

## RESEARCH

# More than half of newspapers offer mobile advertising: study

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Leading media outlets are embracing mobile, with 84 percent of

the top U.S. media outlets having a mobile Web site, a mobile application or both, according to a new report from 2ergo.

2ergo's Mobilizing Media report shows, however, differences in how newspapers are integrating mobile advertising compared with leading consumer magazines. National newspapers, in general, are leading the way in mobile.

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“Consumer demand will not only pull media companies further into mobile in order to stay competitive, but it will also push attention from other platforms as traffic shifts and the corresponding ad activity shifts towards more mobile-like behaviors as well,” said

Michael Scully, market director of U.K.-based [2ergo](#).

iOS preferred

Media outlets have a lot to gain from the mobile space by providing value to consumers via timely information that is locally relevant, per Mr. Scully

However, media outlets face several challenges in mobile.

“Fragmentation of devices is one area that affects those trying to go into mobile Web or apps,” Mr. Scully said. “It's not cheap to commission an app for each platform, and if you're committing to mobile Web, you have to assure at least a basic usable experience across more than 5000 possible device variants, which is not simple.”

Another challenge is still evolving revenue models.

“On the commercial side, revenue models need to prove themselves out a bit further, whether it be ad-based, subscription, freemium, or one-time payments,” Mr. Scully said. “It's difficult to make the necessary investment forward before you understand what the clear financial impact is likely to be.”

The study looked at the top 50 newspapers, including The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, the top 25 blogs such as The Huffington Post and TechCrunch as well as top 25 consumer magazines, like AARP The Magazine and Better Homes and Gardens.

Results show that media outlets often prefer iOS over Android, with twice as many media companies chose to launch an iPhone app over Android. But, this could change.

“Media outlets favor the iPhone because they believe that iPhone users are more engaged media consumers and that iTunes provides a better discovery mechanism for content,” Mr. Scully said. “Both these assumptions are becoming less strong as Android develops, iterates, and spreads quite quickly.”

National newspapers are leading the way into mobile for the media industry, with 86 percent having a mobile site and 92 percent having released at least one app.

Breaking it down, 88 percent of national newspapers have an iPhone app, 38 percent an Android app and 36 percent a BlackBerry app. Only 28 percent have all three types of applications.

Mobile advertising plays a big role in newspapers' mobile strategies, with 66 percent of them serving up mobile advertising.

Leading consumer magazines appear to favor apps over mobile sites, with 64 percent having at least one mobile app while only 44 percent have a mobile site. By platform, 60 percent have an iPhone app, 28 percent an Android app and 12 percent a BlackBerry app.

Only 20 percent of these consumer publications offer mobile advertising.

“Mobile advertising is slow [at consumer magazines], because buyers are slow,” Mr. Scully said. “Data about user behavior interacting with ad content on mobile is mixed, and if advertisers cannot derive volumes of actions with clear value, they'll struggle to sort out

the economics.”

Interestingly, bloggers aren’t flocking to mobile in the numbers one might expect given their focus on interactivity and targeted content.

Of the top 25 U.S. blogs, 64 percent have a mobile site but only 20 percent are being support by third party advertising. And, only 36 percent have at least one platform-specific mobile application.

“Content providers that have a mixed audience of dedicated readers and casual browsers should optimize to serve from the mobile Web and from within apps,” Mr. Scully said.

“In fact, this presents the perfect opportunity for ‘fremium’ offerings.”

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