



BY TONY EADES



‘SoLoMo’ and the CEO

‘SOLOMO’ – SOUNDING A LITTLE LIKE THE TRADITIONAL GREETING YOU MIGHT EXPECT FROM THE INHABITANTS OF A TROPICAL ISLAND – IS THE LATEST BUZZWORD FROM THE VIRTUAL WORLD. →





In real-world translation, 'SoLoMo' is an amalgam for 'social', 'local' and 'mobile'. SoLoMo combines the best of the virtual, digital and real worlds to deliver an experience that's as natural on a mobile device as in real life – finally bridging the gap between user and the web.

The web offers a great resource with around 7.51 billion indexed pages as of June 2012 and 32.7 per cent of the world population connected – a growth of over 500 per cent since the year 2000. But what if you just want to find something locally? SoLoMo basically allows people to interact (social), find (local), and access (mobile) your brand easily.

For retailers, the real advantage of SoLoMo is being able to customise content, coupons and offers for individual customers based on either their previous shopping history or by way of their likes or shares on social networks. Statistics show that 80 per cent of mobile users prefer local-based ads, and 75 per cent say they are more likely to take action after seeing a relevant local ad.

Some of the best examples of SoLoMo in action include Foursquare and Groupon, which are platforms that use social marketing and mobile check-ins as a way to drive business to locally based merchants. Newcomer app Highlight also embraces the essence of SoLoMo by operating in the background of your phone as a social utility that helps you learn more about the people in your immediate vicinity. Linked to a user's Facebook profile, the app works in the background to track names, photos and anything else your network chooses to share to notify you visually when friends and other interesting people are nearby.

So does your company speak SoLoMo? If not, here's how ...

'SO' OR SOCIAL

You need to identify and then create the social media channels that are the best fit for your business, with the must-haves being LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. Website traffic can be easily generated via social media networks, and improved rankings on search engines can be achieved depending on your brand's activity across this medium.

Ensure a consistent branding message covers all your social media channels, and make sure that it is one that accurately reflects your corporate image. After this has been achieved, integrate your social media profiles into your website, company culture, and other online and offline marketing materials.

Integrate Quick Response (or QR) codes into your traditional marketing. From business cards to brochures and vehicle signage, this is a huge opportunity to connect your digital online, social and mobile platform with your offline world.

'LO' OR LOCAL

This is all about claiming your stake on the web. Your website is your real estate on the net, so use it to maximum advantage. Make sure your content is on brand, your site is social-media- and search-engine friendly with relevant keywords, that you are included in any relevant localised or industry-specific directories, and you engage in targeted online campaigns like Google AdWords.

'MO' OR MOBILE

Morgan Stanley analyst Mary Meeker says, "The world is currently in the midst of the fifth major technology cycle of the past half century. The previous four were the mainframe era of the 1950s and 60s, the mini-computer era of the 70s, and the desktop internet era of the 80s. The current cycle is the era of the mobile internet, and within the next five years more users will connect to the internet over mobile devices than from desktop PCs."



Interestingly enough, people seem to prefer to surf the net on mobile-connected devices, with 60 per cent choosing to make a purchase through their phone from their home.

First and foremost, your website should be smartphone and tablet friendly so that mobile users have the same if not a more interactive experience as traditional desktop users. Online marketing has been revolutionised by these hand-held devices, so your site should also encourage interactivity through GEO tagging, Facebook places, Foursquare and Google+. Use Instagram (an iPhone-based photo-sharing app) and Twitter to share document news, events, and other happenings concerning your business via mobile.

Many businesses are now exploring a new world of marketing called 'gamification' to attract the under-25s market by using mobile phone apps. Earlier this year, Apple estimated that its 500,000 apps had received over 25 billion downloads via their App Store.

Cisco IBSG predicts the number of internet-connected things will reach 50 billion by 2020, which equates to more than six devices for every person on Earth; and there are expected to be over 200 million smartphones in Australia and Asia-Pacific by 2016, with 98 per cent of users having Facebook accounts. SoLoMo is vital for any business brand to continue to engage with its customers, stay relevant in an ever-changing digital market space, and own its place in the minds of the new consumer. ●

About Tony Eades

Tony Eades is the Creative Director of BrandManager, a creative marketing and digital communications agency based in Sydney and Perth. He is a business branding expert with more than 25 years experience in brand design, marketing, advertising and media production.

www.thebrandmanager.com.au