

## When Mom Turns Mobile Marketer



**AN INTERVIEW WITH:**

**Katherine Wintsch**  
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Katherine Wintsch is the mother of two young children as well as a high-level strategic planner at The Martin Agency, advising clients like Wal-Mart. She is also the founder of The Mom Complex, a global think tank dedicated to getting moms and marketers to “get real” about who they are.

Wintsch spoke with eMarketer senior analyst Lisa E. Phillips about how moms today are using their mobile phones, and how marketers can reach them.

**eMarketer:** How should marketers be thinking about mobile moms?

**Katherine Wintsch:** Most companies are just thinking about getting their message out. But for moms, if it's not adding efficiency, it's not worth it.

The role of mobile is to make a mom's life more efficient, to reduce the number of steps in her life. So when our clients are thinking about doing apps or anything online on the phone, we ask them, “What is your efficiency quotient for this program?” They often don't have the answer, but it makes them go back and rebuild their app or whatever in a way that's actually making a mother's life more efficient.

**eMarketer:** Can you give an example?

**Wintsch:** Yes. A lot of moms talk about using an app called Around Me. You click on it and you can find any type of store or service nearby. For example, you could type in “pedicure” and it's going to give you the name, location, address, phone number, website, etc., for every single service like that, and the distance that those entities are from you.

Normally, if mom didn't have that app, she would have to go to the website, Google something, look at all the results individually and then figure out how far away they are. The app took what used to be a four- or five-step process and makes it one step.

**eMarketer:** How does mom find these apps?

**Wintsch:** For the most part it's word-of-mouth. She is often with another mother, watches her use a certain app and then says, "I've got to get this."

The problem with apps for moms is, even if they're looking for a new calendar app, there are too many to choose from and she doesn't want to risk even \$4.00, \$2.00, whatever it is, to try them out. Even when apps are free, a mom isn't going to risk the time that it takes to get used to it, and then maybe she doesn't like it or thinks the makers will try to upsell her on something later.

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**eMarketer:** What else do marketers need to know about mobile and moms?

**Wintsch:** Mobile usage lives in the cracks of her life. She's using digital apps or going online on her phone, but it's in very small bursts of time. It's two minutes here, three minutes there, but because she's a mother she's always three minutes away from her digital experience being disrupted. That's another good filter to ask: "Can somebody experience this program that you're proposing in the cracks of their life?"

**eMarketer:** So moms use apps on their mobile phones but do they also use mobile browsers?

**Wintsch:** Yes, they definitely do. I think online banking is an example where they're still using the browser itself. A lot of shopping is still done through the browser. A lot of retailers are coming out with apps, but I think the experience, literally browsing for clothes, is so much more linked to the browser itself. A lot of moms tell us that when the stores have an app, it doesn't feel that they can browse as much. Some retailers are stripping out too much from the browsing experience when they go to an app.

**eMarketer:** Do you segment the mom market in any way?

**Wintsch:** We've created a proprietary segmentation study that's based on values, not based on single vs. working, or black vs. white, or rich vs. poor—all the stereotypical categorizations of moms.

We look at four different archetypes of moms. One is the Renaissance Mom who is on the leading edge, checking out new things and seeing what's out there. Then we have the Cornerstone Mom. She's the bedrock of the family, much more traditional values, traditional family structure. And there's the No Nonsense Mom. She's really more the disciplinarian. She likes structure and

order. And the last one is the High-Flyer Mom, who's a social striver, much more image-conscious. She's what we call a forward leaner. She's more likely to eat organic and experience different cultures.

**eMarketer:** How are these segments useful for marketers?

**Wintsch:** What's interesting to brands is that these are values moms are operating off of and history has shown that the only predictor of future behavior is your value system. The mistake a lot of companies make is their segmentations studies are, by definition, category segmentation studies.

For example, if there's a brand of restaurants and they're doing a segmentation study, they're going to typically start with a base of people who dine out and then subsegment. This is a much broader look at the values, and then you can overlay brand experiences or preferences on top of these.

**eMarketer:** You founded The Mom Complex because you didn't like the way moms were portrayed by marketers. Can you talk more about that?

**Wintsch:** Yes, absolutely. Once a mom, always a mom. But what's shocking to me is that most marketers seem to think that a mom is a woman with a toddler at home—at least that's the way they're depicted in television ads. But my mom is still a mom and she operates almost daily off of those values and principles of being a mother, even though, obviously, I don't live at home anymore and have my own family.

We did a big global study on moms around the world to uncover the one emotion that all moms share—whether they live in Shanghai or Seattle—and that common emotion was doubt. It was, “I doubt whether I'm doing a good job, but more importantly, I doubt whether I can say anything when I feel like I'm not doing a good job.”

**eMarketer:** How do you deal with that in marketing to moms?

**Wintsch:** Marketers have to acknowledge that sense of doubt. What we typically say is you need an insight in your marketing that has some tension in it and some truth in it, that's not too sunny-side-of-the-street. One example is Toyota's Swagger Wagon campaign. The insight is that moms worry about losing their cool when they get a minivan. Because that insight is so true, that work is going to connect so much deeper and so much better. If you are a brand, you'll never connect with mom if you think that she feels that she's always doing a great job.

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**eMarketer:** Do you see moms teaching their kids how to use mobile devices, say, when they hand their smartphone to their kid to keep them quiet?

**Wintsch:** No question. The perfect example in my household is my son, who's 2 years old. He can take my iPhone, he can turn it on, he can swipe the screen three times to get to his page of apps and he can pick the ones he wants. It's

unbelievable.

**eMarketer:** But you, the mom, had to choose which apps to download for him, right?

**Wintsch:** Yes. This is another thing we hear from moms about apps, especially for kids. Moms often go to a mother who has a child that's one year older than her child to get recommendations on the best apps, which is exactly what I did.

My 4-year-old daughter is really getting into the educational apps. She learned all of her numbers and letters on the iPad. It keeps her engaged. I hate to say this but it is true that, as a working mom, we have very busy lives and if my daughter is happy going through flashcards on the iPad and having Elmo respond whether she's right or wrong, I am perfectly happy to have the help.

**eMarketer:** What are some best practices you've learned from working with mobile moms and marketers?

**Wintsch:** I would say create something that you know she'd share with other moms, that's a filter. Second, use mobile to make her life more efficient. The third is don't forget that moms are people too, and they like to laugh. It seems like men get all the funny ads, all the funny apps, all the funny TV shows and marketers play it too straight with moms. But humor is the only thing that keeps us going.