

COLUMNS

## Valuing engagement over scale in mobile

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With the percentage of content consumed continuing to swing in favor of mobile traffic and the next generation set to connect to the Internet for the first time via a smartphone, effective mobile marketing strategy is now a prerequisite for brand success.

As a result, mobile advertising continues to grow rapidly, so it is no surprise that the search for an effective solution to this problem is a prevalent topic at the moment.

Mobile World Congress last month in Barcelona, Spain, demonstrated that this market is all to play for and undoubtedly an area of keen interest, but also that it is yet to be satisfactorily addressed.

### Mobile advertising: a new paradigm

Mobile offers a new paradigm for mutually beneficial interaction between users, brands and content providers, but how we engage with the problems at hand is yet to be clearly defined.

While advertisers pursue the answer to delivering engaging ads without interrupting user experience, an alternative solution lies elsewhere.

With time at a premium and mobile users expecting relevant engagement in the right places and at the right times, the allure of traditional advertising has faded. Rather than looking at how it can be adapted to fit the mobile space, a new model is required.

### More personal and engaging experience

The integration of authentic and relevant content into the mobile framework provides a means of access to the targeted audience that advertisers are chasing in a way that is no longer an interruption, but rather a valuable extension of their participation.

The creation of this auxiliary layer can be seen as beneficial to the user experience, offering additional dimensions to interaction that can be designated to alert, educate and absorb in a way that draws the user further in to the experience instead of pulling her out of it, even if only momentarily.

Naturally, there are still some issues to be addressed here.

Content has become a key marketing watchword for companies looking to assert their presence across digital and social channels in a more engaging way. However, many are failing to tackle the key question to solve that particularly challenging predicament: “What makes this interesting to our audience?”

The content that will succeed in expanding a brand’s audience is that which creates a narrative that can exist and engage autonomously from the brand itself.

To share, people need to care, and for that to be the case you need to be offering them tangible value. With that value secured, you have their attention and, consequently, the opportunity to convince them to come round to your perspective.

### Understanding ROI with actionable content

Engaging stories have the ability to pique an audience’s interest in a way that converts that initial curiosity in to enthusiasm, creating social ambassadors who can help share and grow the content.

This may not provide the direct financial ROI of increased sales that advertising promises in the short term, but what it does offer is a much more accurate way to track those metrics.

While up until now the revenue generated from an ad has been measured by inadequate analysis of impressions and clicks, actionable content is instantaneously measurable.

If that content is also moving the engagement needle, it allows you to develop a much more effective strategy for the ways in which you sell and how you target your customers.

The longer you are able to keep someone engaged and retain their attention, the more you increase the chance of spontaneous action as a result and improve conversion rates.

Immediacy is now a given for consumers and they require more from their mobile experience than a simple search and buy functionality.

### Mobile video now a leading entertainment channel

With the proliferation of smart devices and quicker network speeds, video is now a leading entertainment channel that accounts for an increasing proportion of mobile traffic.

As well as providing a deeper form of engagement, the format offers a number of valuable data and analytical benefits on mobile that have been previously unobtainable.

As companies have started to overcome the difficulties of delivering video for mobile, discussions are rapidly building around the subject and its possibilities. But it is yet to be properly cracked as a fully integrated tool to drive consumer acquisition and retention.

The incorporation of video into this content framework offers a new and deeper understanding of your audience and its behavior.

As well as allowing brands to target very specifically who receives content, it unlocks a real insight into the value of that content in terms of actual revenue generation.

BY PROPERLY integrating video into a user experience, it opens up a wealth of metrics to data-driven retailers that allow them to better understand their audience at all points of the path to purchase. This allows you to measure where, when and why people buy, feeding back into a much more targeted strategy.

Combining content and commerce seamlessly means consumers receive the personal experience that they crave without impairing the flow or speed of the process, increasing both conversion and retention.

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