIN set up – post initial login – and serve up nice big buttons for entry. How much easier is that than my typical 35-character email address and password?

2. Coupon delivery options. Forty-two percent of consumers report that they will leave the store without purchasing if they forget a coupon at home.

I, for one, will not go into a store without my super-klugey coupon/loyalty card wallet, so your geo-location efforts are wasted.

Provide options to text, email or add a coupon to Passbook/Google wallet for easy, frictionless retrieval from a phone.

3. Loyalty card retrieval. Another coupon option is to auto load it into the user's loyalty card.

Setting up this functionality helps marketers link email address to a treasure trove of location and purchase data.

Make it super easy to retrieve my card however I choose – in your app via PIN access or in Passbook/Google wallet.

4. Offers for the unengaged. As a wise marketer once said, "Our biggest challenge as marketers is to scale our programs for the unengaged."

The largest slice of your customers have not signed up for email, are not members of your rewards program and do not have or use your app.

Keep them in store with a text-to-get offer: text to get a coupon, gift with purchase, free gift wrap.

This low-cost, low-friction effort requires only signage and an SMS platform. Best of all, those who text in can be invited to join your SMS program for regular offers, having experienced the benefits first hand.

5. SMS error review. Speaking of SMS, are you checking to see which MO messages result in MT error messages? Are keywords too long or are your instructions unclear?

Look for common mistakes and adjust your instructions or responses. “Please try again” is probably creating, rather than eliminating, friction.

6. Device-oriented tasks. We can eliminate friction downstream if users set up or link accounts in advance. Adding detailed information such as shipping address, credit card or loyalty number will always be easier to accomplish with a big screen and full keyboard.

Use the full capability of responsive design to send desktop users to complex tasks and mobile users to phone-friendly ones.

USABILITY, USABILITY, usability. It is another word for a frictionless experience. It is not bleeding edge, it is not sexy, but do you want an inviting, well-organized home, or neatly labeled file folders?

The onslaught on holiday messaging is upon us.

If your mobile experience is not simplicity itself, there is no shortage of options.

Multichannel shoppers **spend four to six times more** than retail-only shoppers. Get your share: focus on the fundamentals.

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