

4 Tips for Finding Focus in a Mobile World



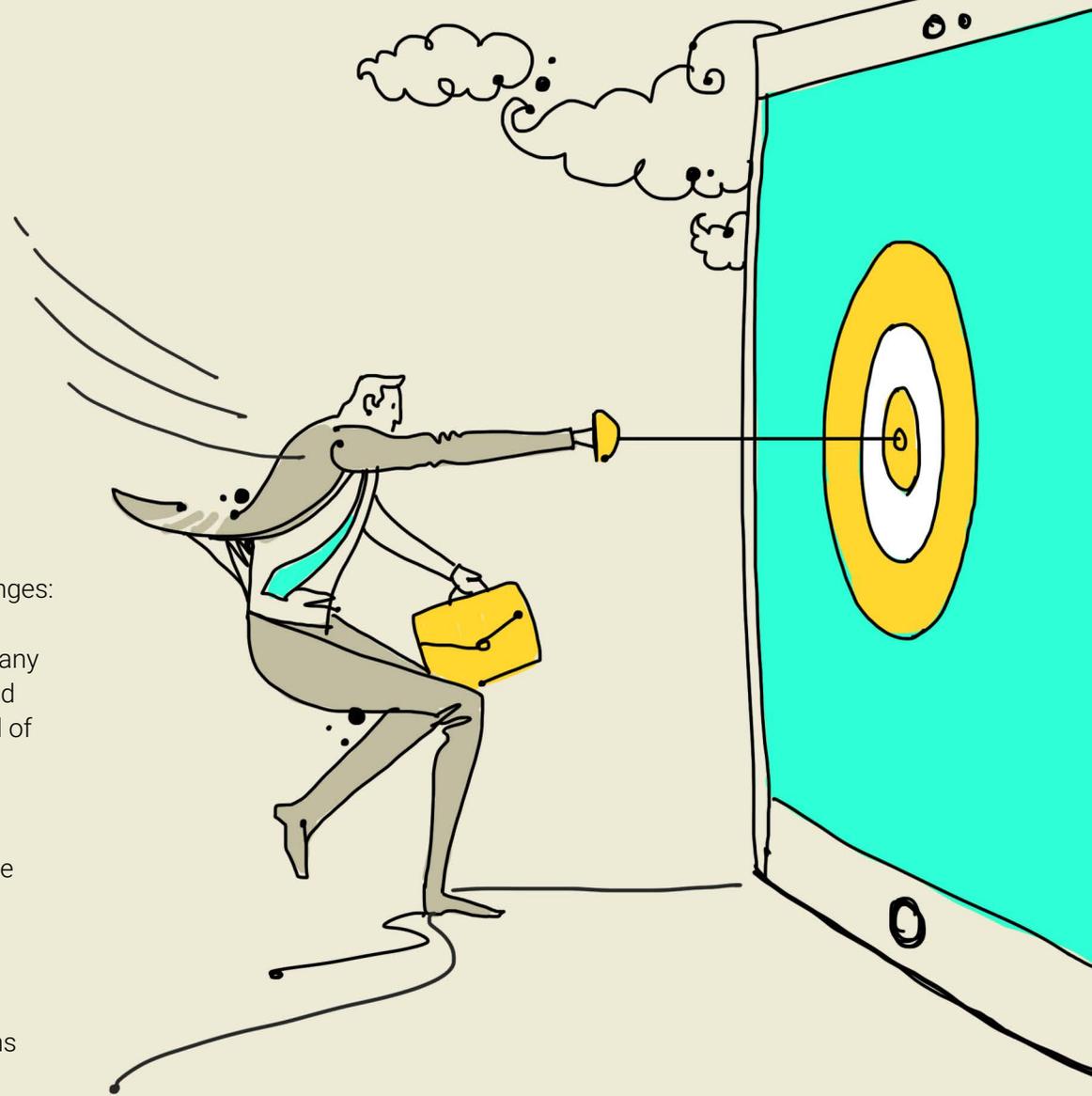
Introduction

There's a reason everybody talks about how fast the digital world changes: it's almost impossible to keep up with – unless you make a concerted effort. Staying on top of digital trends is a nice idea, and something many of us try to do, but there often isn't enough time. What happens instead is a perpetual game of catch-up in which you're stuck reacting instead of proactively making plans.

At the center of the constantly expanding digital universe is mobile technology – the very thing responsible for the accelerated growth rate that makes a marketer's job both thrilling and challenging.

In the current digital climate, a marketer's job is a little bit like trying to plan a trip around the world while places and transportation methods are constantly changing or improving. Imagine you pre-plan for months – even book plane and train tickets – only to discover the cities you were supposed to visit have completely changed or moved. And the plane tickets you bought are no longer valid (let's assume the revival of supersonic air travel has put your airline out of business).

