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Point-of-View

Focus: Local Mobile Motion

by [Brian Wool](#), Friday, May 1, 2009, 10:39 AM

Everybody's doing a brand new dance now

As we speak, there are millions of mobile subscribers potentially looking for local businesses on smartphones with uniquely formatted search applications. These users primarily will be driven to the organic listings that most local businesses are unsure or unaware of how to control.

Many marketers have no strategic plans for the space, and few understand the importance of managing online local business-listings content for mobile. Knowing how to get online content extensively distributed across the exponentially growing number of mobile local-search applications can make a big difference in the future of local businesses from all industries in this stressed economic environment.

For consumers, there are two primary factors driving adoption in the smartphone and PDA market: handset cost and data-plan cost. A bleak economic outlook has given way to price-slashing measures across most industries, including mobile - a benefit to those who have a few bucks in their pockets to spend.

With recession-conscious cell phone carriers like Boost Mobile offering unlimited plans with all-inclusive data packages for as little as \$50, and the iPhone now available for as low as \$199, over half of all mobile users say that they plan to buy a smartphone within the next two years. This means that soon up to 191 million on-the-go U.S. consumers could be searching for local products and services through an Internet-ready mobile device. These statistics will make mobile the primary driver of revenue growth in the local search space for 2009, and the market's most rapidly burgeoning advertising medium.

This means that everyone - from software developers at major corporations to the recently laid-off programmer who is now tinkering in his garage down the street - will be motivated to introduce mobile applications with local-search functionalities to the market. Analysts predict that the mobile device will become the primary connection tool used to access the Internet in just over 10 years.

Local search engine diversification by industry vertical is as prevalent in the mobile space as it is via the traditional Internet; in fact, more so as mobile search is inherently local. And while the local diner or Dunkin' Donuts franchise in Peoria may have submitted their businesses' listing content to Google, MSN and Yahoo (and therefore their mobile applications), both local businesses and national brand managers may not be aware of niche sites like Where Do Kids Eat Free for Apple's iPhone.

There are thousands of mobile applications - the majority of which do not have your business listings - and while some do, much of that content is outdated or inaccurate. Currently less than 10 percent of small- to medium-sized businesses get mobile distribution by being included in local listings via search engines or yellow pages sites; those who want to compete in the burgeoning mobile local search space must market with an aim to increase that statistic.

Whether in an effort to face the recession proactively by inexpensively generating business from

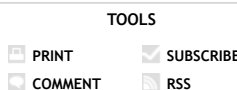
ADVANCED SEARCH

**BRIAN WOOL**

With nearly 20 years of experience in database markets, Wool oversees all aspects of Localze's sales, business development and client services efforts for local search engines, internet yellow pages and mobile and social local search. Prior to joining Localze, Wool held sales and marketing positions at comScore Networks, Claritas and Equifax-National Decision Systems.



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consumers who are ready-to-buy, or to prepare for the impact of unfolding trends, making use of online business content and learning how to manage it and where to send it, are key strategies. These simple steps will result in foot traffic and new business for brick-and-mortar storefronts, directly attributable to mobile local search.

 This commentary is insightful. I recommend it to others.
2 people recommend this article.

2 comments on "Focus: Local Mobile Motion"

 [Jim Dugan](#) from [PipPops LLC](#)
commented on: May 11, 2009 at 9:12 AM


As we say with our new [www.GripOffs.mobi](#) mobile e-coupon site, do you want to search on google just to find out where a certain place is or would you prefer, in addition, to find out who has the best deals in the area?

If a business has control of not only providing their information for a search, but also controlling that information and offering an incentive and, then, monitoring the real-time results, they will be ahead of the game.

With 70% of searches being for retail, we feel that not only will the mobile search function be needed as perfectly described in the article, but the consensus is that in addition to just "searching" for a description or location, those of us on-the-go searchers appreciate the ability to not only find the place, but have the instant e-coupon available for instant on the spot savings.

We know that businesses who proactively conduct even ineffective mobile programs have seen significant increases in their businesses.

Providing mobile search with an incentive such as an interactive e-coupon for instant savings at the point of purchase is here, here to stay, and preferred over just a mobile search function!

 [Eric Fredine](#) from [Predictabuy](#)
commented on: May 03, 2009 at 5:58 PM

Right on. The size of the mobile audience is exploding. But as you say it is also highly fractured. At the same time, there is a shortage of advertisers who can really benefit from this audience - because the advertisers who would realize the greatest benefit are local ones. It's a buyers market for local advertisers who take the time.

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Logged in as [Jennifer MacLeid of Young & Associates](#).

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