

Mobile drives the media world

Internet access and media consumption via mobile is a profound, long-term trend that impacts on all media and marketers. Global research indicates consumers' available time and attention is increasingly being gobbled up by mobile.

People are spending a greater part of their media day online, as recent research from GroupM indicates in their Interaction 2013 study. Importantly, more of people's online time is spent on mobile devices.

I expect that when my three-year-old goes to school, he'll start experiencing mobile online education from the word go. He won't know a world without mobile connectivity.

According to Internet trend expert Mary Meeker from respected Silicon Valley venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Kaufeld Byers, mobile traffic as a percentage of global Internet traffic is already at 15%. The current trend indicates that 25% of all Internet traffic will come from mobile devices by December 2014, (In China, mobile Internet access surpassed computer access during the second quarter of 2012.)

InMobi's Global Mobile Media Consumption research (February 2013) shows South Africans spend 27% of all media time using mobile (excluding calls and SMSs). This compares to 16% for online time via desktop or laptop computer, 23% watching TV, 17% listening to radio, six per cent using a tablet and nine per cent reading newspapers or magazines.

South Africa therefore has a significant multi-screen audience, as the InMobi research found 73% of South Africans use their mobile phones while watching TV - note that this is for activities other than calls and SMSs.

There is a new trend towards 'mCommerce' - Like many people, I love my smartphone, but I don't really use it for buying online. I'm sure though that this is about to change!

On mobile devices the trend is towards mobile eCommerce, or so-called mCommerce. eMarketer believes mCommerce is set to grow six-fold between 2011 and 2016. Digital content is a particularly popular purchase category on mobile.

According to the new FIPP World Digital Media Factbook 2013-14: "The Online

Publishers Association polled Americans about their content purchasing behaviours on tablets in 2012 and found that 61% of those polled, have purchased content; including 39% on digital magazines, 35% on digital books, 15% on digital newspapers, 26% on full-length movies and 18% per cent on full-length TV shows."

So that's what people are currently buying with their phones: Apps and content. It makes sense to me, because digital content is perfect for mobile. But what else do they do that relates to commerce?

It seems searching for information about products and services are trending towards mobile. Research shows consumers are increasingly following a multi-device path to purchase. "InMobi has calculated how consumers first become aware of a product at home on their computer or tablet, at work on their mobile, and out-of-home on their laptop and mobile," the FIPP World Digital Media Factbook 2013-14 explains.

"The next step is active evaluation, which is more often done at home on a tablet or computer, but also at work or out-of-home on a mobile or laptop. Purchase

consideration typically happens on a laptop at home or mobile at work or out of home, while the actual purchase and post-purchase are typically done at home."

Consumers' appetite for social media continues to grow. Even I'm on Facebook now, with the RMS Media Page doing really well. New social options such as Google+ are also adding to the traditional mix of Facebook and Twitter.

On mobile devices social media is predominantly used via Apps, rather than through the phone's Internet browser. If you're like me, you've never even used your phone's browser for social. The Apps are just so much easier and quicker to use. This social App use is in line with overall App usage patterns. InMobi's research shows 27% of respondents actively used six to 10 apps in the last 30 days.

General information gathering and search on mobile already makes up a substantial part of consumers' time. I think we can expect these current trends to continue.

But how does this mobile world affect us in the marketing game? It's clear that consumers are multitasking between devices and media

channels, depending on where they are and what they're doing. This means lying on the couch watching TV now includes social networking, messaging, playing games and searching for interesting stuff. No time to fall asleep through b-grade movies or five day cricket tests!

For advertising and media people like us, it's important to make sure our brands are active on mobile. Great content that looks good on mobile screens, that's also easy to find is becoming increasingly more important. In fact - mandatory! I believe mobile advertising is an excellent way to promote brand content. You can push to a brand App, or a dedicated mobile-friendly website that ties in with your traditional media campaign.

In this way you can effectively reach people in a personal way, through a personal media platform.

The bottom line though is that the future of communication is here and now!

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