

Beyond the Rack doubles mobile sales after launching dedicated mobile site



About Beyond the Rack

Based in Montreal, with offices in New York, Toronto, and Las Vegas, Beyond the Rack launched in 2009. They work with major brands to hold limited-time, limited-quantity sales that are open only to members. Beyond the Rack notifies members by email before each event.

To learn more, visit www.beyondtherack.com

At a Glance

Multi-screen Strategy Results

- Mobile conversion rate doubled
- Mobile revenue jumped to 21%
- Up to 44% of sales from mobile

Beyond the Rack is an online private shopping club selling designer-brand apparel and accessories priced below retail. Every sale starts at a specific time and lasts just 48 hours, after which the items are no longer available. Sale events are open only to members. And with the launch of a hugely successful mobile site, mobile now plays a significant and growing role in the retailer's online strategy.

Multiple challenges spark this online retailer's 'Year of Mobile'

Beyond the Rack was growing substantially in 2011, after two successful years in business. But in analyzing their sales data, they noticed that the mobile conversion rate and revenue-per-visit were low. "We saw the same on tablet. We recognized that as a huge opportunity," says Director of Marketing Richard Cohene. Seizing this opportunity wasn't easy, though.

"On a mobile device, you would literally see our desktop site, and we had a lot of things that were very mobile-unfriendly," Cohene explains. "We had hover features that did not work well on touch screens. Everything needed to pinch and zoom. None of the fields were sized properly. The 'Add to Bag' button was miniscule. The process was a challenge." Beyond the Rack decided to act, and make 2012 their "Year of Mobile."

The drive to create a world-class mobile site quickly, simply and affordably

Beyond the Rack had precise technical and business requirements for their new mobile site. They had to offer a fast mobile site, an optimized shopping experience and seamless checkout. The site had to be completely customized to the mobile user while offering the entire store inventory. Development had to be completed within four months, before the fourth-quarter holiday season. And Beyond the Rack wouldn't build the mobile site in-house, as they had no internal resources to dedicate to it, and needed an external vendor to help.

The company's business goals were straightforward. "We had to create a world-class mobile website, with little to no impact on our technology team, at a reasonable cost, in a short period of time," Cohene says.

"We noticed ... that our mobile site's conversion rate and revenue-per-visit were significantly lower than our desktop site's. ... We recognized that as a huge opportunity."

— Richard Cohene, director of marketing, Beyond the Rack

A technology partner helps streamline and improve mobile shopping

Beyond the Rack chose mobile-technology company Mobify for assistance, after talking with several vendors. Mobify's platform allowed them to remix, reconfigure and restyle their existing website content for mobile devices,



About Mobify

Mobify is a mobile-technology company based in Vancouver, British Columbia, that solves design and performance challenges of the multi-screen web. Mobify's application programming interfaces (APIs) and tools help developers build fast and responsive web experiences for smartphones, tablets, and other devices.

To learn more, visit
www.mobify.com

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*—Richard Cohene, director of marketing,
Beyond the Rack*

while also improving performance. Using Mobify tools and software, the team created an optimized mobile experience. Beyond the Rack didn't just want to duplicate their desktop experience, but to improve it for on-the-go-consumers.

"It took a few weeks before people started to get used to the idea that they could spend more time on the mobile site, and they could check out on it," Cohene says. Once everyone was accustomed to the new look, the mobile site really took off. "It took, maybe a month of data before we could say, 'Okay, there is a clear upward trajectory here.'"

More site changes in the works as mobile sales soar

Beyond the Rack saw the mobile conversion rate double. Mobile revenue soared from 10% to 21% of total sales. Mobile now accounts for one-third of Beyond the Rack sales on weekdays, and as much as 44 percent on weekends – "a huge percentage of our business," Cohene says.

As part of their overall mobile strategy, the online retailer also created mobile-friendly emails using responsive design. These messages rendered very well on all mobile devices, and within six months the open rate had jumped 20 percent.

In addition, Beyond the Rack is now readying a separate tablet site. "Tablet users spend significantly more money, and more time on the device," Cohene explains. "They need to be catered to in a slightly different way. We are going the extra mile and building a totally redesigned tablet website."

