

# Mobile Innovation (Part 4): Innovating Product Offerings Through Mobile

by [Christina "CK" Kerley](#) | April 23, 2013 |



[Part 1](#) of this series introduced the incredible innovation opportunity that mobile heralds for today's marketers. [Part 2](#) explored innovating brand engagement through mobile. And [Part 3](#) illuminated ways to innovate sales channels through mobile.

In this segment, we focus on the third innovation strategy: **innovating product offerings through mobile.**

Inarguably, the lifeblood of any company is revenue. And the sale of product offerings—products, services, or solutions—are how companies garner the revenue necessary for them to grow and flourish. With revenue as the top priority, companies must continually improve and evolve their offerings to maintain current customers, attract new customers, differentiate from their competitors, and gain more market share.

But we are now a mobile world, replete with mobile work styles, mobile lifestyles, and mobile expectations. And customers, whether consumer or executive audiences, expect companies to use *the very same technology* that has improved customers' lives to also improve the products and services they use.

Through mobile, companies can innovate their offerings in two ways:

1. **Harnessing mobile to energize their *existing* product offerings.** Mobile can serve to keep a company's product offerings more compelling and relevant to its target markets.
2. **Tapping mobile to develop entirely *new* offerings.** Mobile can open entirely new worlds of revenue.

Let's look at examples of savvy companies harnessing mobile technologies, mobile augmented reality, and mobile sensors to innovate their product offerings through mobile.

## Dish Network: Wielding Mobile to Transform a Home-Based TV Service Into a "TV Everywhere" Offering

Thinking outside the box, outside the dish, and outside the home, satellite programming provider Dish Network has innovated its existing product offering—subscription-based TV content delivered via satellite dish to viewers' homes—into TV content that is accessible anytime, anywhere, via any device.

By energizing its product offering, Dish Network now allows its customers to enjoy their live, DVR, and on-demand content from anywhere, at any time of day (or night), on any device of their choice, across their laptops, tablets, and smartphones:



The advertisement features a hand holding a smartphone displaying a baseball game. The background is a bright blue sky with clouds and a green field. Text on the left reads: "TV EVERYWHERE™ TECHNOLOGY. Experience TV Everywhere™ brand technology with DISH. The same live channels and shows from home, anywhere you have internet access. Take a Test Drive today! You're just seconds away from experiencing TV Everywhere™ brand technology from DISH. Try it Now. Order Now. Already a customer? Visit MyDISH." A smaller inset image shows a person holding a smartphone with the same baseball game. A button at the bottom right says "Click Here for Video".

Make no mistake. This is a game-changer. Where other cable providers have promoted turning "any room into a TV room" by enabling subscribers to view their cable content from anywhere in their homes by using an iPad app, Dish Network has outwitted and outshined all competitors by rendering competitive offerings lackluster, and far too limiting.

After all, in a mobile world, content should be mobile, too. What we pay for should be available to us *whenever* we want it, *wherever* we are located, across *whichever* devices we are using at the time.

How Dish Network has seized the mobile innovation moment:

- **Before mobile?** Dish Network customers viewed their content from inside their homes, on their TVs.

- **After innovation?** Dish Network turned a stationary product into a truly mobile offering, and customers now view their TV content whenever they want it, wherever they're located, on whichever mobile devices they're using.

### Popular Science Magazine: Wielding Mobile to Turn a Static Content Product Into a Dynamic Multimedia Offering

Popular Science Magazine provides a particularly apt example of a company that's innovating an existing product offering.

As the Web replaces the print read with the digital view, publications are challenged to ensure their readership keeps buying print-based versions of their magazines. Yet, Popular Science has been able energize one of its core products through mobile—and, in turn, given new life (and new liveliness!) to a popular annual issue of the print magazine:



Using the publisher's mobile app, titled "PopSciInteractive," readers can hold their smartphones or tablets over the text of the magazine to view streaming videos. Unveiled in the magazine's annual "Invention Awards" issue, the app offered readers videos of the award winners and the ability to receive a multimedia experience that bridges the printed page with the digital world.

As with any print media, the core value is not the printed format of the magazine, it's the content within the magazine. Thus, using mobile to innovate an existing offering, Popular Science has

increased the value of the print publication by making the magazine's content richer, deeper, and more dynamic for readers.

