

COLUMNS

5 tips to improve mobile commerce strategy

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If you could turn back the clock to 1998, would you not totally rethink your Internet strategy? Of course, you would. You would probably double, triple or even quadruple your initial investment to develop a more integrated online strategy with multichannel campaigns specifically designed to drive more site traffic and increase overall conversion rates.

Well, history is repeating itself. Mobile is quickly becoming the new Internet.

Now is the time to develop an effective mobile commerce strategy which includes shopping cart optimization, social media, email and paid search (PPC) campaigns. Otherwise, you will just be making the same mistake again.

Here are some valuable tips to improve your mobile strategy and increase your ROI:

Focus on the cart

Many retailers invest in the design, product assortment and merchandising of their mobile sites, but totally forget about the shopping cart.

An astounding 97 percent of mobile carts are abandoned, according to SeeWhy. That is because mobile shopping carts are cluttered with unnecessary elements and multiple screens that interfere with the actual transaction.

On average, mobile guest checkouts contain 12 screens to complete a purchase.

Barnes & Noble's checkout is a painful 19 screens.

Staples and Timberland are among the best with six and seven screens, respectively.

Ecommerce retailers who streamline their mobile checkout process will significantly lower abandonment rates and increase conversions.

Mobile is the new social

More than 60 percent of Facebook and Twitter users access those services via their mobile devices.

In other words, mobile is the default platform for social media.

Therefore, it is vital that social media posts are linked to mobile-optimized landing pages to ensure the best customer experience.

Otherwise, you risk frustrating your social followers which may discourage them from clicking on future posts.

Design email for mobile

Seventy-six percent of consumers use their smartphones some or all of the time to sort emails before viewing on a computer, according to BlueHornet.

That means your email campaigns had better be optimized for mobile since more than 80 percent of non-optimized emails will be deleted without being read and 30 percent of consumers will take the additional step of unsubscribing entirely.

Ready or not, you are paying for mobile PPC

Google recently rolled out its new Enhanced Campaigns which contains major changes for mobile pay-per-click: "your ads will show on mobile devices, tablets and computers by default."

Bottom line, you no longer have the ability to split your PPC budget between devices.

If the consumer does a Google search on his or her mobile device, your ad will now show up in the search results.

Therefore, your search ads must send consumers to the product page on your mobile site or you will be paying for clicks that will not result in a sale.

Do not make the same mistake twice

You can see the future of mobile commerce by looking back at online history.

Just as ecommerce evolved to include multiple channels, a successful mobile commerce strategy requires the same.

To drive higher sales and ROI, look beyond the mobile site and streamline your mobile cart, ensure your social media and PPC landing pages are optimized for mobile, and design your email campaigns to be viewed on smartphones.

The time to act is now or you will spend the next few years catching up.

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