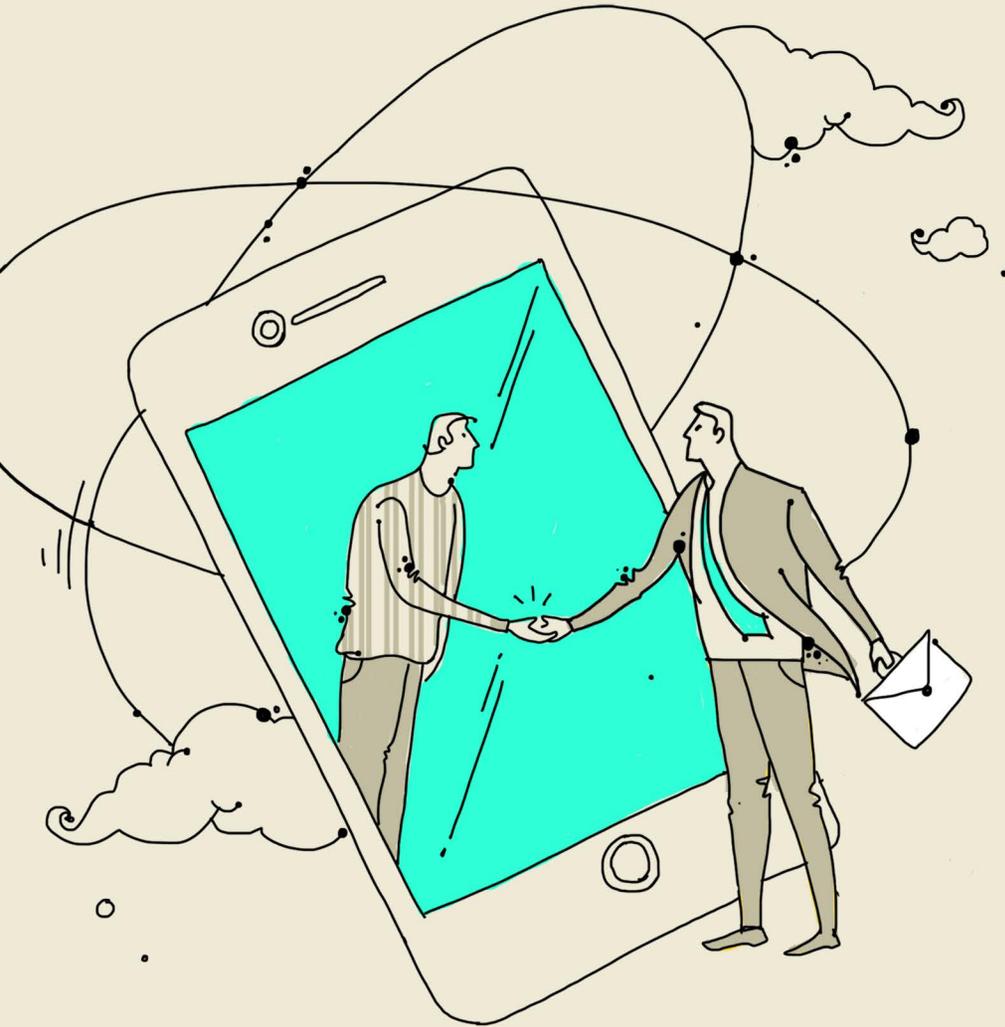
Farfetched? Maybe. Or maybe not: global smartphone usage is growing so exponentially it's predicted that within two years, [all global Internet users will have smartphones](#). Either way, it's easy to see the difficulties such rapid change can cause for planning and executing long term strategies.



Mobile technology has powerful influence over the way we communicate, interact and do business. But with technology comes distraction, uncertainty and constant change. It's tough for businesses and marketers to do the right thing when the right thing is an evolving target.

At the end of the day all you can do is plan, execute and adapt to the best of your abilities. In order to help you out, we came up with 4 Tips for Finding Focus in A Mobile World.

#1 Use Mobile Technology



Perfectly integrating new technology into business and marketing processes is difficult. We won't dispute the claim because it is, after all, the reason we exist.

But here's the great thing about mobile technology: we're all users. Smartphones are part and parcel of the modern workforce; even trades workers depend on mobile devices for communication and location, at the very least. This means no matter the industry you're in, you have an inherent understanding of a large chunk of every single one of your customer personas.

That's right, even though you may have multiple customer personas (most businesses do) they all have a common element: just like you, they're smartphone users.

Since our first tip is to use mobile technology you're probably thinking, "You just said it – we all use mobile technology." However, we don't mean use your device to check fantasy teams or call your spouse at lunch, as you normally would.

What we're suggesting is getting into the mindset of one of your potential customers and using your mobile device from their perspective. It's not easy, but try to be objective.

