

The main title of the blog post, "Understanding Digital doesn't mean you understand Mobile", written in large, white, sans-serif font over a background image of a smiling man in a suit.Two category tags, "MOBILE" and "OPINION", in white, uppercase letters, separated by a small gap.The date of the blog post, "23 JUL 2018", in a small, grey, uppercase font.

MediaCom's Global Head of Mobile, Ben Phillips reflects on the challenges of GDPR and how the medium is evolving.

Despite being in a role he sees as becoming redundant in the near future, global head of mobile at MediaCom, Ben Phillips, says that isn't necessarily a bad thing – particularly as mobile advertising becomes more intertwined into every facet of the marketing mix.

“If I have this title and I'm doing this within a year, I've failed because mobile is a behaviour. It's so ingrained across everything that if my training solution works, everyone should be mobile experts,” he said, speaking to AdNews at Cannes Lions.

“So where do I go next? If I look to the future, we are starting to think about mobile not as a

device, but voice activation. We're building Alexa Skills and that is beginning to look like the new app economy.

"I hope I'll still be in this industry this year. As for my business title, who knows what that will say."

Phillips' thoughts on the future of his role follow a "turning point" for mobile, he explained, as the medium has now proved its effectiveness and is entrenched in each conversation occurring with MediaCom's clients.

"I recently got a phone call from one of our major global brands on set at a shoot who asked how they should shoot a particular scene for mobile. In that moment, I thought 'we're not evangelists in mobile anymore'."

That doesn't mean to say that Phillips' job is completely done and there are still some common misconceptions around mobile.

"Mobile has fought to get a seat at the digital table and there is an assumption that if you know digital, you know mobile. This isn't the case," he said.

"People also default to types of mobile advertising and favour Google or Facebook formats, depending on their background. The challenge is to ask the right questions of these platforms and not just continue to spend in the same way we always have because that will drive very little development."

Reflecting on the winning mobile entries at Cannes Lions, Phillips said mobile advertising has evolved past just a Snapchat filter or bold emoticon being recognised as strong work on mobile. Instead, he is excited about how brands are using mobile targeting in clever ways.

He said the new creative wave in mobile is being partly driven by the stabilisation of ad units.

“We’re not bringing out crazy new ad units. We’re working with what we know now,” he said.

As for the impact of GDPR on mobile advertising, he likened it to the surge of adblocking software that became popular two years ago but has since faded.

“GDPR is just a clean out of those who don’t want to be contacted anyway. We faced this last year with adblocking. 13% of smartphones had adblocking installed on them and that’s largely because as an industry, we had just started talking to people too much,” he said.

“We’ve seen a massive decline in this adblocking applications being used now.

“GDPR is similar to the adblocking situation as it means we’ve got a smaller audience but they’re an opt-in, focused audience.”

This article was first published in [Adnews](#).

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MOBILE OPINION