VERTICAL VIDEO

Vertical video has had its share of ups and downs (no pun intended), over the past year, but with the popularity of apps like Snapchat, Periscope, and Meerkat, ever expanding, vertical video looks like it is here to stay.

Snapchat’s success continues to perplex non-users and marketers looking to take advantage of the ephemeral app. The app is encouraging marketers and media companies to shoot ads vertically for mobile, claiming that vertical ads are viewed 9 times more frequently than horizontal ones on the app. It seems to be working, with brands like The Daily Mail looking to move towards making 100% of their videos in the vertical format. After running A/B testing, The Daily Mail had found that vertical videos had higher engagement rates, higher completion rates, and more satisfied users.

BRANDS GOING VERTICAL

With mobile phones being held vertical 98% of the time (tablets come in at 40%), it makes sense for brands to present their mobile videos vertically, rather than force their consumers to turn their phones.

With eMarketer forecasting a 42% increase in digital video revenue in the US this year to $7.5B, and Forrester estimating that digital video ad spending will reach $12.6B in the US by 2019, it is vital that marketers look into the merits of vertical videos for their brands.
FAST STATS

SMARTPHONE SHOPPERS SPENDING MORE

The third quarter in 2015 saw an impressive year-over-year gain in mobile commerce. Smartphone shoppers spent 233% more in Q3 2015 than they did in the same quarter one year ago.

One reason for this upward trend may have been that the percentage of eCommerce traffic from smartphones increased 3.1% from 26.7% in 2014 to 29.8% in 2015. Whereas, the percentage from tablets decreased 2.6% from 15% in 2014 to 12.4% in 2015. Consumers average order sizes were still largest on desktops at $161.57, but smartphones and tablets were closing the gap with $137.48 and $151.41 respectively. This upward trend has retailers optimistically looking forward to a prosperous holiday season.

APP CONVERSION GREATER THAN MOBILE WEB

One important trend moving forward into 2016, is that mobile commerce sales are transitioning from browser sales to in-app sales. This increase is also reflected in the conversion rate which finds sales 3.7 times more likely to be converted from an app than they are on a mobile browser. For the first time, retail apps have begun to pop up on the “Top 25 apps in the US” list, and it is only a matter of time before on will hit the top 10.
Retailers are always looking for new and innovative ways to improve their online and mobile shopping experience, and one of the newest ways to do so is aimed at eliminating some of the barriers to purchase. Over the past year, social media giants Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, and Youtube have all introduced some version of a “buy” or “shop now” button, with the intent of easing the purchase process of consumers, especially on mobile. This process is similar to one-click buy, where all the consumer’s credit card information is already entered previously and the purchase can be made without going through the cart stage. After making their Google debut over the summer, 17% of retailers are already implementing the technology in their searches. The numbers on Facebook are even greater, with over half of retailers using the site’s Buy Now buttons.

Initial reports have shown that these additions have had a positive impact, but this holiday season will be the first real test for this new wave of social commerce.
THE BIG THREE
Here are the **top three** things you need to know in the world of mobile right now.
MOBILE INFLUENCE
Mobile state of mind
LEARNING FROM MOBILE

The exponential growth of mobile devices and ecosystems is no secret, they’re everywhere. As mobile has shifted to become a dominant factor in everything we do— from socializing to shopping, and sharing— its influence has also spread across several other platforms. Furthermore, this influence isn’t just limited to other mobile operating systems, but instead has also spread to other platforms with the aim of creating a unified and consistent experience across a variety of devices.

Creating a consistent experience across platforms requires more than just using the same design elements, users expect consistent functionality and a seamless transition between mobile and desktop.

This initiative of creating a uniform cross-platform experience is not limited to one company, instead we’ve seen this initiative undertaken by all of the major industry players.
THE BIG THREE - MOBILE INFLUENCE

APPLE

During the early days of iOS, the operating system appeared radically different from Apple’s desktop offering, OSX. As time progressed however, Apple began to interchange elements between the two systems. OSX began to look a bit more like iOS and even implemented features that were previously exclusive to iOS. Apple has taken steps to ensure that users can work seamlessly between devices. Since the launch of OSX Yosemite, Apple has introduced two features aimed at bridging the gap between iOS and OSX. Continuity and Handoff work in conjunction to allow users to work across iPad, iPhone and OSX.