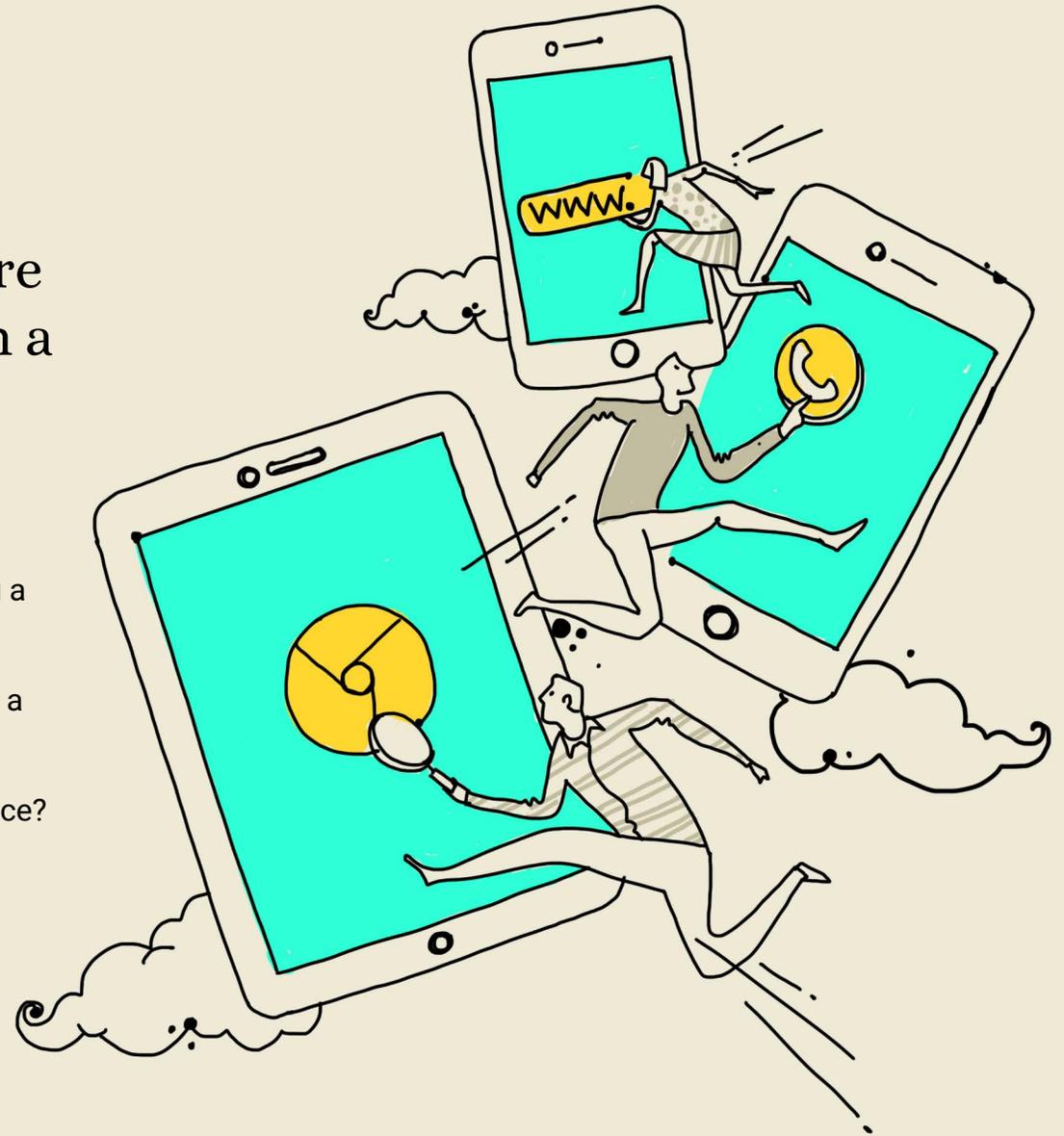
Navigate to your business's website from a mobile device to discover usability issues. Use the Chrome mobile app to search for your business, without the business name or even your primary offering as search terms. Can you still find any pages of your website?

Finally, use only your smartphone to get in touch with your company, and actually go through the process of completing a form or sending an email. Then document the response time and quality, and honestly answer this question: are you delivering the experience you promise and would it satisfy you as a customer?

The number of businesses that haven't done this is shocking. It seems simple enough, and if you've done it, great – you're much closer to finding focus in a mobile world than your competitors!

Here's a quick checklist to ensure you use mobile technology from a beneficial perspective:

- Is your website easy to navigate on a smartphone?
- Can you find any pages on your website by conducting a mobile web search?
- Is it easy to get in touch with your company using only a mobile phone?
- As a customer, are you happy with the overall experience?



