

COLUMNS

## 5 tips for mobile marketing success

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The simple truth is that there is no one right way to succeed in mobile marketing.

Even the definition of success can vary widely from marketer to marketer and from initiative to initiative: driving sales, strengthening loyalty, building a foundation for future programs the list goes on.

With so many mobile channels, strategies and tactics to consider, the ideal path forward will be different for each company based on their unique situation and objectives.

Even so, there are some things every mobile marketer can agree on: the need to avoid expending time and resources without achieving solid results.

The tips below can help improve the effectiveness and enhance the success of mobile marketing strategies and campaigns of every description.

### 1. Know your audience and how they interact with mobile

It does not matter how good your campaign looks on paper if it never actually reaches your audience.

Before you start spending money, make sure your strategy reflects the characteristics of the customers you are targeting:

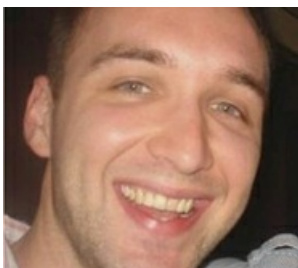
Are they tech-savvy consumers who carry the latest smartphones and know how to use them, or late adopters still finding their way around text messages?

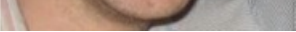
Do they download and use applications, or are they a better fit for a mobile site or a simple SMS-based campaign?

While Android and iOS appear to own the majority of the younger generation, many consumers are still loyal to Research In Motion. Which platform offers reaches your audience? Will you need to go multiplatform to engage a variety of user profiles?

Should you use QR or 2D codes in your campaign? Will your audience know to leverage this kind of technology?

Having the answers to these questions is a critical first step for any mobile campaign.





## 2. Earn goodwill do not kill it

As a uniquely personal and intimate medium, mobile must be used with great care to avoid alienating current and potential customers.

By creating a dedicated opt-in database for your mobile customers, you can provide greater value and a better experience while increasing the impact and efficiency of your budget.

Opt-in not only gives customers control over the messages they receive, diminishing the resentment caused by unwanted messages, it also transforms advertising into something they can actually use content, promotions and services based on their personal characteristics and needs.

Meanwhile, the information captured during the opt-in process helps you to engage customers in a targeted, responsive environment that reduces waste and improves campaign ROI and brand engagement.

As privacy issues continue to loom over mobile marketing, opt-in also provides an effective way to address issues such as choice, control and customization.

## 3. Give a great user experience for every handset

When every brand impression counts, it is essential to make sure you deliver the best possible experience to everyone who interacts with your campaign.

Even now, major companies with extensive resources have been known to produce mobile sites that render inconsistently across platforms, or mediocre apps that vary significantly in feature set, user experience and branding from their mobile Web and desktop experiences.

Regardless of the type of mobile site you are creating, be sure that it is equipped to provide an excellent user experience across every handset your customers use.

## 4. Measure everything, not just success

Mobile media planning is difficult enough as it is, so why make it even harder by ignoring large amounts of data on your own campaign performance?

Yet, that is exactly what many mobile marketers do when they only measure number of opens, downloads, activations and registrations, rather than looking at stats around bounce rate, repeat usage, number of pages per unique visit or length of video views.

To optimize your effectiveness, it is crucial to also measure elements such as feedback pros and cons in the reviews section.

Additionally, it is just as important to count the number of people who did not respond, which might represent anything from a poor experience on a given platform, targeting error or a consumer who was not interested in your contact and came away with a negative impression of your brand.

Simply put, if you do not know why you fail, it is hard to increase your success.

## 5. Let the message choose the medium

Apps versus mobile sites: it is the perennial debate of mobile marketing.

As is usually the case, there is no single answer for every situation.

To make the greatest impact and get the most out of your budget you have to start with your message, then decide how best to deliver it.

What are your goals for the app or site? When a user launches your experience, how much do you want to impress them, and how much is this worth to you?

If you simply want to open another channel for interaction, a simple, practical site can be a cost-effective way to go.

As HTML5 continues to evolve, more smartphone functionality is becoming available to mobile sites, making it possible to create an experience nearly equivalent to a mobile app.

If your mobile experience will play a key strategic role in establishing your brand and converting customers, though, an app still offers key advantages, beginning with complete control over branding, look-and-feel and the user

experience.

The ability to place a call, take and upload photographs or perform location-based actions from within the application itself can make for a much richer experience than having to call out from the browser to another app.

You will have to spend more money to build and maintain the app, including the need to port it to multiple operating systems and devices as well as gaining approval through multiple app stores and updates will be similarly costly and time-consuming.

This will likely improve over time, with better cross-platform development tools already coming to market, but it is still important to keep in mind.

Sometimes, even humble SMS can be the best option.

According to one recent study, 88 percent of mobile users worldwide had sent a text message while only 41 percent had watched a video (Oracle, 2010).

The broad consumer adoption and familiarity with SMS, along with its flexibility, low cost and high open rate, can make it a great way to deliver frequent interactions that build a strong brand relationship over time.

Whatever choice you make, of course, your success will hinge largely on execution: Are you making the best possible use of whichever platform you choose, and delivering the optimal experience for your customers?

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