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Interactive Advertising Bureau

Mobile Buyer's Guide

Second Edition, updated February 2012

About the IAB's Mobile Marketing Center of Excellence:

The IAB Mobile Marketing Center of Excellence, an independently funded and staffed unit inside the IAB, is charged with driving the growth of the mobile marketing, advertising and media marketplace. The Mobile Center devotes resources to market and consumer research, mobile advertising case studies, executive training and education, supply chain standardization, creative showcases and best practice identification in the burgeoning field of mobile media and marketing. Our agenda will focus on building profitable revenue growth for companies engaged in mobile marketing, communications and advertising, and helping publishers, marketers and agency professionals understand and leverage interactive tools and technologies in order to reach and influence the consumer. The Mobile Center includes Board of Directors members and Supporting Members:

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For more information or to find out how to join, please visit www.iab.net/mobilecenter.

This document can be found on the IAB website at: http://www.iab.net/mobile_buyers_guide

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Introduction: Advertising on Mobile Devices

While mobile appears to be a complex ecosystem with its own vernacular, the media buying process is very similar to other familiar platforms including the PC-based internet. This booklet guides you through that process in plain English and will get you started as a first time mobile advertiser. While mobile advertising is much like advertising on any other medium, it's important to remember that there are also some critical differences as well. These key differences, such as different creative specs, richer interactive possibilities, and measurement challenges, can and should impact your mobile strategy.

Yet ultimately, it is about finding the right places to connect your client with the right audience to deliver the right message. In fact, mobile is an execution point on your current advertising strategy; or simply put, another medium to add to your arsenal to reach the right consumer. We will provide a few straightforward pointers to get you started. This guide was first produced in 2009, and the IAB has updated it in 2012 to reflect new technologies and trends in mobile advertising.

In order to determine what role mobile will play in a media mix, you should first understand the marketer's advertising goals. For example, is their objective to increase brand favorability, launch a new product, increase direct response or begin a customer retention initiative? Once you know the answer to this question, the route to take with mobile becomes much clearer.

When creating a mobile campaign it is important to remember that there are multiple channels for reaching mobile eyeballs. They include display advertising on mobile websites and downloadable applications (apps), mobile messaging, and a host of others including video and audio ads, mobile search, and branded applications, all of which can be used individually or as a unified campaign across not just these mobile channels but across traditional channels to create a complete 360° campaign.
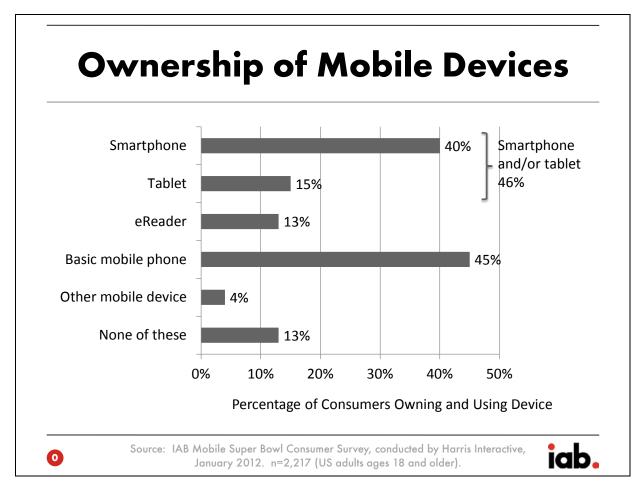
The IAB generally refers to "mobile" as encompassing media on feature phones, smartphones, and tablets, as well as eReaders and portable gaming devices. While smartphone and tablet advertising have much in common (and the other device categories present interesting opportunities), for the purposes of this buyers guide, we have limited our scope to the handset end of the market (i.e., smartphones and feature phones). Buyers interested in tablets should look to the IAB's *Tablet Advertising Buyers Guide.*[1]

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[1] http://www.iab.net/tabletbuyersguide
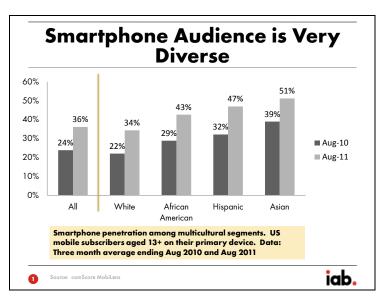
Overview of the U.S. Mobile Marketplace

<u>Audience Composition</u>

The U.S. mobile audience is vast and still growing. According to the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project some 83 percent of American adults own cell phones. And while voice service is still important, the unending introduction of new devices into the market with different price points and capabilities mean that consumers have more choices, more mobile capabilities, and more reasons to use mobile data services than ever before. An IAB survey shows that as of January 2012, about 40 percent of American adults own a smartphone. With these devices becoming more affordable, advanced, and familiar, we're likely to see even greater adoption in 2012.