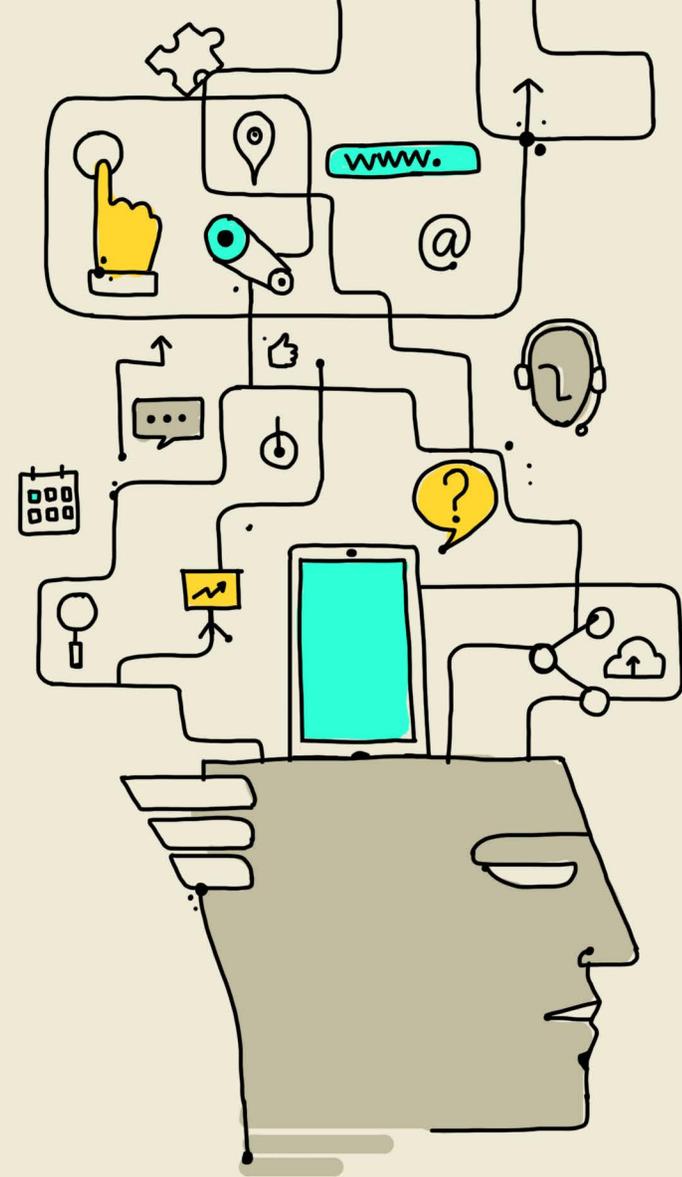
#2 Think Like a Customer

Now, we won't insult your business prowess by telling you to develop a mobile strategy that's customer centric...but that's precisely what you should be doing! It might sound like Marketing 101, but it's the mindset that's propelled some of the best mobile marketing strategies we've ever seen.

To be clear, when we say "think like a customer," we mean think big. When it comes to your mobile strategy, thinking big involves so much more than ensuring your site incorporates responsive code and accommodates varying screen sizes. Of course, that's all fine and dandy, but when companies take the bare minimum a step further, the customers come flocking in.

