

# Poor local marketing 'fails mobile apps'

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2 Jan 2013

Mobile device applications (apps) are not marketed well enough in South Africa to make substantial money for their developers or companies, according to World Wide Worx.



Mobile apps are a multi-billion dollar industry in the US, Europe and Asia, but have not yet taken off commercially in South Africa accord to Arthur Goldstuck, managing director of business technology research company World Wide Worx.

He says that online retail sales should do well this year, but downloadable apps for cellphones, tablets and other mobile devices had a long way to go before they broke out of a niche market.

He singled out FNB, News24 and Ster-Kinekor's apps as being among the best locally produced.

"These are apps which large companies have designed well and which customers have reacted to," Goldstuck said.

"Our research found that South Africans do not get enough information from applications used on cellphones, tablets and the like. This is especially with regard to applications used to encourage buying decisions," he said.

Goldstuck said *PriceCheck*, an app built in South Africa which allows comparisons of the prices of products from different shops, was well made.

Property24's, *appening*, a gig guide for Johannesburg which can be downloaded onto cellphones and *bidorbuy* are two apps that are gaining popularity.

The electronic gig guide's founder, Dale Amler, said: "People have asked what is there to do and I believe *appening* has answered that question. Anyone can add an event straight onto the app," Amler said.

Mxit, South Africa's largest local social network with more than 9-million users, had about 2,500 app developers using its software.

Company spokesman Sarah Rice, said: "This is a big industry with potential and it's something that we are taking seriously. A key message is to understand that a mobile app and a website need to work together ."

Dave Duarte, business technology analyst, said he believed retail apps would only gain traction in South Africa in a couple of years.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge

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