Ownership of Mobile Devices

Device	Percentage
Smartphone	40%
Tablet	15%
eReader	13%
Basic mobile phone	45%
Other mobile device	4%
None of these	13%

Smartphone and/or tablet 46%

Percentage of Consumers Owning and Using Device

Source: IAB Mobile Super Bowl Consumer Survey, conducted by Harris Interactive, January 2012. n=2,217 (US adults ages 18 and older).

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Moreover, the mobile audience is very diverse. For example, comScore data indicate that as of the middle of 2011, smartphone penetration among African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans was far higher than for white Americans. Any media company or marketer seeking a multicultural audience must keep mobile in mind.

Smartphone Audience is Very Diverse

Smartphone penetration among multicultural segments. US mobile subscribers aged 13+ on their primary device. Data: Three month average ending Aug 2010 and Aug 2011
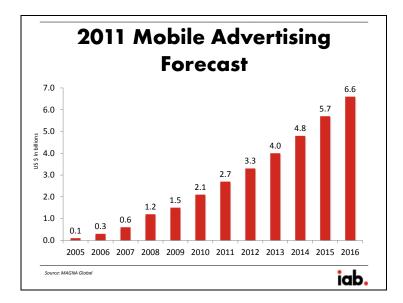
Source: comScore MobiLens

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There are multiple ways to reach the mobile audience. For example three quarters of adults who own cell phones send and receive text messages. Currently, 121 million US mobile subscribers use the mobile Internet monthly. According to RBC Capital Markets, mobile searches will quadruple in the next three years.
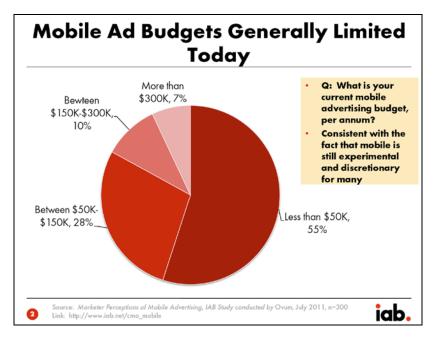
Within the next 12-18 months, mobile access will begin to rival PC access to the internet in the US. Indeed, "mobile first" (as in, first among the various media platforms) is an increasingly common mantra for both digital and traditional media companies. Mobile users already constitute the majority of the audience for some content brands, and more will join that trend.

Mobile Advertising

As always, where consumers go, advertisers soon follow. The mobile advertising market is experiencing robust growth. The IAB estimated US mobile advertising revenue at $550-$650 million for 2010. While the IAB does not forecast the market, it is worth observing that MAGNA, a unit of Mediabrands, projects US mobile ad spending to grow from $2.7 billion in 2011 to $6.6 billion in 2016. Other industry forecasts indicate that the average campaign budget will triple over a similar time period.

2011 Mobile Advertising Forecast

Source: MAGNA Global

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A July, 2011 IAB survey of US marketer decision makers investing in mobile found that mobile budgets remain fairly limited, with 55 percent of marketers surveyed planning to spend under $50,000 for the year on mobile advertising. However, some are clearly already taking the plunge: 17 percent reported an annual mobile advertising budget of over $150,000.

Moreover, virtually all marketers in the IAB survey expect their mobile ad budgets to increase, or at least remain constant, over the next two years; only 1 percent expected mobile budgets to decrease.

Recommended Planning Process and Key Questions

As a general rule of thumb, the less budget and the less time you have, the more you should focus on mobile web and in-app –display ads. As allocation of budgets and time toward mobile increases, you can expand into messaging, traditional media integration, out-of-home mobile campaigns, etc.

