Rise of the Empowered Consumer:
How to reach audiences in 2012

February 2012

EINLEITUNG

Konsumenten haben mehr Macht als je zuvor. Das Smartphone ist die Kommunikationsschaltzentrale des Konsumenten. Mit jeder Aktivität schärft der Konsument seinen digitalen Fußabdruck und baut zugleich seine ‚Filter Bubble' auf. Kurzum: Je deutlicher der Verbraucher heute weiß, was er will, desto schwieriger wird es, ihn in Zukunft von neuen Angeboten zu überzeugen! Denn die Markenbotschaften dringen im schlimmsten Fall nicht mehr zu ihm durch. Große Herausforderungen und Chancen zugleich für alle Markenverantwortlichen.

Damit Herzlich Willkommen zum White Paper ‚Rise of the Empowered Consumer' – herausgegeben von MediaCom.

Dieses Paper ist eine Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten Thesen unseres Webcasts rund um die Frage „How to reach audiences in 2012?", ergänzt um weitere Fakten und Meinungen.
Sie finden übrigens in diesem White Paper QR-Codes, die Ihnen weiterführende Informationen & Videos direkt auf Ihrem Handy zugänglich machen.

Was meinen wir genau mit dem „Empowered Consumer"?

1. Technologie gibt den Konsumenten mehr Auswahlmöglichkeiten. Zugleich schmälert sie den Einfluss der traditionellen Medien, fragmentiert die Rezipienten-Zielgruppen und schafft eine **komplexe Medienlandschaft, in der Markenbotschaften ihre Relevanz für den Konsumenten immer wieder belegen müssen**.
2. Konsumenten filtern heute bewusst und immer häufiger unbewusst (z.B. durch Search-Algorithmen) irrelevante Informationen aus. Kurzum: Es entsteht eine **Filter Bubble basierend auf dem bisherigem Verhaltensmuster**.
3. Durch die Überall-Verfügbarkeit an Informationen und die „Umsonst"-Mentalität des Internet steigt zugleich permanent der **Anspruch der Konsumenten an Markenerlebnisse und Markenkommunikation**. Schlechte Produkterfahrungen können via Social Media einen „Shitstorm" auslösen, wenn Marken nicht aktiv den Dialog mit ihren Käufern suchen. Werbung muss im richtigen Moment dem Verbraucher einen Mehrwert und „Aha"-Moment bescheren. Ansonsten landet sie im digitalen Nirvana...

Wenn Konsumenten sich heute über Produkte informieren, dann informieren Sie sich zuerst über ‚*Meinungen* zu diesen Produkten'. Dieses Peer-Reviewing sorgt bei Amazon zu der berühmten, kaufentscheidenden Sterne-Vergabe; Facebook ist ebenso eine prototypische Plattform für ein solches Peer-to-peer-Marketing.

Denn wenn eine Marke in Ihrem persönlichen Newsfeed empfohlen oder besprochen wird, so infiziert diese Information auch die Newsfeeds Ihrer digitalen Freunde.

Martin Lindstroms aktuelles Buch „Brandwashed" erläutert anhand eines Echtzeit-Experiments den Einfluss von Nachbarn und Freunden auf das eigene Kaufverhalten. Sozusagen Word-of-Mouth am Gartenzaun. Mit erstaunlichen Ergebnissen.... Auch dazu mehr in diesem White Paper.

Was müssen Markenverantwortliche im Blick behalten?

I. **Ein Versprechen ist ein Versprechen**
Nur ein eingehaltenes Markenversprechen ist überlebensfähig im Social Media-Universum. Stellen Sie sicher, dass Ihre Marke den Dialog mit den Konsumenten aktiv sucht, souverän und ehrlich führt.

II. **Seien Sie relevant.**
Liefern Sie genau die Botschaften an Ihre Konsumenten, die auch in der jeweiligen Customer Lifetime Stage eine Rolle spielen (wer gerade einen Laptop gekauft hat, möchte nicht in der Woche drauf Werbung für einen weiteren Computer, sondern eher Coupons für Laptop-Zubehör erhalten)

III. **Channel supports Content**
Die Inhalte Ihrer Kommunikation ist das Wichtigste. Die Aussteuerung der richtigen Kanäle (TV, Mobile, OOH usw.) zur Unterstützung Ihrer Botschaften ist der zweite Schritt. Je kanalneutraler Ihre Kommunikationsstrategie ist, desto besser.

