

COLUMNS

6 principles of a smooth mobile commerce checkout experience

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The mobile commerce usage rate is forecasted to increase from 14 percent in 2013 to almost 40 percent by the end of 2014.

The cause of this rapid adoption in the marketplace is due to a few shifts in the technology landscape:

A. The way in which consumers shop is evolving.

Search and discovery is no longer tied to being in front of a desktop or laptop computer. Consumers are now comfortable making purchases on their tablet or smartphone from any location.

B. It is now very common for smartphones and tablets to have more powerful processors than traditional home computers. Therefore, smartphones and tablets perform faster, which allows for a more enriching commerce experience.

C. Brands are enabling and promoting consumer adoption by putting timely and relevant mobile offers into the marketplace.

This catapulting adoption rate is great for the future of mobile commerce, but its rapid pace is leading to user experience errors that need to be addressed.

Specifically, brands need to ensure that the mobile commerce checkout experience is seamless. It is a major issue if brands lose customers due to too many barriers to purchase during checkout.

Brands can follow the following steps below to create a seamless user-friendly checkout experience:

1. Optimize the mobile checkout experience.

1. Stop reinventing for mobile

This rule is true not only for mobile checkout, but overall, it is important that brands do not try to reinvent the wheel for a different, albeit smaller screen size. A checkout sequence should be based on consumer behavior or existing Web analytics.

2. Only request critical information

If the consumer is at the checkout screen, it is a safe assumption that she is deeply engaged with the brand. Do not then, overcomplicate the process by requesting information not pertinent for checkout and delivery.

Remember that brands can always request supplemental information from customers at a later state in the consumer pathway.

3. Social login

One of our clients was really against a guest-checking-out experience. As a consumer, she saw the benefits and even admitted that she sometimes checks out as a guest, but as a brand manager, she really wanted consumer data for each purchase.

A key data point that our team shared is that most consumers checkout as guest not because they do not want to login, but because they cannot remember their password.

Also, new privacy laws make it almost impossible for consumers to have one standard password across brands' commerce sites.

A proven way to solve both the brand and consumer needs in this situation is to implement social login allowing consumers to use Facebook, Twitter or even Pinterest login.

This way, the brand is able to attain shopper data, and the consumer has one less password to remember.

4. Progress is a beautiful thing

If your checkout sequence takes multiple steps, keep users informed of where they are in the process. If not, this can lead to user fatigue, prompting drop-off from the overall process.

5. Address security

Ensure that consumers feel protected when checking-out and know that their credit information is secure.

Also, always send a confirmation email or SMS (after first gaining permission to text) to confirm the purchase.

6. Activate mobile specific features

Features such as iOS Passbook, Google Wallet and Square are easy to integrate into any mobile payment system and help streamline the user process.

In addition, they help keep consumers organized in their payments and loyalty programs.

MOBILE COMMERCE is growing rapidly, and keeping these points in mind will ensure that your brand is able to get consumers through the checkout process and happily back for return visits.

Excerpted with permission from a chapter in 5th Finger's soon-to-be-released mCommerce Playbook. Adapted for style.

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