

iBeacon-powered contextual **evolution**

Beacons are small, low-cost transmitters that emit one-way Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) signals that can be picked up by smart devices nearby. Apps are programmed to trigger actions when a signal is received, that may result in the form of push notifications, personalized offers and messages, or user prompts. They are a powerful tool for retailers - they bridge the gap between the physical and digital world, enabling retailers to reach out to consumers at the point of decision with contextually relevant push messages or in-app messages.



announcement

In June 2013, Apple quietly snuck the announcement of iBeacon into WWDC 2013. That was enough to get the tech and retail communities buzzing about the consumer engagement opportunities BLE technology could enable.



research & develop

Large companies and small startups got to work creating beacon hardware and POCs. Retailers and standalone shopping apps began prepping pilots incorporating iBeacon technology into the mobile shopper experience.



headlines & pilots

Retailers, stadiums, shopping apps, and many others unveiled small in-market tests of beacons at a handful of locations. The initial pilots received a lot of press announcing their release, but little was reported on the results of the pilots.



test & learn

The initial tests showed that consumers would interact with beacons. In the Test & Learn phase, companies are beginning to take beacons to the mass market. These larger tests will generate statistically significant samples that lead to greater insights.



maturity

Retailers go beyond generic messaging and coupling to deliver personal, contextual messages by combining micro-location with the knowledge of an individual's habits and preferences. We will also start seeing adoption across other industries such as healthcare and finance.

how to get started with your beacon strategy

find the opportunity

Beacons have opened up the opportunity for brands to interact with consumers at the point of decision. Businesses need to hold innovation sessions to determine what unique opportunities beacons create for them to more effectively connect with consumers. To determine if this opportunity is the right to pursue, conduct small in-market experiments and pivot as needed.

scale the solution, collect data

After learning the best way to proceed with beacons through pilots and experiments, businesses can move to mass market deployment. At scale, businesses need a technology partner who can provide hardware, content management, and analytics support. At mass market, the business's priority should expand to include collecting analytics and building predictive algorithms.

focus on optimizing contextualization: build the next-best-action decision engine

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beacon dos and don'ts

do	don't
✔ Innovate - find unique location-based opportunities for your business	✘ Use beacons as a couponing engine
✔ Be targeted and strategic with messages	✘ Annoy consumers by bombarding them with messages
✔ Contextualize & Personalize - drive messages with data but be helpful first	✘ Treat beacons as a static mobile sign, sending the same message to everyone
✔ Start with a small experiment, continue to test, learn and pivot as you scale	✘ Get left behind while others do the testing and find the mass market solution



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