

Mobile and Digital Marketing Consulting and Education Agency



Michael J. Becker
Co-founder &
Managing Partner

CEOCFO: Mr. Becker, what is the concept at mCordis?

Mr. Becker: It is very simple, we advise and we educate specifically when it comes to digital marketing and mobile marketing.

CEOCFO: Fundamentally, what do you understand about those areas that perhaps others do not?

Mr. Becker: We have been involved in mobile, and specifically mobile marketing, for quite some time. I personally have been involved in mobile since 1996, and my partner Paul Berney has been involved in mobile for over 10 years and in agency work for nearly 20. We've both seen a lot of growth and evolution in the space and have established a purview on the application of mobile within the marketers mix at multiple levels. There is a consumer behavior level, an internal marketing objectives and multichannel level, a media and audience building level, an analytics and technology level, and finally, a regulations and policy level Each of these brings a different perspective – that of the consumer, the marketer, the technology provider and the policy maker. The key to success in this space is finding a balance and helping all the groups work together.

CEOCFO: Who is using your services?

Mr. Becker: We work with brands, media companies and technology players of all sizes – from two person organizations to multi-billion dollar brands. For example, a brand may come to us for strategy, advice and education on how they can use mobile within their marketing mix to engage consumers and grow their business. A technology provider could come to us to better understand the needs of a brand client and how to position their offering properly in order to achieve their objectives.

CEOCFO: Would you explain what you mean through the lens of education?

Mr. Becker: One of the biggest challenges in marketing today is that there is a fundamental talent gap across the board with individuals who understand how mobile and digital technologies can be applied and used within the marketing mix. You are seeing the market trying to catch up with lots of students coming up the ranks, but it is not happening as fast as it needs to for us to really develop a stable economy in mobile. Just look at the way media spending is trending. Right now, the majority of consumers' time is spent in digital and social media. About 90 percent of our consumption happens through one of four screens -- a digitally enabled television, computer, mobile phone or tablet. Yet, less than three to four percent of marketers' media spending is happening in those channels. We are seeing estimates of \$20 - \$30 billion gap between where marketers are putting their money and where consumers are spending their time. Marketers haven't necessarily received formal training on how to thrive in a world where consumers are in total control. What we do then, is teach them how to close the gap and how to integrate mobile both from a digital perspective as well as from an application of traditional media perspective. It's really important for marketers to understand. Because, if you think about it, the fundamentals of marketing, the platonic shift of marketing, has completely shifted with the release of the iPhone in 2008.

CEOCFO: How does educating differ from consulting?

Mr. Becker: Education is teaching people how to think and giving people frameworks. One could say that every teacher is a consultant that's teaching people by sharing information and knowledge. We think of Education as a multi-layered approach where you help people understand and embrace knowledge and then apply it. If you think about the taxonomy of learning, what we have done is utilize a framework that starts with knowledge. If you give people knowledge and information, can they recall the information that they need to know? Then you have to test them on comprehension so they understand what you are doing, and then you test them on application to see if they can apply the knowledge and

comprehension that they have applied. You then teach them how they can analyze patterns and identify opportunities. From there, the next layer of education is synthesis. Are they able to use those concepts and synthesize them within their daily lives? Finally, you help to develop the skill of evaluation where students assess theories and evaluate where things are going. Those are the stages of educational curriculum, and one of the aspects of the educational (and consulting) process for me, is assessment. So, on one side of our business, we are consultants. We do digital advisory work for our clients. On the other side, we are educators. We teach knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, business and evaluation skills, and then we assess whether they have learned them or not. We have developed a body of learning assets to help reinforce an individual's development along every one of the stages – for both education and consulting. We call this our mCordis Professional Qualification and Award in Mobile Marketing. The qualification is recognized and accredited by the Institute of Digital and Direct Marketing (IDM) -- the UK's professional marketing and accreditation body. The course's material has also been endorsed by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) and the Association of National Advertisers (ANA). When you think about education, it's really conveying and developing knowledge and skills and then assessing if the person has actually retained and has those skills. We provide courses and programs that follow that methodology.

CEOCFO: How do people find you?

Mr. Becker: People find us partly through our own marketing efforts, partly through general search marketing and certainly through word of mouth, relationships and direct selling. We are marketers in our own way too. We make connections through our association partners such as the DMA, the ANA and the Path to Purchase Institute.

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CEOCFO: What are one or two of the key points you teach that are ideas people may not generally consider?

