

Tapping Into Trends in Location-Based Mobile Marketing

No matter what type of device they use, more and more consumers are browsing the web on the go for places of business near them. Not only do consumers use their smart phones to find businesses, they actually use them while shopping, dining and spending.

A recent study showed that 34% of smart phone users will comparison shop on their device while in a store – nearly 30% will search for reviews while shopping – 21% searched for coupons to use instantly – 12% opted to buy online instead of in-store and over 5% searched for a recommendation on the business or product from their friends.

Consumers age 25-44 are most likely to comparison shop and search for reviews on products, services and businesses using their mobile devices. If these ages are in your target demographic, this lets you know that location-based mobile marketing services would likely be used by your target customer.

When it comes to location-based mobile marketing, coupons are increasingly popular. 34% of smart phone users have redeemed an online coupon and 18% have redeemed a mobile coupon. Another growing outlet for location-based mobile marketing services is QR codes. Over one-third of mobile devices have a QR code scanner.

In fact, all location-based mobile marketing trends are on the upswing. Last year, over half of all local business searches were conducted via a mobile phone or other mobile device such as a tablet or web-enabled iPod.

Location-based marketing services are now getting even more local with the emergence of proximity marketing. Already huge in Japan, proximity marketing is now trending in Europe and spreading to the US. Using proximity marketing, the nearness of a consumer to a specific object or physical location triggers a specific action.

NFC chips, QR codes and other new technologies can provide consumers with an interactive experience. QR codes in particular are attractive for both consumers and vendors because they are free to set up and easy to use. As more businesses use QR codes, their increased presence will increase consumer interest and use of the tool.

As more and more consumers seek to engage with local businesses, it will become more and more critical for business owners to equip their establishments to accommodate the increasing demand for mobile interaction.

Consumers now prefer establishments that offer free Wi-Fi and this baseline service will be a necessity if you want to expand your mobile strategy to embrace proximity marketing. By hosting Wi-Fi services for customers, you'll be able to offer fast-loading content attached to proximity items such as QR codes and NFC chips.

More advanced proximity tools such as iSign allow you to ping a customer's smart phone as soon as they enter or near (3,000 feet or less depending on your platform and technology) your establishment and

ask if they would like an offer from your establishment. The mobile consumer can click yes or no. Current response rates are nearing 25% and may induce drive-by customers that may not have been planning a visit to your store to stop by and transact with you.

Mobile marketing is here to stay, is prevalent and constantly evolving. Ignoring this trend will be at great peril to your business. The good news is that many aspects of mobile marketing have a very low cost to use and a low barrier to entry. If you don't have a mobile marketing strategy, now is the time to develop one.