

COLUMNS

## Specialty mobile agencies helping or hindering adoption of mobile in media mix?

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Smartphone adoption in the United States has crossed 50 percent and consumers now spend more time with their phones than with print media. The growing question is why mobile ad spend is so disproportionately low.

We are finding that the specialty mobile agencies are helping brands get a better understanding of what is possible in the mobile space, but is this helping the integration of mobile into the marketing mix or hindering it?

### Talk shop

These specialty agencies are filling a real gap in the market.

Many traditional creative, planning and buying agencies have not built enough mobile marketing capability within their own agency.

Those agencies that are building the mobile brain trust in-house are often creating specialty mobile departments or even separate agency structures to focus on mobile but not integrating it into their traditional media teams.

Either way, there is a separation that exists between mobile and traditional media planning.

Mobile is the great enabler, the perfect extension to a more traditional advertising campaign.

Mobile enables brands to put content into the hands of consumers on the go where it can then be carried with them and shared through social networks.

Also, mobile adds a level of engagement and measurement that does not exist in out-of-home and print media.

With all the power the mobile device brings to marketers, why is the integration with more traditional media so slow? It is simple – no one is talking.

### Pintegrate

The mobile marketing experts are off in their own departments or their own agencies and the people in charge of creating traditional out-of-home and print advertising campaigns are not up to speed as a whole to make the integration work.

To be fair, many brands we speak with are not embracing the mobile platform as quickly as they likely should, so the pressure is not on their agencies to come up with solutions.

But should the brands be driving the demand or should the agencies be creating the opportunity?

Sometimes tried and true is safer than the future, but we need to adopt new technology or risk being replaced by it.

For those starting to adopt it, simply slapping a QR code on an ad or directing consumers to your Web site through mobile banners is not enough. You are missing the real power of the medium.

We see a number of challenges for brands and agencies as they try to integrate a mobile strategy into their mix. Following are some ideas to consider if you are struggling as well:

1. Stay ahead of the trends. Print media, even though shrinking, is enjoying a higher percentage spend than the amount of time spent with it as consumers are moving more of their media consumption to mobile engagement versus print. Brands and agencies are not redirecting spend fast enough so ad dollars are wasted.
2. Get departments talking. Agencies with separate mobile departments need to force discussion and collaboration internally. Agencies without mobile departments need to partner with these specialty mobile agencies where most of the mobile brain trust resides today. You will not survive by trying to protect the existing model as long as possible.
3. Start with mobile Web. If you have no place to send a consumer via their mobile device for a good experience then your strategy fails. Your non-optimized Web site is not a good answer. Start with understanding how to repurpose or complement your message with a strong mobile Web experience for your consumer.

4. Take advantage of technology. Mobile, if done correctly, gives you immense power. Integrating a mobile strategy can give you real-time metrics and help you build direct dialogue with consumers.

5. Use mobile to connect your consumer to your social strategy. Now you can drive your traditional print and out-of-home campaigns to your social media strategy through the mobile device. Whether you want people to like you on Facebook, select you on Pinterest, download your application, or any number of other strategies, the most powerful opportunity is when you create a real and ongoing dialogue with your consumer.

MOBILE IS A relatively new medium and the technology changes will continue to outpace marketers' ability to adapt and keep up for quite some time, but you have to be heading in the right direction.

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