

OVERCOMING DEVICE LAUNCH CHALLENGES WITH A TOTAL USER EXPERIENCE

JANUARY 2010

As manufacturers of connected devices, you face a tremendous number of challenges bringing products to market, including:

- Raising awareness
- Introducing new technology without confusing customers
- Describing product differentiators
- Showing the user the product is easy to use
- Creating an intuitive setup process
- Addressing consumer concern about technology becoming outdated
- Creating a seamless cross-channel experience
- Ensuring consumers connect their products correctly and use them to the full potential
- Getting users to engage with content regularly
- Keeping users from migrating to using another brand's product
- Increasing word-of-mouth
- Providing a personalized content experience
- Synching product development and product marketing

To successfully deal with each of these challenges, successful brands must create an end-to-end user experience that reinforces positive brand interactions from the first time customers perform product research to purchase, setup and use.

At LEVEL, we believe this total experience depends on the interrelationship of three components:

- All marketing touch points
- The product interface
- A technology foundation

While most consumer electronics companies optimize each of these individual pieces, very few have successfully integrated all three to create a truly cohesive user experience.

All Marketing Touch Points

As consumers move through the awareness, interest and research phases, they seek varying levels of information about the device. Each marketing touch point should help consumers understand the product's capabilities and outline the product's differentiators, technology, pricing, user experience, available content and cross-device synchronization abilities enough to help them make a purchase decision.

Today, success in product marketing is highly dependent on the product experience. If a poor experience garners negative press and user ratings, you will have difficulty in future sales, regardless of marketing efforts.

The Product Interface

The first time a user starts up their new product, their experience shapes brand perception. The ease of the setup process can dictate how the consumers will use the device moving forward and whether or not they set it up properly in the first place. During setup and everyday use, user experience design is crucial in ensuring users actively engage with their devices and find value in the advanced features of connected products. An optimal interface makes content easily accessible, gives enough information about the content for users to make a purchase/viewing decision and maintains consistency across all device types.

If each interaction with the interface is intuitive and adds value to the user, your brand image is reinforced, creating loyalty and positive word-of-mouth.

A Technology Foundation

Consumer interaction across multiple device interfaces is driven by technology, and a product lacking a robust platform will quickly become outdated as consumers demand more content, device functionality and product synchronization capabilities. A platform should be capable of housing, organizing and serving personal and customized content, updating remotely and capturing customer usage data.

A technology foundation may include an application development platform for content expansion, community capabilities for social interaction, data-mining for device usage trends and search capabilities for content navigation. Each interaction taking place on the platform generates and moves large amounts of data, requiring some platforms to use sophisticated data synchronization to push data between components. Alternatively, cloud services are increasingly used for storage and distribution, eliminating major synchronization issues.

Where LEVEL Fits In

An independent digital agency, LEVEL is uniquely positioned to help you bring together product development and product marketing to deliver a total user experience across all brand touch points. Over the last 15 years, we have created and marketed product experiences for leading manufacturers of TVs, PCs, netbooks and handsets like Philips, RIM, Cisco, HP and Apple. Our service offering includes product strategy development, user experience and interface design, media services, technology planning, application development and integration and cloud computing architecture. Providing user-centric design, digital media and application development, LEVEL is connecting you.

To learn more about how LEVEL works with consumer electronics manufacturers, go to: www.level-studios.com/connected