

Yellow Light for Mobile Marketing: Be Measured and Proceed With Caution

Posted by Jeff Hasen, on August 10, 2009 at 02:01 PM PDT

A hyping blogger is a soon-to-be an out-of-work blogger, so let's not make that mistake here.

The reality is that right now the traffic light is yellow when it comes to mobile marketing. Not red – there are too many successes and possibilities to eliminate mobile marketing at the planning stage. Not green – on a road trip, a former boss who was anxious to proceed told a co-worker behind the wheel that "it's not going to get any greener." Actually, my view is that mobile marketing is going to get greener, much greener, as marketers forge a greater understanding and tap more and more into consumer behaviors and interests.

For now, it's yellow as in measured or proceed with caution. The advice is to ask a lot of questions, learn about the successes and the disappointments and stay current with the latest studies.

Like the terrific one recently unveiled by comScore.

Stat: 33 percent of mobile subscribers are tempted to buy products they see in mobile advertising, the highest of any medium

Observation: This fact alone should make marketers pay attention if not immediately budget for mobile. Respectfully, just because you aren't with the program doesn't mean your customers and prospects aren't ready to interact with you via their phones.

Stat: comScore counts 1,031 devices used by mobile subscribers to access mobile media (browsing, downloading or application use).

Observation: The Blackberry Curve tops the list with the iPhone representing seven percent of smartphone users accessing mobile media. Of course, it's all about the user experience so before you sign on for a mobile execution, be sure your efforts will render correctly on the variety of phones that your target might be carrying.

Stat: Mobile users who access Facebook spend an average of 24 minutes a day on the social network.

Observation: The desire to communicate via a social network doesn't end when someone leaves his or her computer. Pardon the pun, but the availability of applications like Facebook on the phone give the masses their *voice* anytime and anywhere.

Stat: The number of unlimited data plan users grew 43 percent in the last year.

Observation: Sure, there are still parents who cringe when the bill comes each month. But those folks are naïve and wising up.

Stat: 60 percent of mobile subscribers send and receive text messages, up 21 percent over a year ago.

Observation: Text messaging is the way mobile subscribers of nearly all ages communicate. In 2008, the daily number of texts surpassed the number of calls. There is no reason to expect the trend to reverse itself.

Stat: 25 percent received an SMS ad, up 33 percent year-over-year.

Observation: There are "only" 29 million smart phone users in the United States. To reach the masses, SMS is often the way to go.

Those facts are just a sample. The complete study is available on comScore's web site.

The hype is available on someone else's blog.