

## Jimmy Maymann on 'Moving to mobile: advertising at your fingertips'

Posted by Jimmy Maymann  
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The growing array of modern-day communication devices has created a new type of media consumer – the 'always on' user. Whether through Facebook, YouTube, Skype, Twitter or mobile communication applications, this consumer is constantly in touch with their friends and the online world surrounding them. Mobile devices have an increasingly important role to fulfill. The launch and penetration of 3G mobile devices has made mobile online experiences more rich and dynamic and made it more interesting for advertisers to venture into the business of mobile marketing. So what exactly are the new opportunities that this 'multi-screen world' has to offer?

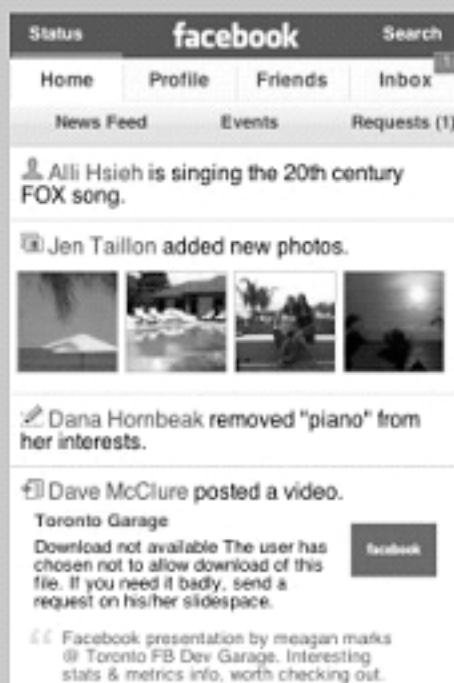


### More than simply smaller screens

Figures from comScore show that 27% of consumers in the major European markets are using mobile browsers, application and content downloaders. Though it has been well over a year since the launch of the iPhone 3G and the resultant boom in mobile Internet services, the growth in new users seems unlikely to diminish. The Web in general has already brought tremendous changes and consumers have grown accustomed to being less than ten steps away from a computer screen. But with the arrival of mobile Internet it is now possible for advertisers to reach into pockets, purses and briefcases of consumers on-the-go. Even more so than PCs, mobile devices are highly personalised, which calls for highly personal media as well.

Mobile ads often benefit from strong consumer response and click-through rates. However, the Status Report on Mobile Advertising by the Interactive Advertising Bureau correctly points out that this can partly be attributed to the novelty effect and a platform that is still in its early days. Users are still curious to explore all the options that it has to offer, including ads. In addition, mobile screens are still relatively free of ad clutter, making the battle for the user's attention slightly less fierce.

It is important to acknowledge the fact that mobile marketing is becoming an advertising discipline within its own right and that it requires more than simply the PC-based Internet on smaller screens. One does not need to be an expert to recognise the new opportunities that are ready to be explored. Advertising messages can be targeted on a much more personal and local level, making the brand message relevant and valuable for the consumer.



### The 'Facebook Effect'

Mobile Internet users spend more time on social network sites, in particular on Facebook. The world's most used social network has a very popular mobile equivalent that allows users to update their status, browse their news feed and view friends' profiles from the palm of their hand. According to comScore figures, Facebook is the second most visited mobile site, accounting for a reach of 28.7%. Even more remarkable is the finding that the use of Facebook on mobile and PC are very similar. On average, mobile users visit Facebook 3.3 times a day and spend a total of 24 minutes per day on the site. The average PC user finds his way to Facebook 2.3 times per day and spends 27.5 minutes there.

This means that there is absolutely no reason for brands to take mobile social media reputation any less seriously than its large screen counterpart. In fact, there is probably a lot of untapped potential and first-mover advantage waiting to be materialised. Just like several other larger sites, Facebook is now offering targeted mobile advertising solutions. However, the many clever branded Facebook applications, such as Burger King's Whopper Sacrifice or Coca-Cola look-alike app have had an even greater impact. There is no reason why similar innovative branded apps cannot be tailored and adapted for a mobile audience.

But other dramatic changes are occurring right now. Following their US counterparts, a growing number of European mobile services providers are now starting to offer unlimited data plans. This will convert into a boom in European mobile Internet traffic. It also paves the way for richer mobile branded content, such as videos and widgets. So if you want to gain early experience in a rapidly expanding market, now might be the right time to act.

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