IV. **Seien Sie transparent.**
Konsumenten teilen gerne ihre Informationen, besonders wenn sie wissen, dass Unternehmen diese Informationen in echte Mehrwerte für den Konsumenten verwandeln.

V. **Mobil ist gut.**
20 Prozent aller europäischen Suchanfragen kommen von mobilen Endgeräten. Bedienen Sie diese potentiellen Kunden mit entsprechend aufbereiteten Websites.

VI. **Verstärken Sie das digitale Engagement Ihrer Konsumenten.**
Nur Sie als Unternehmen können Content wirklich „groß" rausbringen und User Generated Content, z.B. ein Video eines Ihrer Konsumenten, auf 300 Kino-Leinwände bringen. Das ist echtes Customer Relationship Marketing.

Ich wünsche Ihnen anregende Erkenntnisse durch dieses White Paper und freue mich auf spannende Dialoge mit Ihnen.

Bernd Hoffmann, Chief Digital Officer
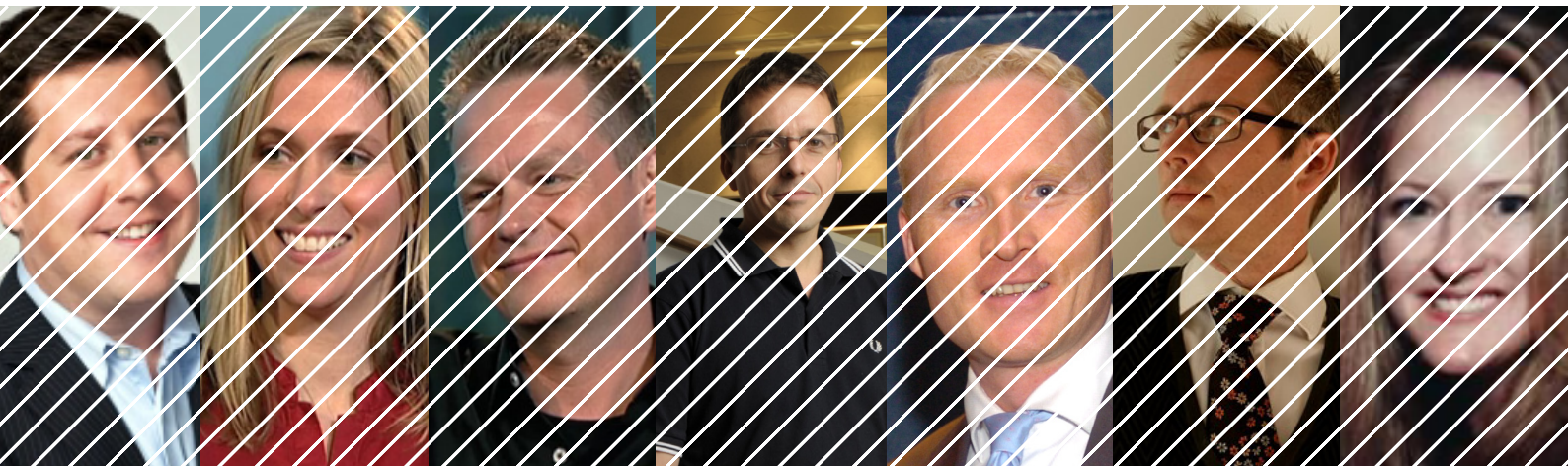MediaCom Deutschland
Bernd.Hoffmann@mediacom.de

"The companies that are smart are going to be really transparent and say 'hey consumer, work with us'. The companies that are less smart are going to be the ones that put up a polished surface and pretend."

Martin Lindstrom
Branding expert and best-selling author

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consumers are more empowered than ever before. The internet and digital technologies have raised expectations of personalised information and services on demand, and created a situation where brands have to work even harder to get noticed.

Every time consumers go online they leave behind a data footprint. While this represents an opportunity for marketers, it also raises issues of privacy and data protection. Brands that are transparent about the data they hold will prosper; if you can make it clear why you need a consumer's details — and articulate the benefits for them — most will be only too happy to oblige.

This data is already being used to create personalised online experiences for the user. When we use search engines, for instance, we no longer receive objective results; we are trapped in a filter bubble which ranks information based on our interests. Irrelevant messages are filtered out.

To stay in the bubble, brands need to build a dialogue with their consumers and be authentic. Brands that promise a lot but fail to deliver will do more harm than good. Working out how much you should give is part of the challenge.

