News in a Mobile World
About This Series

The business of news continues to change at an astonishingly rapid pace. Like our local news partners, CNN must stay ahead of evolving consumer preferences, new delivery channels and shifts in business models and technology.

The following series, *News in a Mobile World*, is designed to provide our local news partners with thought-starters, ideas and perspectives on the mobile news landscape. Some news organizations are mobile ninjas; others have just begun to dip their toes in the water. Regardless, our hope is that this series proves useful in providing thought-provoking questions and best practices to help raise all of our games in the mobile news world.

This document, *Making Sense of Mobile*, is the second in the four part series, providing insights into the critical business decisions that must be made when developing an optimal mobile strategy.
Pt. 2
Making Sense of Mobile
The Business of Mobile

When developing (or optimizing) a mobile strategy, news organizations need to make several critical business decisions.

A deliberate and thoughtful approach will help set the groundwork for a successful mobile strategy.

In this presentation, we’ll cover:

- Whether to create a mobile site or an app
- Why responsive design makes sense
- Key business challenges and takeaways across the mobile landscape
Mobile Web vs. Apps
Many news publishers find themselves in a position of trying to decide whether to optimize their existing website for mobile and/or create mobile apps.
App vs Web Usage
Mobile Web has a larger audience...

How we use our phones

Web Browsing: 82%
Applications: 62%

Source: Nielsen, March 2013
Time Spent on Smartphones

But more time is spent on apps.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smartphones</td>
<td>87% Using Apps</td>
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<tr>
<td>13% Using Mobile Web</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tablets</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>76% Using Apps</td>
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<tr>
<td>24% Using Mobile Web</td>
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Source: Nielsen, March 2013
Holds True for News
An August 2013 survey found that respondents prefer mobile web for news.

66% use mobile sites for news, while 34% use apps

Source: ForeSee, August 2013
Number We Actually Use

While many consumers may have 50 or 100 apps on their phones, they tend to focus on only a handful - roughly 8 apps - at a time.

Local News Apps vs Web

Smartphone owners use local TV apps more than the Local TV website.

Primary Source for Local News According to US Smartphone Owners

- Local TV Broadcast: 47%
- Local TV App: 17%
- Local TV Website: 12%
- Local Newspaper Website: 7%
- Local Newspaper Print: 6%
- Social Media: 5%
- Word-of-mouth: 4%
- Radio: 1%

Source: StepLeader: Local Media App Trends: Summer 2013, July 2013
At CNN Digital

The mobile web sees greater reach but consumers spend more time using the app, particularly watching video on tablets.

- Total Mobile Traffic: 40% of CNN's digital traffic
- App Downloads: 40 million+
## Let’s Compare

### Apps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Should be more narrow in focus than your web site. Think traffic, weather, breaking news, sports, events, etc.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functionality</td>
<td>Can tap into the phone’s core features. Particularly important are alerts and GPS location.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usage</td>
<td>Hard to get users to discover another app, then continue to use it after they download it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Apps have to be regularly updated and maintained, including when each new version of an operating system launches.</td>
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### Mobile Web

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<th></th>
<th>Gives users access to your entire site, optimized for a mobile experience.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can do just about everything a website can, but harder to tap into the phone’s OS.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy for users to find your web address to access what they need when they need it.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your single desktop site is also optimized for mobile, making it part of your regular maintenance plan.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations

1. Optimize for Mobile Web

At a bare minimum, optimize your website for a mobile audience.

• Review the experience of your site on different mobile devices and screen sizes.

• Improve legibility and ease of use.
Recommendations

2. Don’t Over-App

Focus on one core app that leverages your strengths in your marketplace.

The overhead required to maintain multiple apps is significant. In the past year, we’ve seen both ESPN and Yahoo cut back significantly on the large number of apps they supported.
If you have a responsive site you don’t need to reproduce your entire site inside an app. Keep them narrow in focus and task oriented.

An app must have value to attract an audience. And its content and functionality should be unique within your market.

Think about your brand and the segments and content you have that define it. Is there an app extension in there?
Recommendations

4. Consider Video

At CNN we see more video usage inside our app than on the mobile web. This is driven primarily by viewing on iPads during prime time.

Program your app video based on what your audience responds to. At CNN, we see high interest in breaking news and viral videos.
Responsive Design
Separate Sites

In past years, a separate mobile site was required to target mobile users. This approach results in double the maintenance.

Recently a new model has evolved to address this issue - Responsive Design.
What is Responsive Design?

The practice of designing and building one website that adapts to the size of the screen that’s viewing it.

Mobile and web are blurring together, slowly ceasing to be distinct “things”.

![Responsive Design Diagram](image-url)
How It Works
Content is laid out on a grid that adjusts the display according to width. In some cases content scales, in others it rearranges.
Example: Boston Globe
Example: Microsoft

Desktop

Tablet

Smartphone
Advantages

Cost effective
No need to support multiple versions of a site.

User focused
The site displays what’s most important based on screen size.

SEO friendly
Google ranks responsive sites higher in mobile search results.

Easy to share
There is only one URL to share on social media.
At CNN Digital

CNN’s website redesign is responsive.

