

MAKE THE MOST OF MOBILE

> Think smartphones are a fad? Think again.

More than 186 million people in the U.S. own a smartphone, close to 80 percent of the population, according to ComScore. Figuring out the best way to reach those customers (and understanding how and why they pull out those devices) has become a marketing strategy for businesses of all sizes. A piece of that puzzle is illuminated when you consider the most popular apps today.

King of the Apps

Without question, Facebook is the No. 1 app that people use on their smartphones. For “mobile marketers” (and if you’re marketing to mobile users, you are part of that group), an important takeaway is that you must keep your Facebook page updated with compelling posts, including rich media such as photos and especially video (more on that later).

It’s a good idea for your Facebook posts to include links that lead visitors into the subpages of your website and to the exact content you reference (think: bridesmaid bouquets or Father’s Day gift basket). Doing so will build relevant inbound links that score SEO points and reduce your website’s bounce rate (quick exits because people don’t like the content).

When it comes to Facebook and videos, post short and sweet (under a

minute) clips in a variety of settings, including “behind-the-scenes” footage of special events, reaction shots of happy customers and flower and plant care tips.

Old Favorites and Up-and-Comers

Facebook may have passed YouTube for number of videos shared in August 2014, according to ComScore, but you should still build a presence with a free YouTube channel. After all, Google owns YouTube, so you want to create and store video content with the search engine’s own service to build relevance. We recommend you upload all videos to YouTube and embed in Facebook to share.

Once you have strategies for those platforms in place, you can move to other apps on the ComScore list:

- Instagram is an ideal marketing tool to reach the Gen Y set, especially young women. Snap photos of your handiwork throughout the day. Connect your Instagram account to your Facebook page to maximize reach.
- Twitter, already a mainstay in social media, is even more important now that tweets are searchable by Google. Include relevant or catchy #hashtags in your posts.
- Snapchat is also on ComScore’s list, but we recommend floral industry members hold off on that for now to see if its relevance grows beyond its current demographic (Gen Y males). Instead, consider spending time with Pinterest, especially if you have a big or separate wedding business. Brides still continue to use the service to gather wedding ideas.

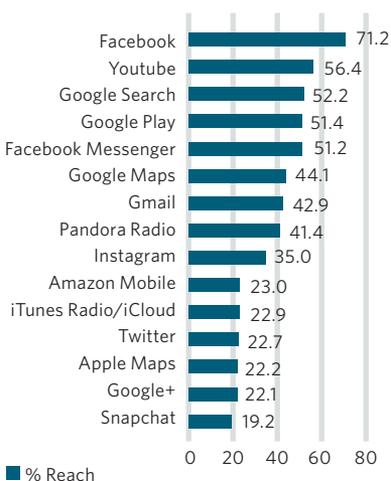


Remember, Google handles mobile searches differently than those originating from a laptop or desktop. Mobile searches use the smartphone’s GPS function to help find relevant, often local, results. So if a potential customer happens to be near your shop and she types “florist” (no geographical keyword), the search will still be smart enough to list you, but only if you are listed within the Google mobile database.

Our last recommendation: Be sure you’re part of the 80 percent of smartphone owners. Although you probably could get by on the advice we’ve given to implement effective mobile marketing practices, you truly won’t “get it” until you become a smartphone user yourself. 📱

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Top 15 Smartphone Apps



SOURCE: COMSCORE MOBIL METRIX, FEBRUARY 2015

Local Search Wins

Google Search and Google Maps are also on the ComScore app list. To optimize mobile search results, claim your business and fill out complete information at google.com/business (formerly Google Places). Already done so? Make it a practice to recheck your listing periodically for accuracy. Upload fresh new photos and videos to your website, as these will appear in the mobile search results.

GO DEEPER
 Discover **best practices for uploading** videos and photos to social media (March 2015 Plugged In) and **choosing a smartphone** that makes it happen (February 2015 Plugged In) in the *Floral Management* digital archives, safnow.org/floralmanagement.