The 5 Biggest Trends Changing Mobile Entertainment

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Mobile entertainment is now a multi-billion-dollar global industry, evolving at breakneck speed as technological advances unlock new possibilities and shape consumer preferences in new and unexpected ways.

Here is a look at the top five trends changing this industry today:

1. Bite-sized, mobile-first entertainment

Mobile phones and tablets have become ubiquitous, and user expectations are shifting towards mobile-first experiences optimized for smaller screens as a result. At the same time, leisure time is increasingly becoming a luxury as the pace of life for the active part of the population continues to speed up. One consequence is that users are increasingly drawn to content that can be enjoyed quickly and easily on the go. We have witnessed the rise of platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts and Yepp, serving up user-generated short-form content to a broad range of audiences.

While there is a lot of discussion about the addictive properties of short-form entertainment, screen time regulation and age restrictions for platforms that offer bite-sized mobile fun, one thing is clear – this type of content has true mass appeal and is likely to remain a major fixture in the mobile entertainment space for the foreseeable future.

Related: 4 Tech Trends Shaping the Future of Media and Entertainment

2. Better connectivity

More reliable connectivity, faster speed and greater proliferation of 5G are also transforming mobile entertainment in their own ways. Better connectivity enables developers to serve up more interactive experiences and data "heavy" formats, such as video streaming and conferencing, audio streaming, podcasting and networked gaming. This democratizes the creation of high-quality live content, which is no longer the exclusive turf of big broadcasting corporations, nor is it reliant upon wifi connectivity and a desktop device.

In addition, the speed and coverage of 5G networks enable more precise location-based services. These enhance mobile entertainment experiences, such as augmented reality games or virtual tours, enabling a more immersive user experience.

With the ability to provide higher-quality and more engaging content, mobile entertainment businesses can unlock new revenue streams, such as subscription-based services or pay-per-view options. By opening the door to more prosperous, more interactive, and more immersive content that can be consumed on the go, improved connectivity directly impacts the possibilities for entertainment on mobile devices and fuelling industry growth.

3. AI and machine learning

Artificial intelligence (AI) has a profound effect on mobile entertainment. Using AI-based tools such as machine learning helps developers improve and optimize backend processes like streamlining repetitive tasks, improving content moderation, and enabling leaner teams to achieve results. It also helps provide the more targeted, personalized entertainment

experience that consumers have come to expect – serving up content based on a user's interests and past viewing behavior.

While AI is also making it easier to generate content, including text, images and video, users are increasingly looking for content that feels authentic and relatable – something that is still hard, if not impossible, for AI to produce.

Therefore, when it comes to funny videos, fun memes and similar entertainment, user-generated content is still king for now, while AI works backstage to enhance how it is delivered and consumed.

Related: The FBI Says Hackers Are Using Public Phone Chargers to Steal Your Information. Here's How To Avoid Falling Victim to the Scam.

4. Social media integration

An argument has been made that mobile technologies are making us less sociable as a society, with some even ringing alarm bells that the art of casual in-person communication is in danger of being lost. After all, look around when riding the subway, and you'll see most of your fellow passengers with their heads bent over their mobile devices, completely oblivious to their surroundings and more often than not entirely uninterested in striking up any conversations with their fellow passengers (which is not such a bad thing, to be honest). However, within the confines of the digital world, the opposite trend is underway, and consumers increasingly expect entertaining content that is much more social and interactive.

Users are no longer passive consumers who just want to play a game or watch a video. Increasingly, they prefer to interact with other players, share their memes, comment on the videos they watch and otherwise engage with their digital communities

and audiences. This trend is prompting the integration of social media functionality into mobile entertainment apps, providing more opportunities for users to interact with others online and within their digital communities.

Related: How to Think Outside Your Industry and Revolutionize the Customer Journey

5. AR and VR

Advances in augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) tech have opened new possibilities for mobile entertainment. AR technology allows users to overlay digital content on top of the real world, creating a more engaging and interactive experience for users. Sharing features within social apps enable users to capture and share their AR experiences, such as swapping faces in photos or putting funny filters on images. AR also enables location-based experiences in social apps, which can be used for real-world events or virtual events. Users can interact with digital content tied to their physical location, participate in AR-based scavenger hunts and other location-based games, or engage in pretend play, such as trying on countless pairs of e-sneakers.

As a result of the many AR- and VR-enabled features coming to the market, consumers are starting to expect more immersive, personalized, interactive, real-time, multimodal, and accessible experiences, prompting a higher level of competition among gaming and mobile entertainment companies to meet these expectations.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/science-technology/the-5-biggest-trends-changing-mobile-entertainment/449149