

Focus on Simple Truths of Mobile Marketing, Not the Hype - Part 1 by James Briggs and Leonard Abeyta

The “third screen,” “on-the-go,” “always connected;” no doubt you’ve heard the hype, know the buzzwords and have seen some mind boggling stats. The mobile phone is the most ubiquitous digital communications channel in the history of consumer marketing. Simply put, we live in a mobile world. According to the CTIA, this “mobile world” consists of more than two billion accounts; and U.S. portion of this world is already sending over 10 billion text messages a month.

We are in a breakout year for Mobile Marketing; major brands, agencies and marketing disciplines have all taken notice and are now struggling to understand where to start. With both next generation devices and networks finally at hand, the pundits and evangelists are in agreement that mobile marketing has finally come of age.

Even so, despite the optimism and the growing investment in the mobile channel, most marketers we speak with are still struggling to fully comprehend how the medium can be used, effectively and today. If mobile marketing is all grown up, why does it still feel like we’re in the awkward days of adolescence?

There are a variety of reasons. For many marketers there is often an unspoken “big elephant in the room” as the mobile marketing hype sounds suspiciously like the internet advertising euphoria of the 1990s. Although mobile as a channel has the potential to change the game, as with the internet, it does so with all the promise and instability of a new frontier. When the “dot com” dust cloud finally settled, sensible models prevailed and the Internet continues to remain key to the marketing and sales strategies for most companies. In the case of mobile, it may be early days but sensible models exist and are proving themselves in the US just as they have in the mature markets of Asia and Europe.

Mobile marketing also gives traditional marketers heartburn for other reasons, these include: mobile marketing as a discipline is not well established and best practices and standards are still being defined; smaller mobile formats require marketing to be more concise, crisp and relevant, audiences are more selective and in control of their experience; and lastly, the channel, with its carrier and partner relationships is far more complex.

Although the channel is in its infancy, traditional US marketers who are not yet testing the waters with mobile marketing are missing the boat. Old media may be “alive and well” but marketing is clearly changing. To create relevant campaigns and seize opportunities in a future where new media is more and

more important, today's marketers must experiment, understand and gain first-hand experience with new media channels, including mobile.

As brands face the challenges of increased competition, fragmentation of audiences and intensifying pressure to deliver quantifiable results, the case for mobile as a viable marketing channel is becoming hard to ignore. Usage and adoption of mobile marketing and media by U.S. consumers is no longer insignificant compared to the rest of the world. According to the latest data from M:Metrics, in August of 2006, 38% of mobile subscribers sent a text message. The majority of those people said they sent a text message "almost every day." Nearly 9% of subscribers participated in a TV or Radio poll via SMS. Moreover, in the month of June this year there were 12B text messages sent in the US, and the Yankee Group estimates that the US text messaging market is growing at 130% per month.

Given unbridled enthusiasm about mobile at one extreme and myopic cynicism at the other, what's a marketer to do? The best advice is to:

- *Concentrate doing what effective marketers do best - good marketing;*
- *Focus on understanding audiences and achieving marketing excellence across all channels (traditional and emerging);*
- *Avoid getting caught up in the hype or limiting yourself by reacting solely to what others have or have not done in your market;*
- *Start taking a practical approach to how mobile marketing can be integrated with current efforts; helping you expand reach, improve relevancy and awareness, increase response rates and campaign performance; and*
- *Establish a relationships with a mobile agency that knows its way around the mobile value chain and carrier relationships.*

As you gain experience, begin taking a longer view for how more sophisticated mobile marketing tactics can help you plan for the future.

In adapting to the realities of the future of marketing, we have seen many organizations implement mobile strategies only to lose sight of simple truths of the channel that can set good marketing programs apart from the great ones. In part two of this article, we will explore "simple truths of mobile marketing" that can help you incorporate mobile marketing in a practical, yet powerful way. We believe these truths will resonate with you, as they have with many of our clients who, like most, struggle with the increasing complexity of today's marketing reality and are under mounting pressure to deliver meaningful, measurable results from their marketing efforts.



About Briabe Media, Inc.

Briabe Media is a full service mobile media firm founded by an experienced leadership team that has worked in and around the mobile telecommunications space for more than a decade. Briabe Media's mission is to help brands leverage mobile platforms to connect with customers via unique, solutions and campaigns that complement their existing marketing efforts and expands their reach, revenue potential and most importantly their relevancy to the lifestyles of their target audience.

Briabe Media takes the pain and frustration out of reaching on-the-go customers for brands and content owners by managing the campaign from the initial concept development through the final reporting and analysis of metrics. Moreover, by working with Briabe, companies are able to leverage our technologies, partnerships and campaign tools while maintaining ownership of their valuable intellectual property and maximizing the monetization and mobilization potential.

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