TEN MISTAKES IN MOBILE WEB MARKETING

Get ready to mobilize

These days, it's common to hear people describe
the mobile web as the biggest thing since the desktop web.
They're wrong. It's much, much bigger than that.

For starters, there are far more mobile devices than PCs
(2.4 billion handsets were in circulation by mid-2006).
In Europe alone, there are four times more handsets than PCs
(in some countries, there are more handsets than people.)

But beyond the numbers, the vast potential of the mobile
web is also due to the way people think about and use
their mobile devices:

They're always on.
They're always at hand.
They're always personal, rarely shared.

No other marketing medium can say any of these things
much less all three.

The power of the mobile web

For big brands, the mobile web is a powerful new medium for achieving all sorts of marketing goals, including:

Reaching new audiences – who may never visit a PC website or spend hours in front of a TV.

Deepening relationships – by finding new ways to reach customers and new ways to inform or entertain them.

Delivering new services – including things you can only do (or would only want to do) on a mobile.

Demonstrating your brand values – mobile campaigns say you're young, innovative and customer-oriented.

Tying in with wider campaigns – completing your integrated campaigns with the mobile piece of the puzzle.

Selling stuff – as mobile transactions skyrocket, there's plenty of potential to make the sale right from the handset.

In short, there's not a lot you can't do with a mobile website and mobile campaigns – as long as you get it right.

Breaking free from 'dotcom thinking'

Historically, marketers tend to approach every new medium in much the same way as they approached the previous ones.

Early TV was like radio with heads. Early websites were static brochureware. And early mobile websites have mostly been scaled-down or stripped back desktop sites (or, worse, the same desktop website stuffed onto a small screen).

This 'dotcom thinking' has made for some pretty poor mobile web experiences. But it's fast giving way to a new generation of mobile websites that exploit the unique potential of the medium.

This eBook is designed to help you break free from dotcom thinking and to approach the mobile web as a new medium with its own unique set of strengths, limitations and dynamics.

The ten mistakes summarized here are some of the more common examples of dotcom thinking we've come across as we work to promote best practice in mobile web marketing all over the world.

We hope it will help you move to dotmobi thinking – designing mobile web experiences that take into account the mobile user and the mobile device. Only then can your brands exploit the true power of this exciting new medium.

If this eBook gets you thinking, please share your thoughts with us on our web resource and blog for mobile marketers: **mobiThinking.com** (launching soon but open now for free registration).

BMW.mobi gives you a quick tour of the latest models.

Virgin Atlantic's **LoveFromAbove.mobi** lets you download wallpapers or upload and share Flickr photos.

Treating mobile users like PC users

Mobile users don't want to download your entire annual report or navigate seven levels of your website.

The first rule of creating great customer experiences is to think about the kinds of things you want to do when you're out and about:

• You want fast access to relevant information.

• You want services that recognize you're on the move.

• You want location-aware, activity-specific experiences.

Thousands of words, massive images, slow downloads. Lots of clicks… not so good.

BankofAmerica.mobi knows you may not want to apply for a loan from your phone, but you will want to check to your balance or find a branch.

"Limit choices. Take the content that's relevant to a mobile user and discard the rest."
The dotMobi Mobile Developer's Guide

Ignoring the limitations of the mobile device

The fastest way to frustrate users is to treat the mobile device like a desktop PC.

Phones can do many things PCs can't do (see mistake three) but there are limitations that marketers need to keep in mind:

The screen is smaller
Even the best mobile handsets have a fraction of the screen real estate of a PC. Make every pixel count.

There's no mouse
Moving up and down is fine, but navigating around a screen is no fun on a mobile.

There's no printer
So don't ask people to print things out.

The keyboard is limited
PC users don't mind filling out long forms or writing whole paragraphs. Mobile users hate it. Keep the typing to a minimum.

Bandwidth may be restricted
Mobile networks are catching up fast, but many mobile devices still fall short of broadband speeds. Keep pages, images and file sizes small.