Mr. Becker: Often when we are involved in teaching mobile marketing or explaining how it works, we have the most comprehensive set of knowledge in programs that we have been able to identify in the marketplace. Part of that also comes from our personal heritage and our pedigree. I have been involved in mobile since the mid-'90s, having founded mobile technology companies, and being one of the founding members and a board member of the Mobile Marketing Association. I also ran the MMA for three years as the North American Managing Director. My business partner, Paul Berney founded multiple digital marketing agencies and had been a marketer his entire career. He was also the Managing Director of the Mobile Marketing Association in Europe, the Middle East and Africa for over five years. One unique thing we bring to the table is a comprehensive, global view and approach for what mobile means. What is exciting about our approach and what makes us uniquely differentiated than agencies of our ilk, is our focus on education and our global perspective that mobile has global reach and global relevance. With Paul's agency experience and experience in the Middle East and Africa and Asia, we really have a global understanding of what mobile is doing. Likewise, our ability to engage with companies from every stage of the organizational industry structure -- and there are really four tiers -- the associate level, which are your manufacturers and carriers, and your technology enablers that are the companies that build experience on top of the base level functionalities of the Internet and mobile carrier networks. You then have the selling class, which are your media companies and your sellers, and then you have the brands. We have worked with them all, and our ability to translate, facilitate and navigate that story is critical. The first imperative is to realize that mobile has and is causing irrefutable behavioral change with consumers, and that there are major implications from these changes. Mobile and similar connective devices are leaning toward consumers recognizing the idea of the "quantified self" and learning more about "myself" -- for instance, how I use location monitors. From a marketer's perspective, the recognized quantified self leads to the quantified customer which presents many new opportunities for business. We then talk about how mobile is uniquely unlike any other medium and provides behavioral triggers and an understanding location and time. All of the factors that lead to what is called contextual relevance -- something no other medium besides mobile can provide. We then discuss and really dig deeply into the customer journey and customers' past purchases. We then talk about marketing automation and how all of the pieces fit together. Finally, and this is where my personal area of interest lies, we focus in on the area of privacy. Where is privacy going and how is that changing both from an industry self-regulatory perspective as well as government regulation perspective. We get into all of these topics. We get into the frameworks, the models and structures, where the resources are, the types of tools and how to evaluate vendors and suppliers.

CEOCFO: Do you follow through?

Mr. Becker: We do. Many times, that depends on the nature of the company too. Some of them follow through, some do not, and some want to develop consistent programs where we check in every two to three months. We offer an ongoing

service where once a quarter, we'll give our clients the 10 global insights that we see are most impactful to their particular view of the business. This way, we develop an ongoing relationship with the client that can adapt to changes in their business and/or market trends.

CEOCFO: *What has surprised you personally as the mobile industry has grown and changed?*

Mr. Becker: To be clear, it's not a mobile industry; it's marketing. In some respects, there is no such thing as mobile marketing. It's just marketing, and the role of marketing is to connect a consumer who has a need with a supplier who can fulfill that need, and do it as efficiently as possible. I would not call the growth of mobile surprising because many people saw it coming. At the same time though, the challenge that we face is responding to the incredibly rapid pace of change. The fundamentals of marketing are still the same, but the approach to how you go about doing it, and the technical complexities for how you go about doing it, have shifted dramatically. You have the unbridled change that exists in the market with a continued rapid evolution to that very change. I don't think anyone was prepared for that. We often cover this in our classes and refer to one of my favorite quotes from Charles Darwin where he says, "It is not the strongest of the species who survive nor the most intelligent, but those that are most responsive to change." One of our goals in teaching our professional classes is to advise people that the only constant they can expect going forward is change. They need to accept and support that organizationally as well as personally.

CEOCFO: *How do keep up with the technology, trends, and all of the moving pieces?*

Mr. Becker: Personally, I have an unbridled passion, excitement and interest for all things related to marketing. I read constantly, and I rely heavily on my business partner and our industry colleagues. But importantly, mCordis focuses on co-creating with our customers. I think one of the core issues that society needs to recognize, is that the way knowledge is created, has fundamentally shifted. There is a wonderful book by David Weinberger, called Too Big to Know. In the book, David discusses this topic and says that the way we create knowledge has changed. Twenty years ago, you had five smart people in a room, they wrote a book, and that was the knowledge. That book would become the tome that we would all refer to. There is a certain insight and inspiration that comes from that type of knowledge creation, but what is happening today, is that the millennial demographic is moving from being a demo segmentation to a mindset. We're no longer talking about millennial targets, we're talking about millennialism and a mindset that that is enthusing throughout society in one way or another. And the millennial mindset is very purposeful. They want excitement, they want adventure and they want experience. That mindset is similar to how mobile is infusing itself across all customer segments so that consumers are starting to expect marketers to do what Don Peppers had envisioned back in 1996 when he talked about one to one marketing. With mobile, we finally have the ability to market and engage customers in a "market of one", and consumers over the next four or five years will begin to expect that. One of the things that's happening in the marketplace today with the market of one, is that consumers want to co-create their experience with you. If you don't allow consumers to participate in their own engagement with your brand, they become disinterested and you lose. So going back to your question, I listen, I read, I rely heavily on my partner and clients. This ever-changing landscape requires an open-mindedness to a whole new way of thinking.

CEOCFO: *Put it all together for our readers. Why pay attention to mCordis today?*

Mr. Becker: mCordis is a mobile and digital consulting and education agency. Compared to other agencies, we have the broadest, most comprehensive footprint when it comes to mobile marketing. There are bigger agencies and global agencies with more access to resources, but they don't have the level of experience in mobile that we do. With mCordis, you're going to get a really unique, completely differentiated viewpoint and approach on how mobile marketing can be incorporated into your business.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine



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**For more information visit:
www.mcordis.com**

**Contact:
Michael Becker
408-242-5733
michael@mcordis.com**