

The Home Depot: 360 mobile strategy bridges the gap between in-store and mobile experience



About The Home Depot

- www.homedepot.com
- m.homedepot.com

Goals

- Capitalize early on the fast-growing mobile market
- Improve user experience on mobile and in-store
- Better understand mobile impact on their physical locations

Approach

- Developed a mobile site early
- Developed an app using breakthrough technologies
- Promoted mobile site through Google Mobile Ads using call extension, location extension, site links and display to raise awareness
- Measured and optimized for mobile conversions

Results

- Visits originating from a mobile phone have tripled in one year
- Mobile sales more than quadrupled
- Implemented close monitoring of key mobile conversions (store locators clicks)
- Rose from 15 to 7 on Keynote's mobile commerce index

Always ahead of the curve

With the motto: "More saving. More doing," The Home Depot makes home improvement easier—and less expensive. Today, The Home Depot is the world's largest home improvement specialty retailer with more than 2,200 retail stores worldwide.

The Home Depot was an early innovator in the mobile space and saw the need to capitalize on the fast-growing mobile market opportunity. The Home Depot's first mobile site was launched in May 2010 and has continually improved over the last two years. With smartphone penetration in the U.S. now exceeding 50%, Matt Jones, General Manager of Mobile for Homedepot.com, says, "We are seeing a rapid escalation in the number of visits, in the types of usage, and in the customer's desire to interact with our mobile content."

To stay ahead of the curve, the company recently launched a significant mobile redesign, adding a new set of mobile functionalities based on user localization. When first accessing the mobile site, users are prompted to share their location, which allows users to access real-time store inventory, real-time pricing, and aisle-location for merchandise in any given Home Depot store. Another very successful feature recently introduced is the ability to buy on mobile and pick-up in-store. The Home Depot's new mobile site now features more than 1,000 video how-to's, and despite being media-rich, the lightweight pages load quickly and are optimized for intuitive access on small screens that are gesture and touch-driven.

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Custom-built mobile site doubles traffic and conversions, quadruples mobile sales

The Home Depot's mobile site success so far has been impressive: between 2011 and 2012, visits originating from a mobile phone have tripled.

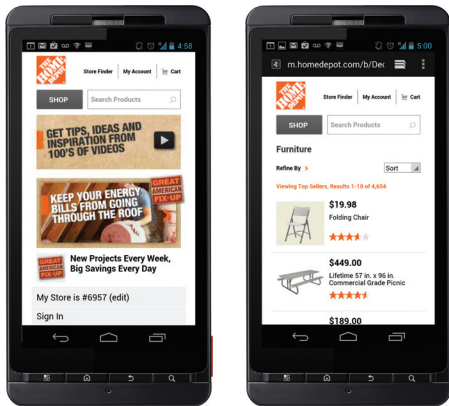
This growth can be attributed to the company's main audience: 1) "Do-it-yourselfers," hungry for content and convenience from wherever they are, and 2) Pros/Contractors, who want to get in and out of the store quickly.

Overall, the user experience has improved markedly, with The Home Depot's recent ranking rising from 15 to 7 on the Keynote Mobile Commerce Index (an index that shows the average response times, success rates, and download speeds for downloading the mobile pages of selected retailer sites). And the continuous mobile efforts have really paid off: "We doubled our mobile conversion rate and quadrupled our mobile commerce sales between the first half of this year and first half of last year," says Jones.

About Google AdWords

Google AdWords™ is a performance-based advertising program that enables businesses large and small to advertise on Google and its network of partner websites. Hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide use AdWords for text, image, and video ads priced on a cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-impression (CPM) basis. Built on an auction-based system, AdWords is a highly quantifiable and cost-effective way to reach potential customers.

For more information, visit:
<http://adwords.google.com>



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—Matthew Jones, general manager of mobile for The Home Depot

Mobile-specific search advertising campaigns using Google Mobile Ads have been fundamental to The Home Depot’s online success. They include Mobile Ad formats such as call extensions for one-touch calling convenience, location extensions for access to addresses, and maps and mobile site links, so users can navigate straight to specific pages. The Home Depot is also making efforts on the display side focused on building awareness.

An app that maximizes smartphones’ potential

To expand their mobile audience, The Home Depot has also launched mobile applications for iPhone, Android, and Windows. The apps enable the company to explore native functionalities that only a mobile device can provide. For example, the company recently implemented augmented reality functionality—using the smartphone’s built-in camera, users can use the apps to overlay select merchandise images, such as patio sets or appliances, on the top of their current environment, like a sunroom or kitchen, and visualize how it would look.

The Home Depot’s apps are targeted at their most loyal customers, while the broader audience accesses the mobile site. According to Mr. Jones, this dual, synergistic mobile strategy is paying off in terms of incremental revenue and engagement with the brand.

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“Mobile is the bridge between interconnected retail”

As a multi-channel retailer, The Home Depot understands the impact of its mobile website on its physical stores: “There is a stronger connectivity between mobile and stores than there is between our desktop site and the stores. Mobile is the bridge between interconnected retail,” says Jones.

And understanding how mobile is adding value to the business requires factoring-in new mobile conversions: “Sales are the macro-conversion but when users lookup our store hours, or a store phone number or driving directions, those are other mobile conversions that will potentially lead to a physical in-store purchase,” says Jones. The cost per macro-conversion has decreased by 75% since the mobile site launched, and the company is now closely monitoring other key mobile conversions.

And this is just the beginning of the mobile journey: the company is perpetually looking for new innovations and continuous best-in-class performance.