Megabytes sometimes cost money
Flat data rates are increasingly the norm but some plans charge by the megabyte. And even flat data plans may incur charges when roaming. Users won't appreciate your wasting their money.

In the early days of the mobile web, marketers saw these device limitations as crippling obstacles. Today, creative marketers routinely overcome all of them to deliver fast, fun, fantastic experiences designed just for mobile handsets.

Spanair.mobi, the Spanish airline, lets user check in from their mobile – using the screen as a boarding pass (who carries a printer around with them?).

"Due to the limited screen size, the mobile designer might need to spread out information into multiple pages rather than present it on one page."
The dotMobi Mobile Developer's Guide

Failing to exploit the capabilities of the mobile device

The flip side of device limitations are the many things a mobile device can do that PCs can't. One marketer we know likes to say that a cellphone isn't a disabled device, it's a *differently-abled* device.

The best mobile websites exploit the many things mobile devices can do. Remember what your users are holding in their hands:

It's a phone – why not invite a call (and make it a link)

It's a camera – let your customers get famous for their photos or enter picture contests

It's a video camera – think short films that tie into your brand, campaign themes or brand values

It sends text messages – ask for short bits of feedback, input, votes, polls, opinions, blurbs and blog posts… or let them easily share your content with friends

It's location-aware – make special offers when users are nearby; lead them to the nearest shop; trigger instant, location-specific offers…

It's a micropayment device – there are many ways to make the mobile complete the transaction on the spot

It sends email – help people alert friends and share their new mobile experiences…

It's a music player – share a tune, a podcast or a ringtone…

**It's a video player** – show a trailer, promo or full commercial

It's a calendar – so people can 'mark that date' right away, before they forget

It's a browser – so your mobile campaigns can link to proper mobile websites

If all this doesn't inspire you and your creative teams, nothing will…

Smirnoff.mobi includes a Pocket Bartender, a 'Vodkapedia' and a Nightlife guide. The guide not only shows you, say, the best bar for meeting people in Bath, it also gives you a map, a phone link for one-click dialling, and a way to instantly email an invitation to your friends.
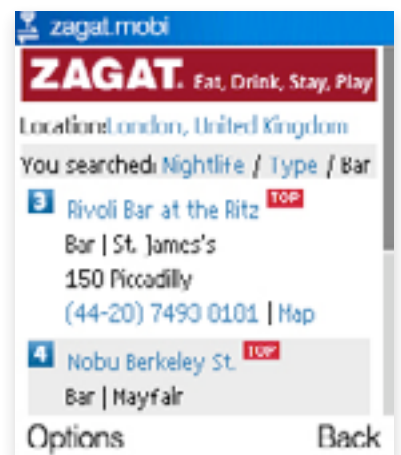
Zagat.mobi, the restaurant reviewing service, lets you find the best restaurant fast, make a reservation with a click, read capsule reviews and post reviews while the meal is still hot…

Using a .com name
for a .mobi experience

Your URL says a lot about your mobile website.

If you use one of the dozens of variations of .com (like mobile.brand.com or m.brand.com) you're sending a message to your audience before they even visit the site; you're saying 'dotcom thinking practiced here.'

The same applies to a name using .co.uk, .edu or .org – they're all names form the desktop web so they indicate a desktop web experience.

A .mobi name says 'this site was designed from the ground up as a mobile experience'.

.mobi is the only top-level domain name that's also a trustmark – because it's exclusively available to mobile sites that meet best-practice standards of usability.

When users see a .mobi name, they know they won't be landing on one of the thousands of frustrating sites driven by dotcom thinking.

There are other excellent reasons to choose a .mobi name – see mistake seven for two more – but this is the most important; it signals a site optimized for mobile users and mobile devices before the user even arrives.

"We didn't consider any other name for Smirnoff.mobi. It's the only domain name that says 'mobile-optimized'."
Michelle Klein,
Global Communication
& Digital Director,
Smirnoff Global Team

"Mobile content and services need to be clearly identified as mobile friendly and simple to find while the user is mobile."
Quocirca Mobile Market Paper

Using frames
(and other nasty habits)

Cut this one out and tape it to your developer's forehead:
Frames don't work well in mobile design because most devices don't support them, and they cause usability problems. Avoid them like the plague.

