

## Are We There Yet? Bye-bye Nascent Side of Nascency

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Are we there yet?

I speak not of the proverbial "tipping point" for mobile marketing. Brands will tell us when mobile has arrived. More on that in a minute.

The question before us is -- are we, as a speaker at the 2006 NATPE Mobile show said, "at the nascent side of nascency"?

We are six months into 2009 so this is the perfect time to take stock of an industry described as everything from early to essential to unproven to relevant.

According to a new survey of brands and agencies by the Mobile Marketing Association, mobile marketing is somewhere between experimental (49 percent agencies, 36 percent brands) and enhancement (46 percent agencies, 33 percent brands).

Further, 1.8 percent of U.S. marketing budgets are going to mobile, up 26 percent this year despite the fact that overall marketing budgets being down 7 percent. On top of that, about 50 percent of agencies and brands surveyed are using mobile, according to the MMA survey.

Taking these numbers into account, can we agree we've left the nascent side of nascency? Just take a look at exactly how much progress we have made.

According to *Advertising Age*, this week's Best Buy Sunday circular will for the first time include short-code text messages, allowing consumers to text message and receive more information about a product. There are also plans to enable customers to text their zip code in order to receive the location of the nearest store.

"We're thinking about mobile and its ability to be a response device, so essentially every ad can turn into a response ad, because everyone has a mobile phone in their pocket," Barry Judge, Best Buy CMO, told the magazine. "[The circular] is an interesting vehicle to look at because it's been around for so long. How can you reinvent a vehicle that you think you know so well?"

Another name brand, Jiffy Lube, went the mobile route when it decided to extend a traditional radio spot to mobile. After doing so it found 50 percent of those who redeemed the coupon to be new customers (contrasted with a high of 20 percent that came from previous non-mobile campaigns).

One last example of note comes from Nestle, which ran a post-campaign survey after a mobile effort around its Arrowhead Water brand. The results of the campaign were certainly notable.

- 78 percent remembered having participated in the promotion
- 64 percent found it interesting
- 38 percent had already purchased an Arrowhead product as a direct result from this program
- 44 percent said they are more likely to buy Arrowhead products
- 24 percent are more favorable over competitor products

Mobile has made advances in large part because of its measurability and the fact that many campaigns are permission-based. Contrast that with email, which when you take into account a recent *Advertising Age* story, is a very different story. The article references a study from Forrester Research which has projected that consumers will receive more than 9,000 e-mail marketing messages a year by 2014. That translates to about 25 messages a day, double the average of 10 to 12 people deal with today.

"There is certainly increased clutter," David Daniels, VP and principal analyst at Forrester Research. "And marketers are beginning to realize that in the face of all that clutter they have to be more targeted and relevant."

Hello mobile. The MMA survey referenced above said that 19 percent of brands consider mobile an "integral" part of its marketing mix.

Tipping point? Maybe, maybe not.

Nascent side of nascency? Hardly.