In the beginning of the planning process, it is important to gather basic information that is vital to any successful advertising campaign. Since mobile is a newer platform, this step can be overlooked due to the misconception that the basic rules of advertising do not apply. Ask yourself the following questions before launching any campaign:

Key Questions:

| What are the campaign goals? | Who are you trying to target? | Is this part of a broader media campaign? | How much money is allocated to the mobile portion of the buy? | What does success look like for you and your client? | What internal resources do I have available to execute mobile advertising? |

This guide will give you the background information to help make best use of the answers to these questions, as well as provide an overview of the marketplace, definitions, and practical examples to give you a greater understanding of mobile as an advertising platform. The best campaigns keep the user experience in mind. For consumers, mobile advertising offers convenient information, entertainment, and exclusivity-- all of which are important when designing effective mobile campaigns.

Some companies and brands are mentioned in the guide to provide context and illustrate examples of different ad formats. These solutions are offered by a variety of vendors, and nothing in this guide should be construed as an endorsement of any particular provider.

Frequently, marketers will decide to add a mobile component to a campaign at the eleventh hour, if there's a little budget "left over" from other media. We recommend against that. Mobile brings the best returns if it is part of the plan from the beginning. Try to start the mobile discussion early in the overall media conversation.

Mobile Advertising Options

Mobile advertising actually comprises a number of different specific inventory types and creative options. Mobile messaging and search remain important ways for marketers to reach consumers on their handsets. Indeed, short messaging service (SMS) has wide consumer adoption, and works across all handsets, making it an important mobile channel. However, taking the pulse of the marketplace, this guide will focus primarily on mobile display, as well as some important emerging opportunities.

Types of Mobile Advertising

Mobile Display	Video	Audio
• Mobile web or in-app • Banners or full-screen • CPM or CPI • Can be static or rich media • Can run on feature phones if creative designed for it	• Still nascent • Consumers increasingly paying for data, may limit video growth	• Most often inserted into mobile music apps • Can include graphic companion banners

Mobile Activation	Branded Apps	Location-Based Advertising
• Enables traditional media (print, TV, outdoor) to be interactive • Uses SMS shortcodes, 2D barcodes, or audio tagging	• Marketers build own app • Helping consumers find apps is challenging • Maintaining consumer app use also challenging	• Utilizes GPS technology or more traditional geolocation • Calls to action can include click to find nearest retail location, click to coupon and click to call

Mobile Display Ads – Just like PC-based Web ad inventory, mobile display ads are typically banners that appear on a mobile web page or mobile application. Display ads can also be full page or interstitial, occupying the entire screen and running for example before a mobile web page loads, in between pages of a magazine app, or between levels of a game. Both mobile web and mobile apps are important ways to reach smartphone consumers. While HTML 5 enables the mobile web to provide increasingly similar functionality to native apps, it is unlikely apps will decrease in importance or usage in the next few years. Today, according to the Pew Research Center's Project Internet & American Life Project, the average adult has 18 apps on their smartphone, and one in eight users have paid for an app.

Typically, a brand or agency buys mobile display ads for increased exposure of a product or service. Banner inventory is generally purchased based on impressions (e.g., CPM) or sometimes for direct response campaigns on a cost-per-interaction (e.g., taps, expands, etc.) basis. Important factors to keep in mind involve: (1) where your ad will appear on a mobile web page or in a mobile app, (2) the size of mobile screens, and (3) rich-media capabilities.

One of the major advantages to advertising on the smartphone is the degree of interaction the platform allows on touch screens. Mobile rich media, encompassing the ability to touch, tilt, shake or swipe an ad, is unique to mobile devices, and allows advertisers to explore creative opportunities and functionality not currently available in other media.

Mobile Rich Media
On the PC-based web, rich media ads are synonymous with Adobe's Flash, which has a huge installed base and giant developer community. In the early days of mobile rich media, the absence of Flash on many smartphone platforms (including Apple's iOS) was a source of frustration for advertisers. However, the industry has accepted this reality, and indeed Adobe is no longer developing or supporting Flash on mobile platforms. This should not deter marketers from embracing the possibilities of mobile rich media, which creates a new level of interactivity, and enables some truly amazing creative executions. As smartphone penetration continues to rise, rich media will find a correspondingly larger mobile audience.

