

Brands must move budgets to the world's most influential mass medium

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Mobile is no longer the future of digital advertising it is the here and now. According to eMarketer, mobile advertising spending will surpass the \$100 billion mark in 2016, an increase of 430 percent from 2013.

Mobile has achieved first-screen status, with average users checking their phones up to 150 times a day, according to Facebook.

Despite its growing prevalence, mobile is still a new and unfamiliar landscape that industry veterans have a hard time navigating.

Research from Forrester Research found that only 31 percent of marketers are confident in their ability to calculate mobile ROI, which means that more than two-thirds of marketers are still hesitant to fully invest in mobile.

While mobile investment is growing, it has not kept pace with the shift in attention to smaller screens.

The brands that adapt to this shift will enter an environment where viewers are increasingly likely to see and engage with brand messaging.

These marketers have found success by embracing the following steps:

1. Targeting capabilities

Because we rarely go anywhere without our smartphones, mobile is a powerful vehicle for real-time marketing.

Mobile takes advantage of GPS and beacon technology, allowing brands to customize messaging based on a user's location and check-ins.

Also, mobile is essential for brand awareness and purchase intent.

Ninety-three percent of consumers who use their smartphones to research a product ultimately go on to complete a purchase, according to Facebook.

A Google study found that one in three shoppers turn to their phones for product information, rather than asking a store employee for assistance.

Marketers should also consider the fact that smartphone capabilities are expanding with each iteration, drawing an ever-growing crowd of mobile users.

2. Meaningful mobile metrics

A lack of understanding about mobile has left marketers reliant on traditional advertising methods.

Views and clicks are no longer representative indications of true awareness and engagement.

An Association of National Advertisers (ANA) survey revealed that companies regard brand lift and awareness, social media sharing rates, time spent, purchase intent and lead generation to be the most important measurements.

Mobile is an ideal platform for measuring true engagement versus mere awareness, as mobile users can make a purchase, share a video or send a tweet with a swipe of their finger.

Traditional third-party cookies do not work on mobile, but consumer behavior is also different than it is on desktop.

Applications dominate the mobile landscape, enabling more sophisticated targeting methods, such as first-party data.

As mobile capabilities become more advanced, so does the potential to track more meaningful measures of ROI.

3. Mobile users feel more connected to brands

Smartphone users are 1.4 times as likely to watch an ad, 1.8 times as likely to share the ad, and twice as likely to feel a sense of personal connection to the brand, according to Google.

The sense of intimacy inherent in mobile viewing makes it the perfect vehicle for brands to build personal connections with their audiences. It also gives users new choices.

Seventy-five percent of smartphone users reported that having the option to skip an ad is important to them.

4. Mobile marketing needs to be a priority, not an afterthought

As brands respond to the industry's mobile surge, many have yet to bring their mobile team's center stage.

Disconnected mobile marketing strategies can result in incoherent and disjointed brand identity across channels. This diminishes mobile marketing's overall effectiveness.

Mobile advertising must be seamlessly integrated into existing marketing strategies to keep the brand's message clear, consistent, and compelling.

Closing the mobile gap

Mobile is the perfect vehicle for in-the-moment messaging, on-the-go recommendations and reaching consumers while they are most engaged.

Brands that dedicate the majority of their budgets to traditional forms of marketing are missing an increasingly significant portion of their audience.

The players who are most successful in this new landscape have found ways to work mobile strategy into their existing marketing initiatives.

These marketers are focused on producing high-quality mobile content, and treating it as its own channel, rather than an extension of desktop. They also respect their audience by giving them a say in what they watch.

MARKETERS WHO embrace mobile's uncertainties can enjoy the benefits of being an early entrant in what has already become the world's most important and influential mass medium.

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