

COLUMNS

Mobile is not TV's handmaiden and nor is it the second screen

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By **Josh Rinsky**

In the world of consumer advertising, television is king and no other channel is going to grab the crown any time soon. That leaves every other screen smartphone, tablet, even computer duking it out for the title of second screen, right?

Even as the number of devices and screens proliferate and infiltrate almost every aspect of our daily lives, when it comes to advertising they are still playing second fiddle.

Screen time

As multiscreen engagement by consumers quickly becomes the norm watching TV with a smartphone or tablet in hand these screens are emerging as a significant force in the media landscape. But marketers and advertisers typically still view them as an adjunct to TV.

Players in the TV industry are capitalizing on the connection between mobile and TV to make TV even more rewarding and relevant.

From real-time conversations on social media to applications with exclusive content, character histories and quizzes to mobile contestant voting, the second screens are hard at work all supporting the activities in the traditional channel.

But it is time to acknowledge a reality: as a consumer, the screen that you wake up to, carry in your pocket, tote from room to room and that sits with you on the couch that is your real first screen.

This relationship between consumers and the screens that matter most is something marketers need to consider.

For app developers, in particular, the mobile screen is the one that matters most.

The mobile ecosystem is not just a means to higher TV or offline retail engagement. It is a marketplace in and of itself, a multibillion-dollar industry that is growing more powerful, more important and more relevant every day.

The mobile industry, built around an expanding universe of apps and games, is fueled by its ability to deliver instant gratification, powered by performance campaigns designed to drive downloads and sales.

On the spot

Rethinking the traditional relationship between TV and mobile flipping the second screen connection opens up new possibilities for app marketers to capitalize on the reach and impact of TV.

And luckily for mobile marketers, new approaches and technology are adding the missing pieces such as measurability and direct response capabilities to TV advertising.

Measuring the effect of a typical brand-focused TV spot can be incredibly difficult. But unlike with many other product categories, mobile marketers offer products such as apps that are measurement-friendly.

Ads that include direct calls to action with the ability to attribute specific consumer action to a specific TV advertisement are redefining the first- and second-screen relationship.

For example, a TV spot that includes short codes and keywords can invite viewers to send an SMS message (text play to 55155) to initiate an instant download creating a measurable link between the commercial and the action from viewing the spot all the way to download.

This transforms the traditional TV model by leveraging the channel to drive attributable actions for direct response.

On top of benefiting from direct response TV campaigns, the mobile ecosystem has evolved to the point where app marketers are also seeking the benefits of big-name-brand recognition.

TELEVISION'S ENORMOUS reach and ability to deliver emotional messages combined with measurable engagement provides an effective and efficient approach for app marketers.

However, it is silly to think of mobile as an alternative media channel.

Mobile devices are not computers' smaller cousins and they need not just be TV's handmaidens. They should not be considered the second screens. They are a new class of device that is driving a new form of engagement.

Savvy app marketers are starting to think bigger in terms of the media strategies and traditional channels they can employ to drive their own success.

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