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Mobile marketing misses of 2011

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By Jeff Hasen

Any list of the year's misses in mobile must include the incorrect predictions that Super Bowl advertisers would include calls to action leading to the creation of massive permission-based databases.

Instead, TV advertisers flubbed the year's best and biggest opportunity to engage.

This was going to be the year that advertisers embraced mobile. Think of the possibilities:

Chrysler offers fans an exclusive Eminem download at the end of the "Keep Detroit Beautiful" when they join a mobile affinity club for the new Chrysler 200.

Verizon Wireless asks mobile users to text in their ZIP codes to learn how its network is superior to AT&T's.

GoDaddy requires users to opt in to watch a special mobile version of their "too hot for TV" commercial.

None of these things happened.

Total number of mobile calls-to-action: 0

Total number of mobile loyalty clubs launched: 0

I will not miss on this in 2012. I'm staying as far away from the Super Bowl as the Indianapolis Colts.

Other misses in the year in mobile:

RIM has had as bad a year as the Colts. It has failed to innovate, underwhelmed in sales, and has shown no direction worth following.

With the likely first pick of the draft, Indianapolis has better prospects for 2012 than does RIM.

It remains to be seen whether the forecast of 50 percent smartphone penetration by the end of 2011 is met. Nielsen listed the third quarter number at 44 percent. The last six points to 50 percent is a large hill to climb, but this is the season of giving and stockings will

be ringing across the country.

We missed on predictions of the iPhone 5 on four U.S. carriers. All of us did, including the most dependable of so-called insiders. No fifth generation of the iPhone, no iPhone business at all at T-Mobile, which spent the last six months envisioning a marriage with AT&T that has not made it to the altar.

Of course, what we got from Apple was Siri, a voice recognition technology that received the fanboy buzz treatment but is already considered a fading novelty by many.

Marketers chased the so-called shiny object but failed to bring home the business results. Savvy professionals succeed by following behaviors and interest research rather than gambling on something entirely new.

These marketers know that just because you can do something technically doesn't mean that you should. The lesson? Know your customers and prospects and market to them in ways that you have the best chance to succeed.

A major global brand allocates approximately 70 percent of its mobile efforts to reach efforts that include SMS, 20 percent to richer experiences that don't reach all subscribers, and 10 percent to the shiny object. That is a great example to follow.

And finally, many marketers missed by dictating how consumers would interact with their brands.

Successful mobile campaigns, like the Backstage Pass program at Mobile Marketer's Marketer of the Year Macy's, provided multiple ways to engage. By giving options like SMS, QR codes and mobile web sites, marketers prosecuted a reach strategy that was inclusive and moved product.

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