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Building a Future Proof Mobile Strategy

MOBILE   PASSION   STRATEGY

BY STEFAN BARDEGA, MANAGING PARTNER, MEDIACOM   30 DEC 2012

Companies need to develop a mobile strategy if they hope to future proof their businesses. This may involve adapting an existing digital strategy, or developing an entirely new mobile-first digital approach.

We all know that smartphone ownership is increasing.

50% of the UK population owns a smart phone. Google is forecasting 25% of its search clicks will come from mobile this year, and we are told that 22% of the UK population can only access the Internet via mobile. Not only is mobile finally here, but it is happening faster than many marketers anticipated.

We have created the following framework to help businesses develop a mobile strategy.

1. Insights will uncover diversity of mobile usage

Understanding the diversity of mobile habits is a critical exercise. We often uncover polarising mobile attitudes and behaviours during qualitative research. People that look identical in every traditional form of segmentation may reveal mobile habits that are radically different. This is most extreme when it comes to mobile payments. In London, we see more awareness and acceptance of mobile payments, thanks to Olympic sponsors such as Visa pushing adoption. Further north in the UK , we see much less interest in mobile payments. Businesses need to build solutions that cater to multiple levels of sophistication, and make it easy for learners to move up to more complex services.

2. Identifying a clear role for mobile

All too often, the role of mobile may not be well defined. This leads to a lack of clarity when it comes to execution, and can result in a business simply taking its existing digital properties and miniaturising them for mobile. Brands should think about the unique attributes of mobile, and consider whether they create a new opportunity. Many of the most successful mobile brands have different mobile strategies based on the computer being used; Starbucks' desktop site is predominantly a digital version of the menu, while mobile helps get people through the queue. It does this by enabling customers to use their phones to pay for coffee and to accumulate loyalty points. At the same time, the company gathers valuable data. Both parties win.

3. Mobile platforms should determine your mobile properties

Mobile is a fragmented market with a multitude of platform distribution opportunities, so having a clear view of what you really need is important. Amongst other things, brands need to decide whether to build an app, a mobile site or both. For most businesses, the starting point should be a mobile optimised website. The app market is extremely cluttered – a victim of its own success in some respects. To get regular use, any app needs to give high-frequency utility or, if entertainment-driven, requires regular content updates.

4. Disciplines should be strategically deployed and integrated

The selection of which mobile disciplines to deploy – be it mobile search, display or SMS, for example – should be determined by matching the strategic benefits of each to the

business objectives. If your objective is to drive traffic to a mobile website, the most cost-effective route will be using mobile search to harvest people already searching for your brand or product.

If you need to distribute a complex ad message in an engaging way to as many people as possible, then mobile rich media advertising is the best way to go. Made possible by the rise of HTML5, rich media for mobile enables brands to create mobile experiences similar to Flash ads on desktops, but with more unique mobile features like accelerometers and GPS positioning.

Whatever mobile disciplines you decide to use, they must be integrated into the customer journey, along with your other media. At minimum, be sure that all offline communication channels provide a mobile opportunity to interact.   This may be a QR code, near field communication, audio recognition or augmented reality.

5. Develop mobile measurement approach
Your KPIs for mobile should be directly linked to the role that mobile is playing, and your measurement framework should be built around those KPIs. If the role of mobile is to reduce churn and retain customers by increasing usage of a loyalty app, for example, ensure that the tracking is set up in advance to enable you to track user engagement over time. In this case, you would need to insert the tracking code into the app before submission to the app store, so be certain you understand all of the intricacies   of whatever action you choose to take.

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