

Brands Shift Focus Of Mobile Outreach

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Agencies say more clients are interested in Android devices and SMS advertising

As more consumers interact with brands via both smartphones and feature phones, marketers are approaching mobile advertising in new ways.

STRATA, a software company for media buying and selling, polled agencies about their clients'™ preferences in Q1 2011. When it comes to mobile advertising, 37% of respondents said they are creating display advertising the most, and 25% noted SMS advertising.

This is compared to 63% for display advertising and 15% for SMS advertising in Q4 2010.

Location-based advertising also doubled as a priority, with 7% of respondents saying they are mostly creating location-based advertising for clients, up from 3% in Q4 2010.

While the iPhone and Android devices receive a lot of press, the reality is that most consumers still have feature phones. And while smartphone owners are more engaged with their devices, many feature phone owners are also willing to interact with brands via mobile.

“SMS often gets overlooked, but the vast majority of users of all ages are texting,” said David Berkowitz, senior director of emerging media and innovation at digital marketing agency 360i, at the 2011 Public Relations Society of America's™ Digital Impact Conference in May.

In September 2010 eMarketer forecast that SMS would be the biggest single mobile advertising format in 2011, with a 38% share of mobile advertising spending. However, it will lose importance as smartphone users increase and feature phone owners decrease, boosting spending on display and search ads.

Not only are marketers shifting their advertising focus, but they are also open to working with various mobile devices. According to STRATA, 76.3% of respondents said their clients are most interested in advertising on the iPhone, down from 80.6% in Q4 2010.

Android devices are also popular and 46.1% of respondents said clients were interested in advertising on Android, up slightly from 45.8% in Q4 2010. Interest in BlackBerry as an advertising channel, at 51.4% in Q4 2010, dropped to 35.5% in Q1 2011.

As mobile advertising becomes a bigger focus for marketers, they are diversifying their programs, and working with more devices and various types of ads.

As consumers increasingly use smartphones or become accustomed to interacting with brands via SMS, marketers can reach specific groups and target audiences by using a mix of advertising and working with several platforms and devices.

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