

MMC Leadership Portfolio

Patrick D. Masters

Full Sail University

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### *Introduction*

In order to better understand today's mobile device users and how they value and interact with technology, we need to ask customers about their mobile devices and the way they use their device. Five subjects, current mobile device users, were interviewed about their devices and their daily use.

### *Demographics*

Subject One is a 19 year old college student who has been using a cell phone for four years. Subject Two is a stay-at-home mother of three kids and has owned a cell phone since 1998. Subject Three is a high school educator and a mother of two children. Subject Three, 39, has used a cell phone for five years. Subject Four is a mid-fifties evangelist for a software development company and has used various mobile devices since the mid-nineties. Subject Five is a retired 74 year old male who has used a cell phone for the last 2 years.

### *Survey*

The subjects all said they were the primary user of their mobile devices. When the subjects were asked if this was their first mobile device, 80% of the subjects said their current cellular phone was not their first device. Of that 80%, three subjects said they upgrade their devices only when their current device breaks or stops working while the other subject routinely upgrades their phone annually.

Subjects were asked about the percentage of time they use the talk/voice features on their current devices. 60% of the respondents said they spend about 50% of their usage making/receiving phone calls with their devices. Subject One said "I bought my phone so I could update my Facebook status and text the non-important things to friends and family." Subject

Five was unaware that current mobile devices were able to do anything other than make phone calls. Subject Four claimed they spend roughly 90% of their usage using downloaded applications or for multimedia consumption such as videos or music. “The talk features are nice but the reason I purchased my iPhone was so I could enjoy my media anywhere I go,” said Subject Four.

When asked what features their current devices lacked, 60% said they wanted Flash playback capability on their current device. 20% felt their device met all of their mobile needs and 20% did not know there were other features outside of making voice calls. Subject One felt as if his inability to playback Flash based content was more of corporate control and designed to deny a fair playing field between mobile device manufacturers and mobile application developers. Subject Four agreed and further expanded “Certain companies choose to keep a closed system in order to prevent choice among users to consume content the users feel is best for them and not what is best for Apple’s bottom line.” Subject Three said “Being able to use Flash apps could help my students realize larger learning gains but because we are held captive waiting for developers to create an interactive app for our lessons, student learning is being impacted.” Subject Two felt their device provided every feature they currently need.

Subjects were then asked if they have ever forgotten their mobile device at home and returned to pick it up. 80% of the respondents said they have returned to pick up their device after forgetting it. Subject One said “My phone is my life. It has my Facebook, my email, my class schedule, and all of my contacts.” Subject Two uses her mobile device to carry out her shopping. She said “Without my device, I have no idea what I am supposed to buy at the store and without it; I end up buying things not on the list and go over budget.” Subject Three needs to be reached while at work. “If one of my kids gets sick and I need to pick them up, the school has to have a

way to contact me especially in an emergency type situation. If I didn't have a phone that would not happen.”

80% of the subjects said they have replaced their landline home service with their mobile service. Subject Four said “I am hardly ever at home and if one of my developers needs to reach me, the best way is my cellular.” Subject One adds “With my cell, I never miss a call.” Subject Two said “Why bother paying for a service (landline) that costs the same but limits the things you can do with it?” Subject Five disagreed and said “What happens when the battery dies? My home phone keeps working and I can still make calls.”

All five subjects agreed that they are not open to mobile advertisements on their phone. Subject One said “I pay for my service, why should I have to view ads for things I will never buy anyway?” Subject Two said “Between all the commercials now, my phone should be the one place I should not have to view ads.” Subject Three said “I don't mind them now but once everyone does it, it will get out of control.” Subject Four adds “Businesses never know how to do things within reason. Once they start, they will never stop with the SPAM.” Subject Five said “I hate constantly being sold to. Do these people think I am rich or something?”

When asked if they have ever made a purchase on their mobile device, 80% have said they have made at least one purchase, with three subjects saying they have made multiple purchases with their mobile device. Subject One uses his mobile device to purchase music from iTunes. Subjects Two and Three have used their mobile devices to pay for downloadable games from the iTunes store. Subject Four said he uses his mobile device to pay his bills using his mobile banking account. Subject Five wasn't aware that mobile devices provided that type of payment option.

