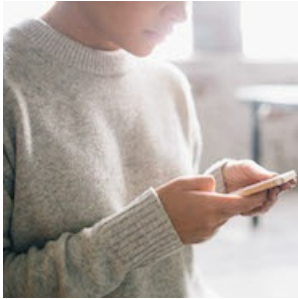


RESEARCH

Sending push notifications after dinner a significant missed opportunity: report

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Marketers should pay closer attention to when they send push notifications

By CHANTAL TODE

While push notifications are an important way for mobile marketers to drive engagement, 63 percent worldwide are sending messages at the wrong time of day, according to a new report from Leanplum.

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The mobile marketing automation platform analyzed 671 million push notifications, discovering that mobile marketers also fail to consider time zones and miss the mark on frequency. The findings suggest that marketers are struggling with relevancy when it comes to push notifications.

"Marketers are failing to take into account how culture impacts likely times of engagement, and often don't use simple tools that enable them to stagger delivery by time zones," said Momchil Kyurkchiev, CEO and co-founder of [Leanplum](#). "But personalization is precisely what marketers need to do to be relevant.

"They need to understand and respect user behavior in context," he said.

Harnessing machine learning

For the report, "Breaking Barriers to Push Notification Engagement," Leanplum harnessed machine learning to derive insights from big data that can help drive campaign optimization.

One key finding is that marketers in North America are missing an opportunity to engage with users on weekdays between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 p.m., when open rates are strong for push notifications. For example, at 8 p.m., users open four times as many push notifications than are being sent.

On the weekends, the data suggests that marketers in North America should send push notifications at 4 p.m. and 5 p.m., when customer engagement is still strong and push frequency drops.

The data also reveals that many marketers do not factor in time zones, with too many marketers sending push notifications in the EMEA region at midnight when users are not engaging.

In the Asia Pacific region, the most engaged hours of the day are from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., while marketers are failing to send enough messages during this time period.

"We were surprised at the differences in engagement between EMEA and North America," Mr. Kyurkchiev said. "In

North America, peak open rates resonate with our familiar pace of life just before work, during lunch, and after work/school.

"However, in EMEA, peak engagement is earlier in the morning and later at night," he said. "Specifically, 9 p.m. in EMEA is the magic hour for push.

"Unfortunately, brands aren't sending push notifications then. They're sending at hours when people most likely to be asleep, including well after midnight. To me, that says marketers aren't even trying to account for time zones, even though it's a simple step to take."

□

Focus on personalization

The findings suggest that marketers leveraging push notifications are not taking region, culture and lifestyle into consideration, relying too heavily on generic push campaigns instead.

With mobile use varying across different regions of the world, marketers could drive better results by tailoring their messaging strategies to address these differences.

For example, mobile games company Pixowl saw a 17 percent increase in revenue by sending notifications when users are most likely to open using Leanplum's Optimal Time tool, which leverages machine learning to analyze individual behavior.

Leanplum offers a number of ways for marketers to enhance their push notification strategies including programmatic delivery, soft-ask push permissions, an in-app news feed and email.

"Above all else, I'd say focus on personalization," Mr. Kyurkchiev said. "Marketers who use generic, poorly timed blasts see little engagement.

"To boost push notification opens, first take into account who your users are, with information such as time zone and demographics," he said. "Next, respect user behaviors, like preferences and interests, in order to start a contextual conversation that encourages engagement.

"This level of granularity increases the chances that users will open your messages and take concrete action inside your app."