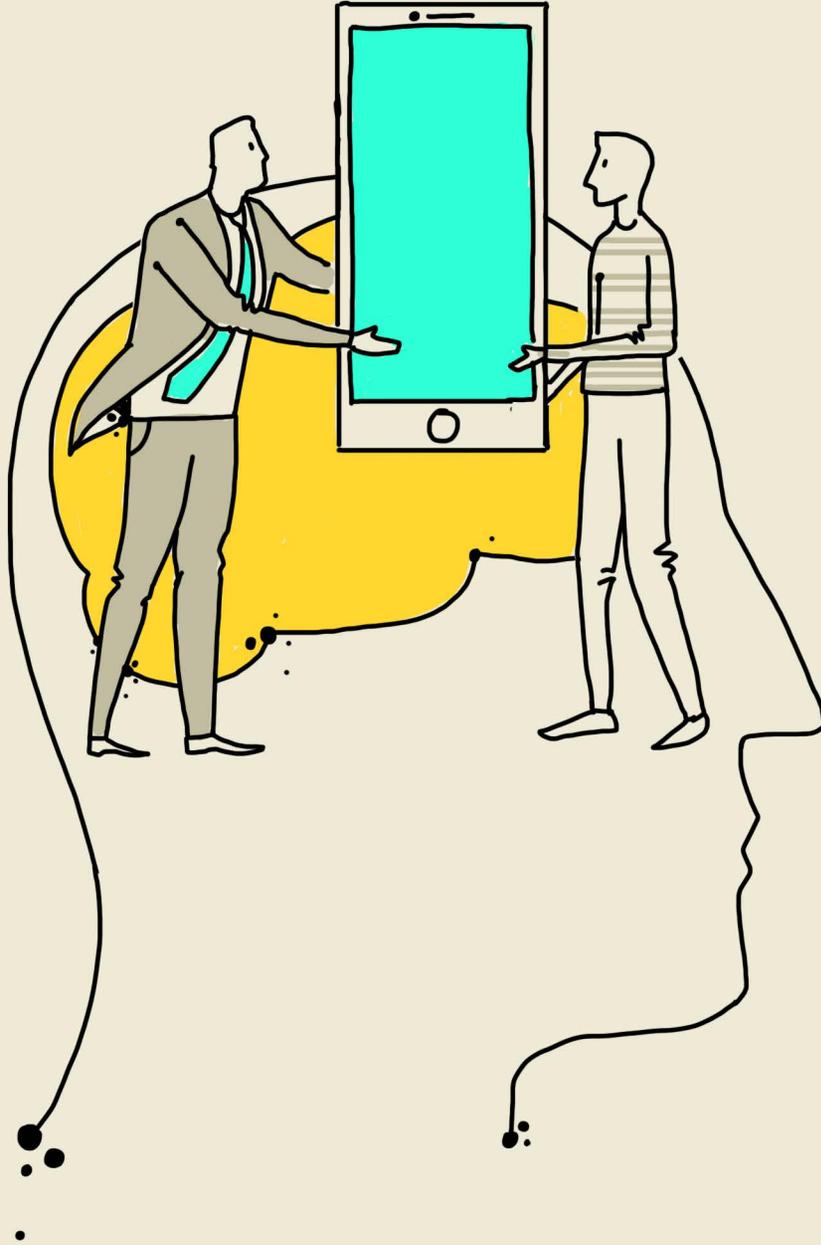
For example, let's take a look at Walgreens, an American pharmaceutical chain found on every other street corner in the United States. The team at Walgreens wittingly identified a mobile opportunity that would offer their customers an unrivaled level of convenience: refilling prescriptions right from mobile devices! After all, millions of consumers are spending top dollar for state of the art iPhones or Androids, most of which featured powerful hardware like 5-megapixel cameras. The convenience of snapping a photo of a prescription label barcode, uploading it to a Walgreens app, and easily generating a prescription refill sounded like the stuff of easy-living dreams within a Jesters-esque world...until they rolled out the app of course.

Suddenly, gone were the days of trekking out to the closest Walgreens, standing in line awaiting a pharmacist to submit your order, and waiting another 20 minutes for your prescription to be ready. Now, all it takes is a smartphone camera, an app and a wifi connection to ensure your medicinal needs are ready when you need them to be ready.



If that in-app service wasn't enough, version 2.0 of the Walgreens app turfed the initial login process. Eliminating this step not only boosted user convenience, but generally [increased the app's acceptance rate as well.](#)

We can learn a lot from those geniuses over at Walgreens. Pinpointing customer challenges like prescription-filling processes and inconvenient login requirements, then remedying them with the mobile technology they already leverage on a daily basis is the perfect storm of thinking like a customer.



To help you think like a customer, here's a list of questions you should keep in mind as you develop your customer-centric mobile strategy:

- Can your customer access your services quickly and conveniently through their mobile devices?
- Is their mobile experience with your brand leveraging all the right kinds of technologies? (ie: wifi access or camera usage)
- Can you make improvements to the challenges customers experience with your services on mobile?

#3

Get Predictive

Every December, we make a set of five marketing predictions for the coming year. Sometimes we're correct; other times we're completely wrong. We borrowed the idea from Moz's Rand Fishkin since we enjoy [his attempts to foretell the future](#).

But guess what? Even though Rand is one of the smartest people in the digital marketing and SEO space, he is still sometimes bang on – and other times dead wrong.

That's the thing about our industry: it's incredibly difficult to predict. Which is exactly why it's so important to keep making predictions; even though you'll never get everything correct, you'll get better every time you attempt it. And you'll also learn a lot about your business and how much difference just thinking about the future can make.