CONTINUITY

Continuity serves as a way of extending iOS functionality to desktop. Leveraging Wi-Fi, an OSX computer can detect other iOS devices on the network that are signed in using the same iCloud account, it’s through this account that OSX can determine which device to connect to. After this link has been established phone calls and messages can be seen across both devices. Allowing users to make phone calls and receive messages from their iPhone through their Mac is a clear example of Apple’s determination to create cross device accessibility.

HANDOFF

Handoff works similar to Continuity in that it allows a user to begin a task on one device and continue it on another. For example a user can begin making a keynote presentation in Mac and then resume writing on iPad without having to take any action.

UNIFIED UX

It’s not just cross device functionality that Apple has been implementing, instead, to move closer to a unified experience Apple has implemented features directly from iOS to OSX. The biggest example of iOS’ influence is the creation of the Mac App Store. As users became accustomed to discovering and installing software from a single unified location, the need for a Mac app store become more prevalent. Furthermore, “Gestures” also began as a mobile exclusive feature, aimed at simplifying navigation on a device screen.
THE BIG THREE - MOBILE INFLUENCE

GOOGLE

Google’s proposition has always been to offer a device and OS agnostic experience. For the most part, any apps or services it releases are accessible across any device in almost the exact same format and functionality.

GOOGLE SERVICES

Google services (such as Gmail) are an example of an experience that is both flexible and consistent across a wide range of devices and operating systems. Google offers a dedicated Gmail app on Android, iOS, and desktop. It’s through this level of compatibility that Google has created a sound strategy and strong user base to drive growth and position its services as the defacto standard. Similarly all of Google’s Productivity tools such as Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets and Slides feature dedicated apps across platforms. Users are able to harness the power of these productivity services in collaboration regardless of device. Users can work collaboratively to edit a document or presentation across iOS, Android, Desktop and Chrome OS simultaneously and remotely.

MATERIAL DESIGN

Looking specifically at mobile, Google has managed to create a seamless experience across mobile and desktop. Google’s design language, dubbed Material Design, began as a standard for Android design but quickly spread to desktop and iOS.

The success of Material Design on mobile helped to spur its widespread deployment. As users become accustomed to the Material Design experience, Google saw an opportunity to create a unified design language across platforms. Elements of Material Design can be seen everywhere from Google’s various sites, to third party apps and apps in the Chrome App store.

INTERDEVICE COMMUNICATION

Along with implementing a mobile first design language across other properties Google has also made communication between desktop and mobile easier. A key example of this is the Google Play Store, accessing the Google Play Store via the desktop website will not only let users browse apps but even more impressive is the ability to remotely download apps to a user’s Android phone. It’s this kind of experience that caters well towards what Google’s audience wants: a seamless experience that is platform agnostic.
MICROSOFT

WINDOWS 10
Although Microsoft may not be considered a major influence within the world of mobile, it has slowly been taking strides towards embracing it. Perhaps the biggest example of mobile’s influence and importance to Microsoft was the launch of Windows 10. Traditionally a desktop platform, Windows 10 is now the same operating system across Desktop, Tablet and mobile. Microsoft is providing the exact same experience across all of it’s owned properties, something neither Apple nor Google can match currently.

UNIFIED APPSTORE
In an attempt to make the Windows 10 experience a truly unified solution, Microsoft has created a unified app store. Any app that can run on a Desktop can also run on a tablet or smartphone. Microsoft has promised developers that they can code once and with a few minor tweaks be compatible across all of their properties.