A device-agnostic rich media expandable banner ad (for Shrek) that opens when tapped with by a user. *Source: Yahoo! via internet2go.net*

Recent developments make mobile rich media easier to build and scale. Several leaders from the PC online rich media space and mobile ad networks have rolled out rich media ad units, and in some cases tools and templates to facilitate building them. Additionally, some solutions allow advertisers to execute rich media experiences across any device, via only a single set of creative assets, greatly simplifying the creation and distribution of mobile rich media.   In 2011, the IAB released its Mobile Rich-media Ad Interface Definitions (MRAID) version 1.0[2], which establishes a common Application Programming Interface (API) "language" for mobile rich media ads, facilitating rich media creative that can run across MRAID-compliant rich media vendors. MRAID 1.0 and the current MRAID 2.0 project should reduce the costs and complexity of building mobile rich media ads.

Branded apps – Rather than buying ad inventory or sponsoring an app, marketers can build their own apps and offer them for download in a smartphone app store. Media, chain restaurants, retail, and travel and hospitality are all categories that have embraced branded apps. However, even categories such as apparel, cosmetics and consumer packaged goods have built branded apps, with varying degrees of success. The challenge for marketers creating branded apps is driving downloads and usage. The major app marketplaces (led by Apple's App Store and Google's Android Marketplace) have hundreds of thousands of apps. Even prominent brands can get lost in the shuffle. And unless an ad provides clear, real value (be it utility or entertainment) and differentiation consumers will quickly abandon it for the next thing that comes along. Thus marketers embarking on a branded app strategy must also have a strategy to market their app, and (barring a deliberately short-term campaign strategy) a commitment to keeping it fresh and valuable to the consumer.

Video – Mobile video ad opportunities are quickly developing as mobile devices become perceived and used by consumers as video players. Faster, "4G" data networks and devices connecting via wi-fi facilitate video viewing. However, data price increases by three major mobile carriers in 2011, and the decline of flat-rate unlimited mobile data in

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[2] http://www.iab.net/mraid

the US may hinder the growth of mobile video, if consumers rebel against paying for the connections used to deliver video advertising.

Audio – Audio ads can play before or after a voice-based phone conversation (where available, this generally subsidizes the cost of the minutes), voicemail, or voice-enabled information (e.g., 411). However, the major venue for audio ads is in mobile music applications, such as Pandora or Spotify. Much like terrestrial or streaming radio, mobile music apps allow advertisers to insert audio ads between songs, often with companion mobile display ads. The mobile/digital music audience is burgeoning, in some markets rivaling the reach of some terrestrial radio broadcasters.

Location Based Advertising – This type of advertising utilizes the handset's GPS or other geolocation technologies to serve advertising based on a consumer's location in relation to a merchant's retail location. Location-based display ads can be served on the mobile web or within mobile apps, and feature all the abilities of other mobile display ads. Several calls to action exist to engage the consumer with your brand, for example, routing to the nearest retail location, downloading coupons, initiating a voice call, placing an order for in-store purchase and pick-up, and visiting a mobile site. An important term to know is "geofencing," which refers to the ability to establish a set geographic area (i.e., around a retail location) within which a given ad or message will be delivered. Marketers just starting out with location-based ads may be tempted to take the technology to its limits, to target as specifically as possible. However, extremely narrow geotargeting will generally net a very small audience (as well as raising potential "creepiness" factors for consumers), and better returns will often result from setting a focused, but relatively broad, geofence. In other words, talk with your vendors about the optimal target area for a location-based campaign. You will almost always get more customers by targeting a district or neighborhood than you will an exact latitude and longitude.

Mobile Display Advertising on Web and In-app

Getting Started

Buying advertising on the mobile web and in-app is similar in some ways to buying display advertising on the Internet. Graphical, interactive display ads are the predominant ad unit. As previously stated, in most cases mobile display ad impressions can be purchased on a cost per thousand (CPM) or a cost per interaction (CPI) basis. Sponsorships are also a possibility, simplifying measurement and reporting and giving 100 percent share-of-voice to the marketer. In addition to the range of targeting options found in Internet advertising such as contextual, demographic, and behavioral attributes, mobile offers the potential to target by location. Of course, any targeting options made available should comply with existing national level, legal and regulatory frameworks governing privacy and personal data.