The other tips for creating great mobile sites are extremely easy
to follow – once you know them. Four samples, from our free Mobile Web Developer's Guide:

Think portrait, not landscape
Desktop websites are designed in landscape mode, where the pages
are wider than they are tall. Designing for the mobile means switching
to portrait mode where the content is taller than it is wide.

Landscape layouts and navigation schemes
Horizontal tabs and columns of text – don't well work on the mobile.
Instead, think of the mobile like a page in a book with a portrait orientation.
So use a single column with text that's left justified.

Use a second-level domain name
Your mobile web address shouldn't need the 'www'. Use a second-level
domain name like yourbrand.mobi. There are fewer characters to type
so users get to you faster.

Use XHTML-Mobile Profile
Using Extensible Hypertext Markup Language means that any browser will
properly render your site. Don't let your developers stray from the standard.
You'll regret it.

Help your developers make great
mobile sites; Download the free
Mobile Web Developer's Guide
from **dev.mobi**

**The W3C Mobile Web Best
Practices: Basic Guidelines
(MWBP)** captures the recognized
best practices established
since 2000 in the Mobile Web
community. Worth a read.

# Failing to test your site for mobile-readiness

The worst way to find out about usability problems on your mobile sites is from your users.

Manually checking your site is never as effective as using a good, automated checking tool that combs over every line of code.

Fortunately, we've built a free one for you. It's called ready.mobi and it automatically scans your .mobi site, checking every against industry best practice and mobile web standards.

Ready.mobi generates a free report with a site score (from one to five) and an in-depth analysis of pages to show you how well your site performs on a mobile device.

It's free. It takes a few seconds. And it could save you a lot of time and embarrassment.
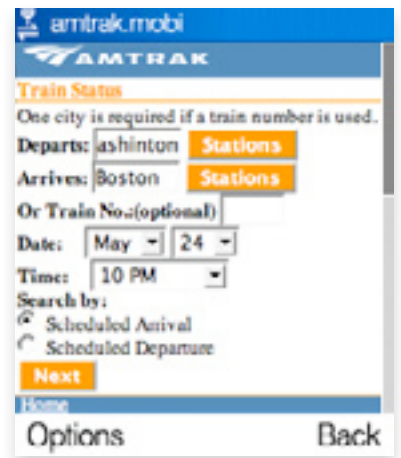
Amtrak.mobi, the US rail operator, lets users check on train status, book and cancel reservations.

Ready.mobi scores **Amtrak.mobi**

Ready.mobi overall score

Hiding your mobile website

It takes a fair amount of time, money and effort to create a great mobile site. Why hide it from the world?

Making your site searchable and guessable gives people the best shot at finding it – thereby maximizing your audience.

Make your site searchable
You only get one shot at having a search engine find your mobile site, since you only get one entry in the Internet Zone files – the files search engines use to start every crawl.

Your .com entry is already used for your PC home page. You won't get an entry for m., mobile., wap. or any other non-standard convention. But you do get one for .mobi – the entry for your mobile home page.

In short, a .mobi name makes your site perform better on search engines and come out higher on the results pages of relevant searches.

Make your site guessable
When people don't know your desktop website URL, they guess 'yourbrand.com'.

When they're looking for your mobile website, they guess 'yourbrand.mobi'.

Without doubt .mobi is the most guessable name for mobile sites. It's also a trustmark for quality and usability. Make sure your site uses its .mobi!

.mobi sites highlighted on Google

Hundreds of the world's top brands use .mobi for their mobile site names. The more people use these, the more they'll trust your .mobi.

Not actively promoting your mobile website

This one may sound like a no-brainer but it's surprising how many great mobile sites are woefully under-promoted.

If you advertise in print, on TV or in outdoor media, it's far more likely that your audience members are closer to their mobile device than to a PC that's on.