MOBILE SIGNIFICANCE
The influence of mobile is clear here, as users have shifted away from desktop and toward more mobile experiences Microsoft has felt the need to adjust to stay relevant and provide the best experience to it’s consumers. Placing the same level of significance for a mobile experience as desktop signifies that for Microsoft, mobile devices are highly important and will not be going away any time soon.
THE SHARING ECONOMY
Mobilizing the Sharing Economy
THE BIG THREE - THE SHARING ECONOMY

MOBILE IS EMPOWERING THE SHARING ECONOMY

The explosion of the “Sharing Economy” has come a direct result of society’s greater interconnectedness and need for convenience. Coupling it with the rapid growth of mobile applications has allowed the sharing economy to prosper all over the globe.

For those unfamiliar with the term, the sharing economy is a socio-economic system that relies on the peer-to-peer sharing of goods and services through online communities. Craigslist, Uber, and Airbnb have pioneered the industry, but its reach extends much further than these three brands.

CONVENIENCE AND SIMPLICITY

The success of the sharing economy is highly contingent on having a process which is convenient and simple, and mobile is known for being both of these. Ownership is also focused on convenience, so if there is convenience AND a cost benefit to sharing it has superseded one of the main benefits to ownership. Using mobile technology provides individuals and corporations constant access to information that enables them to gain access to necessary resources through sharing, and reuse.

GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

Advances in mobile technology have filled the marketplace with the ability to share anything and everything. This is because it has simplified the process of fulfilling immediate and impulsive needs.

Never before could you connect multiple parties with specific needs, and complete the transactions all instantaneously. Mobile has improved both sides of the sharing transaction: sharing of goods, and transfer of payment.

A number of the most popular sharing economy brands began with people who were thinking of new ideas for apps that were looking to solve consumer problems. These brands act as guarantors and protectors of the sharing economy, and add a trust factor that would normally be a barrier to acceptance.

Mobile has taken the sharing economy and turned it into a diverse and global marketplace, that looks to be growing by the minute.
THE BIG THREE - THE SHARING ECONOMY

APPS FOR ANYTHING

If you’re in need of anything from renting a bicycle to having someone wait in line for you for the next iPhone, there is most likely an app for that!

- **UBER**
- **AIRBNB**
- **TASKRABBIT**
- **DOGVACAY**
- **POSHMARK**
- **SPINLISTER**
- **LEFTOVERSWAP**
- **TURO**
- **FON**
- **PEERBY**
TIMELINE OF THE SHARING ECONOMY

Sharing isn’t new, but the way that we share has been greatly altered by the current state of technology. Mobile devices allow us to access the internet from wherever we want, and take advantage of these sharing economy apps.

Here is a short evolutionary timeline of how we got to where we are now.

1979
Marcus Felson and Joe L. Spaeth coin the term, “Sharing Economy” in their paper “Community Structure and Collaborative Consumption.”

1996
Craigslist is launched offering online classifieds and ability to trade goods and services.

2007/2008
First iPhone and Android phone were launched.

August 2008
Air Bed and Breakfast launches offering rentals of homes and apartments around the world.

Late 2008
Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick develop idea for a limo timeshare app, which eventually evolves into Uber.

2015
“Sharing Economy” and “Ride-share” are added to the Oxford Dictionary.
Disruption?
The sharing economy, in all its forms, has made a habit of disrupting traditional business models. Uber turned the taxi industry on its head, and Airbnb has definitely ruffled a few feathers in the hospitality industry, but that does not mean that the sharing economy and traditional business models cannot happily coexist.

Because of mobile technology, Uber has been able to provide many advantages over the traditional dispatch system, which has boosted the demand for ride services. In turn, this has increased the total number of for-hire drivers, potentially raising the earnings of the workers with the requisite skills.

AVIS & ZIPCAR
Because the sharing economy is shaking up a myriad of industries, traditional business models are being challenged and larger organizations are looking for ways to take advantage. There has been a trend for more established companies to purchase these startups to diversify their portfolios. In 2013, car rental service Avis purchased the car-sharing service Zipcar for $500 million. Avis was looking to get into niche hourly rental market, and saw the purchase as a way to compliment their already successful business model by combining their inventory and infrastructure with the technology and innovation of Zipcar.