When asked if the subjects felt safe and secure using their credit card information when making a purchase using their mobile device, 60% of the subjects felt safe and secure. 20% were worried about their card number being intercepted, and 20% have never made a purchase and felt this was a non-issue. Subject One and Four responded the same “If they are going to steal it, there is not much you can do to stop it” said Subject One. Subject Four added “There is risk in anything in life and banks are pretty good about protecting customers with fraud.” Subject Three said “I don’t like having it out there but the convenience of making a purchase on my device far outweighs my concern.”

When the subjects were asked about making purchases at home using a computer and the Internet, all five subjects said they have made multiple purchases monthly using their home computer. Subject Four said “Buying online has become the new brick-and-mortar outlet. Better deals can be found online because companies compete and undercut the competition.” Subject Two says she does all of her Christmas shopping online and only goes to the store for hard to find or locally handmade items.

80% of the subjects said they would be willing to text a company a request in order to receive a song download, promotional coupon, or free information in exchange for their mobile device number. Subject One said “Once they get my number, I know they are gonna [sic] SPAM me so I better get something for it.” Subject Two believes more companies need to give away things in order to get their mobile number for advertising. Subject Four adds “It’s nice to get something for free but we have to make sure the person we are texting understands us as a customer and is not going to send us junk messages.” Subject Five was unaware that his phone was capable of sending text messages but still would not be willing to text a company.

When asked if the subjects would use the text function of their device at an event to increase their interactivity and experience, 60% said it would depend on the event itself and the reason they are texting. Subject One said “It would be great at a club or something to request a song to be played.” Subject Two believes the texting would need to be relevant to the event and not just a way to get her mobile number. Subject Three said “This could be awesome in the classroom for students to review or study for a test. Just text me your answer.” Subject Five said he feels it would take away from the overall experience or force him to miss a big play at a ball game.

80% of the subjects said their current mobile device supports GPS location/identification. Subject Four said “GPS is a huge benefit for people like me who get lost and refuse to ask for directions.”

When asked if they would like to receive advertisements from businesses automatically upon entry into a store, 60% responded that they would be open to it if it were for items they were looking for that day. 20% would like to receive them after having a choice to accept them and 20% would not like any advertisements at all. Subject One said “I think it would be cool to get the ads or coupons for something I was going to buy that day.” Subject Two added “I imagine some places are doing this already but could you imagine how filled my phone would be if I went to the Mall?” Subject Four reiterated his earlier response. He said “If done within reason, it could be a huge benefit to customer and generate more sales for the company.”

Subjects were last asked if they had to make a choice between their mobile phone device and their computer at home, which device would they give up. 40% of the subjects said they would give up their home computer. Subject One said “My phone does everything I need that I do on the computer except write papers.” Subject Two replied “my iPhone plays games, videos, and

music but I can take my device anywhere. Not so with my computer.” Subject Three and Four both noted they need computers in order to complete tasks at their job. “There are some things my device cannot do that I absolutely need to do in the classroom. Without a computer, my class is back in the Stone Age,” said Subject Three. Subject Four replied, “Could you imagine writing thousands and thousands of lines of code on an iPhone? Me neither.” Subject Five offered “I know how to work a computer. I have no clue about my cell phone.”

### *Conclusion*

The fact is more and more people use mobile devices daily. Mobile devices are overtaking the number of PC's. “The billion-plus phones sold per year. The number of active subscriptions, which is greater than half of the human population” (Weintraub, 2010). As more and more users use their mobile devices to complete the same tasks they would have done with a computer, businesses and companies alike will need to find new ways to engage and advertise to their customer without becoming overbearing in the process. As the subjects noted, they are not open to receiving advertisements but would do so in order to receive something of value in exchange.

For companies to leverage the technology and accessibility that mobile devices provide, they must learn more about their customers and provide advertising opportunities that are important and relevant to that specific customer instead of traditional mass advertising approaches. The importance of building a relationship with the customer has become more important than ever. Customers are looking for things to enhance their lives and to do things that were previously harder to complete without the assistance of a computer. The difference now is they want to be able to accomplish this wherever they roam instead of being tied to one location.

## Reference

Weintraub, S. (2010, August 11). The numbers don't lie: mobile devices overtaking PCs.

Retrieved September 13, 2010 from <http://tech.fortune.cnn.com/2010/08/11/the-great-game-mobile-devices-overtaking-pcs/>