Brands should also be aware of changing media habits. Multi-platform experiences are now commonplace for most consumers, not just the young. Brands will need to adopt a more device-neutral strategy in order to reach the biggest audiences.

Mobile provides an unmatched opportunity to reach any sized group, with tailored messaging. Consumers are increasingly staying connected via their smartphones rather than home computers, meaning that brands can reach them anywhere, and at any time with personalised — and even location-based — content.

Brands should also consider additional forms of communication such as sponsorship and events. You need clear reasons to enter this space, but if you can justify your presence and make your messages relevant, you can reach passionate audiences of immense scale.

This white paper delves deeper into these challenges and opportunities, and offers pragmatic actions for advertisers looking to cut through at a time when consumers are in charge.

All statistics produced in this document have been sourced from prior Insider communications unless otherwise stated. Scan the QR codes printed throughout to access this content.

About The Insider

The Insider is MediaCom's external communications programme designed to address the issues that matter for marketers. It is comprised of several elements including BLINK (an industry magazine that covers trends and influences), a newsletter, a webcast housed at www.mediacom.com, and a follow-up white paper.

In this edition, our focus turned to the consumer and the ways in which technology and changing expectations have empowered them to demand more from brands. Expanding on these themes in The Insider webcast, Martin Lindstrom, branding expert and best-selling author, joined us to discuss issues of empowerment and explain why brands need to be more transparent. Martin was joined by Tiffany Bissey, Head of Digital and Emerging Media for Dell, and Matthew Mee, Head of Strategy and Freshness at MediaCom EMEA.

Scan this QR code to watch the webcast on The Empowered Consumer.

INTRODUCTION

What do we mean by the Empowered Consumer and why should you care?

We live in a world where everything is just a click away. The internet has conditioned us to expect information and services on demand at anytime, anywhere — and often for free. It has also given us the power to share our experiences immediately, at the touch of a button. The consumer, rather than the brand, controls the interaction.

As consumers we don't need advertisers to speak directly to us anymore; through social media and our mobiles, we can instantly share recommendations and content with our friends. We can also turn to the opinions of strangers via the ratings and reviews of social commerce to help us determine which products and services we buy. Brands need to work harder to make themselves heard.

In essence, three key factors are challenging marketers in 2012:

i)   Technology has given consumers more choice, reducing the power of traditional media in some markets, fragmenting audiences and creating a much more complex landscape for messages to navigate.

ii) Consumers have been given the power to filter our irrelevant messages (and sometimes, technology will also do it automatically based on previous behaviour).

iii) Rising expectations mean that consumers will constantly demand more and actively communicate dissatisfaction when they don't get what they want. Consumers expect a two-way dialogue with brands and personalised ads relevant to their needs.

Brands need to address these challenges sooner rather than later, to avoid getting left behind.

"The customer journey has changed. You're not relying on advertisements purely [anymore]; now you're looking at ratings and reviews, talking to friends and peers in the real physical world, looking online and on Facebook, and asking about opinions."

Tiffany Bissey
Head of Global Digital and Emerging Media, Dell

"[As a consumer] if you have the time and you have the will, then you have a greater opportunity to make, even contribute, to informed purchases. The difference now is that consumer expectation has edged ahead of organisations in terms of how communications should work for them, how marketing should work for them, and how brands should work for them."

Matthew Mee
Head of Strategy and Freshness, MediaCom EMEA

THE CHALLENGE OF REACHING CONSUMERS TODAY

How do issues of data and privacy affect your brand?

Digital creates data. Every time we go online we leave a data footprint that can tell marketers a lot about us. This goes well beyond the impact of someone finding a picture of our drunk 18-year-old selves and includes information about our search habits, purchase history and brand likes.

In the past, marketers might have turned to physical items to research our status, our cars, clothes and where we lived for example, but now they can discover the same thing via digital status symbols. The brands we like on Facebook, the news sources we follow on Twitter, or the virtual gifts we buy online. All this digital data is fascinating and powerful for marketers if they are allowed to use it — but two key issues stand in their way: data barons and concerns of privacy.

The first issue is relatively straight-forward: data barons such as Apple, Amazon and Facebook know how powerful all this data can be and they won't give it up easily. Data requests from the new Kindle Fire, for example, go via Amazon's cloud, giving the company control of the information about patterns and consumption. Elsewhere, Apple is currently fighting publishers in order to hold onto information about consumers who buy content via its Newsstand service.

