LOCAL & MOBILE

Yext Quarterly Vol. 3

Index

The Authors

Greg Sterling

Greg Sterling is senior analyst for Opus Research tracking the evolution of the mobile Internet. Sterling is also a contributing editor for Search Engine Land and Marketing Land, leading online technology blogs. And he is the founder of Sterling Market Intelligence, focused on the Internet's impact on offline consumer behavior.

Sterling previously ran BIA/Kelsey's Interactive Local Media program from 2001 to 2006. Before ILM he was a producer at TechTV. Prior to TechTV, Sterling was a founding editor at AllBusiness.com. Before all that he was a practicing attorney in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Sterling is frequently quoted in leading US publications regarding the search, local and mobile markets.

Andrew Shotland

Andrew Shotland is the proprietor of www.localseoguide.com a leading search consultancy with a specialty in SEO for local search and enterprise-level search marketing. He is a regular contributor to SearchEngineLand.com and author of the definitive Google News Ranking Factors survey. Andrew recently launched AppleMapsMarketing.com, a blog focused on helping businesses navigate Apple Maps and SIRI.

Andrew has over 15 years of experience in the Internet. He was a founding member of NBC's Internet group and a former GM of NBC.com. He helped start Insider Pages, a pioneering local-social search engine, which was acquired by CitySearch in 2006. He is a co-founder of Backyard, a local deals service that was acquired by Pixelfish in 2011.

How To Track Mobile Traffic in Google Analytics
Andrew Shotland

As the web goes more mobile, understanding the behavior of mobile visitors to your site becomes increasingly important. And as search engines differentiate mobile and desktop algorithms, having good mobile search data can be the key to acquiring more customers. Thankfully, Google Analytics makes it fairly straightforward to gather this data. I recommend creating mobile analytics dashboards to easily track, analyze and share your mobile data. Typically, I start with the two dashboards:

Mobile Traffic and Mobile v. Desktop v. Tablet
The Mobile Traffic dashboard is designed to help you answer questions like:
- How many people are coming to our site via mobile?
- What keywords do mobile users use to find us?
- Do mobile users stick around?
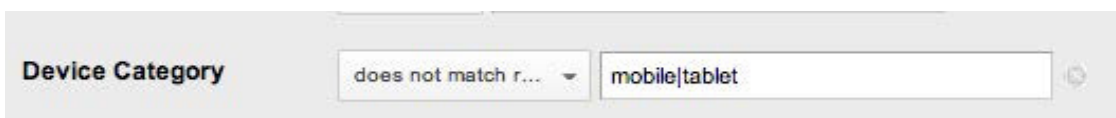- How does my mobile site convert mobile traffic?

The Mobile v. Desktop v. Tablet is designed to help you see the differences in behavior between these different devices.

Step 1
Create the following custom segments in Google Analytics: Mobile, Tablet & Desktop

To do this, in the Custom Segments section, click "+Create New Segment" and call it "Mobile".
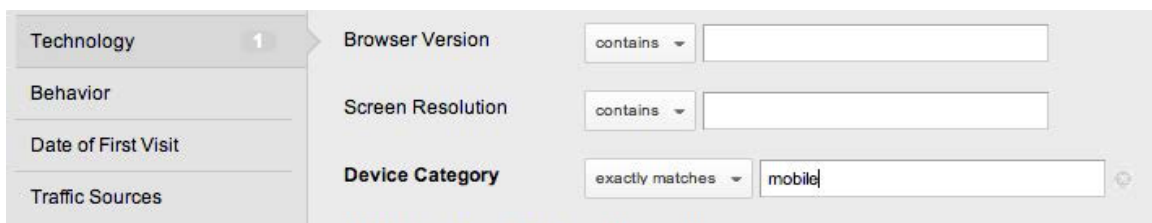
Click "Technology" and in the Device Category section, select "exactly matches" and enter "mobile" like below and save the segment:

Create another segment called "Tablet" and do the same but this time enter "exactly matches tablet".

For the "Desktop" segment, change "exactly matches" to "does not match regex" and enter "mobile|tablet". This filters out all mobile and tablet data.

Step 2

Create your own mobile dashboards or use the custom dashboards I have created below using the custom segment filters you just created.

Mobile Traffic v. Desktop & Tablet

Set the custom segments to Mobile, Desktop & Tablet Data tracked:

- Visits
- Bounce rate
- Average visit duration
- Pages per visit

- Pageviews
- Visits by region
- Visits by traffic source

Mobile Traffic Dashboard

Make sure to set the custom segment to "Mobile" Data tracked:

- Mobile visits
- Mobile pageviews
- Mobile pages/visit
- Average mobile visit duration
- Average mobile page load time
- Mobile bounce rate

- Mobile traffic by source
- Mobile organic keywords
- Mobile organic landing pages
- Visits by type of mobile device
- Mobile visitor screen resolutions
- Mobile visitor operating system

There is obviously an endless number of different ways to configure these reports. For example, I didn't include any advertising, social or conversion metrics in these. I also didn't include app tracking where you might want to track app-specific metrics like how often the app crashes.

So decide what are the right metrics for you to track and start tracking.

Mobile SERP Trends

Contextual Awareness

By having access to your search history, your gmail, your calendar and your location(s) via your phone, Google Now learns what you are doing and what you are going to do and provides relevant suggestions via "cards".

