

MOBILE

Hudson's Bay exec affirms massive shift from desktop to mobile

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Image from SaksStyle

By [Alex Samuely](#)

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RANCHO MIRAGE, CA - A Hudson's Bay Company digital executive at the Mobile Shopping Summit 2015 underscored the importance of the mass exodus to mobile Web in recent years and the need for retailers targeting affluent shoppers to provide optimized checkout experiences on mobile sites.

During the "Product Roadmap Panel: Balancing The Day To Day Vs. Future Innovation" session, executives from HBC Digital, VF Corporation and SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment discussed the importance of engaging in long-term planning for mobile solutions while simultaneously not neglecting current trends or needs. The Hudson's Bay executive, who primarily oversees the Saks Fifth Avenue and Saks Off 5th brands, highlighted how retailers must keep in mind their target audience's mobile usage when thinking about how best to fuel sales.

"Saks probably has the most mature brand, and we have two iOS native apps, one for iPhone and one for iPad," said Blaine North, director of product management at [HBC Digital](#). "I think the biggest shift we've seen, particularly for Saks, is the mass exodus from desktop to mobile.

"Our core customer is a little bit older, affluent woman and she takes a little longer to adapt to trends."

On the same page

Hudson's Bay Company, which encompasses major brands including Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord & Taylor and Hudson's Bay, places a significant focus on getting all digital and mobile teams on the same page and platform. While many of its offerings are still in infancy stages, mobile is a revenue channel that must receive enough attention from stakeholders and executives alike.

The company first implemented deep-linking three years ago, and found that many of the email click-throughs stemmed from smartphones. Integrating that solution into emails has made a big difference year over year.



Saks Fifth Avenue's mobile site offers a streamlined interface

"What we're focusing on and putting 60 percent of our development resources in is getting everyone on the same platform," Ms. North said.

There are many resources planned for the future, especially as mobile commerce cements itself as a sales-driver for major retailers, but HBC also ensures it has a team of several developers ready to conduct updates to current mobile offerings.

"We want to get everyone on the same platform and have responsive Web sites across so that mobile isn't as behind," Ms. North said.

However, the complexity of mobile does require extra education for some teams. Therefore, it is imperative to hold regular meetings with stakeholders, executives and developers to discuss happenings in the space and share ideas on what might be the next best strategy to raise revenue.

Splashing in sales

The SeaWorld executive affirmed the need for regular meetings that get all teams on the same page, particularly as the theme park brand has many functionalities to build into its mobile applications. Park guests may pre-order meals at restaurants to skip lines, purchase branded merchandise and also buy tickets for general admission via their smartphones.

There is lots of competition for each line of business, meaning that executives must all do long-term strategic planning together.



SeaWorld's app makes navigating the busy theme parks easier

SeaWorld is no stranger to leveraging mobile to drum up interest and sales in its parks.

Last December, SeaWorld Kids aimed to drum up interest among a young demographic of consumers and their parents with five mobile applications designed to educate users about nature and conservation ([see story](#)).

"At the end of the day, we can have all these great ideas, but when you really go down and talk to the guests in our park, maybe it's not important to them," said Len Dudis, corporate director of IT at [SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment](#). "We have to keep it contextual as well as provide value for the guest in the app."

Final Take

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