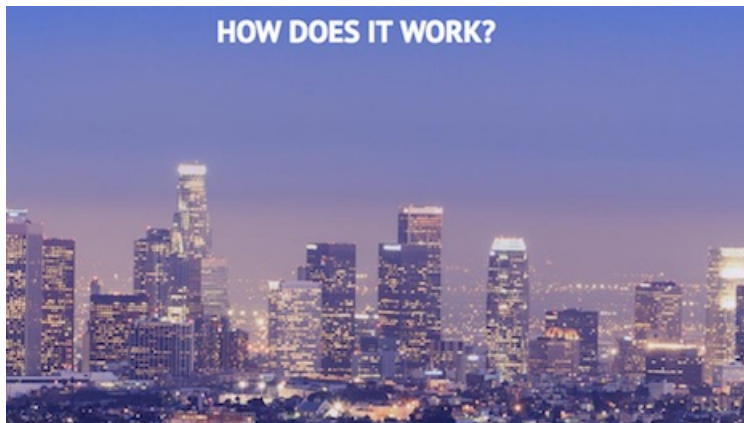


COLUMNS

3 tips to tackle mobile for marketing and retail

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That's the question

By **Michael Korsunsky**

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With more than 2 billion smartphone users across the globe, it is no wonder that marketers are investing more in their mobile strategies.

Mobile marketing comes with its own unique challenges, but when used correctly, it can go a long way in terms of increasing brand awareness and driving consumer engagement.

Here are three things to keep in mind while navigating the mobile world:

1. Everything is mobile

As every marketer knows, consumer attention is a scarce commodity.

With the abundance of information available at any given moment, and at consumers' fingertips, navigating through the attention economy has become increasingly difficult since the advent of the mobile phone.

Though it may sound strange to try quantifying attention, let alone converting that figure into a monetary value, recent research shows that the cost of consumer attention has jumped seven- to nine-fold since the 1990s.

Essentially, that means that within the last 25 years, the most dramatic business expense increase was consumer attention. It also presents a significant hurdle to marketers trying to capture consumer attention in a climate where everyone has very easy access to a veritable smorgasbord of 24-hour stimuli, housed in mobile phones.

It has been more than two years since mobile surpassed desktop for Internet usage, and it shows no signs of slowing down. In fact, the gap is only getting wider.

Mobile now represents nearly two out of three digital media minutes. Because of this, marketers have been forced to adopt a mobile-first mindset.

When a creative team sits down to design a display ad today, they are thinking about how it is going to look on the small screen first and foremost, which is a stark contrast to the desktop-driven design that dominated the industry in the 90s.

2. Mobile devices enable next-level engagement

While the shift from desktop to mobile introduces new challenges for marketers such as the aforementioned smaller display it also presents exciting new opportunities to engage with consumers on new levels.

Mobile devices feature all kinds of technology that marketers did not previously have access to such as sensors, camera, GPS and accelerometers.

Not only does the hardware enable new forms of interaction on a physical level by introducing the ability to incorporate actions into ads, such as shaking, tilting and swiping, but it also enables marketers to collect entirely new data sets about the consumers they want to reach.

With this information, marketers can deliver hyper-relevant campaigns that provide consumers with timely information such as breaking news, driving directions and coupons or deals.

For example, imagine a recent high-school graduate who is getting ready to head off to her first year of college. She is at the salon waiting for her nails to dry and is scrolling through the latest headlines on Cosmopolitan when she is served an ad from Target that features a sale on must-have tech for recent grads. She can tap or swipe the ad for more information and save the deal to Passbook where she also has stored gift cards that were sent from friends and family.

Next time she is in close proximity to a Target store, her device will remind her of the credit and deals she has pending as well as provide directions to the most convenient location.

Once she finds the perfect new tablet and accessories to match, she can snap a photo and share to social media instantly, providing additional visibility and reach for the brand at no extra cost.

As you can see, new hardware developments significantly amplify the possibilities for reaching consumers on the go.

If done correctly and in a contextually relevant way, marketers will achieve new levels of engagement and conversion.

3. Consider the differences between in-app and the mobile Web

According to comScore's 2016 U.S. Mobile App Report, smartphone apps have been the driving force behind overall growth in digital media engagement over the last three years, accounting for 80 percent of total growth during that timeframe.

The report also reveals that mobile app usage continues to outpace mobile Web by a 7:1 margin in time spent a ratio that has held constant for the past two years.

With consumers spending significantly more time using apps than they do the mobile Web, it is no surprise that marketers are allocating more resources to in-app advertising.

As in-app advertising has evolved, it has become clear that native ads are most effective for the medium, since they are the least invasive and do not disrupt user experience the way a display ad would.

Because of that, we are seeing some of the world's most popular apps and the companies that own them investing heavily in native offerings.

For example, Twitter recently announced that retailers can now have their app-install ads that are currently running within the Twitter Audience Platform converted to native ads that blends in with other in-app content. It added that the native format generated a 56 percent lift in click-through application install conversions when compared to other in-app formats such as static banner.

While smartphone apps are dominating mobile usage, the mobile Web has a substantially larger total audience and should not be overlooked completely.

It was right around this time last year that Google reported mobile searches surpassing desktop searches worldwide, indicating that the mobile Web is still a critical channel for discovery.

Additionally, mobile Web sites at least the ones that are worth of your advertising dollars have responsive design, which means the format of the site's content will automatically adapt to the size of the screen it is being displayed on.

For advertisers, that means they only have to create one version of an ad rather than investing in multiple formats.

DEVELOPING AND EXECUTING a successful mobile marketing campaign can be quite challenging at times, but it does not have to be impossible.

In many ways, mobile enables additional campaign functionality not available on other hardware platforms.

From the countless ways to harness the power of mobile hardware to the unique engagement options, the sky is the limit with mobile marketing.



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