



AOL Company Analysis

Mobile Ad Strategy Fuels America Online's Renaissance

October 2009

Overview

America Online (AOL), once the leading Internet service provider, is rejuvenating its flailing brand by expanding its portfolio of products and services, recruiting talented leadership, and moving assertively to capture market share in the burgeoning mobile advertising industry. Although it faces near-term challenges from bellwether online properties such as Google and Doubleclick, AOL will likely emerge among the top five mobile advertising network leaders through 2013. Brand marketers looking to leverage AOL's mobile services should tread cautiously until mid-2010 when the company has firmly re-established its mobile brand strategy.

This report provides a concise and highly impactful analysis of AOL's business prospects, competitive analysis, SWOT analysis, and proprietary analysis of the Mobile Advertising Network Vendor Landscape. This must read report will help anyone involved in mobile advertising better understand business strategies, competition and the direction of product offerings and solutions.

Key Findings

- America Online (AOL), once the leading Internet service provider, is rejuvenating its flailing brand by expanding its portfolio of products and services, recruiting talented leadership, and moving assertively to capture market share in the burgeoning mobile advertising industry
- AOL recently decided to discontinue its Platform-A brand and will house all of its advertising functions under the aegis of AOL Advertising. This unit will include the company's premium ad sales on its owned properties, its Advertising.com third-party advertising network, and its AdTech advertising server operations.
- AOL's growing suite of products and services builds on its core competencies in the buy-side and sell side of media. While a merged AOL/Time Warner continuously bolsters its presence in print and online publishing, the company is making great strides in unconventional media solutions, including mobile.
- AOL's rebranding of Platform A into AOL Advertising is a smart move for the beleaguered advertising network that will immediately boost AOL's presence in the mobile space. Behind the strength of the AOL name, AOL Advertising is poised to offer brand managers a unique mobile display and mobile search advertising cadre of solutions with the extensive reach of AOL's network.
- AOL's long-term challenge is to stave off the accelerated efforts of Google and Bing within the mobile space, particularly mobile local search. Although Google, MSN, Yahoo, and America Online dominate the white label search and content aggregator supply side, the authors expect that Google will emerge as the dominant search



Target Audience

Media Buyers at Marketing and Advertising Agencies, and Corporate Marketing Departments: Chief Marketing and Advertising Executives are determining how best to allocate their budgets for 2010 and mobile is certainly on their radar.

Mobile advertising networks: The suppliers enable different types of mobile ads to be broadcast over mobile networks, in videos, and in other mobile premium content.

Mobile search and content aggregators: Many are chasing Google but the smaller vendors offer localized search capabilities.

Cellular phone providers. They carry the millions of text messages, some of them sponsored, and are looking at ways to leverage mobile marketing campaign data for their own use.

Mobile platform developers: These suppliers create videos, games, downloadable applications for mobile that they in turn use to recruit sponsorship opportunities.

Traditional media outlets: Broadcast television stations and Internet properties are leveraging mobile to stream newscasts and other premium content

Smartphone and PDA manufacturers: They provide the hardware that enable next-generation mobile content possible

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