

Marketing Minute ~
Mobile Marketing: Location, Location, Location
Contributed By Jamie Fortunaso

A 2010 study by comScore suggests that almost 46 million mobile phone users have smart-phones—almost 20% of the market share of total mobile users.

Those numbers are enough for advertisers/marketers to start taking the mobile market very seriously. But, what is the best way for advertisers and marketers to gain traction in this growing industry?

Increasingly, mobile content and applications are being targeted at a user's location. A study from the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA) states that more than 25% of adults in the U.S. have used maps, navigation or other mobile phone services that automatically determine location. The same study indicates that nearly half of those using mobile phone have taken action on mobile ads.

Increasing the localization of customer targeting means more qualified traffic and better opportunities for conversion. Utilizing localized advertising in combination with interactive advertising offers users the very services they are seeking. That's a winning formula.

READY, AIM, ADVERTISE

The great strength of the mobile ad is that it allows for very specific targeting of users. Advertisers who take the time to get to know their target audience will be able to reach out to a large group of consumers who are hungry for information about what is available in their immediate area.

At this point (and it should come as no surprise), the leader in location-based advertising is Google. Google has acquired a patent for using location for advertising, which sets it ahead of the competition. It allows users to bid on ad prices within a defined area and allows advertising from apps to directly correspond to a user's location.

HOOK

Anyone with experience managing PPC campaigns will find themselves in familiar territory when launching mobile ad campaigns. Just like PPC, mobile advertising allows you to set up a section for specific campaigns and, within those campaigns, create accounts for different brands, as well as their relative keywords.

In addition to choosing to advertise in search results or through the content network is the ability to select a specific area—obviously of importance to mobile ad campaigns. Mobile ad platforms will allow you to target geographical locations based on country, region and specific city.

For more highly targeted ads, advertisers can target specific mobile network carriers, devices and even markup languages. This allows users to control who they are advertising to, which allows them to meet the needs of a destination URI, depending on the technological capabilities of the targeted device.

LINE

Limited to very few characters, the mobile call-to-action is a new art form. Mobile ad character limits on Google are 18 characters per line of text (two lines total), offering very few words to send your message.

With so few characters available, highly targeted copy is very important. There are ways to increase your character count, however. For example, using AdMob, there is an option to select an ad targeted at "iPhones and other mobile devices with full Internet browsers." This allows you to get a few more characters in both the title and body of your ad.

SINKER

You want your user to experience a feeling of success upon finding your landing page. Forget about the fact that users can zoom in on a mobile Web page. Create simple pages that display the information that benefits the user immediately upon landing.

Like any other form of Internet advertising, the mobile ad must reach multiple devices and screen sizes. With so many types of handsets, the ability to reach specific ones is absolutely imperative to a successful mobile marketing campaign. To

market to more than just one of these groups, optimize multiple pages for each of the different styles.

A display on a Blackberry Curve is far different from that of an iPhone, for example. Phones have the ability to resize text, but forcing users to take that extra step can be risky. Let your landing pages be as targeted to the users of specific devices as they are to the consumers you are trying to reach. A page that is not automatically readable or navigable with the information important to your consumers (delivering on the promise of the ad) could send users elsewhere.

Web developers can target specific phones to a certain degree by serving up different conditional CSS files. By checking the maximum width of the devices screen, they can create usable layouts specific for the device.

TEST FOR SUCCESS

Like other advertising campaigns, having several versions of an ad and a landing page is paramount to success. Continue to test different tactics and don't be afraid to experiment.

Be aware that the ability to track mobile advertising campaigns is still somewhat limited. When checking an IP address for someone who visited your site with a Blackberry, for example, you will be seeing the Internet Gateway address, not the actual phone's IP address. In addition, some phones don't support cookies and others clear the cache on a regular basis. However, there are analytics solutions to help track ROI. Affiliates who find ways to measure the effectiveness of their campaigns will be miles ahead when the technology catches up to the needs of advertisers. And, by making use of the ability to target specific locations, you have already narrowed the criteria for analysis.

Mobile advertising, especially in terms of affiliate marketing, is in the early stages of its growth. There will be obstacles to overcome. But those who get in early and manage to grow with the developing technology will have a head start on their competition. The technology is already advancing in leaps and bounds. If you start now, you'll be ready for the next development phases.

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