

Smart brands will rethink how to create effective mobile ads



By [Ariane Längsfeld](#), issued by [Millward Brown](#)

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Mobile presents a massive opportunity for marketers to reach consumers in exciting new ways, but receptivity and creative challenges lie ahead.

Consumers are rarely without their always-on mobile phones - using them throughout the day to communicate and view content. Millward Brown's recent AdReaction Video study found that multiscreen users in South Africa spend almost half (43%) of their screen time on mobile devices. Screen time will only increase as data costs drop, network speeds improve and smartphones have bigger and better displays, with faster connection speeds, making it easy for consumers to watch high-quality video content wherever and whenever they want to. Following this trend, marketers will spend higher proportions of their media budget on mobile initiatives in 2016, with mobile video being a main growth driver.

The most advanced brands will use technology in innovative ways in order to reach consumers in new exciting ways and build long-term relationships with them. Many brands are embracing interactivity and initiating a dialogue with consumers via mobile, making it a key instrument for meaningful engagement. Fast-moving technologies like augmented reality and the internet of things offer new opportunities for brands and we'll see more marketers creating campaigns that use these technologies. But it will be a smaller group of brands dipping their foot in the water and it will be essential for brands to build on their core values and at the same time represent a real utility for people.



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Digital and mobile advancements have enabled consumers to attain almost anything they want, wherever and whenever they want it. In 2016 the smartest brands will embrace this growing impatience by delivering real-time gratification. A good example is Heineken's @wherenext campaign, which targeted young males and addressed their fear of missing out (FOMO) by directing them to activities and places of interest using a real-time Twitter-based service.

Social platforms, increasingly accessed by mobile, will continue to emerge including native mobile social networks still on the rise like Vine, Instagram, and Snapchat. After initial experimentation, many brands are now making the most of what the platforms have to offer, extending their boundaries and evolving this further in 2016. Many of these platforms also now offer paid advertising, which brings with it new opportunities but also creative challenges. We're seeing this with Snapchat and the shift from horizontal to vertical video ads. Brands will need to consider their presence on this platform carefully, rethink their advertising and test its effectiveness. Live-streaming apps like Periscope are also enhancing this new way of creating and watching video. In 2016, brands will experiment with broadcasting their own content, although on a smaller scale.

In general, brands will invest more on mobile advertising and especially mobile video ads. We know that when well executed, mobile ads are highly effective and are two to four times more impactful than online ads in driving brand metrics. However, receptivity toward advertising on digital in general and especially mobile devices can be a challenge, so brands need to be mindful of how they address their audiences on mobile. We also see that the performance of mobile ads varies widely while many brands still make executional mistakes and the gap between best- and worst-performing campaigns will continue to widen as the medium is coming of age. If brands don't think more carefully about the creative development for mobile and pre-test their mobile ads, they will potentially miss an opportunity, or even worse, negatively impact their brands. Furthermore, whilst developing mobile creatives, marketers also need to think about the role mobile plays in integrated multi-channel campaigns.

And as Steffen Krabbenhøft, Head of Mobile EMEA at Mediacom, believes, "mobile is moving beyond being a standalone channel, but is becoming the glue that links everything that we do. Mobile is now the new planning currency, a powerful channel that increases our understanding of consumers and helps their cross-media targeting. For example, geo-location data is transforming the way Mediacom delivers messaging and understands consumer behaviour for a number of their clients. When evaluating the effectiveness of OOH advertising, the use of heat-map data has enabled the agency to understand dwell times and engagement levels around outdoor sites across the world. Location data has also enabled one brand to augment its advertising frequency by identifying consumers who have been exposed to OOH messages and following this up with digital media."

Mobile offers a huge opportunity to brands, but they need to choose wisely from the wide range of possible ways of addressing their audience, making sure it's relevant to their brand. To succeed in this channel, and avoid executional mistakes that have been made previously in online channels, marketers must consider mobile-adapted executions much earlier in the creative development process to ensure their ads deliver the desired effect

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