Walgreens & TaskRabbit
Another brand that has partnered with a sharing economy app is Walgreens, whose partnership with the TaskRabbit app allows consumers to get medicine delivered directly to their door. This benefits both Walgreens who can now serve their customers better, and TaskRabbit who is now exposed to a much greater audience.

Since the mobile sharing economy does not seem to be slowing down, traditional businesses need to find innovative ways -like the ones mentioned above- to take advantage of these trends.
HOLIDAY RETAIL TRENDS
From Black Friday to a White Christmas, we have your mobile trends covered
MOBILE HOLIDAY RETAIL TRENDS

Earlier this month, Chinese retailer Alibaba hit $14.3 billion in sales on Singles Day (November 11th), with 69% of those sales coming from mobile. With numbers like these, North American retailers have more than a few reasons to be excited for the forthcoming holiday season.

Here are a couple of mobile trends that we see will play an important role in holiday retail.

MOBILE RETAIL INFLUENCE

Mobile’s impact on retail cannot solely be measured by the direct sales made on the devices. Even if the final purchase is not made on the device, it is more than likely that a mobile device played a role in the purchase journey. Last year, $1 trillion of all retail sales -roughly 28% -were influenced by a mobile related search. Expect this number to increase as consumers become more comfortable with conducting a wider range of activities on their smartphones. Less people are putting down their cellphone to make their purchase on another device, and consumers are now opting to begin and end their shopping journey with a singular device.
WEBROOMING VS. SHOWROOMING

During this holiday season, both webrooming and showrooming will play an integral part in illustrating the strong connection between mobile devices and brick-and-mortar stores. Webrooming is when consumers browse for items on a brand’s website or application but ultimately head in-store for their purchase, while showrooming is the exact opposite, with consumers testing the products in-store and buying them online. These two trends are telling of how retail is evolving at the speed of tech.

A recent study found that 88% of consumers have used the webrooming technique in the last year, while 73% have showroomed. With numbers like this, it makes sense why previously online-only brands such as Warby Parker, Birchbox, and even Amazon have found themselves opening brick-and-mortar retail outlets, allowing them to provide a real-world experience for their customers.

With the increasing popularity of mobile shopping, many physical stores felt they were doomed, but these two trends show that mobile and brick-and-mortar have the ability to compliment each other. To create a truly omni-channel shopping experience for customers, it is important that applications integrate features that are able to drive consumers in-store, such as beacons and mobile-specific time-sensitive coupons. This allows them to have multiple touch points with their customers, and deliver their core marketing messages more efficiently. The desired outcome for the brand is making the sale and gaining a customer for life, regardless of the channel.
The top 10 highest eCommerce spending days of 2014 were all during the holiday season. Will that trend continue this year?

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**Note:** The numbers represent billions of dollars spent.
YOUTUBE FOR RETAIL?

When you think of Youtube, retail and mCommerce are probably not the first two things that pop into mind. However, it is becoming more common for people to turn to the video hosting site to help them shop, look for shopping advice, find inspiration, or search product reviews. **One in four (26%) shoppers say that online videos play an important role when they are searching for gift ideas**, and **32% of shoppers say that they plan on using videos more this year for their holiday purchases.** Unboxing videos, have become a popular choice for shoppers, totalling over 60 million hours and 1.1 billion views in 2015 alone. This trend is even more prevalent with people shopping for consumer electronics, with **57% of shoppers watching related videos prior to purchasing.**

SHOPPERS BECOMING MORE SAVVY

Retail **holiday sales are conservatively forecasted at a modest 3.5% to 4% increase in spending of 2014.** However, they may not be spending more, but they may be spending more savvy. The increase of eCommerce and mCommerce sales mean that consumers are spending less time in malls and other retailers, where it is easier to make impulse buys. When shopping on mobile, most people are more likely to go in with a plan and shop for only what they want. This means that it is important for marketers to focus on these customers and understand the importance of promoting their eCommerce and mCommerce sites.
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