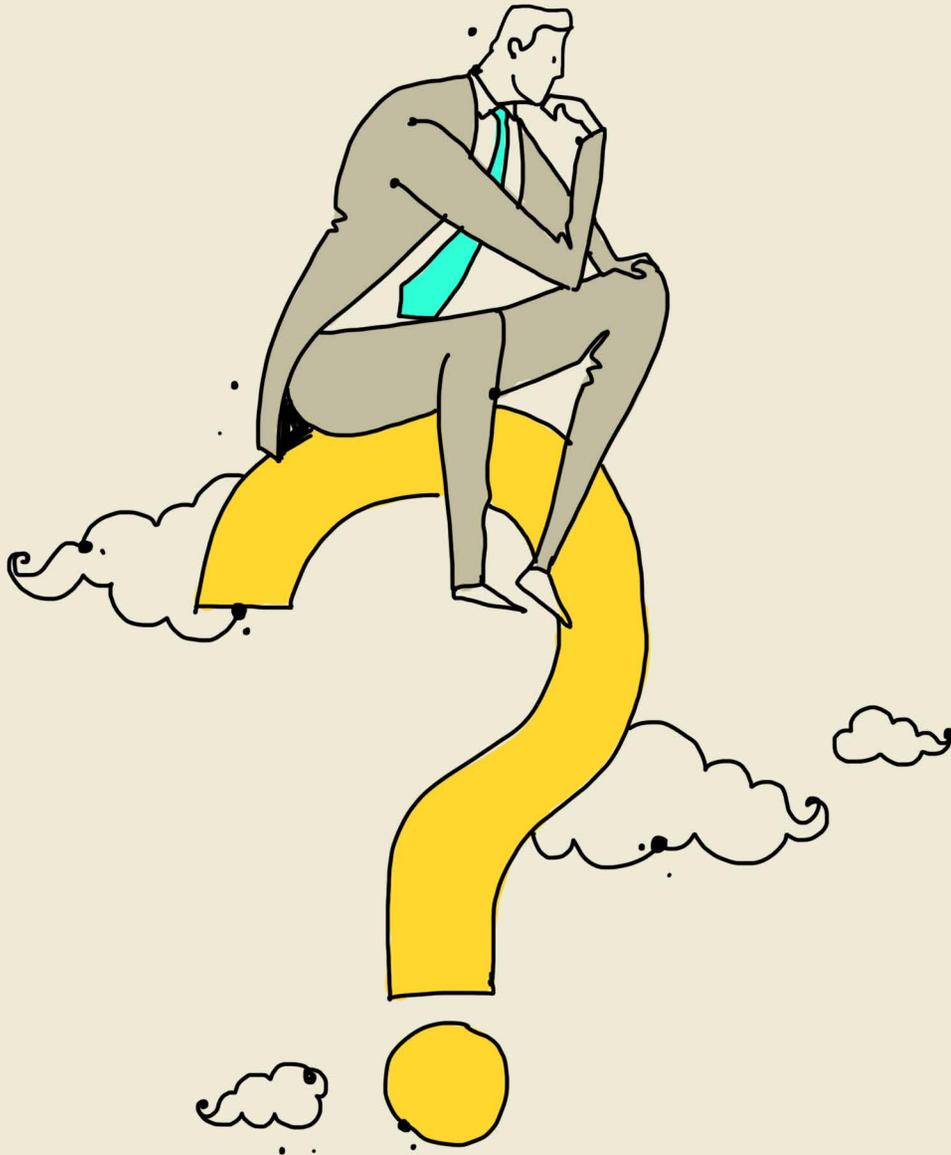
There's a great quote from Canadian hockey icon Wayne Gretzky in which he says, "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take." In the same way, if you don't try to predict what's coming, you'll only be able to react to whatever unknowns the future holds – which is messy for business. However, if you take a shot at thinking even six months ahead, you might make a prediction that helps your business achieve its goals much faster than you could had you not tried.

Another great aspect of getting predictive is that, like taking a shot in hockey, there's no downside. Nothing catastrophic will happen if your predictions are wrong.

Consider the Pokémon Go phenomenon that has swept the world off its feet. If you were paying attention to the game coming down the



pipeline and had an inkling it would have success, maybe you made sure you downloaded the game before its official release (you know, for science). Even a minor prediction like this would have given you a jump on discovering all the ways [Pokémon Go is changing mobile advertising](#).



To encourage you to get predictive, here are some questions to inspire your inner oracle:

- What new devices are hitting the market next year? How could they potentially relate to your business?
- What new games or apps are coming out soon? Could they intersect with your business in any way?
- What kind of technology are the world's biggest brands purchasing (ie: what companies are Google and Facebook buying)?
- Could any of these new devices, apps or technologies alter the way your customers interact with your business?

