

COLUMNS

When mobile leads your business instead of lagging behind

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By **Marlon Rodrigues**

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Something crazy happened this year in the mobile industry, which is saying a lot given the number of superlatives. Have you seen a growth curve for anything mobile-related?

Behind the scenes of the fight between the smartphone juggernauts, and majority of installed mobile devices being smartphones, they are also starting to change the definition of what our seminal Web traffic figures mean.

Hard cell

The typical conversation around digital or Web is still very much premised on a desktop Web environment. After all, so many lagged the move to the desktop Web in the 1990s and others just caught up.

However, we can easily see that digital is much more of a spectrum of devices and formats than it has ever been – just look around your office.

Traffic from mobile devices is threatening to be a very disruptive force in how digital media companies organize their business.

At least 20 percent of the digital traffic is mobile, and some brands are seeing even higher proportions of mobile traffic today.

In many ways, the developing world is a leading indicator of how content will be consumed in the coming years with markets such as India already seeing half of their Web traffic coming from a mobile device.

We believe that the trend in North America will tip mobile traffic to pass desktop sometime next year.

And yet, it is not just that more people are coming to your brand from a mobile device, but what they expect when they get there.

Venture out

There is a channel effect at play here that Britain's Guardian publication noted recently that shows that its readers are drastically different in age between mediums carrying identical content.

We know that smartphone users are younger and more affluent, making for a highly sought-after demographic for marketers and advertisers.

Finally, a recent study validated something we have known for a long time – mobile's power is in being readily available at the point of decision, making it a highly important point of engagement in the daily life of our audience.

This necessitates a rethinking of where mobile fits into your overall digital plan.

A popular venture capitalist famously hit a vein when he said, "Mobile first, Web second."

Still, many are not able to act in this way given their legacy technology and existing commitments.

There are, of course, exceptions that have shown the courage to take strong stakes in the new digital world.

IT IS NOT too late, and the technology that allows us to think about digital destinations as a spectrum instead of silos enables it.

In time, the keyholders of the mobile and digital areas of businesses will hold the keys to the entire business. What will they wish they had done today to prepare for a more resilient business tomorrow?

*Marlon Rodrigues is director of marketing at **Polar Mobile**, Toronto. Reach him at marlon.rodrigues@polarmobile.com.*