Planning and Audience Measurement

Some operators and publishers that have mobile properties sell mobile ads directly, while others allow their inventory to be sold by a third party, either as premium inventory or as part of a mobile ad network. As with the PC-based Internet, planning a buy depends on setting goals around audience size and desired demographics. Measurement firms like Nielsen Online and comScore offer audience data for mobile Web sites. However, mobile measurement is still in its early stages, and other vendors such as Flurry, Localytics and Ground Truth are emerging as important sources of data, particularly in the hard-to-measure mobile app sector. In the early days of mobile marketing, marketers may also need to rely on data directly from publishers regarding audience size and demographics.

For many publishers and advertisers, there is an assumption that the audiences for PC-based and mobile web properties are one and the same. Though there is little evidence to back that assumption, many advertisers take that as an article of

faith. As measurement becomes more sophisticated, both advertisers and publishers will have a better idea of how the mobile audience compares with the PC audience. Additionally, as the body of intelligence on mobile advertising grows, expect to see more normative data available, allowing advertisers to benchmark performance in their category.

Another issue advertisers should consider around planning and targeting is that not all smartphone users are created equal. Different devices or OS platforms may have different user characteristics and capabilities. While mobile web ads will generally run seamlessly across devices, for in-app buys in particular it may be worth considering targeting a specific operating system or device as the audience for the campaign, both because that can simplify and speed creative development, and because it may be a way to roughly target a demographic or psychographic of interest.

Campaign best practices

Today there are two parallel interactive inventory buys: PC and mobile.   A fairly common error among novice buyers is to simply take creative built for the PC-based web and shrink or crop it down for mobile screens. When buying PC and mobile inventory the key is not to simply try and implement the same creative execution into PC and mobile media types but extend the idea to the mobile space with mobile-specific execution of the idea.

Four things to consider:

Platform: Try and tailor the idea to the platform, not just the creative execution. It's important to keep in mind that mobile phones are a highly personal device, and one that is nearly always with a user.

App or Mobile Web: Mobile apps are very popular, both with consumers and with marketers, who may currently be overly focused on the possibilities of in-app advertising. Mobile web ads can deliver greater reach, and potentially offer a simpler route to achieving significant scale. Additionally, the rich interactive features available for in-app ads are increasingly (depending on the ad server and publisher) available on mobile web as well. The IAB recommends media planners consider both.

Audience Size: The size of the mobile site, mobile app, web site and TV audience matters if you want to track campaign success across platforms. Within the mobile platform, the type of advertising inventory used also affects the potential audience. For instance, the mobile web may offer broader reach while in-app advertising limits the size of the audience at the same time it opens up creative opportunities.

Duration: Make sure the campaign is long enough to reach a healthy sample of unduplicated users (three months or more) and strong enough (three to five million impressions) to generate statistically sound sample sizes.

Role of ad networks

One important difference between mobile and PC-based advertising is the role of ad networks. In many ways, the value chain for mobile advertising looks similar to PC-based web advertising fifteen years ago. For any platform to be attractive enough to advertisers, scale is necessary. In the early days of the web, and for the "long tail" of small-audience web sites today, ad networks played the role of middleman between advertiser and publisher to aggregate inventory until individual sites grew large enough to warrant a direct sales force. In the past decade the role of the ad network on the PC-based web has evolved and is far less critical to the overall value chain, yet the situation is very different on mobile.

Today, ad networks have already established themselves as a key "mediator" for mobile advertising, alongside branded publishers. While mobile may progress on a similar trajectory as the PC-based web, diminishing the role of the ad network somewhat over time, it's hard to picture a large-scale mobile display campaign today that doesn't rely at least partly on an ad network. That said, many of the larger mobile publishers are beginning to offer enough scale to offer an alternative for

reach, and advertisers should be wary of the simplistic notion that buying a mobile campaign exclusively through ad networks will meet all their needs.