#4

Plan...To Be Agile

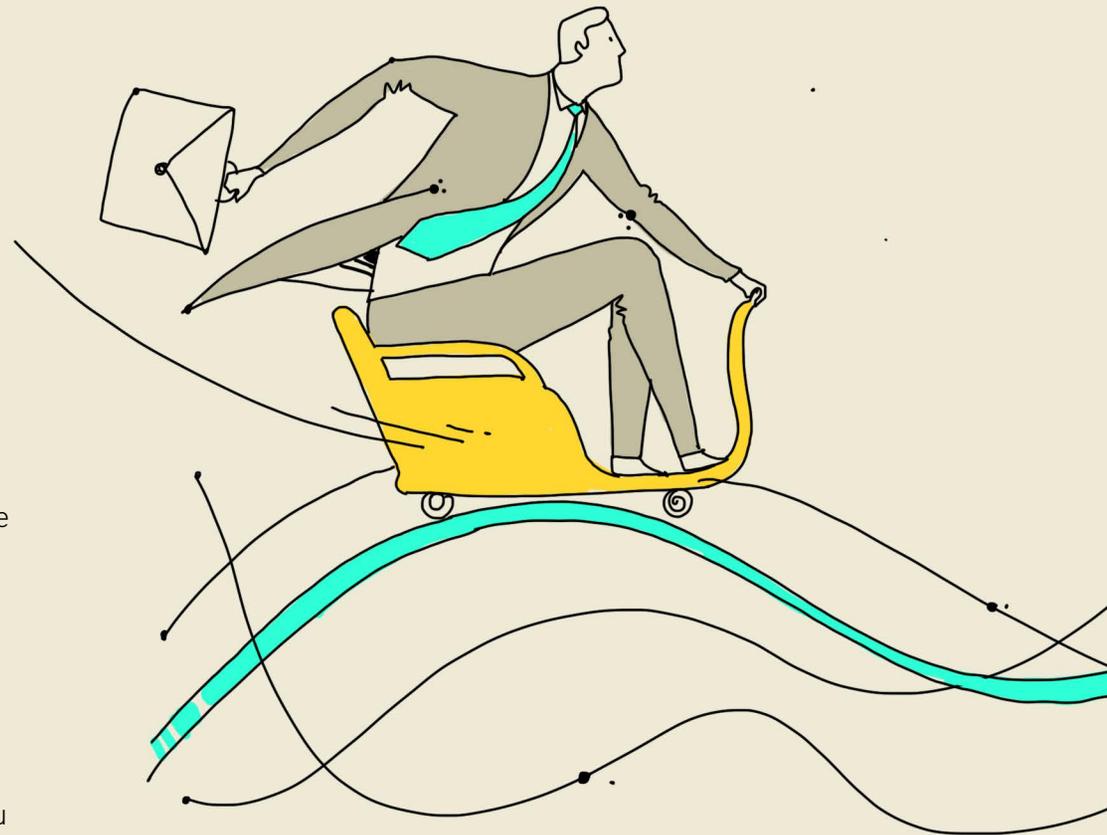
Before we delve into tip #4, let's clarify: there's nothing wrong with planning. It's an essential component of not only business, but life. Knowing where you're going and how you're getting there is a good way to live.

Having said that, in the world of digital marketing there is no room for rigid planning. Nor is there cause for stubbornness in support of a plan simply because it's "the plan." These things are, for lack of a better way to describe them, hallmarks of old-school thinking.

The belief that once you set down a certain path there is no turning back is a fallacy; don't fall victim to it, and don't let anybody convince you it's real. If you plan to go one direction and quickly realize it's the wrong way, turn around and go back. Stop and take a break. Or veer completely off the beaten track and zig-zag your way through the trees. Anything is better than trudging along a disheartening path merely because you chose it. You were wrong, but it's okay – plans change.

If that felt a little bit like a session with a psychiatrist, we're sorry. But it needed to be said.

So how can you plan to be agile? For starters, develop **a loose plan and keep it small** (as opposed to all encompassing). One of the reasons this works is it'll be easier to deviate from a plan if it didn't take you days of work to put together. Devising a yearly campaign is a lot of work, which makes it harder to abandon if things aren't working out after three months.



Think about it, though. No matter what kind of strategy you lay out – social media, content or PPC – if it's not attracting and converting customers, you shouldn't simply keep going and hope for the best. You have options. Make a small iteration and wait for improvements. If that doesn't work, try a bigger adjustment. If things still aren't going well, it may be time to make an agile movement and embrace something new.

As Sean Maguire would say, "It's not your fault."



To assist you in planning to be agile, here are some questions to help you determine when it's time to form a new plan:

- Is your marketing plan generating the results you expected?
- If not, is there an easy improvement to make?
- If your marketing plan isn't generating new business, what is the reason to continue with it?

