

COLUMNS

Does content quality matter for mobile advertisers?

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In the online advertising space, there have been a number of studies that have highlighted the correlation between quality content and advertising effectiveness.

Good content can help drive higher brand recall, favorability and purchase intent, and because of this, savvy advertisers prioritize quality content when picking their advertising partners.

But does this quality halo effect hold true for advertising across the mobile Web and applications? I think it absolutely does.

In the spirit

A recent Dynamic Logic AdIndex study we ran to measure the effectiveness of a spirit manufacturer's mobile and tablet campaign revealed that women exposed to the creative within hand-selected, high-quality content environments were three times more aware of the brand than the control group.

In addition, the target audience showed a 54 percent lift in brand favorability and a 110 percent lift in purchase intent.

This, and a growing number of studies like it, reveals that as with online advertising,

quality content drives enhanced results for mobile campaigns. However, this presents some challenges for brands as they navigate the still relatively nascent mobile advertising space.

The issue right now is that mobile display is still happening in a largely long-tail environment. Mobile media is fragmented, so advertisers typically partner with networks to get scale, and that is where control over quality gets tricky.

A large portion of mobile inventory comes in the form of in-app ads.

Developers can create an app in their garage on the weekend, and then sign up online to join any of several mobile networks or SSPs. They download and install the network's SDK, wait for approval and then ads begin to appear.

This may be convenient for developers looking to monetize, but it is a terribly low barrier of entry to the network. There are lots of apps and games available that might make a good fit for a brand advertiser, but smart buyers know the ratio of good to bad is disproportionate with many networks.

Sure, advertisers can scrub network lists, a tactic that has carried over from the traditional Web. However, scrubbing takes a lot of work, and when brands scrub their lists significantly, they start to remove scale from the equation, which is the reason they partnered with a network in the first place.

But it is not all doom and gloom.

On the aggregate

The content problem is starting to take care of itself. Publishers who got their start on the Web are, in many cases, now seeing upwards of 10 percent – and, in some cases, almost 50 percent – of their traffic coming from mobile devices and tablets.

Consumption habits are changing so the quality content at scale issue should ultimately take care of itself.

There are also aggregators of mobile and tablet inventory in the market that focus specifically on quality. These vendors can help augment direct publisher buys by delivering scale without any sacrifice in quality.

WHETHER IN addictive, buzz-worthy games or established publishers' mobile properties, advertisers will pay to deliver ads in quality environments, particularly as more proof emerges that connects quality with results.

The rules of engagement are not dissimilar to what advertisers have grown used to in more traditional online environments. It is simply about understanding exactly what you are buying and carefully selecting vendors to deliver the optimum balance of quality and reach.

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