

Brands without mobile strategies risk becoming obsolete: Forrester exec

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NEW YORK – A Forrester executive at Forrester Research’s Forum for Customer Experience Professionals East 2013 said brands that do not use mobile strategies to transform the customer experience risk becoming obsolete.

During “The path to breakthrough mobile experiences,” the executive discussed the ways that brands can use mobile to give their customers an experience that is enjoyable, easy and meets their needs. The executive stressed that if brands do not engage consumers on mobile, then they risk becoming outdated and overrun by their competitors.

“Mobile is fundamentally shifting customer experience,” said Julie Ask, vice president and principal analyst at [Forrester Research](#), San Francisco.

“If you don’t evaluate how to use mobile to transform your customer experience, you risk being disintermediated or made obsolete,” she said

Power of mobile

Ms. Ask explained that mobile has changed the customer experience in three ways: immediacy, simplicity and context.

When consumers are using mobile, they want anytime, anywhere access to information, they want simple tasks and they expect relevant solutions, per Ms. Ask.

To boost customer experience, brands should manage their customers’ expectations through mobile since this platform allows brands to communicate with consumers anywhere at anytime.

“[As the consumer,] let me do business with you, when I want to do business with you,” Ms. Ask said.

Also, mobile platforms aid in speeding up processes and simplifying tasks, which can help consumers make product decision on the go.

“Mobile can offer real time information to help me make a decision [as a consumer,]” Ms. Ask said.

Moreover, mobile meets the needs of consumers by providing relevant and timely solutions. This gives consumers confidence and control of their decisions.

Personalized stay

During the session, Ms. Ask gave the example of travel and hospitality brands using mobile platforms to aid their guests at different points in their journey.

Many luxury hotels have created mobile applications that allow guests to manage details of their trip through their smartphone.

For instance, Beverly Wilshire, a Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA, enhanced the hotel experience through a mobile app that allows guests to take full control of their stay.

The “Beverly Wilshire Beverly Hills” app gives guests the ability to explore the hotel, make restaurant reservations, order room service and plan other aspects of their stay. This app helps guests while on-site and show off the hotel’s offers to consumers who are planning vacations ([see story](#)).

Beverly Wilshire app

Also, Starwood Hotels & Resorts updated its Starwood Preferred Guest mobile app to create a seamless, guest-centric experience. The updates included content based on whether or not the user is planning, en route or already checked-in to a specific hotel.

The personalized “My Stay” interface allows fully-integrated booking, member information, hotel searches, travel details, FaceTime customer service and social media.

Detailed information, photo galleries, transportation options, weather and local attractions are available for each hotel at each of Starwood’s brands when consumers are in the booking and researching process ([see story](#)).

Overall, brands should not change their already established customer experience tactics. They should aim to add mobile to improve upon their customer experience.

“Use the same consumer experience tools,” Ms. Ask said. “Now we are laying in mobile tactics to improve and differentiate [the experience.]”