The point is, there are some things your customers will only be able to do on your .com site and others they can only do on your .mobi. The more you promote the mobile experience, the more people will turn to it.

Top brands that promote their .mobi sites are finding their traffic starting to rival their .com websites. But people can only spend time on your .mobi if they know it exists!

The Zagat.com website actively promotes **Zagat.mobi**.

Fox News promotes **FoxNews.mobi** on the air.

Running mobile campaigns without .mobi presence

You're running SMS campaigns and banner ads on mobile sites. What's the call to action?

If it isn't a click-through to your .mobi site, you're missing a very big trick – and a perfect way to start building traffic to the core of your mobile marketing efforts; your .mobi.

Campaigns come and go. Your .mobi is your persistent marketing presence and the center of your relationships with mobile customers.

Successful mobile marketing means building a dynamic .mobi and running campaigns that link to it.

Jaguar's US mobile ad campaign for the Jaguar FX delivered 15 million impressions that drove over 85,000 unique visitors to its .mobi site.

More than 12,000 videos and 16,000 wallpapers have been downloaded from the site, as well as significant brochure and test drive requests.

Serving the same content in the same way to every mobile device

The desktop web has one dominant 'client' technology; the Windows machine.

The mobile web is very different, characterized by thousands of permuations of device, operating system, chip and firmware.

The result: content that works perfectly and looks great on one device can crash or look like hell on another.

The best way to address this problem is by creating device-aware .mobi sites that serve up content optimized for each device.

The dotMobi team has developed an important tool to help solve the device diversity problem. It's called **DeviceAtlas™** and it's the world's most comprehensive database of mobile device information.

Your developers can use it to make your .mobi device-aware so it performs perfectly for every user, no matter what device they're using.

DeviceAtlas™ is free to members of **mobiSquared.com** – which is also free – and starts at just $99 a year for others. It's not priced for maximum profits, it's priced for maximum uptake.

Beyond the iPhone
The iPhone is an incredibly popular handset, but don't make the mistake of building sites that are 'hard-coded' just for the iPhone. Yes, you should embrace this important device, but by using **DeviceAtlas™** you'll ensure that your site works on all phones as well as the next-generation iPhone, whenever it comes out.

Welcome to dotMobi thinking

The mobile web is the single greatest opportunity facing every major brand.

The only way to maximize your return on mobile marketing investments is to optimize your mobile sites for mobile users and mobile devices.

That's what dotMobi thinking is all about.

We hope this eBook has helped you to think about the mobile web in a different way than you approach the desktop web.

We also hope that you'll join the dialogue and make use of our online resource for marketers, **mobiThinking.com** (launching soon but open for free registrations now).

Your developers probably already use the free guides, testing and development tools available on dev.mobi, but just in case, you might want to send them the link.

Selected .mobi sites:
AAA.mobi
AXA.mobi
BenettonPress.mobi
Bunkers.mobi
E2012.mobi
FBIMostWanted.mobi
Frankfurt.mobi
KLM.mobi
LocatePizza.mobi
MSN.mobi
NewsOfTheWorld.mobi
Opel.mobi
Purina.mobi
SAS.mobi
SXSW.mobi
TheTimes.mobi
VolvoCars.mobi
XBox.mobi
Wachovia.mobi
WWF.mobi
Yum.mobi

About dotMobi

dotMobi is backed by fourteen top players in the mobile web.
We exist for one reason; to accelerate the mobile web and promote
best-practice mobile sites.

Our investors are some of the biggest names in the mobile web:

Google, Microsoft, Visa, Voadafone, Telefonica, T-Mobile, TIM, Nokia,
GSM Association, 3, Syniverse, Orascom, Ericsson and Samsung

These industry leaders founded dotMobi not as a profit centre but to promote
a thriving mobile web and encourage best-practice site development.

Revenue from the .mobi name registrations is ploughed back into the market
in the form of developer tools, marketing resources, best-practice guides,
training and accreditation and new applications such as Device Atlas,
the industry's most comprehensive database of device characteristics.

.mobi™

Mobilize Your Brand