While ad networks may offer greater scale than many of the branded publishers can today, much of the inventory may be undifferentiated. Advertisers may find that working directly with a content publisher can offer tighter integration with content and more exciting, customized creative opportunities.

At the end of the day, the question of how much of the media buy should be via networks versus directly with publishers depends on the campaign goals and execution, but as with PC web media buys, some balance between the two will likely be optimal.

Creative execution

One of the other significant differences between buying mobile display ads and PC web display ads is that mobile ads are not generally sold by unit size. Because the sizes and resolutions of mobile phone screens vary, the way the ad creative looks on mobile phones will also vary. Therefore, unless it is targeted at a single handset model, and particularly if it runs across both feature phones and smartphones, any given mobile campaign will likely require multiple sizes of mobile web banners. The Mobile Marketing Association (MMA) publishes standards for mobile banner sizes,[3] and represent a good starting point for marketers looking to learn about creative sizes available.

For in-app advertising, there is even less standardization in sites and features. Even "full page" ads will vary in size from device to device or even publisher to publisher. In-app ads facilitate creating rich media ad units that allow a user to interact physically with the creative. However, one publisher may allow and encourage shakeable ads, while another will not support that capability. Additionally, advertisers should realize that apps are a different user experience than the open mobile web, so they should think carefully before forcing a user to leave an app to go to a mobile landing page. Advertisers should ask themselves if they could still accomplish their campaign goals within the app and ad unit itself.

While there may be differences in the technology between apps and the mobile web, both the buying process and the end user experience will generally be similar today and even more so over time.

Clear Visuals and Messaging
- Engaging users requires a clear call to action

Compatibility
- Format the campaign creative to be compatible with handsets that are most common among the target demographic

Simplicity
- Make certain that the call to action does not require any complex steps for the user

Value
- Keep your offering relevant and valued by the target audience

Four things to keep in mind for mobile creative executions

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[3] For the latest MMA mobile ad sizes, see:
http://mmaglobal.com/whitepaper?filename=MMAUniversalMobileAdPackageDec2011.pdf

Mobile Landing Pages

What happens after the user taps on the mobile display ad is a vital point of consideration for marketers. Where does the tap lead?

Mobile landing pages or microsites (i.e., the page or pages that appear when a user taps on an advertisement) need to be customized and formatted specifically for the mobile environment. The page should be designed to reduce the amount of scrolling needed and minimize load times.

In other words, your mobile campaign should not direct mobile users to the webpage you use for PC-based interactive campaigns. Even though smartphones may render such pages, trying to navigate a page designed for the PC-based web on a handset—even a smartphone—is seldom an optimal experience. If your PC-based site has any Flash components, they will be lost to the majority of mobile users. The landing page is your chance to convert users into customers or leads. A good mobile landing page will not only be formatted for the mobile screen and browser but will also have the following qualities:

Example of a s smartphone-optimized landing page.
Source: MediaPost

- No Flash
- Clear call to action
- Not too wordy
- Visually appealing with images, where possible
- Light weight and quick loading even over limited 2G or 3G data networks
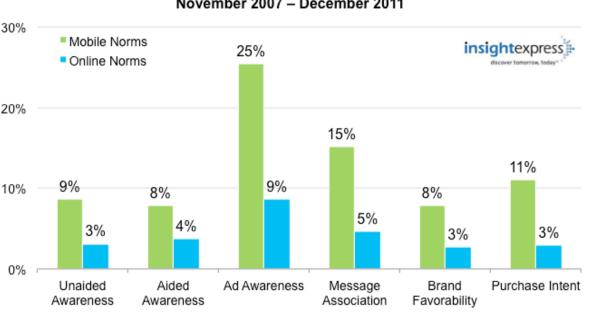
Mobile Display Campaign Metrics

Measurement is still very nascent for mobile advertising, and challenged by technological and regulatory conditions. The success of a mobile advertising campaign can be measured in a variety of ways but generally fall into two buckets: Direct Response Metrics and Ad Effectiveness (Branding) Metrics.