Google Cards currently display public transit data, information about nearby local businesses, events and points of interest. It can even remind you about restaurant reservations.
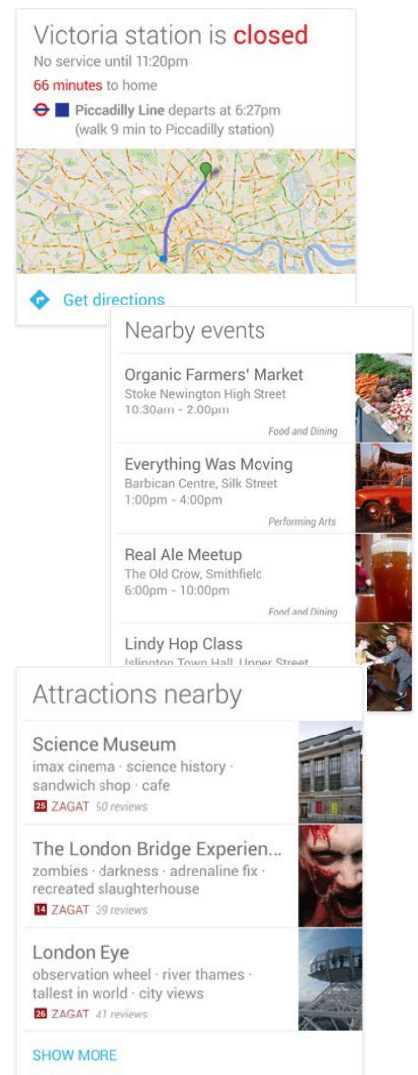
How To Do Mobile Keyword Research

Andrew Shotland

Recently, Google removed the ability to use its keyword tool to get mobile keyword search volume estimates. While this makes things trickier, it does not make it impossible to get mobile keyword data. Here are a few tips:

Analyze Mobile Keywords in Your Analytics

Most popular analytics services allow you to filter organic and paid keywords by device type. Create a report that shows all of the keywords driving traffic from mobile devices - and if you have data on internal search keywords from mobile devices, get that data too.

Use Google Webmaster Tools' Search Queries Report

The Search Queries tool allows you to show keywords you get the most Google impressions for filtered by Mobile. With this report, you both can get an idea of which keywords have a decent amount of search volume and identify the keywords that you rank close to the top for. These are high potential keywords to target.

Put the Data into Google's Keyword Planner Tool

Even though you can't see mobile specific volumes anymore, you now have a list of mobile-relevant keywords and their keyword volumes. Analysts estimate that mobile now accounts for between 40-50% of all searches. So if you multiply the keyword volumes by a conservative 40%, you can start to get an idea of how much mobile volume there is for these. Realtor-related terms in San Diego v. San Francisco, you can now do it. And you can couple this data with keywords used by searchers from specific cities that you can get in your analytics.

Analysts estimate that mobile now accounts for between 40-50% of all searches.

Expand Your Keywords Based on Patterns

Once you have your highest volume mobile keywords, then start looking for patterns in the keyword types. Although there are definitely some specific words that signal mobile intent, in my experience the difference between large keyword sets of mobile search terms and desktop search terms are rapidly disappearing. This is partially because search engines are getting better at surfacing suggested search queries after the user types only a few characters.

But if you can break your keywords down into patterns such as <city name> + <service>, <city name> + <brand>, <city name + sku>, etc. you can start to see how you can expand these keywords by adding additional cities, brands, skus, etc. And you can put them into the Keyword Planner Tool and estimate their mobile search volume.

Use the Locations Filter In the Keyword Planner Tool

Perhaps the best feature of the new tool is the ability to research keywords by specific regions of the country by using the Locations filter.

For example, if you just want to see traffic for realtor-related terms in San Diego v. San Francisco, you can now do it. And you can couple this data with keywords used by searchers from specific cities that you can get in your analytics.

As you can see, there is no simple way, at least none that I can think of, to recreate the data that we lost from Google's old keyword tool. But there are still plenty of ways to try to get in the neighborhood.

And getting in the neighborhood is what local mobile search is all about, right?

Mobile Driving Over 50% of Traffic for Leading Local Sites

Greg Sterling

It goes without saying that the mobile internet is growing fast. Viewed from 30,000 feet, however, it still appears to represent a small minority of overall internet traffic.

StatCounter, for example, reports that just under 85% of US internet traffic comes from PCs, compared with 15% from mobile. But these numbers don't tell the full story. In fact they mask the degree to which mobile is increasingly becoming synonymous with the local internet.

To illustrate that more clearly, we've rounded up a sampling of recently disclosed traffic and query data from leading local publishers:

- 78% percent of Facebook's daily active users are mobile (Facebook's mobile app is second only to Google Maps for local lookups)

- 59% of searches on Yelp are from mobile devices

- 50% of search on YP's network is from mobile devices

- As of Q4 2012 Google Maps had more mobile than PC users

- Nearly 50% of Groupon transactions in June (for North America) came from mobile

- More than 50% of search traffic on Zillow is from mobile device

- 46% of Nielsen survey respondents (Q1 2013) report using mobile devices exclusively for local research across several verticals (banking, gas/convenience, insurance and retail)

Finally according to comScore, in May 2013 time spent online via mobile devices (481 billion minutes) exceeded internet time spent on the PC (477 billion minutes).

Mobile SERP Trends

Precise User Location is a Key Ranking Factor

Below is the result for "sushi bars" in Pleasanton, CA in Yelp's iOS app. The red numbers next to each result are the result's rankings in Yelp's website. Because of the imprecision involved in using an IP address to determine location, the website results provide a geographically wider selection of results.

