

COLUMNS

5 things marketers still are not doing right with mobile

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Mobile advertising accounted for 47 percent of all digital ad spending last year and is on pace to become bigger than desktop spending in 2017.

For marketers, the shift has been quick and most are still figuring out the space. If they want to optimize their return on all of the money that they are spending now, they still have some learning to do, though.

Here are five things they are still doing wrong:

1. Forcing consumers to kill their ads. Annoying ads take over the screen and force consumers to hit the dreaded X to get rid of them. Do you think they are up for an advertising message at that point?

Solution: Pursue an inbound marketing strategy in which users will be drawn to your content rather than an interruptive strategy.

2. Using clumsy retargeting ads. Just because I recently looked at a band-saw on Amazon does not mean I am ready to buy one now as I read a story on a political news site. What ever happened to context?

Remember magazines when the ads were always suited to the editorial environment, too?

Solution: Apply learning from past campaigns to inform new ones. Run the ads where they make sense. We have the data, so let us use it.

3. Autoplay video. I am paying for this phone data so I would appreciate you not feasting on it with your unrequested video.

Solution: Dump auto-play. There are ways to entice readers to click, including headlines and, most importantly, well-executed and well-targeted content.

Consumers will pay attention if the content is good.

4. "From the Web" ads. Dear publisher, I know you need cash, but do you realize that these fake news links cheapen

your site and make me ill? And marketers, do you really want to be a part of this?

Solution: Dump these ads. They may bring in revenue, but they hurt your brand and the public perception has turned against them. In the long run, they hurt, not help.

5. Not properly labeling your native ads. This sure looked like a legitimate story. How about making the "advertisement" tag a bit bigger next time?

Sure marketers want to blend in with the content, but when editorial integrity is at stake, everyone loses.

Solution: Do not try to trick readers. If the content is good, they will click even though they know it is an ad.

Oh, and let us just add one more thing for good measure.

Mobile ads are still pretty boring.

And why are so many of them still static? Not enough are using HTML5 yet.

Until this starts to change, advertisers do not have the opportunity to really be creative which, of course, improves user engagement and delivers more brand recognition.

Mobile ads will start to work better when the creative has the license to be just that creative.

The good news is, with all of this, the solutions to the problems above are not hard to implement.

But habits are hard to break, even if they are new habits.

Marketers are still relatively new to mobile, in the scheme of things. But before they get too deeply vested in the wrong things, they need to exercise more self-awareness.

Self-awareness that they are indulging in quick fixes, opting for low-hanging fruit and participating in the otherwise ersatz goings-on listed above, rather than playing for the long haul.

MOBILE IS HERE to stay.

Once marketers realize they need to play like that, they can start learning from their relatively early mistakes and start focusing on what they should be doing to fix them to be prepared for the long road ahead instead.

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