

COLUMNS

## Are you really in mobile? Five rules to follow

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By [Jason Wadler](#)

By this point, in 2013, with mobile Internet usage projected to overtake desktop by next year, every forward-thinking business knows it needs to have a mobile presence in order to best serve its customers whenever they need that service, wherever they happen to be. But having a mobile presence is not the same thing as really being in mobile.

Those who are truly in mobile recognize it as a solution for meaningful, quantifiable customer growth. How can you be sure that your mobile team is implementing strategies that directly drive revenue growth for the brand?

Let us look at the five musts for driving truly effective mobile commerce programs.

Forget product-focus or channel-focus. Focus on the consumer. Any business with a mobile commerce strategy needs to understand who its customers are, what they want to do on a mobile site, and what their value is to your brand.

Customers demand and create their own path by browsing across multiple platforms, and it is important to understand how they are using your mobile properties.

Keep presentation and functionality in mind across and by device. Are your mobile pages functional with a touch screen? Are you prioritizing even limiting information for these high-urgency, on-the-go consumers? Are your experiences optimized to each device, with information displayed in a clear, uncluttered design?

Also, are you incorporating click-to-call campaigns to ensure the "ready-to-buy" consumer has multiple paths to purchase?

Enable consumers to respond across channels. Mobile searches rarely start and end with mobile 75 percent trigger a follow-up activity via desktop, phone or some other channel, instead. And importantly, those follow-ups happen quickly, with 55 percent of conversions happening within an hour of that first search, be it via a store visit, phone call or purchase outright. (Nielsen).

Plan for immediate action on the customer's part and list a phone number at any touch point for quick contact via smartphone, but make all channels such as Web site, call center or branch locations visible as early as possible in the customer's path.

Recognize usage differs by device. Track user response by device, and change ad experiences based on the user behavior you find.

Desktop, tablet and smartphone use peaks at different times of day and on different days of the week. Smartphone

traffic, for example, peaks on weekends, while desktop traffic tops out early in the workweek and plummets on the weekends.

Tablet traffic is heaviest in the early evening, and smartphone traffic picks up at night.

Since tablet users spend 54 percent more per purchase than smartphone users and 21 percent more than traditional Web users (Adobe), clearly, there is a lot at stake in getting the balance.

Location matters. Take advantage of mobile's geo-location capabilities and localize your marketing messages whenever possible not just in ads, but on your mobile sites.

Think once again about what your target audience wants when they search for businesses like yours.

When calling an insurance company, for example, customers expect representatives to be knowledgeable about their specific, local needs.

Similarly, when searching for a new car, consumers may want details about the specific vehicle, features and prices online.

When it comes to actively engaging in the sales cycle, however, the key is connecting interested buyers with the right local auto dealers. In smart mobile marketing, this is where the rubber meets the road.

Optimize the entire consumer journey. Link data from the first customer interaction through to the final sale, including every step along the way.

Determine the customer's path to purchase, and maximize each phase from start to finish.

Remember, while clicks may serve as strong indicators of consumer interest, clicks alone are not enough.

Creating the right mobile experience means linking consumer interest to action, in the form of sales. By understanding how consumers travel through your mobile experience, you can optimize the path to purchase from start to finish.

To truly be in mobile, marketers need to be committed to using it to the fullest. This means linking and leveraging each step in the consumer purchase path to lift sales and satisfaction.

*Jason Wadler is executive vice president of [Leapfrog Online](#), Evanston, IL. Reach him at [jwadler@leapfrogonline.com](mailto:jwadler@leapfrogonline.com).*