This makes privacy a vital issue for marketers. Privacy terms and conditions are no longer just a topic of concern for geeks and obsessives; hearings in the UK Parliament, rows in Germany over Google Streetview and the latest EU proposals on privacy are all a measure of how mainstream the issue has become.

Brands can respond in one of two ways: they can hide the data they have in a black box, in which case they will ultimately find that consumers start

"Brands can respond in one of two ways: they can hide the data in a black box, in which case they will ultimately find that consumers start to exert and demand greater controls, or they can be open and transparent and share what they know about their audiences."

to exert and demand greater controls, or they can be open and transparent and share what they know about their audiences.

Ultimately, the end-game for privacy is a clear and transparent exchange in which the consumer is happy to give up their data, or some portion of it, in return for a clear benefit — be it targeted offers or great content. Dell, for instance, successfully merged behavioural targeting technologies — which captured consumers' visit history — with dynamic creative tools to build customised messaging. The model recognised returning prospects by leveraging stored data from cookies and then retargeted them with customised ads on their next visit to an outside website running Dell advertising.

The huge potential for data to revolutionise the way marketers communicate can be seen from developments such as persuasion profiles. These are profiles that cut across individual sectors and could hypothetically be useful for retailers, government health campaigns and any organisation that wants consumers to take action.

Persuasion profiles, currently still in development, tell marketers what kind of messages we are most likely to respond to. Are we more likely to buy if we know that our friends are buying, or do we just want hold out for a better offer?

Early experiments suggest smart application of such methodologies do increase sales, but there are naturally privacy issues to be addressed before such information might be transferred from one site to another, even if a large retailer has developed this understanding.

Scan here to read BLINK article "The Data Wars", to learn more about these issues.

"In the future we will probably see a Wikileaks of brands. An independent organisation, or several organisations, will disclose stuff that is going on in certain companies that do not have their houses in order. [We need to] work with consumers to find out what we should do from an ethical point of view."

Martin Lindstrom
Branding expert and author

"[As a consumer], I'm going to see loads of commercial messages [and if] those messages are actually more appropriate for me [thanks to behavioural targeting], that's kind of great. The amount of data that I've been willing to share about myself to facilitate that targeting is something that needs to be transparent. That's the key issue."

Matthew Mee
Head of Strategy and Freshness, MediaCom EMEA

What is the personal internet and how do filter bubbles block your messages?

Infinite content demands editing. The solution developed by the likes of Google and Facebook is personalisation: their algorithms determine what consumers see based on behaviour and interactions.

Since 2009 search engines such as Google have returned user-specific results — information filtered by relevance based on your web history. Thus, search results are no longer objective and users may find that a search for Egypt, for example, returns either some very interesting holiday or historical information, or stories about the Arab Spring.

Such selections have been dubbed a 'Filter Bubble' by Eli Pariser (in The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding from You), which trap the user in a unique, personal universe of information created specifically for them by a series of complex algorithms. The system is invisible, but is becoming more and more difficult to escape.

What's more, Google has announced new privacy settings that will allow it to combine stored data from all of its services (search engine, Google+, Gmail, Maps, Android, etc.) to provide even better filtering and targeting (although users will be able to opt out to avoid this kind of data collection).

For advertisers, filter bubbles can be extremely useful; filtered search results mean that your brand's targeted display ads will perform more efficiently and provide users with more relevant advertising if correctly optimised (based on user interests and location; brands should try to localise messages for different markets where possible). But at the same time, the act of filtering can also make it more difficult for brands to build awareness and maximise reach. In other words, if nobody is looking for your brand, then you won't appear in

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their search results, even if consumers are looking for your product category.

The world of top-down information has been transformed into a world driven by peer review and word of mouth. Dell now puts consumer reviews, good and bad, on its site, while Amazon's consumer reviews have been reported to even change the purchasing habits of Unilever's Global CMO Keith Weed.

Martin Lindstrom's book Brandwashed explains the power of word of mouth via a $3 million social experiment inspired by Hollywood movie The Joneses.

The Morgensons are an ideal family in Laguna Beach, California and on camera they showed that the most powerful persuader is the people around us. Each family friend ended up buying an average of three brands recommended by the Morgensons, while the Morgensons themselves ended up buying six out of the ten products they were promoting.