The order appears to influenced by the rating as well as geography. The mobile results appear to be heavily influenced by the precise location of the user's device. In the example below, ratings still play a big part, but in the case of Kokoro Sushi, which is the physically closest sushi location to me, geography appears to be the reason why the restaurant moved from ranking #13 to #4.
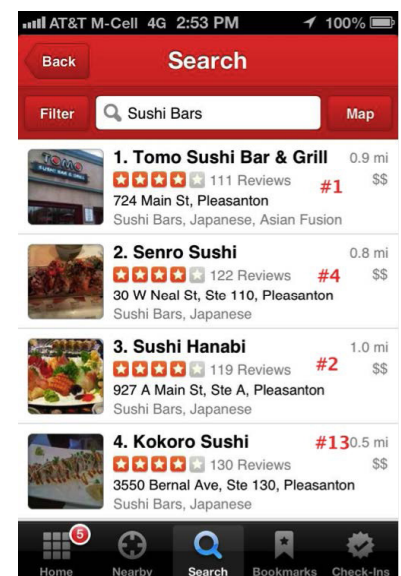
A YEAR IN LOCAL MOBILE SEARCH
Local Mobile Services' Growth 2012-2013

Mobile Visitors Growth

+430%
More
Mobile Visitors

Local.com
19M 2012
34M 2013

TripAdvisor.com
26M 2012
79M 2013

Trulia.com
6.5M 2012
13M 2013

Facebook Place Pages

+ 125%
More Local Business
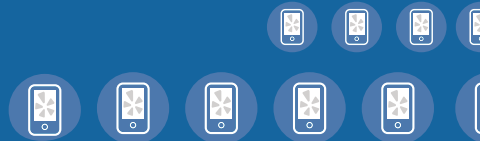Pages on Facebook

8M 2012
18M 2013

Yelp Mobile Usage

+44%
More Mobile Devices
Using Yelp/Month

7.2M 2012
10.4M 2013

Mobile Commerce

+23%
More Money
in M-Commerce

3.8B 2012
4.7B 2013

Mobile Ad Spend

+113%
Increase in Local
Mobile Ad Spending

1.5B 2012
3.2B 2013

Foursquare Check-Ins

+50%
More Money in
M-Commerce

4M 2012
6M 2013

More than 40% Across Age Groups
Want a Smartwatch

Greg Sterling

One of the hottest new areas in mobile computing is "wearables." This comprises everything from the Nike FuelBand to Google Glass and newly introduced smartwatches like Galaxy Gear.

Wearable computers should prove to be fertile ground for location-based apps. But before that can happen there needs to be a market. We sought to determine whether there was actual demand for these new, internet-connected fashion items.

We asked specifically about wearables in an August 2013 survey of more than 1,100 US adult smartphone owners. The findings show, somewhat surprisingly, that there is real demand especially among those under 40 years of age.

When asked whether they owned or had used any "wearable technology" only a small minority responded affirmatively. Well over 80% of respondents had no direct experience with Google Glass, smartwatches or fitness wristbands.

The group with the most exposure was, as one might expect, those under 30. While roughly three-quarters of this group said they had not used any wearable technology, 8% said they owned or had experience with smartwatches and 17% had used a fitness wristband or tracker.

MOBILE SERP TRENDS

PINS NOT RANKINGS

The default view for both Google Maps and Apple Maps is now a set of map pins v. the traditional list of links. While the concept of ranking has not gone away entirely – there still is an art and a science to being one of the pins in the initial set of results, the concept of a top 3 ranking means less in these applications. As with the Yelp mobile results, the results are highly tuned to your device's specific location at the time of the query.
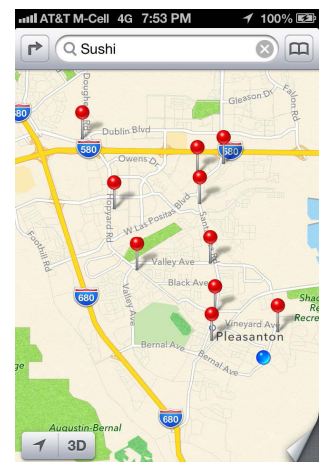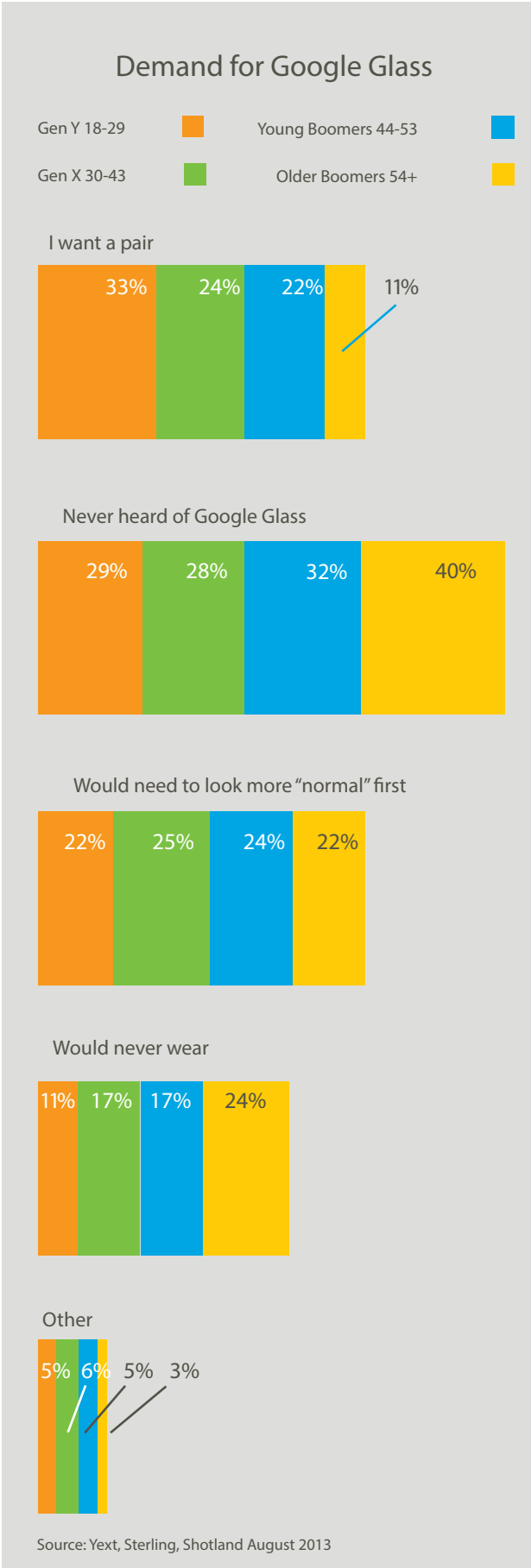
Demand for Google Glass

