

COLUMNS

## Ring in the holidays with mobile marketing

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By **James Orsini**

Mobile is the media for the moment. Advertisers, retailers and brands simply must have mobile as an integrated part of their holiday marketing plans and budgets. Fortunately, it is not too late to deploy the proper efforts.

EMarketer says that for the first time consumers are devoting more attention each day to smartphones, computers and tablets, resulting in our spending five hours and 16 minutes per day in front of screens without even turning on the television.

This year brought several unique opportunities to engage mobile media solutions to help boost holiday initiatives.

Extremely happy holidays

Black Friday is really shading into Grey Thursday. Accenture reports that Black Friday will be a rage since 55 percent of shoppers planned to shop that day, up from 53 percent in 2012.

With more retailers pulling back store hours to open on Thanksgiving evening, sales will start sooner rather than later.

Walmart, Macy's, J.C. Penney and others have announced sales beginning 8 p.m. on Thanksgiving evening.

Kohl's has a text "save07" to Kohl's mobile push notification feature to get shopping alerts as the day approaches and to help drive store traffic.

With massive lines and consumers on the go, there is no better time to leverage mobile demand-side platforms (DSPs) and push in-app display advertising.

A captive audience online is fertile ground to push your ad while they are playing Angry Birds, waiting for their chance to get that 50-inch flat screen TV.

The whole notion of layaway is back stronger than ever for many retailers. Regular messaging to your mobile channel is essential for retailers to remain relevant with their holiday shoppers.

Thanksgivukkah has been coined to note the anomaly for American Jews. The first day of Chanukah and eight days of gifting starts at the sunset on Wednesday, Nov. 27 the night before Thanksgiving on Nov. 28. It turns out this has never happened before and will never happen again.

The next time Chanukah falls on Nov. 27 is 2146, which happens to be a Monday. Therefore, 2013 is the only time Chanukah will ever overlap Thanksgiving.

Gift keeps on giving

Mobile as media for the moment is a solution which can help to capture this added gifting pressure and buying power of U.S. consumers around thanksgiving.

Cyber Monday is Dec. 2. The Interactive Advertising Bureau reports revenue from mobile ads and searches more than doubled in the first half of 2013, reaching \$3 billion.

Accenture's Holiday shopping survey states that 49 percent of the customers surveyed confirm that they have budgeted three quarters of their purchases for discounted or sale items this holiday season. Mobile couponing is an absolute must this holiday season.

Giving Tuesday is Dec. 3. If you are a nonprofit, you might want to check out [www.givingtuesday.org](http://www.givingtuesday.org). This is a daylong national effort to help charities raise money online during the holiday season.

Last year, about 2,600 nonprofits drew donations on giving Tuesday. Large participants such as the American Diabetes Association, small participants including the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company and local groups such as Minnesota Gives representing 4,300 nonprofits in that state, will all be vying for the same dollar.

You see, unlike retailers who know their competition, nonprofits compete for every philanthropic dollar given.

Yes, the American Diabetes Association may be competing for a donation which could go to a church, a university, a museum or any other celebration of philanthropy.

All the more reason why these 501(c) 3 organizations should be establishing mobile database initiatives and communicating regularly with mobile channel opt-in subscribers.

WE DO NOT know what next year's holiday season will hold.

With the Interactive Advertising Bureau reporting mobile's share of total online ad spending in the United States more than doubling to 15 percent during the first half of 2013, I can assure you that this media for the moment will only increase its portion.

Do not miss the call to ring in the holidays with mobile marketing.

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