Direct Response – Direct response metrics are commonly tracked in other forms of digital media. The simplest direct response measurements on the PC web are click-through rates. Although "clicks" are generally called "taps" in the world of smartphones, the same metric is available for mobile. Other direct response metrics include a wide array of engagement or conversion rates, including tap-to-call, data opt-in, expands (for rich media ads), plays, coupon downloads or redemptions, and sign-ups to name just a few. To the IAB's knowledge, no one has yet sold a campaign on a "cost per shake" basis, but that may be only a matter of time. These performance results will vary by campaign type, messaging and calls to action. One word of caution for direct response metrics: the click-through rate has long been an imperfect, and overused, metric on the PC-based web. Tap-through rates may be the right metric for some mobile campaigns, but given the wide array of rich interactions that can be offered and measured in mobile creative, the IAB strongly encourages buyers planning direct response campaigns to focus on creative that allows more subtle and rich interaction than simply tapping through to a mobile landing page.

Ad Effectiveness Metrics (Branding) – Ad Effectiveness metrics provided by companies such as Dynamic Logic or InsightExpress measure how advertising exposure affects key metrics distributed across the purchase funnel of a product or service. They use consumer surveys about ad experiences to deliver metrics that can be compared and benchmarked against similar studies conducted with traditional and other digital media. Upper funnel metrics such as brand recall and message association measure overall awareness of your ad message. Lower funnel metrics such as brand favorability and purchase intent measure to what degree the audience was persuaded by your message. In short, these metrics allow you gauge the degree that your ad and brand have been recalled and will increase consumer action.

Below is an example of metrics you can expect from these studies, along with normative data comparing mobile to PC-based ad performance.

Data calculations based on overall exposed percentages (minus control) from 11/07-12/10   *Source: Insight Express*

Measurement across the PC-based web and mobile is not seamless. The IAB has been working with the MMA and the Media Rating Council (MRC) to establish ad measurement guidelines for mobile, first for mobile web[4] (released in 2011) and currently for in-app ads (expected late in 2012). While the mobile Web has many similarities to the PC-based web, devices vary in their acceptance of cookies, and mobile operator proxy servers can also make pixel- and tag-based tracking more difficult. Mobile apps don't use cookies at all, and many mobile apps are designed for offline use, leading to issues around ad metrics that must be batched and uploaded when the device reconnects.

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[4] http://www.iab.net/guidelines/508676/guidelines/mobilewebmeasurementguidelines

As the consumer's behavior, mindset, device, and end point are often different in the mobile world, cross-platform insights are even trickier to obtain. Some of the largest publishers are just now beginning to figure out how to accomplish this with statistically reliable datasets. For more on the state of mobile measurement, refer to the IAB's recent State of Mobile Measurement white paper.[5]

Long story short, you should talk with your media company and vendor partners about metrics—learn what is available early on and choose those metrics that fit with the brand, creative, and campaign goals. Look for the right metrics, not just the easy or familiar ones.

A mobile web banner leading to opportunities for users to set up reminders, find sales and locate stores.

Reminder Call   Store Locator   Deal Alerts

Integrating Mobile With Traditional Media

One of the great opportunities that mobile advertising provides is that it can act as a digital gateway that can be entered from traditional media. Marketers are increasingly finding ways to better integrate mobile into their overall communication with consumers. Print, outdoor, ad TV ads, and even product packaging will always deliver the reach that is needed for a strong media plan. However, they often lack in their ability to be engaging and encourage immediate action from the target audience. Mobile activation permits you to:

- Leverage traditional media that you are already using
- Drive incremental traffic to your mobile content
- Promote immediate and targeted action

Common short codes, 2D barcodes, and audio tagging are all ways to tap into mobile to activate traditional, offline media. The first two methods do not even require incremental capital spending, while the third requires somewhat greater investment. All these methods drive traffic to your digital content and should be part of your mobile strategy consideration set.

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[5] http://www.iab.net/insights_research/industry_data_and_landscape/somm

Common Short Codes

Common Short Codes (CSCs) are strings of five or six digits that a mobile user can send a text message to and receive information or content in return. CSCs offer brands and organizations an efficient and easy way to take advantage of text messaging as a way to connect and communicate with consumers. SMS keywords can be used to trigger service updates, enter sweepstakes and receive coupons or discounts. Today, CSCs are the most widely available and carrier-accepted way of activating cross media to mobile campaigns, and they tap into the ubiquity of SMS.

