

Mobile Media in 2014: New Behaviour Trends to Emerge

By **Marian Salzman**, Author and CEO, Havas PR
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How will it work on mobile?

In the universe of trendspotting, the media are in a unique position. They carry, report and increasingly are an important part of the trends. The word media used to conjure up a classic mix of TV, radio, print and outdoor, each in its place. That old view is becoming rapidly outmoded as all forms of media are accessed anywhere, anytime through smartphones and tablets.



By the end of 2013, it's estimated that 6% of the world's population will own a tablet and 22% will own smartphones. In other words, mobile devices are the media for growing numbers of people. No matter the content, it all needs to answer one deceptively simple question:

Whether music, video, news or shopping, it must be capable of passing through the eye of the mobile needle. That sounds pretty daunting. How can a consumer appreciate the high production values of a movie or follow a news report on a 3.5-inch screen? It turns out that viewers pay closer attention when they watch video on a mobile device than on a computer or TV. They focus more and multitask less. As mobile media habits become widely established,

we are seeing new behaviour trends emerge that break with everything that has gone before.

From raw breaking news to depth and context

Everybody from die-hard news addicts to casual gawkers gets at least some breaking news from social media now. A recent Pew survey found that 30% of Americans get news on Facebook and 8% on Twitter. Savvy users can set their accounts to aggregate news sources into a one-stop news channel. Even news organisations track social media as a 360°, 24/7 scanner.

With headlines and essential points instantly available all the time, established news channels are moving away from old-style newscast formats toward longer shows that offer a deep-dive take on nonfiction stories. As CNN president Jeff Zucker put it, the definition of news has to broaden to compete for "eyeballs and attention." To put it another way, the traditional news business needs to create value in the gaps that are opened up by social media.

Pics or it didn't happen

In pre-digital days, the maxim was "Seeing is believing." Now it's "Pictures, or it didn't happen." Images rule. They communicate faster and more compellingly and — despite Photoshop — look true. For a few years, the written word ruled the PC-based Internet and mobile Internet because the technology couldn't handle images. But now it can handle everything and images are on the rise. Visuals are driving the hottest trends in social media, many of them created on the fly on smartphones; Instagram, Vine and Snapchat have joined the almighty YouTube as attention magnets.

On the news front, print-based titles such as The Guardian, The Daily Mail, USA Today and The New York Times are making video part of their offering. Meanwhile, Yahoo's hiring of former CBS and NBC anchor Katie Couric as its global news anchor shows that even pureplay digital brands recognise the need to go video.

Apple is getting serious about social media

Over the past few years, it seems as if most of the world has been gripped by social media frenzy. The big social brands have amassed hundreds of millions of users and floated with gigabuck IPOs. World leaders such as Pope Francis and President Rouhani of Iran speak to the world through Twitter. Advertising on social media is forecast to have reached \$4.6 billion in 2013, up from \$3.4 billion in 2012. Yet through all the excitement, the world's premier digital device company has seemed indifferent to it. But Apple's arm's-length

relationship with social media looks set to change after it acquired social analytics firm Topsy for a reported \$200 million.

Topsy has indexed every tweet ever sent since 2006, now running at around 500 million a day, and can slice and dice the global conversation for its clients. Apple hasn't disclosed its reasons for buying Topsy, but informed speculation is rife. One popular reading: It's about content discovery, providing real-time recommendations to consumers wondering what to watch next.