How Popular Science Magazine has seized the mobile innovation moment:

- **Before mobile?** Popular Science Magazine was a product that offered static content for customers.
- **After innovation?** Popular Science Magazine energized its product with multimedia features, and the magazine's content now dynamically bridges the printed page and digital world for readers.

### GlowCaps: Wielding Mobile to Turn Dumb Pill Bottles Into Smart Medication Reminders

GlowCaps serves as a spectacular example of a truly breakthrough product—using embedded mobile sensors and mobile connectivity—that solves a plaguesome problem.

Half of people on medication have forgotten to take their prescription medicines on time (or at all), and more than **\$100 billion is spent annually** because of excess hospitalizations stemming from poor medical prescription adherence. It's all too clear that remembering something as simple as taking medications on time, every time, is anything but easy.



The advertisement for GlowCaps features a central image of a pill bottle with a white GlowCap. To the left, there are more GlowCaps and a box labeled 'VITALITY GlowCap'. To the right, a circular diagram with four numbered sections (1, 2, 3, 4) illustrates the product's features:

- 1 Personal Reminders:** GlowCaps flash and play a ring-tone so you don't forget. They even call your home phone.
- 2 Social Network Support:** GlowCaps send a weekly email update to a friend or family member that you select.
- 3 Pharmacy Coordination:** GlowCaps order refills from your pharmacy.
- 4 Doctor Accountability:** Each month, GlowCaps send you and your doctor a printed report with incentives if you exceed compliance goals.

A 'Click Here for Video' button is located at the bottom right of the diagram.

Enter GlowCaps, mobile-enabled pill bottle caps that glow to remind us to take our medications—and also track our progress and help us refill our prescriptions.

GlowCaps fit on standard prescription bottles and use light and sound reminders, along with phone calls and text messages, to ensure patients don't miss any doses of prescribed medicines.

First, pharmacists give GlowCaps to patients and explain how they work. Then, at home, patients plug in the reminder light near where they store their medication. Every day, the light flashes for up to an hour, and plays a ring tone every few minutes, until the GlowCaps cap is opened (the pill bottle cap also glows). If the medication goes unopened, patients receive a phone call and a text. Finally, weekly emails—sent to patients, doctors, and caregivers—track which days patients did, or didn't, take their medication as prescribed. GlowCaps are embedded with a "push to refill" button that alerts the pharmacy.

The result? Better behavior, improved medical outcomes, and decreased medical costs—all because a simple mobile solution transformed an otherwise dumb pill bottle into a smart medication-reminder and progress-tracker for patients.

How GlowCaps has seized the mobile innovation moment:

- **Before mobile?** People had to rely on faulty memory to remember to take their medications—and, all too often, they forgot... leading to poor medication adherence, medical complications, and excessive medical costs.
- **After innovation?** People no longer forget to take their medicines; they can now rely on their medicine containers to remind them about taking their medication, to automatically track their progress, and to seamlessly refill their prescription.

### Architecting Innovation: Wielding Mobile to Transform Product Offerings

Mobile proffers a host of opportunities, technologies and strategies to energize existing product offerings and develop entirely new brands, services and solutions. But, though transformative, mobile is just the technology—the *innovation* lies in how companies strategically wield this remarkable medium.

So the key question for marketers seeking to innovate their product offerings is this: **How can you wield mobile's capabilities and tools to energize your existing product offerings—and to create entirely new product offerings?**

- Could you, through one brilliant move, render all your competitors obsolete—like Dish Network's "TV Everywhere" has in freeing customers to view all the content they desire, at any time, from any place, through any mobile device?
- Can you breathe dynamic life into your static product as Popular Science Magazine has through an augmented reality mobile app that turns a once static product into a multimedia experience for customers?

- Or might you solve a vexing, universal problem, as GlowCaps has, by using mobile sensors to transform otherwise dumb pill bottles into smart containers that remind customers to take their medication on time, every time?

Many questions await you—but much innovation, too.

Next week, we'll continue to explore how to wield mobile to innovate more of the marketing ecosystem in Part 5 of this series: "**Mobile Innovation Strategy No. 4: Innovating Customer Experiences Through Mobile.**" You'll discover how to wield mobile's capabilities and tools to streamline customer interactions, remove friction from customer-centric processes, and deepen the overall brand experience



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