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How to optimize mobile marketing efforts with targeting

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By [Eric J. Hansen](#)

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You have heard the saying, “When you optimize for everyone, you optimize for no one,” right?

It sounds obvious: optimize for the right audience to achieve your online marketing goals. But many marketers do not – for several reasons.

For example, technology is changing so quickly, it can be difficult to keep up with new audiences and new devices. Which means you might be missing out on a new key segment – mobile visitors.

Web ensnares new audience

With the ongoing proliferation of browsers and devices that can access your content and commerce offerings, the mobile Web opens up a vast new audience of potential visitors to your site.

In fact, Gartner predicts mobile will be the No. 1 Internet access device by 2013.

ABI Research believes that 8 percent of total ecommerce sales will come from mobile by 2014.

Also, according to comScore, nearly one-third of all mobile users already actively engage with Web content on their mobile phones, and 53 percent of smartphone users routinely engage in mobile Web browsing activities.

So, what are you doing to optimize for mobile devices and mobile visitors?

Testing sub-segment

Since many organizations have not yet allocated specific budget for mobile content, testing a subset of existing, highly-trafficked content on a targeted mobile audience can provide a low-cost and low-risk stepping stone towards building a business case around making a deliberate investment in mobile optimization.

Tests have proven that showing mobile users content that was specifically tailored for mobile devices improves the user experience, makes the site stickier and, ultimately, increases conversion rates.

With mobile targeting, Web marketers and analysts are able to test, measure and, ultimately, deliver the content, layout and promotional offers that are more effective for each mobile device category.

These can include such attributes as:

- Preferred markup language: HTML vs. WAP/WML
- Keyboard type: physical versus touch screen keyboard
- Screen dimensions and rotation support
- Browser capabilities: scaling, Flash and AJAX support
- Cellular network data speeds: 2.5G, 3G and 4G
- Mobile operating system: Apple iOS, Android, BlackBerry/Research In Motion, Windows Phone Mobile and Palm webOS

Living with Java

Clearly, mobile users clearly have different needs and expectations than desktop users.

For example, environment, task-at-hand and physical device constraints all differ, often dramatically.

However, while marketers can test what is working or not working on their regular Web sites and in their search engine optimization and pay-per-click campaigns, many mobile devices do not support JavaScript-based testing and targeting solutions or accept cookies to track users.

In fact, mobile site operators have estimated these devices to be as high as 50 percent of their audience, thus precluding pervasive JavaScript-based testing, targeting and analytics for these mobile users.

That means you want to look for a non-intrusive mobile testing and targeting platform that does not rely upon JavaScript operations for generating content variations, so you do not have to worry about what browser, version or settings your users have.

That way, you can test, target and analyze users who have disabled JavaScript or cookies, have browsers that do not support cookies, or have chosen to only accept temporary session-based cookies.

Clearly, with the rapid growth in mobile adoption, Web marketers are now realizing how important it is to provide a compelling mobile Web experience.

Mobile targeting brings a needed capability to the Web marketing toolbox, allowing marketers to easily and non-intrusively test, target and deliver the most compelling mobile experiences.

Eric J. Hansen is CEO of [SiteSpect](#), a Boston-based technology provider for multivariate testing, behavioral targeting and digital marketing optimization. Reach him at ehansen@sitespect.com.

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