Desktop | Tablet | Smartphone
Recommendations

1. Go Responsive.

In the world of news it doesn’t make sense to not be responsive. As more and more screen sizes are released, you only have to maintain one site.

And users will expect the same content to be accessible no matter how they are reaching you.
2. Don’t Try to Retrofit.

Attempting to squeeze your existing site into a flexible responsive design is more difficult than starting from scratch.

Rethink your site’s desktop layout from a mobile-first perspective. If the mobile view is the first interaction a consumer has with your brand, how would you want them to consume it?

This will force you to make hard and conscious decisions about the content layout and editorial priorities of your site.
Converting your site to a responsive model is not quick, easy or cheap. But in the long run, it will save ongoing costs associated with maintaining multiple site designs, functionality and infrastructure.
Recommendations

4. Plan ahead.

The switch to a responsive design requires planning and expertise:

- Strategically rethink how consumers interact with your news at varying screen sizes.
- Start with mobile views first. This will force you to prioritize content and functionality with clear intent.
- Rebuild all of your site’s templates to flex and adjust the placement of content based on screen size.
- Test thoroughly across multiple mobile devices, platforms and screen sizes.
4
Business Challenges
Analytics

Tracking and measurement on mobile devices has always been a challenge and continues to be.

- You can’t cookie mobile devices to track user actions.
- You can’t tell if a single user is using different devices to access your mobile web and apps. This prevents you from determining an un-duplicated mobile audience.
- Expect mobile measurement to be a big focus in the coming years as existing analytics heavyweights and new startups try to tackle the issues.
Monetization

While revenue from mobile has sharply increased it remains far from supporting itself.

• The amount of traffic vs. the amount of revenue coming from mobile is extremely disproportionate.

• This is tied somewhat to analytics. As analytics improve look for more money to shift to mobile.

• As new products and services launch, there is not always an immediate payoff for participation. It can take the market a while to mature to support advertising.
Pace of Change

Large media companies may find it difficult to quickly adapt.

• New products and platforms are launching at a steady pace. It can be challenging to keep up with what’s new and whether or not it’s worth paying attention to.

• If you don’t have the right infrastructure to support publishing content and developing new products, jumping onto the latest fad can become costly.
Competition

Digital is a big universe. Competition can come from surprising places.

- Your direct competition and industry peers are facing the same challenges. Keep a close eye on them and learn what you can from their efforts.

- There’s a steady stream of new mobile startups. They will always be more nimble and faster. And some of them will be looking to reinvent news - even at the local level.
5/Key Takeaways
So What’s the Payoff?

Your audience is already on mobile. A mobile strategy is critical to your future success. It can:

- Extend the reach of the brand to grow your business, particularly among a younger audience.
- Drive new and different audience engagement activity patterns.
- Pull audience to your products using alerts.
- Create new sources of revenue (eventually).
- Enhance the brand’s reputation and image.
- Drive audience between platforms.
1. Don’t Ignore Mobile

Think of it as making an investment in your audience. Know that it will not start as a positive return on investment. But it will eventually pay off in revenue as the ad market catches up.

While traditional media viewership may be down, when you look across all platforms, news consumption is actually increasing.
2. Know Your Audience

Use analytics to determine how many mobile users you have, when they are interacting with you and what kind of content they prefer throughout the course of the day.

Once you understand how your audience is currently interacting with you, look for trends that can influence how you program your content and what new products might be most appealing to them.
3. Define a Clear Mobile Strategy

Before you build an app or create a responsive site, know exactly what your goals are and that they have top-level buy in. Establish what it means to be successful.

Mobile requires constant investment (of money and resources) and constant management in order to be successful.
4. Don’t Over-App It

Mobile often suffers from the shiny object syndrome. It’s easy to get distracted from your core focus. Maintaining discipline is difficult but very important.

If you decide to build apps, don’t go overboard. Start slowly with one that has a narrow focus and see how it resonates with your audience.
Mobile is the future of our business. Don’t be afraid of it. Embrace it. It should be part of your core thinking everyday, not an afterthought.

Integrate mobile into your daily workflow, news gathering and distribution.
6. Be Flexible

Expect for the unexpected and prepare to pivot. The entire mobile landscape can be disrupted by a new device, a new corporate strategy or even a new app.

Don’t get married to one idea or approach.
7. Experiment

Mobile is all about experimenting - and failing at times.

Don’t be afraid to try something new. Don’t be discouraged if you don’t hit it out of the ballpark. Learn what you can and apply it.
We see a sharp divide between our under 35 audience and our over 35 audience in terms of how they interact with technology. Younger audiences are much more quick to adopt. They represent the future of your business, so pay particular attention to youth trends.

This applies not only to your news products, but also your newsroom. Listen to your younger hires and enlist their help in shaping your mobile and social strategies.
What’s Next?

Part 3 of the News in the Mobile World series will address the editorial considerations when programming news for mobile consumption. Topics include video trends and best practices, social media and local news programming and other keys to success when designing content for mobile experiences.

Part 4 of the News in the Mobile World series will discuss monetizing mobile. Most executives recognize the potential of mobile, but many still struggle with making money from it. In this part of the series, advertising trends and best practices, as well as paid content strategies, will be addressed.
Thank You
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