

MOBILE

PwC exec: Branded apps not required for understanding modern customer journey

May 13, 2016



Context reigns supreme within mobile experiences

By **Alex Samuely**

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

NEW YORK An executive from PricewaterhouseCoopers at the MMA Mobile Marketing Leadership Forum May 11 advised marketers to offer a balance of utilitarianism and content within their mobile experiences and place context above all else to ensure the right experience meets the right user.

During the session, "Aligning Consumers and Business Needs by Bending Consumer Journeys," the executive reminded marketers that addressing consumer journeys on mobile does not require having an application. However, in order to maximize efforts and truly transform the way business is conducted, brand leaders must identify the right mobile catalysts and contextual experiences for their audiences.

"Changing your mobile or digital experience is a big undertaking," said Anton Fajardo, tech lead director, experience center at **PricewaterhouseCoopers**. "You fundamentally change the way you do business.

"It's not something you take lightly."

Context is king

Mr. Fajardo invited audience members to consider how businesses undergo evolution. Many businesses attempt to change technology or the consumer, a tactic that hardly ever leads to success.

"Technology moves way faster than the consumer," Mr. Fajardo said. "The business can definitely not catch up to the consumer.

"If you try to chase any of those two, you will fail eventually. So how do you take control of your own destiny?"

He admitted that understanding the consumer journey is not an easy task, but claimed it can be done even without having an app in the marketplace.

United States-based companies are now mimicking ways that marketers in Asia boost consumer engagement. Instead of focusing on driving app installs, brands are joining the chatbot craze.

Facebook and Uber's partnership offers the right amount of utility

Facebook now enables users to order an Uber without having to download the ride-sharing service's app, showcasing how non-app-based experiences can be utilitarian.

Many Asia-based brands are tapping into the popularity of mobile messaging platforms such as WeChat and WhatsApp and connecting with multitudes of users there.

Microsoft's recent chatbot disaster notwithstanding, an explosion of relatively easy-to-develop messaging interfaces is expected this year as marketers look to capitalize on the time spent in Facebook Messenger, Kik and other similar apps ([see story](#)).

Triggering real-time engagement

Regardless of whether an app is primarily content-centric, utilitarian-centric or both, brands must have systems in place that trigger real-time engagement based on context and location.

For example, sports arenas or stadiums with their own mobile apps need to take into account a slew of important aspects, such as segment, context and time.

Game attendees entering the stadium for the first time will likely want quick access to their mobile tickets.

Meanwhile, consumers already inside the arena may look for a mobile wallet with which they can purchase food at a concession stand.

Stadium apps generally provide contextual experiences based on consumers' exact locations

Additionally, if concession stands want to sell the last of their goods toward the end of a game, they can send out a push notification to fans, offering them a 20 percent-off discount.

If individuals feel as though branded material is not speaking to them directly, they will be much less likely to continue interacting with it, regardless of how many resources were poured into the initiative.

"I think the key to delivering great mobile experiences today is context," Mr. Fajardo said.