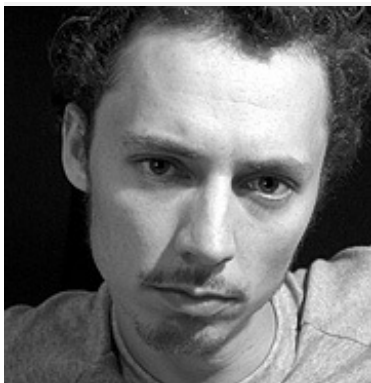
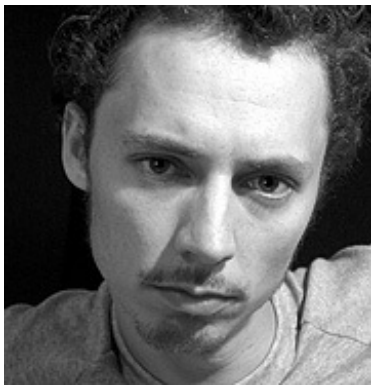


COLUMNS

## 3 mistakes to avoid when planning holiday 2011 campaigns

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By **Steen Andersson**

Over the last 10 years as a mobile executive in Australia and the United States I have seen every possible success and failure in mobile first hand.

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As this year's holiday season approaches I thought I would share some valuable make-it-or-break-it lessons from my decade of experience.

Here are three common mistakes I see when retailers are building a mobile strategy:

1. Do not make the mistake of not promoting your mobile holiday program
2. Do not make the mistake of ignoring mobile email customers these holidays
3. Do not assume that mobile commerce is the best way to drive revenue with mobile

Do not make the mistake of not promoting, promoting, promoting

One of our first customers in North America taught me a very important lesson – it is critical to effectively integrate mobile into your larger holiday promotional plan.

This client – I will not name names – via its agency spent more than \$250,000 building out a decent mobile Web presence.

Unfortunately, when it came to the holidays, it had not planned any form of promotion or integration with existing activities.

To cut a long story short, the marketer would have been better to take that \$250,000 budget and give \$50,000 to the five customers that visited the site as an incentive to come into their retail stores.

The failed \$250,000 build-out is an extreme case, but as you look towards these holidays, do not be seduced by the promise of an amazing game-changing standalone mobile program.

Mobile offers its greatest value when it is integrated across your existing activities and, ideally, leverages all that you know about each individual consumer.

In terms of promotional basics for the holidays, think about how you can divert mobile traffic from your dot-com site to the mobile site. Include QR codes on all your printed materials.

Try having a dedicated section of your Web site, as well as promotional spots, talk about how to engage with you via mobile.

Finally, do not forget to send a dedicated email to current customers to advise them on how they can engage with you on mobile. And do not forget to make these emails mobile-optimized.

Do not make the mistake of ignoring mobile email customers this holiday season

We have found that after mobile-optimizing promotional email templates we can generate a 15 percent to 25 percent higher read and click-through rate amongst consumers.

If you are a typical retailer or brand, 10 percent to 20 percent of your current email traffic is being read from a mobile device. How readable are your offers on these devices?

You will probably find that text in your non-mobile-optimized email appears tiny or it may not appear at all.

The holiday season features the highest promotional email traffic days of the year. Do you want your customers reading from their phones to delete your great holiday email out of frustration, or do you want to see them enjoying the experience of pouring over your exciting mobile optimized holiday offers?

Over the last two years, we have been testing different mobile email optimization techniques, and we have found that the greatest uplift in metrics is driven by increased

font size.

The challenge is creating a good-looking template that works on both mobile and PC.

So how do you get the same HTML email to render with normal fonts on the PC, but large, readable ones on the mobile? Conditional CSS.

The secret is to leverage the power built into the latest smartphone email clients and have your HTML code check the width of the email window before setting the font size for that device.

As a rule of thumb, look at doubling the size of the fonts on the phone compared to the PC.

This allows you to read about the product without having to zoom and then pan around the email.

If you are creating very image-heavy emails, then you need to think about bumping up your key benefit copy and calls to action as high as you can without making it look ridiculous on the PC. That will maximize your read rate and click-through rate for your mobile consumers.

Do not assume that mobile commerce is the best way to drive revenue with mobile

One common mistake that I see is the digital/online team forgetting that 90 percent of their company's revenue comes from or through physical retail stores, not online.

Unfortunately, because of the often siloed nature of the business, they are set up to purely focus on the online world. The good news is that we are starting to see more retailers start to look into this opportunity.

A significant revenue driver amongst some of our retail clients has been mobile coupons. Through linking time-limited and mobile-exclusive offers into their mobile coupon wallet, shoppers have a sense of immediacy that produces quick visits to physical retail locations.

If you are a retailer, think about how you can use mobile coupons to drive customers into your store. You can divert shoppers from a competitor's store by offering a high-value mobile coupon which has the added convenience of always being on hand in their phone.

You can include your holiday door buster offers as a pre-load to their mobile coupon wallet, allowing your customers to flip through offers while waiting for the bus or picking up the kids from school.

We are also urging clients to think about what challenges a shopper faces when she is in the actual store environment.

For example, being able to scan the bar code of a toy in the store and seeing an aggregation of online reviews for that product is a huge benefit to many shoppers.

We know that shoppers are already doing this without involvement from the brand or

retailer.

A **recent Google study** on smartphones showed that 70 percent of smartphone users used their phone in-store, 40 percent of those using it to read review on products.

Do you want Amazon servicing those review needs or do you want to have a say in that process? This is where your application strategy is important.

There are many other opportunities for influencing shoppers in-store. It just comes down to the nature of the products in question. Are they high consideration purchases?

If so, detailed product specifications, compatibility references and reviews are critical.

If it is low consideration – a fashion accessory, for example – can you use that first product as a doorbuster to upsell them into another clothing item that they had not seen yet?

There are lots of opportunities to tap into this holiday season. The trick will be to choose the one or two that you think you can execute on effectively and make sure you tell your customers about them.

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