

COLUMNS

Moving from passive to interactive viewership with apps

April 4, 2016



Lahary Ravuri

By **Lahary Ravuri**

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Entertainment and media companies who are relying on passive viewership are missing a valuable opportunity to engage people repeatedly through an application. Consumers now want to go beyond just consuming. They want behind-the-scenes, interactive exploration of the media and activities that they enjoy.

When an NBA team grabbed hold of this concept, they established a way for game-goers to get VIP treatment in an app. The fans get closer to the players they follow and their team through an app accessed from a smartphone or tablet. The team's app strategy has taken a ticket-buyer and turned them into more.

The dynamic messages that are possible in an app go beyond where print can reach.

For example, the NBA team app includes scores, articles about players and upcoming games, arena maps, promotions and ticket purchases. Social media connections spur shares and conversations, while a play-by-play can be accessed in the arena and during away games.

With 82 regular season games, controlling three apps in house has meant easy and frequent updates to game day information, player stats and the magazine that pulls all of the stories together. The team can interact with their fans any day of the week thanks to apps.

In an area of high competition, getting screen time more often is a serious win.

Connecting a dispersed audience

Entertainment and media companies with dispersed audiences can create a community of connected fans through apps, too.

A prominent theatre company in the United Kingdom, for example, is celebrating 50 years of live-stage performances that have reached millions of patrons.

Engaging audiences through an app has opened the door to evolve from static printed content into a connected experience that spans the globe.

News, audio, video, interviews, commissioned content, ticket purchases, schedules and even interactive premium content puts that passion of theatre into the hands of past, and future audience members.

The app has completely removed the hurdle of connecting consistently with a dispersed audience who would otherwise not have access to printed materials. It offers what the audience wants: access to actors and directors, show information and often-unattainable insight into the inner-workings of a production, no matter where they travel.

The theatre company also gets what every entertainment and media company needs: consistent, repeated and valuable connection to an audience.

Possibilities

Smartphone and tablet features can be integrated into an app designed for audiences.

Social features such as photo-sharing create community and shared experiences across audiences. Video and photography can be used to strengthen messaging, introduce new concepts, or keep people engaged between events by bringing viewers behind the curtain.

Real-time interactions create live connections with influencers that attract viewers. When these experiences are integrated with push-notifications, consumers engage at higher rates to consume content, buy tickets or consider promotions that they might otherwise miss.

Apps also provide the opportunity to produce levels of content that can gauge interest and create revenue.

The theatre company produces both free and commissioned content for theatre-goers that allows the theatre to connect to 4.1 million theatre-goers beyond the seat they sit in during a performance. The NBA team produces multiple apps for every level of fan.

For entertainment and media companies creating experiences that are worth reliving, the app provides the moment of connection they need to create and recreate meaningful experiences.

Defining a cultural interest

The entertainment and media industry has unprecedented opportunity to create and define cultural interest with apps.

A consumer who loves the theatre will proudly download an app that gives her the inside access she craves.

A sports fan will return to apps that gives access to the personalities, information, updates and stats that he will share in every conversation.

A TELEVISION SHOW, movie, magazine, band or concert venue all have the opportunity to influence by creating, curating and releasing apps for their fans to indulge.

Passive is no longer the standard for entertainment.

Lahary Ravuri is group manager of product marketing for Adobe Experience Manager Mobile at [Adobe](#), San Jose, CA. Reach her at ravuri@adobe.com.