Lindstrom's experiment illustrates the power of word of mouth marketing and shows just how persuasive friends' recommendations can be. These interactions don't have to be in person either; online, social media platforms facilitate word of mouth marketing at an even greater scale.

When our friends talk positively about a product or 'like' a certain brand in Facebook, it creates a natural positive brand positioning within the market. 'Likes' help a brand look popular, but their true value is largely immeasurable. Rather than chase 'likes', brands would be better off encouraging consumers to engage with its content.

EdgeRank, the algorithm that Facebook uses to determine the content we see in our news feed, naturally promotes the content that is most relevant to the individual user. Hence, the more a brand engages its fans, the better chance it has

of appearing in its fans' newsfeeds and its fans' friends' newsfeeds as well.

"The world of top down information has been transformed into a world driven by peer review and word of mouth."

As Martin Lindstrom notes in Brandwashed, the influence of our peers shouldn't be underestimated. Facebook "is peer-to-peer advertising at its best and it works".

Scan here to read BLINK article "Hacking the Meme Code", to learn more about the personal internet and filter bubbles.

Scan here to read more about word of mouth marketing in our white paper on Social Media.

Scan here to watch a video on The Morgensons, Martin Lindstrom's social experiment.

"A 'like' should almost be recognition of whether or not someone has got some value from the stuff you are doing. Every client should be out there involved in content... and knowing where people are spending time with it is a good indication of whether it's working or whether you're talking to yourself."

Matthew Mee
Head of Strategy and Freshness, MediaCom EMEA

"There is an addiction to [Facebook] 'likes'. What's the value of a fan? [Brands need to think] much more about engagement and conversation and dialogue and not about checking off 'yes, I have achieved my "like" target for this quarter — I've done my job'."

Tiffany Bissey
Head of Global Digital and Emerging Media, Dell

What can you do to satisfy consumer expectations without going too far?

At the heart of a relationship with the Empowered Consumer is transparency. This may be difficult for many brands and marketers to implement given the closed history of some organisations, but ultimately, you are going to have to manage this change.

Consumers want information and will demand a dialogue; Dell now gets 26,000 posts a day on its sites related to its marketing and its products. Positive or negative, all posts are treated equally and some have even forced changes to the company's marketing strategy and product design.

What's key about these conversations is their authenticity. Brands that talk the talk but don't actually change will quickly find the rug pulled out from under them. In 2009, Domino's Pizza was faced with a classic case of crisis communications. Two employees had uploaded a defamatory video to YouTube and the viral community swiftly spread the clip around the world. The company responded with a press release, but neglected to talk to fans online. Negativity around the web snowballed and share prices plummeted. The company has since redressed this problem and embraced social media, but it had to learn the hard way.

At the same time, brands need to be aware that in seeking to meet the wishes of consumers, it is possible to go too far. Every time you go out of your way to please a customer, you are adding credence to a series of unreasonable demands. Social media led by Twitter is demanding that organisations change, but they don't have to promise everything. The more you give consumers, the more they want.

"At the same time, brands need to be aware that in seeking to meet the wishes of consumers, it is possible to go too far."

Responding to serious criticism or concerns on social media is important, but you don't have to respond to every message or request.

The majority of questions that brands get asked are very simple and repetitive and could be covered in the FAQ section on your website.

"What's key about these conversations is their authenticity. Brands that talk the talk but don't actually change will quickly find the rug pulled out from under them."

Community-based consumer support sites can help relieve pressure on brands. Sites such as Getsatisfaction.com allow consumers to share brand experiences and recommendations with other like-minded people, for example.

The use of a suitable social analytics tool can help track conversations and topics, aggregate the most common concerns and identify the ones you need to action. If one person doesn't like your logo that's not a problem, but if the majority of your followers hate it, then it's time to act and reassure your fan base you have heard their concerns.

Ikea, for example, is never going to send a carpenter round to your house to help assemble your latest flat pack and consumers have been trained not to expect this. All brands need to be similarly realistic about what they can and cannot do for their consumers.

Scan here to read BLINK article "Please Me Now!", to learn more about these issues.

"Many brands are now using Facebook as a customer service platform. Ask yourself what the purpose and consequence might be. Airlines that deliver personal flight services on Facebook are in fact creating a feeling of a personal assistance that is massively missing when they get to the airport and on the actual flight."

Aimar Niedzwiedzki
MediaCom Beyond Advertising, MediaCom Norway

"One of my philosophies is that you should always over deliver and under promise."