When asked specifically about Google's internet-connected glasses, Google Glass, we found that demand was similarly concentrated among people under 40. A full third (33%) of those under 30 said they wanted a pair.

Overall, roughly half of those 43 and younger said they were interested or willing to consider Google Glass if more conventional designs became available. Finally, among those under 50, less than 20% said they would "never wear" Glass, indicating a high degree of openness to the product.

It's premature to generalize these findings to the smartphone population as a whole. However, they suggest a sizeable potential market for internet-connected glasses.

The survey revealed even higher levels of interest and demand for smartwatches.

Well over 80% of respondents had no direct experience with Google Glass, smartwatches or fitness wristbands.

Demand for Google Glass

Gen Y 18-29 ■
Gen X 30-43 ■
Young Boomers 44-53 ■
Older Boomers 54+ ■

I want a pair

33%	24%	22%	11%

Never heard of Google Glass

29%	28%	32%	40%

Would need to look more "normal" first

22%	25%	24%	22%

Would never wear

11%	17%	17%	24%

Other

5%	6%	5%	3%

Source: Yext, Sterling, Shotland August 2013

Demand for Smartwatch

Among those under 53, just over 40% said they didn't own a smartwatch today but were interested. This shows a surprisingly high level of potential demand for the right product.
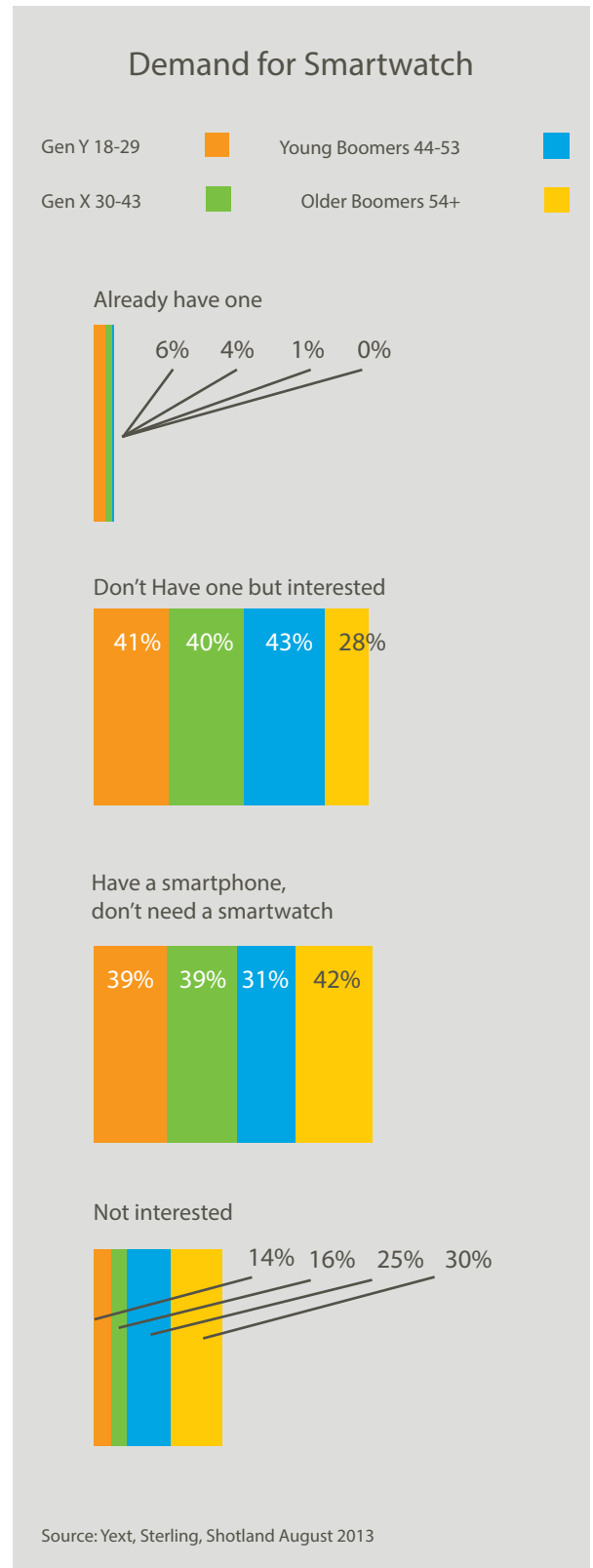
The brands that saw the highest levels of interest were Samsung (35.7%), Apple (34.5%) and Google (24.7%). Microsoft and Nokia had very low levels of interest, mirroring their smartphone market shares. Samsung recently introduced a smartwatch, though Apple despite expectations did not at its iPhone 5S event

Smartwatch consumer brand preference generally tracked respondents' current smartphone maker. Among iPhone owners, 75% wanted an Apple smartwatch while 24% were interested in one from Samsung or Google.

