

MOBILE MARKETING : The Shoppers Stop

As smartphones get ubiquitous in India and more consumers access the net via the mobile, advertisers are turning their gaze to mobile marketing to extend the reach of their ad campaigns and directly engage with their target audience.

Mobile as a medium clearly offers quite a few advantages, the most important ones being interactivity, integration with the web and its explosive growth. Experts say, "Mobile ads have five to seven times more the reach as compared to other mediums. There is more opportunity to interact and the time spent is larger." Also, some of the advantages it offers include it being a direct response medium, lowered cost/impression, easy customization and sophisticated tracking.

India is one of the few countries where an entire generation has skipped the personal computer and has directly moved onto using internet on their mobile phones. So the mobile phone is a medium that cannot be ignored by marketers for the sheer factor of its ubiquity in the country. And thus not surprisingly, India is by far the largest mobile advertising market in the Asia-Pacific region, with over 6.5 billion advertising impressions served monthly, even while being categorized largely as an advanced phone market.



However, are marketers doing enough to leverage it fully? Experts feel that marketers are now finally waking up and smelling the coffee and thus the focus on this medium is quite recent. According to Menon of Games2win, some of the brands which have used the mobile in innovative ways are MTV Roadies, Samsung Galaxy Tab, Kerala Tourism and Chevrolet Cruz. Also, brands such as Nokia, Nike and Titan have leveraged the medium well. The increasing share of the ad pie for mobile advertising indicates the increasing interest and confidence levels that marketers are developing towards this channel.

SMS(short messaging service) marketing, search and display have been the most visible form of mobile advertising so far but there is a lot more that is happening in the space now. Overall, the definition of mobile advertising is ranging. Multi-channel is better than a single rich media channel. Multi-channel integration, i.e., integration of new media such as the mobile with traditional media is important.

Well, the good news is that consumers are evolving continuously (thanks to the advent of smartphones and 3G), thus forcing marketers to evolve their marketing strategies. "India is seeing a base of more mature m-consumers, with the urban population showing an interesting consumption pattern, increasingly characterized by reduced tolerance in terms of page opening time and quality/richness of content owing to 3G."

So there are some creases that still need to be ironed out but the medium is definitely poised for growth. As per TRAI's report, India had about 884.3 million mobile subscribers by

November 2011. Say experts, “With smartphone penetration increasing and a healthy ad ecosystem, Indian mobile advertising will soon become a major influence in the global scheme of things.”

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