Example of a CSC outdoor ad. Votes via SMS short code tallied on billboard in real time   *Source*: *bbc.co.uk*

Shortcode services need to be approved by each participating carrier network. Once the service is provisioned on a shortcode the carriers may allow for the owner of the shortcode to run "keyword" differentiated services off this code. However these services need to be compliant with MMA guidelines and not diverge from the original application.

The owner of the code needs to manage the Terms & Conditions, HELP SCREEN, INFO SCREEN, customer service, and any opt-in and opt-out (STOP MESSAGE) centrally.

2D Barcodes

2D (or two-dimensional) barcodes, like QR codes and others, are a more advanced version of the traditional UPC barcode designed to work with common camera phones. With a 2D barcode reader app on their phone, a user can "scan" a barcode and automatically link to a specific mobile website, save an event to the phone's calendar, dial customer service and more. This eliminates the need to type in mobile web URLs, search for content by keywords, or send a message via shortcode. Increasingly US carriers offer barcode readers to their subscribers as a free download and handsets pre-loaded with barcode readers are also increasingly common around the world.

2D barcode example: Download a free ebook while waiting for a plane in Denver *Source: Smartlifeblog.com*

Activating 2D Barcodes – A barcode can be created, downloaded, and placed into any media in a matter of minutes. The challenge is that there are many competing 2D barcode formats, and no one definitive standard at the moment. The best 2D barcode technologies provide a complete and integrated solution that offers both a barcode reader (mobile application) and a platform to create and manage 2D codes. Factors to consider:

- The client application should be available to the greatest number of handsets possible – either through download or pre-load.
- Analytics capabilities: the platform should be able to collect analytic data like number of scans, unique users, date/time of scan, and even user demographics.
- Price: some barcodes are free to generate and use while others charge a fee.

Choosing Placements for Short Codes and 2D Codes **–** A great benefit of both SMS shortcodes and 2D barcodes is that they can be placed on virtually any printed or digital surface. So, it's key to think about the context of the environment and the mobile user within that environment. Places with limited or no mobile connectivity (like subways in the US) or where consumers can't stop to scan a code (like busy freeways) are not ideal venues. Users are more likely to interact with this call to action when they have a specific need, and/or the time to consume mobile information.

Audio Activation

While it's still extremely nascent, some advertisers are also experimenting with audio activation for their marketing. During the most recent Super Bowl, approximately half the commercials included Shazam's audio capabilities. Using the Shazam app, audiences could use their phones to "listen" to a few seconds of audio to promote and unlock online content. For instance, viewers who "Shazamed" a Toyota ad could use the app the enter a contest to win a free car. Similarly, Pepsi's ad featuring an X-Factor winner allowed viewers to unlock an extra video. While this type of activation is still very new, the Super Bowl proved to be particularly fecund ground for mobile experimentation in audio activation. Expect to see advertisers finding more ways to activate mobile content through offline engagement.

Audio scan (Shazam) call to action on TV commercial

It is recommended to use these methods across media touch points so they become more visible to your audience. This also provides a way to understand what media generates the best response so you can refine your campaign.

Choosing the End Mobile Experience

Mobile technologies are extremely flexible in what they can deliver marketers. A mobile ad can send the user to product information, provide a promotional code or coupon, dial customer service, download an app, encourage a sign-up, deliver rich content and more. It is critical to evaluate your campaign goals, consider the target audience and explore some of these key factors:

Convenience: Information is power – especially for someone who's on the go and needs a helping hand. Whether it's an e-ticket with real-time flight updates or a can of soup with recipe ideas at the supermarket - if it's relevant, it has value.

Entertainment: Being on-the-go sometimes means standing still. Easy access to news, photos or a quick game of trivia can be a real lifesaver, and a user in a dull spot of his or her day is likely to be more willing and able to interact with an ad that amuses, distracts, or entertains.

Exclusivity: Everyone wants to feel special. A unique feature of these methods is that the consumer has to *do* something to *get* something. Discounts, access to events or insider information – it's all worth something. Especially if your customer can't get it any other way. Mobile calls to action should remind consumers of the value the are getting.

To get going, just start simply, and evolve the complexity of the experience as you and your audience become more comfortable with the technology.