Martin Lindstrom
Branding expert and author

"The pace that's set by something like Twitter and the consumer's ability to immediately respond to the service they've received from a brand is something that places huge challenges on an organisation and the agencies that help them in terms of meeting that expectation. Consumers are really pushing the envelope now."

Matthew Mee
Head of Strategy and Freshness, MediaCom EMEA

RESPONDING TO THESE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

How can you take advantage of consumers' changing media habits?

Despite the increasing proliferation of web-connected devices, too many marketers still see digital as a channel for young people and tend to target other, older demographics primarily through traditional forms of communication. This is a severely inefficient marketing strategy as in reality, smartphones, digital usage and multi-tasking is now the way of life for the majority of consumers.

In the US, reports from companies such as eMarketer and Deloitte reveal that the Boomer-aged segment of internet users (aged 50-64) is the fastest growing group, and that in 2011, the number of Boomers regularly using social networking sites grew by 60%. What's more, 65% of the internet population is now over 35 years old.

Smartphone penetration will reach nearly half of US mobile users in 2012 (44% — a staggering 107 million consumers), while tablet penetration will hit 23% of all internet users at 55m. E-readers meanwhile, will be in the hands of 46m and 24% of internet users.

Statistics also show that the majority of the US population (75%) are now multi-tasking while watching TV. 42% are online, 29% are talking on mobile devices and 26% are sending IM or text messages — often about the content being broadcast.

Digital and multi-device behaviour is now mainstream and brands can no *"65% of the internet population is now over 35 years old."* longer afford to focus solely on one channel; they must learn to become channel or device neutral. Empowered Consumers are everywhere and not just limited to the young. Multi-platform experiences are now commonplace and the choice of device — mobile, tablet, TV or e-reader — is largely irrelevant, but the experience must be optimised accordingly. Brands need to extend their messages into the digital world in order to reach everyone.

TV provides perhaps the best example of how media consumption is now spread across multiple platforms. Programmes are no longer just consumed through traditional television sets, as the latest data from GlobalWebIndex shows. In the US, 90% of consumers watch an hour of TV a day, but 27% also watch on-demand TV online at least once a month. 10% stream live TV online at least once a month and 8% stream live TV to their mobiles at least once a month.

Habits in China are even more progressive: 65% of consumers watch an hour of live programming every *"Digital and multi-device behaviour is now mainstream and brands can no longer afford to focus solely on one channel."* day on their physical TVs, but 53% catch up with on-demand services online at least once a month. 40% stream live broadcasts at least once a month and 19% watch live TV via their mobile devices at least once a month.

Rather than think about targeting via traditional TV, radio or print, brands need to think more about what kind of media they want to use for their messages: video, audio, text or image. In short, the best solution is simple: put the consumer at the centre of your strategy and build your communications around them. The choice of channels should be a secondary focus.

Scan here to read newsletter article "Time to become device neutral", to learn more about these issues.

"Brands need to move away from their traditional device and channel-centered approach and focus on the consumer much more. In our new device-agnostic age, brands have to understand how their messages can be adapted to each of the many devices now used."

<div align="right">
Chris Pyne
Client Strategy Office, MediaCom US
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"Increasingly when we're watching TV, we're watching it with another screen open — a response channel. [More and more], contact points with service providers or products open up or suggest a return path or a communication path. Increasingly there's an expectation from people that [a response channel] should be in communications. If it isn't, even if they don't choose to use it right then, there'll be something kind of strange about that."

<div align="right">
Matthew Mee
Head of Strategy and Freshness, MediaCom EMEA
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How can you integrate mobile into your marketing strategy?

In the future, not all brands will use the same methods and media to reach empowered audiences, but some channels will stick out as being more universally important than others. Mobile, for one, provides unparalleled opportunities to reach consumers anywhere and at any time because it is the one device that they always have with them, and increasingly use to stay connected online. In fact, globally, 33% of mobile internet usage is now primarily at home; a clear indication that consumers are already ditching PCs and laptops for more convenient portable devices.

"Mobile provides unparalleled opportunities to reach consumers anywhere and at any time because it is the one device that they always have with them."

In the retail sector, mobile has the potential to alter the way consumers research, shop and even pay for products. Already, in many regions, consumers are becoming used to searching for and purchasing products through their smartphones and barcode scanners which mean that they can quickly find the best price on the mobile web for anything they see in store. Moreover, group buying clubs, such as Groupon — many of which can be easily accessed from smartphones — allow users to share offers with friends in social networks and make instant purchases and secure group discounts.

