

RETAIL

Mobile demands convergence of marketing and commerce: Kohl's exec

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Photo courtesy of jeweler Boucheron

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By [Brielle Jaekel of Mobile Marketer](#)

BOSTON An executive from Kohl's at eTail East 2016 emphasized that while desktop commerce evolved and grew separate from marketing, mobile commerce cannot and to move forward, it is important to intertwine the two disciplines.

During the session, "Examining the Relationship Between Marketing and Merchandising and Increasing Traffic Conversion," the executive explained that Kohl's has a while to go in the mobile space but its important to think about the overall customer interaction with the retailer. Customers are using their smartphones for such a wide range of interactions and capabilities that retailers need to consistently be on their game in terms of being relevant to the right customer at the right time.

"I would say we still have a lot of work to do, but like many other retailers out there it is still our primary traffic driver," said Sarah Rasmusen, vice president of digital presentation and analytics at [Kohl's](#). "We are learning a lot more and more about how the customer is using her phone and using the app in-store.

"So I would say our desktop Web store environment probably grew up independently of marketing, but we know that our mobile cannot," she said. "So we know that it is the big traffic driver but that still needs to be the big conversion engine so we are kind of pivoting with how to go forward channel wise with the phone first."

Mobile, digital, bricks-and-mortar

While digital and bricks-and-mortar retail were born as separate entities, the industry has evolved so much that the two are one in the same. There is hardly a line between marketing and retail anymore, with technology on mobile, digital and social media being purchase-enabled.

Kohl's will be moving forward in attempts to merge marketing and retail in the digital space, but leading with mobile-first.

The closer retailers can bridge the gap between marketing and checkout, the more likely they will be to drive sales

and drive impulse purchases.

An executive from TVPage also detailed that as mobile video is on the rise, and retailers should introduce video into their strategy by first optimizing it on Web sites and tracking customer attribution. Retailers should follow what customers have followed through to purchase and let that lead the next steps in video introduction.

Timely targeting

A Walgreens executive explained that the marketing industry was largely a bid to get the largest number of eyeballs on a specific product or service, but it has shifted one-on-one interacting and targeting. But the future lies in targeting the right customer at the right time.

For instance, if a Walgreens customer bought shampoo today, it is highly irrelevant to target him or her with shampoo products the following day. Retailers should look to targeting them again later on down the road when she is likely to be out of the product and interested in purchasing more.

"Marketing used to be this spray and pray and now we have gone to a kind of one-to-one marketing, but I think that the next big shift is going to be point in time," said Wayne Duan, director of digital commerce at Walgreens. "Are you marketing to the right person at the right time?"

"For Walgreens, it is all about replenishment. I know that you just bought shampoo yesterday, why am I going to spend marketing dollars to get you to buy shampoo tomorrow, you just bought a bottle."

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