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BEST PRACTICE REPORT

# **Reaching Consumers in a Multi-Device Environment: Strategies for Digital Marketing**

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## Executive Summary

A sharp increase in use of mobile devices—tablets and smartphones—is changing how consumers interact with digital media and experience brands. Using several different types of devices with more interactions in many different settings, consumers are less apt to distinguish digital as a separate marketing channel.

Digital is no longer a separate experience but has become a multi-device interaction that gets incorporated into many aspects of daily life (Sohn and Skroch, 2012).

According to a new consumer survey “The New Multi-Screen World: Understanding Cross-Platform Consumer Behavior,” 90% of all consumer media interactions are screen-based: smartphone, television, computer, or tablet (Google, 2012). The remaining 10% of interactions were print or radio. And, these consumers have become multi-device users with most of their 4.4 hours of media time spent in front of a screen—tablet, smartphone, TV, or computer. The key concern for marketers is that the consumer experience across devices, settings, operating systems, and applications should be seamless and significant (David, 2013; Klais, 2013).

These interactions are driven by context—where consumers are, what they want to accomplish, and the amount of time available. The interactions can be sequential, with users moving between devices or simultaneous, with a user accessing multiple devices at the same time (Layton, 2012).

Given the proliferation in devices and interactions, five technology strategies are impacting today’s digital marketing experience and will continue to grow in influence. These trends, which perceptive marketers will leverage to advantage, are:

- continued improvement in devices’ client-side capabilities;
- homogenized user experience across different devices;
- enhanced immersive user experience;
- increased use of and demand for responsive design; and
- continued improvement in metrics measurement and support allowing more accurate customer targeting. (Sohn and Skroch, 2012; David, 2013; Klais, 2013; Kim, 2012).

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Within this multi-device digital media model, consumers expect a lot: real time information, anywhere; utility and entertainment; transparency; quality content; involvement, co-creation and dialogue; and customization (Sohn and Skroch, 2012). With improved digital experiences, reaching consumers is no longer about a particular media channel but rather how best to convey brand and ideas. Success in marketing is not as dependent on the media channel as it is on the idea being communicated and the brand (Sohn and Skroch, 2012).

Multi-device, multi-channel, and in different settings, reaching consumers is a fragmented process and it is dependent on the marketer to transform this process into a comprehensive and coherent experience. Mobile platforms and more responsive CRM systems are the catalyst for the next generation of connected experiences. In 2013, leading marketers are anticipating the longer-term mobile disruption and shifting from tactical efforts to more transformative mobile strategies (Sohn and Skroch, 2012). Mobile first has become the imperative (Table 1).