Physical retailers have always struggled against web-based competitors, in part, because of the cost of maintaining a physical footprint, but also because they simply cannot offer the same kind of tailored experiences as their online rivals. Websites can make personalised recommendations and quickly change the look of their stores to reflect what the consumer wants; bricks and mortar outlets cannot do this.

As a result, high-street stores should act fast to embrace mobile and understand that searching for information and offers while we shop is now part of the retail experience for many groups of consumers.

At the most basic level, this could be via the use of QR code offers on outdoor sites near their outlets but these offers can also be much more sophisticated. Location-based software allows brands to contact consumers directly through their mobile devices and even snare passers-by with enticing offers. Shops can use mobile targeting to drive sign-ups for in store reward schemes, for instance, or offer discounts when customers check-in via Facebook or Foursquare (and consequently announce their shopping locations to friends).

Third party apps, such as Shopkick — which rewards consumers with personalised on-the-spot discounts and gives them 'kickpoints' every time they enter a store or scan products at the counter — can also help increase footfall and purchase habits in store.

Brands should also be prepared for an explosion in video interaction. Video calling, through services such as Skype and MSN, is already commonplace online and increasingly shifting to mobile. By 2015, an estimated 15 billion hours of video chat will be watched globally on mobiles alone, which opens up a whole host of opportunities for your brand.

Imagine receiving a video message from your favourite celebrity, for instance; tech-savvy celebrities such as actor Ashton Kutcher or British adventurer and TV presenter Bear Grylls are already reaching audiences in this way. Brands should consider how they can be part of similar interactive experiences that excite consumers, promote loyalty and encourage them to share it with their friends.

Scan here to read newsletter article "Don't let mobile baffle you", to learn more about these issues.

"One thing that I definitely think will grow is social commerce. Your retail store is not the centre of your universe anymore; it's expanded and we need to expand with that."

Tiffany Bissey
Head of Global Digital and Emerging Media, Dell

"American pharmacy chain Walgreens has been successful in using mobile not only as a marketing medium — through which it offers coupons and other incentives — but also as a means of facilitating the shopping experience. Walgreens' shoppers now have the ability to use smartphones to fill prescriptions and order photo prints in advance, saving them time waiting in line and placing orders. This also helps stores operate at peak efficiency."

Tricia Nichols
Managing Partner, MediaCom US

How can events and entertainment take your brand further?

As traditional channels are less able to provide personalised content, brands may find greater opportunities to reach Empowered Consumers elsewhere. Sponsorship and events are just two different ways brands can reach out to consumers.

Digital tools, such as social media, allow consumers to talk about and share their passions with friends. Music and entertainment are obvious discussion topics, but sport stands out as the world's most popular mass-appeal pastime. It presents a fantastic opportunity for brands to reach large, passionate audiences.

> "Sports stands out as the world's most popular mass-appeal pastime. It presents a fantastic opportunity for brands to reach large, passionate audiences."

To succeed in the sports sector though, brands must abide by two key rules. Firstly, they must be authentic: if there is no clear reason for your brand to be involved, consumers simply won't listen. Secondly, they must be strategic: different sports attract different audiences. Brands need to identify their target audience early in order to find the right sport to invest in.

Alcohol brands have long had associations with sports sponsorship — Budweiser is a long-standing Super Bowl and FIFA sponsor, Heineken is a current partner of the UEFA Champions League and Guinness has deep-rooted ties to rugby — and they enjoy great success by developing positive associations.

To stay relevant, brands should also try to enhance the sporting experience for the consumer. Mobile apps offer just one way of providing added value. In the UK, Budweiser recently launched an app to support its sponsorship of the FA Cup. The app allows users to check scores and player information, share predictions via social media and vote for their man of the match for a chance to win prizes. Users can also use the app to bring their match day programmes and Budweiser-branded beer mats to life through their smartphone camera.

Elsewhere, UK telecoms company O2 helped bring Irish rugby fans even closer to their team with its 'Be the Difference' campaign. Launched during the 2009 Six Nations tournament, O2 gave supporters a unique opportunity to share their words of support directly with their heroes by uploading personalised 'team talks' to a specially created site. These messages were then viewed by the team before each game. The names of the fans who registered on the site were even used to make up the numbers printed on the players' shirts.