Among Android owners 84% wanted a smartwatch from either Samsung (54%) or Google (30%), while 9% were interested in an Apple smartwatch. Just under 70% of Windows Phone owners (probably Nokia) wanted an Android-based smartwatch, while 23% were interested in a Nokia-branded smartwatch.

As mentioned, these wearable devices will eventually offer an array of location-based apps. Google Maps is already a prominent feature of Google Glass, for example. However before most of those apps will be created, developers will need to see solid consumer demand and device sales.

If these survey results are any indication, the potential demand is there. Device sales should follow for those wearables that offer the right mix of functionality and design at the right price.

Demand for Smartwatch

Gen Y 18-29   Young Boomers 44-53

Gen X 30-43   Older Boomers 54+

Already have one

6%   4%   1%   0%

Don't Have one but interested

41%   40%   43%   28%

Have a smartphone, don't need a smartwatch

39%   39%   31%   42%

Not interested

14%   16%   25%   30%

Source: Yext, Sterling, Shotland August 2013

Two-Thirds Under 30 Go 'Mobile First'
for Local Information

Greg Sterling

Location and mobility aren't entirely synonymous. Yet location defines the mobile user experience in ways it cannot and does not on the PC. As mobile continues to grow it's driving ever-higher percentages of local traffic. Indeed, there are already more internet-connected mobile devices than PCs and the parity is getting larger.
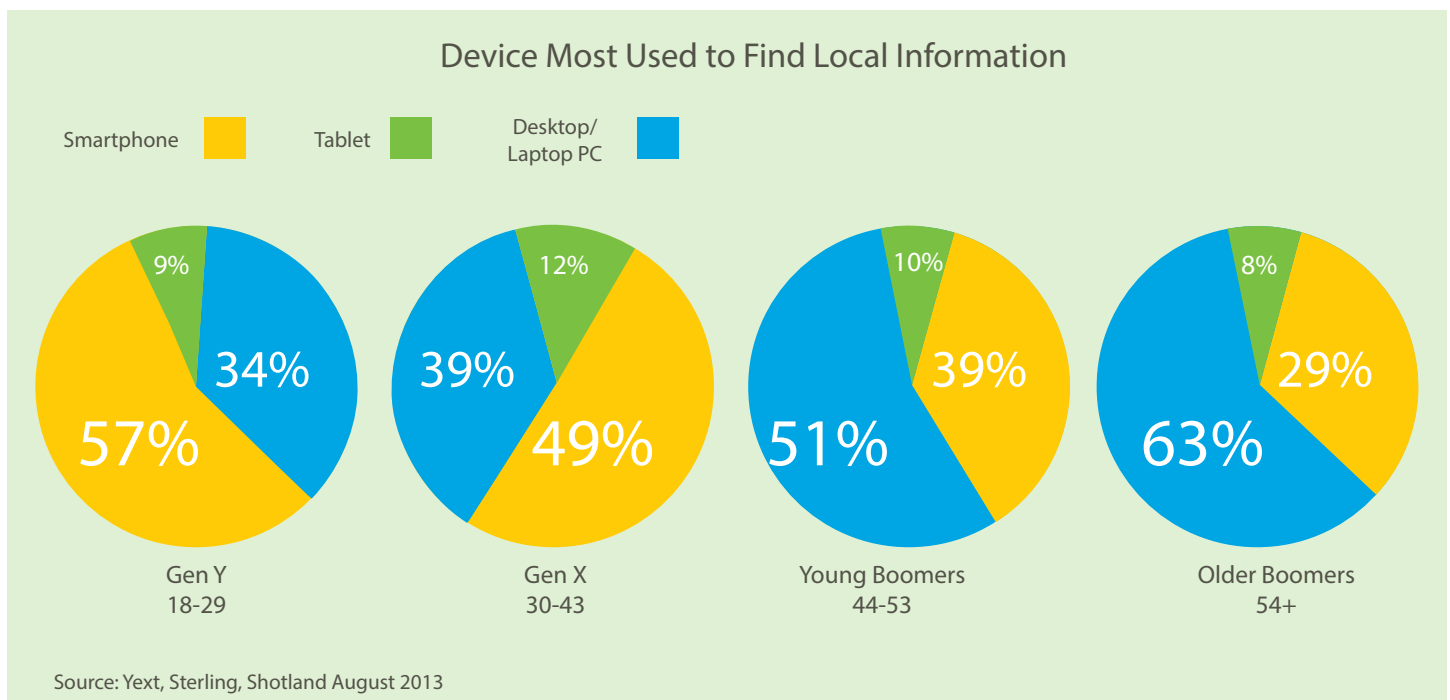
In our August 2013 survey of more than 1,100 US adult smartphone owners, we took a closer look at location-related topics such as check-ins, privacy and local reviews on mobile devices.

Our survey population was in tune   with the most recent comScore smartphone market share estimates: Android 55% (comScore 52%), iPhone 37% (comScore 40%), Windows Phone 3% (comScore 3%).

Device Most Used to Find Local Information

Asked which device (PC, smartphone or tablet) they most commonly used to find local information, younger smartphone owners said they relied more often on mobile. In fact, 66% of people under 30 qualify as "mobile first" when it comes to finding local information.

That equation flips for older people. The majority (63%) of smartphone owners over 55 said they use PCs most often to find local information.

