

COLUMNS

Battle for advertising consistency in digital era

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For years email marketing has been one of the most basic and ubiquitous channels of advertising, and for good reason. As advertising technology evolves, there are few other channels of communication that allow marketers to deliver consistent messaging – both in timing and on devices – to their audience, creating a platform for ongoing brand engagement.

The big problem with email marketing is, open rates are low – really low. In fact, open rates are so low industry leaders cannot typically achieve more than a 30 percent open rate with their absolute best performing email marketing campaigns.

Pushing it

Mobile and social media marketing both tried to solve the open rate problem, but they have faced hurdles that limit their effectiveness at achieving open rates that are greater than 30 percent to 50 percent.

In the realm of social media marketing, generating a Facebook like, Twitter follow, Instagram follow or YouTube channel subscription does not translate to ongoing consistent engagement and, therefore, these platforms do not help social media solve the

low open rate problem.

In the realm of mobile marketing, a few specific channels of advertising took aim at solving the low open rate problem such as creating native applications and including push notifications.

However, many users do not enable push notifications for most apps due to battery drainage issues, and others mute branded notifications to avoid the unwanted bombardment.

Among the consumers who both enable push notifications and do not mute branded notifications, only a handful are able to act on notifications because they disappear as phones are unlocked and there is no log of the push notifications.

I realize some of you might be thinking, “There is a log – my phone’s notification center which shows everything I have not cleared,” but there are only a few users that enable for branded notifications to appear there.

Moreover, once a user finally downloads a branded app – we all know generating app downloads is a massive challenge in-and-of itself – that user is not even likely to fire-up that app more than five times. Most users only access a handful of apps with any kind of regularity.

The only channel of advertising available on mobile that has taken aim at, and solved the low open rate problem, is text message advertising.

Pushing for it

Text messaging is more readily available to consumers than email, has an open rate of more than 97 percent, and is almost always read by the intended recipient within the first five minutes of receiving the message.

So why have so many advertisers moved away from text-message-based marketing programs over the past few years? Because the other channels of advertising are sexier and appear to provide “richer” brand experiences.

What most advertisers do not realize is, those who are engaging with their audience via text message today are providing rich, immersive branded experiences that are achieving higher engagement and action rates than any other channel of advertising.

The best part is, consumers do not view text messages as spam because of the heavy regulation around short code-based text message advertising, so open rates have not suffered even though this channel of advertising has been around for more than 13 years.

Perhaps it is time for marketers take a step back and think about the importance of consistency in advertising, and which channels of communication are conducive to achieving that.

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