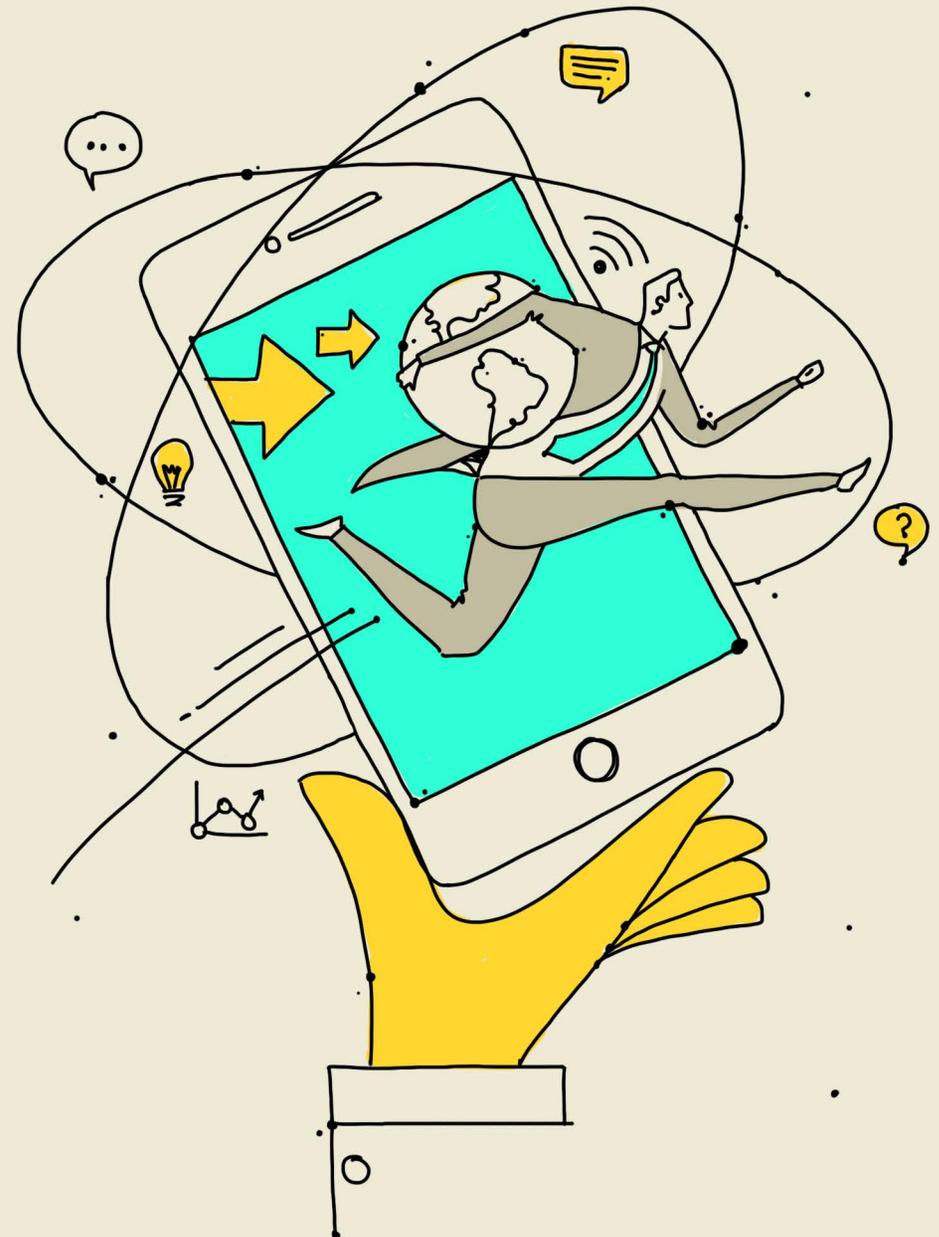
Conclusion

There's a lot going on in the mobile space, both due to the power of the technology and how frequently it's iterated and improved. For marketers, it's easy to lose sight of goals in the battle to stay updated on the latest trends.

The key is to focus. First and foremost, focus on your business and achieving the goals you set. Second, when it comes to mobile technology, focus on understanding one or two components – preferably ones that relate and connect to your industry – really well, and let the rest go. It's just too hard and stressful to keep up with everything, not to mention how impossible it is to practically apply everything even if you do manage it.

One way to improve focus is to hone in on a few things you believe are likely to happen, that way if and when they do, you're prepared and can take advantage. A second method, which might seem counterintuitive, is to loosen your grip on even your best laid plans if things aren't working out. Changing the plan is always a better option than riding a malfunctioning one into the ground.

At the end of the day, every marketer and business owner finds focus in their own way. If you're ever stuck, the handy little checklists we've included in this guide are here to inspire you. We hope you've learned from our 4 Tips for Finding Focus in A Mobile World guide and wish you the best of luck (and focus!) in all your endeavours.



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Headquartered in Toronto, Canada, we also have offices in over 80 countries. We're a powerful network of marketers who strive to discover, analyze, build and implement digital solutions that win digital marketing awards and help businesses succeed online. Over the last 20 years, WSI has won multiple digital marketing awards for our solutions by adapting to the constantly shifting landscape of the Internet. We take pride in helping businesses make the most of the dollars they spend on digital marketing.

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