Device Most Used to Find Local Information

Smartphone ■ (yellow)　Tablet ■ (green)　Desktop/Laptop PC ■ (blue)

Gen Y 18-29: Smartphone 57%, Tablet 9%, Desktop/Laptop PC 34%

Gen X 30-43: Smartphone 49%, Tablet 12%, Desktop/Laptop PC 39%

Young Boomers 44-53: Smartphone 39%, Tablet 10%, Desktop/Laptop PC 51%

Older Boomers 54+: Smartphone 29%, Tablet 8%, Desktop/Laptop PC 63%

Source: Yext, Sterling, Shotland August 2013

One local-mobile behavior thought to be waning is check-ins. The survey found, however, that roughly 60% of users under 53 had at one time or another checked-in on a smartphone. More surprising, roughly 40% checked in on a weekly basis. Another 20% did so monthly.

For the remaining 40% who didn't check in the primary reason was "I don't want to broadcast my location to strangers." That was followed by "privacy is too important to me."

But why are significant numbers of smartphone users checking in? Among five potential responses offered, the top three were: providing location for a social update, informing friends "of where I am", or claiming an offer.

Across age groups Gen Y was most likely to check in to connect location to a social update. After that Gen Y members were most likely to check in to claim an offer.

Gen X smartphone owners were primarily motivated to check in to let friends know where they were, followed by providing location for a social update. Young and Older Boomers both followed the same pattern.
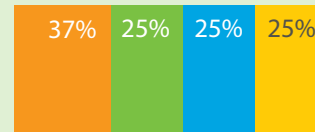
It's also noteworthy that across all groups roughly 20% said they would check-in for an offer. Accordingly, we also asked about sharing location with a business or commercial entity. Only a minority said they would not share location with a business, while 70% said they would share location to gain rewards or a deal.

Roughly 55% of those under 53 told us that they had at some point provided mobile phone numbers in exchange for offers, points or other rewards via SMS. Members of Gen Y (~50%) and to some degree Gen X (~30%) also said they would also be willing to share location for exclusive or personalized content. Boomers were much less interested in this location-for-content exchange.
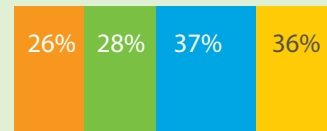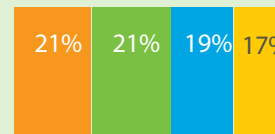
Reason for checking in or sharing location

Gen Y 18-29 ■ (orange) Young Boomers 44-53 ■ (blue)
Gen X 30-43 ■ (green) Older Boomers 54+ ■ (yellow)
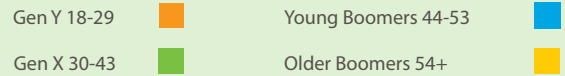
Provide location for picture/social update

| 37% | 25% | 25% | 25% |

"Let friends know where I am"

| 26% | 28% | 37% | 36% |

To recieve offer or a reward

| 21% | 21% | 19% | 17% |

Its a habit

7% 13% 3%   6%

Not sure

7% 11%   12% 13%

Other
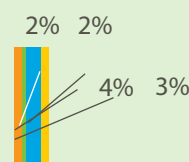
2% 2%   4% 3%
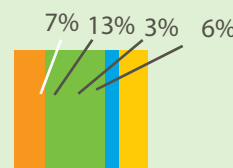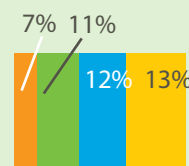
Source: Yext, Sterling, Shotland August 2013

Mobile Apps Used to Rate/Review Local Businesses

The survey also investigated mobile ratings and reviews. Nearly three-fourths (70%) of our respondents had written reviews or rated local businesses. In contrast to finding local business information where mobile devices were widely used, PCs were heavily favored for local reviews. Roughly 70% of Gen Y and more than 80% of those over 54 preferred PCs to mobile devices for rating/reviewing local businesses.

For the roughly 14% who preferred mobile, Facebook was, somewhat surprisingly, the dominant app – over Google Maps, Yelp, TripAdvisor, OpenTable and Foursquare. For members of Gen Y, Google Maps was the second most common app used. However Yelp and TripAdvisor beat Google Maps with the 44 to 53 age group.

Yet when it comes to local search and discovery Google Maps dominates all others except for Mapquest, which remains popular with older users.

There are clear differences in the attitudes and behaviors among age groups when it comes device usage. For those under 40 mobile is increasingly the primary device for local information (except for local reviews). Older smartphone owners still rely much more heavily on the PC to find local business content.

Even though there are nuances in the data, it's clear we're witnessing a tectonic shift in consumer behavior. Digital marketers have spent 15 years thinking about how to effectively reach internet users on PCs. But they really haven't fully comprehended the degree to which PCs have faded as the center of the online universe.
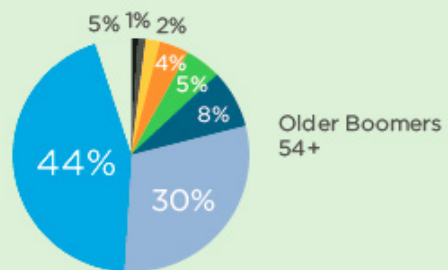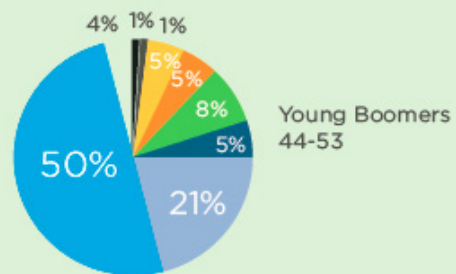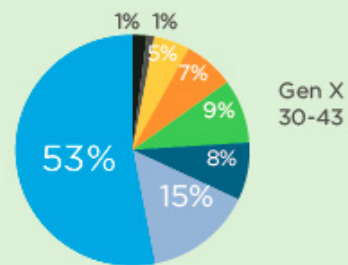
The PC is just one device now among many. And when it comes to local information, they are increasingly eclipsed by mobile devices.

