

MOBILE

Mobile video hits new heights with Verizon's stake in AwesomenessTV

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Verizon Go90 platform

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While mobile video has been a big focus over the past year, it has yet to reach its zenith as major players continue to up their game, such as Verizon taking a 24.5 percent stake in YouTube-focused entertainment company AwesomenessTV.

The recent investment from Verizon is meant to help to propel the wireless carrier's Go90 platform as a bigger player in mobile video by tapping into AwesomenessTV personalities and talent to produce a bevy of quality short-form videos. As mobile video continues to grow with consumer behavior, major developers are bringing it to the mainstream, evidenced by Twitter and National Football League launching a streaming partnership while Facebook Live continues to expand.

"This will be an incredibly important partnership for Verizon," said Michael Becker, managing partner at mCordis. "In today's marketplace, content is king and distribution is queen, the offspring of the two is a conversation.

"Verizon, by aligning its distribution channels with high-end, in-demand, content has the potential to retain and draw subscribers, drive data traffic and stimulate conversations," he said. "A potential big win for the business."

Valuing mobile video

Verizon is working to bring a television-like following to its Go90 platform, but is focusing on short-form as the shorter snippet works out better for mobile viewing. The new partnership will create an independent content brand, which will feature new content from individuals underneath AwesomenessTV's umbrella, including behind-the-scenes employees.

The partnership also gives AwesomenessTV the tools to work with Hollywood production personnel such as writers, studios, actors and directors, which means mobile video is taking a big step into the mainstream.

Verizon is purchasing a 24.5 percent claim into the company, but media brand Hearst will maintain another 24.5 percent, while Dreamworks keeps its majority share at 51 percent.

The partnership is not the only big step for mobile video this week. Twitter has also partnered with the NFL for a deal that will provide live streaming of Thursday Night Football to mobile users.

As the NFL's viewers' interest in streaming grows, the league opted for a Twitter partnership due to the wide range of discussion that takes place during the games on the platform. The thought process behind the decision was to target consumers where there is already a dialogue taking place, and vice versa.

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Facebook is also displaying its faith in mobile video with updates to its live streaming video. Users will soon be able to broadcast live to a Facebook group, schedule a streaming Q&A session through its events feature and videos will also be featured in a dedicated area on the homepage of its app.

Marketers and video

Marketers are also highly interested in sponsored mobile videos, and can build a following of loyal fans by finding publishing partners that reflect their brand image, but creating a call-to-action flow is where the real marketing magic lies ([see more](#)).

Unilever's Tresemm employed model and television personality Chrissy Teigen for a video series, which took the form of a video blog to showcase a new product line ([see more](#)).

"People have voted with their behaviour, they love video, video across all channels TV, computers, tablets and phones," Mr. Becker said. "They also love all kinds of video, user generated, short-form, episodic and long-form.

"What is vital to the power of what Verizon is doing, especially on mobile devices is that mobile brings an essential feature that few if any other channels deliver, individual addressability," he said. "This addressability will be a powerful tool for Verizon to power new advertising and Over the Top Marketing efforts. With OTT Marketing intermediaries will fall to the wayside and marketers will be able to go direct to their prospects and customers.

"Marketing is going to get so much more efficient. In addition to video consumption increases across mobile and all digital channels, we should also keep an eye out for the rise of interactive video and video that bridges the gap between the digital world and the physical world."

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