

COLUMNS

Marketing campaigns for a device-centered future

March 28, 2016



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The Year of Mobile came and went without anyone agreeing on when it actually occurred. But regardless, very few marketers will dispute that mobile is the new all-encompassing reality.

Mobile users continue to turn to their mobile devices for more of their daily activities and searches. This ubiquitous use of personal devices, coupled with emerging technology trends, means marketers now have the opportunity to realize the long-desired goal of reaching the right person at the right time in the right place.

Of course, that is easy to say and marketers like to say it a lot. But as any marketer can also attest, it is not necessarily simple to do.

Before you can achieve this advertising utopia, you must first have a deeper understanding of mobile technology, and the still nascent applications of it that can better connect brands directly to their desired consumers.

Let us take a look at the mobile-device-centered future and the emerging technologies that hold the greatest potential for campaigns.

Right person

We have come a long way when it comes to finding our audiences.

Once upon a time, it might have been acceptable to simply throw your full budget at a television commercial that would run during a show that was likely watched by a vague semblance of your target demographic. Those days, thankfully, are gone.

That said, the mere dawn of digital did not fix everything in terms of finding the right audience.

Over the past decade, we have spent a lot of time tracking people by chasing cookie crumbs a step up from untargeted TV buys, yes. But hardly a foolproof means of targeting down to the individual.

These days, the best opportunity to know the individual that you are reaching is that little device sitting right in his pocket.

Every mobile device has a unique identifier that can be tied directly to the individual using it. When you target your ads by device, you target your ads to the individual an opportunity still overlooked by many marketers today.

Right place

OK, so you know who is going to see your ad. But where will they see it? Surely that promotion for the all-you-can-eat sushi lunch special is going to waste when you deliver it to a customer working 50 miles from the restaurant itself.

Enter geo-fencing.

Thanks to the unique footprint of every mobile device, you already know who is going to see your ad. When you layer on smart geo-fencing capabilities that provide an understanding of where a consumer is, you take the next step toward relevance.

Programs that incorporate geo-fencing allow you to set up triggers so that when a device enters or exits a given area, the consumer can be targeted with a mobile ad, text message or other appropriate alert.

Many mobile devices enable location-based tracking by default, and a large percentage of consumers are potentially reached through campaigns incorporating geo-fencing. Which brings us to the final point which mobile marketers must consider.

Right time

Targeting the right person at the right place might not amount to a hill of beans if the timing is not right.

The time at which a person is in a location provides the context needed for marketers to determine the proper messaging for an individual.

In this regard, the emerging Internet of Things is going to be transformative for marketers when it comes to proper context.

TECHNOLOGIES EMBEDDED in everything from our cars to our refrigerators are going to be able to communicate with personal mobile devices in ways that recognize both the place and time of an interaction.

Some day in the not-too-distant future, your car might text you a mobile coupon for coffee just as you are driving past the local java shop on your way to work in the morning.

Not a coffee drinker, you say?

Your car and phone already put their heads together on that one and let the marketer know. Your coupon is for a donut.

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