

Ad networks: the scale and insight to beat fragmentation

The past few years have shown remarkable growth of the mobile internet, driven by rapid consumer adoption and major advances in the capabilities of mobile devices. In recent months, mobile ad networks received a great vote of confidence from investors, who bet substantial sums that the space will continue growing, become more valuable, and attract an increasing share of marketing budgets.

 By [Michael de Souza](#) 9 Nov 2011

In spite of this, though, some naysayers still question the value of ad networks. They believe that marketers are still treating mobile as an afterthought, and they question the quality of network traffic.

Low quality traffic?

Ad networks, by definition, represent a broad spectrum of sites across the web. To question the quality of traffic on a network of the scale of BuzzCity (or any of the big three ad networks) is to question the mobile internet itself - and basic claim that 'the internet is rubbish'.

In mobile, as in the fixed web, there are indeed many sites dedicated to meaningless drivel (jackass-style videos and skateboarding pets come to mind), but any site that attracts loyal users, and grows its traffic consistently, is a site that by definition, answers real consumer demand for content and services.

With a few exceptions (usually, sites that create negative brand associations), the only place that isn't a potentially valuable source of traffic for your brand...is a site with no traffic.

Is mobile still an afterthought?

As for mobile being an afterthought for brands and agencies, well, there's some truth there. Traditional media (print, broadcast and outdoor) is holding on to the lion's share of ad revenue for now, but its proportion of budget is falling as it loses ad spend to digital channels. That trend isn't going to reverse anytime soon.

The burgeoning mobile ecosystem now includes significant mobile commerce channels, a wider array of content and services than ever, and of course, ever increasing advertising budgets. The slice of pie may not be massive yet, but already it's nothing to be sneezed at.

The challenge facing marketers: fragmentation

Consumers are spoilt for choice. Ten years ago, options were scarce, but users now have options ranging from the most basic to the most advanced mobile devices.

Agencies and brands aren't that lucky. Anyone who's worked in the industry, even in the most cursory way, knows the challenges of fragmentation. Marketers face a dizzying array of platforms, and almost too many individual models of handsets to count. Each has its own screen size, hardware configuration and mix of functionality. That can make setting a strategy very difficult indeed.

Our regular reports, including [The BuzzCity Report](#) provide analysis and practical advice for marketers. Because we've never put our eggs in one basket (either in the platform wars, or the web vs. apps debate), we have a clear and unbiased view of the state of the mobile web.

By working through this rich data and providing insight, the ad networks play a valuable role in providing marketers with the information that they need to make the right decisions, and set appropriate strategies.

Avoid the strategy black hole

Mobile strategies are unclear for many advertisers and agencies. Without a transparent, unbiased view of the whole ecosystem, it can be difficult to make decisions. And when decisions are made without the right information, mistakes are almost inevitable.

The first step towards setting an appropriate strategy is to question statements such as those discussed above, get the information that empowers you to decide what's best for your brand based on an accurate and true picture of current usage and trends, and then harness the potential of millions of those mobile users around the world.

ABOUT MICHAEL DE SOUZA

Vice President of Media at BuzzCity
[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>