

# Why Small Businesses are Embracing Mobile Marketing

Published Aug. 31, 2011

Daniel Kehrer shares the importance of embracing the mobile market.



By Daniel Kehrer

Founder, [BizBest.com](http://BizBest.com)

It all became clearer to me recently in three bright flashes:

**Flash #1:** I'm sitting at O'Brien's Irish Pub, a neighborhood watering hole, having a beer with a friend. As I scan the other patrons of varying ages, every one of them is doing something on a mobile phone and two have both a smart phone and iPad.

**Flash #2:** The newest high-powered research report arrives, showing a huge leap in the number of small businesses using mobile marketing, or planning to do so.

**Flash #3:** I upgraded to the newest generation smart phone myself and immediately discovered an even faster and more capable mobile experience.

Main Street tends to be cautious about changing the way it markets, but local business owners are now embracing mobile marketing at a remarkable rate, including SMS (text messaging), mobile banners, email, paid search, mobile video, proximity campaigns, sponsorships, coupons, loyalty programs and deals.

That's one finding of "Main Street Goes Mobile," a new study by Borrell Associates, a media research firm. As business owners see

more customers staring at small screens, they are taking notice. Trade magazines are full of stories about mobile marketing successes. Even trade shows for funeral directors offer mobile marketing seminars.

New research shows that half of local businesses plan to use mobile marketing this year, devoting 20% of their ad budgets, on average. Meanwhile, customers are spending more time on tablets and smart phones, and less on PCs and laptops. If you aren't using mobile marketing, you should know that other small businesses are upping their spending on it this year by 41%. Borrell predicts that spending on local mobile marketing will double yearly for the next five years.

The mobile trend creates yet another challenge for small businesses: How to grow with social media and mobile marketing – at the same time. The mobile part is critical because social media marketing is a real-time experience; not something people do only when they're in front of a PC. Now they carry the experience in their pocket, purse or hand.

Here are some benefits, tips and advice on joining mobile marketing with social media:

1. **Mobile expands your options:** There's only so much time you can spend in front of your computer, so adding mobile capabilities can free you to monitor, manage and update your social media marketing wherever you are. This makes it easier for you to make timely responses to customer questions or comments.
2. **Increase your QR Code mileage:** QR codes are an excellent, low-cost way to extend your digital reach and are well suited to mobile. Customers can scan the code with their mobile device (using a free code scanning app), and be taken to a web page or content. It's far easier than searching online. QR codes offer one of the best ways for mobile device users to interact with your business.

3. **Adjust your content for mobile:** Content intended for distribution to a mobile device should be formulated with that purpose in mind. Make it short, simple, clean, easy to access and easy to share. If you have a blog, make sure you have a mobile version.

4. **Mobile sets the table:** While some mobile marketing can result in immediate leads or sales, getting someone to fill out a form or make a purchase from a mobile device is difficult. Instead, think of mobile-social marketing as one more “touch point” that lets you connect with customers and prospects. Your goal is to offer helpful tidbits that set up the opportunity to connect in more substantial ways later.

5. **Tap existing social tools:** You don’t have to create mobile-social marketing from scratch. By using existing, mobile-based social networks such as Foursquare as a base, and then spreading the word via Facebook and Twitter, you can begin to meld mobile with social marketing. A good site to learn more is *ShopTalk: Social Media* ([www.shoptalksocial.com](http://www.shoptalksocial.com)).

Have a question about mobile marketing? [Connect with a SCORE mentor](#) online or in your community today!

**About the Author**

---



Daniel Kehrer, Founder & Managing Director of BizBest Media Corp., is a nationally-known, award-winning expert on small and local business, start-ups, content marketing, entrepreneurship and social media, with an MBA from UCLA/Anderson. Read more of Daniel's tips at [www.BizBest.com](http://www.BizBest.com), follow him at [www.twitter.com/140Main](https://www.twitter.com/140Main) and connect on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/in/danielkehrer](http://www.linkedin.com/in/danielkehrer).