

COLUMNS

4 global mobile commerce trends to watch

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By [Liz Elting](#)

The consumer mindshare race is over, and mobile is the clear winner. Experts have declared that the consumer mobile experience has officially eclipsed the desktop experience on a worldwide scale.

It is not just shoppers who are driving this trend. IT consumerization has also driven tablets and other wireless devices into the enterprise.

Gartner recently predicted that by 2015, more than 80 percent of handsets in mature global markets will be smartphones. What does this mean for marketers?

The mobile experience must be factored into every campaign. Here are four mobile commerce trends every marketer should be watching in the coming year:

Mobile payment technology will evolve. With mobile now established as the preferred way for consumers to make purchases and enterprises to do business, expect the development of easy and secure payment technology solutions to surge.

Yankee Group predicts significant advancement in new ways to check out online, but also cautions that cloud-based mobile applications and payment solutions will hit some bumps in the road, and even some major data breaches.

International mobile marketers should be sure to partner with vendors that adhere to security standards such as PCI on their source language mobile apps and sites.

Many mobile marketers find out the hard way that the same standards are not always extended to the translated versions of online storefronts.

Furthermore, transactions that are 100 percent secure on the source language site may be placed at a higher level of risk based on how the translated versions are managed through a third-party translation solution.

Make sure your third-party language service provider partner is PCI compliant in all target languages.

Mobile acceptance means greater expectations. For such a new market demographic, it did not take long for mobile consumers to develop lofty expectations of their on-the-go experience.

A new survey conducted by a mobile app development firm just before Black Friday revealed that shoppers are overwhelmingly frustrated by retailers' apps and mobile sites.

More than 80 percent of that survey's respondents said that mobile apps and sites can be slow to load, challenging to navigate and error-prone at checkout. This number is even higher for international shoppers.

While it was once acceptable to develop content only in English, the changing demographics dictate that retailers who hope to be successful in these markets must offer engaging content in the native languages of their target

consumers, and that content must adhere to local standards and look familiar to local consumers.

This must extend beyond translated and localized product descriptions on your mobile site to include the shopping cart, checkout and even post-sale experience.

Coming to your smaller screen: mobile video. With faster Internet speeds and wireless carriers investing in global expansion for higher availability, mobile marketers should plan to leverage the increased demand for mobile videos as a way to boost the global customer experience.

In the past, retailers avoided using video on their mobile-optimized sites, mostly due to the reduction in the speed of the site. But speeds and availability are expanding, allowing retailers to use full-image video.

Studies show that customized video content realizes a high return on investment for retailers.

Taking the time to offer translated and localized videos to your international customers can build lasting brand loyalty and even entice customers to share content via social media. For mobile shoppers, sharing a video is the new word of mouth.

Sponsored stories go global. The biggest shift for mobile marketers will be seen in sponsored content, better known as native advertising.

Native ads are different from ad banners or interstitial ads because they allow brands to promote their content into the endemic experience of a mobile site in a non-interruptive, integrated way. This trend began gaining ground in the last half of 2012 and will continue to grow in 2013.

As more companies explore sponsored stories on Facebook or sponsored tweets, this trend will cross borders.

As such, native ads will need to be accurately translated and localized to convey the original meaning effectively in the source language while presenting local content that enables international consumers to relate to the brand.

With mobile taking the marketing world by storm in 2012, it is clear that companies will continue to commit substantial resources to new engagement strategies that help them connect with consumers.

The key to success in 2013 will be personalized, customized mobile content delivered by highly optimized mobile sites or strong branded apps.

Liz Elting is cofounder/CEO of [TransPerfect](http://TransPerfect.com), New York. Reach her at liz@transperfect.com.

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