

## Should mobile efforts focus on the iPhone?

November 09 2009



**CONTENDER**

### **Kelly O'Neill**

*Product marketing director, ATG*

*Nearly 10 years' experience in mobile shopping*

Yes. Consumers rely on smart phones and other Web-enabled mobile devices to connect with each other, research companies and products and even to complete transactions. Shopping has become a cross-channel process spanning Web sites, call centers, social networks, mobile devices and traditional storefronts. Companies must provide customers with innovative and rewarding experiences across all these channels. Marketers and merchandisers are right to focus on mobile - and the iPhone is the first device they should cater to.

The features native to the iPhone make it an ideal interface for merchants to present products and promotions and provide shopping apps to consumers. Brands must provide the rich, personalized experiences their customers expect. The ability to flick and scroll, zoom in on images with a pinch, and browse products on a screen as large and crisp as the iPhone's makes it easy for marketers to get creative.

According to Generator Research, the iPhone market share is increasing rapidly and it could become the dominant global player by 2013. Figures from AdMob show the iPhone rules traffic on the US wireless Web. I've heard firsthand from major retailers that for many retail brands, as much as 90% of all traffic to mobile sites comes from iPhones. While other devices like the Palm Pre, Blackberry and Android are promising, none has reached a level that warrants first-priority investment.



## **CONTENDER**

### **Jeff Hasen**

*CMO, HipCricket*

*More than five years of mobile marketing experience, 10 years in marketing*

: No. iPhone apps are sexy and, when done well, produce a terrific brand experience and word-of-mouth activity. But brands rarely can rely on sex and buzz alone. While history will look kindly on Steve Jobs for his contribution to mobile, there is more to mobile marketing than just the iPhone.

In our view, marketers should use a pyramid strategy with SMS being at the foundation, since it is available on nearly every phone owned by 270 million Americans. By comparison, iPhone owners account for approximately 5% of the marketplace. Text campaigns, which include mobile alerts, text-to-win and coupons, are a great starting point because they are affordable, measurable and effective — and you can use them to build permission-based databases.

Moving up the pyramid, companies can deliver a richer brand experience through mobile Web sites, ads and social campaigns. Seventy-two percent of mobile phones are Web-enabled and 55 million US adults access the mobile Web regularly, making this a solid choice for reaching a broad audience.

At the top of the pyramid you'll find apps on iPhones, BlackBerrys and phones powered by Android and Windows Mobile. A mobile strategy reaching multiple levels of the pyramid and targeting all mobile users, no matter which phone they carry, often makes the most business sense. No one is saying "ignore the iPhone," but why reach 5% of your potential customers when you can reach 85%?

### **DMNEWS' DECISION**

While the iPhone may dominate the mobile market in terms of buzz or a "cool factor," the sheer number of consumers using other smartphones dictates that marketers should pay attention to a range of wireless devices, especially when considering broad-based mobile initiatives.