Mobile apps used to rate/review local businesses

Source: Yext, Sterling, Shotland August 2013
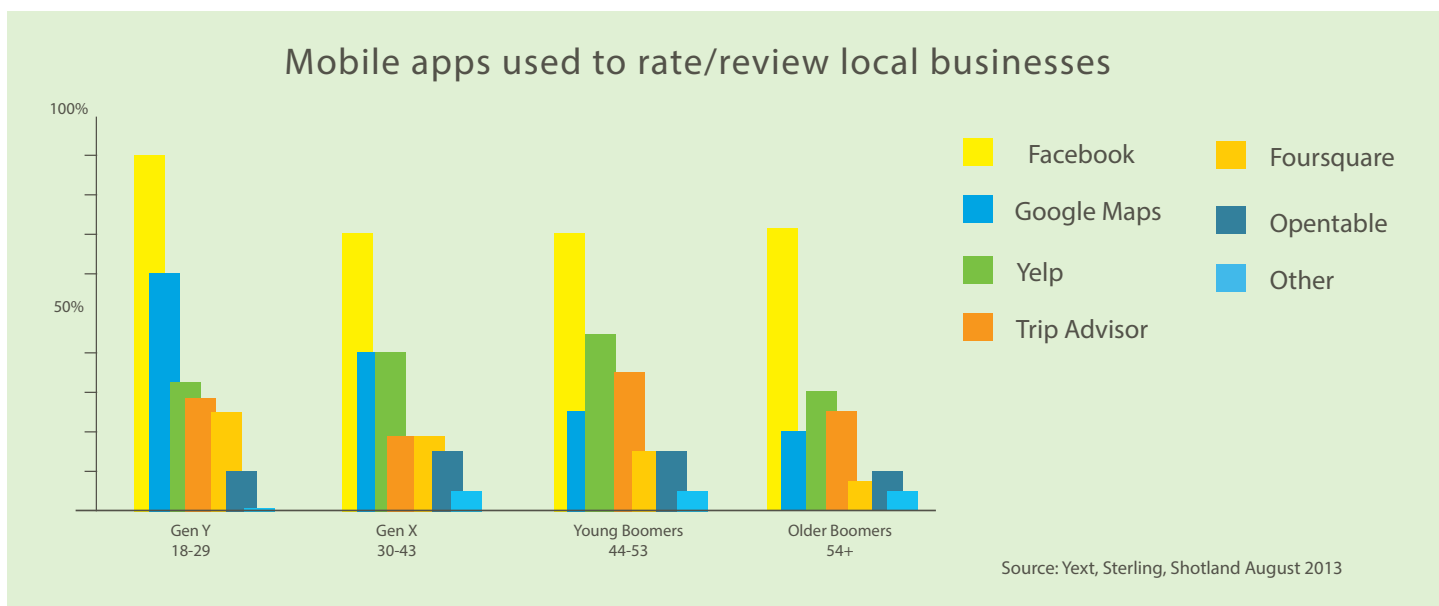
Members of Gen Y (~50%) and Gen X (~30%) said they would be willing to share location for exclusive or personalized content.

Boomers were much less interested in this location-for-content exchange.

Which of the Following Is Your Most Often Used App for Location and Local Business Information?

- Google Maps
- Apple Maps
- Yelp
- Mapquest
- Facebook
- Foursquare
- YP.com
- Scout
- Other

Gen Y 18-29
- 68%
- 1%
- 7%
- 6%
- 8%
- 4%
- 5%

Gen X 30-43
- 53%
- 1% 1%
- 5%
- 7%
- 9%
- 8%
- 15%

Young Boomers 44-53
- 50%
- 4% 1% 1%
- 5%
- 5%
- 8%
- 5%
- 21%

Older Boomers 54+
- 44%
- 5% 1% 2%
- 4%
- 5%
- 8%
- 30%
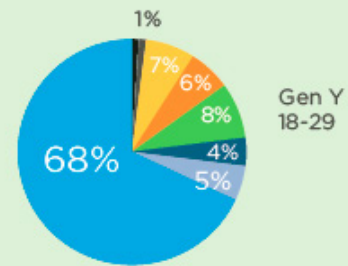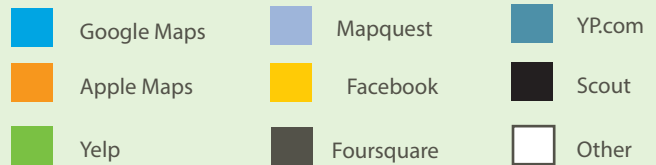
The Rise of "Generation M"

Greg Sterling

In this case "M" doesn't mean "Millennial," it stands for "mobile." We're now witnessing the emergence of a generation of smartphone and, increasingly, tablet owners who prefer to search, browse and buy on mobile devices rather than conventional PCs.

In a number of verticals the PC is either being used as a secondary tool or in some cases not at all. In addition, more monthly minutes are now spent online through mobile devices than on PCs.

A recent Nielsen study found that 46% of US survey respondents relied exclusively on smartphones or tablets in conducting online research across a range of local categories (i.e. retail, banking, gas and convenience). That same study found that, in the banking category, more than 50% of smartphone and tablet users did not use a PC to make purchase decisions (e.g. about credit cards).