Alternatively, brands can cut through by creating unique content for specific events or teams. Audi in the US, for example, partnered with the US Olympic Ski Team to talk to team members in a way that chimed perfectly with the brand's positioning in the market. The branded content could then be packaged and distributed through a number of channels, and to all the devices owned by the target audience.

Digital activation offers another way of promoting events or launches in sports and other entertainment categories. In 2011, Nu Metro films in South Africa engaged consumers in a unique way to promote the film The Hangover Part II. To capture local interest, the distributor invited influential entertainment bloggers to attend the premier, engage in their own Hangover-style experiences and keep a running commentary of the night on their blogs, Facebook and Twitter. The stunt galvanised thousands of fans who spread the word via their own social feeds and helped the film perform 20% better at the box office than its predecessor (a remarkable feat for a sequel).

Scan here to read newsletter article "Give your brand a sporting chance", to learn more about these issues.

"Ensuring that you are authentic requires a fairly detailed strategic process and a framework for success. Brands need to identify their KPIs and work out what they want sports rights to achieve for them. They need to identify who they want to reach in order to ensure that they choose a platform and a property that is going to deliver against these bespoke targets."

Marcus John
Global Head of Sports, MediaCom Sport

ACTIONS FOR ADVERTISERS

Advertisers who want to embrace Empowered Consumers should consider the following actions:

1. Be honest and talk to your consumers

Make sure your brand is talking to its consumers. You don't have to bow to every demand, but you must listen and be prepared to engage in a two-way dialogue honestly and promptly. Take your consumers' feedback on board — both positive and negative — but don't promise things that you can't deliver. Brands that try to fool consumers, hold back or simply ignore the online conversation completely will suffer and could risk alienating consumers.

2. Deliver relevant messages

Don't bombard your audiences blindly. Work out ways to target your consumers individually and tailor messages for certain segments. If a consumer buys a laptop, for instance, they might not appreciate being offered another one the very next week, but they might enjoy discount coupons for accessories or contact from your customer service team.

3. Devise a device-neutral strategy

Too many brands are thinking too narrowly in their advertising and only using certain channels to reach certain audiences. Think more about what kinds of messages — audio, video, text or image — you want to deliver rather than the channels you want to deliver them on. Consumers should be able to find your messages anywhere.

4. Be transparent and respect the consumer's data

Respect your consumers and be transparent with the data that you have. More often than not, consumers are only too happy to provide information when they feel it is useful and beneficial in some way. Just remind them what they are getting out of your relationship together and don't hide anything away.

5. Love mobile

Your brand is seriously missing out if you lack a developed mobile strategy. Consumers are using mobile more and more (20% of all European search queries are from mobile devices) so make sure you have the right content and services for those users. Build a dedicated mobile site and add response mechanisms such as QR codes to connect consumers through your traditional advertising. Also, talk to your agencies about video interaction trends and identify specific opportunities that you can own and use to reach your target audience.

6. Think about how to bring scale to digital empowerment

Consumers have more power than ever, but they can't do everything themselves. Think about how you can you add something to their lives. Consumers can create their own video content, for instance, but they don't have the power to put it on 300 cinema screens or ensure it gets aired in the middle of the Super Bowl. Think about how your brand can cleverly own these spaces and bring scale to digital empowerment.

"Don't do to consumers what you wouldn't do to your own kids. You need to adopt the same ethical approach with consumers that you do with your family. And if you feel a little uncomfortable about doing certain things when you have that mind-set, just don't do it."

<div align="right">

Martin Lindstrom
Branding expert and author

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"Accept that your consumers are possibly more connected than you are as a company. Look and try to identify those gaps where you are not quite meeting their expectations and focus your strategy going forward on that."

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Matthew Mee
Head of Strategy and Freshness, MediaCom EMEA

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"Embrace [empowered consumers]. Don't be scared by them. Embrace the feedback you are getting, embrace those conversations [but know] that changes in your corporation will not happen overnight."

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Tiffany Bissey
Head of Global Digital and Emerging Media, Dell

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KONTAKT

Wenn Sie mehr Informationen zum „Empowered Consumer" erhalten möchten, wenden Sie sich bitte direkt an

Bernd Hoffmann
Chief Digital Officer

MediaCom Agentur für Media-Beratung GmbH
Derendorfer Allee 10
40476 Düsseldorf

Telefon: +49 211 17162-7362
Bernd.Hoffmann@mediacom.de
www.mediacom.de