The Pew Research Center not long ago found that 34% of all those who go online with mobile do "most" of their internet browsing via smartphones. Tablet usage was not part of the study. Had it been Pew speculated the "mostly mobile" audience would have been even larger.

Device Most Used to Find Local Information

Asked which device (PC, smartphone or tablet) they most commonly used to find local information, younger smartphone owners said they relied more often on mobile. In fact, 66% of people under 30 qualify as "mobile first" when it comes to finding local information.

That equation flips for older people. The majority (63%) of smartphone owners over 55 said they use PCs most often to find local information.

66% of people under 30 reported that they used smartphones or tablets more often than PCs for local and location information

Online Share of Minutes by Platform by Content Area

Legend: ■ PC ■ Smartphone ■ Tablet

Content Area	PC	Smartphone	Tablet
Total Internet	49%	39%	12%
Automotive	76%	16%	8%
Business/Finance	68%	29%	3%
TV	66%	12%	20%
News/Information	62%	31%	7%
Sports	62%	31%	7%
Food	56%	28%	16%
Health	54%	40%	6%
Entertainment	50%	39%	11%
Lifetyles	50%	32%	18%
Retail	49%	35%	16%
Weather	36%	55%	9%
Social Media	33%	58%	9%
Technology	20%	64%	16%
Games	18%	48%	34%
Radio	17%	77%	15%
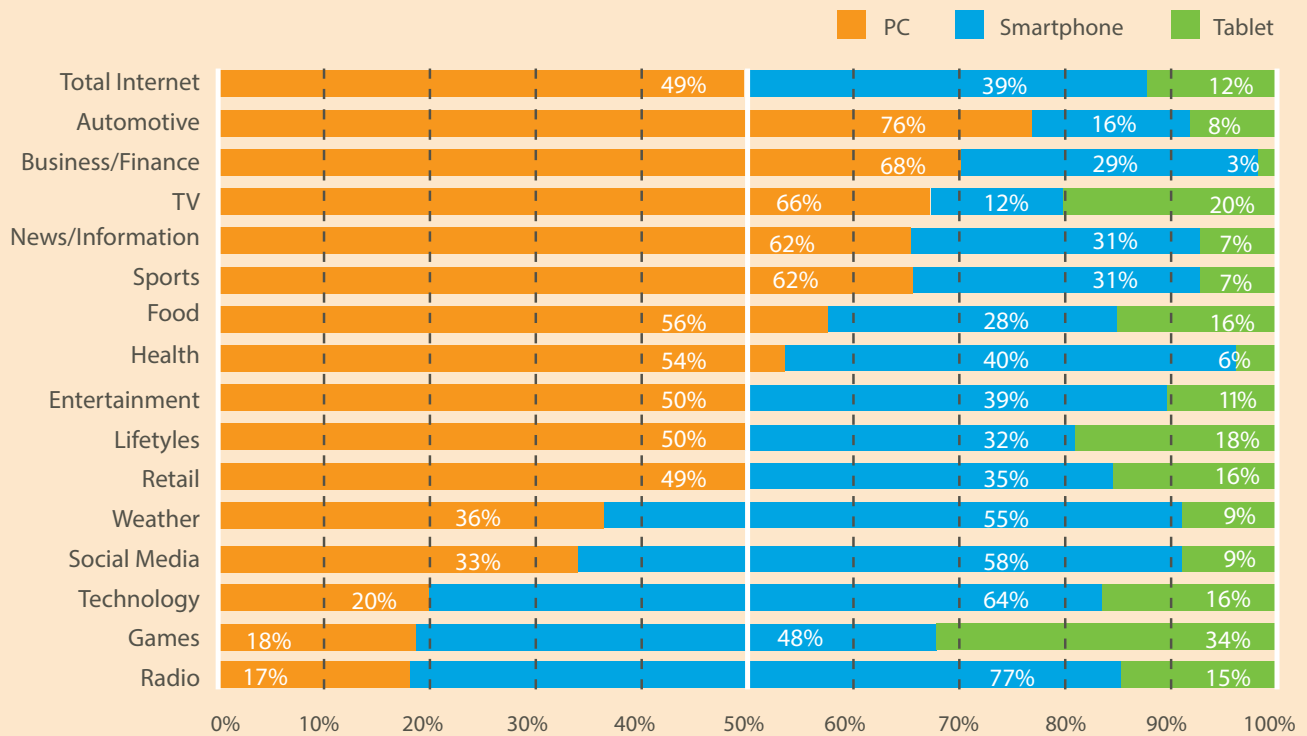
Source: comScore Media Metric Mutiplatform April 2013; comScore Mobile Metrix. April 2013

The chart above reflects comScore data comparing time spent by device in specific categories. Some verticals continue to see heavy PC usage (e.g. automotive), while mobile devices are responsible for the bulk of time spent in others (e.g. social media, games).

US smartphone penetration now stands at 64% according to the most recent figures from Nielsen. But when one looks more closely, the numbers are even larger in selected age categories. Those in the 25 - 34 age group have the highest smartphone penetration, at 81%. Teens 13 -17 are second at 70%. And most conventional or feature phone owners are over 55 years of age.

In the Yext survey 66% of people under 30 reported that they used smartphones or tablets more often than PCs for local and location information. As we wrote in another article in this issue, more than 50% of search queries on many high-profile local sites (e.g. Yelp, Zillow) are now coming from mobile devices.

Marketers and brands trying to reach people under 40 are all-but-compelled to adopt a "mobile first" strategy. Yet that's not happening -- because many marketers have yet to assimilate and fully understand the far-reaching implications of the rise of Generation M.